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Letters Section 1

My dear Brother,—I was very glad to get your letter, and get news of the dear brethren around you. I trust, too, from them that the Lord is carrying on His work. With us numbers have largely increased, and there have been a good many conversions: but the increase of numbers has tended to lower the barrier against the world, and the very lapse of time, for it always tends to come in imperceptibly; it weakens, too, the competency to deal with evil when it arises. I have long felt that Satan was making a dead set at brethren in this respect, but was anxious not to go before the Lord, but wait on Him, and did. It brought on a crisis in London, but God came in most graciously; not that they are wholly out of it yet. But God has stepped in, and He will, if the brethren are humble, complete His work, and I do not doubt it will be very useful. Out of London, it has been an occasion of sorrow, but has not so much affected them directly. He is ever faithful.

I am engaged in translating the Old Testament into French: we are towards the end, but it will nave to be revised. It has been a laborious work, and it is not the way of reading scripture that nourishes; still it instructs, and makes one’s knowledge of it accurate in detail. It is for others substantially I do it, as is evident. But scripture, and the infinite preciousness of Christ, opens to me more and more: His preciousness is infinite, and yet how near; that comfort in passing through the wilderness! “I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.” We oust seek to realise these things: how little we believe they are real facts.

Have you weighed how Romans is man on earth, as we all are, but full grace towards him, chapter 5:1-11; then reckoning himself dead (not risen), but Christ his life and he in Him, and Christ in him; experimental, chapter 5:12 to end of chapter 8 Colossians—dead and risen, but on the earth; his hope in heaven and his affections aright; but the presence of the Holy Ghost not the subject. Ephesians on quite other ground (alluded to partially once in Col. and 2 Cor. 5)—not dead to sin, but dead in sins, and sovereign grace putting us into Christ where He is, so that we are sitting there; our new place and relationships. Colossians is fitness for the place. Ephesians the presence of the Holy Ghost fully recognised and spoken of; not experience, but contrast of the two conditions. This is only for you to search into. Its connection with figures from Egypt to Canaan would be more than I could go into here. Love to all the brethren: may they be kept from the spirit of the world.

Ever affectionately yours in the Lord!

Pau, 1879.

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Dearest Brother,—You will have received much later news than I can send you how beloved Mr. Wigram is gone home, and since then the trouble they have had in London. But God makes this, as all else, work together for good to those who love Him. With the details I have had little or nothing to do, being absent in France; with the root and ground of it everything… The result is in God’s hands, so that I go no further. I have long felt the state of things; and that the’ Lord will sift the brethren, or is doing so, cannot be doubted. What struck me was, not the evil, I see as much in the apostles’ days, but

powerlessness to meet the evil. I was most thankful to get the news of brethren in Australia, New Zealand, etc. God, I think, is working here in spite of all. There are conversions, and He is binding saints together where there was division and evil… On the whole in England there is much to thank God for. We are not out of the place of patient waiting on the Lord, but the mass of evil which seemed insurmountable is wasting to its own real dimensions, and people s consciences, I trust, are awakening to God's presence, and realities; and when we are in God's presence all goes right. I have the Lord greatly with me in it all, though deeply tried. When people were tried with circumstances, I was comparatively at peace, had gone through it with the Lord.

I think I see that Christ is presented in glory as one who leads us on in energy, conforming us to what He is according to the glory; and that when the question is of nourishing the inward life, and the affections and character, it is the humbled Christ on whom we have to feed. This is partly the case in Philippians 2 and iii.: the former the inward state and character, Christ coming down; the latter, a glorified Christ, the Object after which we run. But it is taught in many passages. I have been struck also latterly, in connection with a controversy on certain teaching whose soundness was in question, that while Romans gives us death to sin, the old man or flesh, and Colossians death and resurrection, just touching Ephesian ground, this last has nothing to do with dying to the old man. The object of grace is owned as dead in sins, and then a wholly new creation in Christ; so that we have the contrast of the two things, what by the Holy Ghost we are put into, and what we

were in the flesh. Colossians is life, not the Holy Ghost; estate, not place. But I must close. We have nearly done the bulk of our work.

Paw, 1879.

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My dear Brother,—Thank you much for your kind note. I suffered more than is any good for me to talk about, more or less for these two years or more, but said nothing and did nothing, but bore, till I gave up everything to God; since then I have been as peaceful as possible, and free to enjoy the unspeakable goodness of God. The state of things forced me to act in this matter alone; and when —— gave expression by an overt act to what was going on, and I knew to be going on, for a long while, and he sent me word, I had a full correspondence with him, friendly, but telling him what I saw to be the working of his act; and it was not till all remonstrance and reasoning was useless that I ceased the correspondence, and told him so. Those who backed him up in evil are responsible for a great deal. I then felt I must act individually which I did, and only stated what I had sure and certain ground for, but that definitely and plainly. I have no particular pleasure in the word ‘profane,’ but my business was to make plain what his act was. He pretended to have a kind of private inspiration as to it, and long insisted on being led of the Holy Ghost. Now the thing was wrong, done secretly, knowing that all brethren would be against it: none defend it now. He had been thinking of it before, I know, though I paid no attention to it at the time. So little was there any leading of the Holy Ghost, that in three weeks he had broken with the person he was led to, and they

were in utter opposition. The bringing in the Holy Ghost for what was wrong in itself, and done in this way, and really to put down the meeting which was and is there, I felt and feel was a profane thing. The mischief which was at work seemed to blind to all the plainest features of what was right and wrong, honourable and dishonourable. This was what made it urgent to be plain. Having given my personal testimony I have never meddled in the discipline part, and indeed, being out here, could not in the practical part, and I had no advice to give. I cast it on the Lord,.and He has wrought. Consciences are gradually awakening. I do not think that we have got into clear water, but there is much more sense of where we are and were. I am not much in correspondence with England as to what goes on there; till about a fortnight ago, I may say not at all. But as I believe God is working, I am quite at peace.

I have never had for a moment an unkindly feeling toward ——. I do not think he is the most completely leader in the evil, but it was he who did the overt act; but I do not think I am out of charity with any. I have, up to this, kept the greatest part of what pressed upon me to myself. What I dwelt with was a public act done in defiance of brethren: and the state of things was such that it must have led ere long, not to my giving up what are called brethren's principles, for I believe they are God's testimony and in His word, but those who were pretending to carry them out—how I cannot tell. With —— I was cordially united, and there was very true union there, but of course I could not make them a meeting independent of others, and go in there and nowhere else. Stay in the evil and see the work corrupted I could not, when it came before the

conscience of others—and the very effect of what had been going on was to deaden the conscience. That, I trust, God is awakening up, and if brethren are patient that will bring out clear blessing. I trust God will give me patience still to leave it all to Him, for in seeking to do good we would seek sometimes to hurry His working: but I believe in His mercy He is at work. If brethren are humble and seek His face they will find a blessing. Mere violence against myself I take to be a matter of course; and, save for those who feel it, whom I trust I should be given to meet in the wisdom of grace, it does not in the least degree move me. It is good to be alone with God, and walk in grace with others.

I am glad T. is gone to Canada: it makes links where I can no longer be one, though 1 should like greatly to see them all again.

Pau, June.

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* * * Take care, too, that irritation does not come in; the wrath of man never works the righteousness of God. The saints ought to be able to win back to peace many souls, and the way of peace is that which will do it. But let their vexation subside; you will have given up no principle: one's own soul suffers by being constantly occupied with evil. It is not the place of communion. —— saying he gave up brethrenism has put the thing in its true light; and if left to reflect on it, many will find where they had got to; if carried on as if seeking to carry one's point, they will not. You should not mind such as——. There is a kind of violence which grace is entirely above. It ought to be above all. God's ways are His own and wonderful… I have constantly found that

bringing things to God, if real, is the way of having them done. Our hearts are very treacherous, and we are in danger of rejoicing in iniquity, if the evil of another proves our point. Pray for the peace of Jerusalem, and pray for poor —— much. He is one dear, as redeemed in the blood, the precious blood of Christ. Many would think this inconsistent with my letter, but it is not. It was occasioned by a public act which threw the whole testimony of God into confusion. Be assured that God knows how to manage His own affairs: He has shewn it. Give people time to weigh and think.

Affectionately yours in the Lord.

1879.

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Dear Brother,—Though I went through sore trial some time back about affairs in London, I am now a good while in perfect peace. It is good to be exercised, and I was thrown wholly on the Lord. God, I believe, is working, and has owned the testimony. I do not think we are at the end, but if He has begun to work, He will, if we wait on Him, carry it through; but it will be in His own time and in His own way, and patience must have its perfect work. But it seems to me there is quite a different spirit at work. I hear very little from England. My place of refuge and of news is with the Lord, and it is a blessed place.

I am inquiring at present what is the meaning of the cleansing on the great day of atonement being wholly what was within, what was heavenly, but have not yet seized it… We are awaiting a letter from —— to know if the hay will allow us to come to the mountain. All is so late that I suppose it will be later than usual. I have yet

to see how far my old frame will carry me in mountain work. I am as fresh, through mercy, as ever for home and local work, but drawing close to eighty, of course, takes physical strength more or less away.

Pau, June.

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Dearest Brother,—I was very glad to hear from you, and thank you for giving me the information, too, as to the brethren. My heart clings to them all as ever, though far away; and now far on in my seventy-ninth year, I cannot, humanly speaking, look to travelling to see them as I once did: though my mind is, through mercy, free as ever, my body naturally is not— nearer home in one sense, nearer Christ I hope in every sense. I rejoice in the blessing, both at Sugar Creek and St. Louis, not only for their sakes as I do, but in the Lord shewing Himself in grace. Both places have gone through a sifting, as is common after a first start, and now spring up again under His gracious hand. May it continue and be kept in humility, the sure and only way of enjoying blessing. He always blesses, but we only enjoy it then. On His faithful love we can always reckon—oh how surely! The Lord is working everywhere, but will have what is holy and true amongst His own. Everything seems to shew we are closing in to the end; at any rate, our part is to be ever waiting for Him, who has loved us and will make us like Himself. It is God’s own rest we are called to enter into: what likeness to His thoughts and delights we must have to do so, and how blessed that is! but this is our portion.

Assure dear—— of my unfeigned sympathy. He had been working for the Lord a good deal at one time, nor am I surprised that this blow should have brought back his

heart into that channel, but, with all his little children, he is much to be sympathised with…

May God in grace give us all increased devotedness. Soon only what has been Christ in our path will remain. I have been these six months here occupied with the translation of the Old Testament into French, now nearly accomplished. Give my kindest love to all the brethren. May He keep us all close to Himself, where safety, joy, and holiness are found—Christ all and in all. I shall always be glad to hear of the brethren and of you, too, dear brother. Again my unfeigned sympathy with —— in this world of death…

Pau.

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My beloved Brother,—I had been thinking of you constantly, but was occupied from six in the morning to eleven at night in the south of France, and a good deal absorbed with my work, now finished in the rough—that is, it has only to be revised. I was comforted, dear brother, on the other hand, by the grace of God given unto you, and your soul's getting on in quiet resting in Him. I feel daily more that heaven is our place; all our living associations are there, and Christ is all there; the rest is to go through, through grace drawn from Him: "of his fulness have all we received, and grace upon grace."

I do not read the periodicals—have not even time for it; but I have the feeling that they have a good deal lost their power, and I think the Lord has in a measure blown upon them. A means of food for many who can hardly buy books is useful, but these are too pretentious, and then they have as periodicals run into a worldly form.

Dr. Johnson said his “Rambler” was like the stage coach —had to start, full or empty. But there is more; the tone of brethrenism tends to lower with increasing numbers, and the Lord has been exercising them in England, and graciously, though humblingly, for their good. They have the truth, but I had feared for some time that they were taking the place of having it as credit to themselves. But the Lord is graciously working with them.

And now, dear brother, about your plans … it is a question of spiritual judgment and divine guidance. I am sure God ever faithful will guide you. Christ is all, and He will guide and keep you. We shall sorrow at no sacrifice when we meet Him. I find the sure faithfulness of the Lord in working and answering us, though He may exercise our faith.

Liskeard, July 25th.

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* * * I cannot doubt that the Lord is working. Had I not had this confidence, I should have left the brethren nearly a year ago, but I felt it would be unfaithful: not as doubting that they had the truth, but as unfaithful to it. I felt it would be hireling work, but God is working and bringing light into the souls of many, and with a little patience He will bring about His will, I mean His blessing. But there is no doubt it was a deliberate plan for breaking up the brethren here. That, at present, is broken down, but in general, consciences are beginning to find that they had got away from the Lord—of course, not every one—and the assemblies trusted a few, and failed in humble reference to God. They had got into a bad state, and this had been brought home to them, but for their good… But I have no doubt, painful as it all is,

that God is turning it to blessing: the humbling will be useful, and seeing God is working. I trust there may be patience till He has fully brought about a blessing.

Occupy yourselves with Christ that you may be refreshed and strengthened. It is a great thing to pass through sorrows with Him; they are then turned to a well, and grace comes down too. Pray for the saints—all of them—carry the sorrows to Christ, and in your own spirit bring Christ to the sorrows. The brethren had got puffed up, and were sinking from fidelity towards God, and He has visited them in mercy. In waiting on Him, He will exalt the faithful in due time, and rejoice in the Lord always.

London, July 26th, 1879.

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[From the French.

Very dear Brother,—Our passage down here is a time of wars and conflicts, and it could not be otherwise. Now, if the enemy finds us uncovered, if the flesh is active, he can ever harass us. More than this, we must have the whole armour of God to be able to meet him. It is not a question of strength but of wiles, and God allows us to make the discovery of our state by this means, as in the case of Ai, and of the Gibeonites. But in the work there will always be conflict—victory, no doubt, if we are faithful. To stand, that is our business, in the evil days.

I am sure, dear brother, that as to these evil speeches there is only one thing to be done—to be silent, and bear them, and cast all on God, praying even for those who speak thus. I have been struck with the place that patience has in the christian life, in the New Testament:

“Strengthened with all might according to the power of his glory”—what great work is to follow?—“unto all patience and longsuffering with joyful-ness:” “Let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and complete in all the will of God.” Because then the will of man himself, his own spirit, has no place in our walk. Often, even in seeking to do good, we do not sufficiently expect God to act, who alone is able to do good. I hope the brethren who have been evil spoken of will have perfect patience, and God will judge their cause. Let them place themselves at the same time before God, humbled on account of all this evil, praying God to bring in the remedy Himself. He will compel you, it may be, to exercise patience; He will exercise it Himself; and in His time (and it is the best) He will appear for the blessing and to the joy of those who have waited for Him. Salute the brethren.

1879.

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My dear Brother,— … A word on the Park Street circular: I did not like it being sent round the country, but I dare say it may do good. … I was not at the meeting, nor did I go to any of them, the rather as I was in France. The paper, however, was a notification of the conclusion they had arrived at, nor were they the first.… The various gatherings had to act, because the remains at Kennington (a large number had gone out) positively refused to act, so that each gathering that felt the evil had to clear itself. This was an abnormal state of things, but was merely provisional, and could not be helped. The effect of this action was that what remained at K. put —— out; but a very large number of brethren there

had gone out already, and this had to be regulated. The assembly in London being silent is not exactly the point. All are agreed that——is out, but formal exclusion has been declared—as to themselves, has been pronounced —by a great many to clear themselves, and in the country a vast mass of gatherings are clear, and clearer than London. What course the Lord will make it take, I know not at present. We wait to learn what K. has done. But there is a work going on in the conscience of those who hitherto have supported ——. But such a demoralising of conscience and insensibility to right and wrong I never saw. It was high time to do something. And the Lord has worked, and is working, and He alone can do it. Some would often go too fast, and others too slow. If brethren had not been demoralised, there would have been deep sorrow of heart for poor——, but five minutes would have settled the case, when a few facts were known, and did with upright minds.

I am off to France, but shall return as soon as I can.

London, August 26th.

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My dear Brother,—Propitiation is properly for sins, as Hebrews 2, and 1 John 2; and Romans 3:25, 26 is to the same effect: only, Christ having taken the condemnation for sin, persons who do not search out words exactly may speak of the effect as for sin. Sin, as calling for it, was not properly known in the Old Testament. Leviticus 1 does not, as far as I see, apply to this, except in a very general way. It was as a periV aJmartiva" that God “condemned sin in the flesh” in Christ for us, so that there was no condemnation for us. In Leviticus 1, though blood was shed and atonement made, all is sweet

savour. Man’s state is no doubt assumed, that is, sin; but the condemnation side is not what is in view, but acceptance. In the periV aJmartiva" sin is properly in view: in propitiation sins are in view. Substitution is a human word, though a right one; but properly it is sins; that i3, the scapegoat in contrast with the Lord’s lot. Sin, as such, is never forgiven: God condemned sin in the flesh, but Christ took this place, was given periV aJmartiva", and knowing no sin, the condemnation of sin in the flesh took place, and that in death, and we are dead with Him for faith: it has ceased to exist— the condemnation of it gone. Death in Christ involves both. Guilt is from sins. We are dead to sin with Christ, but He has died for our sins. This last is what is properly atonement, and meets judgment. Death to sin is a question of state, not of guilt, though of exclusion from God. A question of defilement, not guilt, refers (and rightly) to what was done in the sanctuary, which was defiled (not guilty), which in full apprehension of the work has its importance. The scape-goat had to do with personal guilt; the blood on the mercy-seat with approach to God, but the sanctuary was cleansed.

The word “atonement” is very vague, and never used in the English New Testament but once, where it ought not to be. In the Old, rp^K “to make atonement” refers to the removal of positive guilt out of God’s sight. And, as I have said, sin properly does not come into question in the Old Testament, though birth in it is recognised in one place only. (Psa. 51:5.) Even where the sweet savour of Christ’s acceptance is figured, man’s sinful condition is recognised, and the work that is infinitely acceptable is in view of this. But this, though it assumes it, does not deal with sin in itself. Lost and guilt are different: one

my state; the other, my responsibility and guilty failure. I believe I have said all I can at this moment.

I doubt whether you have got all the bearing of scripture as to sin. “Now once in the consummation of the ages hath he appeared eij" ajqeVthsin aJmartiva" by the sacrifice of himself.” It is not a question of guilt and imputation that is here. Judgment is according to works, but Christ was periV aJmartiva" when God condemned sin in the flesh; further, as to sin of the world, we have ai[rwn thVn aJmartivan tou' kovsmou. (John 1:29). We have had an innocent garden, then a sinful world, then a world wherein dwelleth righteousness. Of course there can be no sin in mere creation, but the status is one of sin, “the bondage of corruption”: defilement can be, if not guilt; hence the tabernacle and all the vessels were sprinkled with blood. True, because of Israel’s sins, but defilement attached to them: “the heavens are not clean in his sight,” and He who went into the lower parts of the earth, is gone “above all heavens, that he might fill all things.”

Sin in the flesh is not guilt; but it would defile, and not allow us to be with God, were it not condemned in the cross through His death who was made sin for us. The full effect will only be in the new heavens and new earth. Sin is not put away in the lost, I fully admit; but I could not say there was no suffering for sin in the abstract. It is never said sin is put away: I know the work is done, and am at rest. But the fact will not be accomplished as an effect till the new heavens and the new earth. If taking away be not a sacrificial expression, periV aJmartiva" is, and the sacrifice of Himself is. I could not say there is no sin of the world except as regards guilt and responsibility: it does not recognise defilement by

sin. Further, rp^K is applied to the holy place (Lev. 16:16-20); so it is to the burnt-offering (Lev. 1), where there was no actual sin committed. The main effect of the burnt-offering is to shew the perfect sweet savour of the sacrifice of Christ to God, but it was made in respect of sin, but not on account of actual sins committed. Man must come by blood because he is a sinner, and though we get Christ Himself here (not “of his own voluntary will,” for that is a mistake, though it was so, but “for his acceptance”—Lev. 1:3), yet, as it is for us, the element of sin must be brought in.

As to speaking of atonement, which, although acknowledged, he did not bring adequately into prominence, the reason for it is very simple, as you may see in reading Leviticus 1:4, where it is especially said to be so in the usual (we may say, technical) word.

Matthew 22:14 seems clearly profession, or outward calling; the chosen, those owned in the wedding. As to Matthew 20 you must connect it with 19. There devotedness and self-sacrifice are made the ground of reward. Only the principles of law and grace are so different, that those great in one would be very little in the other. But lest there should be self and self-righteousness wrought by what preceded, the sovereign grace of chapter 20 is introduced, and the converse stated—many last first, and first last. Here it is grace as to service, only so much work for so much pay is utterly blown upon. The rest trusted the master for what they might get, and free grace acts consequently. God alone can judge what He should do in rewarding. Thus last are first, and first last. Many are called to serve, some chosen vessels, but all in grace.

In a general way we have God's book as a registry. But then you have specifically in the New Testament, "book of life." In one case it is said, "whose names are not written in the book of life of the slain Lamb, from the foundation of the world." These God had written, and it was sure. But they are supposed true, unless shewn to be otherwise—as one on the list of voters, unless proved to have no right.

Your affectionate brother in Christ.

1879.

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My dear Brother,— … The two things in the Bible Treasury [June, 1878] are true,1 but not connected. But the clear difference was not brought out till the examination of Cluff's doctrine brought it out. If we wait on God, erroneous doctrines become inlets to clearer truth. Dying to sin, and rising with Christ is experimental; but we enter on this ground by faith, or it is a vain human effort to get at it. In Colossians 3 God says we are dead; Romans 6, faith holds we are dead; then 2 Corinthians 4:10 carries it out in practice. Ephesians is the sovereign work of God setting us in Christ. We say we are dead apart from practice; but it is for all that experimental, but on the discovery of Romans 7, and then, by redemption and the presence of the Holy Ghost, the consciousness of our new place. You cannot connect Ephesians 2 and Romans 6. In Colossians 2:12 is Romans 6, and resurrection added, and in verse 13, Ephesians—only not going on to heaven, as Colossians does not. It is as believers we have died with Christ: still God and faith reckon me there when He died, "crucified with him," because the

sin in my flesh was condemned then: in God's mind I was there. I only possess it when I have the Spirit, see Romans 8:9, 10; but then I go back to the work there according to verse 3: but there is no union there. Now there is real union.

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To the same.]

* * * I do not think 'we are hid in God' is right. I have not the lectures2 by me to look at them, but at any rate (and they were only notes) it can only mean to follow the passage. 'We are hid in God' has very little sense to my mind. The point of the passage is Christ is our life, and being hid is merely in contrast with appearing here in glory. 'What we are' would not do. The point is life: "Ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God." I have not seen 'New Creation':3 I have not time to read the journals. But I believe there is a new being: "That which is born of the Spirit is spirit."

I have run over the article. … I believe the purpose of it to be right. But the vessel is a part of the old creation. And it is said, "if Christ be in you the body is dead;" because if it be not dead it is what scripture calls flesh. There is a confusion between death and new creation, which is an error. But life is not a mere condition of existence. "In him was life." "The Father hath life in himself." We bear about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus. And as He has suffered in the flesh, "arm ourselves likewise with the same mind." I do not think you adequately recognise that there is a new life in Christ for us.

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To the same.]

* * I do not think that any take eternal life for a new soul; and I am afraid your attempt to define will only makes the matter more obscure. Existence is not life: the table exists, but is not alive. “In him we live” is not we have life. But the thing I fear is the unsettling the fact of what life in Christ is. Thus “the Father hath life in Himself.” Is that a mere condition of being? Again, “that eternal life which was with the Father and has been manifested to us.” Your system loses, it seems to me, too much “He that sanctifieth, and they who are sanctified are all of one, for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren.” The life by which the Lord lived in this world was not in the first Adam at all, even when innocent. “Because I live,” says Christ, “ye shall live also.” He is a life-giving Spirit. Remark, if the tree was not eternal life, it was the tree of life, not of existence, and living for ever, not existing for ever, which is spoken of. So that your attempt to distinguish by definition breaks down the first step. So again, “all live unto him” (Luke 20) breaks down your definition, for the aim of that is to say that though the condition of existence was changed, life was still there. So when you say it is not in us as yet, you touch a vital point: we have life; Christ is our life. “This life is in His Son,” and “he that hath the Son hath life.” Do you mean that none of us have the Son? then the wrath of God abides on us. The ascribing to a person what is true only of a nature, runs through all John’s epistle. “He cannot sin;” “the evil one toucheth him not.” It is not a community of being, because He is also God; but we are all ejz eJnoV",4 and because He lives we shall: He gives us eternal life, and we shall never perish. Our condition of being will

change, our life not. Scripture adds the presence of the Holy Ghost for the christian condition of being. But “he that is joined to the Lord is one Spirit:” what is that so far but community of being? The life of Jesus is to be manifested in our mortal flesh, and this is said if we which live are delivered to death that it may be so. You make it only born of water, but “that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.” Your effort at defining breaks down, and I fear its taking away the reality of a new life in Christ; quite admitting it is distinct from immortality. I have it in Him as much when mortal as when immortal: that is a change in the condition of being; the life, Luke 20 teaches us, is not touched in that change.

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To the same.]

* * * Metaphysics will never save souls. The real point is do we receive something new? I am not aware that scripture speaks of life in Christ. We have “the law of the Spirit of life in Christ.” But it is said, “Christ is our life.” I suppose that is something new for a sinner, or even for Adam innocent. The point in John 3:6 is not born of the Spirit, but what is “born of the Spirit is spirit.” “I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.” I believe fully in the immortality of the soul, but that has nothing to do with eternal life. That “was with the Father and was manifested unto us.” It is Christ the Son. And as to us, it is something in us which springs up as a well of water.

Your speaking of ‘being’ is unconsciously a sophism, because ‘a being’ in English means something having life. Life constitutes in ordinary English an existing thing, a being of which the manifestation is spontaneity.

But this does not touch this question, but whether, the soul being supposed which gives personality, I do not receive something positive in receiving Christ that I had not before: “God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son;” “he that hath the Son hath life:” Christ is life. It is never said we have life in ourselves, even when Christians, but in Christ. Of course, born of the Spirit is in contrast with born of the flesh, but born of the flesh is beginning to be, or to have life. Life is not a condition of being; it constitutes it: a material substance without life is not called a being. ‘A being’ supposes personal spontaneity; only life in scripture goes further than mere power of personal spontaneity: but life is not what affects the state of a being where personal spontaneity already is, but is the source of it: and this for the Christian is Christ, and not what we have from Adam. In virtue of that I reckon myself dead to sin, “the body is dead,” I am not in the flesh. In your system it is merely a modification of the state of a living being. Now that is being born of water, hence the other is added, born of the Spirit. It is not said ‘is water,’ but it is said “is spirit.” Is life in God a mere condition of His being? ‘Being’ means what has life. Hence to say life is a condition of what has life has by itself no sense. “In himself” may characterise it in God, “in the Son” may characterise it in us—not in ourselves. To this is added the presence of the Holy Ghost: “the Spirit is life because of righteousness.” He is as the perennial spring to the stream, so livingly united, that “because I live ye shall live also:” we are “created in Christ Jesus.” It does not change our personality, even when death affects the body, or present constituted organisation, and we live in our souls for God, though the organised vessel may be turned to dust, but, if Christ be our life, with Him.

As to your reasoning, you contradict yourself in saying life is ‘being’ in a given condition, and yet that you cannot have being without a thing’s having life already: death is a change in our condition of being, not in our circumstances of life. Having the Son as life so that we live by Him is not merely a circumstance of our life. Scripture never speaks so, but says Christ is our life—so thoroughly so that because He lives we shall live. What is scripturally defective in your mind is the real reception of the Son as life, the source of a new spontaneity in the soul. And this is a very grave matter.

* * * * *

To the same.]

* * * I do not look for the meaning of a word in scripture, 5 save on scripture subjects. Yet in this case it does afford proof. Spontaneous movement is commonly taken as the characteristic of life: some spores seem to have it where there is not animal Ufe, but that is all. But it is said, “In him we live and move and have our being:” the moving is the consequent of life. God works in us to will and to do, but we are already alive. But that spontaneity is the expression of life is the common doctrine of all thinkers, unless rank materialists, as distinguishing animal existence from all below it—is identical with life, the expression of it. But in divine things there is no question at all: “God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son”: “he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.” Because He lives we shall live also: “this life is in his Son.”

You talk of the power of spontaneity. These words have no sense to my mind unless they mean the source of it. But what I insist on is that there is something, called life

in scripture, given; not an operation on what is there, but a gift of something that was not there. So that I say, “not I but Christ liveth in me,” not a mere disposition of ‘I.’ What I fear is that you lose this. What you do is to separate what is carefully put together, and you connect what is carefully separated. Nobody thinks there are two souls; but it says, “in me, that is in my flesh:” “it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me:” “Nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me:” “If Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin.” It is not merely a condition of the soul, but power that is there by the personal indwelling of the Spirit of God, “the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus.” It acts in the soul, but it is in virtue of it that even the body will be raised. If there were not more than a condition of the soul, how could it be said, “because I live ye shall live also”? When Christ breathed on His disciples, and said, “Receive ye the Holy Ghost,” was it only a condition of soul? It was not the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; but the second Adam is a life-giving Spirit.

Your affectionate brother in Christ.

September 9th, 1879.

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Dear ——,—I could see, without your telling me so, that you have been made up in the teaching of those who deny the immortality of the soul, and make those whom scripture calls “the offspring of God,” a cleverer kind of brute. What you have quoted from my Geneva lectures I hold, as then, or still more, to be of all-importance. The coming of the Lord and the resurrection of the body was lost in the soul’s going to heaven, and that through the Platonists, and it was a sign of the ruin of the church. It

made no such impression as you suppose on my hearers, for the immortality of the soul was not in question, was accepted as a recognised truth by them as by myself. I may say the contrary had never been heard of there. The first person who used the passage left out what guarded it, and I feared that I had exposed myself to the charge carelessly, no one doubting it when the lectures were given; but he had to confess he had it in his copy. I added in the next edition some more, I think the quotations, but cannot now be quite sure; but that death was ceasing to exist, none of us dreamt of. Hence, too, there is nothing about eternal punishment; the point was that in the public teaching of the church, going to heaven had taken the place of the Lord's coming and the resurrection. When I began to preach these, fifty years ago, I was held to be I know not what—enthusiast or heretic— and I am thankful to have been the means of spreading it far and wide. The whole purport and character of the church was and largely still is clouded by this departure from the truth. In America men of standing in the professing church deny the resurrection altogether as to men, not perhaps as to Christ—though the apostle binds them together.

You give an interpretation of Luke 20 instead of receiving what is said. The Lord first speaks of the saints only, those who "shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from among the dead," "children of God, being the children of the resurrection." Then He says, even Moses shewed this at the bush: God is not "a God of the dead but of the living": and then lays the foundation of an absolute fact of which He had not spoken before at all: "For all live unto him." They have died as regards men, but as to God, wicked or saints, all

live: it is not confined to saints, but it is so with every one. Before He had been speaking of the resurrection of the saints, and exclusively of that resurrection; now He declares that for God all live. He denies that death is the cessation of existence, and in an absolute and positive way. Nor is it exact to say it is of the question of resurrection God is speaking, in calling the things that are not as though they were. (Rom. 4:17.) He is speaking of quickening Abraham's dead state so that he should be the father of many nations.

There is not a word of the sense you put into [the parable of] Dives and Lazarus in the passage. They were both Jews: it is the substitution of the unseen world for this. Abraham's bosom is a wholly Jewish thought. Hades was well known to them, and is found in the Old Testament in the term Sheol. But it is expressly and explicitly making the unseen world seen in a parabolic description; they both alike died. There is no thought of the cross opening the door to the Gentiles, or breaking down the middle wall of partition. The Lord says they are to hear Moses and the prophets, or one rising from the dead would have no effect. It is a mere effort to get rid of the plain testimony, that the soul subsists after death in the case both of wicked and of just. All live for God. The soul is unaffected by death as to existence, save that it is separated from the body. What was the gulf fixed between Jews and Gentiles by the change of dispensation? What had "thou in thy lifetime" to do with dispensations? It did do this, as to Jews and Christianity, that there was an end of riches being a sign of God's favour, but it was not because of a change of dispensation, but that the truth of things came out in another scene, not in this. The purpose is as plain as

possible to those who have not been perverted by this false doctrine. Luke 15 shews the grace that seeks and receives the sinner; then (chap, 16) the use grace makes of this world's goods; and then the veil is drawn to contrast the effect in that, with the portion of selfishness in this world—"thy good things." The rich man had a fine funeral, but there it ended for this world. It is expressly declared that death does not reach to the soul. "Fear not them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do; but … him who after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell." Mortal is always confined to the body.

As regards the saints an intermediate state is taught as plainly as words can teach it: "To depart and to be with Christ which is far better": "Absent from the body and to be present with the Lord"; "To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise": the express object of which is to teach the blessedness of the intermediate state in contrast with Christ's coming in (not 'into') His kingdom. So Stephen, "Lord Jesus receive my spirit." The passages I have quoted before shew it as to all; and Peter tells us that the Lord knows how "to reserve the unjust to the day of judgment to be punished." Your reference to 1 Corinthians 15 is of no avail here, because it speaks of believers only in what you quote; they are "raised in glory." Nor will any bringing of it to 2 Corinthians 5 help you as to the plain statement there as to the saints, which is as plain as plain can be. He was thinking of dying, as chapter 1 shews; he was not wishing it, as weary of the trials, but looking for an eternal weight of glory, and through them; but having spoken of this as God's purpose, he speaks of what is man's portion through sin—death and judgment—and yet, having

eternal life and the Spirit, is “always confident,” even in view of death. Knowing that if absent from the body, which most assuredly is not resurrection, but the contrary, he would be present with his Lord, that to depart and to he with Christ is far better. He does not quite dislike the idea of death in the first paragraph, but merely says his desire was to be clothed upon, not unclothed, and contrasts it with groaning in this tabernacle, yet not so that he wanted to be rid of it, but to be clothed upon; and in verse 9 formally puts the two cases. I do not agree with you as to identity by the Spirit; I am not the Holy Ghost, nor is the Holy Ghost me. As dwelling in me they are distinguished; He bears witness with my spirit. (Rom. 8:16.) After all your turning about this passage, it remains that when you quit home you are with the Lord, and you are not the Holy Ghost. It just shews where error and our own thoughts drive us. It is not even true that Christ’s neighbour on the cross had the Spirit. You confound the life begotten by the Spirit, and the Spirit itself, which dwelling in us, makes our bodies a temple.

As to the question of eternal punishment, the question is always really of the sense we have of the deserts of our own sin, and is inseparable from that of the immortality of the soul; as if I have one and am at enmity with God, I must be for ever miserable as shut out into outer darkness. But you have confounded, as is very common, law and gospel. The Gentiles have no law: “As many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law, and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law.” So that all your system is wrong from beginning to end according to scripture. Further, it is never said Christ was substituted for all—it is “that he

died for all.” You confound the blood on the mercy-seat and the scape-goat: the Lord’s lot, and the bearing of the sins of the people represented by the high priest. You will find no Scripture which speaks of bearing the sins of all, but carefully the contrary. The passage you quote from Exodus gives the principles of the government of Israel in contrast with atonement, which Moses talked of, and could not make, each person being to be blotted out for his own sin; and besides that, though forgiving their sin governmentally, declares that when He visited He would visit their sin upon them. All this is a misapprehension of scripture. In quoting “the lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world,” you have confounded sin and sins: one a state in which we are by Adam’s sin, and the other our own guilt, and which are carefully distinguished at the end of Hebrews 9 The effect of this work will not be complete till the new heavens and the new earth. They are equally distinguished in Romans as to the believer and as to the remedy; one, Christ dying for our sins; the other, our having died with Christ: our guilt the consequence of our own sins—our state the consequence of Adam’s. You are all wrong as to making law the measure. It was the measure of human righteousness in a child of Adam. But what we have now is God’s righteousness, and that without law. Nor is the blessing of Christianity, though partially and darkly intimated (for of church blessings there is absolutely no hint, nor meant to be, but the contrary— see Eph. 3; Col. 1), to be found in the Old Testament. Life and incorruptibility are brought to light by the gospel. Nor is the law the measure of human sin, though it is of human righteousness; it is the rejection of Christ, who came when the law had been broken, which is so. “Having yet one Son, he sent him also last unto

them, saying, They will reverence my son”—“but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father.”

An immortal soul, hating God in grace, must be miserable. You say you consider that it is inconsistent with God’s character to hide these terrible consequences of sin. You had better have looked at what is written. (Gen. 3.) He did then and there a great deal more than He had said. He told him of nothing but human sorrow and misery, and then death as a man on the earth: so in judging, he was to return to dust, and the woman to suffer in child-bearing. But He did a great deal more, giving, in the judgment on Satan, what faith could rest on in hope. He drove out the man, and shut up the way of the tree of life —exclusion from God and what He had established, and no immortality here below. So that in saying that, you are charging God foolishly, and forgetting that when “God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses”—come in grace—they rejected Him. Man under the gospel (in a general sense the world, for “there is no difference”) is in a far worse state, though he may be redeemed out of it, than when driven out of Paradise, and a final one if not born again and justified. I, as to the flesh, am at enmity with God. Further, if death be all the wages of sin (it is the wages assuredly, but it is falsely quoted as if it were all the wages of sin, and so you put it) then I pay the penalty for myself even as a Christian, and Christ need not have died for me, only given me a new life. Further, it is utterly false; for the whole consequences of our sins, save mere animal death (the penal arrest of man here) are after the judgment and the result of it. So that this whole view essential to your

system is totally unscriptural and false. “It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment.”

I do say the system subverts the atonement. The theory is that we are animals, and they quote what is said in Genesis to shew that ruach (breath), and nephesh (soul), and ruach-chayim (breath of life), etc., were in animals. I admit it fully, man dies as an animal dies on the earth. God, they tell us, gives eternal life in Christ, but till then we have no immortal soul, but are simply a cleverer, more intellectual animal of superior intelligence. Now suppose God gives eternal life to an elephant or a dog, would a dog be responsible for what he had done before when he was a dog; would he have to repent? If not, neither have I. And what is the atonement for? A mere animal, for that is their theory, is not a responsible being —is not in this, in relationship with God—has never been tested as such—is not at enmity with God as man is in the flesh, so that he cannot please God: there is no law for him of which you say so much. The system falsifies man’s whole relationship with God, on which all rests as to him from creation on. It is as degrading as it is false.

You will say, What scripture have you for saying animals are such? There are plenty, and the man who denies the difference debases himself to them; but suffice it to quote 2 Peter 2:12. But even Genesis 1 is enough: God had formed the whole creation, and having made it complete as such, God saw that it was good; so closes the history of the creation of animals, of whom God had said, “Let the earth bring forth,” and it brought forth. Then God solemnly consults about setting a head over it, the image of Him that was to come; then forms his body first, and breathes into his nostrils the breath of life — making him in His own image and likeness. Thus He

placed him in living relationship with Himself. He was His offspring in his created state, responsible, and his responsibility formally tested. Is this mere animal life? If it be as degrading as it is false, it is as false as it is degrading. No one denies man is an animal, a living soul; if you take his blood you take his life as you would a pig's. The question lies beyond that. We are not to fear them that kill the body but have no more that they can do. Animals do not want atonement, and I do: if I were only an animal, I do not. It makes animals responsible to God, and not mere "natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed," as scripture does; or man not so, if he is only an animal: and with responsibility, repentance and atonement disappear. I have confined myself to your statements. I add, scripture speaks of everlasting punishment. They use eternal life to prove we have nothing eternal till we have Christ, and then when eternal is applied to punishment, say it does not mean it. The simple answer to shew its normal meaning in the New Testament is, "the things which are seen are temporal, the things that are not seen are eternal." But the real question is, What does my sin deserve? The answer to this is the test of where a man is, and settles by divine teaching what scripture declares as to life and punishment.

Yours truly in the Lord.

[1879.]

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My dear Brother,—I bless God more than I can tell you for His gracious working. His way is "in the sanctuary" if His way is "in the sea," and if we are with Him there, the sea bows to His power; but to none else that I know

of. After my first deep distress, I trusted His love, though sometimes depressed; and He has worked constantly and wonderfully. I have been surprised all has subsided so soon, but when He works all is soon still…

What I now look for is God's grace, that brethren may lay it to heart, humbled before the Lord, breaking off from worldliness, and having their conversation in heaven. I am a poor thing, but I can see that we are not what we were, I fear, in any way; and I do trust brethren will not lose the blessing of this awakening shake they have had, nor of the wondrous grace God has shewn us. It would then be sad indeed. But I trust the Lord may arouse them, and am most thankful for what He has done.

I have written to dear ——, in consequence of your letter. There are, I believe, complications there, but I put the matter before him in itself. But it is more difficult sometimes to get out of a position than into it. But the Lord has shewn so much grace that we ought to count on Him—only to have patience. As to the other point, the regular thing would be just to follow London without saying anything: 1 hardly suppose there is any need of doing anything special. What I hear to-day seems to say that London is getting quietly into its usual course. If so, there is no need. If there were doubt about restless minds at ——, it might be a question of wisdom whether to raise the question there, unless to re-assure others. If London needed the support of testimony from without, there would be a motive; but this seems hardly to be the case. If——is suspected, but really firm, it may clear itself. In itself it would be an unusual and irregular thing to write and say we accept your judgment; for, unless some special case of remonstrance were there, in a case

more or less common to both, it would be of course. The sending everywhere the first notice from Park Street raised these difficulties. No one, I think, judges that to have been wise, but that will gradually quiet itself. If there be any bonâ fide uncertainty as to —— being clear, it would have to clear itself. If it be as you seem to say, it is clear: I see no great use in raising questions in your midst. If there are others to re-assure, grace may do it.

We have had a useful little conference for two days here, and other meetings.

Les Ollières, Ardèche, September 10th.

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Dear——,— … What I am anxious about, now that the Lord has delivered us from this very serious assault of the enemy, and in wonderful grace preserved His testimony amongst us, is a greater though less ostensible work; that the brethren should be devoted, faithful, unworldly (and that in all then-ways) and spiritual, Christ being all. It has been a much more serious question and struggle than many brethren suppose, and God in sovereign goodness has preserved us, and, however feeble and unfaithful we may have been, His testimony amongst us. If the brethren do not lay it to heart, both the humiliation and the goodness, as largely shewn to encourage, God will take away the testimony from us, and who shall deliver us then? This is what occupies me now. I look to Him to do it, He only can, for who can make spiritual but He who works by His Spirit? Let brethren know they are nothing, and know no motive for anything but Christ, and all will be well. There is a testimony for the last days, and God will maintain it, but the brethren have been, through grace,

the vessels of it. They rose in thoughts of themselves as they declined in consistency with the testimony. When God is at work, it is love for the truth, grief at the condition of the church of God, and separation of heart and ways to the truth, while waiting for Christ— not thinking of ourselves as vessels of it. It is said of Jehovah Himself, that He was grieved at the misery of Israel. God allowed an assault of the enemy to shew us where we were— nothing more humbling. In mercy He has delivered us: are we going to learn the lesson He teaches, and to go on with thankful hearts in the path of single-eyed devotedness, to meet the Lord? That is the question now. I have long said, brethren began by practical separation from the world. Though certain great truths for the last days were there, still what the world saw was that they were not of it. Is there going to be this testimony now? It was so in houses, ways, conduct—many faults, I doubt not, but there was that stamped upon and characteristic of them. It was not a discussion whether they were Philadelphia or not. But I stop: you will understand what I mean… But God is good, and has been most good to us, and I trust to Him to arouse the sleeping brethren. Many I know have had their consciences awakened: may their hearts follow with faith in God's goodness. We read, "My soul followeth hard after thee; thy right hand upholdeth me." … Here I have not much to tell you of. We have had some good meetings; but it is not in the part I have been, yet in it there is much fresh work. But there has been attention and interest, and they are getting on well in general. They had a little shake themselves, but it has done them good, for they too were getting sleepy. London has had its sound everywhere, with those who are aware of what is going on at all elsewhere. In about

a fortnight or so, I shall be getting (D.V.) to Pau. This is a poor country to get about when you cannot take long walks on foot as I used; but the Lord provides.

Vernoux, September 13th.

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My beloved Brother,—I have waited to reply to your letter till our London troubles could at least be seen through. You will have sorrow at any rate, but God has been most gracious to us. It was a question of the existence of brethren. Satan made a violent effort to destroy their testimony. I had long felt it was in the air, and it pressed on me to return to England, though till I was back there was nothing precise in my mind. Dear Wigram, three years ago, said (not to me) that it was all over: he did to me in his last illness. But I felt the Lord was above it, and above everything; and so He has been. I suspect it helped to keep him out of England, and I believe hastened his end, though he had long been ailing. But Satan's effort has been confounded. There are details to be brought into order outside London, where, as it seems to me, they acted too hastily, though right at heart. But in London there is common action, and peace, and, save the places I have alluded to, clear conviction all over the country… I was in France nearly all the time—at first suffered intensely, but was enabled to commit it to the Lord, and pray. And though I put my finger on the public act, now judged, I took no other part, unless a soothing one to individuals, and on my return to England went to no meetings about it (but continued to pray the Lord) till the very last. But the Lord's hand was there, and I trust many consciences awakened all over the country; and this is what I have

rejoiced in, for brethren had declined, the world crept in, and it was the fullest truth, with generally practice little better than their neighbours. I had, before it broke out, anxiously thought about leaving the public body of brethren, but felt it would not be faith.

What I am anxious about now is that there should be a real testimony; I mean, unworldly, spiritual, devoted, such as ought to be with such truth as is given us, and such wondrous grace. The Lord has spared the testimony. What do we not owe Him, unworthy as we were? But I look to and trust the Lord for it, Who else can do it? I do look to His blessed goodness and love for, to me, a greater, though not so visible work as the bringing us out of the strait we were in. This is the thing that presses on my heart now, that a true living testimony may be given. Bethesda was nothing to what we have gone through, because B. was outside. But except the two places I have alluded to, which may require patience, I do not know one soul that has been lost to the path we are in, God's path I believe. I think of writing a little paper on what I hope for. But at present I am living under the sense of the wonderful goodness of God. I am thankful more than I can tell.

What as to my own state, beloved brother, I believe has kept me, for it is God's absolute grace always, is that I have from my starting had no thought of myself but of being wholly vile. I know it more than ever: as I drew nearer to God I saw more of what vileness was. And I have, though I well know it is all grace, been consciously nearer to God now a good long while—I trust more consciously and settledly so; yet it is all grace. One cannot be near to Him without knowing it is so, and wishing it to be so. He has kept me, even outwardly,

wonderfully. I cannot go long journeys on foot as I used, but otherwise, though in two months I begin my eightieth year, holding my two meetings a day often, and in the open air. His goodness never fails. Yet I have had sorrows plenty, but that is all right: soon there will be the opposite. What a joy, besides Christ, to see all the saints exactly what His heart would have them; what an immense joy—all to His glory, the eternal witness to the efficacy of His work! I have learned more than ever in these last affairs to count on the Lord… I have been having some good meetings here among the mountains of the Ardèche, chiefly among the Christians.

Ever affectionately yours.

September.

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Dearest ——,—I do not think all is gone through, but I believe God is able to bring it through. Let London keep its place in lowliness, those that are faithful not individually taking part in any evil, and waiting on God's action: "He that believeth shall not make haste." The mass of brethren have need of quiet. I am glad there is a meeting for humiliation; if genuine, as I trust, it will bring blessing. Its tone will distinctly shew where brethren are. Where activity is distinctly wanting is in bringing up Christ to souls, and devotedness to Him, unworldliness, a life where we do one thing, a home, dress, manners, which say that Christ is all. There is danger of being too much occupied with evil. It does not refresh, does not help the soul on. "Abstain from every form of evil," but be occupied ourselves and occupy others with Christ. The evil itself becomes not less evil, but less in comparison with the power of good where the

soul dwells. I have almost feared being too much occupied with evil in this letter, for what I really have at heart is to occupy souls with Christ and good. There, too, power is found as well as a sanctuary of peace for our souls. To be simply occupied with evil is always a weakening thing; God is not there, though we may be forced to turn and do it for Him in care for others. It is just going beyond this I have feared in my letter. One only, blessed be His name, can touch the leper and not be defiled. Of all else, even where right to be done, “the soul that toucheth it shall be unclean until the evening.” God is a jealous and a holy God—blessed be His name, a God of infinite grace!

I have had a happy and I trust profitable tournée through Haute Loire, Ardèche, etc., and seen the brethren, save in two places, and many who came even thence. We had readings in the different centres, and lectures in the evening: here three days, and there are many around, and large attendance everywhere. Blessings and conversions are given of God, but there is a tendency to sink into things that are seen, as nature does: but I was very happy with them—four of five meetings forced into open air from numbers. Tired I have been, and threatened with my eye, but it is better. After St. Hippolyte and Mont-pellier, please God, Tuesday at Pau.

September, 1879.

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My dear Brother,—My path is to be quiet, feeding souls with Christ as far as God enables me. It restores the tone of the soul for every emergency. My impression is, my letter expressed the desire to be with brethren in the

perilous times of the last day, not any break up of brethren. The pretensions of brethren I had seen growing, and it alarmed me a good deal. But God has been putting that down, and that is a very good sign: “whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth.” I counsel patience on all sides. Consciences are awakening and getting humbled as to the state brethren are in, and that was what was wanting.

I could not leave brethren, I felt it would not be faith, and I feel I was right. I have never a moment doubted that it was the testimony of God. But there was a regular plan to break it up in London, and, with this, the most precious truths, connected with deceit and evil, and this sectarian pretension of what brethren were. This was my difficulty. When a positive act took place, I could deal with it for myself; up to that, it was going on without anything positively culpable to lay hold of. Now we have only to wait patiently the Lord’s working. “Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in him, and he will bring it to pass.”

1879.

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My dear Brother,—As you speak of humiliation, I desire to reply a word. I think humiliation quite the thing called for, for the general state of brethren—their worldliness, their decay in positive testimony, their low spiritual state generally. I thought I had spoken to you of Bochim when I wrote before, but I did not, though I did to another, at the same time. I accepted the general idea of Bochim, but not the special character. Bochim was instead of Gilgal, the place of circumcision, where the angel of the Lord (unknown to them) was. That was a judicial giving

up of Gilgal. I do not as yet accept that for brethren: God might give us up, and we must bow; but as yet I trust that He does not.

The difficulty as to common humiliation was, that what some judged as sin, others advocated and defended, or at least judged very light of. How could there be honest common humiliation? What defended the evil was exactly what the humiliation had to be for. The mere state of brethren was caring for brethrenism, not for God's glory. I do not say there was nothing of this last feeling, but, in general, it was shame for the state, not going to the root. However, God has judged the overt act, and, I suppose I may say, has cleared brethren from the principle that was at work so far … but godly souls are fully convinced that the demoralisation I spoke of has been manifested, The question of the existence of brethren as a testimony depends upon their recovery from this. If they do not, they will be at Bochim; but there, Gilgal and blessing were over. I trust the Lord will maintain His testimony. I think the question a most solemn one. ——takes the ground of Hebrews 12:27, that brethren are to be removed as things that can be shaken, he and a few more being taken up afresh as a fresh testimony before the Lord comes. Now this being done as I affirm it to have been done, is an immensely vital point. If it has that character, it is not of God. It is no personal question. It is a question if, as he affirms, brethren are to be set aside or to remain a testimony for God. He has acted, as privately led of God, to set them aside. Half the brethren, I dare say much more, do not know what is involved. But God has wrought to judge the overt act. It now remains to see if brethren answer to His mercy, in drawing closer to Him…

I do not expect the mass of brethren to see the issues involved, but I look to God to work by His Spirit to preserve for Christ's glory a testimony to Himself, in awakening the consciences of brethren, and drawing them in heart and ways out of the world, so that He may use them as vessels of His testimony.

Your affectionate brother in Christ.

October 1st.

* * * * *

Dear Mrs. ——,—They confound the whole of the truth in Ephesians. It is the act of God who took Christ, and set Him at His right hand, and us by the same power, setting us in Him, making us sit together in heavenly places in Him. Canaan under Joshua is warfare, and in this sense experience—warfare carried on by us in grace, as led by Christ in Spirit: and confounding these two things is one of the great mischiefs. But the use of the rest of the images is also false. The Red Sea is, I doubt not, an image of Christ's death and resurrection for us: but it is so as bringing us completely to God, not experience at all, but redemption, dying, and rising again: the wilderness and Canaan are experience. Thus "Thou hast led forth the people whom thou hast redeemed. Thou hast guided them by thy strength to thy holy habitation." They were not in Canaan as an inheritance, but "Ye have seen … how I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself." It is God's work bringing them to Himself, complete—not experimental, as of journeying or conflict experiences. It is all wrong confounding these. Even to Sinai, where originally they were to worship, all is simple grace.

There they enter on the process of experimental knowledge of themselves.

The wilderness is no necessary thing nor part of God's purpose, nor mentioned when coming out of Egypt. (Exo. 3, 6, and 15) The thief on the cross never went through any wilderness, nor any Joshua (Canaan): redemption put him straight into Paradise. The "Ifs" of scripture are all connected with the journey and conflict, and met by the sure promise of God, because we and (so to speak) God, for faith, are both tested there. I admit fully there is a deliverance by dying with Christ to sin, in Romans, and to the world, in Colossians. But the wilderness, and Canaan as in Joshua, are not sitting in heavenly places, but man tested in his journey in this world, and conflict in heavenly places with spiritual wickedness. Now, for this last we have to be dead with Christ. Hence, Joshua is "every place that the sole of your feet shall tread upon;" it is active taking possession as the Lord's host, not sitting in heavenly places: in Ephesians we wrestle against spiritual wickedness in heavenly places, but having done all to stand. It is confounding the responsible man with the redeemed man. Redemption is always absolute and perfect: the responsible man, whether past Jordan or not, tested. I may war as in the flesh and be captive to sin, and set free and in the Spirit obtain the victory or stand fast. As to culpability and redemption, Egypt is the flesh even when started on the road. The wilderness is a usual but not necessary part of God's ways— what the world becomes to those who are redeemed, or stand on that ground, and individually tested if they get to the end, viewed not as in heavenly places, but through redemption on a journey there; for scripture does so

consider us: so in Philippians, so in Hebrews, though otherwise very different. Joshua—Canaan—is another thing; being God's host, we are realising what belongs to those who are risen with Christ.

I may look at redemption as complete in Christ, and then in Christ I am brought to God: I may look at it as the beginning of exercise fof myself, tribulation working experience, and find a Joshua and Caleb place through God's faithfulness; or I may be fighting God's battles as the Lord's host; but neither are sitting in heavenly places. I may have eaten the grapes of Eshcol in the wilderness, and fail before Ai in Canaan: but redemption is perfect, and sitting in heavenly places in Christ —one the absolute power, the other the blessed effect, of God's work. I have no going to Gilgal, constantly there, to renew the moral condition before God which even victory endangers.

Be assured these people never know themselves. There is an anecdote of John Newton: when a person wrote to him he was in his C of Cardiphonia (a work I quite forget), he replied that he had forgotten one trait of C, that he never knew himself to be there… We must not confound righteousness with experience, though complete judgment of self ministers to the knowledge of divine righteousness.

I have had a good journey through the Cevennes, and a good deal to encourage, though the world creeps in.

Montpellier, October 4th.

* * * * *

To the same.]

* * * I agree that we are sitting in heavenly places, in not with Christ; but I do not know in speaking of its being by faith, by which of course it is known, if you have allowed quite enough for union with Christ by the Holy Ghost. Again there are things which we enjoy by experience which are not acquired by experience: every sealed believer is in Christ before God, and his place is to know it (John 14); but there are those who do not, through imperfect teaching. Hence, to the Corinthians he writes as to carnal (not natural) not as to spiritual. “We speak wisdom among them that are perfect”—perfect meaning simply grown men in Christ. So Philippians: “Let us therefore as many as be perfect.” We take the place by faith (beyond Jordan), but when taken we realise being in it by the Holy Ghost; and this is experience. It is not based on experience or progress in it. We are in it if in Christ. I reckon myself dead. But the wilderness is as much the fruit of redemption as Canaan.

It is quite false to make it a matter of progressive experience, as at the end of the desert: it is our identification with Christ’s death, and Jordan is identical in fact, though not in application, with the Bed Sea. But at the Red Sea it is a redemption wrought for me: in Jordan I died—not by experience, but I died; that is, it connects itself with our state, though we do not change that state by experience. But I experience that I have changed my position. This is not a play on words. A process of experience is not the operative cause; but I have been brought into a new experience which is the fruit of the change. It is important to see that it is no subject of progressive experience. Experience is that I cannot get it at all (Rom. 7)—no good to be got in me, nor a new position out of me, by any process. I then

learn by simple faith, as taught of God, that He has condemned sin in the flesh, which I find in me, in the cross of Christ. (Rom. 8:3.) This is simple faith and divine teaching; the effect is I am free according to verse 2, and take the ground of chapter 6. Ephesians 2 is quite another thing; there is no experience at all, but a new creation, if there, dead in sin. The new creation has nothing to do with dying, but we are viewed as dead in sin.

I do not know if you have seen what I have taught, that the wilderness is no part of the counsels of God but of His ways; and that the Red Sea and Jordan coalesce, only at Jordan they go up into the land. Further, in its full character the Red Sea closes all: they are brought to God, to His holy habitation, but not to the result of His plans as to us. The thief had no wilderness. All that experience learns is that I must have a deliverer; and then I learn that it is all done on the cross. The realisation of this (2 Cor. 4) by the Holy Ghost is another thing; but then it is reckoning myself dead—always carrying about the dying. It is important to see that Ephesians is on a totally different footing: and when on the ground of reckoning ourselves dead, there is an always carrying about the dying.

As to relationships, it is all nonsense: I may be called out, as Christ Himself was but, save that calling, He was subject to, and afterwards lovingly owned, His mother. If a person is not called out, or giving up all for Christ, there is no question that these relationships are clear duties, and so treated everywhere in the New Testament. If they come into competition with Christ, everything gives way to Him.

* * * * *

To the same.]

* * * As regards your estimate of my thoughts on our reckoning ourselves dead—it requires a practical consciousness that we have no force to arrive at it; and there it is so many fail, often mistaking the joy of forgiveness for true deliverance. In Germany there has been much of this, and indeed a good deal everywhere. Practically there must be a single eye upward, or we do not discover our want of force.

As to disowning such relationships it requires the word. It may come to a question between Christ and these ties, and then everything must give way. We belong to the other world as risen with Christ, not to this; but as belonging to it, the acknowledgment of what God has established is part of our christian life. Is a wife to disown her husband, or children their parents? There is at bottom a great deal of self-licence in all this. It is monstrous. Where that is disowned which God has established, self, not Christ, has the first place in people's hearts. If the unbeliever disowns it it is another thing. If he breaks the tie, there is liberty; or if he requires what is contrary to Christ, for he receives his authority from Him, and cannot use it against the direct authority of Christ. We cannot feel too strongly that we belong to another world, not to this; but that is not the question, but the path of those who do belong to it according to the word.

I have written because the idea of not owning the relationships is monstrous. You will find it a difficult task, because I greatly dread any diminution of the feeling that we are dead and risen with Christ, or of

having our conversation in heaven. But so false a use of this, which I feel more strongly every day, is just what would tend to alarm upright souls as to the truth.

Yours truly in the Lord.

Was Christ wrong when, after refusing all connection with His mother when engaged in His service, which was of course and in every sense outside such relations —when His hour was come, in a positive and demonstrative way, He gave testimony to the relationship and acted so touchingly in it? It is remarkable it should be introduced.

There is a loosing from the power of our surroundings (as the Americans say), and sometimes from the surroundings themselves, as called away by the Lord, or as driven out by themselves. The absence of natural affections is an evil sign of the last days; but we have to live in natural ties as those who are not in them, to act from Christ in them. What God established of natural relationships He always owns, carefully so; but a power has come in, which, as sin has ruined all, overrules or makes independent of them.

* * * * *

To the same]

* * * Miss —— seems to me to have mistaken the ground on which these matters rest. As to Christians she puts it on legal ground. If I am one, and have even a needless scruple, I must act on it, but that is not the true governing principle; but that another object has possessed it, and the other things die down, lose their hold as objects. It does not hinder enjoying what God has created; it may and will hinder my seeking it as an

object now all is fallen. Christ had seen the beauty of lilies of the field, but who would think of His seeking to cultivate beautiful lilies? In such things the principle is to do all in His name. So an overwrought mind may rest in a changed scene, as He took His disciples into the wilderness to rest awhile. But Christ is to be all.

With unconverted children it is another thing, they have for themselves no such object: then health has to be considered in cheerful exercise, occupation of mind without overstraining, and so on. But where there is wise interest of parents in them, they can, while providing for this, lead children to find their enjoyment with themselves, in kindly care of the poor, and a thousand healthful enjoyments and occupations; and this I have seen done, and children grow up attached to home and family. And this scripture contemplates. For schools I can only speak of general principles. As a rule music is a very dangerous occupation: it cultivates sentiment without conscience: as a general character musicians are not a moral body. It may have to be taught or learned where worldly parents require it.

Yours truly in the Lord.

* * * * *

* * * I have little time to reply to your letter, which I was very glad to get. I feel ripening on towards Home, and more weaned from the outward activities of the work; but I trust my heart not less interested in it. I have just come from the Rhone and Cevennes district. In more than one place there are conversions, and a great number of Christians in the Haute Loire and Ardèche, and, though the world everywhere exercises too much influence, yet walking in peace, and as far as I know

blamelessly. Externally it has been a very trying year; the vineyards rooted up far and wide, and the silkworms a failure. But there is One who is a stay through all.

As regards England, it has been as you know a time of trial. The general state of brethren was really what God was judging. Partizans seek to keep up uneasiness… In Kent there was haste in those who sought to do right. This gave a handle, but has been the means of bringing out the party-feeling at work. God saw, I believe, that sifting and purifying was needed there. But for God, the want of principle would have been crushing, but with Him is always peace. And we have to ask, “Whither goest thou?” and trust Him. Even if the Messiah and Son of God (Psa. 2) was rejected, it was only to bring out the Son of man in the glory of the Father. God is never baffled. It has been a time of blessing for myself; and many consciences, I would say of all the godly, have been deeply awakened. There was a want of faith in some, but this was not surprising: there is in us at all [times]. We read, “My flesh and my heart faileth me: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for. ever.” It has made what is eternal more and more everything to me. It was cheering to see how upright souls soon saw all clear. And how precise God’s government is! We have only to lean on Him and all is right.

I rejoice in your work as in my own, though I sometimes envy evangelists a little; but we have to fill the little niche God has put us in faithfully, and we cannot do more.

Ever affectionately yours in the Lord.

Pan, 1879.

1 ‘The believer has died out of his old Adam standing in the death of Jesus, and has been quickened, raised up, and seated in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.’

2 [On the Addresses to the Seven Churches, Col. Writ., vol. v., p. 483.]

3 “Voice,” etc., Aug., 1879.

4 ‘Of one’ Heb. 2.

5 ‘Where does scripture teach that life is the source of spontaneity, not only the power of it?’

Letters Section 2

* * * * *

My dear Brother,—I am not unaware that a considerable party seek to keep up excitement. I do not think with quiet staid souls they do much except expose themselves: quiet service to Christ is what tells in the long run; it is all I think of doing. But God has acted. I do not expect to be clear of the incubus all at once. Had we more faith, we might see yet greater deliverance. I accept with thankfulness what God has done. A great deal of the talk that meets my ear has no effect upon me at all, at the utmost, tries me at the moment. What you are now feeling, when broken up as a system, weighed on my spirit, in all its collective force, beforehand. I do not see that haste has ever done any good in all this matter. I wait still on God: on what else should I? But I go on with my positive work with the best faith I have, and it is but poor; but feel the Spirit more than ever with me.

I am thankful you take courage to go on helping others. What I look for is to bring in Christ in power; the obstruction of unbelief will then, when people are not restored, wither. It is this, with patience, my soul thirsts after. I would I had more of both, still He is with me. Kent has shewn a deplorable state of things; still, haste brought the actual state of things about, under God’s overruling hand. This prolongs our need of patience; but He will guide in this as in all else. It is God’s actings, as far as I can, I look to; not, save for their own sakes, the state of individuals.

I do not doubt the state of those whose evil condition I spoke of, weighs down the comfort of those who seek to walk with God, but the question was then, Is the testimony given of God to be given up? It is more locally felt where opposed, but before it was doing its work unrestrained. It is now evil one meets with, too constantly, in gatherings; not a question if the testimony should exist. Our word is, “Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.”

I thought only to write a line, for I am very busy.

[1879.]

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* * * My resources are somewhat diminished … but it is all right: everything is right for faith, save, of course, sin itself. “In everything give thanks”; and if all comes from God it must be right. Even where we have made mistakes, wliat comes from Him is for good. I am not surprised at the working of evil. That evil I felt all along: my trust is God’s working. If He sees fit to preserve the testimony in the hands it is in. He will and He can. In such a state of things every one finds his level. There have been tendencies to haste, through upright separations. If God brings one about, all that are godly and solid will be there. There are a mass of God-fearing men who will be led right… The least self-confidence will go wrong. I am tried, but not uneasy. God, I still believe, is working for good. I have no doubt that both unbroken and ill-disposed persons labour to do—or in a way to do

—mischief; but there is One behind mightier than all that. Nor can I say I am afraid as to God's testimony. Whether 'the brethren' will have it depends on His good pleasure. I trust so with all my heart: but His testimony is more than those who bear it.… What saints—what we—have to do, is to rest quiet and let them go on, and help souls on with something better—feed them with Christ. I think this multiplying printed papers very undesirable…

I am writing on John, in French, when I have a minute, and again (having left oif) on Romans, in German; have been looking over and correcting the hymns, and have two papers coming out; but it is only at short moments I can do anything, but get as fast into heaven as I can. But I have never found the Lord and scripture what they are to me now.

Pau, 1879.

* * * * *

My beloved Brother,—I was very glad to hear from you, as I always am, and of the beloved brethren too. It is a comfort to think that God, in sovereign grace, will have His beloved redeemed perfected and in peace with Him. Our part here is faithfulness in walk, under His care and by His will on the way. You will desire to know something of England… All is not yet clear, but when God works we look for full result. And through it all I never was so happy within, and scripture and what is unseen more real and blessed than ever. I trust Australia will go on quietly and earnestly seeking the Lord and the good of souls for His glory. It is what I seek in England, to drop all this, and seek to minister Christ. It is what souls want, both for quietness, and forming them in His

image. It is those who are not with Him who are restless.

I have heard that brethren out in your world have been exercised about dear——'s teaching, that souls are not Christ's till they are sealed. Now I agree with him, the authority for it being Romans 8:9. The prodigal son shews what the force of it is; as converted and in the right road, he at best hoped to be treated as a mercenary, had not on the best robe which fitted him to go into the house, nor knew in any way his place as son. But we have to be guarded as to dealing with souls as to this, because they may cry, "Abba, Father" really, yet be kept down by the teaching they are under; and we must not quite confound the "perfect"—that is, those who know their new place in Christ—and one who being forgiven, and being sealed can cry, "Abba, Father," but does not yet know what he is brought into: he may be, like the Corinthians, carnil though a Christian. But I am very glad the question is before brethren. The fact of the Spirit being given besides a nun being born again by the Spirit, has been so lost sight of, that a Christian's place has been lost sight of with it. And God blesses this truth of the Spirit's presence now; He would have it before the saints. But the knowledge of the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free, is different from that into which He has brought us so as to say, "As he is so are we in this world." The latter is more John's doctrine than Paul's (Paul's more the liberty), though you may get the groundwork of it in Paul.

The Lord guide you, dear brother, about your marriage, if still in abeyance: it is ever good to wait on Him, and not be in a hurry, or let our own will work. "I waited

patiently for the Lord" is a word of Christ's Himself, and He cares for us and directs in everything.

[1879.]

* * * * *

Dear——,—I want to get this6 printed as a leaflet letter. It is with unfeigned trembling I have put it out, not as doubting its truth, and as to its contents, opportunely, but doing it in the way of addressing all.

Do not give in to the alarm and uneasiness some would create: many things God alone can settle, and there is an effort to give importance to discontent. God will keep in perfect peace those whose minds are stayed on Him. He is above all evil, and Christ has gone through everything, and has all power in heaven and on earth… The Lord governs, and will bring all about in His own way. The brethren everywhere, speaking generally, are in ten thousand times a better state than they were before the hubbub. There is more conscience, more fear of God… Seek the good, leave the evil to God, only keeping a good conscience. He says, "Be still and know that I am God." "I waited," says Christ in Spirit, "patiently for the Lord." And then there will be a new song in our mouths, and blessed is the man that maketh the Lord his trust.

Love to the saints.

Paw, October 13th.

* * * * *

* My beloved Brethren,—I never felt the same distrust of myself as I do now in writing this, and I desire to speak to my own conscience as to you. I should not write at all, but as taking the lowest place, always the best, and now

especially the only true and right one. He who is lowest and lowliest will be most blessed.

Let me say a word as to Bochim. Looked at merely as used for humiliation or sorrow where saints have failed, and voluntarily by grace place themselves to own it before God, I heartily enter into it, but taken as it is really in scripture, there was nothing of the kind at Bochim. The Lord declared in judgment that He would no longer drive out their enemies, and they wept when they heard the judgment. There was no sorrow for sin and failure, but for judgment, and they worshipped where they wept. Gilgal, that is circumcision, the removal of the reproach of Egypt, and the Lord's presence by His angel in it, was lost for ever. There was no voluntary confession and humiliation at all. It is all a mistake. They had not faithfully put out the evil that was amongst them, and the Lord, though interfering from time to time in compassion, left them judicially in this state. I refer to this because the word became a kind of watchword with many. But God has wrought a great deliverance for us, much greater than most of those spared are aware of: some have felt it. And what I desire now is, that our consciences may turn and see where we had so failed as to bring this sorrow upon us. I am not going to turn back and charge any one or refer to any recent circumstances, but to weigh, where conscience is awake, how we brought ourselves into the strait place we were in. I hesitated a moment whether I should say anything, before the details which remain were set in order by God, as I am assured His grace will do; but they do not affect my object.

Is it not true for every thoughtful conscience that the spirit of the world had invaded us? We do not go to

parties; if we meet, we meet to read the scriptures and edify one another. Discipline for any gross evil would be, I suppose, exercised with some measure of faithfulness where the evil was apparent: I make no exaggerated statement of evil: many, I doubt not, were walking christianly, I dare say better than myself. But as to the course of this world, had we not greatly fallen into its ways? not, as I have said, in open worldliness—but was not there that, current, and let pass, which grieved the Spirit of God, and hence weakened all spiritual energy, and spiritual discernment for discipline and for the Lord's mind in all our course—the loss of discerning things that are excellent "to be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ," "filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding … fruitful in every good work"? Have we been as purified to Himself for a peculiar people; not our own, bought with a price; as epistles of Christ known and read of all men; living by Him, and close to Him, and for Him; as is said, "Christ is all, and in all," so that whatsoever we should do should be done in the name of the Lord Jesus? Were our sole and constant motives Christ, or the common motives of the world? Were buying and selling, our houses, our clothing, ordered on principles which Christ, if there, would approve? Did we walk even as once we walked? Was there devoted service among the poor and needy, visiting the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and keeping ourselves unspotted from the world? We read, "Be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind." Were we yielding our bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God as an intelligent service, proving what was that good and acceptable and perfect will of God, as Christ offered Himself for us a dying sacrifice? Ah! what

place had He, has He in our hearts? Do we live to Him who died in love for us? If the testimony of God as to the truth was with brethren, was it the truth as it is in Jesus, the having put off the old man and put on the new man, which, after God, is created in righteousness and true holiness?

I had long dreaded: the Manchester meeting alarmed me. I was not there; but the discussion was whether we were Philadelphia, or who was Laodicea—and not at Manchester only. Brethren had got to think of themselves as a body of people, and to say the least, less of Christ and His body. Now God calls us, and that in love, to remember from whence we are fallen and repent and do the first works. He looks for consistency and devotedness. He always does, and I bless His name He does, but He does so call us now by special circumstances. Satan, long practically undermining as to devotedness and unworldliness, had made a deadly effort to set brethren aside in their testimony to the truth. God in His sovereign mercy has broken his effort. It has been His doing only. Now comes the positive side. Is that which gave him entrance, and a handle, removed, and the Lord truly honoured? If our consciences do not take notice of His ways, the next thing, though His patience is great and long, would be His judgment. Satan's efforts and power He can easily break, humbling us in the meantime; but His judgment who shall withstand? I ask myself, I ask you, how far can we say, "To me to live is Christ"? That is the grave question for us all now. I do not seek to discourage, quite the contrary. The Lord, in sovereign mercy, has not left us, though we have greatly failed. He has shewn Himself most graciously with us, when we might have expected

the contrary. How soon could the apostle say, “All seek their own, not the things of Jesus Christ”! He has shewn Himself full of mercy and grace: what I seek is that our hearts may turn to Him according to that grace.

I add, as the passage has been circulated, that Hebrews 12:27 has no possible application. There God Himself yet once more shakes and removes what can be shaken, that the things which cannot be shaken may remain. What man, when God shakes all things, can establish what cannot be shaken? One part of the passage does belong to us, to those to whom the warning of God’s shaking all things yet once was addressed, namely, “We therefore receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: for our God is a consuming fire.” Such is His government here, but with that we have boldness to enter into the holiest. May our thoughts be formed there: may we yet remember that He governs!

Your affectionate brother in Christ.

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* * * I never felt so thoroughly humbled as in writing the leaflet I sent. I have felt more than ever through all this business, what a solemn thing it is to have to do with God— never practically knew His faithful love so much, and the deep responsibility of acting for Him, and a most solemn thing it is. And then when I set about to write to all, as a kind of resuming word from Him at the issue of it all, I felt and feel now, in looking back at it, this responsibility as, I believe, I never did. And then all I have said and done has been so canvassed, that I had to see and not say a word that He did not mean me to say, and which I might not know how to justify afterwards, at

least before God. But if you feel you can do that, it gives great firmness and comfort of spirit with Him, not going beyond His will, and serving Him in it. Of course it is always what we have to do, but it is greatly put to the test sometimes. I have happily not a feeling of unkindness. Character comes out in these siftings, and there are things which morally offend you; but God is above all the evil. It is the essence of Christianity. He can be where, as to our own path, we cannot; but further, this ought to rule in us—"Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children; and walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us." And we must remember that His saints are precious to Him. This allows no evil in ourselves, nor acquiescence in it; but it should govern our ways towards others…

Patience with any human effort to maintain evil will prove its nothingness more than a restless feeling: it gives weight and gravity to the testimony, and it enlists God with us. It is the "God of peace" sanctifies: it is not acquiescing in evil; I would have—I have no tendency in that direction; but following God, not going before Him. Though often tried, I do trust Him fully.

I have looked through the old 'Poor of the Flock,' and corrected a great many hymns, perfectly astounded that so much short of all the light we had ever passed; but there was often piety, and I have put them in the form of truth where there was. I have already gone through the new one. I am now going to look through other hymn-books which I have, to see if there are any which could be added, and there are two or three of my own from which some verses perhaps may be taken, some of which you have not seen.

May the Lord keep you all in peace and patience! Rousing to devotedness I trust will follow: that God alone can do; but our hearts can be directed towards it, and that, I trust, they may be. There has been a good deal of awakening of conscience… I look much to rousing the saints to joyful devotedness, but, I repeat, that is God's gracious work. But after all, our business is to keep our hearts up in heaven, for our own joy and for the life of our souls, and to be able to serve Him on earth. God is above all this evil, and can keep our hearts above it. Not that there may not be exercises and fears; still He is there to sustain, and will in His own time—the best—bring us out of them. Meanwhile we have to stand fast, trusting in the Lord.

Pau, October 25th.

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[From the Italian.

Dear Brother,— Your letter has long lain under my eyes waiting to be answered, but all September I was occupied in visiting the assemblies in Haute Loire, etc., so that I was not able to write much. Here it is difficult to do all that I have on hand… It is very sweet to have confidence in Him. You need, dear brother, to have the same confidence with respect to Italy. God has wrought there; the work is a work of patience, but when I think of the state of things at Milan the first time I went there, the difference is great. The work is a difficult one: people educated by priests always remain for long years under this influence; I have known it in Ireland, but God's grace is sufficient; it suffices for everything. And then God has raised up labourers. You have cause to bless God for what He has done already; progress that

was too rapid would not be so solid… Be sure the work in Italy is of interest to brethren; but we must look to God that He may work. I feel increasingly, what we all know, that the work for God is the work of God.

I am greatly enjoying the word: its fulness and perfection are more than ever wonderful to me; but all that we learn in the word is bound up in Christ, and we receive it from Him, from this fulness.

Pau, October.

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* * * I hold most distinctly that the assembly must judge: “Put away from among yourselves that wicked person.” There are three concerned in the judgment: Christ’s glory, the purity of the assembly, and the guilty individual. The second makes it necessary they should act, or they are involved in the evil. “Ye have,” says the apostle, “approved yourselves to be clear in this matter.” This connects itself directly with Christ’s glory. But nothing is done as to the assembly, if it has not acted. I have, always objected to brethren going down to settle things for an assembly. A wise and godly brother may counsel from scripture and seek to arouse the conscience; but nothing is really done if the conscience of the assembly does not act. The word of scripture is, “Having in readiness to avenge all disobedience, when your obedience is fulfilled.” The power of God’s Spirit was to bring all that was under its influence to obedience to the ways of God. Then came vengeance on disobedience. You may not have an apostolic rod, but you have God’s sure government for Christ’s glory. Thus, supposing evident sin, as at Corinth, and one supported him in it and refused the clear common consent of all, so

that it was a rejection of the assembly's authority when the case and the word were clear, they might hold him guilty with the offender.

But if there were godly brethren who doubted about the facts, or the judgment of scripture on the fads—provided the Tightness of discipline in itself be recognised, so that it is not the principle of retaining known evil, or the denial of the competency of the assembly to judge evil—then I should say they should wait and look to the Lord to make them of one mind. Speaking of a 'dead-lock'7 is supposing only men are there, whereas Christ is. If the assembly be in a state incompetent to judge, it is for the assembly to humble itself, that through grace it may be able to know God's mind. There is One above it all able to bring about His thoughts, and he who has faith will find the sureness of His hand if He be really waited on. But nothing requires more waiting on Him than discipline, personal feelings are so apt to come in.

October 30th.

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My dear Brother,—I need not say how thankful I am that the Lord is working. He has been, in the States, and many meetings have gathered in many places. His own work and hand have been very evident, for which I greatly thank God. I should much like to see them all again, but it is very uncertain if I shall. In a little more than a fortnight I shall enter, if spared, my eightieth year, and it requires younger men (though my strength has been wonderfully preserved) to go much about in active work. May the Lord graciously raise up labourers in His harvest! My heart is only there when not with Christ in heaven—there where, through grace, it will

ever be. I find all that is not seen ever more, and alone, real—my affections sometimes dull, but the purpose of my heart ever there: I cannot conceive having the heart anywhere else. These troubles in England, or rather London, have awakened many consciences, and I believe have done a great deal of good. We were getting sleepy —nothing outwardly very bad, but Christ was not all as He had been, and that gave occasion to the enemy to come in. Save in giving one plain testimony, after great conflict of heart, before the Lord (by my occupation here, God kept me out of all discussions about it) I cast it on the Lord and did nothing, and when I returned to London did not go to any meetings about it till the last when all was closed. And I have learned of God's ways and trusting Him what I never did before. His faithfulness is very great, and how little we are! The great secret I find is patience, and its having its perfect work—not going before Him in His ways.

I believe there ought to be much more power than there is, and more being led of the Spirit; but that system (perfectionism) is all wrong, and ignorant of scripture too on the point. The want of spiritual power, so common, gives occasion to it. God is working everywhere. In Sweden, Norway, Germany, there is considerable work going on, and there is considerable subject for thankfulness even in Spain, and manifestly the Lord's work.

I am again for a little while at Pau, to revise our translation. I have withal held meetings in the country, and been comforted. I count on the gracious Lord to keep and bless you always. One cannot do an instant without Him, and oh how blessed it is to trust Him! I feel all our work ought to be directly the immediate

expression of God’s mind, and it is a very solemn thing to work (and wait) directly from Him. What a thing to say in this world! The Lord keep you and be with you.

Pau, November 1st.

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My dear Brother,—I do not think you see the bearing of ——’s act. It was not that he broke bread with you or any other isolated Christian. That, and I said so and was reproached with it, might pass. One might desire confidence and fellowship in such actings, but if done in the unity of the Spirit there was no wrong in it. But at Ryde there was a meeting, owned right or wrong by the other gatherings in the island and elsewhere, and he went down, while saying in London that it was only to follow what he considered a movement of God, declaring to others that he went also to give a testimony against the gathering that was there—in fact, setting up something apart from it. This entirely altered the character of the act. As to the unity of the body, I feel no difficulty as to scripture or the position of brethren. As to the danger of slipping into sectarianism, that is, making ourselves a body apart, I recognise it fully; but it has through mercy received a rude shock. The printed list of meetings tended to it, for evil slips in unintentionally, and for this reason I never would have anything to say to it, though very convenient, and done with this view. M.’s book,8 which I never heard of till three days ago, strange to say, had from what I hear of it (I have never seen it) the same tendency; but human nature is always disposed to say ‘we’ if it cannot say ‘I’: “He followeth not with us”: while in separation from the

camp, I am as decided as possible. But I never in my life asked any one to come among brethren.

But the principle of scripture is as plain as possible. There was one body on earth, of which all are members. They do not heal in heaven, nor preach, nor use any of the gifts spoken of in 1 Corinthians 12:“If one member suffer, all the members suffer with it:” that is not in heaven. The body will be perfected in heaven (Eph. 1:23), but is practically always considered as on earth, and formed there: “by one Spirit are we all baptised into one body.” And this was clearly down here. (Acts 2) The Lord’s supper is the external sign of this unity: “one body for we are all partakers of that one loaf.” It was this, more than fifty years ago, brought me out of the establishment: nor have I any other principle now. This obliged me to own every one baptised with the Holy Ghost as a member of the body. Only in the last days we are called on to distinguish those who “call on the name of the Lord out of a pure heart” which at the first was not called for: “the Lord added daily.” This makes the brethren (so-called) not the church of God, but those who alone meet on the principle of its unity. The line between narrowness and fidelity is a very narrow one. But the Spirit of Christ can guide and keep us on it. The unity of the body cannot be touched, for the Holy Ghost unites to Christ: all those who have been baptised by the Holy Ghost (that is, received Him) are members of the body. It is “the unity of the Spirit” we have to keep; that is, to walk in that power of the Spirit which keeps us in unity on the earth, and that needs endeavouring. I dread a gathering in any place being called the church of God. They are the only assembly that meets on scriptural

principles: did I not think so I should not go there, but it tends to narrow and sectarianise them.

All this seems to me very simple, but it is not so easy to keep the spirits of all here to it, both in fidelity and love, for we are poor creatures. I know those who tend too much to looseness, others too much to narrowness. The Spirit of God alone can lead us in both, and that requires us to walk near Christ. But as to principles I have no difficulty; but without holiness and Christ being all, being emptied of self, we shall not practically succeed. God is light and love, but He alone can unite both and thus give a true and right unity.

November, 1879.

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My dear Brother,—I thank God with all my heart for the blessing He has granted you. … It would seem that God is testifying that He does not give brethren up, at least, that He encourages them to count on Him, and go on; for in France, Switzerland, and elsewhere, there seems a reviving. I have asked myself if it is that He owns what little effort at fidelity there has been. At any rate, He is encouraging those who look to Him… As to leaflets, it is at present the fashion, and it seems to me a very bad one. I quite agree with—— that the assembly must act; but I accept neither unanimity, majority, nor minority. Abstract principles do not settle any practical cases. “Put away from among yourselves that wicked person” is clear and decided. Who is a wicked person? —— says we must be guided by the Lord. But who is to decide if we are? All these things seem to me rather labour lost. They go, without despising any, out of my head, with all I

have to do, about as fast as they go into it. We want quiet godliness, and, above all, lowliness.

I have been very happy in the Lord, and find the word more rich to my soul than ever, and, I think, heaven more near. But all out thoughts are poor things, but not the Object of them. I feel, too, the direct action of God by the Spirit more than ever.

Pau, November 17th.

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Dearest Brother,—Eternal life in full is conformity to Christ in glory, according to the purpose of God. As life we receive it now: they did even when He was here, though, till the Holy Ghost came, they little knew what they had received. That He did quicken them, see John 5:25: but when the Holy Ghost came, Christ in glory—the pattern of this life in glory— was revealed, and attached itself, so to speak, to the life which existed in the saints, and thus became the hope and formative power of the life of Christ in the saints here, and so their spring of joy. John always unfolds life as in this subjective state in us; but, beholding the glory of the Lord unveiled, we are changed into the same image from glory to glory. So Christ has sanctified Himself that we might be sanctified through the truth. Thus Paul who ever, as his general theme, presents us to God justified and glorified, never really speaks of the present eternal life of the Christian (the nearest to it is Romans 5 and vi.; now, one is given in the well of water springing up into eternal life—the glorious state, that into which it springs up— and is fife in the power of the Spirit, recognising this at least on the way to the glorious result in the mind of God) save at the end of his course

[chap. 6:22], which is generally taken as the close of this life: there is not much difference. The other is a mere image of its present operation.

As to your second question: I have never doubted (since studying it) that the departure from first love involved, in. the general history, the final rejection of the professing church. The evil was greatly aggravated, but repentance and return continues for three churches: and in Thyatira space had been given to repent, and judgment, and the Morning Star and the kingdom take the place of the church. The rest are, as Protestantism, beyond as to the basis church structure; and all from Thyatira to the end of Philadelphia refer to the Lord's coming. There are always (Isaiah 5, 6) these two grounds of judgment: what God first made us, and—Can we meet the Lord? departure in Adam, and Christ coming. So that, as to Ephesus, I agree with you.

As to revision, a very large part is done, but not all, and what is has been sent to another Hebraist for Hebrew and French. That may delay. But I wait for my work to be closed which is very near, and one or two things relating to—and if it lingers too long, I may very probably return before all is closed, even if I had to return here.

J. G. D. seems failing, dear man; happy for him, but a real loss there. The uncommon kindness of his character was sometimes a snare to him, but he was upright, and God delivered him; and his piety, grace, and devotedness were beyond many —I might say, most—and God used him very much out there. If we trust God, we shall see God's end of things. And, blessed be His name! all is just

as He would have them; and we are but on a journey. Still God ought to be glorified here.

Pau, November 19th.

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[From the Italian.

Dear Brother,—Being very busy, I have not been anxious to answer your letter, inasmuch as the urgent matter was done already; but I was always thinking of writing you a few lines… Just now my days pass one after another without any difference, always occupied in the revision of our French translation, only the word of God is always new, and His love always more precious. I continually find something new in the word which nourishes the soul and reveals to it the love of God, and His ways.

It is by the Word that we live in this passing world, and it clearly reveals to us the things that are not passing, the heavenly things. “We have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.” It is a great truth, a great fact, that the Spirit has been given to us; not only that we are born of the Spirit, but that believing in the efficacy of the blood of Christ, we are sealed with the Holy Spirit: by Him we cry, “Abba, Father”; by Him “the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts”; by Him we know that we are in Christ and that Christ is in us The work of Christ is the foundation, but the presence of the Holy Ghost is the power of enjoyment. He gives the consciousness that we are children, and heirs, and He is the earnest of our inheritance until the possession of that which Christ has won for us; He causes us to wait for Christ. Once

redemption as a personal matter is known, there are the two great truths presented by the word; we have been converted “to wait for his Son from heaven” (1 Thess. 1); and where the Spirit is there is liberty; when He is not grieved, there is communion with the Father, and with His Son, Jesus Christ. May our Father keep us in His holy name from thus grieving Him; and may we enjoy His blessed countenance!

I am delighted, dear brother, to see that God is evidently working in Italy; He is indeed working everywhere in these last days, but in Italy the work went on slowly… but it seems as if the Spirit was working more at present. I do not want to go faster than what would be solid work; but it is happy when He encourages us, and shews us fruit. We must follow God, and not run before Him; and how great was the Lord’s patience!

Pau, November 20th.

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Dearest Brother,—As the list of meetings has come up and dear——shewed me what you said, I write a line. It is quite true what you heard: I never liked it. It was the principle; and the gravest things often come from very small ones when a principle is in it. But I never wished to make any fuss or bother about it. It is of course very convenient. Still such motives as that lead to many things. My objection was, that it was making a list—numbering the people—and of brethren a distinct sect; as Congregationalists or Baptists might count their churches. This was my grand difficulty, but there has been another. The names put in, by whom I know not, though I have no distrust of the care taken, yet by the fact itself (and this your letter confirms) [confers] a kind

of position as elders. Now this may lead, not to the influence of those who are pillars, which I find in scripture, but soon to a recognised place. I knew the case where there were three, and the order being changed, the one who lost the first place was greatly grieved about it.

Again I wrote to —— about a very bad tract. This man's name was in the book: he had been excommunicated a year before. These were the things which made the difficulty: the inconvenience remedied by it, faith and earnestness of purpose would overcome… At first it was much abused—not I daresay now. But the principle is my difficulty. But as I did hitherto, so I leave it now—only write a line to you to explain my thoughts. No change in the form would affect my difficulty as you can see, and I have no distrust as to the care it is done with.

Your affectionate brother in Christ.

Pau, November 26th, 1879.

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* * * The paper on the "Bride" in the "Voice"9 is evidently put in to re-assure those who thought the corporate relationships of Christians in danger of being set aside; so that with its purport I can have no quarrel, as assuredly I have not with its author. But my objection to what I have read is wider and deeper, and I allude to it now only for common profit in reading scripture, making no suppositions which many have made. My objection to what I have read is this: generalisations as to divine teaching in scripture, drawn from slight expressions without any adequate examination of the word, and consequently, when sifted, found sometimes

very imperfect and misleading, sometimes wholly false. To this I confine myself here.

We are told that Peter does not name the assembly, nor John the body; Paul does not name the bride. If the name were all, a concordance would suffice to judge of it. But it is not all. The article continues, ‘These omissions are characteristic of the writings of each;’ so that whatever collateral help we may find in them, this characterises, and so far gives the scope of the Holy Ghost in these inspired writings. Let us examine the facts. Peter does not name the assembly. But Jude does not, nor James, nor John. The last two speak of a local assembly, with which we have nothing to do here. Not even in the Apocalypse does John speak of the assembly as such; on the contrary, carefully avoids it, so that its absence is certainly not characteristic of Peter. That a special dispensation of the mystery was committed to Paul, he states himself, and that has been the subject of teaching about fifty years. But so little is the omission of the assembly characteristic of Peter, that he alone, of all besides Paul, does speak of it in a special, but very interesting aspect. (See 1 Peter 2:4, 5.) The saints are built up a spiritual house.

But the grand point is that we get the bride in John. The bride aspect, the affections of the heart for Christ, is to be found there only; Paul does not name it, and this is ‘characteristic of each.’ I read through John’s gospel—not a trace or a hint of it, not a thought of anything corporate place, my answer is, The passage, where what of John, turn to them: total and confounding silence! The truth is, that John is exclusively and carefully individual in all his teaching. This is what, in this respect, unequivocally characterises him. But I forget ‘Mary

Magdalene, as it were, telling the brethren in the corporate place of blessing'; but this is another example of this misleading carelessness. There is nothing of bridal relationship, nothing corporate. If in this obscure phrase with no tail to it, it be said it is we who are in the corporate place, my answer is, The passage, where what was told is given, leads away from everything else to our wondrous relationship along with the blessed Saviour to His Father and God. Relationship with the glorified Man brings in the body and bride. (See Eph. 1 and 4) This [John 20:17] refers to individuals and the place of sons. The whole ground is wholly wrong. In John's teaching what is said to characterise it, is not found at all.

I shall be referred, of course, to the Apocalypse. There I find myself on altogether other and lower ground, however glorious. It is the Lord God Almighty and a throne. If the churches be referred to, Christ is a judge, not a Bridegroom. There is neither body nor bride. In the properly prophetic part we have the divine judgment of the world, we are going to reign over the earth. But it will be said, the bride, the Lamb's wife, is shewn to us. It is; but in what way? Affections for a bridegroom? Not a trace of them. It is a great city. The throne of God and the Lamb are in it. It is a matter of glory and government. The bride has this place, but the place of the bride with Christ as such is not hinted at. There is one word which speaks of it when the contents of the book are closed,10 "The Spirit and the bride say, Come." Here the relationship is alluded to, but assumed, and if I am to know what or who the bride is, I must look outside John, unless I make it a great city and government, for he, in all his teaching, never says one word about it. And where shall I find it? In poor, cold Paul! There, using the

image of the wife, I find the ways of the Lord in love in gaining, preparing, and presenting to Himself the heavenly spouse according to the love He bears it. And if I would learn the other side, what we ought to be in this character, I turn to 2 Corinthians 11, “I am jealous over you with godly jealousy; for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin unto Christ.”

I do not know what is meant by ‘naming,’ but when I examine scripture, I find every one of the statements of the article baseless, wholly baseless, as to the alleged characterising facts. Paul is the only one who really teaches anything of that, the omission of which, we are told, characterises him. And in John’s teaching, not one word is found of that which we are taught to look for in him. Paul is sober on such topics, and would have others not be led away from the simplicity that is in Christ. I entirely disagree, as to the fact, with what is said of the Reformers,11 but my object is not controversy nor teaching. I would only add, that, pretending to be Philadelphia is quite another thing from being Philadelphia, and tends directly to Laodiceanism of heart. May the saints be kept in the simplicity that is in Christ. Assuredly I can have no wish to weaken true devotedness to Christ, Christ being all, which only is life; but I have not found this the effect of this teaching, but rather filling people with the thoughts of themselves and the wonderful new things they had got—not a self-judging knowledge of Christ Himself. Nor do I a moment question that John has a peculiar place and character in the teaching of the Holy Ghost, specially in the revelation of the Father, and, through Him, immediate relationship with Him. But then only notice, that in the

summing up and guarding of the system found in the article I comment on, what is true is old, and what is new is wrong.

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My dear Brother,—It is high time I should be answering your letter, but if you knew how I have been occupied, and how many I have to write which are obligatory, you would not be surprised at it.

The Lord is as faithful and as mighty to save now as ever, indeed I have found Him more so, that is, had experience of it. It makes me tremble in looking back at what was at work in London, but in waiting on the Lord there is a strength that nothing can resist, and a hand that can move everything, and a wisdom that can guide it, ahd—shall we not say?—alone that does—I must. But all was the Lord’s doing, not that there were none upright and faithful, for there were those with whom my heart went; but some were apt to be in a hurry, and others disheartened. Even those who sought to act aright saw only the details and surface. I saw the evil, and was greatly exercised as to leaving those called brethren altogether, but felt it was the testimony of God, and could not, and then had to take the thing up in earnest, but only to cast it on the Lord. That day only will declare what had to be gone through. Details have still to be dealt with, but the brethren are at peace, and there is good in London, and souls added. Thank God my soul realised the faithful love of the Lord, and my heavenly portion, as it never did, so that this was only a place of work. But I do not expect my spirit, in the human sense, ever to return to its former state. One has now to seek to get the spirit of brethren out of it all, and

encourage mutual confidence. For myself, always alone, I am more totally alone than ever before; but I feel the Lord's faithfulness as I never did. What matter, then, where one is as to circumstances?

Kindest love to the brethren in Chicago, if you are there. I am in my eightieth year, and I shall hardly see them all again now, but my heart is as fresh in its affection to them all as ever. There is that which never ends. I have been interested lately in the thought, how the heavenly divine holiness of glory is the only one—the same now. One has only to draw the veil, and it is there in perfectness, here under a veil. See 1 Thessalonians 3:12, 13; as many others. This sets us practically, wonderfully in heaven though, in a poor earthen vessel. The Lord keep you, dear brother, near Himself, in all lowliness of spirit, but cheerful confidence!

Pau, December.

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My dear Brother,— … As a principle I object to brethren settling things for an assembly, because they have ministerial gift, and was thus rather indisposed, as to this, towards the action of——, and I am far too little acquainted with the facts to form any judgment, even for myself, in the case. They assured me that it was a case of manifest evil and unrighteousness towards this sister (I forget the words used), and that some were beginning to see it, and had (I know nothing as to number) returned to the Table they had left, so that the case was getting really quite clear. I have a considerable jealousy of individual, practically clerical, influence, though such may of course help an assembly; the conscience of an assembly ought to be exercised and purged: merely

judicially putting away is no use without this; there is no purging of themselves without this. It is always well to hear both sides: many questions may arise… These two brethren represent it as a very bad and flagrant case of party and unrighteousness. I am habitually slow to form any judgment. But they seemed to think the case was settling itself. This is not the only case in England, and there are cases where God alone can bring all to a righteous standing, and in such we can only leave it to Him, and act where a positive claim on us arises, and then we can count on Him: for abstract judgment we cannot in the same way. But the question would at once arise, Are things in the same state as they were? I am ignorant of the present, and, indeed, of the past facts of the case, and thus cannot judge with any real godly judgment.

Your affectionate brother in Christ.

Pau, December 13th, 1879.

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[From the French.

* * * I am at work from seven in the morning till eleven at night. Then I generally have many things which press heavily, within the range of my responsibility. But I commit them to Him who is mighty above all which this poor world can require, and to whom a burden is no burden at all. He guides everything, just as I, sitting in a carriage, might guide it; and orders everything according to the counsel of His will. It is well to journey thus, and the Lord is faithful in making everything contribute to the blessing of those who love Him.

I have been much enjoying the thought that the whole life, holiness, condition of soul down here, is but the making good of what we possess up there. It is always Christ, and “before the Father.” (See 1 Thess. 3:12, 13.) This indeed sets us there in Him (and He in us); save that we have the treasure in an earthen vessel, and we increase “to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.” There are not two kinds of holiness. Christian holiness is the same which we shall have before our God and Father, when we shall come again with Christ. But although the thing is realised with God, it must be bound up with brotherly fellowship, because love, too, is in the nature of God. Separation from evil is realised by dwelling in Him. and this is shewn in love to one another.

Pan, December 18th.

* * * * *

My dear Brother,—I have no doubt at all of the resurrection of the Old Testament saints. The answer of the Lord (Matt. 22; Luke 20), as well as other passages make it as clear as possible, as well as those you quote. But it is one of the characteristics of New Testament teaching, that it is teaching people, dealing with people, not with abstract doctrine or theology. Hence the teaching of the resurrection is the resurrection of those concerned in the teaching. Thus the apostle has in his mind those he was writing to: 1 Corinthians 15:18, 22, 23, refer to Christians: verse 21 is more abstract—resurrection of dead came by man. 1 Thessalonians 4:14 clearly applies to Christians, verse 16 also. Revelation 14:13 can refer to the saints which compose the church, but may to those slain afterwards also. Resurrection is

always individual. There shall be a “resurrection of the just.” That takes in all, but in the body of the passages the apostle is thinking of those he was writing to; and life and incorruptibility were brought to light by the gospel. Daniel 7 gives us the slain saints under the beast as heavenly saints. 1 Thessalonians 3:13 embraces all, I cannot doubt. But I have no doubt the apostle had specially in his mind those he was writing to. Such, as far as I see, is the mind of God in these passages. But Christ repeatedly speaks of saints in general.

Bordeaux, December 21th.

Dear Miss——,—I suppose I must have perceived that this objection could be raised, for in the fourth edition, 12 which I got to look at it, I have, ‘All this (1 Thess. 4:14-16) is a matter which belongs exclusively to the saints—to those who, sleeping or waking, are Christ’s, and who will be, from that moment, for ever with the Lord.’ The truth is, the mind is justly occupied with what concerns the church; and so I find in the New Testament many passages refer directly to the christian saints who form the church, because they were there and then before the writer’s or Holy Spirit’s mind, which yet from other places we may know to be true of Old Testament saints. Here the word ‘exclusively’ meant to the exclusion of the wicked dead. I do not doubt the Old Testament saints will arise, though in many a passage they are not at all brought before the mind; because the Spirit was founding and encouraging the hopes of Christians then tried, perhaps persecuted, not meaning to deny that Old Testament saints would be in the kingdom. The word ‘exclusively’ does not apply here to the Old Testament saints, but to the world; but the mass of passages in the New Testament apply in fact only to

the church. Other passages say we shall sit with Abraham and Isaac in the kingdom, and the Lord teaches clearly their resurrection. That which the Old Testament saints do not form is the body and the bride.

Ever yours truly in the Lord.

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My dear Brother,—.Your letter has lain some days on my table, but I am constantly hard at work, from seven in the morning to eleven at night, and hard head work. The epistle you refer to, you must remember, was written to one who wielded derivatively the authority of the apostle, as his trusted and intimate companion. Still the directions given, when applying to general responsibility, apply now as ever. But you cannot have authority without really possessing it, nor did I ever see the case of discipline which could be decided otherwise than in actually deciding it. Where it is a wicked person clearly, the case is pretty clear; but even then the question comes in, Is he really such? and the state and competency comes in. This was really the case with you, and in this condition of weakness, your yielding, God turned into blessing. If one such as Timothy rebuked, according to the apostle's order, he would carry the conscience of all the sound part of the assembly with him. But rebuke before all is different from rebuking one who is not there, nor has it the effect in the same degree of making others fear. But if the assembly, or those who watch over it and carry the mind of the assembly with them, are agreed that it is not wickedness calling for excision, but cannot be passed over, I see nothing to hinder a person's being rebuked publicly. It was done at —— in a case where a man was overtaken in a fault

which none would have known had he not voluntarily told of himself, and there was no question of his godliness or state of mind; but the world had more or less known it. And that is now forty years ago, I suppose, and I believe it has been done in several instances. But it requires the existence of moral authority to do it, and must now flow with the conscience of the assembly. If it is a case of putting away, and the assembly cannot decide—and it is an act of the assembly, "put out from among yourselves"—they must wait on the Lord to have spiritual unity of judgment; I do not say numerical unanimity. And even for an apostle it was so delicate a thing, that he regretted having written an inspired epistle, and one which had produced the desired effect really, and was deeply troubled and exercised. It is as to this he speaks of being not ignorant of Satan's devices. … In all these cases I look to the conscience of the assembly being exercised, that the weight of the assembly go with the act if anything short of excision; if it amount to that it is the assembly's act, the assembly purges itself. A rebuke never had that character, it was preventive to others, and a rod to the offender…

Pau, January, 1880.

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[From the German.

Beloved Brother,—My hearty thanks for your affectionate letter. I have said nothing about this history of the brethren, because I was afraid such a letter might somehow have theappearance of counterpoise to brother —— and I believe it better to write to him direct. I knew that the history was being translated and issued. I always dread whatever would represent the brethren

as a sectarian body. But each is free, and I have not occupied myself with it… But when people would say that the brethren were Philadelphia, and this was circulated amongst many, I was really anxious about it. May God give us to assume this character practically! But to apply this to ourselves is another thing, and at a time when the brethren in London were in confusion, was something certainly deplorable. It appeared even to some godly brethren, that with such a pretension, God must withhold His blessing from the brethren, and this feeling has been vented amongst brethren in the communications from abroad. I had before I came back from America observed this presumption in very dear brethren also, to whom I was closely attached, and it has given me great pain. I bethought me of the word of Zephaniah to Israel: "I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of Jehovah." "Thou shalt no more be haughty because of my holy mountain." God has been full of goodness towards us, He has humbled, but spared us; and in London they are quiet, and God adds to them precious souls, although some would disquiet them. But God is there, and keeps them in peace: and I believe that these events have been full of blessing to the brethren, and that in England, and Ireland also where there was merely care of heart through brotherly feeling. I have never been in circumstances to call for so great thankfulness as in this test of God. He is ever, we know, faithful: I have proved it here. There are some slight remnants of the results in Kent: but God has put forth His gracious hand likewise, and many have reaped abundant fruit; and what remains to be done God will do, I doubt not. I thank you also for all the details you have communicated to me… It will be on my heart—to

say nothing of the welfare of the dear Saviour's redeemed ones, and especially of the German brethren, many of whom I have known personally, and heartily loved. I am in my eightieth year, and that brings eternity near: there we have the Father's love, Christ, and His own people. It is, in fact, quite near for me. The word which is eternal is more precious than ever: I have nothing but daily, present blessing. I have suffered much with respect to this confusion in London; yet there was an inner life, and the presence of God is more appreciable than ever. I can no more climb mountains on foot, but my heart is just as much with the brethren before God, nay more than ever. Heartily do I thank you for the news you have sent me. Greet them heartily for me. May God preserve us in a deep, true feeling of our nothingness in England, in Germany, and everywhere, and all will go well.

Your attached brother.

1880.

* * * * *

My dear Brother,—I hold it of all importance to maintain intact the discipline of God's house, as to not eating with those under discipline. I got a dreadful scolding from one for acting on it. Nor do I in the least blame ——. It is very well that the son should feel that the father did not feel lightly his son's getting put out. I should not eat with him, and if he ate at the same table, I should not enter into conversation with him, and if—— did, I should not like to be at the table. If the lad's spirit be at all subdued, and there was fear of alienating him by harshness, I might have him eat at the table, telling him that I could not have free intercourse with him. But as

he was necessarily in the house I should not refuse letting him eat at the same table. But I could not keep company with him till he was humbled. This would not hinder anxious love as regards him, and the assurance of it; but familiarity and company at table, as if nothing had happened, I should not accept. I give my son his dinner if needed, I shew him my heart yearns over him, but I could not be familiar and at ease with him. I should not eat with him, if even I ate at the same time. Something would depend on the age of the son, and how far he was under the father's authority. If young and under it, I must let him eat, and treat him as I would treat him as one under rebuke. If grown up and independent, I should be less disposed to do so.

[Date uncertain.]

* * * * *

My dear Brother,—I remember the same question13 arising in my mind, at least thirty years ago, when writing in French the tract "On Worship." There is one thing which may facilitate your inquiry. John's writings always refer to the individual. Chapter 4 shews that individual worship is recognised. But if this was in intentional separation from all saints, it would be another thing. Love to all the saints is a necessary ingredient in the heart's going up to God. But worship together has a distinct and peculiar character, because there is Christ's promise to be there. "In the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee." But I do not doubt that if I am alone I can worship God alone. Still scripture is full of joint worship, and so it will be in heaven.

But in an assembly I should think it an unhappy thing for one to set himself apart as superior to others. Our part

is to esteem others better than ourselves, and whereto we have already attained, to mind the same thing. If it is something that positively grieved the Spirit, it is another thing. I cannot in Spirit have communion with what is contrary to the Spirit. But while I admit a low estate of soul will be painful to a spiritually-minded person, yet in the case you put, the person has not learned to esteem others better than themselves. “Let each” it is said.

London, February 5th.

* * * * *

Dear ——,— … Very glad indeed to hear good accounts of Italy. I expected blessing. You were always a pessimist, but keeping aloof, looking to God, one is above the heaving and breakers, and walking on a rough sea is the same as walking on a smooth one.

There is as much danger from those who want to be extra, as from those who were at mischief; but God is above one as above the other. And both lived with their minds in evil to justify their discontent: whereas those who seek simply to serve Christ, and to walk in peace, are blessed of God and in quiet… I have seen no sign but of positive progress, and firmness when I did not expect it… but my confidence is not in progress, but in God. If the testimony is more honestly unworldly, I do not fear: if not, what good is it? Trust in the Lord, and work away for Him. May we be found watching and so doing when the blessed Lord comes!…

London, February, 1880.

* * * * *

To the same.]

* * * It is remarkable that when I heard of B.’s death, suited for Italy as he seemed to be, true and faithful, the feeling that came into my mind was, God is going to bless Italy—which I could not account for, nor give a reason, but there the feeling was. Not that there will not be exercises and trials: that one must expect—still rejoice in the goodness and grace of God; and so we ought.

I am not, dear brother, a pessimist, because I may say, since my conversion, I never had a thought of any good in man or myself, while fully admitting amiable and nice natural characters, as I think the Lord did. But He did not trust it: He knew that all true good was beyond and behind. I fear rather drawing the line too sharp and. too hard, for there is not a good, but a moral, nature in man. Hence we are born of water as well as of the Spirit: the word is the instrument, but all good is of God. When He loved the young man, He said, “None is good save one, that is God.” But I am not disheartened, though I may be cast down, because behind all there is God, One who never fails; and if He be for us, who can be against us? Only we have to know our own nothingness, and wait patiently for Him.

I was thinking lately that Christ is still waiting in patience. “Sit at my right hand, till”—and not said when. We do not know how deep and wide divine thoughts in connection with man go; but we know the Father has given us to Christ, and we shall be like Him, and brought, identified with Him, into the Father’s house. Those whom the Father has given Him, at all cost He will bring back to Him, according to His own heart and purpose. It is a bright and blessed prospect. But I trust Him for blessing quand même as to man, if we have His

mind… The Lord be with you in your work, and keep you near Him—the only source of good, and true self-judgment.

Deuteronomy 26 gives the normal apprehensions of a godly soul in that book. He does not go up to Abraham, but merely a Syrian (Jacob) going down to Egypt, redemption and enjoyment of promises in the land, with personal integrity in connection with it. It is a kind of key to the book. The Lord always quotes from Deuteronomy (Matt, 4); it was the ground Israel was on, and not according to promises to Abraham. And He was the tested Man there.

March, 1880.

* * * * *

To the same.]

* * * I have been getting on much more definitely with Deuteronomy: though as yet I have found some paths in the wood, I am not out of it. But the scripture is already a good deal developed, and that is positive enjoyment. When I have anything definite, you shall have it. Chapter 4:[leads] up to outside Jordan; Jehovah, jealousy and restoration in mercy. Chapters 5-11. they are passed over—the covenant of ten words, government and what they were, the legal responsible ground of their possession of the land, Jehovah jealous: restoration not till chapter 30. After chapter 12 it is the plea to preserve them from idolatry. These are some of the paths into the wood, but the divine footsteps can be traced, where they had not so reached yet…

The Lord is faithful, and full of tender compassion; of whom should we be afraid, except of ourselves? There

we have reason. Trust in the Lord, and be doing good. Our time is a time to sow, but, if faithful, the sheaves will come in due time. It is by faith and patience we shall inherit: God means it to be so. My heart is with you in your work, but, what is better, the Lord Himself will be.

Ever, beloved brother,

Your fellow-labourer and servant in Christ.

* * * * *

To the same.]

* * * As regards Deuteronomy [14:22-29; 26:12; cf. Num. 18] you will find in Tobit 1:714 what gives historically the fact of the second tithes, and of the third year, which facilitates understanding the text. But the spirit of the difference is important. Worship, in the previous books, was the degree of nearness to God in His sanctuary: here it is thankful enjoyment of blessings received according to promise, only enjoyed before Jehovah, so as not to be detached from Him, and enjoyed in the spirit of grace. (See chap, 26) In chapter 16 you have no eighth day in the feast of tabernacles. It is thus not priestly drawing near to God, but enjoyment of the fruit of His promises, in grace with Him. This characterises the whole book. With us there is not this difference, because the most holy place is our Canaan, and in Spirit we are there, and it is what is there as the fruits of promise that we enjoy.

I was very near forgetting to tell you how I was getting through the wood! But that was by your being a pessimist, saying there is no hope, as if God had forgotten us, and did not see it.

March, 1880.

* * * * *

My dear Brother,—In Job 2:9 you have also from his wife, “Curse God and die.” In 1 Kings 21:10 it cannot mean bless. If taken in this sense it must be a euphemism for cursing The usual explanation is this: Er~B# (barak) means ‘to kneel,’ used for camels even: Er~B# (berek) is ‘a knee,’ hence ‘to implore’; and there are two words, one Arabic the other Ethiopic, which have this uncertain sense (I know nothing of these languages). Hence while kneeling is the physical sense, it is to bless from above in Piel, and to cause (camels) to kneel down in Hiphil: but while some Hebraists, particularly Jews—but Schultens and others—will not allow the sense of cursing in this derivation of the word, and the Jews translate bless when we say curse, if you believe Gesenius it is as I have said above; others take it as derived from a word signifying, ‘to dismiss,’ ‘send off.’ So Delitzsch interprets it in Job. In 1 Kings 21, his fellow-labourer also translates ‘blasphemed’; but in explaining, derives from ‘dismissing, or sending off,’ saying, ‘Which is the same as blasphemed.’

I judge you are quite right as to the purport of the book, but all God’s dealings and care are wonderfully brought out. “He withdraweth not his eyes from the righteous”—had considered Job before Satan; justified Job, by allowing Satan’s efforts, from his charge of hypocrisy; and then takes him in His own hand for discipline, making him know himself in grace, and God in majesty; sends an interpreter, one among a thousand; and when he has owned both, blesses him more than ever.

My answer has been delayed, but if you knew all I have to do you would pardon me.

1880.

* * * * *

To the same.]

* * * The point of the verses [1 John 5:1-4 etc.] is this. Love to God's children is the proof of love to God. Who are they? Whoever believes Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and he who loves Him that begat, loves him that is begotten of Him. Thus if it be love because of the Father, I shall love all the children, for they are all His. Then comes a counter-check: I know that I love God's children, as such, if I love Him—not merely a set of people I like, but His children as such. But my obedience to His commandments is the proof I love Him. Love to God's children as such cannot be, because it is not loving Him, hence clearly not His children, because they are such, for I do not love Him. It is the testimony that love to the brethren, to be really such—chapter 2:9, because they are God's children—cannot be separated from obedience, because that proves I do not love God, consequently not others because they are His.

* * * * *

To the same.]

* * * You seem to get into a multitude of questions. As to a remnant, it seems to me lost time to argue it. There clearly is a remnant in Christendom; that is, all nominal Christians will not possess the privileges of true ones. And they are in this sense a remnant. But, the result being different, it seems different, because the Jewish remnant remains on earth, to become, as such, the nation; whereas true Christians, going up to heaven, never appear as a distinct body in possession of their

privileges, as all the dead saints will be raised and go with them. But in the time of faith, the faithful will be just as much practically a remnant as the Jews will be. That is, I believe, the true state of the case, but there is much instruction in viewing them as such, only we have to keep the truth of the unity of the body in its full force.

London, March, 1880.

* * * * *

To the same.]

* * * I suspect your good vicar has never read Clemens Romanus, but only his (Mr. Marshall's) epitome: probably it was before he was born that I did. But you ought yourself to have had the answer ready. Clement speaks, § 42, of bishops and deacons: but if there were several that is not episcopacy. There are only two classes—so in Timothy and Titus, called also bishops and deacons. Titus was to appoint elders, several, in each city; and Paul goes on, "for a bishop must be blameless": bishops and deacons in 1 Timothy 3. So Paul in Acts 14 chose elders for them—forgot the bishop!—and in chapter 20 calls for the elders, and then says to them "bishops"—again forgot the poor bishop or awfully despised him! We have thus the certainty that those whom Clement speaks of, § 42, were several in one place. He always speaks in the plural. They appointed persons, § 44. He does not think those should be thrown out of their ministry, and says, 'Blessed are those elders who, having finished their course before these times, have obtained a fruitful and perfect dissolution.' Clement, like Paul, ignores the existence of a bishop, writes (if there was one) to his church, without hinting at the existence of such a personage. 'Further we see

that ye have put out some who lived,' etc. The letter is a letter from 'the church of God which is at Home to the church of God which is at Corinth.' There is no trace, I repeat, of a bishop at Kome or at Corinth. The passage he refers to is the proof that he objected to their deposing their elders, but has no thought of any bishop, as the word is now used. Speaking of some—'You have put out some'—though it was in the one church of Corinth; and calls them elders, for which archbishop Wake has translated 'priests' —Chevalier, honestly, 'elders,' with 'presbyters' in margin.

You can easily see why I suspect your clergyman (I have not his name exactly) has read Marshall, which I have not, and not Clement, which I often have, and discussed with others, too. Perhaps he has not read Tertullian or Jerome either. Tertullian says John the apostle instituted them in Asia Minor, a plain proof Paul had not. Jerome says the church got into this plan as the elders were each trying to draw the faithful to themselves, and then they set up one as primus inter pares. In Alexandria, though there was a patriarch, Jerome tells us there was no episcopal ordination till Hesychius and the council of Nice. As to Justin, I do not remember his saying anything about bishops. He speaks largely of a president at their Lord's day meeting, and his praying as well as he could, also of his holding meetings at his lodgings, at Kome, when he went there. But I cannot now look them up; but I have read them more or less, and I am not aware of any such passage, or finding it quoted on the subject. Clement being short, and I having often read it, I could lay my hand on it. As to Clemens Alexandrinus, he may be quite at ease: in his day there were bishops plenty, but the reference is unfortunate, for, if I am to

believe Jerome, there was then no episcopal ordination. As to Ignatius, all the rhetoric on the subject [notwithstanding], I have no doubt it is spurious. In the genuine Syriac copies a bishop is mentioned in this way once. Now I do not doubt, according to Jerome's account, they soon came in, possibly, partly through John, too. In Clement's time it is clear there were none such that he recognises—'not a trace'—but what totally excludes the idea, As to Article XVII., I quite admit that God's predestination is secret to us, but the seventeenth Article is not: it is very plain, and I think very good. I may add, in Clement, § 57, where he exhorts the leaders of the sedition to submit to their elders. I have read some of Hooker, too; but [he was] one whose mind rested in human order, and not on scripture, but a reverend, godly man; but while a standard work with the clergy it is really intrinsically not worth reading. They say he died meditating on the hierarchical order of the angels. As to the Fathers, I have read some, consulted almost all, and some a good deal. But when, many years ago, I set about to read them, I found them as a body such trash that I gave it up as a study: for history they are of course useful, and I have examined them largely. Did Mr. —— ever read Hernias? If that is not enough to destroy all confidence in the early church, I do not know what would. Did he ever read Cyprian or Chrysostom on the state of the church in their days? Talking of looking to the primitive church for some doctrine or morality is the most wicked humbug that ever was: either people have not read what is patristic, or they must love and excuse wickedness. Hermas was read in the churches, and is quoted by Irenseus as scripture, and Origen speaks of it as inspired. Pretty work you give one to do.

March 23rd.

* * * * *

To the same.]

* * * I write to send you back Mr.——'s letter, but I do not think of answering it. I think, in general, positive truth is of more avail than controversy. He is upon ordinary evangelical Arminian or semi-Arminian ground, and that is a wide field to enter on in a letter. I do not think that I ever said, as he quotes, 'elders nowhere,' I may have said 'elders, as such, nowhere.' I suspect the seventeenth Article tries him, and it is really a very wise statement as I remember it. Their point of departure is not scripture, and hence they have difficulty in having anything. What I mean by 'doing this' was, that if a friend or a parent was to give me something, and say, Keep it in remembrance of me, to make it a command or a precept would destroy its whole nature. The emphasis is on "remembrance of me."

As to Article XVII., he confounds the counsels of God before the foundation of the world, and our knowledge of our election when we are called and justified, and cry Abba, Father. Whatever the means of assurance, I am necessarily assured that if I believe and am sealed so as to cry Abba Father, I know I shall be kept to the end; one, according to scripture and the seventeenth Article, involves the other. They that are called, says the article —obey the calling—are justified, etc., and at length by God's mercy, attain everlasting felicity. So that the question, according to the article is, Can I know I am called and justified? for if so I shall attain everlasting felicity. Now scripture says—first John as Christ's forerunner came to give the knowledge of salvation,

then the blessed Lord says, “In that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you”—and the apostle, “We have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear, but the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.” So John writes, “I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for his name’s sake.” I need not quote more. The epistles are addressed to saints, to the “elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit,” and we are said to be saved, not merely as a principle (but in the perfect) seswsmevnoi, actually saved, for He has saved us, and called us with a holy calling—fruits the proof in others, the Holy Spirit dwelling in us, in ourselves. “Knowing, dearly beloved, your election of God.” So 1 Thessalonians 5:9.

Now I would deprecate levity in so solemn a thing as the consciousness of our relationship to the Father. I had rather see a man deeply exercised in Romans 7 than taking up the doctrine of assurance with levity. And further, I see in the scripture the Christian looked at as not only in Christ, where there is no “if,” but as running the race to attain actually the glory, as actual men in this world; and here I find “if,” and working out our salvation with fear and trembling, and the responsibility of the saint comes in, but with a sure promise of being kept. And this is the difference in the character of the assurance; one is in an actually accomplished redemption, with the knowledge (John 14) that we are in Christ: the other, glory, is not an accomplished thing, as is evident; it is certain through the promise of God. See Romans 8, “Whom he justified, them he also glorified”: the whole chain is there from beginning to end, and depends on His faithfulness in keeping us. And this

distinction is morally very important, because it maintains constant dependence, but dependence on a faithfulness that cannot fail, which is most important for practical spiritual life. As regards my path, I am kept, and if so need it, but do not doubt God's faithfulness in doing it. I cannot speak of danger as to redemption, it is accomplished, but for my wilderness journey there is; but there is a keeping which exercises my dependence and faith. (See 1 Peter 1:4, 5.) See, too, 1 Corinthians 1:8, 9—where he then goes on to blame them for everything—and the far happier testimony in John 10. I must close. This is more important than ecclesiastical questions or the Fathers. It is "that which is from the beginning."

In Ephesians you will find plenty of exhortations but no "ifs": you do, when we are spoken of as yet on the journey. No doubt we see this, as all things, clearer if we are near to God, because what He is is realised, and Christ dwells in our hearts by faith. We make our calling and election sure, not surer, of course, in God's mind, but in ours.

Your affectionate brother in Christ.

As regards 2 Peter 1:3, Tischendorf reads "by his own glory and virtue," l§[q, not Sid, but it does not alter much. But in these are given the promises, the word communicates them to us as ours, and thus our moral delight is in them—escaping the corruption of the world —the heart is elsewhere. Peter never goes beyond the moral effect—not the vital source: "suffered in the flesh," not "dead": born of the word, not of the Spirit. "Whereby" (2 Peter 1:4) is dij w|n, and "by these" (diaV

touvtwn) the promises; the revelation of the glory and virtue (ver. 3) to the soul is what produces the effect.

The difference of 1 Corinthians 12 and Ephesians 4 is that one is the operation of the Spirit down here, distributing to every man as He will—simple power, so that it might be stopped, as tongues, if no one understood or no interpreter or even more, at the most, than three prophets. Ephesians 4 it is Christ who takes care of His church, and this cannot cease or fail. Apostles and prophets are the foundation which cannot be laid now, it would be a new church: but these apart, Christ cannot fail to give what is needful for His church, and will to the end. Hence there are no miraculous gifts, so-called, spoken of. I am much better, but have again a cold.

1880.

* * * * *

My dear Brother,— … As to the book of meetings I take no notice of it as I always objected to it altogether: very convenient, no doubt, but it is a counting up of a company, and as your letter shews is looked at as conferring a kind of authority and representative character given by—whom? Those who are going to a place can easily find out those they seek with a little trouble… I knew of a place where there were three, and the order of the names being changed caused the greatest displeasure to the one who was no longer first!

But I am sure God is working, and will bring about the result which He can take pleasure in. Indeed, from the first, having given a plain testimony I have only cast the matter on God; and I am thoroughly confident He has acted and will act. I said when in England, when asked if

I thought He would give deliverance—Yes, when He judges the brethren adequately humbled. As regards Kent, which He saw needed sifting, and where all went on without my having anything to say to it, I have also left it to God, save answering the letters written to me… But I feel, dear brother, that God must bring blessing about in His own way. The evil was deeper than mere present circumstances, or I might have ventured to write. The only thing I dreaded was some taking the ground of making a fresh start, that all was now individual. In one sense it must always be individual. But beginning anew for a fresh testimony apart from what God had raised up was just what——wanted and attempted to do, and a denial of the one there was. I was long and deeply tried before it broke out whether I should leave brethren, feeling the state of things long before it broke out, but I felt it would not be faith and was held through the storm. But God has evidently wrought and is working in rousing brethren, and putting an end to what I long dreaded in many details. He has wrought in Switzerland, in France, in the States, in Canada, and I hear in Ireland, New Zealand, to say nothing of Sweden and Norway—Italy too—and has been giving fresh blessing since all this in London. I have no doubt through mercy Kent will partake of it… My confidence is in God only, and there we can be assured, if looking to Him in the way of His will. The attacks of those who are unfaithful I have not even read. I believe in God's acting. All I seek is not to go beyond His leading… His government never fails "though he bear long with them," and I trust it will be in peace and blessing for all.

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To the same.]

* * * I do not believe all I hear, or rather it does not produce upon me the effect it does on some; because the good, of which as the fruit of His own grace God can and does take notice, is much quieter than the evil. Had I not been fully convinced conscience had become swamped or weakened by the influences at work I should not have given the testimony I did. But this conviction made me feel that God alone could maintain and restore the testimony confided to us. Hence having given my testimony I took no part in details… The result is in God's hands, not mine, and I desire to leave it there. When people wait on God, His actings and government will always bring them up into the place of His approval.

I have said, both in my first letter as to —— and in the little leaflet I ventured to send to brethren, what I felt as to the state of brethren. But I do not think that setting up to be on higher ground, and leaving the state of things, is the path of faith, but a humble looking to God and crying to Him. There has been an effort to have a kind of common humiliation, which would swamp the judgment of evil, but I was not to be caught by that in my judgment—for I was not in the way of it locally…

I do not look to the state of personal feeling, much as I may desire it, but bona fide corporate action. This distinction I have always made, because corporate action (namely in the church) we have God's promise for, not for the state of each individual soul, save in the general principles of grace… I am aware there is an effort to get up a party against faithfulness, but for that I trust God. And faithfulness does not want a party, nor can a party help it… I desire healing; but I desire no

healing which lowers the standard of christian walk, or hinders bringing God and His word to bear on conscience—first one's Own, and then on that of others. Hence I have felt one must leave God to work out the result in Kent, as with all brethren. The difficulties of those who desire to walk faithfully, and with whose intentions I sympathise, are more trying than positive evil.

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6 See below

7 'One unspiritual person bringing things to a dead-lock, and thus the evil would remain unjudged.'

8 'The Brethren: their Origin, etc.'

9 Vol. xiii. p. 93.

10 Before the contents of the book are opened, the saint refers to the effect of Christ's first coming; and after they are closed, to His Second. (Chapter 1:6, 7; 22:17.)

11 'The assembly as the house was certainly caught hold of by the Reformers.'

12 [The Hopes of the Church of God, Col. Writ., vol. ii, 468.]

13 'Is there such a thing in these days (of Christianity) as private or individual worship, or is everything, properly so-called, confined to the gathered assembly? And, as a collateral point, Can a person, forming part of a meeting for worship, retire from it mentally, if he feels it is below his own state, or the like, and go on with God alone, as it were, though in the meeting actually?'

14 'The first tenth part of all increase I gave to the sons of Aaron who ministered at Jerusalem: another tenth

part I sold away and went and spent it every year at Jerusalem: and the third I gave unto them to whom it was meet.’

Letters Section 3

To the same.]

* * * God gently clears the way, I believe. From the beginning I have felt that God was sifting the meetings in Kent, and when that is done adequately in God’s eyes there will be peace. But the evil that was at the root of all this, besides a party spirit that had long existed, was that there were brethren, and dear brethren, who, from what I believe was want of faith, judged it was all over with brethren, and London broken up, and that they must as standing on higher ground start afresh as a new body. Now I admit that the brethren had got into a low worldly sleepy state, but I do not think it was faith to think the Lord could not rouse them up, nor that it was grace to set up themselves to be the cream of all… I cannot say, sorrowful and humbling as it may be, that I regret that the sifting has come. It was from the hand of God because in grace He saw it was needed… While I acknowledge in the party who take the ground of purity many dear and true saints, some to whom I am even personally attached, and their uprightness as the governing principle of their lives, I do not believe faith or grace to have been the source of the pretention I have referred to. The enemy profited by the evil, which I admit, to produce the pretension and schism of heart, varying I acknowledge in degree and form. The course of Abbot’s Hill I still judge to have been thoroughly wicked, and I have not seen that the conscience has been reached… I believe God is working, but He does not heal slightly the hurt of the daughter of His people, as Jeremiah says. I do not believe that hurry in acting is

the way of God. I look for conscience being reached and so the root of the evil; then there will be lowliness and the path be plain.

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To the same.]

* * * As to the act of exclusion by A. Hill: I look upon it as I always did as an act of wickedness, a false pretence to be the discipline of God's house when it was a violent party act: it was not even truthful. If it was discipline which had God's glory, the holiness of God's house and righteousness as regards evil for its motive, as that discipline should, how can they talk of withdrawing it in grace when other people objected: does grace mean giving these up? Other saints not engaged in these questions in any direct way were unanimously struck with the spirit of their conduct from their own documents. I knew some of those concerned in it, which made it worse… But I go on none of these things, but that their act was a very wicked act: I believe it impossible to be with. God and not see it. And they have haughtily refused to meet upon the ground of common failure and confession. Mr. —— says it is the Lord's matter. The act was his, not the Lord's: that it is the Lord's to judge it I admit; but people can know by His word whether it is right or wrong before He manifests Himself.

Your affectionate brother in Christ.

1880.

* * * * *

My dear Brother,—I was very glad to hear from you and get news from you all, and surely so much the rather

that they are happy ones. I was very thankful you could say that you were going on now, not occupied with your old trials and evil. We may be forced to go through it and be sifted by it, but it never feeds nor builds up the soul; and when it is no longer necessary to do so, it only distracts and tends to irritate, to turn away from the bright and blessed apprehension of Christ and the love of God. I rejoiced greatly that you were getting on with positive blessing; but we have to watch, for the enemy always does, and if we are not looking actively to the Lord we lose our safeguard, and when distracted from Him he gets in, and often unconsciously: duties, occupation of heart with them, loss of spirituality, and the sense of the preciousness of Christ, worldliness, and then all the feebleness of walk which flows from the heart not realising Christ as motive and power, the light of His presence, and the soul in the light before Him. The Lord has been very gracious to you, having cleared you out from all your difficulties, not merely as a part, but not leaving a trace of what might have rested as a regret on your spirits—haste in leaving, and returning while the evil was still there—for you have been left clear of it all, and all that went before clean out of question. Now it is only the straightforward conflict with self and the world that we always have here.

You know we have gone through a great conflict here, but the Lord has been very gracious, and shewn that He governs— a great comfort. There is a great desire to hear the word, I may say in a general way, everywhere. I have some fifty young men to read with me every Saturday evening, with only the word to draw them; and the brethren who have been faithful in our trials are more knit together. Altogether, though all wounds are

not healed as to individuals, we have much to bless God for, and the work goes on externally as usual. It is increasedly blessed in Italy: we have lost a very dear man who was the efficient labourer, nor on account of the language can his loss, humanly speaking, be easily supplied, but God is above all difficulties.

What I fear everywhere is the world—often unsuspected. We have need of positive diligence in seeking His face, so as to prove He is with us. “The secret of the Lord is with those that fear him.” Our salvation is accomplished and settled, but the government of God which goes on according to His nature and holiness and wisdom, is a most important thing. He is faithful and full of love; but oh, what a difference to walk in the light of His countenance, to be in His secret! It would be a great joy to me to see you all again, but I am now in my eightieth year, and though my mind is as fresh as ever, that is no help to long journeys. Kindest love to the brethren, some of whom I do not know, and all your family. ——I trust will learn that Christ is worth a lot of lumber, and gold too, and, what is a great thing, worth it for ever and worth it now too. I have not had a shoe on these four or five weeks with the gout, but it has given me quiet.

Ever affectionately yours in the Lord.

London, March 11th.

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Dearest——,— … I trust you will have been guided in your path. —— has been used to such questions, but only the Lord can guide us in His path; if we have His secret and work with Him, having His approval all is well. May He so guide you! In England we have much for which greatly to bless the Lord… There remain some

whose activity is of the enemy, I doubt not, and not of God. I feel it a solemn thing that they should be there, or, if there, should not be wholly in the shade. But I have felt all along that, save a positive testimony when called for, my part was to leave it entirely to God, for it was not a case of ordinary discipline, but an effort of the enemy to set aside brethren's testimony altogether. He has come in, and I trust Him for all the rest. Details have to be redressed… All is not straight, but, as I said, He who has done much will, I trust, finish the work of His goodness. That is what we have to seek, for San Francisco and London and heaven.

I have been writing in French on John, began for myself, but gone on for publishing, but have found rich blessing in it; what the Lord was really doing and His position in the midst of the Jews comes out so very clearly; His position, indeed, in the midst of the world as the light of God and the life of those who followed Him. He is all to us now, will be for ever. It is a great joy to me, that we shall be eternal witnesses of the efficacy of His work for the whole host of heaven, and even for the Father—the fruit "of the travail of his soul"—and not one (oh, how glad will it be!) who will not be exactly what His heart would desire, and so presented to God—a bright and blessed time. But I must close… May the Lord guide you in all, and those who seek His face; do not be in a hurry, He must do the work, and sometimes does the work slower than we fancy doing it; but He does it well.

Hereford, April.

* * * * *

My dear Brother,—Truths are sometimes simpler, when we take them simpler and do not make a system.

Thyatira clearly goes on to the end, and the kingdom and the Morning Star— the church and heavenly Christ —are substituted for her. She is the great successional church on the earth, and Popery as such—the ecclesiastical system that has had space to repent, and has not. Here, however, she is reviewed in her religious character. Babylon is more the civil corporate power which she exercises over the beast; but she is Rome, influences the masses, committing adultery with the kings, etc.: the horns— the power of the ten kings—and the beast hate and destroy her. But she is the persecutor of the saints, and is judged, not by the Lamb, but by God, and providentially as I suppose.

Laodicea is quite different in this respect: she is in a bad state, nauseous to Christ. It is her religious state, descending religiously from Protestantism—Sardis; and Christ hay done with her: she is nauseous and cast out of Christ's mouth, disappears as a religious system, before the dealings with Babylon. What the individuals become is not stated, they may be infidels or anything else; but the corporate testimony is rejected by Christ or any in it. The civil political influence of Babylon remains to be destroyed: the blood of all saints was found in her, as in Jerusalem when she was destroyed. Thyatira is judged religiously, namely, for her religious state: she rather becomes Babylon, as judged in Revelation.

This you may meditate on, but I cannot, in haste, form any defined system of interpretation where it is not defined in scripture.

Your affectionate brother in Christ.

Your correspondent is much more modest. Titus and Timothy were occasional messengers of Paul, going and

clothed with his authority for several objects, and no sign of local episcopacy; and John was at Ephesus after and such a delegate could not supersede and govern him, and Revelation 2:13, 24, etc., prove they represented the body or those faithful among them—not an individual, nor [do they] suppose such.

April 15th, 1880.

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* * * The Seven churches are the external state of Christendom; and Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea, all go down to the end. All the speculations as to it are mental reasonings. The first three are judged by comparison with what the commencement was, as we with innocence, and the last four in view of Christ's return. This principle runs through all: Israel, Isaiah 5, 6; man; the church. Am I what Adam was? Can I meet the second Man, the Lord? Our part as regards the state of the church is faithfulness to the direct word of God everywhere, but as to special days, 2 Timothy, Jude. What is called the new lump principle is just what is condemned in Jude. They were in their feasts of charity, but separated themselves. The word applies to the state the word speaks of. If that applies to me, the exhortation does too; but in 2 Timothy, the directions are full—"from such turn away." I cannot turn away from Christendom: I should be an apostate. I purge myself from evildoers, false doctrines and those who hold them.

For myself I have all along been very isolated, but I have never seen God so manifest Himself for those who are faithful as in the last few months or even weeks. I do not say all evil is purged as it should be, but it is not only that conscience is roused as it has been this year and a

half, but that God has acted and met faithfulness. It is felt by all attentive souls occupied with it. And never has a door been closed (even before this), and the work went on as really never before, but now in the heart of the evil itself He has set to His hand. With us here in London it has been truly marvellous. I do not think His work is finished, but when He is at work, trusting Him for the issue is a simple matter. Trusting the Lord is always the ground, yet I feel on new ground when I see God acting, and He is.

I trust your dear child may again gain strength. But it is a world where sorrow and death is come; but the Lord is come in after it, and that is our comfort, and has suffered all needed—"crucified in weakness," but is out of it in power. The Lord sustain you both in looking to Him.

1880.

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My dear Brother,—I had heard there was trouble in New York, but was greatly grieved when I read the cause in your letter, if I have rightly understood what you say, that some, —— among them, cannot worship the Lord. There is nothing new in it: a case happened in England, but the person was refused communion. It is a deep grief to me; I have written to him, which I thought the best way. Anything that touches the glory of the Lord, and our heart-estimate of Him, is of the last moment, and must be near the heart of him who loves Him. The case I referred to soon shewed other thoughts derogatory to the Lord.

As to myself, I am much better; I had a very severe cold from coming into the fogs of London, and it turned into a

fit of the gout, from which I begin to be free; but have only put my shoes on these last few days, and that on going out, but I left London for a journey to see the brethren and work. I have had very free, nice meetings, well-attended at several places, and felt the Lord with me. All this trouble in London, which in principle threatened all the brethren, has done me and all of them a great deal of good—roused their consciences and made them feel the need of looking more to Christ and being more wholly for Him. It was not a mere question of discipline, but a regular effort to break up brethren, which I had long felt was going on, but which came fully out, with very corrupting elements. God has graciously broken that up…

It is generally a time of blessing… But here it will be still toil and labour, in the midst of opposition, till He comes who shall take us up to be with Him in God's rest. If we can only glorify Him meanwhile, all is well. What else have we to do? At the close of life, we see that only is life; but faith sees it all along by His being all: hold fast this, dear——, and the secret and guidance of the Lord will be with you. It will be soon all over, and His approbation will then be everything. The time of my lying by was a time of rest I was greatly craving, and could hardly have found if I had been able to go out. I must close. We are in His hands, and thank God we are.

Your affectionate brother in Christ.

It may be merely an idea taken up by dear ——, which, with a little gentleness and scriptural proof he may drop; he seizes points rapidly, and I trust he may be delivered from this, for it affects morally all our estimate of Christ. It affects, in the thoughts and the feelings as

to Him, the divine nature; only I hope, by dealing gently with him, he may come straight.

April 16th.

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My dear Brother,— … I have sent several sheets of John, and they have begun to bring it out at Vevey. This has greatly interested myself. The way in which this gospel wholly sets aside man—law as efficient for him, promises —and presents Christ, God manifested in flesh, light, connected with what is divine, eternal, and heavenly, is very striking. I believe we have to take up man on his responsibility, and press it upon him in grace, for he has a conscience, the true 15Anknüpfung-spunkt of God with man, putting man in his place, and, as to this, God too. But if we want to know the truth of the matter, it is that man, cultivated of God so that He could do no more for His vineyard, meets the manifestation of Himself with inveterate enmity, and all is new, and sovereign grace and salvation, and then the Holy Ghost that we may know it. While it is the character of all the gospel, chapters 8 and 9 bring this out distinctly. The word leading to the revelation of “I AM,” then brings out the stones to stone Him. What a scene! The incarnate Son is but clay on blind eyes, making innate blindness externally a hiding of light. The pool of Siloam, “the Sent One,” gives sight, and the light is seen, and God known. The word is the instrument, for, rejected as it was by the Jews because He told them the truth, and their consciences, I think, evidently uneasy, their wills would none of what pressed on those consciences, and these would know when He was gone into new and other scenes; while the impression on the blind man was “he

is a prophet”—so with the Samaritan woman. The word has divine power on us, and so divine authority: then all can be received with divine faith. Then, chapter 10, He has His sheep: chapter 11, He is going to His Father, His hour was come. But we must begin by conscience.

We have everything to bless God for… I feel it is springtime with brethren, though with gracious sunshine we have March winds betimes; still, as I trusted, God is working, and I wait for Him. My path now here may not please men; but if I yet pleased men I should not be the servant of Jesus Christ. I have long, if poorly, served Him; but I believe I trust Him as I never did before. I feel I am a different person, not in myself as if there was good there, but trusting Him; and it is good, dear brother… The discipline of what has passed (and I never suffered so) has been most useful to me: He does all things well. The world passeth away and the fashion of it, but he that does the will of God abides for ever. The Lord be abundantly with you and all the dear brethren.

Reading, April.

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To the same.]

* * * I have often pressed that, while God must open the way, the power of Christianity is not in what it finds, but in what it brings; but it is true that Christians are constantly exposed to follow the influences which surround them. But we must be with God, and so from Him, without ceasing to be with Him in all our dealings with others, representing Him, and acting for Him, in all the service He has given to us; and if we are content to be nothing, and seek Him, this is happily accomplished without effort, for He will be with us. He is faithful and

gracious, and the result will be sure in His own time: in general, in these days, we have to await this, to have it solid. Still, we see cases, where the Spirit of God works manifestly; and though revival work is often shallow and superficial, I do not judge it as severely as some do, for I find when the blessed Lord speaks of Himself as sowing, only one out of the four lasts to bring forth fruit. You will be glad to hear that the desire for the word seems everywhere manifest… They are dark times, but wherever Christ is fully preached, there are attentive and, through grace, receptive souls. We have only to work on.

Dublin, May.

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Dear——,—I know no one who does not think that all who believe in Christ are washed in His blood: but washed in His blood is not the same as redemption, though they may be identified as necessarily going together. Peace is not simply a matter of experience, though peace is experienced. “Having made peace by the blood of his cross”: that is not experience. And when I began to preach peace by Jesus Christ, fifty or sixty years ago, it was very rare indeed for any believer to have it. I object entirely to its being called mere experience: there is faith in the efficacy of Christ’s work as well as in His Person, though all who believe in His Person have part in His work. The “therefore” of Romans 5 is lost in the note you send me, and the connection with chapter 4: the writer is not aware of it, but he denies justification by faith as stated in Romans 4, 5. No doubt if I believe in Christ, God sees me clear, but that is not justification. Peace is the consequence of

justification by faith. I insist that all that believe in Christ are justified (washed in Christ's blood). But your correspondent leaves out justification by faith in consequence of Christ's being risen, and confounds peace and justification, or rather drops the latter, leaving all as what is in God's mind, or the experience of peace. It is for souls very dangerous teaching, leaving out all exercise of soul, and the reality of faith connected with the sense of sins. Conscience and responsibility are left out of the question and hence so much hollowness of profession. The best gospel preached when I began was, You must be born again, and now examine whether you are in the faith; and three quarters of evangelists are there yet, and object to assurance, though there is an immense change; but very few have the faith of Hebrews 10. Your correspondent shuts out faith as to this. I do not believe he means any harm, but I fear there is too little experience, and too much learned.

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My dear Brother,—I do not take up ——'s objection to your tract, not from any slight of him, but because I have discussed the subject with him heretofore, and I think him the opposite, to say the least, to being clear on the subject, On that point I do not listen to him. But I am not quite satisfied with your tract: the mediatorial character of Christ on the subject of life disappears too much, and the life of God becomes too much the God of life or life in God. I agree with your tract in the main, though it does seek to make mentally clear what can be only spiritually clear, as it seems to me. I do not believe that "the life of God" is merely character of life. It involves, as indeed it always does, a true life which bears that character.

But in John 5:26 I have what makes me hesitate. It is not said life in Him, as in the Father Himself—“hath,” and “given to have,” at once makes a vital difference. You could not say any one gave God to have life in Himself, and that, because He has it in Himself. It is not a question with me of Christ’s true eternal Deity—it is none, but of ejkevnwse (Phil. 2:7), and taking on Him the form of a servant, and so being dependent and obedient, a place He carefully and perfectly continued in. ‘That life,’ you say, ‘which is proper to God, dwells as fully in the incarnate Son as in the Godhead itself.’ I do not say anything of ‘as fully,’ but in the same way is not true, for the Father has given to the Son (incarnate) to have life in Himself. This is not true of Godhead. You could not say that God lives diav any being. Christ says I live diaV toVn patevra (not tou' patrov") John 6:57. And the subject here is just this descent of life, and our living by Christ; and the flesh of Christ is distinctly brought in and His’ death. In John’s gospel this reception from the Father is most carefully everywhere retained, while His own proper Deity shines all through most strikingly. Hence your phrase, ‘is none other than the life of God—the life which is proper to God, and which at the incarnation took up its abode, in all its divine fulness, in the Person of the Lord Jesus,’ has hardly a clear sense. It never took up its abode in God, and it is never so said in scripture, but that the Father gave to the Son (incarnate) to have life in Himself. This leads me to add here, that “That which was from the beginning,” in 1 John 1 is not for me eternal, but the incarnate Word down here, as chapter 2 clearly shews. Further, remark that in John 1, where we have abstractedly what Christ was—“in him was life,” and, I doubt not, divinely and eternally—as such it is light, which is not received at all.

I do not agree with your interpretation of “gave power to become sons”;16 for we are sons uiJoiv by faith in Him—quickening power was needed to receive Him.

I admit the life is never ‘detached from its source’; “because I live, ye shall live also”: but ‘enjoyed in common’17—this tends to destroy its mediatorial character at the other end, for ‘in common’ is as if we had both received it alike from some common source: Hebrews 2:11 goes the farthest. And you go so far as to say, ‘in common with God its fountain.’ (P. 34.) Now scripture goes very far in this direction, though not so speaking of life: we dwell in God and God in us. But here again mediatorship is left out. True it is that Christ and God are identified in John’s epistle: still, in chapter 4:9, we get the mediatorial character. I have no difficulty as to divine nature. Christ is our life, and he who has the Son of God has life; and he has the life of Jesus, which if shewn out is there to be shewn out. All this I should insist on, and have long and largely so done, and as I fully admit and. thank God for it—never detached: but ‘in common with God its fountain’ you will not find. Christ is our life: but Paul connects this with another truth you have not touched. We are raised with Christ, He having become, as to life down here, a dead Man; and in Colossians we are raised with Him; in Ephesians — quickened with Him and raised, Jew or Gentile, and seated in heavenly places. But here He is looked at, not as a source of life, but as raised by God’s power.

I could not say that life was not communicated, for surely if a man is born, life is communicated, only I admit not life in us as a separate thing. “He that hath the Son hath life”: God’s “seed remaineth in him.” In speaking of vegetable and animal life as you do,

conscious, voluntary action in mind or body, and important and reflectively only in man, is left out; and, to say the least, it greatly characterises life itself, if not a definition.

Growing up to Him who is the Head, has scarcely its place in your account of holiness. Christ is eternal life: we have Him as life; and it will be complete when like Him in glory, and we “are changed into the same image from glory to glory.” So He has sanctified Himself that we might be sanctified through the truth. The nature which grows is holy, I admit, in itself. Your account of sealing (p. 39) I doubt the exactness of. When examined in detail, I find it based on faith in the blood and its efficacy in remission; so in the type of the leper. I do not think tevkna and uiJoiv quite so distinct as you make them (p. 40), though I admit the difference: Galatians 3 is uiJov"; John uses tevkna, but Romans 8:14-17 shews it is not merely characteristic style.

—— sent me ‘New Creation.’ I think nature’s relationships are too much lost in it. God holds to all He created in the first creation. “From the beginning it was not so.” “God made them male and female.” “What therefore God hath joined together”: this holds good as long as man, in the body and natural life, is there. I do not know what you mean by the new creation being complete and perfect in Christ.

I have not quoted Christ’s breathing on His disciples in connection with life, as it may be disputed; but we have Him “come that they might have life, and have it more abundantly.” I rejoice with all my heart, both for your own sake and the Lord’s goodness in the blessing He has given you. In general there is much thirst for the

word now, so that brethren are a good deal encouraged in faithful service.

Dublin, May, 1880.

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Dearest——,— … Everywhere I find the saints springing up in fresh growth, and happier, and conscience much more alive, and thirst for the word, and the soberest minds feeling the difference. Persevering firmness in holding a true moral ground, and bearing the humiliation of the saints on the heart and not setting up to do something especially excellent oneself, is the path of faith. If God casts the brethren off, it will be time enough to start afresh with something from Him. I prefer trusting His goodness, acknowledging how greatly we have failed. We shall see in result where God will bring us. What I feel is that the whole tone of the spiritual state of brethren has to be raised; and it is rising, though, I doubt not, much remains to be done. But it is by occupying them with Christ and His glory and sufferings, with all that is before us, and the truth as it is in Jesus, that this is to be done. The more I think of it, the more I see that the plain maintenance of moral integrity, and then trusting God, is of all moment now. The former had been so shaken and forgotten, that, unless gross cases of morality, godly judgment of evil was impossible. Many have still to learn that want of moral integrity is not to be borne, but the sense that the Christian must so feel has been widely awakened, and this is a great point. But I say no more—but this is what is on my heart, was from the beginning. Worldliness will, I trust, have its wings clipped too. Many details pass before my mind, serials and the like; but I go no further.

I trust and pray that God may graciously spare Mrs. ——. A mother, be she ever so sick, is always an immense loss: the bond of the house or family is broken. An eye and a heart are there which, even if they cannot do mach, those that make the family refer to, and run in solicitude through all. A man cannot be this in the same way, however kind a father. Still God does all things well, and can turn, however deeply felt, an evil into real and better blessing. Still no one can be a mother but a mother, but God can be everything to us and towards us in all our cares.

Here there is very fresh interest in the word. I am growing old and my gout is a hindrance, still I work away, and all, all is well. If He works, how should it be otherwise? My kind remembrance to Mrs. ——. I trust and pray she may have the Lord very near her in her weak state: weak or strong, it is what we need, and, weak or strong, sufficient for us. Affectionately yours in the Lord.

Dublin, May 20th.

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Dearest——,—As regards the brethren, it is not only that I have enjoyed my visits, but grave, sober men, like ——, I found quite cheery as to the way they saw God working among brethren. I do not doubt a bit that there is still much to do, and only One who can do it. I am not surprised at those you speak of labouring to support evil; perhaps I expect such things too much…

Now if God is pleased to set aside brethren, I bow to it; but I do not believe it, though we may have deserved it. God has interfered, and checked the tide of evil. I quite recognise there are remains, but I trust Him as to these,

as to the body of the evil…, Wait awhile and you will see the issue of God's dealings… The brethren had let things get into a state in which corporate action was very difficult, but God has acted, and will act… Brethren had morally declined, and the question was, Had God given them up? Well, I felt faith would not say Yes, and I stayed where I was; but the whole state had to be raised for permanent blessing, and that was an individual, moral thing. Many were ignorant of what was at work…

I have no doubt many are sealed who could not explain it, and would fear, from bad teaching to say too boldly they were sons; but an unsealed Christian is unknown to scripture. It is not conversion, but the Holy Ghost coming to dwell in us so that our bodies are temples. In general, it is said, "having believed [Ephesians 1 "the gospel of your salvation"] ye were sealed." If we come to details, I believe it will be as believing in the work and its efficacy as well as the Person of Christ.

"Be of good courage, and he shall strengthen your heart."

Dublin, 1880.

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* * * I know well how few know deliverance; but it is a great thing to know that I, a poor worm, should be before God and the Father in the same acceptance and favour that Christ is, loved even as He is loved. But it is the greatness of infinite love. Then it is not generally preached with intelligence; next, it is experimental; and, above all, we must be in earnest to have it. Who is willing to be dead to what nature and flesh would desire? Yet that is the only way of deliverance. People will tell you it is our standing in Christ. I admit it as

Colossians 3, and as faith owns in Romans 6 and Galatians 2; but who is willing to be in the standing? It is standing, or else we are in the hopeless effort of Romans 7, or an honest monks' labour, which I have tried; and even if we have experimentally learned, as it must be learned, who is carrying out 2 Corinthians 4, so as to have the conscience living in it by an ungrieved spirit? But if experimentally taught, it is of the greatest use to souls; and the joy of being blameless in Christ before God is exceeding great, and one that is eternal and divine in its source and nature—a wonderful thing; "for he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him." The world is a terrible snare, and a subtle one, and greatly hinders this deliverance. A soul enjoying deliverance has its object elsewhere. (See Rom. 8) Then we must remember, "the soul of the diligent shall be made fat." I press, when souls are in earnest, "My grace is sufficient for thee, and my strength is made perfect in weakness." For we learn we are without strength for deliverance, and walk in the sense of it if we can be used in service; but His grace is sufficient. Knowing we are nothing is the place of blessing, for then God is everything; and the place of strength, for then Christ can put forth His strength. In this 2 Corinthians 12 is a most instructive chapter. Strength for service may be found, in what is within alone between us and God, [and] may be found, in the third heavens; but strength in it is found in Christ, when we are kept in the abiding consciousness that we can do nothing. We all know it. If we have not a permanent thorn in the flesh, we must at any rate return to the camp at Gilgal.

Dublin, May 28th.

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My dear Brother,—These of discipline are always difficult, and test the state of the assembly. I do not pretend to have much gift for them, and it depends on the spiritual discernment of those who deal with it. I have no doubt an annihilationist should be put away: it always really denies the atonement, responsibility, the immortality of the soul, and every just sense of sin. The main question is, Does he hold it now?

I would say that dear——, whose devotedness I know, is apt to deal rapidly and harshly in discipline, yet I cannot think it an evil that the assembly has given thereby a plain testimony, that it will not accept those who hold such doctrine: but this testimony it has given, and I am very thankful for it. The question, whether he held it then, does not affect this one way or another. The only thing that affects my mind is the subtle infecting poison of these doctrines; and hence the getting assured that not only the open holding of the doctrine, but the infection of the doctrine, does not remain, for it chimes in with the flesh and human nature. But if he be perfectly clear now, the assembly did clear themselves, for which as to it I am very thankful; and I see no reason why he should not be received. It is a good sign that he justifies the assembly, but I may say, that we have no right to keep out God’s children if they are sound in doctrine and godly in practice. The point is, Is he really clear, and does he judge the doctrine as evil, and really the denial [of what is] fundamental for souls; for, I repeat, if we have only animal-living souls, responsibility and atonement are gone. If God gave a dog eternal life he would not have to answer for what he had done, nor [need] a Saviour either; and I never met one who had not lost atonement: even if Christians their minds had

lost it, and I have had to say to plenty of them. Besides, if death is ceasing to exist, as they hold, Christ ceased to exist, and the foundations of faith are gone; and this was admitted to me by two of the most respectable of them at Boston. Does he, then, clearly judge the evil? Only seek [that there should not be] any breach of unity, for questions of discipline always tend to that. But our trust is, as you say, the Lord is above it all…

Kindest love to all the brethren. I am eighty if I live a few months, and I can hardly hope to see them—a sorrow to my spirit, but it is a going home to them as to me, and not an unwelcome one, though as long as He has work for me here, I am content to stay, and would rather have His will, whatever it be. I shall be always glad to hear from you and of all the brethren.

Affectionately yours in the Lord.

Dublin, June.

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Dearest Brother,—It is a long while since I wrote to you, and I have been some good while purposing to do so. It is not that I have a great deal to say, but I do not like dropping my intercourse with you. My soul draws nearer home: I want but a few months of eighty, and, though fresh in mind, through mercy, that home breaks more and more into my spirit. I feel more and more how ignorant our hearts are of it; yet, strange to say, I am sometimes afraid of being too familiar with it—not sufficiently adoring affections. And surely that is true: yet one thing I know with joy, that Christ is all.

I had been going through the hymns we have, for a new edition, and the question of hymns to the Father

presented itself, and the study of our relationship with the Father was much blessed to me, developing it to my heart. How gracious He is!

I have been laid up with the gout, fruit of over-fatigue in France; but the Lord's hand was in it, for I craved being quiet on my return to London, and it precluded my going out. But, though yet barely able to put on a soft shoe, I worked my way from London here, holding meetings in many places, and found everywhere thirst for the Word. Here also we have had most interesting meetings, reading John, and a great number coming. We read John's gospel, and Christ came personally before us, not our privileges, but Christ Himself.

There are three things I find in the often trying and toilsome life of faith: first, trusting God that nothing can hinder His accomplishing His purpose. All that his brethren did to frustrate the accomplishment of Joseph's dreams, just led to that accomplishment. They sent him to Egypt. The hard and wicked accusation against him in Potiphar's house put him in prison, where he met the butler and baker who brought him where the dream was fulfilled. Next, for us, simple obedience, taking God's mind for wisdom, and doing His will. He has a path for His saints in this world; in it they find Him and His strength, though perhaps the life of faith be dark: then, if we know the purpose of God, light is in the soul. But the path He will guide us in. It may seem dark, but, if His, it is the way of arriving at His rest. But a single eye seeking nothing but Christ is the secret of certainty of walk, and firmness as having the secret of the Lord with you. But what a calling! we have to walk worthy of God who has called us to His own kingdom, and yet what a joy to be thus associated with Himself! And we know His

purpose is to glorify Christ, and so we seek that, in walking worthy of Him and serving Him in love.

Did you ever notice Luke 12, the two things looked for in us? First, watching; its reward, making us sit down to table in heaven, and ministering the blessing to us; and then serving in what He sets us to do, and the reward of that, ruling. But the first is wonderful, that He remains for ever our servant in love. How blessed to have Him, and be His! There is progress in the Song of Songs. First, He is ours; next, we are His; and then I am my Beloved's, and His desire is towards me. That is wonderful to say! The riches of scripture, both for knowledge and for affections, is beyond our thoughts—no wonder, as it comes from God; but it is all ours. But the perfectness of our place is wonderful; and I do not mean now as to glory, true as that is, but morally. He is given to be the Object of our affections who is sufficient for the Father's; and to have Him in His path down here even is the food of the soul. Energy comes from seeing Him up there (Phil. 3), likeness to Him from feeding on Him down here (Phil. 2)

We are drawing on to the end, and I look to the Lord to keep His own to meet Him in that day. The Lord be with you, dear brother, in your soul and in your work.

Dublin, June 10th.

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Dear Brother,—I do not at all accept the exposition of the Bible Herald.18You might as well say the great day of atonement was for those already cleansed. Besides, the anointing the leper was not recalling the sealing of the Holy Ghost to mind, but doing the thing when he was cleansed: he had never been anointed before, and

the blood put upon him was the ground of its being done. It is an old interpretation, I judge, and a false one. Besides it confounds everything, imputation and uncleanness with loss of communion. The red heifer is the rite that refers to restoration, nor is it a question of discipline —which is for restoration, not for cleansing by blood.

Dublin, June.

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Dearest Brother,—I was very glad to get your news, and that thus far the Lord has helped. My conviction is that, though we might like increase of numbers, yet, from the state of Italy, very godly care—not suspicion—should be exercised in receiving into communion. Some may stay back thus who ought to be in, but testimony to Christ is maintained in its integrity. Deliverance from popery is a great blessing, and at first it took that character, and I doubt not there are many scattered converted souls, but gathering is another thing: “He that gathereth not with me scattereth.” Very ignorant souls may be rightly gathered, if there is godliness and integrity and lowliness; but we are called to walk with those who call on the name of the Lord out of a pure heart.

Here the Lord has added another to the list of places where thirst after the word has been marked: we have had, at their desire, reading-meetings three evenings a week, very well attended, and liberty amongst the saints. We have read John’s gospel with unabated interest; and I think the blessing has specially been from its being the blessed Lord Himself that has been before us: not even, however confessedly precious, the church privileges of Ephesians, and the like. Most precious they

are, and to His glory, still they are as to us, and not Himself, and there is nothing so precious as that—Himself. Life, righteousness, power, are all in Him; but that is for us. But in Himself objectively, it is purely Himself. You know I was studying and writing for myself on John at Pau, and it enlarged my apprehensions very much, but even so it was comparatively teaching, and led me on, perhaps, to what we have enjoyed here; for much of what we enjoyed was old truth.

May He keep you—us—near Him!

Dublin, 1880.

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Dear Mrs. ——,—I hardly know how to answer you, save to say to you to look to the Lord, and to do so myself; but that is a great comfort. Labourers in the harvest we have a crying want for here, and the Lord recognises it as a kind of known want, and tells us what to do. For who can send them but He, or raise up such as can go? I know none. In these countries there is far and wide an open ear, and very few to tell the glad tidings of salvation and a Saviour's love, yet there ought to be a sense of it which would urge us to bring it forth to others. After all, you are better off than many a place; yet I recognise the need, and earnestly pray the Lord to supply it. He cares for His church better than we know how. Yet I do not at all deny our responsibility in being exercised before Him for called-for blessing. It would have been a great joy for me to see you all at Boston, and indeed elsewhere, again; but I am forced to remember that I am within a few months of eighty, and have had the gout to boot, and though, thank God, fresh and happy in spirit, and labouring as usual, long

journeys become a greater burden, but one is nearer home—not, I hope, weary of what is here, certainly not of His service, but feeling it the deepest grace and mercy to be allowed to serve when I know what I am, though all around brings the presence of evil home to me, but—the thought of seeing Him, being in my Father's house and where holiness is and evil cannot be, where every saint will be exactly what Christ would desire they should be, the manifested proof of the travail of His soul, an eternal witness to the efficacy of His redemption.

The door is very open in these kingdoms for the word of God, and everywhere I hear of there is a thirst for it; so that besides study work there is plenty for all the labourers there are, and more too, if the Lord were pleased to send such as He would have.

Belfast, June 19th.

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Dear——,——'s notion is nothing new; it is held by many mystic evangelicals in a somewhat different shape, perhaps, but it is only a notion… The general notion I have alluded to is, that there is a kind of essence or germ of the body which remains, and is glorified, which would involve the exuviæ. But I have a horror of all notions, they are not Christ, and His unsearchable riches, and if the soul is full of Him, notions do not rise or suggest themselves. 1 Corinthians 15:38 answers it: "God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him," and what is sown in corruption is raised in incorruption, and what is sown in dishonour is raised in glory; and if we pretend to go further, we go beyond what is written, and are in danger of being designated a fool. There is no such

minuteness of comparison as this notion would find: it takes it to shew generally a resurrection in incorruption and glory, out of the grave of corruption and dishonour; but the exuviæ is a thought man's mind adds; but, as has been said of old, we are to bring ideas from scripture, not to it. It was a natural body, and becomes a spiritual body. When the living are changed there are no exuviæ: Christ could shew His hands and feet pierced. It is a change; the corruptible puts on incorruption, and what is mortal, immortality. These notions are the product of men's minds, and not what flows from the fulness of Christ, and that is the evil; and if we harbour them, it tends to shut Him out. But we have to bear with idle notions, and not strive. The best thing is to bring in Christ, and they fall or collapse by their own emptiness.

——has begun to break bread. —— is greatly troubled: I cannot say it did me. I could not ask them to go to A. H. till they gave up their false position, and I could hardly expect them to abstain for ever, and if they acted in starting with precipitation after the action of A. H., there was no way out but one God might open. But there was not the sober weighing of all before God that we ever need, and there was in some degree the pretension to start something extra. ——wrote to me of a prayer-meeting they had in London: but I answered that I had nothing against a prayer-meeting; but I could not be a party to a party, even to resist evil. But it will all get right, but as to men, I fear their seeking their own ease, not simply waiting on God for all.

The Lord be with you! He it is who works, and His Father too. May we lean constantly on Him!

Belfast, June, 1880.

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Dear——,— … The first resurrection I believe to be one whole thing, as contrasted with the second. (Rev. 20:4, 5.) Verse 4 brings in those killed under the beast. You have the general fact, there are sitters on thrones; then you have those who were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and “those who” —not, and who—had not worshipped the beast. These all form part of the first resurrection, the Old Testament saints “made perfect” with us. Chapter 6:9 answers to the first specific class in this verse; those of the beast’s time to the last, for whom those of chapter 6:9 wait. In this last verse there is nothing expressly of resurrection; the question is the execution of vengeance; for this, they have to wait for the last class, who are slain under the beast (such as the two witnesses), who are a kind of supplementary class, and are the saints of the high places of Daniel 7. When judgment is given to the saints (Dan. 7:22) their trials are over; the same characteristic is found in Revelation 20:4. The patience of the saints goes on till then. This is over when the Ancient of days comes. (Rev. 14:13, 14.)

Affectionately yours in the Lord

Dublin, June 24th, 1880.

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My dear Brother,—As regards division, I am as decided as possible… I wrote that I would no more go with a party against evil than with the evil itself, and quoted Isaiah 8:12, 13. I knew before I left for France, but found it much more forward than I was aware of when I returned. I do not believe it is either faith or godliness. I am pretty well aware of the springs which have moved in it. It would be still a question whether God was going

to set aside the brethren: if He does, certainly I should not go with any party in it. I have long felt that this party that assumes to be the godly one is the one to be feared. They are tried with evil, I admit, but this is not faith… Suffice it to say, with no party action will I have anything to do save to reject it. But the conclusion come to at Cheapside favoured no such action.

Dublin, July 1st.

My dear Brother,—I am always glad to hear from you, though I am a bad correspondent, and, I suppose, a bad one from pre-occupation with much work that lies before me…

Spiritual life wants cultivating; it is this we must look to, that there may be a true testimony. The brethren in England are somewhat aroused, but we have still much to seek that the Spirit of God and the life of Christ may pervade the mass. For this not only the privileges of the church must be held out, but Christ Himself. The other is all right, needed to clear us as to the mixed deadness of the name of Christian, and brighten our hopes; I should ever insist on it, it is what brought me out; but it is not what sustains life and forms the affections. “He that eateth me shall live by me.” This alone gives singleness of eye, and fixes the mind as to its object. It is never said of the church, but of Christ, He is all. “Christ is all, and in all” —“all” as object, “in all” as power of life to enjoy Him, and know the Father.

I have had, through mercy, a good time in Ireland, and in Dublin a great desire after the word. The brethren have been greatly interested in reading it; indeed, we have found it commonly thus. Kent remains unsettled, but I have heard nothing of it since——began to break bread.

It is not what in itself tries me, but a party right in their desire for good, but pretending to set up something new and holy, and, I think, despising God's patience with what I admit has greatly failed; but I feel one must take this, as all else, as under His hand; but I do not see them to be guided of God. I do not believe it is faith. I have to learn, in them, for myself, that patience may have its perfect work. After all, God continues blessing in spite of it all. I dread the world; and a nourishing with Christ, and cementing power of the Spirit is needed, so that both the object and the power should bind all together, and the truth spread by a divine testimony. To His working we must look.

It is a great comfort to think He is always right, and always does right. He loves the church, and in the midst of all our failures carries on His work of loving grace towards it, to "present it to himself a glorious church, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing." And, individually, such a High Priest became us as was "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, made higher than the heavens," yet we have not One "who cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted like as we are, sin apart." We belong to there, yea, go in boldly; but are here sanctified in spirit for that place which He has prepared for us by His entry there, and exercised and helped here by a sympathy and mercy which, while it is met by dependence in us, is a living and gracious sustainment, and gives blessed confidence. On Him we can count; He loves the church now as ever, and though our hearts are weak, how often have I seen His hand come in where all seemed hopeless. As men have said, 'Man's extremity is God's opportunity,' and so it is, and even in our souls—where

to know deliverance is, that we must have learned we cannot deliver ourselves. Peace be with you.

Your affectionate brother in Christ.

Dublin, July, 1880.

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My dear Brother,—I was glad to see your hand and name, and answer you at once. I object altogether to the question. What benefit does the world get from [propitiation]? It puts everything on a false and low ground, as if the end and only object of God's ways—leaving out the claims of His glory and nature in that which angels desire to look into. I agree in general with what you say; but "the Lord's lot" was not for the sins of the people, as guilt, though God's holy and righteous nature was met in respect of their sin. The blood was sprinkled first, on and before the mercy-seat—God's throne in the most holy place where God dwelt—and the altar of incense. The atonement was for the "holy place… that remaineth among them." "That is for the people," (ver. 15) is in contrast with Aaron and his house. But what was cleansed and hallowed was the holy place, and the altar, no doubt, because of the tabernacle being among them. As meeting God's nature and character, it was the basis of all. (Compare Heb. 9:23-26 and 27, 28.) The taking away the sin of the world was to have "a new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness"—is the fruit of the sacrifice of the Lamb of God. Thank God! our sins are taken away, too, but that is a different thing from putting away sin.

It is deplorable to make putting away our sins, true and blessed as it is, the end of all God has been glorified in

Him (John 13) in such sort, that Man is in the glory of God. In the scapegoat, God's people were represented in their head—the high priest—and those only who, as such, were identified with him. In the other there was no such representation—a most important principle. Though the people's uncleanness were the occasion of it, it was the Lord's lot, His dwelling-place which was in question, and transgressions not in question, save as the means of its defilement; and the blood was under God's eye as the ground of all God's dealings till, and making the security of, the new heavens and the new earth. (See John 13:31, 32.) Through the cross, God Himself has been fully glorified, and in virtue of it Christ Himself has entered into the glory of God as Man, though He had it before the world was. (So Philippians ii.) Man's sin was absolute, Satan's power over all the world, man's perfection absolute in Christ when absolutely tested, God's righteous judgment against sin displayed as nowhere else, and perfect love to the sinner, His majesty made good. "It became him." (Heb. 2) No doubt our sins were borne too, thank God! that we might have part in the results; but blessed as this is for us, it was really a secondary thing to the basis of the glory of God in the universe, and the bringing all into order, according to what He is fully displayed. So John 17:4, 5. But in John's gospel there is not a word of the forgiveness of our sins, save as administered by the apostles.

Finally, the people were not represented in the blood on the mercy-seat and holy place; their sins gave occasion to its being done, but the cleansing was of God's dwelling-place, that that should be fit for Him, and what He was, perfectly glorified by Christ's death—to be for ever before Him as eternal redemption. The two goats

made but one Christ in different aspects. But propitiation alters the whole ground of God's dealings with man. It is the display of God's mercy maintaining God's righteousness, but opening the door to the sinner—the ground on which I preach the gospel, and can say to every sinner, The blood is on the mercy-seat; return to God, and it will be His joy to receive you: it is not necessary for Him to judge you if you so come, for His righteousness is fully glorified, and His love free. This may bring out the evil will in man, but it is then "ye will not come to me that ye might have life." There is death in substitution—He "bore our sins in his own body on the tree"—"died for our sins according to the scriptures": as I have said, the two goats are one Christ.

The word "lost" is not a different word. Christ came to seek sinners, not repentant sinners. God leads to repentance. We have the repentant sinner in the third parable—the seeking in the two first. (Luke xv.) The "lost" in them has, of course, a physical sense as a figure, but there was no thought of their disposition to return. It is a miserable denial of the gospel; "God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." The figure of their being carried clean away, not to be found, may be given, but that forgiveness and redemption are by blood-shedding is stated everywhere—no remission of sins without it. "We have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins." Luke 19:10 is also "lost"—the same word…

Dublin, 1880

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Dear——,—First, I do not think you have put in adequate prominence, at starting, Hebrews 10, distinguishing the

Spirit's work which gives us the sense of our sins at conversion (and can only of past ones) and Christ's work when all were future, and the efficacy of which was not only up to the day of our conversion. Next, I believe 1 John 1:5-10 to be abstract—the message received from Christ come. Chapter 2:1, as you say, is clearly believers; but confession of sins is at the beginning and all along. Walking in light, fellowship, and cleansing, are the three elements of the christian state. Chapter 2:1, as you say, begins with the saints: it was for them he wrote what went before, but what he wrote was abstract truth, the message. But I think chapter 1:9 is present application: uprightness in confession brings forgiveness in relationship—not merely justification.

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Dear——,—1 John 1:7 I believe to be an abstract statement, as I might say, Quinine cures intermittent fever: it is its quality and effect. Abstract, absolute statements characterise John: "he cannot sin;" "the wicked one toucheth him not." As to verse 9, it is the same, only it is subjective—the state and act of the person. If a person confesses his sins he is forgiven: his soul must be in that state to be forgiven. Only when it is at the outset, it is justification once for all, afterwards governmental: in the first case, non-imputation; in the second, the dealings of God with His people or children. And the difference is important, connected with the revelation made in Christianity.

I thank God for the blessing He has bestowed upon your work. May He keep us near Himself, and that Christ may be all, so that our life may be the production of Christ, and nothing else. His coming will indeed be joy. Our full

happiness is laid up in treasure there. We wait for it till He comes. Till then it is the word of His patience and serving Him.

Affectionately yours in the Lord.

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Dublin, 1880.

My dear Sir,—I have received your tract, and am glad to have done so, as it affords me an opportunity to give a little more fully the scriptural evidence of the Deity of the Lord. How much it pained me to read it, I cannot tell you; but I apply myself at once to the point. The rash expressions of individuals are nothing to the purpose: the question is, what does scripture say? No Christian denies he should pray to the Father, but it is equally certain the Lord is prayed to—nay, calling upon the name of the Lord Jesus is, so to speak, a definition of a Christian in 1 Corinthians 1:2. Stephen called on the Lord Jesus to receive his spirit, and Paul that the thorn might be taken from him. A child prays to his Father, but the administration of the house is in the Lord's hands.

It is a strange assertion that the scriptures do not say that Jesus is God: and I pray you to note that the question connects itself directly with that of—What was He before He was a man? "The Word was with God, and the Word was God." "And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us." You will not deny that that was Jesus: did God, for such the Word was, cease to be God? He was "in the form of God," laid aside His glory, "and took upon him the form of a servant;" but He is called God: Jesus is Emmanuel, God with us. (Matt. 1:23.) The scriptures do therefore call Him God. Again, Jesus means Jah, or Jehovah the Saviour; His name states that

He is Jehovah: is not Jehovah God? Jesus received it, because He was to “save his people from their sins”—whose people? Hence, in John 12, the evangelist cites a passage from Isaiah vi., where the highest glory of Jehovah is displayed, and says (ver. 41) the prophet saw Christ’s glory and spake of Him. Hence the Lord says to the Jews, “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.”

Your question as to the Son of David is nothing to the purpose; no one says God is the Son of David: all Christians own that Christ was born into the world as a man: what they say is that the Son of David was also God. Take the end of 1 John 2 and beginning of 3—in chapter 2:28, “he shall appear;” that is, Christ: in verse 29, saints are “born of him;” but they are “sons of God” in chapter 3:1; but the world “knew him not”: that is, the same Person is Christ on earth. In verse 2 we are “the sons of God,” but, “when he shall appear;” now it is Christ. No one can read this passage and not see that Christ and God were one Object or Person before the apostle’s mind; and so at the end of the epistle, “We are in him that is true, that is, in his Son Jesus Christ: this [He] is the true God and eternal life.” And even the Old Testament knows this. In Daniel 7 the Son of man comes to the Ancient of days (ver. 13), but further on in the course of the chapter, the Ancient of days comes. (Ver. 22.) So in Revelation 1:17: “The first and the last” is “he that liveth and was dead.” In chapter 1:8, Alpha and Omega is the Almighty; in chapter 22:12, 13, it is Christ who comes. In 1 Timothy 6:14, 16, “the blessed and only Potentate” is “King of kings and Lord of lords,” but in Revelation 19:16 this is Christ. In John 17 He looks to be glorified with the Father, but He had had it before the

world was. What He says is that He does and can do nothing as originated by Himself, ajf* eJautou' (John 5:19.) The same is said of the Holy Ghost (chap. 16:13), “He shall not speak of himself”— ajf* eJautou' — “from himself” as a source. No Christian denies He took the form of a servant, and always so lived on the earth: but who “took upon him the form of a servant”? Not an angel; he is a servant, and cannot leave his first estate. Christ “made himself of no reputation” when He was in the form of God: was it a false form? The Lord forgive the question: I put it for your sake, dear sir. He could say, “before Abraham was I AM.” The fulness of the Deity, you admit, dwelt in Him. The Son of David was much more than the Son of David: “God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself.” Whose thoughts and words were Christ’s? were they not a man’s, yet whose? He could say “the Son of man who is in heaven.” What was He before He came down? Was the Word which became flesh (saVrz ejgevneto) before [He became so] God or not?

Proving He was Man, proves nothing; we all believe it as fundamental truth: but was He only a man? Clearly not: He was “the Word:” He “came down from heaven.” What was He then before He became a man? He claims to be One with the Father (John 10:30)—can a creature? If He was not a creature He was God; or we have one not created at all, of independent existence in Himself, yet not God, which is confusion and impossible. “By him were all things created:” who did that? He is the Firstborn of the creation, because He created it; all things, moreover, consist by Him. (Col. 1:16.) He was “in the beginning,” and then by him were all things made that are made. (John 1:1, 3.) He, then, was not made: are

there two Gods? He laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of His hands; they perish, but He remains. (Heb. 1:8, 10, 11.) All the angels of God are to worship Him. (Ver. 6.) “Blessed are all they that put their trust in him” (Psa. 2:12), but “cursed be the man that trusteth in man.” (Jer. 17:5.) He and the Father are one: can any creature say that?

I find, then, that He is called God before He came into the world (John 1), after He came into the world—“God with us.” He created all things, and “by him all things consist,” is to be worshipped as the first and the last, Alpha and Omega—which is the express title of the Almighty, King of kings and Lord of lords, the Ancient of days: and, lest we should think Him some inferior God, we are told that all the fulness of the Godhead (qeovthto") dwelt in Him bodily. (Col. 2:9.) The moral teaching of scripture confirms it. “Christ is all” to the Christian, so that if He be not God, God is nothing. The object of the supreme devotion of the heart, I am to live to Him (2 Cor. 5:15); is this to a creature? This is the real question: Is He the creature or the Creator? No Christian denies that He is true, very Man, and that He has taken a place inferior to the Father; but for this He made Himself of no reputation when in the form of God, and took upon Him the form of a servant: no creature could do that; he is one by nature.

He was, as you say, the foreordained Second Adam, but that Second Adam was the Lord from heaven. (1 Cor. 15:47.) He came not to do His own will surely; as Man, obedience and dependence was His place, but He came into a prepared body, having offered Himself to do it. You may say, He is Son of God. What do you mean by that? “Kiss the Son lest he be angry.” God spoke ejn

uiJw'/ (Heb. 1:1.) The exaltation of Jesus, of which you speak, was after He had been “made a little lower than the angels [whom He had created] for the suffering of death,” being “made like to his brethren in all things.” He “maketh his angels spirits … but unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God”—He does not make Him anything. Would the blood of a mere man cleanse from all sin?

How you can say the scriptures do not say He is God, I do not understand: they do over and over again, directly and indirectly, in equivalent terms. I have not quoted “God manifest in the flesh,” “Christ who is over all, God blessed for ever,” as critics may reason about them. The last, however (Rom. 9:5) is as plain a testimony as can well be conceived, and the language such as makes it impossible to apply it to any one but Christ. Is it not singular that you should have passed over all the passages I have referred to, and only quoted what shews that Christ was truly a man, which nobody denies—without which, indeed, His Godhead is of no avail to us? I cannot in the compass of a note pretend to discuss fully such a subject. But all scripture confirms the truth, that Jesus is Jehovah. John the Baptist was “the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord”—that is, Jehovah (Isa. 40): so Luke 7:27, from Malachi 3:1: so Luke 1:76: so when He says to the leper, “I will, be thou clean.” In Isaiah 66:15 Jehovah comes with fire and the sword, but we know it is Christ who comes. What is the meaning of Micah 5:2? Who is Jehovah’s fellow? (Zech. 13:7.) The cleansing of the leper was Jehovah’s work: the feeding of the five thousand, a reference to the Psalms speaking of Jehovah; and though done as Son of man (Luke 9:10-17

and following) accomplished Psalm 132:15, spoken of Jehovah. He not only works miracles, which God can enable any one, if He pleases, to do, but He confers the power of working them by His own power on others, which man cannot do. (Luke 9) All these I refer to as confirmations of the direct statements of scripture that He is God, and they are consistent with no other doctrine. And they might be multiplied by reference to every page of the gospel. He quickens whom He will (John 5:21); can that be said of a mere man, a creature? The Old Testament declares that Jehovah was to come, and His way be prepared, but this was Christ. Hebrews 12:25, 26, shew positively that Christ is the Jehovah of mount Sinai.

I do not write in a controversial spirit, and beg you to weigh the passages, because it is the greatest of all comforts to know that God did thus come down and become a man—reveal Himself to us so near us. I know God in knowing Christ, find Him grace and love, and cannot in any other way know Himself. May the gracious Lord give you to see it!

[Date unknown.]

* * * * *

My dear Brother,—Mr.——assures me, for I had written to him, that he is quite sure that he joins heartily in praise and worship to the Lord Jesus Christ. He has only wanted the full sense of sonship to be known and of nearness to God in Christ. Now this is right and many fail in it, and have the feeling they can approach Christ, and trust in His love, but not God. The spirit of adoption is greatly wanting in many. When there was a man at Auburn in Maine (I forget his name) with whom I also

had to do, and who opposed prayer and praise to the Lord Jesus, ——had also a correspondence with him to shew him he was wrong, but then both our efforts were useless.

It is possible some may have objected to it really. If they will not worship a Man, the angels will, and moreover, every knee bow to Him, of men and infernal beings. While scripture puts us into the glory with Christ and like Christ, it carefully guards the personal glory and title of Christ. Moses and Elias were seen in the same glory as Christ, but the moment Peter would put them on a level, they disappear, and the Father's voice is heard declaring He was His beloved Son. The heavens were as open to Stephen (through Christ's death) as to Christ when He came up from Jordan; but Stephen looks at Him as an object, as Son of man, and is changed morally into His likeness: heaven looks down on Christ, and, instead of conforming Him to anything, the Spirit seals Him as He is, and the Father owns Him as He is. It is down here He says, "the Son of man who is in heaven." It is He who came in in subjection by the door, the Shepherd who gave His life for the sheep, who says, "I and my Father are One." If there is the divine and human nature in Him, there is only one Person. And he who says, I will not adore a man, is, to say the least, in danger of denying the unity of the Person. He who has seen Him has seen the Father. The Man who spoke to Philip and washed his feet, could say, and did at the same time, "Believest thou not that I am in the Father and the Father in me?" Stephen, full of the Holy Ghost, addressed himself to the Son of man, saying, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." Authority is given to Him to judge "because he is the Son of man;" but it is "that all

men should honour the Son even as they honour the Father." Is that refusing to worship Him? See John 5:18; the Jews were more consistent.

To separate the Son of man and Son of God is to dissolve Christ. See John 3:14, 16. See again, 1 John 5:20, "We know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, in his Son Jesus Christ. This [He,ou\to"] is the true God and eternal life." But Jesus is the name of Him who was born of the virgin Mary, and Christ is the anointed Man. And the apostle emphatically adds in contrast, "Little children, keep yourselves from idols." There is a most striking passage in 1 John 2:28 and 3:1, 2. The inseparableness of personality and the distinction of nature is very striking—" Before him at his coming," "is born of him" in verse 29, so that we are "sons of God" (3:1), and yet the world "knew him not"—"sons of God" (ver. 2), but we like Him when He shall appear. All this blessed truth is lost if we dissolve, as I have called it, Christ. And yet I must know Him as a man: that is the distinctness of the nature, for He prayed to God and died, and yet He "was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death"—when in the form of God, "made Himself of no reputation" (eJautoVn ejkevnwsen), yet, being thus, could say, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." "No man knoweth the Son but the Father." But he who loses these things loses the Son. Speaking of worshipping a man is losing the Person of Christ. And if the angels are to worship Him [Heb. 1:6], worship is a just service as to what is—for it is not our being exempt which is in question, but His being entitled to it. And there it is Christ, though His Godhead is brought out, yet as

incarnate; for it is said, “when he had by himself purged our sins,” and He is “the first begotten” (not the “only begotten”), and Psalm 2 is quoted where He is distinctly celebrated as Messiah—Christ, or, as in English, “His anointed.”

But I fear there has been too much discussion: refusing to worship the Lord is a very serious error, but discussion about His Person seldom leads to much fruit. I have spoken as plainly as possible, that there may be no mistake about my judgment of refusing to do it. But you or others may have wrongly estimated what Mr. —— wished to put forward. It is not only in replying to me, but in his controversy with the man at Auburn, that he rejected the thought of not worshipping the Lord—to whom “every knee shall bow” (and that puts Him in the place of worship, as “have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal” shews). But his statement to me is quite clear. It is possible some, not inclined to worship Christ as is due, may have profited by expressions to support their false state of heart. Hasty conclusions are not always wise. Firmness against false doctrine is always right. But there are a great many who are in the Martha state—“what thou askest of God,” who, as not really free, cannot go directly to the Father, nor worship anybody rightly, and cannot worship under the conviction the Father Himself loveth them—not questioning God’s love in sending His only begotten Son, but who do not enter into the present privilege of direct address to the Father, as those who are in His presence and enjoy His love there— loved as Jesus Himself is loved, wonderful as such a word is, this love being in them…

Affectionately yours in the Lord.

Dublin, 1880.

* * * * *

My beloved Brother,—It is time I wrote to you, and seek withal to cheer you also, for I-hear that you have had trouble. My letter I had headed to begin some weeks ago, but only now could continue. I have not lost my interest in Barbadoes, nor in your work, dear brother; but I have been incessantly occupied travelling and visiting the gatherings, besides claims in study work. I have been looking over the hymns for a new edition, have my Testament on hand for a new edition, an English translation of my German to look over, am writing on John's gospel for the French, and on Komans for the Germans, and have been laid up in the gout to boot, not to say that I am within a few months of eighty; but enough of myself, only to excuse myself for my delay in writing. And now I must begin again for the third time, with the same excuse, having had two meetings, if not more, daily up to this (Edinburgh); besides the same work as far as possible while travelling, but Christ more precious than ever. I wonder sometimes how in sovereign grace God has revealed Him to me. I feel nearer, more at home in the Father's love, yet conscious of unworthiness, but more in the sense that all is pure grace. That there was no good in me I learnt, in one sense thoroughly, that is as a fact, some eight and fifty years ago, and I have, I hope, a deeper, clearer sense of it now, not seeing it, of course, as God does—for who does?— but at least with Him; but thus more in the sense of present, sovereign goodness in Him. And that is blessed, for that is what will be for ever, when no sin will remain and where sin can never enter; but that love is a sanctuary in which we walk while passing through a

world of snares, “the provoking of all men … from the strife of tongues,” and the more the crossing and entanglement of what is without, the sweeter the rest of His presence; and soon there will be nothing else, and even here He makes all things work together for good to them that love Him: but the rest is better, but the other leads to it even here.

We are not at the end of our troubles here, at least locally, for in the mass in the country they only need ministering Christ to them. And there is a great thirst for the word, so that a door of blessing is richly opened. But besides the positive evil in worldliness, a class had sprung up of true hearts, many of them, but where will, and, in some, pretension was at work, who, tired of the evil which I think they had not faith to meet, would have thrown, as we say in French, the handle after the axe, and cut the connection altogether, and set up afresh—not pretending exactly to make a new body, but that it was hopeless trying to go on. I had been deeply tried by this question before the evil broke out, but had concluded before God that it was not faith thus to leave, that “the hireling fleeth,” and I stayed and served, though away in France from the London disturbances… Where there has been faithfulness there is more life than before, sensibly so I think, and they are more closely united; but there is wanting a bond of general confidence which, I trust, may grow with time, and is growing; but there is still the feeling, and locally the effect, of the class I mentioned —the last not large, but it tends to keep the sense of uneasiness alive. One has to have faith for everybody. Yet God is so good; for the work goes on with as much blessing as usual. Except in the locality referred to, a stranger would perceive little

amiss; it is the general bond which is wanting: for one's work in testifying of Christ it is quite happy.

I thought you would like, dear brother, to know how things were here, and I have given you as plain and true an account as I could. Those who went wrong are disposed to make and represent all as bad as may be, but as to that I trust God. I have little uneasiness as to that. They feel I believe, when there is a little soundness, that God is not with them in it. I fear more what I believe is the unbelief of those who have felt and judged the evil, and with whom, as to that, I sympathise. The real truth is, God has been sifting us, but I believe in love, and when needed; and in that love I trust, and in this matter I never trusted anything else.

Kind love to the brethren: may God abundantly bless you and them.

Affectionately yours in Jesus.

Edinburgh, 1880.

* * * * *

Dear ——,—Christ has a priesthood which calls us above, Hebrews 7:26. Such an one "became us" because we belong there; but a priesthood which can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, because we are down here. He enters into all these as knowing them, and so lays hold on our hearts, but to lead them up to higher and holier associations where God dwells. How gracious! There as an object we see Christ glorified, and are led on, for we are to be like Him and with Him. This gives energy to spiritual life. We look back to Him in humiliation, and this engages our affections and forms our heart and christian character—gives us delight in

His perfection —“let the same mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus.” Thus feeding on Christ, and eating His flesh and drinking His blood, we abide in Him and He in us. The heart finds its food, its strength, its everything in Him, and our responsibility and the desire of our heart—so that it is the law of liberty—is to please Him, and walk as He walked, worthy of the Lord. What a calling! As He is so are we before God; as He walked so would we walk. Would that we could! In one sense we can, for His grace is sufficient for us; but we soon find, in looking at Him, how far we are behind. Cleave to Him. John 14:19, 20.

1880.

* * * * *

Dear Mrs. ——,—I was very glad to get your account. I need not say how thankful I am for the blessing God has bestowed on the work… I do trust the Lord may continue His blessing on the depot and on the saints. As to me, I am growing old, past eighty, and my activities somewhat more burdensome; but till to-day, and some days of travelling, I have had two meetings daily these six weeks or more, and when in London it is yet harder work. In general there is a very open ear for the word, and we cannot complain of want of blessing. There is nothing very new, but the thirst for the word is striking, nor are conversions wanting. The shake brethren got in London has aroused consciences; they needed it, but the Lord has been very gracious, and though there are local traces of it, God has not allowed His testimony to fail. But there is not the same deadness to the world as at first, but more than a while back: I do trust there may be yet growth in this respect…

What I still dread is worldliness; it weakens the spring of all. For what is there but Christ? He reveals the Father; He is eternal joy, and present life too. We do not enough feel that what is not seen is revealed to us. See 1 Corinthians 2 How could we look upon it if it were not, or how set our affections on things above? Perhaps as one draws nearer we see clearer, or are more occupied with it, but it seems to me all. People go on around me with their occupations, and I suppose must, and I know ought in one sense; but it seems to me another world which ends in nothing. At any rate, the fashion of it passes away—Christ, and His word, and they who do God's will, never. All that is eternal; only we have to seek His guidance to serve Him, with His wisdom and according to His will.

Kindest love to the brethren. It would, were it possible, be a joy to me to see them, but it is hardly likely now.

Aberdeen, September, 1880.

* * * * *

My dear Brother,—It will be impossible for me to get to Lerwick; indeed, I am already a little uneasy at the time I am kept from getting back to London, and I am getting old, too, though most mercifully kept. I have work claiming completing I can only do in London, and shall probably have to go to France this autumn, and am thus pressed up for time. The Lord has been graciously with me in my work, as I trust He may be with you, as I know indeed He has. Christ is everything. May you be given to keep Him constantly before your eyes. Our strength is to know our own nothingness, and have Him as everything. He never fails, cannot fail, and, if we walk in His path and words, manifests Himself to us, so that we should

have joy in our souls and strength in our service. I hear you have been unwell, but a time of retirement is a very good thing in our service; it puts us before God instead of our work before us, and makes us feel, too, that our work is in His hands and not our own. I remember when I used to be ill every year, I always felt if I had been near enough to God I should not have needed it; but it is always grace; but I trust you will be better.

Your affectionate brother in Christ.

Aberdeen.

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15 ‘Point of contact.’ German.

16 ‘Christ, or the Last Adam, a quickening Spirit, gives power to as many as receive Him to become children (tevkna) of God, by their being born of God.’ [‘Eternal Life,’ p. 33.]

17 ‘This… the believer has, not as a gift which on its bestowal becomes detached from its source or spring, but in inseparable connection with Himself, where it is enjoyed in common or in communion with Him.’ (Page 20.)

18 Vol. 4:161. ‘This portion [Lev. 13, 14] treats of discipline toward a Christian, or one who has been reckoned as such, and not of the salvation of a sinner.’ ‘In thought we must go back to the Lord’s death and resurrection as often as restoration is required … for by His blood atonement is effected and by His resurrection all who believe in Him are cleared from all charge of guilt.’ (P. 165.) ‘But for the atonement we cannot receive the Holy Ghost: without the Spirit we have no power to serve God: of these things the action of the priest [chap.

14:17] here reminds us… The restored one has need to be reminded,’ etc. (P. 168).

Letters Section 4

[From the French.

Very dear Brother,—I thank you for your letter. All this interests me much. ——writes to me also of the issue of this division movement of which you speak. It appears, blessed be God for it! that it is coming to an end. Often a little patience to let God act is the remedy, while judging all manifested evil, specially when the evil is more in the general state; then it is necessary to seek, by nourishing the souls of those who are Christ's, to raise their spiritual tone. For the rest we must always look beyond this poor world down here.

We ought to be a testimony for God down here, and we must surely remember this. "Ye are my witnesses," said Jehovah to Israel, and with still greater reason are Christians such, who are the salt of the earth, the light of the world. I seek this, I pray God for it, and also that He may maintain His testimony in its purity. I believe He will, but for that we must live near Him in spirit, as He lived by His Father, one with Him, in such a way that all He said and did was but the expression of what the Father was. It is what we ought to be for Christ, but for that the heart must be with Him above. The first thing is communion with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ, for there the direct power of the life is. But it is a mistake to suppose that the heavenly things are not revealed to us: "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit." "We have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which

is of God, that we may know the things that are freely given to us of God.” Now, whilst giving us strength down here, and detaching us from the things that are seen, this accustoms us to live in the things that are our eternal portion.

We often make use of the Saviour in His grace, so suited to our need, and that flows so freely towards us—who thinks of us, of all our difficulties, of all our weaknesses —and we are quite right, for He makes us pass in peace and safety through a world of sorrow and danger; but it is another thing to have the heart lifted up above the world, whilst passing through it, and attached to Him in heaven in such a way that that which fills the heart now is also the object of our hope. It is what I seek, and pray to God for, for other Christians as for myself. But we must have Christ for the journey through the wilderness; we need to know how to count on His faithfulness in all circumstances, and to wait on Him.

May God keep all the brethren very near to Him, this is our eternal position, and it keeps the conscience awake. “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.”

1880.

* * * * *

Dear——,—I have thought it well to send you my answer* to Mr.——, who wrote to me19 to announce his separation from brethren. Though I sorrow for him, I do not know that it is an evil that the system of which it is the expression is come to a head. The evil has long been apparent to me.

*My dear——,—You know nothing of my relationship with Abbot’s Hill, nor what I have said or written to

them, but that is not the question now, but the position you have definitively taken…

You now openly judge the whole body of brethren as unfit to be associated with, on account of their state, while reserving to yourself the right to select certain assemblies and individuals whom you will own. You and this party are characterised by that holiness and truth which are proper to the precious.testimony which God confided to brethren, at least by the love of it and fidelity to it; the rest are in a mass regarded as unworthy.

Now I have not seen that those who pretend to this, are more holy or characterised more by what is proper to this testimony, nor more devoted, nor have the good of the church of God at heart. Their state does not approve itself to my spiritual judgment, while owning many of those I refer to as dear brethren. I know among the thousands of whom you know nothing, brethren walking in obscurity, more devoted, more given up to Christ, than those who are disposed thus pretentiously to quit them. You admit the precious testimony of God was confided to brethren, so that it is solely on the ground of their unfaithfulness and your greater faithfulness that you leave them. Now I admit that brethren have declined from the unworldliness which was proper to this testimony, and have borne as God enabled me a testimony to this effect, and the troubles in London have largely awakened conscience, and I may add, I never met in visiting, so great an appetite for the word. But all this was fully before me, before——'s case arose. I weighed before God, with deeper anxiety than I can speak of here, the question of leaving brethren, and what I should do. I felt clearly it was not faith—"the

hireling fleeth”—and I remained where I was, though in some things more isolated. I have not remarked that those who have taken the ground you do have advanced in holiness and spirituality, rather the contrary, and I am satisfied it is the path of pretension, not of faith. The question was fully before me, and decided before any of the particular questions arose, though partially occasioned by what brought some of them in result. I therefore, having had the matter fully before me, reject as evil the ground you have taken. Were the movement of those you join yourself to, to break up brethren—and I have thought of all that—your party, were I to be with any (which I do not think I should) would, I think, be the very last I should be with: indeed, I should not think of it at all, it is too pretentious for me. I have felt that brethren had got into a low state, and have felt the path was to serve them in it. You have judged that they are in a hopeless, irremediable state, and judged of God to be unworthy of His testimony. God will judge whom He accepts in this. If God has not so judged them, you are clearly wrong. I shall not regret, if He does reject them, having sought to serve them, and Him, in their low estate.

I enter into no details as to——. It is not the question. Your statement is, ‘I am not free to be in their association, as feeling my great responsibility to the Lord and to the brethren.’ I believe that under the influence of an evil system you have not been able to resist the effect of the pressure of A. H., and what was associated with it. You cannot be surprised if I act as to you on your own statement, and at the same time reject in every way the system under whose influence you are. I reserve to myself, as it concerns many besides you, the

right to communicate this letter in any way I think proper. I leave the judgment of the question, and of the right path, entirely in the Lord’s hands. Your affectionate brother in Christ.

Perth, September 22nd.

* * * * *

My dear Brother,—I trust that it is error,20 and not heresy. For the latter there must be the evil will of the flesh; and I trust that this is not the case with our brother. Another thing it is right to add, that it is always right to hear what a person has to say before condemning him. But taking your account of the matter and question, it is quite clear that there must be faith in the word in order to be born again. That we are begotten, and born, by the word is plainly stated in scripture; and the word is received by faith. A word not believed has no effect at all. A person may see men as trees walking, that is true; still the word has been believed. I believe that the source of the teaching is taking up a doctrine in the mind; and, lowliness failing—it is not experimentally realised, but the mind trusted—things are put out which are not really of faith.

I do not think the passage in Matthew 13 as to the good soil, applies at all. In every case, save the first, the seed sprang up and grew: the object of the parable is quite another. I should not, on the other hand, use for it (though I do not doubt I have often done it, from not examining it closely), Galatians 3: “We are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus,” because it ought to be “sons,” not “children.” And this, which is christian standing, is contrasted in Galatians 4 with those who were quickened, and heirs of all, but not in

the position of sons; that is, believers under the law. The origin of the error I believe to be a hasty and immature taking up of the difference between being quickened and set free. That people must believe the word to be quickened I have no doubt of; but a person may believe in Christ, and not know the value of the work of Christ so as to have peace and forgiveness. Thus the prodigal referred to was brought to know he was perishing, confessed his sins, and set out to his father, and that was the work of grace in him, but said, “Make me a hired servant.” That was not knowing his father; nor had he the best robe on him so as to be fit to go as son into the house. When his father was on his neck he does not say, ‘Make me a servant’; and, indeed, we hear no more of him, but of what his father was to him and did for him.

I have no doubt that He who begins the good work will perfect it unto the day of Jesus Christ; but the work of the Spirit and word, by which we are converted, born again, through faith, is distinct from that knowledge of the work of Christ in the conscience which gives peace, and there may be an interval passed between them; but my heart being repentant and turned to God, is a distinct thing from having the Father on my neck, and the best robe upon me. In Acts 2 they believed, through grace, Peter’s word and said, “Men and brethren, what shall we do?” Peter then presents to them the forgiveness of sins, and the reception of the Holy Ghost. Here there was no delay, but there were two distinct things; and, from want of a plain gospel, souls often stay some time in Romans 7, converted (by the word), but without peace, much more, without deliverance—nay, are taught to stay there.

My impression (for, I repeat, it is always fair to hear what a person has to say) is, that what has been taught is the fruit of being aware of this difference, and the mind, having had too much confidence in itself, teaching what was not experimentally learned, and hence immaturely and with mistakes, which might be mischievous—perhaps, dear brother, with a little dogmatic impatience on your part, there being behind truth which you had not learned. But in this case it would be error, not heresy; only the teacher would have to be more a learner, and not to go beyond what he had learned with God. I have spoken openly, having confidence in his and your love as brethren, though personally I have not the pleasure of knowing you.

Earnestly desiring you may all find true peace and union through grace.

Your affectionate brother in Christ.

Perth, September 21th.

Dear ——,—I did not like the article21 by —— at all, and sent him word so. But there is great general decline on this point, and I have a tract in hand as to it, which I hope to get out as soon as possible.22 We must not confound manifested salvation, and being born of God. We read, “To give knowledge of salvation to his people by the remission of their sins.” But before Christ came, souls were born of God; but they could not believe that Jesus was the Christ, for He had not come. They might have believed the promises then which referred to Him who should come: “But life and incorruptibility have been brought to light by the gospel.” I can now say, “Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God.” But that is not exactly saying, Whosoever does

not, is not. We can say, he that, when He is presented, rejects Him is condemned, dies in his sins; and a saving work may be begun in the soul by the Spirit of God where the soul is not clear as to the Person of Christ, but which assuredly leads to it, and which, now that His name is spread abroad, it is almost impossible to separate from it; nor can we ever say that a man has life till he believes in Christ. Still this remains always true and fundamental, “He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life”; and repentance and remission of sins were to be preached in His name. Conscience and knowledge may be both, there without a quickening work. But there may be a work in consciences in the living power of the Spirit, before the mind is clear as to the truth concerning the Lord, yet ultimately the testing-point; and, the fact of Jesus Christ being the Son of God and dying for us being universally known, it is implicitly believed without the passage to real faith being perceived. We see love to the brethren, love to the word, and we cannot help trusting the work of the Spirit is there, and there is the current faith in Christ with us, as I have said— the change into reality unperceived. But all this refers to our perception of it, not to the reality of the thing in God’s sight. But “of his own will begat he us by the word of truth,” and that truth is concerning His Son. We may see the fruits, and so judge or trust that life is there; but the root is not in the fruits.

It does not follow that a person is clear as to the efficacy of Christ’s work, because he believes in, and loves, Christ. The sealing of the Spirit goes, as to the detail of the work, I believe, with faith in the work, as well as the Person. See Acts 2:37, 38, and 10:43; Ephesians 1:13.

But in a plain gospel they go together; Being in the flesh is being in the standing of the first Adam before God, and not in Christ—judging from ourselves to God's judgment, and not from His work to our place before Him: "According to this time shall it be said of Jacob and of Israel, what hath God wrought?" So the prodigal. "In the flesh" (Rom. 7 and 8) is the same. Deliverance and forgiveness are not the same thing. We must learn what we are, as well as what we have done; deliverance is known by sealing, as being in Christ. "Where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty."

We had a most useful meeting at Rochdale.

London, October 14th.

* * * A question was communicated to me by —— 'What would be sufficient to deprive the assembly of the testimony of God?' Now the question is, to my mind, a profound mistake— that the testimony they bear is the governing object of the mind of saints. It is no new thought to me, but what I have insisted on, I know not how long (some thirty or forty years), that wherever an assembly, or the assembly, are such to bear a testimony, they will be a testimony to their own weakness and inefficiency; because the object of their walk cannot be one which efficiently forms a Christian. When they have a right one, they will be a testimony; but to be one is never the first object. To have Christ, I mean practically to walk with Him and after Him, to have communion with the Father and the Son, to walk in unfeigned obedience and lowliness, to live in realised dependence on Christ and have His secret with us, and realise the Father's love, to have our affections set on things above, to walk in patience and yet confidence through this

world—this is what we have to seek; and if we realise it we shall be a testimony, whether individually or collectively, but in possessing the things themselves, and they form us through grace, so that we are one: but seeking or setting up to be it does not. Moses did not seek to have his face shine, nor even know when it did, but when he had been with God it did so.

Wherever Christians, so far as I have seen, set up to be a testimony, they get full of themselves, and lose the sense that they are so, and fancy it is having much of Christ. A shining face never sees itself. The true heart is occupied with Christ, and in a certain sense and measure self is gone. The right thought is not to think of self at all, save as we have to judge it. You cannot think of being a testimony save of your being so, and that is thinking of self—and, as I have said before, it is what I have always seen to be the case.

Yours sincerely in the Lord.

[Date uncertain.]

* * * * *

My dear Brother,—One of the first signs to me of the evil current as to that point was the Manchester meeting. Brethren were thinking and speaking of themselves, not of Christ. Setting up to be Philadelphia was being of the spirit of Laodicea, as indeed I have often said: I have trusted that God was working towards that, but setting up to be something was the very opposite to that work. Philadelphia is never gone till Christ comes—has the promise, because she has kept the word of Christ's patience, to be kept from the hour of temptation which is coming on all the earth, and the promise that Christ is coming quickly. I trust that there will be a much more

decided Philadelphian testimony. That is not what I quarrel with, but the corporate pretension to be it now.

The next thing I object to is making those who open when the Lord knocks, specially excellent Christians who are in this spiritually advanced state. I see nothing of the kind. They are unconverted or professing to be Christians, in so low a state, that all is going to be spued out of Christ's mouth, and they are warned to get Christ and what is real. There is not a word of their coming out and, being in testimony; Christ goes in and sups with them. But so far from thinking the promise the highest, I have always thought it the lowest. It is merely reigning —a wonderful thing, no doubt, for such as we, but what Old Testament saints will have too. It is the external glory, not being inside the house. The exhortation is to get what is real from Christ instead of their empty pretension, "that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear," and. get their eyes anointed that they may see. I see nothing of extraordinary advance in spirituality here—a most salutary warning in the present state of things, but nothing extraordinarily spiritual, nor any call into a special place of testimony at all. The whole thing seems to me a delusion. Philadelphia is praised because they have not denied Christ's name. They have a little strength: that does not sound very exalted; but to be faithful and keep Christ's word when others are giving up the faith, may be the test of theirs. I desire earnestly to see the beloved saints roused to entire devotedness and strength and constancy of communion; but it is not pretension to be something which characterises this.

When I saw you, you were unhappy because you had not the gold. Now, any one who knows anything about the matter, knows where this comes from. I told you you

were the gold, that is, the righteousness of God in Christ… The system you speak of was calculated to lay hold on saints who were desiring something better, but filled them with themselves and fancied spirituality, not Christ. Truth sanctifies, and in these things he had not the truth. That I have from himself: the very thing he was inflating people's minds with, he owns to me was unsound teaching; and women running about teaching as they did, ought to have opened the minds of sober saints.

You say both go on to the end [Rev. 3]: how, then, can Philadelphia be gone? I do not at all object to judging our state, provided it be conscience, not murmuring. It has gained much latterly, through grace; but the earnest desire of more of Christ dwelling in our hearts, I go heartily with. But that is not pretending to be something, and an inflation which does not come from God…

I believe I have answered all your questions.

London, October 20th.

* * * * *

Dear ——,—I have been informed that your dear husband is gone to his rest. Though it be long time since I saw him I have not forgotten the pleasure I had in knowing him as a true servant of the Lord. We could not be surprised at his being taken away having been so long feeble, but this does not hinder its being a sorrow and a blank to you. The comfort we have is, that this is not our resting-place, and the blessed Lord never fails in sympathy and kindness for the inevitable sorrows of the way. If He takes away what was long an object, and for our hearts at least a prop, He always comes in to cheer

and comfort the spirit. Him alone we can never lose, who is really nearer to us than any human tie, and beside us on to rest and glory. If our hearts now wish themselves with Him we abide in Him, and He in us, and there is no rest like that, nor stay, and then it is a sanctifying stay, and leads us onward towards Him. How real a comfort too, to feel those we love to be surely gone to Him. The Lord expected the disciples to rejoice in His going, for He was going to His rest: well, He is entered as our forerunner, having secured our entry there.

Be assured of my sincere sympathy with you, and with your daughter, who I trust is, for her, pretty well, for I have heard she is again a good deal an invalid.

Sincerely yours in Christ.

London, October

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* * * I felt much what has happened to poor——breaking up his plans and hopes, and yours for him too. But I cannot help thinking that, strong as was the hold the world had upon him, the Lord’s eye is upon him for good, and indeed that there is a work of God in his soul, strangely spoiled by other elements, still a work there. The style of young men and young women is, at present, not merely displeasing to a staid Christian, but utterly offensive to good taste. Vanity I expect in this world, as long as the Lord allows it to go on in His patient grace; but there is besides divine life, a respect for what is comely, a moral modesty, which seems going clean out, even where you might expect it, and to characterise the style of the day, and offend, in the young women—even young men. I do not speak now of——, for though I

might see, of course, vanity, and the love of it in some, I did not see it in them; I speak of what is general. But I think more at this moment of dear——. I trust his voyage will be of use to him; still one cannot but feel that the Lord has laid His hand on him; in love I am sure, and for his good, still it is a solemn and serious thing for him. May the Lord deepen the work in him, and lead him to peace. God cannot let us alone, and leave us to ourselves when He has begun a work in us, and when anything in our natural character tends to carry us away, He says stop….

I am glad your health holds up. But there is more to sustain us than that, a faithful loving Lord, who never fails us and never will. You have, in some respects, a trying place, but He does all things well and makes everything work together for good to those who love Him. There is much more reality in a living loving care of us, than we are aware of. It is faith for us now, but what is not seen is eternal. I often have said, how little they knew they were sending the poor thief to paradise when they were breaking his legs. But I must be off to a meeting.

Affectionately yours in the Lord.

London, November 9th.

* * * * *

My dear——,— … The Presbyterians profess to hold new birth by baptism in a worse way than English Episcopalians, though they have no formulary to bring it under the eye. It was held by all the Reformers. But where sacramental grace is held, the root of Popery and ecclesiastical hostility to the truth is always found.

As regards the kingdom of heaven; the kingdom of heaven is the kingdom of God, only dispensationally spoken of, and is the kingdom of God when the King is in heaven. But “kingdom of God” is a more general term; we have “it is not meat and drink,” etc. “Kingdom of heaven” is only used in Matthew in contrast with Messiah on earth. John never speaks of dispensations, but of the reality of things, God being revealed: and so “kingdom of God” is used here, John 3.

The Red Sea I believe to be Christ’s death and resurrection, and thus redemption by which we are brought to God, as is there said. You have not the saint raised in Romans; he is looked at as we are, a man living on the earth, but having Christ as his life, forgiven and justified, and reckoning himself dead, and giving himself up to God as one that is alive in Christ from the dead. The Red Sea redeems, not from enemies, but out of flesh, and so sin and Satan’s power. Pharaoh was not an enemy, but an oppressor. Jordan is death experimentally, death with Christ; then after being risen, fighting begins.

London, November 19th.

* * * * *

Dear Boys,—Thank you for your kind note; I am now, through mercy, in my 81st year and pretty well; but the great thing is, as you know, to be born again. They say, ——, that you are, and love Christ; now a proof of it will be that you bear with patience and submission your deafness, it is a real trial for you and I feel for you, but God makes everything work together for good to those who love Him. I trust you may get better, but He is always right and perfect in His ways. I trust——gets as

sure at six years old of God's love as I am, through mercy, at 80. I can look back along life and see how gracious and perfect He has been all through, and that my years cannot measure all the mercy and faithfulness He has shewn to me.

Kindest love to you both.

Affectionately yours in the Lord.

November 19th.

* * * * *

Dearest Brother,—I was very glad to hear from you and of the saints, I do not find absence enfeebles my interest in them. I should greatly like to see them all again, but having now entered my eighty-first year I can hardly look to long journeys and active labours as once undertaken, but ever to Him who, with no journeys to take, ever watches over and visits them in an unceasing and tender care—a heart that never grows weary, and strength that never decays. I am fresh through grace, and Christ gives me renewed strength still to work on. I have had these last few days three meetings a day, and scarcely less than two for a long time, having been round visiting the saints up to the North of England and Scotland. Thank God, I found the brethren generally happy and much appetite for the word; and others labouring about give the same testimony, and in several places there is a good deal of conversion. You will have heard there has been trouble in London which has been really largely blessed… Not that all are clear, but the general state of the work encourages those who are engaged in it, and any evil is sinking down in its littleness. Our conference meetings too have been much blessed. But I do not doubt and have not doubted there

had been decline in spirituality and devotedness; and God in His rich mercy gave them a good shake, but it has roused and blessed them. There is far more conscience and reference of heart to God than there was. For myself it deeply tried me, though I had little personally to say to it, which my being in France helped me in, but I never enjoyed the Lord's love, and learned what His word reveals to us, and its power, as I have in these times; and I have felt how good it is to trust Him who never fails.

God makes a difference between mistakes in judgment, and positive wrongness of state. There is a government of God: where there is integrity of heart, He may chastise us because of it for blessing: there is always in such case want of waiting upon Him. But while He may exercise our patience by the other, it will sink out of the place of testimony. Chastening is good for us—we seldom wait sufficiently on God. He goes on straight in His way to the end of purposed blessing, while the petty ways of man cross each other in a thousand directions, and where only men come to nothing: where the Lord is at bottom the motive, He leads us into His straight way in the end—so faithful, so patient in goodness. The Lord give us to have Himself always before us—the eye on Him, the heart looking for Him, who shall receive us to Himself, and have nothing imperfect.

Redemption is perfect, absolute: when first known, in itself a source of boundless joy and triumph, and at the end of our course, when more or less we may accuse ourselves of failure (Deut. 9), gives as to acceptance God's judgment, "What hath God wrought," said of Jacob and Israel. (Num. 23) All that is a work finished and done, and Christ sitting down because it is. But it brings

us generally into the wilderness (not as imperfect, for the thief could go straight to Paradise), and that is not a finished work, but what we go through and which tests us, but in which where life is, God helps us by His power: we learn what we are, but we learn what the Lord is— it is constant dependence or failure, but constant faithfulness to sustain us. But here we go through exercises which humble and prove us (Deut. 8), but learn much to do us good in our latter end. We have the priesthood to help, the red heifer and running water to cleanse for communion, and at the end return to what I have quoted—Numbers 23; but we must learn it along the way. The redemption is never unsettled. Put Deuteronomy 9 and Numbers 23 together, and much is learnt, but it must be experimentally learned with God on the way.

Your affectionate brother in Christ.

1880.

* * * * *

* * * When I have a moment, what occupies me now is the sealing of the Spirit, and His coming down here—not anything new, but brethren were becoming muddy about it, part of the general decline; it has an importance in my mind it never had. Indeed, I am sometimes afraid the importance of the great facts of Christianity almost sets aside the thought of souls. This would be want of love, a central, vital point of Christian truth, and of the state of our hearts. I always feel that I fail in it. Christ is everything to me; that I know; there my heart is at rest. Though my affections are poor, the link is there; but I feel that my heart does not go out enough to those He loves. Well, He will be perfectly glorified in every one of

us; that is a comfort. Though I feel my want of energy in love, He guides us in what we do. Patience and perseverance I understand, at least, in a general way.

November, 1880.

* * * * *

To the same.]

* * * I am preparing my head for a volley of stones, for I have a tract printing on the Sealing with the Spirit, which was needed, and I hope will be useful; the part I thought the least of probably the most so… I have certainly been nearer the heavenly rest than ever, and to the chamber the other side the cloison (I do not say galandage, for the body is for the Lord). I fear there is not enough adoration in my frame, yet Christ knows what He is to me.

How unspeakable the grace that gives us a place with the Son of God! such a word, “As is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly”; then as to standing and acceptance, “As he is, so are we in this world”; and as to nature, origin, life, “He that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one.” We ought to be empty of all but what comes from Him, and its source in us. A3 far as it is so, it makes us very serious to be so in derivative communion with God, and then in thinking of the world around us—full of joy too, and according to the nature of God. Such was Christ’s life, and He is our life; but poor creatures we are, even when devoted, but He is our strength, a strength made perfect in weakness…

At this moment I am occupied with Adonai, who and what He is—clearly, directly, Christ sometimes, as Psalms 2 and ex., but there is more than that.

December, 1880.

* * * * *

My dear Brother,—The idea that ceasing to break bread a Sunday, or even two, dissolves the assembly, seems to me without any ground whatever. An assembly may not break bread out of the fear of God, by reason of trouble and confusion at the time through a perverse individual (and I have known such a case), without a thought of dissolving itself, but because it was a faithful assembly and feared God. Why, a persecuting police or violent man might come in and hinder them breaking bread! If it must be by the will of the assembly, it must be a will to dissolve itself. I trust the Lord will put an end to the confusion at —— and I believe He will. What is needed in such cases generally is restoring souls, not the outward state of things. There is an interference often of brethren from a distance which is not of God, and dulls the conscience of the assembly. I do not deny they may be useful if coming to serve and awake the conscience of the assembly itself. Its own folly may dissolve an assembly as a fact.

[Date uncertain.]

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Dear——,—I should gladly give you anything which would enable you to carry out your plans. My difficulty is whether it can be done. I will tell you where I am about it, and you will see I am bringing out a new edition23 as it is out of print. As a had come out, save for learned people since the last, I thought I would give it where it changed anything. This led me a little further, and where I had said T. R. reads, in the note, I have added the principal authorities for and against. I doubt I have done

any good by it; still inquirers will see that B D L (and now a generally), and Memphitic go together, and A, later uncials, and generally Syrr (Peshito and Harclean) go together, and so other MSS. further on. My original object was translation, not text. Hence, if all the main authorities accepted it, I did, and in common cases this is all right. When it is a question of mere copying, the older are more likely right, and there is the influence of lectionaries and Tatian [‘the Harmonist’ so called], which may be often thus corrected. But I believe the old MSS. have been quite as much wilfully tampered with, if not more, than others. We have none the clergy and monks had not to say to: I have no doubt a number of small mistakes—“answered” for “answered him” or “them,” and “Jesus” for “He”—from lectionaries. But I am not myself satisfied critically, nor do I trust these received authorities.

Tregelles is very accurate, but has merely a selection of MSS. which he approves of because they follow B. It is a system: Tischendorf more complete, but as a general rule following the same. Lachmann, though systematically following early uncials, is very often more with Textus Receptus. But I am not satisfied as to a critical text though many mistakes are corrected in mine. Hence my difficulty in replying to you.

January, 1881.

* * * * *

To the same.]

* * * I know of no such change as you speak of in my views. I have looked it [Synopsis] over at some, if not all, of the new editions, and am doing the same now for another. Developments thus there have been; the Psalms

you will see a note on; the division of Romans got clearer in my mind, and some difficulties in Deuteronomy were cleared up: but there has been no change of views at all that I know of.

I have no doubt at all that Rebekah is a type of the church, and in no respect of the remnant of Israel: to them Christ returns. In every point it is just the opposite.

But as to my Synopsis, I go and learn from it myself sometimes. Nor am I aware of any changes. You may be quite at ease then.

January 14th.

* * * * *

To the same.]

* * * In general it is a mistake about fresh truth. ——did apply to the church some things I should not, as Song of Songs, though to individual souls there may be application, just as individual souls are under the law. It was, on the contrary, the discovery of church truth and place which threw back crowds of passages to the Jews. You have only to look at the headings of a Bible of the Authorised Version to see it. There is nothing so fresh as the truth which comes from God, and is always fresh. Opinionum commenta delet dies: I do not trust notions. There is a large linking of truth in scripture; and if people get out of this for notions, these only mislead and hinder, and give importance to our ideas and so to ourselves: whereas in receiving the truth one is subject to God, and nothing oneself. I write these few lines because an important principle is involved in it.

Affectionately yours in the Lord.

January 21st.

My dear Brother,—It is a good while now since I exchanged a line with you; and, in fact, I have been laid up, so that I could do, for some time, little or nothing—entirely down, so that I did not know whether I should be raised up at all again. It is now near three months that I have been unable to pass the night stretched in my bed—at first, not at all: now I sit up in bed about a third of the night, but I sleep rather better then, than lying down—all this of the poor body, but it makes its being left, if not glorified, nearer to us. God may give higher apprehensions of the joys before us, and if all be not habitually and honestly purged before God there may be exercises of conscience, even if we know the remedy. I hardly came so near to going away as that; but I was surprised, in at least looking it in the face, how little difference there was: Christ with me for the way, and Christ at the end for full and perfect joy. It is a difference to go. It is what is eternal, but we live as in Christ in what is eternal; but faith is not sight. But the word is ever precious, which brings what is of God, and God Himself to us, in the power of His own Spirit, and so as from Himself, and this gives it a peculiar and blessed character: soon it will be better still; not from Himself, but Himself. But it is suited to us here, just like Christ Himself— what is of God and heavenly, but suited to us here—with a divine flexibility which suits itself to all circumstances and to everything that is in our hearts, but to take us up whence it comes from.

I have written a tract on the “Sealing of the Spirit.” I felt its being muddied, as it was, a good deal, and this was the case everywhere; it was a sign of the state of souls. But dear ——was never, I think, clear; I have often told

him so, never really out of Romans 7 But how many are there! Yes, very many take for granted they are out of it, while full, perfect, simple redemption is not really known. Ask, not in Palestine, but in Boston and New York, what it is to have “no more conscience of sins,” and they cannot tell; and then God for us is not known. This side in the public teaching was wanting at the Reformation. They saw Christ’s work meeting our need before God, but “God so loved” was hardly a part of their gospel. On assurance they largely insisted; indeed, justifying faith was, to them, the personal appropriation of Christ’s work in an assuring way: it was not sufficiently the object of faith, though it was there, but the state of the soul. But when it pleases God to do so, He works with very imperfect truth, provided it be Christ; it is one of the present difficulties. At the first, full truth flowed from the centre and drew souls up to it; now it works where all is confusion, to bring in divine order and faith through the word—I mean order as to the truth. But I close.

In general, throughout the country, there is a real appetite for the word—a happy sign—and brethren are blessed. In some parts of London, though there is nothing outward, the effect of local troubles remains. But the Lord loves His church, and does not cease His care for it. Nothing will fail of His purposed grace. Peace be with you, dear brother, and constant guidance, keeping near enough to hear His voice through grace.

Your affectionate brother in Christ.

January 29th.

* * * * *

[From the French.

* * * The word “friend” has a double meaning: my friend is a man to whom I can open my heart, and also a man who is kind and friendly towards me; but the term always implies a certain intimacy. The Jews called the Lord “a friend of sinners,” and truly He was so. He called His disciples His friends, because He had communicated to them all that the Father had given Him. Any familiarity with the Lord, such as one finds among the Moravians, impresses me painfully, and I consider it carnal, even when it is linked with piety. “He is not ashamed to call us brethren.” In this last sense, it is quite improper to apply this word to Jesus, and to call Him oui Brother. In the instances which you quote, I think the style is too familiar. But if we say, ‘What a wondrous Friend of sinners Jesus was, when He gave Himself upon the cross!’ or, ‘What a Friend to His own is that Jesus who ever lives to intercede for us!’— the thought assumes quite another character. But we must avoid a freedom which is not becoming.

The meeting for breaking of bread is in principle the meeting together of all Christians in the unity of the body of Christ. Every Christian, then, has a right to share in it. But at the same time, in the present state of Christianity, we are called to maintain, scrupulously, faithfully, and with zeal, the holiness of the Lord’s table. (2 Tim. 2:22.) Now the assembly is in no way a voluntary meeting of Christians who have chosen the assembly, for in that case it would be a sect. It is, so far as such a thing is possible now, the meeting of all the members of the body of Christ. We must have sufficient evidence that those who desire to take part in it are true Christians, and that their walk is moral, christian. Now, if they habitually meet with those who deny the truths of

Christianity, they are defiled; and it is so also if they meet where immorality is allowed.

Difference in ecclesiastical views is not a sufficient reason for shutting out a soul. But if one wanted to be one day among the brethren, the next among the sects, I should not allow it, and would not receive such a person; for, instead of using the liberty which belongs to him to enjoy the spiritual communion of the children of God, he puts forward the pretension to change the order of the house of God, and to perpetuate the separation of Christians.

London, February.

* * * * *

* * * I was very glad to hear of you and from you, and that the Lord is helping you on. If we look to Him He ever does: He never leaves us. But there is a government of His, in which the enjoyment of blessing depends on our walk with Him, and nothing can take the place of that. But I must turn, with but little time, to your questions.

It was the almost universal opinion of early Christians that Genesis 6:2 applied to fallen, or rather to the fall of the angels (in this case different from Satan); and Jude 6, 7 seems to confirm it—compare 2 Peter 2:4 more generally. But if it be so, God has shut them up in chains of darkness, and hidden the whole scene and its fruits from our sight in overwhelming waters of the deluge; and it is a mercy that He has.

Baptising for the dead (1 Cor. 15:29) is, I believe, the nature and meaning of baptism. Alive in flesh, we as a figure take our part in Christ’s death; only it is put in a

general way, and the force of it—what is the good of taking a place in death if there be no resurrection? If you take verses 20-28 as a parenthesis, the verses connect directly: verse 29 answers to 18, and 30-32 to 19. This renders the intelligence of it easier.

As to Daniel, Christ was cut off and took nothing (see margin —the real sense—did not take the kingdom then), after sixty and two weeks, that is sixty-nine. Now we learn from the gospels His ministry was as nearly as possible three years and a half, so that for intelligent faith there is only half a week left, and, in tact, only that of the great tribulation. For unbelief —the beast and the apostate Jews—there is a week; and they enter into covenant for this time, but he breaks it when half through, takes away the sacrifice, and the great tribulation begins—that which is spoken of in Matthew 24 after verse 15, and in Mark 13—and this only in the Revelation.

I have been laid up ever since my last return here, but am a great deal better; not an illness, but exhaustion from overwork, and the effects of a bad fall at Dundee Station; but the Lord’s hand ordering all.

Your affectionate brother in Christ.

February 7th.

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Dear——,—I rejoice that you are helped and happy in your work—I trust very constantly dependent too. That is the secret of a work wrought with God, and that, though it may seem quiet, lasts, and lays the ground for progress. I can only write a line now, though, thank God, much better.

It is not that there are not deep things in the word of God, but if we search it with His grace and Spirit it is always plain for us on the top; then we have it from Him. The cream is on the surface, not that we do not search and study, but that when we get it from God it is plain and on the surface. Till then we must wait till He teaches us. The passage you refer to is quite general. You must expect in a great house all sorts of vessels, precious and vile. Christendom has become such, and hence we must expect such. False doctrine, when it characterises a man, is a vessel to dishonour; sound and exalted doctrine accompanied with unholiness, makes a man a vessel to dishonour; he who builds up sacramental corruptions, as Puseyites, Romanists, Greeks, are—at any rate as teachers— vessels to dishonour. I give these merely as examples; but it is left to spiritual discernment, according to the word, to judge what is, and then to purge oneself from them…

The Lord keep you humble and near Himself.

London, February 9th.

* * * * *

My dear Brother,—I do not like the pages24 you sent me, because they perplex the mind as to what it needs as fundamental truth. The first passage might pass, because the last words save it. But the first two lines state boldly that God does not need to be propitiated, and the second line of page 246 throws all into confusion. ‘To be propitiated on their behalf He never needed,’ yet propitiation was requisite. Now this confounds two senses of ‘propitiate’: the disposing to kindness, and meeting justice about sins. Yet it was ‘an act Godward,’ and propitiation was needed; yet ‘God

needed not to be propitiated.' This confuses and mixes up the two senses of the word, and indeed the characters of God, as judge and as love. Now as regards reconciliation, I recognise fully God did not need to be influenced to be gracious towards us. In John 3 His love is stated as the ground on which the gift came, by which propitiation could be made. The outgoing of the love of God was the free spontaneous actings of His own grace and nature. This was wanting in the theology of the Reformation and their creeds. They had, "the Son of man must be lifted up," and believed in its efficacy; but they had not, "for God so loved" etc. Christ on the cross had satisfied for believers the justice of God, but God still retained the character of a judge.

The mistake is, confounding the character of judge and sovereign love, which is above all causes and relations. God is a righteous judge; righteousness is a real thing, and God is righteous, a righteous Lord, and requires righteousness. He is not said to be righteousness, but righteous, because it is a relative term; no more than we are called to be love, because it is free and supreme. Now love brought down God to deliver Israel. But the God who delivered them was a righteous God, "of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity." He passed through Egypt to smite; and blood, the blood of the lamb, had to be presented to His eye, or He must have smitten Israel. He judged being what He was, according to that which met Him, righteous judgment, and passed over because the blood was there. It was a righteous estimate of the value of what God saw. "The Son of man must be lifted up"; and this should have all its value: to reveal God's love and all its manifold

consequences, according to the counsels of God, it needed to be the Son of His love.

I read, ‘It is not the meeting of the sinner’s need, though that results from it, but the providing that God should be able to act in grace.’ This supposes that God’s activity is only in grace, and that judgment is only a casualty. But this, save as to activity, is false. There exist relationships to which responsibility is attached, and these must be met. There is right and wrong, which bring in judgment, besides grace. Of these the express measure, as to man, is law; nor would grace exist but for this, though love would. When men have failed, righteous judgment ensues, the receiving of the things done in the body. And in bearing our sins in His own body on the tree, Christ directly and intentionally met our need—this as regards us; but as a general principle, He gave Himself a ransom for all, gave Himself to meet the need as an ajntivlutron. This giving Himself was pure, unbounded love, but it was to meet a need. The blood on the lintel and doorposts was the effect of divine love, but it was to meet a need. Responsibility and its consequences are forgotten in the statements; and the requirements of God’s nature founded on it lost, as if there was nothing but the activity of love which had to be kept pure in God, according to some unknown standard and exigency. The love is free and sovereign, but the righteousness and righteous requirement is true and unchangeable: “The Son of man must be lifted up.” The existence of conscience is the now innate sense of this. And obligation to God is in these pages set aside or forgotten, in insisting on the love of God. There is a vast deal more: the doctrine of God’s righteousness for man when man had none, and the wonderful counsels of God

in which grace reigns through righteousness, so that righteousness is itself the fruit of love, and a far, far wider range of thought behind, on which I do not touch, confining myself to the questions you have sent me.

Reconciling God is not scriptural, and it seems to me unworthy of God—[supposing] some being, superior Being in love, who is so to dispose Him. I add, the words are confounded in A.V., Romans 5:11: “atonement” should be “reconciliation”: and Hebrews 2:17, “to make reconciliation” should be “propitiation,” where the need is clearly expressed: compare chapter 1:3.

February 18th, 1881.

* * * * *

Dearest——,—Your letter was not answered, because, first, I was so low, I could do next to nothing; and then it got astray, when I could take care of nothing; and it hung ever on my mind as a thing to do, and I was very glad to get yours to-day.

I may comfort.you concerning England, for as a general rule the gatherings are in a far better state than they were before the trouble, and there is more conscience. I do not doubt much is yet to be desired, but there is more spring, too, in work, and everywhere a great desire for the word. The difficulties found faith very low; and a mass had come in as they would to any other sect with little or no principle, and what occurred found them in this state of weakness. Then there was a revival baptist work, which, while it sought to be accredited by brethrenism, had none of the principles which had formed them…

A collateral difficulty arose, that a large number of godly brethren were so disgusted with the duplicity and want of uprightness that they were disposed to leave, and so get clear of it. This was perhaps the most trying part of it, having to oppose men you loved and valued; but, dear brother, the Lord is sufficient for everything. The last difficulty is gone, and the upright ones more cordially united than ever… But the mass of brethren are sound, and going on, not occupied with all this, and because they are quiet they pass unnoticed. Occasionally there is a local effort which troubles them, but it is left to God; and if a few who stand in the gap are firm, then all go on peacefully and happily…

In general, God has sifted, and sifted for blessing, and has sustained brethren; and I trust Him fully for the testimony. I have no doubt Satan made a dead set at brethren, and God allowed it because they wanted it; but He has shewn Himself in goodness, and He always does well, wisely, and right…

And now for your texts. Those who yield feigned obedience [Psa. 18:44, etc.] are those who, without any heart for Messiah, are afraid to do anything else, and nationally. The sheep in Matthew are the individual results of the preaching of the kingdom, and judged only for the manner they have received the messengers. There is a war judgment (Rev. 19:11), and a sessional judgment. In Psalm 18 they bow under power to the throne. Matthew 25 is individual moral judgment when He has the throne. (Compare Psalm 18:34-45; Matthew 25:31.) Only there is a double action. He comes from heaven to destroy the beast, and takes the kingdom, and then out of Zion establishes His kingdom on earth, the Assyrian [being destroyed]. This is connected with all

His ways as to Israel, His being in the midst of the people or not; Israel owned or not owned. I apprehend the 1000 years will give ample time for the existence of the army at the end. Partial dominion would not do; “every eye shall see him”; He will “plead with all flesh.” (See Isa. 66) “And there shall be one Lord, and his name one”; “the God of the whole earth shall he be called.”

Remember, dear——, what I have often said in New Zealand and as to England, that Christianity works by what it brings, not by what it finds. I have to leave the active field now to younger men than myself; but there is One who never grows old, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever, and who cannot fail His own, or in making all things work together for good for them…

Ever affectionately yours.

London, February 24th.

* * * * *

My dear Brother,—I have a tract on Sealing which I thought I might have had to-day; but it is not come. I do not write in any magazine now. I am not at all happy about the brothers’ book-selling concerns; the spirit of the world has got thoroughly hold of it. Sealing on the new birth is a mistake in principle; it leaves out the sprinkling with blood for forgiveness. I know of no ground for delay save knowing this. (See Acts 2:38; 10:43, 44.)

As to eternal life: in the full sense of it it is Christ Himself, and that revealed as Man in glory, 1 John 5:20. But its essence is divine life in the Person of Christ, 1 John 5:11, 12. In Him was life, and that life He has in

manhood, John 5:24. But this has a double character; the Son quickens as Son (verse 21), and then we are, when dead in sins, quickened together with Christ: in one as Son of God, a divine Person; in the other, a dead man whom God raises. Now life and incorruptibility were brought to light by the gospel. For eternal life was manifested in the Person of the Son, and when He was risen and glorified, shewn out in its new full character in Man. If we be risen with Christ, “when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, we shall appear with him in glory.” Now till He came this never was displayed, nor according to God’s full purpose in man, till He was glorified: but I have no doubt the Old Testament saints were quickened and they will be perfected. Still it was as much in Christ humbled, as in Christ glorified. 1 John 1 was before the world, and that is its essence, only now brought to light in connection with the incorruptibility of the body in resurrection (or changed) a spiritual body. Paul never speaks of it as ours25now that I remember: John does, for he always speaks of things in their essence. But it comes in the knowledge of the Father sending the Son, and Jesus Christ as so sent of Him; and the Father, Son, and life come in the Son, and the Father revealed in Him, runs all through John’s teaching, connecting us with Him in life. (1 John 4:9; 5:11, 12.) We live, but Christ is our life. But the revelation of the Father in the Son, and that as giving eternal life in Him, is the essence of John’s doctrine, along with propitiation and forgiveness in his epistle—not in his gospel. But it is not necessary that it should be in the heavenly glory to be eternal life; but redemption through Christ is. In Matthew 25 they go into life everlasting. The places in the Old Testament where it is spoken of are Psalm 133 and Daniel 12.

Its essence is Christ as life, but in its full thought as to us, is being like Him in glory. But there is quickening by Him as Son, and being quickened, and raised with Him—in both cases life, in the latter known in heavenly glory as the result. God has reserved some better thing for us, but the Old Testament saints will be perfected with us. No one who has not life can have to say to God really. The Pharisees had got hold of the expression, as they had of resurrection. But the Lord goes down to the ground they were upon, if they will enter into life — God's commandments. But in the Lord's unfolding the subject in John 6, you find having eternal life as a present thing, as constantly in John, but directly connected four times over with His raising us in the last day. Its full development is in the sphere it came from, and in the power of Him who has it in connection with man, and so immortality (incorruptibility)—the body brought in. Nor, though they have it down here, is this shut out in the final result in Matthew 25, Daniel 12, and Psalm 133.

You cannot separate eternal life and new birth; but though the essence of divine life is there, yet eternal life in Christ as man and finally in glory does go further—man being quickened as accomplished in Christ glorified. It is the gospel which has brought it to light… The moral subjective effect was produced by being quickened, obedience, dependence, reference of heart to God, delight in His will. Hence the saint now can delight in the Psalms, though there is no knowledge of the Father.

I am, through mercy, much better; but, saving a reading in my room, have held no meetings, but been twice to the breaking of bread.

February 24th.

* * * * *

My dear Brother,—I owe you well a letter, but you know I have been ill, and all this kind of work fell in arrear; but I am a great deal better, and seek to pull the arrear up. Beloved brother, what we have to cleave to is Christ: in Him we know the Father, and He is that eternal life which came down from heaven; in Him, too, as glorified on high, once crucified, we are introduced into the holiest. He has sanctified Himself that we may be sanctified through the truth. It is little noted that what human nature could not see or conceive is revealed to us by the Holy Ghost given to us, "that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God." This is the world the new man lives in, to which he belongs, and all the rest passes—when "his breath goeth forth … all his thoughts perish."

We have to go through a world full of experiences, and christian life in it thus, with which as ministering we have to do. Our great affair is so in our own souls to have Christ formed in us, and so to know Him experimentally in the little world of our own souls, that all that is of self being judged, then only Christ may come out, whether as testimony of life in the big outer world, or in that which we apply to others in ministry; and to wait on Him so that we may be guided in doing it. I often find the question arise in my mind in service, whether I was enough in the spirit of unitedness—that is, with Christ— the sense of His presence—so as to have had the right thing come into my mind: for "a word spoken in due season, how good is it!" At least we must seek this, and be continually looking to Him so that

there may be nothing hasty in our words. I have no doubt that if we kept close to Christ, His Spirit would guide us in our intercourse with others. We are not always conscious of divine guidance, even when it is there; but the word comes from Christ to the souls we have to say to, even if rejected—as we see with the Jews. But our part is to keep close to Christ, so that it should be “not I, but Christ liveth in me,” and thus He acts in our thoughts and ways without our, at the moment, thinking of Him directly; but we always have the consciousness of speaking for Him, and of His presence. “Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt,” “which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace to the hearers.”

What a life, an honoured life, a Christian’s is if it be a Christian’s! But all perishes but the word (I mean of what we have as in this world); but that does not—it abides for ever. For our life first—”Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God” —it is of and from heaven, divine like Christ; but suited, as He was, to a world and hearts which were the opposite of what is divine; and He and it are alone so, and we—if we eat Him and live by Him and so follow Him. What an immense privilege that we are set to bring out divine things on earth, and soon shall enjoy them where there will be nought else! May Christ keep us close to Himself: we may be assured He cares for His church and cannot fail it. May we judge ourselvet and trust Him, and nothing can separate us from His love That is a comfort!

As regards this country: those who went out at Kent will, I suppose, immediately break bread, and for good and all. Some urged them to do it. In general about the

country, conscience has been much awakened, and there is much more freshness and desire for the word, and that even in London, too. But the absence of all principle and conscience in those who have formed a party (though the rest leave it to God) cannot, if there are to be gatherings, go on long. But it opens people's eyes. It is a question, Can godly discipline be exercised? And God seems raising the question in different places. I should add that —— was round as far as Aberdeen, and came back quite cheered with the state of brethren. For if Satan is at work, and such audacity I never saw (a little bit once at——), the Spirit of God is evidently and happily working too; but the revival work, and the tone which accompanied it, has introduced a mass of persons from whom God alone can deliver us. I keep entirely aloof from them. I am a great deal better, only have no breath. Nothing separates us from the love of Christ, and all things work together for good to those that love God.

London, March 1M, 1881.

* * * My impression,26 for it is not the result of theological examination, is that the Lord God speaks of Christ's mission as a whole from the time it was said (if time it can be called) "a body hast thou prepared me" till the service was accomplished. He sent that blessed Person with the whole scene before Him into the world; but the actual sending, down here when a man in the world, was from the Holy Ghost coming upon Him when He returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee. With quite another object in view the two steps are in Philippians 2, "emptied himself," and, being a man, "humbled himself." So God prepared a body for Him (dug ears for Him); and then, though Son all the while as

when twelve years of age, He was sent out as man set apart to bear the witness He was sent for. God had created the world by Him, He will judge the world by Him. But here He is looked at as sent into the world for service; and His whole Person, Son of God and man, is in view as one whole in service. He took the form of a servant. “Lo, I come to do thy will.” The sanctifying was the appropriating—setting apart—this Person to the humble, in one sense, but glorious service which Christ performed, though service He never gives up. The Father set apart this Person for this service—did so in preparing a body—did so in incarnation, and did so in anointing and sealing when the opportune time was come. He was sent into the world, so actually set apart (in divine purpose in Psa. 40) for the service, the Word made flesh and dwelling among us, and then as Man by the Holy Ghost coming and abiding on Him. He could not be sent before He was set apart for it, but while actually set apart in Matthew 3, 4, He could not have been actually then if not in God’s mind and by incarnation before.

[1881.]

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My dear Brother,—Thank you for your account. I cannot but think God is bringing things to light. I trust and pray that God may guide the brethren at——. Waiting upon Him, He surely will. Christ never ceases to care for the church. He may see good to try us, but He is a match for any mischief-maker. But I write properly for two points: First, that I do trust our dear brother will do nothing whatever, but cast it all on the Lord; He will take care of it: I know that. The other is, that unanimity is nonsense,

a denial of the power and operation of the Spirit, and clean contrary to the word of God. First, it is nonsense; because till the case is decided the person charged is one of the assembly, and you are not going to make him agree as led by the Spirit in judging his own case. If you do not allow him, you have put him out before his case is decided. It is real nonsense. Waiting for quiet godly men who doubt is all right: unanimity is so many men agreeing. The world must go on and so judges by a majority, but for the saints nothing can be done unless all agree—this is man, not the Spirit of God. Supposing it was a flagrant case of stealing or adultery? Are you to wait till he agrees to put himself out? Again, supposing the person or persons are obstinate, self-willed, evil walkers? The assembly must, in either case, go on with wickedness, with what God judges in its midst, till the guilty think proper to judge themselves, or break up altogether. It is denying the operation of God's Spirit in the assembly's clearing itself: better not to have any discipline at all.

It will be said that we have not the power—say of Paul. Be it so. But put out "from among yourselves" is a duty, obedience to the plain word of God, not power in the sense of an apostle. Evil is to be got rid of "that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened." The requiring unanimity is contrary to the plain word of God on the point. Paul says, "Having in readiness to avenge all disobedience when your obedience is accomplished." This puts the case that after the labour of the apostle to produce obedience had produced its full effect, some might remain not subject to the word; then he would come with the rod and avenge disobedience. The case is stated of non-unanimity, and dealing with those who

stood out. I quite understand that people may seek to say the power is not here. But that is not the question, but that unanimity is not supposed even when the power was there; and I am persuaded that though power is not manifested as it was, Christ is just as true to His church, and has just as much power now as then, and will shew it. But unanimity is a mere human device: there is no such thought in scripture. It is merely a set of men must agree: the power of the Holy Ghost is denied. The judgment is not valid because men agree, but because God is there: and Christ being there is not supposed by the apostle necessarily to produce unanimity; he puts the contrary case. It is because it falsifies the whole ground of the church's standing and authority that I attach importance to it.

March, 1881.

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* * * As you are so far off I tell you more of these news of different parts; but what we want always is news from heaven, to be at home there, Christ dwelling in our hearts by faith. I find the word richer and richer daily. This has brought us news and blessed news from heaven, and in the Person of Him who is the fulness of them, and is gone back there after accomplished redemption, and, think of it! as our forerunner. And we must not think these things are not revealed—what eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor is entered into the heart of man to conceive; "but God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit." "We have received, not the spirit which is of the world, but that which is of God, that we might know the things which are freely given to us of God." All the other names of God—Almighty, Jehovah,

Most High, Adonai—have to do with this world, and God shines but through the cloud. But the Father is seen in the Son: this is not dispensational; it is the sun breaking through them: and God known in His ways of perfect grace, Himself known. Christ, the only-begotten Son, has declared Him—what a blessing I—and brought us into His own place with the Father, soon in the glory itself. In that name of "holy Father" we are kept; and this is what we have to seek, to walk according to this place as dear children, as sons. May we remember that we are set in Christ before God; that is perfect; but, if so, He is in us, and we are set before the world to represent Him. (See John 14 and Rom. 8) And to do it, "out of his fulness have we all received." We must learn experimentally our own nothingness to be there, but it is a blessed (but a very responsible) place; and we must be full of Christ to do it at all—converse with Him for His own sake, for our delight in Him gives us, if we keep in mind our dependence, His presence and wisdom and strength for all through which we have to pass; and men and the world and the saints should meet Christ in us as they did in Christ. I have no need to say how infinitely and constantly perfect He was, and whatever we are it is still Him and of Him; but then so far weakness is not a hindrance, because God does not suffer us to be tempted above that we are able, and then His grace is sufficient for us, and His strength made perfect in weakness. The secret is to keep the sense of that weakness, and look entirely to Him. Man lives by every word; it, and He in it, ought to be the source of every movement, as well as the rule of it, in us; and that is a great secret. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." But I must close. The Lord keep you near Him, and guide your

heart within and your ways without. My loving remembrances to all the brethren.

Affectionately yours in the Lord.

London, March 22nd, 1881.

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Dear ——,—May I beg you to be my mouth-piece to the other sisters, and receive the same yourselves, to assure them of my sincere thankfulness for their kind interest. I account it a precious thing that the saints take interest in one another. The life of Christ shews itself thus. I was very low indeed, but am much better, but humanly speaking shall never have my breath for work as I had; but it is all in the Lord's hands; at past 80 it is not very surprising. My mind through mercy is as clear as ever, and study work I go on with as usual. God may use us, but the good that is done down here is wholly done by Himself; who else would do it? And Christ has loved His church and given Himself for it, and sanctifies it for and will present it to Himself, without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, Man's ways cross and traverse each other, but He goes on in the secret of His own love always straightforward and makes everything work together for good to them that love Him, I should be very glad to see the brethren: whether God will allow me, I know not—perhaps in warmer weather. It is in His hands. He may use us, but has no need of us, and soon we shall be where the patient continuance in well doing will not be called for. I am very thankful to all for so kindly thinking of me. Yours sincerely in the Lord.

London, March 28th, 1881.

My dear Brother,—My letter to Mr. ——, though private, concerns us all. There is a principle at work which puts external unity before righteousness—uses unity to hinder righteousness. Now to me righteousness goes first. I find, that in Romans 2, let grace be what it may in sovereign goodness, it never sets aside righteousness…; The course of Abbot's Hill, I was convinced, was wicked, I was so convinced from the beginning; and it was not a mere mistaken act, but a course pursued, and I could not own them. The question goes far deeper than local claims: whether christian profession, and so-called unity, to which in its place I hold thoroughly as ever, as plain scriptural truth, is to go before righteousness—God's claim to fidelity to Him… I do not think that any church theory, however true and blessed when walking in the Spirit, can go before practical righteousness.

Such is the substance of my letter as to principles, what I have gone on all along,…

Affectionately yours in the Lord.

April 20th, 1881.

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* * * First, Ephesians 2 is not experimental, but that absolute work of grace which has taken us, when dead in sins, and put us into Christ in heavenly places; as it took Christ dead as man for our sins, and put Him into glory. Romans 6, 7 are experimental, though we find liberty in Christ. As to it, we have died with Him: that is Romans. We have risen with Him is also added in Colossians: died to sin in Romans—from the principles of this world in Colossians. But this, while known in Christ, or it would be hopeless labour, is experimental. But what gives deliverance is seeing it in Christ, though of course

when free I feel the comfort of it: but deliverance is the difference of being in the flesh and out of it. A soul earnest after holiness labours after it and does not succeed. The new man craves it, seeks it, toils for it, and has it not. The cords that bind it down are too strong for it, but it is learning a most profitable lesson, that it has no strength. But this is while comparing its own state with what it would be before God, with what it knows God would have pleasure in. It is not a question of guilt, properly speaking, but of practical acceptance. It judges of what God's feelings towards it are, by what it is, and just because it "would" holiness cannot find rest. It is learning it has no more strength than righteousness; when it has really learnt this, and this is experience, and necessary experience—"without strength"—it recognises, as taught of God, that it has died as to the flesh with Christ, and that it is not on that ground at all, that it is not on that standing at all. It learns to say "when we were in the flesh," and this by the Holy Ghost, though through the appropriation by faith of Christ's death—not for sins (that refers to guilt) but to sin. The soul reckons itself dead with Christ to its old position, and now alive in Him, married to Him who is risen from the dead. It is not that conflict does not go on, "the flesh lusts against the Spirit"; but it is not under the law of sin and death—the cords are cut it could not break. In the experience of Romans 7 you have not the Spirit, but the law. Conflict there is; but conflict with one who ties me down is different from conflict with one whom I have power to tie down.

I am not in the flesh if Christ, if the Spirit of God, dwell in me. I know (John 14) that I am in Christ and Christ in me —not progress but a new position—when we have, in

the old, experimentally learned we have no strength, whatever our desires. It may be sudden consciousness of the effect. It is by faith; but never till we have experimentally learned that we cannot succeed. A man may have learned the doctrine, but he must know himself as having no strength to have deliverance from himself. “We know the law is spiritual”: all the rest is “I,” till we arrive at “O wretched man that I am!” What is deliverance from bondage if I am not in it? You may be very naughty, but you cannot be in Egypt if you are across the Red Sea. Not that the Red Sea is our death with Christ, but it is His dying and rising again so as to make in Himself the new position for man before God. The Passover was for their sins—non-imputation.

April, 1881.

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My dear Brother,—The divine nature and place of Christ must be held above all question. All men shall “honour the Son, even as they honour the Father”: He and the Father are one—all the fulness of the Godhead in Him bodily: “the Word was God,” and created all things. I might quote texts without number to shew it: it enters into the very warp of the whole truth of scripture. I put this in the forefront of my reply. The Adonai Jehovah of Isaiah 6 was Christ.

This is not the question, nor do I believe it to be a question with our dear brother M. Taylor. Did I suppose he denied this, as I have heretofore said, I might seek his restoration, but I should as so holding, disown him altogether. But we must remember that no man knows the Son but the Father; that this—all concerning Him—was when in the form of God He made Himself of no

reputation (“emptied himself”) and took the form of a servant and was found, in the likeness of men, [having] laid aside the form of divine glory, and for our sakes and for the Father’s glory humbled Himself even to death. “Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him”; through which having accomplished redemption He now sits as man at the right hand of God. He has received the glory as man though He had it with the Father before the world was. Hence we find (that in the days of His flesh, with strong crying and tears He made His supplication unto Him who was able to save Him from death; that He could say “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” and “Father into thy hands I commend my spirit,” and now risen can and does say to His disciples, My Father and your Father, My God and your God.

If this humiliation of Christ be lost, all is lost with it. In our relationships, therefore, we say, “to us there is but one God the Father… and one Lord Jesus Christ.” I cannot doubt that M. Taylor has made unadvised and undesirable statements, the effect certainly being to turn away from the worship of the Lord Jesus. I have found this cropping up in Pennsylvania. But I regret deeply the way in which it has been taken up; and, it may seem strange, but I attribute much of the effects, such as existed in Pennsylvania, to the way in which what he said was taken up: because what may have been rash and unadvised was pushed to the utmost possible extreme of heresy, and others from favouring him defended this… It is possible, too, he may have sought too much to defend himself.

I do not see any contradiction in these two letters. My present conviction is, that he did not deny worship to Christ, but that he did decline addressing himself to

Christ at the Table, though leaving liberty to others. This happened in my own case in Brooklyn. There is a great difference between the worship there being addressed to Christ and to the Father; the whole tone of the meeting is changed by it: this I have long noticed. Though with no formal intention, I seldom give thanks without being led to both, but quite sensible of the difference; and worship, when met for it, is more suitably to the Father, if people are up to it. But if it was taken as objecting to addressing Christ I should resist that. I dare say Taylor made a kind of system of this without being clear. But I doubt a little that the mass of brethren are quite clear as to the real bearings of the question. I believe a little wisdom would have made it the occasion of all getting clearer on what spiritually is practically important, instead of its being a ground of conflict and attack. I have no sympathy with the way it has been done. If Taylor repelled any address to Christ in breaking bread, I think he would have tied himself to a system which marred the liberty of the Spirit in himself; and this, though leaving others free, I cannot doubt he did: a general denial of worship to Christ I doubt; and I somewhat doubt, but from my general acquaintance with the state of souls, that the brethren understood the bearing of insisting on worshipping the Father. There was a system, instead of the guidance of the Spirit in Taylor’s mind, and then I fear, some self-defence, as there had been unguarded and exaggerated statements; and the whole thing has degenerated into moral charges.

As I see things now, were I at——, I should object to the charge of any intended falsehood in these letters. I do not think the explanatory one clear, and I doubt that ——

was clear about it; but that is another question: and ill as he is now it would be quite unseemly to press the matter against him. This is a mercy from God for you all. But you must be careful at —— if you decline endorsing the attack of the others, not to get into a separation outward or inward from the rest… I trust the Lord may restore peace and mutual confidence; but this is easier lost than restored.

Your affectionate brother in Christ.

I doubt there was any definite doctrine as to the Lord in Taylor's mind, but I apprehend there was a theory and system as to addressing Him at the Lord's table, and that it was not the leading of the Holy Ghost at the time.

April, 1881.

* * * * *

My dear——,—I did not wait for your letter to express my feelings to the brethren as to the way in which they took up M. Taylor's case. Not only did I not like the spirit of it, but I do not think they knew the bearing of the question. Still there was evil: I think their position augmented it, because others took up what they accused Mr. Taylor of, and defended what he could not himself have maintained.

In Pennsylvania there was an attack made on worshipping the Lord Jesus, and contempt poured out on those who did. When I was at Brooklyn, and had broken the bread, and had addressed the Lord Jesus, one remarked to him, 'Mr. D. can do it!' He said 'He may be at liberty to do it, but I cannot.' He admitted that, though leaving others at liberty, he could not do it there. I do not think he meant to deny worship to Christ

absolutely; but in getting fresh apprehensions of direct approach to the Father by grace, he got his mind, often hasty though so true to the Lord, into confusion in putting his fresh knowledge in its place; and being attacked (by what, I believe, was inadequate apprehension, though in the main seeking Christ's glory) instead of humble spiritual inquiry that all might be clear from the word, he defended what he was not clear about.

That Christ could say, "Before Abraham was I am;" that even when humbled and in the flesh all should honour the Son as they honour the Father must be fully maintained—is beyond controversy for the [Christian]; and it is a fact that many had been led away from this. I justly believe M. T. sound as to the divinity of the Lord; but as to worshipping Him there was confusion, through the thought of worshipping the Father being a higher thing; and this had gone further perhaps than he meant in the minds of many…

Ever yours in the Lord.

May, 1881.

* * * * *

You are, I dare say, a good deal isolated now where you are, being incapable of as much activity as you were wont to employ. I am yet more shut up (from want of breath) from going about. But the blessed Lord is never shut up, nor His heart either. He could say, "Ye shall leave me alone, and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me." It is this sustains and holds up in this time of faith; and it is meant to be a time of faith, but a time when "our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ": the Father fully revealed in Him,

and we knowing the Father in Him. What could we look for more? save that the Spirit is the power that brings it all to us; and that we have. I find two things in the New Testament as to our joys and sorrows: first, “Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice”; and, nothing separates us from His love. Still, we are poor, feeble, exercised creatures as to what passes here and, however faithful, may be cast down, though doubtless ought not to distrust. Then I find, “God, who comforteth those that are cast down.” Ah, I say, it is worth while being cast down for such comfort as that! And this is not faith that rises above the circumstances, but grace that meets us in the circumstances: and think what it is to have God occupying Himself with us in our sorrows, when we remember who He is.

I have no doubt you find yourself more alone; at our age it is natural. How few remain of those I once was associated with, but in general I have a happy feeling that they are with the Lord. I was always a solitary soul, thinking more for, than with people: but it is good to be more alone—most good, if it be more alone with Christ. What a place that is!

We get Christ’s love to His disciples compared to His Father’s love to Him (and ours ought to follow)—is in one sense above, as the Father was in divine glory, not in trial or sorrows. I have often said there is loving up, and loving down. In loving up, the higher and more perfect the object, the more excellent the affection: in loving down, the more wretched and worthless the object, the more truly divine and without motive the affection. Both were perfect in Christ. He gave Himself “for us,” but “to God.” (Eph. v.) But I must close my desultory letter. May

the Lord be abundantly with you, both alone and in work. Kindest remembrances to all yours.

Your affectionate brother in Christ.

19 [‘An excited letter written at 4 a.m., but withdrawn the next day, most thankful that he had only written to me.’ ‘No one went with him.’]

20 [‘That a person may have life for years and not know of it; that faith is not required for life, but only for deliverance.’]

21 [When is the believer sealed?’ Helps, vol. iii. p. 98.]

22 [Col. Writ., vol. xxxi. 385.]

23 [New Translation of the New Testament. Third edition.]

24 [The Christian Friend, September, 1880.]

25 He does say Christ lives in me and Christ our life.

26 In what sense is the term “sanctified” used (John 10:36)? Why does it precede the sending into the world?

Letters Section 5

London, May 1st.

My dear Brother,— … I know of no Christianity where Christ is not all—increasedly so, and naturally, in these my closing years. But there is a flighty notion of perfection which is merely self, and I think of a bad kind, through the religious pretension it has. There is no perfection but glory with the blessed One, and no other to be aimed at, and this always keeps us lowly, for what are we compared with that? Ah! when we study Christ's life too down here, and what His heart and motives were, how shallow we are, how He must be everything, and how deep and far beyond our view the sufferings of His soul down here!

I would add that the meeting at——began in a very loose way, and had to be purged of this, and social circumstances added to the difficulty. But God pursues His own ends through circumstances, when we are often governed by them, or at any rate influenced and hindered. And how He bears with us! We have seen the Lord's hand with us wonderfully here latterly. I certainly did look to the Lord, and He shewed Himself indeed in the most unthought of way, so that we have been astounded at His goodness. Here we are happy enough, but the County of Kent matters came up as we expected they must, being so near London, and [brethren] coming up, so that their reception involved the London gatherings. But though we know not how all will end, God has so dealt with the worst cases that His acting being manifest, encourages the heart. Brethren never went through such a crisis as they have in all this

matter; but the Lord, while exercising and humbling them, has heard their cry, and I believe preserved their testimony: the testimony, I never doubted He would, but it did not follow—in their hands. But I felt in praying I could trust Him for that, and I believe He has. But I must close.

London, May 10th.

* * * * *

My dear Brother,—All depends on its being a private meeting or a public one. It is clear they must not teach, and in the assembly keep silence, and if they have a question ask at home. (1 Tim. 2:12; 1 Cor. 14:34.) I believe sisters have a very honourable place in scripture. They clung to the Lord when the disciples deserted Him; in death and resurrection they, not the apostles, are found, and in life ministering to Him; and the apostle in the end of Romans bears them the highest testimony. But the Lord never sends them out to teach or preach. And then the apostle is peremptory in forbidding them the same as to authority. Everything is beautiful in its place. If therefore it was quietly helping each other among themselves, I see nothing to hinder; or explaining scripture for the gospel to poor ignorant and unconverted women, even if several were together; but a teaching meeting even among themselves seem to me contrary to scripture. Its being in the room makes no difference really, but in circumstances it does: it is a teaching place, and you cannot separate the thought. Whatever puts them into the place of teaching, puts them into mischief, and is not of God. “The ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price,” is what honours them.

Your affectionate brother in Christ.

May 10th, 1881.

* * * * *

My dear Brother,—I confess I think the state of this sister unsatisfactory. There was no staying away from conscience at the time (naturally a woman would be ashamed of course), and continual deception for five shillings a week. Still she acknowledged it honestly: so far it was well. If I saw there had been thorough repentance of old, I would not bring it up again, but this hardly appears…

The great question for me would be the present state of the soul, her true repentance. If I was satisfied she was really humbled, and gave up the pay, I would not proclaim her sin. It might be said that the ancient sin unknown to the assembly had been discovered, but as the soul's state had been restored before it was discovered, it was not mentioned. If there has not been genuine repentance, the lapse of time does not change the state: and I should say that the sin was of a very old date, but as no sign of adequate humiliation was seen exclusion was called for. All depends upon the state of her soul. There seems honesty: is there a real sense of the sin? As to Achan, I cannot doubt if he had put it all back they would have been spared, because then there was, though momentary failure, honest rejection of the sin. But that is just the question here: is there?

I would certainly not bring up sin, if it was judged. The question is, Is it judged? The assembly's conscience was not denied, because it did not know it. If it had been more spiritual it might have felt there was something hindering blessing, but it was not defiled by permitted

sin. Now you have to see if the guilty person has really judged the sin, or it may become so— at any rate in the conscience of those who do know it.

Your affectionate brother in Christ.

* * * * *

Dear Miss ——,—The Lord is graciously doing what was and is always needed, making you know yourself. We may often accept the gospel not insincerely, and yet not have the least learnt what we are, that is what sin is in the flesh. As regards confession (James 5:16)—the form this distress takes with you—I agree with ——, it is not a command imposed, but a means afforded for walking fully in the light, a relief if I cannot get rid of something that presses on my conscience; nay, even if I have done from time to time what keeps my spirit fretful, and out of communion, it is given as a means of relief, in order to my spirit's being conscious of being in the truth, to find some one worthy of such confidence, and opening the matter to them. It is a relief to open the heart, only not to be done with levity, but in the true sense of the evil, and gives occasion to the other to pray for us. This is connected with the government of God, and has nothing to do with deliverance. Its true character is lost if we look on it as an imposed obligation; but we make what is called a clean breast of it, and all sense of guile and false appearance is taken away. Sometimes the desire to confess is a mere effort to get the mind at ease without a thorough dealing with God which goes to the root.

Romans 5:1 is simply forgiveness, faith that Christ has been delivered for our offences. If that be so, God must despise Christ's work before He imputes sin to me: and not only is that impossible, but God has given proof to

the contrary in raising Him from the dead, and setting Him as man in glory: and He has not got my sins there. The work God has wrought in Christ has blotted out my sins: the Lord imputes no sin. Then comes another source of distress, even if I am clear that believing in Jesus I am justified from all things. I find my old man, my flesh, produces the evil fruit still; and this perplexes the mind if it has learned forgiveness, and brings doubts and deep distress where it has not. It is always in its nature legal—that is, refers God's estimate of us, to what we are: namely, His thoughts towards us are dependent on our state before Him; whereas our state depends on His thoughts. See the prodigal when he found his father. (Compare Num. 23:23.)

Now our peace as to our sins is simply that they are forgiven and put away: Christ has borne them. If I believe in Him, God has declared this; I am "justified from all things." But for the discovery of our sinful state and getting deliverance, there is an experimental process in us. The doctrine is that we died with Christ: that is Komans6 But the resting on the truth found there as a doctrine, is connected with the experience found in chapter 7, the result then being in chapter 8. Now this experience is the painful learning that we have no strength to make good what we would in what is right. There is a point in this experience which often helps, but is not deliverance; that is, hating the evil which yet works in me, it is not I, for I hate the evil, and I am not what I hate. But after this I find what I hate too strong for me, and I am brought to the consciousness of my being without strength, the point to which God was leading me by it all: "When we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly."

Your anxiety about confession and distress of soul will all disappear, when you have the deliverance which follows this full breaking down. We are conscious then of being in Christ, as Romans 8:1; and then Christ is in us as the power of life (vers. 2, 3): Christ is substituted for self before God for us as righteousness., What am I before God? Christ. And He having died and risen again and received by faith, lives in us: and the flesh is treated as not me but sin that dwells in us, and we have by the Holy Ghost the sense of being children. In a word, Christ is substituted for self before God, and yet as livingly in us—“as he is so are we in this world.” This is God’s teaching; it belongs to every one who believes in Christ, but we do not get it experimentally, till the self for which Christ is substituted is thoroughly judged and broken down—no good in it, and no means of getting into a better state however much we desire it. And this is the process you are going through, with a pretty strong will to be broken by it. I add, it is of moment in this conflict to avoid all evil—not that this will give us peace; that comes from being dead with Christ; but if we are not watchful it gives a handle to the enemy.

Christ came to save the lost, and we must get to see we are lost as to our state in order to get deliverance: yet in the grace that came to save us when such, God knows when self is really judged, and then gives peace. In yourself in the flesh you are lost, but we get out of this standing through being dead with Christ. The sin in our flesh was judged on the cross. We hear nothing more of the prodigal son, once he found his father: all is what his father was to him.

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To the same.]

* * * It is experimentally we learn what we are, and very humbling it is, but it casts us on the Lord so that we find He is our righteousness, not anything we are or our state, and then we get strength too; for “where sin abounded grace did much more abound.” You have a strong will, not accustomed to govern yourself, and hence the struggle is more painful; but the Lord is faithful to bring you through it. You must feel that deliverance is not for you till you get it: our will mixes itself up much more than we think with the flesh, but it is much better to suffer under it, than take it easy as you speak of. When you feel it pressing on your will, look away to Christ at once, and the new man being then in operation the heart gets elsewhere. It is not direct conflict with it, for this being under law, the motions of sin are by it. Then Satan uses it to bring sin on the conscience and discourage us. Resist him, and I do not say you will overcome, but “he will flee from you,” for Christ has overcome him for us. Then get healthful active occupations: there is plenty to do in this world, if we have the heart for it. Above all, believe ever—“My grace is sufficient for thee.” When the heart gets on Christ, all is easy; it is away from what is a snare to us. Once we let the devil inside, so that the mind is occupied with what the flesh tempts us with, it is far harder to get it out, than to keep it out. When you speak of gleams of light sometimes, it is what always happens when God is carrying through the process of self-knowledge. He gives us occasional deliverance so to speak, so that we know there is such a thing; like a man rising head above water and getting breath, or he would be drowned, yet goes under again when he has got

enough, to shew there is such a thing as being out. Understand that God does this, because while He must make you know yourself because it is yourself, He is above, and can and will deliver. But you will find Christ faithful, and what He shews you thus that you may not despair, He will accomplish fully. Cry to Him—we ought always to do it, not to faint. Read your Bible as something addressed to yourself, praying Him to give it the efficacy of the Spirit to your soul: no indulgence of will, but ready service, in what the house or any other duty may call for, and you will find—not that the flesh is not there, but—that you are not in it.

The power that does it is the death of Christ, not for our sins, but to sin. (See Rom. viii.) God has condemned sin in the flesh on the cross, so that there is no condemnation for us. The sin we find working in us is worthy of condemnation, but has been condemned when He was (a sacrifice) for sin; and this we learn by faith, though God makes us learn what it is experimentally, which is just Romans 7. Chapter 6 is the doctrine, chapter 8 the result, when we have gone through chapter 7. The conflict remains, but the Spirit is there: it is no longer the conflict of natures under law. (Gal. 5:17, 18.)

Look to Christ always faithful and loving, and “sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under the law, but under grace”: that is, God is for you, not requiring, but giving and forgiving.

Sincerely yours in the Lord.

London, May 11th, 1881.

My dear Brother,—I was very glad to hear from you and that you were all safe arrived, and. thankful too that

none had left to follow those that went out. Dear —— will want no spectacles now to see the King in His beauty, and even the vanity which may have hindered him on earth is gone for ever: there is none in the presence of the glory of God, nor with Christ our just and infinite delight… It is sweet to think that he is, dear fellow, with Christ, and nothing but the new man remains. That is a comfort for us all, though we ought to keep down the old man here, that we may be free fully to enjoy Christ. I am not a perfectionist, fundamentally not, but I believe there is power in Christ to keep the old man down so that the Spirit be not grieved, and thus communion perfect in our measure…

Christ is the same, dear brother, in Barbadoes, as in London, and He and He only is life and power, but He is intimate with us, can dwell in our hearts by faith, and so we can not only comprehend the wide extent of glory, and look down its infinite yet perfectly ordered parts as from a centre, but know, blessed be His name! a love which passes knowledge.

It is wonderful, the place God has given us, yet it is, while we were only sin, what Christ's work was only worthy of, so that while pure and sovereign grace reigns, so that we know perfect love, that is God, yet it reigns through righteousness. It has often, for some time, been a joy to me that we shall all be a perfect testimony to the efficacy and worth of Christ's work which brought us into it, as well as of the Father's love, and that eternally. It is what we ought to be here, but we know how feeble it often is here, but there we shall for ever be adequate witnesses of Christ, by the very glory into which He will have brought us, and that is very blessed.

The Lord be with you, dear brother, in your work: we have only to serve Christ earnestly, and in communion with Him, and all is well; the rest passes and is gone. I have nothing much to tell you of things here… I do not, as you know, move in and out among brethren, from my bodily state. But God is working on to the result of His own ways. There is the occasional difficulty of letters of commendation, otherwise all around us is as quiet as possible… May the Lord be with ——in his work, and all the brethren. I am very thankful to them that they remember and think of me. They may be assured I do not forget them, and earnestly desire of God their blessing and peace in Christ, and that the whole assembly may be indeed as trees of the Lord's planting. Oh that all His saints were! Christ all to them. Peace be with you.

Affectionately yours, dear brother, in the Lord.

1881

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[From the French.

Dearest Brother,—I was very glad to receive your letter and news of Switzerland, for which I thank you. England is pretty much in the same state—more than one place where conversions are somewhat numerous, but nothing very striking. But the condition of brethren has evidently improved; there is more conscience, more life. All the labouring brethren who have gone about the country have returned happy, and with their souls refreshed; and God is acting in a striking way in the midst of the difficulties of London. Brethren can see it at a glance. Everything is not settled, but evil has manifested its powerlessness. We have had only to allow God to act,

and who can do so but Himself? As to myself, it is the resolution I have taken from the beginning, and I bless His name for it. We do not sufficiently consider that it is He who works the good, and He alone who can do it, and He arranges everything.

I have been very ill, dear brother: I mean my strength has sunk under the effect of too much work, and of my age, then of a serious fall while travelling. I did not know whether it was not God's will to take me out of this poor world… I had peace, I had not any doubt, but at first I felt the ruin of the vessel, when I was alone at night with the Lord. The thought of being with the Lord soon became uppermost, and I was happy in going to Him, if it was His will. What was in question was the activity of my affection for the Lord, and not at all the assurance of faith. That it would be better to be up there with Him, I did not doubt; His love is to my heart a treasure more precious than ever, of infinite value: it is the effect of this experience. I am better now, humanly speaking: the time of my departure has not yet come. I work as usual in my study; I have been present at the Sunday morning meeting, and have taken part in it; then I have been at two meetings for reading the word.

I asked myself whether God's will was still to use me for the brethren: on one side that, on the other to be with Himself. I do not cling to life, but I should desire to finish my course; and brethren have not yet got out of all the difficulties of their position. But God is there; I do not by any means doubt that He will fully accomplish the work of His goodness, and the courage of brethren is revived by His grace. Those who seek good are more united than ever. I am working quietly—happy, profoundly happy in His love, with little strength, but

sustained: bearing brethren on my heart, and reckoning on the Lord for them. It becomes me to remember that I have passed my eightieth year. Whether here or there, Christ is everything.

May God be with you in your labours. Greet the brethren cordially for me. May God give them grace to seek His presence constantly.

Your affectionate brother.

* * * * *

Croydon, June 28th, 1881.

Dear Brother,— … As to the difficulty in England, you were all wrong in supposing that brethren were not aware that baptism had to say to it. They were aware, but it was all on one side. Two years ago, one of them had said brethren must split on this point… For my own part, it was a complete demoralisation of brethren that moved me; and this has fully come out, and those in whom this want of principle really prevailed, form now a party, and seem likely to break off in one or two places where they prevailed. But in general consciences have been awakened, and the change for the better is strongly felt… There was a strong movement to leave brethren a year or more ago, on account of the demoralisation I have spoken of; which, having been deeply exercised about it, I resisted, and we have been spared that, and the Lord has wrought wonderfully. One after another has got clear, and the body of gatherings in London are united in their decision: in fact, there is more union than ever. The deep impression of how the Lord has wrought is effectual as the things He has done, His hand has been so manifest. And now, dear brother, if you were to become a Psedo-baptist, I should not be a

bit more attached to you, and if you love Christ better, as I trust you may daily, I should. I never was satisfied with the manner of my baptism, though I felt it could not be repeated: I had been received into the ostensible body with bonâ fide intention of doing so, and could not be let in again. I think the principle more right than Baptist ones.

Since I wrote to you I have been at, what is called, death's door—told that if I attempted to go upstairs I might die on them. The action of my heart failed, and often at night it felt as if it would cease entirely. The first feeling of the break up of the vessel was a solemn one. It was not doubt of the Lord's love, or of the perfectness of His work, but the fact of the breaking up of the status of my existence; but it has left, through grace, the profoundest consciousness of association with Him, and of His love, and of the Father's too, and as if I had left the world behind me: and this sense of His love is very sweet and of association with Himself. I am much better, though a really good night's rest is unknown to me, but study work I can do as ever through mercy; but am, for my thoughts so to speak, a dead man, for the other world: we all ought to be so, and I had long so held the truth, but it is another thing to be there. All I have taught has come back to me as divine truth from God, and that is a great comfort. I have nothing to regret but my own poor walk, though I had no object but Christ. But of Jacob and Israel it shall be said, "according to this time"—the end of the wilderness—"What hath God wrought." My mind is as fresh as ever: so there is your poor old friend, John Darby, looking for Christ in you and nothing else, and knowing He is there.

Kind love to all, and tell the Nelson brethren I have but one thought, their happiness in Christ.

Affectionately yours in Him.

The Lord will guide with His eye, if we look to Him—at any rate as poor horses or mules, in His faithful love, if we do not.

Croydon, July 10th.

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* * * You have a more favourable opinion of the Bevision than I have. It is not that many passages have not been rightly corrected—many as I did myself, so that I cannot complain; and I think there are many well composed. But there is, it seems to me, no acquaintance with the mind of God, and great fundamental truth lost or marred. Look at Romans 1: “a righteousness of God by faith,” is not known to scripture. It is “revealed by [on the principle of] faith.” So (Col. 1:16) “in Christ all things were created.” They are wholly ignorant of the commonest force of ejn in Greek: so again: “Grieve not that holy Spirit of promise in which you are sealed.” (Eph. 4:30.) Now all this baffles a plain man, and on fundamental truths; and the word of God is for plain men. They are wholly ignorant of the force of English tenses; as the difference of ‘saw’ and ‘have seen.’ Both are past, but the shade of difference practically often of importance. They have not an idea of ‘have.’ The English auxiliaries vary the force without changing the time, or have two times, the participle and verb. ‘Has’ is present; ‘was’ present at another time, known from the phrase, not the word. I was comforted when it came out, finding several things good, and though the criticism of the Greek text vulgar, and the

fashion, yet what was infidel or loose avoided. But when I read a chapter or two, I found it, with just corrections, for practical use a total failure. The Americans have generally the advantage of them…

The brethren were going on with top-gallant sails set, and that does not do for us; but God has been separating the precious from the vile, and He does well what He does—better than man. I have undiminished confidence in the result. The Lord is doing what He made my motto in starting, Jeremiah 15, “If thou take forth the precious from the vile, thou shalt be as my mouth.” He will, He must, accomplish His own purpose; may we be found only in the way of it.

I have been in sight of death, so to speak, and it was a useful experience as realising things; but I am a great deal better, though broken in physical strength, thank God not in mind. I find my service of God poor, as in me it all has been, and Christ indeed now everything.

July, 1881.

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[From the German.

Beloved Brother,—I thank you from my heart for your affectionate letter. You must not think that, when I said those speaking French were my field of labour, I loved the French more than the German brethren. I do love the French brethren much, as God has much blessed my work there, and I have experienced all manner of love and kindness from them. I lived amongst them, and I bear them witness that nothing could exceed their friendliness; besides they are simple and generous. A peasant in France is nothing worth, and that is always

profitable for all Christians. The blessing too has been great: at Pau, for instance, when I began to work there, it was said there were thirty Protestants and three Christians; now there are almost one hundred that break bread: besides a National church and an Independent congregation. In the south of France everything was pure unbelief, openly; now in most villages there is an assembly, often a numerous one. Yes, my heart says with joy, rich and poor they have all evinced continued love and kindness. One could hardly love brethren more than I the French; but in my spirit and natural temperament I have much more affinity with the Germans than with the French—more readily at home (French has not the word). What I wanted to say was, that I felt God, out of England, gave me the French speaking countries as a field of labour, perhaps America also, and in fact this did not fail. In His constant goodness He added part of Germany. I feel, indeed, how poor my labour has everywhere been, and that God alone is the worker of any good result. Who could be that? What source of good is there if not God? and there everything is good. I always thought that; and have learnt it too, and praise God that I am nothing and God everything.

Death has been realised in my experience, dear brother —no new principle, nothing new as regards truth, no doubt of His love, or that Christ is perfect righteousness before Him. But I found the breaking of every sort of link with life as it is here below a real thing. Now this experience has been very useful to me. I have a much deeper sense of the grace of God and of the value of Christ—no new truth, I believe—and my soul rests upon the truths that I have long learnt. All has been made good to my soul. But the consciousness of love is quite

another thing. I feel that I belong to the other world. For long years it was my object, because I looked for the glory of Christ, and nothing else but the salvation of souls. But it is sweet to belong to the Father's house and to feel that, and to realise in closer consciousness a deeper sense of the endless love and pure grace of the Father, and what Christ and His love is. I know that He is my righteousness, and I have not to think of myself, except of my footsteps here; and it is good to think of God as the Father, and of Christ His Son.

I am much better, and can work as usual in my study. My bodily strength is much reduced. But I have long felt that this has become my present lot for quiet home work. My mind is fresh as ever, and I have taken part in some meetings, but my outward activity is for the most part over. Partly, too much work has reduced me, and I fell to the ground which did me bodily injury. Then, I am eighty, soon eighty-one years old. My hearty greetings to the brethren. Assure them that I was never more at home than among them. The wish and prayer of my heart is that Christ may be ever more and more everything to them. Soon He will become everything, and all else will come to nought.

Hearty greetings to your family and all the brethren at Elberfeld.

Your attached brother in Christ.

London, 1881.

* * * * *

* * * I have had it on my mind to write to you ever since I heard you were sick. But I have been a great deal more sick myself—more over-worked and broken-down than

ill, but so that for some time, though I felt all was in the Lord's hands, I hardly thought I should recover my strength, but leave this passing scene. And this hindered my doing anything but what came necessarily to hand to do. I felt it a solemn thing: it was not doubt as to God's or Christ's love, or the efficacy of the blessed Lord's work in justifying, but the breaking up of the life and its state in which I had lived hitherto, and its being gone. But it was a useful experience. It broke the link with present life a good deal, and made Christ's and the Father's love everything, and much more real to me, and this is a great blessing. I am a great deal better, still feel the effect of it; but, thank God, the effect in the realisation of Christ's love in my spirit is not gone. I did not doubt it before, but I have a keener sense of belonging to another world, though for a little moment remaining in this—that is, Christ and the Father's house is all. Now it has not come as near you: still your conscious decrease of strength, if it has not been such.as to give a conscious snapping of the thread of life, still tells of its passing away. I trust with care you may be better and refreshed in spirit. Still I believe it is good to look the truth of it in the face. I found sovereign grace more precious than ever. That I knew had met all my sins; of that there was no question: but the personal love of the Father and Christ was what the sense of was so greatly increased: thank God! It was a comfort to me that all I had taught and laboured in was of God and from God. It was not on this a question of the workman at all, but of the truth: I had long known, and gladly, that I was nothing.

Remember that all things work together for good to those that love God, called according to His purpose,

and dwell on the perfect divine love of the Father in giving the Son, and His unknowable (in its extent) love in accomplishing all for us. And then He loves you now. I have not a doubt, though much better, that all this was from God's hand; and so surely it is with you according to that love, only personally applied, which gave Christ for us—could not be greater. Not a sparrow falls to the ground without our Father, and He assures us we are of value to Him. He makes no mistakes, and there is nothing that escapes His eye and hand. "He withdraweth not his eyes from the righteous"—what a mercy! It is not death in itself which is present to you, that is another thing, but the course of life is broken with you for the moment, and even if you recovered strength, as I trust you may, and rejoice in God's present goodness, still the experience will have been there, and give a tone to life, and that is a great gain. "As for man, his days are as grass: as a flower of the field so he flourisheth. For the wind passeth over it, and it is gone; and the place thereof shall know it no more. But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him."

And now, dear——, be of good cheer: look to Him who is your life—a life that never fades—as He has "made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light." God has to take care of you for a little while, instead of your taking care of the house, and He does it tenderly, graciously, with His poor weak children. Think of Christ and the Father's love, and all will be well, and well for ever. That is what I have learnt…

Your affectionate brother and servant in Christ.

Croydon, July 12th.

* * * * *

* * * As to “justification of life” (Rom. 5:18) it is that justification we have as being alive in Christ; that is, it goes beyond mere forgiveness of sins as in the old man which are put away. It is the clearance of all imputation which we have as alive in Christ. But the passage gives us something more specific, it refers to verses 16 and 17. Verse 16 is “of many offences unto justification,” which of itself goes further than clearing the conscience of sins. Verse 17 further adds that they who have received “abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life.” This, while based on the clearing, brings us into the new place in life and reigning in it. Hence we have “justification of life”: “by one offence towards all men to condemnation … by one complete righteousness [dikaivwma] towards all men to justification” (ver. 18); but then “in life,” a new life in Christ—not merely, that is, the old sins cleared away negatively, but in the new place by a work of Christ which God had fully owned. He had finished the work which His Father had given Him to do, and was in virtue of it in a new place as Man in life. Life (in us) and justification went together.

I do not know if I have made myself plain. It does not go quite so far as the “in Christ,” but it does identify our justification and a new life in Him.

[1881.]

* * * * *

Dearest ——,—The tract27 is merely the system of high experimental Baptists, Warburton and Gadsby and company. Indeed I had been the means of the conversion of its last leader when tutor to my nephews. There were

godly people among them, but simple faith in the Lord's work little and seldom known; they looked for Holy Ghost work in themselves—surely necessary, but not faith. But the tract is a moderate expression. The insisting on real exercise about sin for peace I believe to be useful in these days; there is great looseness and carelessness as to it. But there are two decided defects in the tract: the two first parables of Luke 15 are left out in it; and in his system. There, experience is excluded; it is brought in in the third, the only one he refers to; but that, till he meets the Father, is the history of the work in man, of the prodigal, not of the Father; the moment he comes to Him you hear no more of the prodigal. In the two first, all is on the divine side. "For God so loved" is forgotten. All his statement as to being born is drawn from a human illustration which scripture never uses, and not from scripture, and his statement is in the teeth of scripture. He says we are not children till we are sealed; whereas scripture says the Spirit is given to us because we are sons, and that it is when the gospel of salvation has been received by faith that we are sealed for the day of redemption; and we are declared to be sons of God by faith in Christ Jesus. Christ Himself (only He in His own title) was sealed and anointed by the Holy Ghost come down from heaven. The insisting on reality of repentance I believe to be timely in these days.

Affectionately yours in the Lord.

Croydon, July 21th, 1881.

* * * * *

My dear ——,—I did not answer your letter, being laid so low myself as to stop my activities. I am better, and seek gradually to clear off old arrears. Indeed, I did not know

for some time after your letter whether I was not going to be taken away from this world. I found it a solemn thing, for it was quite present with me, but a very useful, and, in result, blessed experience. It made me much more feel to belong to the other world, and the Father's love and the Son's love and work stand out with a clearness and real depth it never did before: no new truth, but a different realisation of what that truth brought. It has linked me wonderfully more with the sources of grace, but we are poor creatures after all.

As to Romans 6 of which you speak: it is not out of experience, as redemption—a work done for us, accomplished, and where accomplishment and value is owned of God—Christ has died for our sins and, as to imputation, we have no more conscience of sins. This (Rom. 6) is connected with our state, and yet in one sense it closes experience, that is, the efforts of the soul to get at rest by victory. Chapter 7 is the experience that we cannot succeed; even where to will is present, we have no strength. When fully, experimentally, convinced of this, we find through grace, that as to the flesh we died in Christ's death; that what the law could not do, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin has condemned sin in the flesh—not forgiven, that cannot be; but that the sin 1 find working in me and distressing my soul, and which I condemn and hate, but is still there, God has condemned in the cross, so that that condemnation is accomplished for me; but that it was wrought in death, so that if I was there, or am now for faith in what Christ took, it is in death—Christ's death, the condemnation over, the death come—I died with Him; so that the condemnation is passed, but I have died for faith. In Colossians 2, 3 it is God's estimate of

this my state, “Ye are dead:” in Romans 6 it is faith’s through grace; I reckon myself dead, because Christ who is my life died. In 2 Corinthians 4:10, you have the apostle carrying it out in practice.

Now, Christ’s work outside us, for us, is done entirely outside us and accepted of God; we believe in it and God’s acceptance of it. But in being dead with Christ, though it put an end to the experience of my own useless struggles, it is something I reckon as to myself; and while it is judicial (according to Col. 3), and hence is the way and only way of liberty, as I know God so accounts it about myself, yet I have by faith to reckon it according to what Christ has done once for all. I do reckon myself to have died with Him, and God so accounts me as having Him who did die as my life. Still, it goes on in my heart, and so far is experimental. I believe that the sin was condemned of God on the cross, and that God does so reckon it (Col. 3); but Romans 6 takes it up on the faith side, and I reckon myself—that is not judicial, though based on faith in what is, namely, Colossians 3, Romans 8:3— and I have to carry it out according to 2 Corinthians 4.

It is then experimental, as that which is the exercise of faith in us, and taking what has taken place in Christ as true of us; not a work done about us and available as accepted of God: it is so far judicial, that it is in seeing the work accomplished, and judicially in Christ, we obtain liberty with God in spite of flesh, and power in the law of the Spirit of life. Conflict remains, because the flesh and temptation are there, vigilance and diligence called for just because we are delivered, to maintain holiness and communion. The thought of imputation is gone or acceptance connected with it; till

then, even if justification be known, it is a question of acceptance if not of righteousness. That question, as well as that of our sins, was settled on the cross, and we are free, free with God, but free to be holy, and that is real deliverance; we pass from the effort of a captive against his chains, to conflict, with the strength of Christ, against the enemy. Jordan and Colossians have come in, for Romans only insists on death with Christ, not on resurrection; life there is in Christ but not resurrection with Him. Ephesians is another thing, but that would be too large a subject now.

Your affectionate brother in Christ.

Croydon, July 28th, 1881.

* * * * *

My dear Brother,—I have long had before me as a present purpose writing to you, though I had no special subject before me, but I was brought very low, and for a little while it was more a question of leaving this world altogether than of writing letters. I am better: God did not see good to remove me at present, though for a little while my heart was looking that way. It is a good thing to have it near one. It was the action of the heart giving way from overwork, and I had a bad fall on that, and being in my eighty-first year I am still feeble under it, but sensibly better.

As regards the question you put, it has exercised saints, and the case has been before us of old, but one would not accept a person who would not worship Christ. I took this same ground at Auburn, in Maine. There are certain vital truths connected with the Person of the Lord, which, when possessed, guard the soul from interpretations to which the soul who merely follows the

words may be liable. Tell me I am not to worship Christ: you take away the only Christ I know. I have none other but one I do adore and worship with a thankful heart which owes all to Him. The object of John 16:27 is to give immediate confidence in the Father, in contrast with the spirit of Martha, chapter 11:22. Here the Lord says, “I say not unto you, that I will pray the Father for you: for the Father himself loveth you.” Further, the question is not of worship here at all, they should ask Him nothing (ejrwtw'), but were to beg (aijtevw) the Father in His name. But all the angels of God are to worship Him, every knee to bow to Him. But more; calling on the name of the Lord is, so to speak, the definition of a Christian. Paul thrice besought the Lord to take away the thorn, and the Lord heard his cry and answered. Stephen was “invoking and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.” Christ is the Adonai of the Old Testament, as Isaiah 6 and John 12 and indeed Psalm 110 and other places. The Sitter on the throne and the Lamb are associated in Revelation 5:13; indeed, it is a question if chapter 4 be not the Son in His divine Person. You cannot separate the Ancient of Days and Christ in Daniel 7, though as the Son of man, He is brought before Him; for in verse 22 the Ancient of Days comes. And judgment is committed to the Son “because he is the Son of man”—yet “that all men should honour the Son even as they honour the Father.” I do not quote passages to prove His Deity—that He and the Father are one, the fulness of the Godhead dwelling in Him bodily; that He was God, and created all things—as it is not called in question.

As to the use of the Lord’s name in addressing the Father, if it be that in substance the prayer is not in His

name, I reject it altogether. The use of the blessed Lord's name did not belong to a lower state, for He says, "Hitherto ye have asked nothing in my name," whereas on His going away He says, "Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name," so that it belongs distinctly to this time. If it is merely the form of words, it is another thing; we may get into any routine of words and lose the force. But our prayers are only rightly directed to the Father in the name of Jesus; and in walking down here, it is not as being in Him we pray, nor is that praying in His name—true as it is that we are in Him. It is rightly addressed to the Father according to all the value of Christ to the Father, but as a separate Person, and separate from the Father too. It will not do to deny the mediatorship of Christ, the Man Christ Jesus, between God and man. He is both present with God, and Advocate with the Father. The loss of the mediatorial place of the blessed Lord would be the loss of Christianity. To "us there is but one God the Father;" "and one Mediator between God and men, the man Jesus Christ." His divine nature is not the question in this, and I know of no right prayer that is not in His name; it is not in Him, but "through him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father."

One who refused to worship Christ, or who did not own His mediatorship and that in every aspect, I could not walk with. But I think that worship of the Father and the worship of Christ as Mediator has a different character. In worshipping the Father I go to one who in infinite, uncaused love (the form and glory of Godhead never left) has revealed Himself to me, brought me into the place of son, not spared His own Son for me, reconciled me to Himself by Him, and given me His Spirit that I

may have the consciousness of the place He has put me in, so that I cry, Abba, Father. It is all through Christ, but I know the Father and what He is through Him—alas, yet how imperfectly! yet so as to joy or glory in God. It is God, but God known as Father, John 4:23: John always makes the difference. So Christ tells us He was going to His Father and our Father, and His God and our God. It is what the Father is in Himself to whom we are brought, and as revealed in love in the Son, we being made sons, that is specially before us in worshipping Him, though all blessings flow from Him. Now in the worship of Christ become Mediator, I own His divine title though He laid aside His glory—now taken again — but it is One who has come down to me, has lived and died for me, loved me, washed me from my sins in His own blood. He was slain and has redeemed to God those far from Him; has made Himself of no reputation; and in unutterable grace to me, has been in all points tempted like as we are, sin apart, can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities. Now I quite admit a child owes worship to a loving Father—all right; but sorrows, exercises, thorns in the flesh, cases where I want sympathy, my wants, and then the administration of everything in the church, connect themselves with my looking to and worshipping Christ viewed as Mediator. It is not a person simply as made partaker of the divine nature, and through the Spirit knowing the Father through the revelation of the Son, who worships the Father as so knowing Him. I come more into the scene as knowing Christ a tempted Saviour, as a Friend tried in the circumstances in which we are. Were He not God this would lose all its value, but it is of inestimable value to every exercised soul. But it is evident that it connects

itself more with my state down here. It is just what is precious.

This is true, that the work of Christ has been so divine and glorious, God Himself glorified in it, that it lifts us up to worship Him in respect of the excellency of what He has shewn Himself to be in that, and so we rise up to Godhead: for hereby know we love because He laid down His life for us. This it is important to lay fast hold of for His glory. We at once see the unity of thought, purpose, mind, nature, in the Son and in the Father. Still it is practically true that souls are apt to rest in looking at Christ, however justly, in the mediatorial aspect which concerns themselves, and their worship descends to this. It is not the blessed nature of God in which they joy and glory, and that known in a Father's love as their Father, but in the grace and service and benefits of which they are the objects and recipients, found in Christ. Now this cannot be separated when true from the source of love in Him as a divine Person, but is connected with our wants, infirmities, and failures in a word—which, though divine grace, refer to self, and in which we ought to think of self, that the sense of it may be real, and we filled with divinely given thankfulness. Both are right, both are sweet, and what we have to cultivate by grace, but different. One lifts us up simply to God for our new man to dwell in and delight in, and surely worship Him. The other brings down that love in sympathetic goodness to our state, though felt and estimated by the new man—God revealed, but as entering into all we are, and all we want, and that even to our sins. Now that the adoring recognition of this is true worship I fully admit, and the exclusion of it wholly wrong and deadening to the affections of the soul; but it

is a different thing from the soul, by the Holy Ghost, being with and adoring the Father, to whom Christ has brought us, loved as He is loved. I apprehend there was the tendency in——'s teaching, desirous of reaching to the former, to set aside the latter, and that was all wrong; but I fear brethren active in the matter had not learned to appreciate the difference between the two. The result was attack and then personal defences, and many things defended by others as right which were rash and ill-advised statements which might have been corrected.

Take hymns and see how many you have addressed to the Father, or which continue to have Him and not ourselves for their subject after the first verse? You may, perhaps, have hymns to the Father; but in revising the hymn book I found how grave a question the doing it had raised for me as to this: though our spiritual state affects everything we do, yet it requires a more spiritual state than hymns to Christ, though He be worthy of equal honour. But while I make this difference, you cannot separate them by a sharp mathematical line, so to speak. Affections do not flow in that way. And the love of the Father and the Son run into one another. If the Father did not spare His Son, the Son in the same divine love gave Himself. We have known the Father through His revelation of Him. "He that acknowledged the Son hath the Father also." The incarnation, and service which follows it in grace, has given a special character to our heart relationship with Christ, but after all, all is of the same divine source. Worshipping the Father as being in Christ has been spoken of, as substituting it for worshipping Christ; but I find no such thought in scripture. In Christ is our place and privilege; worship is

a separate thing which springs through grace from our hearts individually, or, yet rather, collectively; but worshipping in Him I find no trace of in scripture.

Affectionately yours in the Lord.

July, 1881.

Dear Mrs. ——,—I was very glad to hear of these different souls whom God is leading on. It is always so pleasant to see God working in blessing, and souls opening under the rays of His grace; for what He does, though it may be in a short moment, is eternal… It is not a good sign when people do not like a yoke being put upon them if the yoke be God's word. "Take my yoke upon you and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly of heart." We like our own will. There may be a bondage which is not of Christ, if it is that of man on the new man, but subjection of will is the secret of all peaceful walk in this world. It is Christ's work which gives peace to the conscience; but it is a subdued will, having none of our own, which in great and in little things makes us peaceful in heart in going through a world of exercise and trial. All in us, morally speaking, is sin, and having done with that, we live in what the Father is for us, and on what Christ is a wondrous exchange. Self is always alienation from God; that is, in its working.

As to Mr. ——'s teaching on Matthew 13:38-43; I do not know what it is: ——'s interpretation of verses 44, 45, I do, and never received—his interpretation made it not the kingdom of heaven at all—nor did I as to the bride: Ephesians 5 and Revelation 22:17 seem to me to contradict it expressly. But mistaken interpretations are not false doctrine.

Luke 11:5, etc., is a general statement, that if we ask we shall get. In Luke 18 there is more reference to importunity, but not to its being exactly God's way, but that when the answer, for God's own wise reasons, does not come at once (for the answer may imply many things which God cannot well do), then we should persevere. It is not sufficient to know what is the true ground; there must be adequate motive, Christ must be all to us or we shall soon be discouraged, and this true of everything. When Christ is not everything, and the Father's love the air we breathe for life, we are not going right.

I sorrow over the way Mr.——'s case has been taken up. I have no doubt he spoke unguardedly and was wrong in certain views; but I doubt brethren understood what was in question. I admit his statements had done mischief to some, but the way it was taken up added to it. There might have been a gain of spiritual apprehension; I fear now there may have been loss, but the Lord will overrule it. "That all men should honour the Son as they honour the Father" with whom He is one, scripture is plain enough about, and that it lies at the basis of all truth is a first principle of Christianity. But I trust the Lord will give peace.

I am at a local conference out of London, the first experiment I have made of my strength. It is now some months since I preached, but have been four times to breaking of bread.

Yours sincerely in the Lord.

August, 1881.

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Dearest——,—Most thankful am I that your dear child has confessed Christ. At her age it is an anxious thing, as the world has not yet tried their faith; but I do not see that we have any title to keep them out when we have no doubt that they are Christ's. I should put these things before her, tell her where my anxiety was as to her taking on her publicly the profession of His name—only guarding against producing any distrust of His love and perfect grace—before I brought her case before others with a view to her breaking bread; and make it a serious thing with her; but of course, if she be Christ's, she has her title there, and there is the place where the care and nurture of Christ ought at least to be found. This of course will also fall much on you and Mrs. ——. May the Lord keep her in lowliness and close to Himself, that the flesh and the world it belongs to may not strengthen itself by growing years, but the contrary.

We had, I believe, a useful and happy meeting at Oxford, but, besides proofs to correct, it has left me with thirty-four letters to answer, several long unread, so I add nothing. Affectionately yours in the Lord.

August, 1881.

* * * I did not doubt a moment, when I saw the black edge, that your darling—— was gone. Be assured of my unfeigned sympathy. It is a world for death, but death is gain in Christ. The Lord, has left you other objects to occupy your affections, but I have always seen and felt that the first taken, and her the first-born too, tells more on us than any. Up to now life, so to speak, had been working, and the fruit of life growing up in these dear objects of affection. But now death comes and says Yes, but I am here in the world; and it is more or less written

on all that are left. But it is a mercy that God has left all your recollections of dear little —— pleasant, and that you step from these into heaven to Christ with her. I do not think that there is more feeling in the sorrow than in sympathy with it—a different kind there is, of course: but the Lord's sense of death at the tomb of Lazarus was deeper far, I believe, than Martha and Mary's, tempered with divine sustainment of life, but feeling what death was more than they did—not exactly the loss of Lazarus, that was their sorrow, but all that death meant for the human heart, and as God saw it in love. So your little one is gone, but is gone to Christ, and He is the resurrection and the life. Wonderful that He, such in this world, Master of death, steps then into death Himself for us! But oh, how perfect in all things He was! I recommend you and Mrs.—— to Him. He makes up every loss, and in Him we lose nothing. He had a better right, and a blessed right, to—— than even you had, so He has taken her to Himself. We cannot say a word, save that that is what it is; and He has taken her before the fresh buds of divine goodness were soiled or sullied in her. May the gracious Lord turn it all to blessing to you. Since —— my affections were linked up with these little ones, but there is better than what passes away.

Affectionately yours in the Lord. 1881.

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[From the French.

* * * I have been very low—so low that I did not know whether I should get up again. I had no sense of death, for God—and, if we have not judged ourselves, Satan—is especially engaged at such a moment. But, quite uncertain whether I should get up again, J found myself

within sight of my end, and I was surprised at the little difference which it made to me: Christ, the precious Saviour, with me for the journey; then, I through grace; with Him for ever—there was no change as to this…, Christ is all, beloved: everything else will pass out of sight; but He, blessed be His name, never. He who is not ashamed to call us brethren is, nevertheless, seated upon the Father's throne. It is a wonderful redemption, and He who accomplished it is infinitely precious.

Let us keep close to the Lord, for He would have us there, and let us recognise our own nothingness. The true christian condition is this, that there should not be a thought nor a feeling in the heart of which He is not the source. This is the realisation of the word: "To live is Christ." But what grace, what watchfulness, is needed, for us to come near it!

London, September 2nd.

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[From the French.

Beloved Brother,—I am much better through the goodness of God. There is a change in me at the end of this nearness of death, not in doctrine, not in my views. In all that nothing is changed, all is confirmed: it is a sweet thought that all that I have taught has been of God. But I have much more deeply the consciousness of belonging to another world. I had it indeed already by faith, but I have the feeling of being of it. I do not know when He will take me, and up to this moment I am doing, as always, what my strength allows. To watch and pray is necessary as in the past, but what the beloved Saviour has said is beyond it, "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world"; and from whence was

He? In this respect there is a sensible change—and I wait.

1881.

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* * * It has struck me, God continuing to bless through all the trouble. Exercise of faith it has been, and in a measure still is, but it is, after all, a happy thing to be cast on God; rest is elsewhere. Do not do feats as to bodily effort; the Lord's servant has to endure hardness sometimes, and it is a good thing; but there is no good in doing it on purpose. Enduring is right; I would there were more of it; but a single eye takes out of seeking even this. What a blessing to have the heart purified, and all light by this, till we come to where there is no darkness at all—the blessed place where God is, where Christ is glorified. There all the saints will be for ever adequately to His glory, the fruit of the travail of His soul, for He shall see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied. Think of His being satisfied! His love is perfect now. We need polishing, but there are elements in us, because Christ is there, which will come out in perfect beauty, when the rough stuff, which makes its surface now, is wholly off for ever. Here it has to be worn off, detected by various exercises, that conscience may be exercised with it, and thus the internal, moral fruit wrought; but then it shall be perfect in itself.

I have finished John, and for myself, at least, I have learned a good deal in it; I hope profited. With Him it was only the coming out of the perfect thing; there was no inconsistent crust, not even individuality, to rub off. He was just what He should be to manifest God, and man in perfection to God, every moment. I feel the sense

of divine love deeper and deeper, and of patience with such as me.

September, 1881.

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My dear Brethren,—I am not going to occupy you with —— or —— or——. It is to another they will answer, and I trust they will depend on His grace. I wish to inquire into the truth of your statement, 'he is content to teach from the word of God, and we are equally content to hear it from that alone.' You shall have the teaching you have learned to delight in and what scripture says side by side, and you or any one can then judge if this teaching is from the word of God, in the hope that some of you (may it be all!) may be delivered from what, to my mind, is a Satanic delusion, because on fundamental points it is in direct contradiction with that word.

'The Gentile who is dead does not require forgiveness.'

Luke 24:47, "That repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among (eij", to) all nations, beginning at Jerusalem."

Acts 10:43: "Through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins." Acts 26:17, 18. Romans 3:19, 25: "That every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God." "There is no difference … whom God hath set forth a propitiation [mercy-seat] through faith in his blood." 1 John 2:2: "And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for (the sins of) the whole world." Romans 4:7-10: "Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven … How was it then reckoned? … Not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision." Acts 13:38, 39:

“Be it known … and by him all that believe are justified from all things.” Colossians 2:13: “And you, being dead in your sins … having forgiven you all trespasses.” Now here we have Gentiles dead in sins and uncircumcision, forgiven all trespasses. Colossians is essentially to Gentiles. (See chap. 1:27, and as the whole passage here shews.) But they are forgiven. But if, in spite of evidence, it is insisted they are Jews, then the Jews were dead as well as Gentiles. At any rate the teaching is false that the dead do not need forgiveness, for here the dead are forgiven. And this leads me to Ephesians 2:1, 5: “And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; wherein in time past ye walked,” etc. These are dead Gentiles, “Among whom also we all had … even as others”—these are Jews. “But God … hath quickened us together with Christ.” Here are both together, but both dead and both quickened together, and sitting together in heavenly places in Christ.

This anti-christian statement that sinners of the Gentiles have no need of forgiveness is connected with, partly founded on, a false interpretation of 1 John 1:9, as if it applied only to believers, that they are cleansed from particular sins; but though this may be supported by souls not yet set free, it is not in the passage. It is not, if we fail the blood of Christ cleanses us, but “if we walk in the light, as God is in the light … the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin”—from all sin, not from any particular fault. It is the christian state, or standing in the light as God is, and cleansed so as to be fit to be there. After that John speaks of particular sins: “These things write I unto you, that ye sin not. If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father.” (1 John 2:1.) There is no re-shedding of blood, no re-sprinkling

of blood in scripture. “The worshippers once purged have no more conscience of sins”: “By one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.” It is not that we do not offend, but there is no imputing of the sin as guilt: “Blessed is the man to whom the Lord doth not impute sin.” And in Romans 4, where this is found, it is expressly declared it is not for the circumcision only. It is for all those who believe, “though they be not circumcised, that righteousness might he imputed to them also.” Your teaching has forgotten that there were those who were not Christians, who were not under law either, and accounted righteous by faith and forgiven their sins. See Romans 4, where this point is fully discussed to set aside what you hold. “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.” A ransom is that by which redemption comes, is wrought; to have the good of it Christ must be believed in: but as the righteousness is of God, it is as good for the Gentile as for the Jew, and is needed by the Gentile as the Jew. “There is no difference.”

I will now take up the question which your teacher connects with redemption, and where he is very confused. He declares he has only the earnest of the Spirit—he does not say of what, only goes on to the redemption of the body. That we are waiting for that is all true (Eph. 1): but in the previous part of the chapter, what is spoken of redemption is spoken of a something we have, “to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved. In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins.” According to the teaching you have now, this is Jewish, though there is not a word about law or Jews.

You are not accepted in the Beloved, you have not redemption and forgiveness, and in your madness pretend you did not need it. The passage speaks of those who are chosen in Him before the foundation of the world: I suppose there were no Jews or Gentiles when "predestinated to the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will." All this belongs, according to this passage, to those who have redemption through His blood.

You are taught that redemption is 'only to the state in which Adam was, that is, Eden: as he was earthy, such are they who are earthy, and can, by redemption, only be brought to the state in which Adam was before he fell!' Why so? Why is the sacrifice of God's Son, made sin for us, to produce no other effect than creation? I read: "He hath made him to be sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him"; or, as we have just read, "We have the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of his grace"; "He hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ." (Eph. 1) Besides, redemption is identified with the forgiveness of sins. What has that to do with innocent Adam? If it be the intervention and work of God, it has the effect purposed of God, and according to the worth of that work; and that is, that we should be "heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ." (Rom. 8:17) "So that in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus." (Eph. 2:7.) The whole train of thought in your doctrine denies the whole scheme and revelation of Christianity, which sets us redeemed and forgiven in the second Man, the last Adam, in all that belongs to Him as the glorified Man, as the Son of man. You get the same truth in

Galatians 4:7, where it applies expressly to Gentiles. (See ver. 8.) “Christ was made under the law to redeem them that were under the law,” but He was also made of a woman, the Mediator between God and man.

We are told ‘he could not say all have sinned till he proved the Jew guilty; and now having quoted their own scriptures and prophets, he proves them guilty, now he writes “all.” ‘All right; but then the Gentile is guilty, has sinned, but being dead, ‘does not require forgiveness.’ ‘We have all sinned, are all guilty, but do not require forgiveness.’ It is a shame to have to reason about such stuff! And then he impudently says exactly the contrary of what the passage says, ‘He brings in the free justification from the law.’ Scripture (Rom. 3:21, 22) says, “But now without law [apart altogether from it] the righteousness of God is manifested”; and to whom?—those under the law to justify them from it? Not the least; but “the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, etc., etc., that he might be just and the Justifier of him that believeth.” Hence in chapter 4:11 he expressly tells us it comes on the uncircumcision, not to justify from the law, for they were not under it, but without law, having nothing to do with law (cwriV" novmou). Now you are taught that when Jews are proved to have sinned and be guilty, all are—Gentiles as well as Jews; and also that ‘the word no difference applies between Jews and Gentiles, not between Jews and God.’ All right: but then Gentiles have sinned, and Gentiles are guilty. All the world is guilty: all, Gentiles as well as Jews, have

sinned. “Being justified freely by his [God’s] grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.” Now this justification and this redemption is directly and unquestionably applied, and formally said of all those who had sinned, all Gentiles and Jews, for there is no difference. All this is largely confirmed and developed in Galatians 4 T do not dwell on Ephesians 1, 2, 3, where Jews and Gentiles are carefully identified in the same privileges, according to the eternal purposes of God, the middle wall of partition being broken down—Jews and Gentiles, they are all chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world—it would be to expound the whole epistle. To say those spoken of in the beginning of chapter 1 are privileges only of Jews, is to talk nonsense in defiance of what is said. It is all the saints and faithful at Ephesus, who were chiefly Gentiles (see Acts 29:9, 10); and Gentiles are carefully introduced, as his own mission is developed in chapter 3 where he calls himself prisoner for them—Gentiles.

I turn to another point: ‘God is not Creator of the unconverted! ‘It is denied’ that we, before we were saved, were created by God!’ I have been asked for a text. I quote Acts 17:25, 28: “He giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; and hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation.” He is addressing the heathen and says, “For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring.” ‘Adam [before he fell] was God’s creature.’ Genesis 6:7: God says, “I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth.” But according to this teaching, He had not

created at all what He was going to destroy. Malachi 2:10: “Hath not one God created us?” Even the poor women have a chance of thinking themselves God’s creatures. “For neither was the man created for the woman, but the woman for the man.” So in Ephesians 3:9: “God who created all things.” Ecclesiastes 12:1: “Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth.” Will it be said He is the Creator as well as the Redeemer of the Jews, not of the Gentiles? Then He is God of the Jews, and not of the Gentiles, not “of the spirits of all flesh” (Num. 16:22; 27:16); and Jews and Gentiles are distinct races of beings, have not a common Creator. John 8 refers to Jews. Further, if it be because we come in by ordinary generation, then nothing is created of God; for not a tree, not a bit of grass, but comes from another, as is written, whose seed is in itself. ‘God created nothing but the earth, and what was first upon it.’ Then “the things which are seen” (Heb. 11:3) has no sense. John 8:44 is referred to: there is not a word about creating. They had the spirit of Satan, murder and lying —he was the father of it. It was their moral character. So in 1 John 3:8: ‘Creature, or God’s only work in creating.’ This is because the word “made” is used, and that they are begotten of Adam. The poor women were never (not even Eve innocent was) created of God; nothing therefore at all that exists, is created of God! Genesis 1: heaven and earth were created. God created great whales, and all that moves in the sea. (Ver. 21.) The difference of “created” and “made” is imaginary. God said, “Let us make man.”… “So God created man.” (Vers. 26, 27.) And He rested “from all the work which he had made,” and in it “he rested from all his work which God created and made” (Chap. 2:2, 3—lit. “created to make”), and “these are the generations of the heavens

and of the earth when they were created, in the day that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens." (Ver. 4.) In Hebrews 11: "By faith we understand," etc. Now that is exactly creation. Colossians 1:16: "For by him [the Son] were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, Visible and invisible, whether they be thrones," etc. But the coming in of sin, we are told, has made the difference—not as to his being God's creature: "he that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning." And "in this are manifest the children of God and the children of the devil. Whoever does not practise righteousness is not of God." We are the children of Abraham, if we are in Christ; but of creation not a word, whereas sons of Belial is a common expression. They are morally his offspring by murder and falsehood; as the Lord called Peter, Satan, when hindering His obedience unto death, through the influence of the world's Prince. As Christ says in this chapter, "Ye are from beneath; I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world." (John 8:23.) To be in the spirit of this world was to be from beneath. I might add as to present creatures Psalm 104, which celebrates creation as it is, and when we read verse 30, after speaking of creatures dying and returning to their dust, "Thou sendest forth thy spirit, they are created: and thou renewest the face of the earth." The guilt of the heathen was that they "served the creature more than the Creator." To Elihu who gives us the thought and mind of God in contrast with Job and his friends (Job 33:4, 6) "the spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life." Yet he is speaking of natural life: "I also am formed out of the clay." Again, chapter 34:14, 15: "If he set his heart upon man, if he gather unto himself his spirit and his breath, all flesh

shall perish together, and man shall turn again to his dust."

As far as I can gather what is taught (for the statement is obscure), the possession of eternal life is denied. That we have the earnest of the Spirit till the full development of it in glory is true. But at present I am told I only have the earnest of the Spirit. But it is said that life is mine by faith. The earnest of eternal life is not scriptural thought. Leaving the statement there, I give the positive statement of scripture. First, it is because we are sons that the Spirit of God's Son is given to us: so that we must have life, be sons, to be sealed and cry, Abba, Father. More is needed, but this is clear; you must be a son, which is by faith in Christ Jesus (Gal. 3:26), or it is false to say, Abba, Father. This is by the Spirit given to us. (Gal. 4:6.) But I will cite direct statements. John 3:36: "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life." John 5:24: "He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life." 1 John 5:11, 12: "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; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life."

Now this is the result of this short statement of the teaching you accept. You deny God is our Creator. You deny redemption, except of the body at the end. You deny that we have need of forgiveness of sins when converted to God; and unless an obscure sentence be cleared up, you deny we have eternal life—we have only the earnest of the Spirit. Now I do not touch on ecclesiastical questions, though you seem to me in this also to have cast the truth overboard; but you cannot

expect to be owned to be Christians, denying all these fundamental truths. It is impossible. You may ask why I call you brethren? I do so, because I trust you may be delivered from these sad delusions of the enemy, in which the fundamental truths of Christianity, as to its application to us, are denied. I might have reasoned a great deal on the statements on which I comment, but I have preferred citing scripture as the adequate reply. May the Lord deliver you from the delusion of the enemy Affectionately yours in Christ.

October 1st, 1881.

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My dear Brother,—I—indeed I might say we, for the brethren invited to meet the American labourers were here, and it naturally passed on to several—was greatly rejoiced to hear that God had graciously made your mind clear as to your true position and Christian path before Him. I have been more than fifty years in it, and have never had a shade of question on my mind. I have seen failure in myself and others, but it remained in scripture where God had put it. I am additionally thankful that it is from scripture, not from persuasion, that you have learned it. God can of course use others to lead us on, but we know better on what we rest when it is in scripture itself we have found it. Difficulties I have no doubt you will find; there are a certain class which are only in the path of faith, but the joy of the Lord is with us in them. In the last dayi, too, perilous times shall come we read, and that we must experience, but the light and strength of the Lord is there. What a bright picture we have in Luke 1, 2 of the poor and unknown remnant who walked with God in the midst of the

unparalleled wickedness of Israel! As to your outward path God will shew it to you. We have only to find His will, and we shall find Him in it. —— will I dare say, have told you of our meetings here: there was much happy communion in it.

Croydon, October, 1881.

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My dear Brother,—I was very glad to get your letter and hear of the saints too. People newly come out always need pretty constant pastoral care, and especially in colonies where the tendency is to loosen all the habits. It is a comfort to know, that through all the Lord will keep His own; I do not mean that labourers and all saints should not be exercised as to it, but that when they see failure they have this to fall back upon. But we desire to see them as a watered garden. What a joy it is when we see them so! It is the power of the Spirit of God which makes them united and happy together, but then He must work in the individual heart, that it may be so, that they may be as "willows by the water-courses." And there is grace enough in Christ to do it. The text has often been a comfort to me, "My grace is sufficient for thee"; but then we must learn, and experimentally—so Paul himself was obliged to do—the other part practically; and this is a very great thing to learn practically—I mean that we are nothing: we all know that it is true—but to walk in the sense of it. It makes the difference between one saint and another; only we must refer to Christ in grace, or we might get discouraged. But a man who is discouraged is not really there: he does not find strength; but where is he looking for it? When we are really nothing we look to Christ, and

we know that He can do everything and, while contending in prayer for a blessing, we know that He does, and orders everything. I was saying to a young clergyman recently out, and fearing as to the future of brethren—the Christian has no future but glory. All he has to do is to do God's will at the moment, and the rest is all in God's hands; only we know that glory awaits us. But this does suppose a just sense of our own nothingness, and blessed confidence in God, so that knowing His love we can leave all to Him, knowing that He does all at any rate, and that He will make all issue in blessing.

I have not much to tell you of these countries. Dr. Wolston thought of asking the American labourers to England, and they came gladly to meet in a home conference those of us who had laboured there, and they enjoyed it amazingly, and we all got unusual blessing. They went round too to various gatherings as the Lord led, and I hear their ministry was very fresh and they enjoyed it much. I quite trust it may be a means of real blessing.

As to the difficulties among brethren, it is a moment in which there is a very great and organised effort to make a party against righteousness. It is of course sorrowful, but in effect I do not know that it is more than the needing sifting of God's hand. My weak state makes it a little trying to me, but I trust the Lord and work on. There is much to be thankful for, but it is a sifting process at present, and we have to await the result of God's dealing. The preservation of His testimony is what I look and pray for. Nor do I doubt of it, but I have left all in His hands, only answering letters written to me.

The Lord be abundantly with you, dear brother. He is all to us, and soon will be so without a cloud, and that will be a blessed time. I have happy accounts of God's work both in France and Switzerland—in the former where they had, a good while, gone a good deal to sleep. May we be found watching and waiting for Him!

As to the revised version I think very badly of it indeed. Individual passages are more accurately translated, but they have not had the mind of God at all, and that on fundamental points. I have written a paper on it, to be printed, not published. I have had a slight paralytic stroke—very slight indeed, but it disables me a little in my activities.

October, 1881.

Dear——, It is time I should write to you. It was not for want of often thinking of you that I have not, but what little strength I have has been spent on the French Old Testament and the English New, both laborious work. But I felt you were a good deal isolated, and was longing to write a line… All around God is carrying on His clearing work. What I am anxious for is that brethren should see it is His hand which has indeed wonderfully interposed; but that calls for lowliness and thankfulness. The sense of His goodness always humbles. Exulting is never right; but what ground for it when we have allowed to come in and grow up amongst us what God in His mercy has to put out? Still we have great cause for thankfulness, and one thing I have noticed too, that God has never stopped His work by and amongst brethren. It is nothing very great, but it has constantly gone on, and is now too shewing itself… What I have specially had in my mind to pray for as to this is, that He would maintain

His testimony, the testimony He raised up among brethren. Nothing is better than visiting work, without assuredly depreciating the gospel. What I feel is to be done, and as far as able always have done, is to seek to present Christ according to the state of the soul one has to say to. I never bother myself about brethren, if God gathers them it will be well; but my business is one—what does that soul want? It may be deeper conviction of sin: it may be, that Christ has made peace; but whatever it is, that is what I have to bring, and look to Him to seal the word and make it good; and then feed on Him for oneself, for He is there in grace for us, and unsearchable riches in Him.

I am better; in His goodness God has preserved my mind untouched. For study work I am as fresh as ever, and happy and thankful in His love, which is infinite. Eighty-one is not the age to expect very great restoration, but there is One above eighty…

Love to all the brethren. May they, with purpose of heart, cleave to the Lord.

Your affectionate brother in Christ.

Ventnor, October 2lst, 1881.

* * * * *

Dear Brother,—I must be brief. I believe Christ bound the strong man in the wilderness after the Holy Ghost coming upon Him, and the Father owning Him as His Son. The relationship and position of accepted man being established there, He goes as such, led of the Spirit, to be tempted of the devil, who sought, if He were a Son, to get Him to put Himself out of the place of a servant and failed. The strong man was bound and He

proceeded to spoil his goods, delivering all from his power; but that as his temptations were as to this world and the effects of sin, sin itself remained. He departed from Him for a season (Luke), and then the consequence of taking up the sinner, which was a second thing, came upon Him.

1 Corinthians 15:22 I believe is all in Christ. But the other sense is true, there will be a resurrection of the unjust, and it only speaks of the body here. But the resurrection of the wicked is not developed: see the verses which follow and verse 43.

I do not think 1 Thessalonians 1:10 refers to the tribulation, but to the carrying out of judgment by Christ, and first specially at His appearing.

The hymn book is out, and the brethren at Croydon thought it much improved, but I have found a good many printing errors—partly mine. The Croydon meeting was greatly enjoyed by brethren, much communion, and the Americans very happy. I trust they profited too.

October 21st, 1881.

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My dear ——,—I was glad to hear of you. It is quite intelligible your remaining to help——, the rather that he is not strong and would require some strength at this season, though the sea may temper it. I know what walking work is, but was perhaps stronger than either of you then, but non sum qualis eram; between my eighty-one years and paralytic stroke, however slight, my physical strength is sensibly impaired. Our real strength does not change and we ought always to know it better, and still more that we have none but that. Keep it in

mind, dear——; we are all, though knowing it well, apt to forget it. But this stay implies that you have definitely taken your place as given up to the work. May the gracious Lord guide you in it! How does your wife bear the roughing? Real sorrows women often bear better than men, but, of course rough outward life, with little comfort, they will feel as weaker vessels. I have well known what roughing it is and long walks, but not only was happier in the work but, I think, never better. Still in the long run it wears; but to serve Christ is blessing wherever it may be—the best of blessings here below. When I look back (and I look more forward) I see much to judge, but serving Him and He was my object, casts a sweet light on it all, though tempered with the sense of my own poverty in it. But that turns the eye on Him, and that is all blessing. Be content to be tired and work hard, but do not do feats, which some of us are inclined to do—true labourers too. Do what Christ gives you to do with patience. You see I talk a little as an emeritus. I hardly shall do much more hard work since my attack of paralysis, slight as it is, but nothing separates from the love of Christ. Kind love to all the saints. My kind remembrance too, if she will kindly receive it, to Mrs. ——. I wish her a winter with Christ.

Ventnor, October 3lst.

27 [Referring to a tract by a high Calvinist on “Life before Faith.”]

Letters Section 6

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My dear Brother,—I was glad to receive your kind letter, and to know that you are happily arrived and quietly established at——, though it be a somewhat cold climate; but it is hardly colder for you Canadians than Canada for us English, and I liked it. But, here or there, it is where God would have us, that is our place, and where we may expect a blessing and the consciousness of His presence. He may and does keep us, in His patient and perfect goodness, everywhere, but it is in the way of His will that His presence is revealed to us, so that we walk in the light of His countenance. He kept Abraham in Egypt, but he had no altar from Bethel back to Bethel.

I trust fully that you are both in that way; I do not think it an evil that a young married couple should go through the rough of life a little together at the beginning; it binds their hearts together. Surely there is a far higher and better bond, but as to circumstances the comfort each is to the other, and the sustaining help each is to the other, bind their hearts together; for life down here is made up of small things. If it were only when a husband comes home cold and tired, finding ease and a welcome and comfort, as far as may be, and the like, there is the continuous sense of one caring for the other, and that is a great point. They are thrown on one another, and where affection is, this cultivates it, and I believe this is of all importance; and then what accompanies it, entire confidence one in another.

But this is all maintained, dear brother, by Christ being all to each, for self is thus set aside, and the grace of Christ working in the heart overcomes all difficulties, and, while Christ is the motive which rises over all, makes the other the object of affectionate and considerate service. But for our own sakes too He is everything, light to the soul, but the blessed expression and communicator of the love of God; and for this there must be real diligence. All that is around us, and even real duties, are constantly soliciting us away from Him, and tending to weaken us spiritually. When we cleave to Him, all goes on smoothly in the heart, in the consciousness of His love: we know how to confide in and count on Him, nothing separates us from His love. The distractions of the world lose their power, because the heart is elsewhere: nine-tenths of our temptations would not be such at all; as a mother who thought her child was run over by a train would not see fine things in the streets on her way down. And what are really our duties we should serve Christ in. A holy intimacy with Christ is the strength and light of the soul, and He encourages us in it, for He is full of love. How near He brings Peter at the end of Matthew 17 The tribute was the tribute to the temple, to Jehovah, and while He shews He knew all and could command the creatures—the fish to bring the exact needed sum—He says to Peter, “Lest we should offend them,”—you and I are children, we do not owe the tribute, and—“that give for me and for thee.” And He spoke as intimately and familiarly to His disciples about His death as He did to Moses and Elias. It is a gracious and blessed Saviour we have; He delights in our being near Him, and soon will have us so for ever, and like Him too. May He make you more and more like Him daily! Oh! cultivate intimacy

with Him; it keeps the conscience alive and the heart happy. You may be comparatively a young Christian, and I an old one; but He is all we want, each of us, and suited to each. You can have Him to keep you in the journey before you, and I can look back and see a patience and a faithfulness, a goodness beyond all my thoughts and all my praise. It is a sweet thought that in going on I am drawing near being with Him for ever. If spared, you have more of the toil of the way; with me it is almost over. You have a helpmeet, and I have trod it alone; but all is lost, so to speak, in His grace and faithfulness.

Kind remembrances to Mrs. ——, whom I must learn to call by her new name—my first attempt—and thank her for her kind note: I am very glad she already bears it, for when people are engaged I do not think long delays are a good thing, though possibly sometimes inevitable. May the Lord abundantly bless you both… I shall be very glad, dear brother, though far off, to increase my acquaintance with yourself; only may your heart be with Christ!

Your affectionate brother in Him.

Ventnor, November 10th.

My dear Brother,—Thanks for letting me know about yourself and the work… I quite enter into the need of those gathered to be watched over and nurtured. But it is now as ever, the harvest is plenty but the labourers are few. I believe it is more devotedness than competency to help which is wanting, though devotedness is a large part of the competency. It is this we want, dear brother: we are not our own but His, bought with a price. It is carried out cheerfully and

joyfully when we think of Him, not of ourselves. For love does not grow weary of serving, though service may be often in trial as regards the scene—indeed, save with rare encouragement, always in the general run of it, is. “Therefore I endure all things for the elect’s sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.” But what a thing to say! what Christ could say, save that Paul of course puts in “in Christ Jesus,” and of course does not speak of atoning sufferings (how could he?), but otherwise was filling up that which was behind of the sufferings of Christ for His body’s sake which is the church. May we know how to follow hard after Him and we shall find His right hand upholding us!

I rejoice at the Lord’s opening the way before you both at ——, and this other place. I believe He will, though we have to follow Him where He opens the door, but when He opens the door no man can shut it. But He has a testimony, and if we have but little strength He will maintain it. I have not a doubt of this testimony for the last days. We cannot think too poorly of ourselves as bearing it—still count on Him to make good His testimony: and what a testimony it is! I was writing a page or two this evening on what I have more than once spoken of, the end of Matthew 17. The tribute was the tribute to the temple. The question to Peter was really, Is your Master a faithful Jew? The Lord shews His divine knowledge, adding, but we are children, we have not to pay, but less we offend—and then shews divine power over the creature making the fish bring Him a piece of money (a didrachma was due for one, and it had a stater, two didrachmas, ready in its mouth), and says, That take and give for Me and for thee. Do you like to hear Him

say, that blessed One, “for me and for thee”—bringing Peter with Him as one of the sons? What sovereign and blessed grace! God in knowledge, God in power over creation, but Son as man down here associating us by redemption and grace with Himself. What would we have more, or more lovingly and tenderly told? and it is always so. It is so with us; “me” must and ought to go first; it would be nothing without it, but “thee” is with the “me” in heart and in the place He has obtained for and given to us. I ask what could we more? and it is ours, and however weak we are, for Peter was holding Him for a Jew. It is doctrinally taught in John 20. But I must close.

You may have heard that I have been ill, had a bad fall which brought old age to a crisis, for I am just entering on my 82nd year. It brought death near me, a most profitable experience, though always true, but it made me feel I belonged to the other world, not to this: nothing new in doctrine, or foundation, but a realising of it all. Then I had a very slight paralytic stroke, which did not touch my mind or limbs through mercy, but left my cheek numb. I am better, but not able to be as active in work; but I get to meetings, and in my study work as usual. Kind love to all the saints, and again thanking you for your letter.

Affectionately yours in the blessed One that loves us.

Ventnor, November 14th.

* * * * *

Dearest Brother,—Thank you for your very kind note. I need hardly say how very thankful I was to know you were clear. I find the great thing is to get enough above circumstances to be occupied with Christ in His full

grace; you cannot if your own conscience is not clear, but if it is, our business is to be occupied with grace and Christ. I said to ——, who was afraid to take any step, not knowing what it might come to in the future—that there was no future for the Christian but glory, that he had to do God's will at the moment and all the rest was in God's hands, and must be left to Him. It is a great truth and He has settled it all already…

My illness and the seeming close approach of death has been more than blessed to me. I feel in quite a new way that I belong to the other world. The truths all abide, but my spirit is over the river. I am a great deal better, and for study work up to it as usual, perhaps not quite for so long a time; but all, even religious services seem to belong to this world, to be temporary, but the Father's love and Christ everything. I believed it before, and in a certain sense acted upon it, but I am in that company now. I always was, but now seem consciously dependent on God, to live or to die. What is eternal is our portion, and Christ fills it.…

I did not doubt for more than a year before ——'s affair, nearer two, I believe, for it pressed on my spirit before I left America, that it was a systematic demoralisation that was going on. W. had given up all as hopeless; I could not while the Lord was there, otherwise I should have left brethren then, as to which I was deeply exercised, but I felt it was not faith. From that I have never swerved, only I felt sure positive present duty was there as to God, and He has not failed. As it was going, I prayed that He would maintain His testimony to Christ and His truth as He had brought it before us, and I believe that souls are in a far more healthy state than two years ago. We must only leave all to God, and there

are things calculated to give deep sorrow. I must close, dear brother, and with many thanks for your kind note, and an affection I heartily reciprocate—trusting you may fully find the Lord has guided you to ——.

Ever affectionately yours in Christ.

November, 1881.

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My dear Brother,—I agree much with what you say at the end, that one must find it in the whole as a revealed fact. Thus we need His blood-shedding, His death, His forsaking [on the part] of God; all together make up His work. But when He shed His blood, He did not suffer; He was already dead. And this was important. Had the soldiers killed Him He would not have laid down His own life, it would have been taken from Him. Had He not shed His blood, the great sign that His life was given would have been wanting. Now, I get what expiated. and what purified in His death; but He laid down life Himself Then being forsaken of God—none of us can fathom what it was to One who had dwelt in the bosom of the Father, to find His soul as a man forsaken of Him, and that as made sin. In the measure in which He knew holiness and love, and that was absolute, He felt what it was to be [made] sin before God and forsaken. And though the physical death came after, then He, morally speaking, drank the cup. It was necessary He should freely give up His own spirit, all being finished, in peace. John's word is not "He gave up the ghost," but "gave up his spirit" —a divine act when all was done—and in peace and confidence as a man, as in Luke, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." The use of the word Father is important here. He does not say "My God" in

His life—not even in Gethsemane, for He was in full communion with His Father. In the forsaking it is “My God,” though in perfect submission, and saying “My.” After His resurrection He uses both, in His message by Mary Magdalene; for now God was for us in righteousness and we children. But “Father into thy hands” is perfect peace in the enjoyment of sonship. But He must actually die, or nothing would have been done; but the sting and curse were gone out of it; and He laid down His life in communion with, and in obedience to, the Father. It is when really already dead, that His blood which had all the value of that death was shed (with the water) to cleanse from sin. It must have the value of death in it, yet death not be by it. Sin gives death its sting, and that must be borne—yet death have none, but be the free giving up of His own spirit. All this was accomplished.

We learn it in parts, but it all made one great sacrifice, from meeting with God as made sin, His personal dignity in giving up His own life, and in the shedding forth the blood and water when all was finished—the shedding forth that in which its value is applied to us. But it is of all moment to view it adoringly, and not in dissecting it, as it were; only fully recognising as far as we can the import of drinking the cup, where all the ingredients that sin had put into death are found. It is in the spirit of adoration—and withal, knowing what sin is—we must dwell on it, but the glory of His person giving Himself for God the Father’s glory and then for our sins, and made sin for us, and devoted love to Him—that we must look at it.

November 12th, 1881.

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* * * I have not the least doubt that the interpretation28of John 14:17, though very common, is a mere blunder. “Dwelleth” is the same word as “abide” in verse 16. Christ the Comforter would not “abide” with them as He then was, nor was He “with” them. The other Comforter would abide “with” them, and “be in” them. “Will abide” in Greek would be the same word as “abide,” save an accent, and there were none originally: mevnei abides; menei' will abide.

Next, Acts 13:2 was not the assembly. The prophets were fasting and praying together and the Holy Ghost spoke with authority by one of them, “Separate me.” The state29 of the individuals sent had nothing to do with it. God in His government may employ a fitting vessel, but no state of fitness can separate by divine authority a person for a specific apostolic work. And this is the point: the free action, and divine authority of the Holy Ghost; that is, of God. I have no doubt, as a general rule for edification, usefulness in service depends on the state of the servant, but to use this as a plea for denying the direct action of the Spirit is ruinous. It is not a chandelier of light, though each should be filled with the Spirit, but the personal free action of the Spirit. Scripture recognises the diligent use of the word, “Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them,” etc.: but to use this to deny the sovereign freedom of the Spirit is also ruinous and destroys our dependence on and guidance by Him. In Acts 8 we have first “the angel of the Lord spake unto Philip.” Now, I do not doubt that the Lord chose a fit person in Philip, but the angel’s speaking to him was not the state of Philip’s soul. Then we find the Spirit telling him to go to the

chariot. Then the Spirit “caught away,”—a word in Greek or English leaving no pretext for the interpretation30 given to it—”and the eunuch saw him no more.” In Paul’s journey the Spirit of Jesus did not allow him to go into Mysia, and they were forbidden to preach in Asia or Bithynia.

It is alleged that this independent action of the Spirit belongs only to the Old Testament, as Saul, Balaam,31 etc. This is a mistake: Caiaphas prophesied. It will be said that this was in Judaism. But Paul teaches it doctrinally (1 Cor. 13), “Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not love, I am … nothing.” The very fact of tongues is an independent action of the Spirit, for they did not understand what they said, and if there was not an interpreter were to remain silent. Tell me that this is lost—I understand you, but then do not deny that the Holy Ghost so acted. But there is a difference to be made between 1 Corinthians 12 and Ephesians 4. In the former the Holy Ghost down here acts with divine authority and power, but it is simply giving power (in gifts) to whom He will; but “the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets,” not more than “two or at the most three” were to speak.. The word of God, the authority of Christ in the church, ordered the exercise of the power. If a man spoke with tongues, and—it was so completely the Holy Ghost—he did not understand what he said (a case supposed), he was to be silent, unless he or another could interpret. The apostle preferred to speak with his understanding, and edify the assembly, to which end all was to be directed. In the latter case (Eph. 4), it is Christ ascended on high, who, having received the Holy Ghost from the Father, gives for the spiritual need of the church (and

here there are no gifts which are miraculous, in the ordinary sense, but) “apostles and prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers,” and the promise that these will continue to the end, and then (ver. 16) what every joint supplies in the measure of every part.

But the Holy Ghost has been given, and come down, and all goodness and wisdom in exercise is from Him. He formed the body, He also makes us members. Even Christ “by the Spirit of God cast out devils.” We are to be “led by the Spirit,” and surely in the most solemn part of our lives here, our spiritual activity in the church of God, this is not to be given up, and we do without it. This is not giving up, or acting without, our understanding. The apostle preferred action with understanding, but that did not exclude the direct action of the Spirit. Men speak of impulse,32 so that the notion of the Spirit’s action is lost, and it is of man. But if it is not of the Spirit, it is merely of man. The apostle would have the Spirit and the understanding. (1 Cor. 14:15.) The saying we could not then judge is a strange blunder of human reasoning, for it was when there was direct revelation they were called on so to judge. Faith, direct looking to God and His power, is identical with the action of the Spirit in its source and results; and what is called faith in Hebrews 11 is constantly referred to the Spirit in the Old Testament. All direct action of God as to the creature, and finally in divine things, from creation on, is by the Spirit in scripture: no good thought in us but from the Spirit, no wisdom. It is the Spirit that lusts against the flesh. Waiting humbly on the Lord, that He may lead us to act, or not to act, and lead us in acting, and that habitually and in all things, is not acting from impulse, but the contrary, and the leading will not fail. If

we are to judge, what are we to judge—whether what is said or done is of the Spirit, or not? If it is not of the Spirit, it is of the flesh: only the paramount authority and order of the word, which is certainly by the Spirit is maintained.

Further,33 the Holy Ghost being individually in our bodies, as temples, is not all. He forms the body, or rather formed it on the day of Pentecost—not by spiritual progress, but by coming personally down, and baptising into one body. Nor is that all. The Holy Ghost is not in an assembly as God's house or dwelling, but in the assembly. In 1 Corinthians 3 they are collectively God's temple, Christendom (see 1 Cor. 1:2), only realised especially at Corinth. (Some will say it [ver. 12] is doctrine: it is so, but realised in men; as "the seed is the word of God," Luke 8:11; "the good seed are the children of the kingdom," Matt. 13:38.) So, in Ephesians 2, "Ye are builded together for a habitation of God through the Spirit." That is not individual; and if the Holy Ghost dwells in the habitation, is He to do nothing there, or direct everything? The assembly is as much the house, or temple of God, as it is the body; only all the members of this last are personally dwelt in by the Spirit and members of Christ. As to two Spirits, it has no ground at all. It would be much more applicable to dwelling in individuals, but this is carefully guarded against (1 Cor. 12), in contrast with demoniacal inspiration. Whatever is not of the Spirit is of the flesh.

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To the same.]

It is not only the presence of the Spirit in the house, but His acting in the service of the saints, which I look for.

As to the other point,34 though I believe that often there is no harm meant, and that by presidency is merely meant that His leading should be followed, where it is substituted—a rare case, but which I have known—for the presence of Christ, it is an evil. He is in the midst, spiritually no doubt, but still Himself. I cannot have the same affections towards the Holy Ghost as towards Christ. He was not humbled, did not die for me, and so on. The ministrations are under the Lord, too, as such, but the active power is the Spirit. I do not think, 'leads after Him' is right, because the Father and Christ are objects. In ministry the Spirit is active, but He brings the word from on high: "whatever he shall hear, that shall he speak."

The Spirit does act in us (Luke 12:12), and I do look to the Spirit acting in me—I do not say, pray that He may act; I pray to the Father, or to the Lord, but I wait for the Spirit to act. Christ is Head, but it is the Spirit acting in us which gives what He would have said.

1881.

* * * * *

[From the French.

* * * As to affairs in England, it would be difficult to give you a detailed history; but the principle is simple enough, and it is with this we must be occupied, so as to discern what is of God and. what is of Satan, and be guided in our walk to the glory of God.

You know that the natural tendency, as numbers increase in the assemblies, is that the heart wearies a little of the truth, which at the outset had authority over us to cause us to walk in the truth in separation from

human systems; and at the same time the mind gets more and more occupied with persons who compose the assembly, till at last the truth gives way to the persons in our hearts, the conscience to the intelligence, Christ to the man, and brethren become, in another way, a system of the worst description: this is Satan's aim, and it is in this way that he assails the brethren.

The first fruit from this bad root is, that brethren are occupied with themselves to the exclusion of other Christians who are equally members of the body of Christ: they think of themselves more than of the Lord. They do all they can to keep the gathering together, losing sight more or less of the great truths which have acted upon hearts individually, and which truths formed the gathering, not as a great work visible and recognised on the earth, but as a testimony from God and for the glory of Christ in the midst of Christianity. It is of the last importance that we should continually remember that brethren are a testimony and nothing else; that is to say, that it is the truth that has kept us for the glory of Christ, and not we ourselves. This is easily forgotten. I have particularly noticed proofs of this in Switzerland for the last six years at least. A late fruit from this root is, that christian conscience has become valueless from neglect of its promptings, and ceases to act. From this it results that brethren are feeble, and become guilty, even in matters of simple righteousness, in such a way that even the world would condemn them. The assemblies of God are little thought of as such, and the presence of the Lord Jesus in the assembly is forgotten and ignored. This is what has happened in England, but the Lord loves us too much to allow such a state of things without reminding us.

But the test is general; it touches closely each one: that is why so many assemblies, and brethren individually in each assembly, are affected by it. In some cases the assembly is of one mind; in others there are two parties, more or less equal, one holding on to the truth at any cost, the other thinking more of only what is on the surface; and there may be other reasons acting upon many, leading them to follow a course which seems to them more easy. It has always been thus. Lot walked a long time with Abraham without his faith being put to the test: when the time for the test came he must walk alone, and then is seen for the first time the measure of truth that he really possessed in his soul. This is what is happening at the present time, and no one can determine the precise moment when such and such a soul will be put to the test; and we should be wrong in forcing or hastening the test in any way whatever, and even when it is there, to suppose that every one will be tested in the same manner. All this is in God's hand: nevertheless when such a sifting does come, happy are they who profit by it, receiving the test as from God with searching of heart; or better, seeking to get into the presence of God that He may search it, so that all that interferes with the glory of Christ shall be judged and put away.

We must have patience, and help each other: a lack of patience has caused some to act too quickly, and though they acted with the best possible intentions, of separating themselves from evil, the result has been unsatisfactory. We are quick at seizing the reins when we see danger ahead; but the Lord knows better than we do what has to be done: in due season He will deliver all who look to Him. But this must be real, not trying to

escape the test, or to delay the time of action when the evil is clearly manifest; Another valuable lesson the Lord would teach us is, I think, to occupy ourselves more before Him with the state of individual consciences. It is easy to neglect pastoral work. One is inclined to act by means of outward pressure, instead of waiting for the inward action of the Spirit, who would lead the assembly by the healthy and spontaneous action of all who form part of it. This ought always to be the aim, but alas! very often it is not possible on account of a corrupt influence which has been already too active, and for too long a time, so that morally, many have become incapable of a spiritual judgment; thus division is inevitable when the test comes to the door. But in any case we ought to wait until God sends the test. A man cannot be hung because he intends to kill me. We must wait until the act is accomplished before taking action, doing all we can, at the same time, to raise the spiritual standard by a healthy ministry of the word, as the Lord in His grace may give us. Then when the test does arrive, some, at least, will be able to act according to God.

The present struggle is between intelligence and the Spirit. It is a subtle thing which exercises the heart to its depths— must I be guided by my intelligence according to the things that I know, or must I walk in dependence on the Lord? Some pretend to be an expression of the assembly of God when their acts prove that they have no sense of the Lord’s presence in their midst. To admit their pretension, would evidently be to deny the presence and action of the Spirit of God, for such walk by human intelligence, and override conscience. This is what happened at Ramsgate, and a division was the result. All was inquired into in London, and three

meetings with a week's interval were held on the subject, and every facility was given to arrive at a correct knowledge of facts, in order to come to a conclusion according to God, and this not by any preconcerted measures, plans, or arrangements, but simply through God's intervention in rather a remarkable way. Many… wished to set aside the decision arrived at on that occasion, and to walk in their own way: hence the reason of the present trouble. The principles involved I have endeavoured to shew to a certain extent. It is scarcely necessary for me to inform you, that the above inquiry was forced upon the assembly in London through a letter of commendation from an assembly in Kent where the difficulty arose; it was necessary to come to a decision, because all means during several months had been used to induce the opposing ones to humble themselves, but without fruit.

November 26th, 1881.

* * * I am not a Baptist as you know, but the whole thought of baptism in the Prayer Book is equally wrong and absurd. It was not this brought me out but the presence of the Holy Ghost, and the unity of the body. But baptism is to death; no hint in scripture of giving life. The only connection with resurrection is Colossians 2; but it is to Christ's death. Regeneration is only twice used—Matthew 19 and Titus 3: in both it is a change of position; in Matthew, the millennium; in Titus, distinguished especially from the renewing of the Holy Ghost of which we are born by the word—the incorruptible seed of God.

It is overlooked that we are baptised to something—as to Moses, to John's baptism for the remission of sins—that

is, associated with some system introduced for our blessing. Now forgiveness of sins is one grand feature of Christianity—"repentance and remission of sins." And the person by this door of entry, as an initial rite, is introduced into the divine sphere where these things are. God has been pleased to set up a system where these things are, and so when Saul became a Christian by the revelation of the Son in him, he entered by baptism into the enjoyment of this privilege. So it is said to save us in Peter, but guarding against attributing it to the mere rite. But the connection of life with it is never found in the word. But the English service is too ridiculous. It gives as a present thing by it, forgiveness of sins to an infant who has never committed any, and then has no real forgiveness by redemption at all, pretends only to governmental by absolution. They wash the infant's sins away who has not any, and when it has, has nothing for them—pretends to give life withal by it of which not a trace is to be found in scripture, but is directly attributed to other things.

Saul was baptised like others as the formal professed entrance into God's confession on earth, the institution where these things were. The twelve were sent to baptise the Gentiles who heretofore were strangers to it, a commission never carried out (Gal. 2), but not to circumcise them, and this from Galilee, not from heaven —Paul, with the things to be had, not to establish that wherein they were to be had, and from a heavenly Christ. The Baptists have lost the scriptural truth of a place instituted of God where His blessing is, as the Jews formerly and Christendom now—neither judged as heathen; and the Prayer Book, following Popery, puts the possession, as if the being in the place of it was that.

Even unconverted, we are not heathen—perhaps were, but not heathen [now], and judgment (when incurred) on a different ground.

November, 1881.

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To the same.]

* * * Paul says, “Among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God.” The commission in Matthew was only to Gentiles. The remnant were associated with Christ risen, not glorified. I do not doubt Jews were baptised, but there was no direction to do it. Not being baptised was a refusal to own Christ when they believed (I have met the case with a Jew), and “with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.”

Paul starts from a glorified Christ when the last enmity of man’s heart had been brought out, and a messenger, so to speak, sent off to heaven, that they would not have this Man to reign over them. Paul only goes to the root of things (save John): Peter, “he that has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin:” Paul, he that is “dead to sin.” Peter though with accomplished redemption and the new birth, goes on with the Jewish system—never the church as the body of Christ. Peter is the fact and effect on men here. Peter looks for the inheritance above as a hope: Paul recognises it as such (Col. 1), but looks at us also as a new creation, sitting in heavenly places in Christ, and the inheritance is all things, Christ being heir, and we joint-heirs with Him. Besides personal justification, he deals with the ways and dispensations of God, His counsels, and ways experimentally. John is always individual and brings us into the revelation of the

nature of God, and our being in God and God in us according to that nature. It is nature, not counsels…

Though I believe the children of Christians have certain rights and privileges, as a general principle with outside souls it is to try to get them converted and then make professors as you say. There is in scripture a reference to households which I do not understand. The truth is, when I have to do with souls I do not think of theories nor of brethren, but of what that soul wants, and so speak to it. But there is one thing we have to remember; at the beginning power was at the centre, and acted from it, and gathered. Now a great corrupt body being in existence, power (assuming conversion) is shewn in separation; gathering may follow: not that they leave their profession, but practically power acts from outside, and draws from the existing centre.

God is working… He exercises and sifts. He has been most gracious with brethren, and will maintain His testimony. I counted on Him to do it.

December, 1881.

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* * * The character of what has been thrown off in the skirmish is most marked: what we have to look for is God working. The one thing I desire is that a bright clear testimony to Christ, and devotedness to Him should come out of it all. As to details, I have little to say. My experience is that the work of God is never done without opposition; only God holds the reins, and if He gives peace, who can give trouble? Yet He can say, “Satan shall cast some of you into prison,” and even speak of being faithful unto death, as if He could not help it, and had only the other world at His disposal. It is

where we are with Him that the blessing is. Here He is with us, the enemy externally reigning (till He takes to Himself His great power), and gives us the privilege of suffering with Him. Here I have felt weak, have suffered the loss of all things I counted gain; but I had a dread of hostile power, though I have had to go through it a little. Any way, I am what He has made me, at least in any good; and there nothing, and He everything. Thank God it is so! only then we have to realise this in every-day life —Christ all, and that nothing else shew itself. If it were only so! Still we can delight in Him, and joy in His love, and that will never end. Then our joy will not be pent-up; now it is, like steam, to carry on the work of His grace, but oh! what a burst there will be of it when in port, and it does not spend itself, but grows, for the Object is infinite.

I am occupied with a preface or introduction to the French Bible, and have nearly finished it. It has interested me; I was afraid at first of introducing it, but the Lord is good— I ought not to say He is an austere man—so I have done it (in French). The Lord be with you; it is a privilege to serve in these last days—more difficult, perhaps, but a brighter testimony than ever. Devotedness and lowliness, that is what I seek. It is very hard to be nothing, though we know it; the very energy of service takes you out of it, unconsciously: but near Christ, and in love, we forget self; and that is just the measure of godliness and spirituality.

December, 1881.

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To the same.]

* * * I find it requires the grace of God keeping us near Christ to have the heart free to rejoice in God working. … I am writing an introduction in French to the Bible. I shrank from such a task; it seemed to me so solemn to be giving a kind of resume and estimate of all God's mind as revealed. Still He is love, and helps in grace, and I have greatly enjoyed the work, and He has helped me. Scripture unfolds itself when you look to God and study it. I go and feed there when weary with man-work, still it is the work of faith—heaviness, if need be, "the trial of your faith," and it is all good. I have been interested last night in looking at Genesis iii.: how to approach God when driven out (but clothed by God before they were put out), and that is, a burnt-offering—sin, expiation, and all the value of Christ—not sins committed, but man's state. In chapter 4 it is, "If thou doest not well" (and this confirms me in so taking it), "a sin-offering lies at the door;" that is, there is a remedy, do not distrust and get angry: this is provision for actual evil.

Do not reckon yourself lonely: it is a good thing to be alone with God; I have been always alone, but I bless God for it. Not that communion of saints is not happy and a blessing: Paul thanked God and took courage, but it is alone with Him that we get stuff, and there only; where else should we? And in these last days the true lasting work must be from Himself. There is no true work, I well know, but of Him; but the scripture makes a difference of the last days, where the keen discernment and, therewith, the earnest love and grace alone can be found, to carry us through the tangled web of men's minds— and always calm because with Him. "They

looked unto him and were lightened:" we should wait on His working…

You will find plenty to swim over, sometimes rough, without going to Epirus; but we are, and sweet is the thought, in the same boat with the Lord. All things become real as we grow old, through grace; yet He is always the same, sufficient for the young, and sufficient also for the old, and so full of tenderness and grace. May we be kept humble, so as to know Him, and all the resources that are in Him, and they are in Him for present difficulties, and even loneliness—for He has felt it: "Ye shall leave me alone; and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me." So you can say, 'I and Christ that is with me.' "That take and give," He says to Peter, "for me and thee"—to think of putting us so together!

Affectionately yours in the Lord.

December, 1881.

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Dear Miss ——,—I answered your questions by mistake to another person who had written to me about the same thing. The two cases were, one in the Western States where a German (for all this is German, whose religion is characteristically for this world) began by healing his neighbours, he says—and I had no reason to doubt it—by looking to God in faith; perhaps got puffed up, and worked by Satan's power so as to lay a man, who himself told me about it, like a log on the floor, without the use of his limbs; and then it turned to a system of corruption, so that he had to flee the country for his life, and said afterwards that at the end it was Satan's power. The other was a more reputable case: a Lutheran

clergyman who used to heal persons, but connected it with all the false Lutheran doctrines of baptismal regeneration, etc. I knew personally the case of some really good people at Boston, where it was connected with perfectionism and higher life, falsifying and discrediting by error what is greatly wanted in the church—to be able to say, “To me to live is Christ.” Dorothy Trudel never had peace, nor a plain gospel, till her death bed.

But no mistakes of men take away the plain force of God’s word and that He does answer the prayer of faith. James 5 supposes the church in order, and that those, who in a certain sense represented it, could be sent for —where God’s order was going on and His government regularly administered in the church. That is not the case now, but if those who are practically such, and have personally faith (that looks through the ruin to the source of good according to the order) and believe, God will still hear the prayer of faith: I do not doubt it. In general it is only looking for so much physical relief, generally turning aside from what is heavenly. There may be faith in the person also; sending for the elders supposes something of this. But while I fully believe there may be such answers to prayer, the books about them seem to me full of error, and, while there may be some faith as to what is physical, not calculated to edify. But the very prayers of the Establishment for rain, etc., suppose the principle.

December, 1881.

Dear Miss——,—I have no confidence in the movement for faith-healing, save as it may rouse people to look more to God. I never saw it save in individual instances

connected with real sound doctrine. The two cases I referred to were one in the Western States where it turned, though it seemed to begin well, to an out and out work of the devil, the other where it was based on full Lutheran views—of being born again in baptism; besides (which were not on my mind) it was connected with perfectionism, and I might add Irvingism, but these were not on my mind. —— and myself are not elders, and the case in point came in thus—the ordinary local discipline of the church. (James 5.) This does not hinder my believing that God does answer the prayer of faith. I have arranged that——and myself will be free at half-past four Monday next, to look to Him for you.

Yours truly.

December, 1881.

* * * * *

My dear Brother,—I have known two cases of anointing by request, one at Plymouth… the other in Switzerland: both these were blessed to the body; we owned we were not official but cast ourselves on the Lord. I trust by giving it out you may not have a crowd of curious young brethren. Peter thrust them all out. It is “the prayer of faith” which heals. It is not said, that I know, where the anointing should be: but anointing them is the person rather than the place (as if it was a cure), and this has its importance as to its nature.

The Lord be with you in your service.

[Date uncertain.]

Dear Miss——,—I shall be glad to know if you continue better; as to that your faith may be exercised. But both —— and myself were struck with the fact that the state

of your soul answered to what he had prayed for, and of your body what / had; so that we should be the rather glad to know how you are.

Yours sincerely in the Lord.

January, 1882.

Dear ——,— I was happily away, at [the time of] the Manchester meeting. ——, who had a mania for publishing, did so with this, very wrongly. I looked at it hastily, but found it all full of themselves—Philadelphia and Laodicea. It was we, it was the first alarming sign of mischief: Laodicea began in John's time.

I do not doubt there is a consecutive history in the passage— which I divide into two parts, chapters 2 and 3—for it ends in Thyatira or popery. In chapter 3 we have Protestantism alongside. Philadelphia is a church without pretension which keeps Christ's word and does not deny His name; which further keeps the word of His patience; which still expects Christ, though it may seem He will never come; He is waiting, and in the patience in which He waits—for the long-suffering of God is salvation, He is not slack concerning His promise—taking His word to guide and still waiting; and such will be kept. But it is not the party which outwardly characterises the church which is addressed—all, in a general sense—but (I believe) those who have ears to hear.

It is not apostasy which characterises Laodicea, nor heresy, nor Babylon, but much worse, I think; professed light from human sources, from the human mind—and has not God's eye-salve (nor gold tried in the fire, Christ as divine righteousness), the sense of the value of all

things. It is just the reality of that which is divine, known by divine teaching.

I do not think the seven churches go down a regular declivity. Smyrna is God's stopping declining by persecution. Philadelphia is not decline on Sardis. The tendency is there, but it is not absolute, or universal. A great deal that is neither here nor there has been said as to Philadelphia and Laodicea; but those of Philadelphia are not the description of the progress of evil. Not keeping Christ's word, but denying His name, was their danger; and in this they had overcome: the other was dropping the expectation of the Lord, the word of His patience; in this, too, they had overcome: and they had two promises—kept from the hour of temptation—they would be off before it (not diav; ejk) and the ecclesiastical powers which had despised them should be humbled to recognise that Christ had loved them. In verse 12 they are singularly identified with Christ. But the faithful in Philadelphia are called to overcome as much as in Laodicea. Faithfulness in the circumstances of each particular assembly is what each are respectively called to.

The Park Street declaration was the act of that assembly — of Park Street—being the reception of a letter of commendation, which in no case went beyond the assembly receiving it—indeed, in most cases would be useless, as people came up for a Lord's Day and went away: only that as it really involved serious questions it was sent down to Cheapside, as courtesy to brethren. Secondly, I never meddled with the original Park Street declaration, and all would not go to the meeting. What I objected to was sending out the notice. What I did as to those outside not being associated—it had been

proposed to them and they would not go—was to urge that Cheapside had owned them as Kennington when they were going wrong, and could not now reject them when they were going right. I took pains, too, in communication with——and those outside, shewing them that those who remained in as to their action had now joined with them. Finally they accepted the common action.

Perhaps I should tell you it has been a question with me of dying all night, and even now I cannot answer your letter very easily. But to be blackened—I am used to it.

London, January 25th, 1882.

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My dear Brother,—You must not be surprised if you have a short letter after a long silence. My earthly tabernacle is brought very low, and I cannot do much, but I would not in the love of Christ leave you without writing. I understand that the Egyptian brethren want an earlier forming into the christian position. But the question arises who shall do this, but those who could build up when there? If I found in Egypt a widespread and real faith in their new position in Christ, I should be content. This, however, has been the great defect in Germany; having to do with a large converted number wholly under law, deliverance from that became their great test, and they made little progress afterwards. Still a more advanced state of Christians was generally secured, while much time may be spent, so to speak, in ripening up a few under our hand, where the resulting testimony is after all equivalent. If, indeed, the moral spiritual state answered always to the known position I should hardly hesitate, but this is hardly so; and hence

doubt may come in at least where always to be—in one [place] or the other. But I should be disposed to visit both, and minister according to the need of each. The Egyptian ones coming under other's care is for many reasons an additional difficulty, but the Lord is sufficient for it, and if He opens none can shut. Where I found it to be a case of one or the other I might stick to Syrian work.

Many labourers in America were over here for a conference, and went over the country besides. They seem to have enjoyed it greatly themselves, as our brethren did their presence, and I believe there was blessing by the word.

I believe I must close. I hardly yet know if it be the Lord's mind to leave me or to take me. A little more strength and, humanly speaking, I should be here for a while; there are elements which tend to weaken me. But I am in His hands and peaceful—of happiness I do not speak: what is best I know well. There are a few things I should be glad to see to an end; but the Lord does not want me for them. The Lord is turning our sifting to manifest blessing, and we have only to bless His name. But I have done.

Your affectionate brother in Christ.

London, January 31st, 1882.

* * * * *

Beloved Brother,—I too have been laid aside, and in a great measure am, nor can I walk properly without an arm and a stick, nor do I preach. Through mercy my mind has been left clear, and I am here at my post, beset with those in person and by letter Who are getting clear

in our present, I might almost say our late, trials. God has been sifting us and it is nearly over: as I have said, we cannot halloa as those that are out of the wood, but we can see the light through the trees, and in that light there is light. Already it has been a real blessing to brethren; and, what is a mercy, work has gone on all the time—gathering a little stopped in London, but not even there hindering conversions—and a fresh spring and knitting together which there was not before. God is full of goodness. I heard from ——, and he mentioned more energy in evangelising which, with looking to God, is the real remedy…

They do not mind working on another man's foundation: an apostle could not help it, still if there be faithful devotedness and the place be really filled, God is above this danger too; if it be not filled it may be humbling, but we could not desire that God should not call these poor souls, because we were not the instruments. Still I have always felt it in France, where we had begun the work, an humbling thing if inroad was made on it, and that has happened where there has been a decay of spiritual energy. There is a government of God in these things. Paul had to say to such, and there is a time and a guidance when such happens: "he followeth not with us" will not do, if he preaches Christ.

Mais parce que vous êtes malade, I come to visit you, and what shall I bring? Christ. But you have Him and that gives communion, and communion in what is eternal which makes it very blessed; and if we are feeble, the Object is not. It has struck me as very blessed that God should reveal to us all His thoughts and mind in which He glorifies Himself. I have been writing a kind of preface or introduction35 to the Bible,

just translated into French, and it presented itself to me in this way; that all time was a kind of parenthesis in eternity, in which all that was eternally in the mind and character of God, wrought out on the earth in time, should be brought out in its glorious results and display —His glory and its accomplishment in the Son in the future eternity. And all this is given us in scripture; the basis connected with man's responsibility in the Old, and the divine operation of grace in the New. The more one studies it, the more one finds God, and alas man too, in the Bible…

And now, dear brother, take courage. The Lord watches over us, makes everything work together for those who love Him— may exercise, chasten us because He loves us; but His love is shed abroad in our hearts by His Spirit which He has given us. The proof is, Christ dying for us when sinners, pure sovereign grace doing what was needed; the power of enjoyment is, the Holy Ghost in us, I think you will find the "ifs" in scripture attach themselves to the journey here. There is an absolute finished redemption in which there is no if, but a "stand still and see the salvation of the Lord"—a finished work and, with a short prefatory work of pure grace and divine power, it is "ye have seen… how I bare you upon eagles' wings and brought you unto myself." Then they must get through the wilderness to get to Canaan. It is the experimental learning of what we are, and if life is not there it is just a profession, like a Christendom; but if we have life, thus we get experience, "to humble thee and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart." Here we need, not a finished work save as the basis of all, but an ever living Father and Saviour: we work out our own salvation with fear and trembling, but there we

have such —it is God that works in us. He gives us eternal life; we are personally known in precious grace; kept by the power of God. It is dependence, but on what cannot fail; an exercise of faith, perhaps, but counting on faithfulness just as sure, but by a living action, not a finished work. (See 1 Cor. 1:8.) And then at the end He adds, that there may be no confusion as “at this time it shall be said of Jacob and of Israel, what hath God wrought!” (Num. 23:23.) That is a good story: go and hear Moses at the bottom of the mountain—“stiffnecked” and “rebellious,” but above, with the answer He hath not seen it: red heifer for failures, priesthood to help us along (to the) close, and then comes God’s judicial estimate of what He has wrought. It is a blessed history, but sweet to trust Him by the way, and we need it.

I have been brought down low again by a cold, not able to lie down, but all is love, unclouded.

The Lord be with you.

February, 1882.

* * * * *

My dear Brother,—I was very thankful my introduction36 on the chapters of John furnished, through the grace of the Spirit, food for holy affections during your delay at Syra. I had put it all there, that whatever dry criticisms they might be forced to read, they might have some positive food.

It is a great thing to have developed affections. Some are much more demonstrative than others, but it is not merely this, but the development of the affections themselves within, by what is in the Object of them. Still, it comes to my mind that it is a great thing to have

concentrated affections—Christ forming them, so that in having Him in our hearts we may know what is in His; and what a blessing that is! Concentrated, means practically, personal; so that I get at His heart, and know what is there, and that there is that personal affection there. As regards this, there is in the sense that we belong to Him—but then there is development—the sense of what the exercise of that affection towards us is: interest in our circumstances; thoughtfulness for us; bearing our sin and drinking that dreadful cup; even making us part of His own happiness in glory: summed up in knowing Him in what His affections are. But then how infinite in this case this development is! And after all He loves us personally; but He loves us perfectly in this, that whatever He enjoys He brings us into the enjoyment of. Then it is divine; which stamps its character on all the details. That chapter (17) is greatly the expression of it, as putting us in the same place as He is in Himself. But we must know Him to know what His love is; and it will suffice for ever. But this joy, dear brother, in His love, which is to us known to be unchangeable, is by the Holy Ghost, and we are dependent on grace for it, so that it will be connected with all our life here.

I have been interrupted again and again since I began, so you will only have desultory thoughts; happily the foundation of it is in John xvii., and always there for the Holy Ghost to use. It is a known love, yet passes knowledge.

Your affectionate brother in Christ.

London, February, 1882.

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My dear Brother,—You can hardly compare mercy and grace thus.37 Grace refers more to the source and character of the sentiment, mercy to the state of the person who is its object. Grace may give me glory, but mercy contemplates some need in me. Mercy is great in the greatness of the need, grace in the thought of the person exercising it.

Affectionately yours in the Lord.

London, February, 1882.

My dear Brother,—Thank you very much for your sympathising note. There is a difference between work and being laid aside; though I see many things for which grievously to blame myself, yet my work was always Christ, and now my leisure, if such I can call it, is Christ. What comes before me is how far I so realise Christ before me, that the joy of being with Him, awaiting the glory, satisfies my present affections: it is not doubt of the efficacy of His precious blood, of being in Him, of the sovereign unbounded love of the Father who in a thought beyond all our thought gave us to Him to be with Him for ever—still with this I am content.

I do work, however, somewhat, though I cannot stick to it very long, but many letters on what is passing, inquiries, etc.; still they daily diminish. It is quite possible that if the Lord will I may pick up a little bodily strength, not for any renewed active life, but for some more sedentary service. Yet I feel I passed the barrier some months or a year ago.

Again thanking you sincerely for your note, believe me, Affectionately your brother in the Lord.

It is not that I for a moment doubt the sufficiency of Christ for my happiness while waiting for glory, but how far I sufficiently realise it now. He has long been all I desire.

February 13th, 1882.

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My dear Brother,—What a happy thought that you and I are tending to see the blessed Lord and be with Him for ever! What a blessed thought! It is often a happiness to me to think that we shall have not only Christ—which is the great thing—but that then not one of the saints will be anything which is not perfectly pleasing to Christ. It is what we have earnestly to seek now, and He is our strength and wisdom to carry it out; only let our eye be single and Christ everything. Though we may be, humanly speaking, nearer home than some others, we have need of Him, and His precious and thoughtful grace every moment on to the end.

I am better, and I trust getting better, but I get no sleep, and have not got much strength to write. Kindest love to the brethren. The Lord graciously keep them very near Himself from evil, and in the power of the good that is in Himself.

Peace be with you.

Your affectionate brother in Christ.

February 16th, 1882.

* * * * *

My dear Brother,—The unity of the Spirit is what occupied us at Croydon, and though I think I have it clear in my mind, I have some difficulty in making it so

to others. The grand fact is, there is one Spirit as there is one body; not only abstractedly, but actually one, forming the body, putting each member in its place in the body; and He is the source of every proper thought and act in the church, now the fact is there. No doubt the end of Ephesians 2 is the great example of two made one, but then that was brought about by death and resurrection putting all on a new footing, bringing in a new state of things founded on it. It is of the unity of this new state of things that the Spirit is the power and characteristic. Now the Holy Ghost brings all these things into harmonious detail, and gives fellowship in them in that harmony; there then is the unity of the Spirit, and this may be of course in a thousand details, wherever the Spirit works. I do not think we can bring in verses 4-6; not that the Spirit has not to do with them, but that they are collateral subjects formed by the same Spirit. Affectionately yours in the Lord.

London, February 18th, 1882.

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My dear Brother,—I think you are substantially right,38 only the testimony gone in Thyatira is the whole ecclesiastical system—Rome, down to the end. The only material difference that I know is, that I should put instead of dissent, liberalism —in fact, infidelity, with the profession of Christianity. I agree as to Philadelphia also, not any particular body or church of Christians, but a state and condition.

I write in haste and weary, but most thankful to hear of ——, etc.

Croydon, February 23rd, 1882.

To the same.]

I do not believe the Greek church39 enters into the account. She forms no part of the history of the four beasts or “times of the Gentiles,” and here these two points are from Daniel associated together. Next Thyatira takes the church aspect of this, and the whole history is complete.

I know of no corporate taking away of the candlestick till then. A local church may have suffered this judgment, but as the general history of Christendom—then only: that is, the whole position of church testimony is set aside. Besides this, from its state certain positive judgments are inflicted on it. The following suffer at the end dissolution and decay. They are not properly an ecclesiastical system. You must remember that there is an apostasy referred to in Thessalonians, and here negatively, which must not be left out of account. I believe this answers all your questions.

Your affectionate brother in Christ.

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40My beloved Brethren,—I feel, in undertaking a few words here, on the one hand a great responsibility, but on the other a real joy of heart, when my mind turns towards that which, I believe, the Spirit of God calls for. That we have passed through a time of humiliation, pain, and exercise of heart, every one feels, no one denies The state of the brethren required it, “for he doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men;” but “whom the Lord loveth. he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.” But then He does receive us—a very great mercy and blessing. Think what it is to be received as His testimony and witness on the earth, poor

and unworthy as we are! Nor, immense privilege though it be, do I speak of it, as such, as acquired privilege. “Ye are my witnesses,” says Jehovah to Israel. That is the position and responsibility they were placed in. Every Christian is such in his place, that the life of Jesus may be manifested in their mortal bodies.

The seven churches have been so widely introduced into this subject, that it will be well to inquire a little into their true character. There can be no doubt, I think, of their presenting a rapid but most perspicuous sketch of the course of Western Christendom, when through the operation of God it had come into the position of human responsibility. First, its full ecclesiastical character, till it comes—after time is given it to repent —under God’s judgment; and the kingdom, and the Morning Star—Christ in heavenly character—are substituted for it. Thereupon you have a collateral picture of Protestantism running on coincidently after the Reformation, till it be rejected. That part of Christendom had been cleared of its Paganism, and there was much activity connected with this; but Christ had not His place in the heart of Christendom. It had “a name to live, but was dead.” It is treated as the world, and the Lord comes on it at an unexpected hour, which is the world’s portion. Every one will have remarked the condition given in each assembly, as the ground of special blessing, “to him that overcometh.” But remark, it applies to the difficulties and dangers that tend to hinder faithfulness in the position in which the particular assembly finds itself. Some special reward may then be the recompense.

But there is more in these churches to remark, which characterises them. The character—here [Philadelphia] it is Christ’s holiness and truth. However great His love

—as it is infinite and unchangeable—His active goodness, what characterises our knowledge of Him, is His Holiness and truth—what we want of Him and characterises our testimony. This is of all moment. That in spite of the power of evil, He it is who holds the door open or shut as He pleases. This is not operation of gift and grace in the labourer, but that He can open the door of access to souls. But this was not all. In the midst of all that was going on He knew their work, and He had set before them an open door, and no man should shut it. His eye was on them for good. The testimony of grace was to be borne, and should not be hindered. Those who set up for traditional religion, would be forced to recognise them, and own that Christ had loved them. Further, the danger is not becoming Laodicean, but apostasy. Laodicea has its own dangers for Laodicea. But, through grace, they had not only kept fast hold of the believer's hope, but of Christ's patience as to its accomplishment—"kept the word:" divine authority in that book. Christ, to whom all the promises belonged, and to whom it had been said, "Sit at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool," seemed to have sat very long expecting till His enemies were made so. But these saints waited, as He had waited, the accomplishment of the promises. God was not slack, but long-suffering. It is very remarkable to notice that Christ never puts His coming beyond the life of the person He is speaking of or to. The five wise and foolish virgins were the same who slept and wake: so in every case, with one exception—which makes it stronger—that Peter should die: but He was not speaking of His coming. Now, centuries have passed, generations succeeded each other, are we with present earnest desire waiting for God's Son from heaven? He abides God's time. Are we

firm in hope and present faith while doing so? This was a condition—not to be fulfilled, but that was—by the faithful of Philadelphia, and they would accordingly escape the hour of temptation which would come on all the world. But the Lord said more, He was coming quickly, they were to hold fast what they had, that none took their crown.

What certainly chiefly characterises the saints in Philadelphia is the analogy of their position to that of Christ—at the close of a dispensation, no apparent strength, but the door held open to Him by the porter. They keep His word, they do not deny His name, and specially they keep “the word of his patience.” The way they are identified in the glory cannot but strike every one—blessed thing too! What characterises Him— most important for us to note—is truth and holiness: truth, and as a girdle of the loins, for it is the truth that sanctifies. There is no specific Laodicean characteristic in Philadelphia— each has its own—nor Philadelphian faithfulness in Laodicea. Each belongs to each. The danger we have seen was quite different.

And now, what I would beg of brethren is, not to be occupied with evil, but if the Lord has set before them an open door— and He graciously has—their part is to profit by it; to hold steadfastly by truth and holiness, by which Christ characterises Himself, and be ever as men that wait for their Lord, keeping the word of His patience: and God will assuredly bless them. It is not merely doctrine, but activity guided by doctrine, and a path formed on that of Christ.

London, 1882.

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My dear Brother,—I can only write a line to acknowledge your kind letter and to thank the dear brethren who remember me. I am very low, but very peaceful and happy, and still continue to labour at tracts and small papers, etc. But sleep is a dreadful assailant except at night. I judge it was my fall at Dundee which brought my state to this. I have been writing on Propitiation which the Swedes are in trouble about,41 and Philadelphia which has troubled the brethren, but both very short.

Kindest love to the brethren.

Your affectionate brother.

London, February 28th, 1882.

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My deak Brother,—Only just a line to say that your letter reached me in going out of this world—and in recollection, of many devoted kindnesses—to recall all the truth that we have taught in Christ, and to urge you on in the full liberty of resurrection to bring that same Christ constantly before souls. His abiding faithful love will guide your steps as to Mexico.

Your affectionate brother in Christ.

Bournemouth, March 10th, 1882.

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My beloved Brethren,—After years of communion in weakness, I have only bodily strength to write a few lines, more of affection than of aught else. I bear witness to the love, not only in the Lord ever faithful, but in my beloved brethren in all patience towards me—how much more, then, from God: unfeignedly do I bear witness to it. Yet I can say Christ has been my only object—thank

God, my righteousness too. I am not aware of anything to recall—little now to add. Hold fast to Him. Count on abundant grace in Him, to reproduce Him in the power of the Father's love; and be watching and waiting for Christ. I have no more to add but my unfeigned and thankful affection in Him.

I do add, let not John's ministry be forgotten in insisting on Paul's. One gives the dispensation in which the display is: the other, that which is displayed.

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Beloved Brethren,—I feel satisfied that if there be a godly-recognition of God's hand upon us, and lowly confidence in the purpose of the Father for the glory of His own Son, there will be a great deal of blessing, and spreading forth into the doors which He opens.

March 19th, 1882.

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[From the French.

The first and the essential question for every living man before God is, how he can be in His presence, well-pleasing to Him. (Phil. 3:7-9.) It is no question of a righteousness which should satisfy the claims which He has on man: he is already a sinner, and entirely alienated from the glory of God; he perishes without law; he is condemned by the law. (See Rom. 2 and 3) Now the infinite love of God, seeing him in this condition, spared not His own Son (see Rom. 8) in order to blot out all the sins of those who believe on Him, and by accomplishing a work which, while perfectly glorifying God, rendered at the same time those who have part in it fit, as the Man who had accomplished it,

for the glory of God, so that they became the righteousness of God in Him. It was a part of this righteousness to put them in the glory where Christ was, without which He would not have seen of the fruit of the travail of His soul. Many benefits and a new life accompany this blessing; but I have only laid this foundation.

Receive, beloved reader, this testimony to the efficacy of the love of which I speak, and that He has given peace with God for eternity.

March 28th, 1882.

28 ‘I cannot see that the Spirit took up His abode in the house, or in them in any way separate from, or distinct from, His being in them individually. By the fact of His being in them individually, and being Spirit, He was of necessity in them collectively, and in no other way that I can see …“He is with you and shall be in you”: on this is founded the whole thought of the presence of the Spirit with us, apart from His being in us, as the leader of the assembly. I understand the Lord to mean that He Himself, having received the Spirit, He, the Spirit, was with them, because Jesus Himself was with them, and He was in Jesus; but that by-and-by the Spirit would be in them in like manner as He was in Jesus: that at Pentecost they should themselves receive the Spirit, and that now the Spirit is not with us in the sense in which that verse speaks of His having been with the disciples.’

29 ‘The Spirit in me, if not grieved or otherwise hindered by me, would produce in me a state coincident with His presence in me, in which state I should be alike capable (1 Cor. 2) and free (2 Cor. 3) to answer to the leadings of the Lord according to my relative place in

the body (1 Cor. 12) as He took His place as Leader of the assembly.’

30 ‘Taken off his feet, and carried off.’

31 ‘These examples are Old Testament, and only speak of the operation of the Spirit, not of His presence, or the manner of it in the Church.’

32 ‘I understand the leading of the Spirit as characteristic of the Christian at all times, whether in or out of the assembly. (Rom. 13:14; Gal. 5:18.) But any other leading in the assembly, as from a Spirit separately distinct from us and in our midst, I do not see, as though I should wait upon Him as outside of me till He impels me to act. That I conceive would be inspiration (2 Pet. 1:2), and would hinder any action I took under such impulse from being judged in the assembly according to 1 Corinthians 14:29; while also the waiting for such an impulse would hinder self-judgment in me as to my own spiritual state. All that is there done should be done tw'/ pneuvmati kaiv tw'/ noiv (1 Cor. 14:15), not uVpoV pneuvmato" (2 Pet. 2:21), as if He were there apart from His being in us; for then no one could judge the ministry as we are now told to do. (1 Cor. 14:29.)’

33 ‘He dwells in the church, but it is He who dwells in us who for that reason is there, and not separately, as though there were two Spirits or that I had to look out of myself to find Him in the assembly, save as much as He is in every other Christian; nor that I am to wait upon His acting on me, but rather to know, and that, too, by the state which His presence in me produces, that He dwells in me, to act by me—if the flesh in me be not allowed to control me instead.’

34 ‘The presence of the Lord, as distinct from the presence of the Spirit… I understand Him to be leader of the assembly (president, it is sometimes said, though I think the word inapt), only that whatever truth the word conveys, it is the Lord that is in it, and not the Spirit. The Spirit, as I understand it, leads after Him, but He is the leader.’

35 “Collected Writings,” vol, xxxiv., p. 1, &c

36 “Collected Writings,” vol. xxxiii., p. 143, &c

37 Mercy, ‘the day spring in God’s own being,’ ‘sovereign and absolute,’ reached ‘when the divine outflow of grace had been abused,’ ‘which presupposes this condition of things,’ ‘confounded with grace to the soul’s great loss indeed.’ ‘When the grace in which all were set has been abused, outraged, nothing remains but absolute and sovereign mercy for all.’

38 ‘Is the candlestick the united church testimony on earth (no other churches or rather kind of churches), Ephesus standing for the whole when it was there, Smyrna (another phase) likewise, Pergamos likewise, then Thyatira in the same way till the candlestick was removed on her refusal to repent, her judgment being final—the united ecclesiastical testimony being gone in Thyatira, though popery as a system runs to the end? 2. Does not another kind of thing begin with Sardis, Protestantism, but not having the ecclesiastical tendency, running to the end, and treated as the world; Philadelphia being neither popery nor Protestantism, but a return to divine principles, that too running on to the end, that is, the Lord’s coming for us; and Laodicea, being none of these but all the dissent which has sprung from Protestantism itself going on also to the end? 3.

Thus the last four quite distinct from each other, but running parallel to the end—Sardis and Laodicea embracing all the dissent, and judged at the Lord's return, Thyatira before by the beast and the kings.'

39 'Is it that the whole papal system is the only ecclesiastical right on to the end, only disowned by God in Thyatira, though existing to the end, and as the only ecclesiastical system? And that "the testimony gone in Thyatira" is the candlestick, and removed then only and never before? Does any historical event shew this removal of the candlestick? Where does the Greek church come in, if at all, in Revelation 2, 3—is it popery or dissent!'

40 Found in Mr. J. N. Darby's handwriting in a drawer at 3, Lonsdale Square, London.

41 "Collected Writings," vol. xxxiv., p. 201.

Appendix Section 1

My dear ——,—My mind is extremely remote from any purpose of institution, but I was led by our conversation to look into the evidences of the practice of the early church upon the subject, on the principles of which, though feeling the opportunity of instruction, I felt no doubt. For I cannot but feel that the religion of which we profess membership, is not an imposition of observance, a law of carnal commandments contained in ordinances (as indeed it would contradict the whole purpose and counsel of God), but an admission to privileges, exceeding great and precious promises, whereby we are made partakers of the divine nature; not merely in our hearts, but that, in respect of our consciences, no man should judge us in respect of a sabbath, or of a new moon, “which are a shadow of things to come.” Nor is this any licence to evil, because we are only so far become therein free, as in that we live we live unto God, for all that is in the flesh can never be free from condemnation of the law; but we as alive again from the dead, are not under the law, but made free. True it is that, being in the body in respect of its weakness, even to those who have received the first fruits of the Spirit, grace is ministered; also under ordinance, of which I see Christ Himself, the comprehensive centre; and, for that man is prone to go astray and not only in respect of individuals but more especially when according to the dispensation of God congregations take place, the order of righteousness must be maintained; in this respect laws must be enacted. Yet this is no part properly of Christianity, but the appendage of its dispensation; and even in scripture itself I distinguish between these two

things. My mind would gladly go into the nature of precept, which it has had great delight in inquiring into, but it would be far too wide a subject to indulge in. However, in what I give you full leave to account a speculation if you please, I remember, though admiring that God should have afforded such apprehension to a heathen, Socrates ended where Christianity began. He speaks of all the appetites of his flesh as nails which fastened him down to wretchedness and misery, and speaks of death as a benefit which should deliver his soul from this; his other hopes seem to be wholly vague.

But if we consider the nature of the law we shall find its end to be rest from labour; the desire of entering into rest was the foundation of the hopes of the [Jewish system]. It knew the labour of the present, and rest therefore morally was its hope; to it, therefore, the sabbath was afforded, the symbol of that rest derived from the cessation of God from the labours of creation. But we are admitted in some sort by hope within the veil; we know that that rest is not a resting day nor night from the undivided glorifying of the ever living God. This is the new life. To us therefore the earnest is afforded, by Him who is the resurrection, was the Author and Firstborn of the new creation, of this living rest which remaineth to the people of God, aptly signified by the Lord’s day. Both, you see, affirmed one day as God’s, the witness of His universal right; and, so far, both concur. But to us the mystery is far more fully revealed, and we have the Lord’s day—not a compulsory recognition of right, but the blessed pledge of our inheritance amongst the saints. To him therefore who refuses this, and will not recognise himself as the child of eternity, which is all God’s, but will put himself under the law from the

freedom of sonship; to him the Sabbath arises again, an unalterable claim of a jealous God. I cannot enter here into the statement of how I distinguish Christianity from all that preceded it, or is out of it, of which the Jewish system is an imputably defined covenant; but I go to what led me to write to you, to communicate to you what my books afforded me on the view which struck your mind.

Now the state of the case seems that all the East observed the Sabbath as well as Sunday; at least the observance of it was settled at the time of Athanasius, when there was, as on Sundays, communion (which, generally speaking, was on these days only), with this difference that they always stood praying on Sunday; indeed that from the first century the Ebionites always observed Saturday as well as Sunday, but they observed it as Jews. They commenced in the first century of Christianity, and became a distinct sect in Hadrian's time. The origin of its observance seems uncertain in the East; it was observed-as a festival by the church except at Milan. As a fact it was introduced into Spain about a.d. 300 by the Council of Illiberis…. Constantine passed a law that Christians should not work of a Sunday, except agriculturists, who were not to neglect the seasons God afforded them42…

I adduce these evidences of the course and practice of the church then as to the Sabbath and its nature. All refer the observance of Saturday to deference for the Jews for its origin. Augustine is the first, I find, who directs that the honours of the Jewish Sabbath should be transferred to Sunday.43 At this time the Gallic councils forbid rural labour. In the sixth century early, the council of Orleans says, "Because the people are persuaded that

they ought not to travel on the Lord's day with horses and men and carriages, nor prepare any victuals to eat, and use no exercise pertaining to the cleanliness of man and horse… And we think they ought to abstain by which more easily coming to church they may be at leisure for prayer"; and many councils under Charlemagne, etc., enforce further strictness. By both the Theodosiuses spectacles were prohibited on Sunday; but it will be remembered that attendance on them any day was excommunication, before the empire became christian.

In the earlier councils I find only enforcement of attendance on worship; in the still earlier fathers statements of the devotional services of the Lord's day, and nothing more.44 … Gregory the Great, the author of many of our prayers, says that Antichrist will renew the observation of the Sabbath. I would mention here that, though Brigham himself affirms it, I do not find direct evidence of Saturday being a day of divine service in the week TertuUian has another passage to the effect of the above. I have given no evidence.of Sunday being a day of special devotion from the beginning, as it is not questioned, but there is abundant direction.45 … I find, by the bye, both my learned compilers informing me that the Essenes (which is singular considering their general principles) only among the Jews, and the antichristian Dositheus carried the Sabbath to the excessive strictness. They interpreted the command of continuing where they found themselves on the entering in of the Sabbath, to their very posture. The Jews determined two miles to be the place where they were, and so held it lawful to travel two miles all around because they did

not go out of the place where they were; how foreign to the perfect law of liberty!

I confess my apprehension of the nature of the christian Lord's day (Sabbath clearly it never was called, in scripture or anywhere else, for many centuries) would make it consistent that there would be no direction in the New Testament concerning it, and consequently little notice of it in the early fathers—and of its actual ordinance there is abundance: notice of this seems to flow with its habit of observance. This no way detracts from its validity in my mind, in fact but founds it on clearer and christian ground: but I am running into the expression of my opinion, of which I would only say that I would be a Christian and not a Jew.

Socrates, the historian, says, in a long and valuable chapter, that the apostles and evangelists have by no means left the yoke of bondage on those who come to the preaching of faith, but have left the feast of the Passover (he writes of Easter and other feasts) to the good disposition of those who received benefit in them; and that the observance of Jewish types is abolished. I do not forget that the Sabbath is in the first table, as I have observed that God by His prophets identifies it with the recognition of Himself, placing it, I think, on a much higher ground than formal ordinance.

Yours sincerely.

[Before 1830, according to a note made by the original copyist—'before he came to Plymouth.']

* * * * *

* * * I am a bad person to answer this question, though the blessed Lord has not left me without His presence.

Yet I love to get on these subjects. A person, I think, who has really found God must in some measure feel as this person does. The passage of St. Paul in the Ephesians is the answer and expression of this, “Oh! the height and depth,” etc. He that, loving, knows God, dwells in God and God in him; and one knowing His fulness must know that he is brought into a depth which none can fathom but God, and be pained at not doing it. It is the way of growth, as a child who uses the compass of strength but cannot reach it; but a Christian’s exerts itself (by that solecism) to know that “which passeth knowledge.” And therefore the soul, when first learning it especially, will feel at a loss and perhaps pained, nor finds its repose till it knows in a certain sense as it is known.46 …

In two ways it thus dwells upon, and because of this seeks, Jesus. [First as] the unfathomable love of God, that is of love in Himself, he learns and knows that it is this too in.itself, yet not as separate from the revelation in Jesus’ body, therefore the apostle adds, “Herein is love,” etc. Secondly, that it may be brought near to familiarise and make [known] yet diminishing nought of its fulness, it is brought into intelligence in the incarnation, and death especially, of the blessed Lord Jesus our Head. Therefore he says, To know “the breadth and length and depth and height … that ye might be filled into (or ‘unto,’ that is, of what fills and its extent) all the fulness of God.” So, hereby know we love “because he laid down his life for us.” It is the stepping-stone of weakness and emptiness and necessity unto that fulness, and the resting-place of the soul, as to its natural powers, at this inexhaustible fulness of God. Yet this is indeed learning the heavenly, having God, the peculiar and distinctive privilege of those quickened by

the Spirit, which alone gives capacity to know and fathom such a thought. But as a motive of conduct it is infinitely wholesome that we should feel pained at how little we reach the fulness of God (for it is in this He has acted towards us, and as Christ is the order of this towards us, so is He of it towards Him) by His Spirit, and ever seek for more full manifestations of the power of this in us, accompanied by simple apprehension.

[A very early copy—first two pages only preserved.]

* * * * *

* * * Plymouth, I assure you, has altered the face of Christianity to me, from finding brethren, and they acting together. There are, as you know, individuals here, but scattered as missionaries over the country.

Dublin, April 13th, 1832.

* * * * *

My beloved Brother,—I would not leave the country without a line in the Lord to you, though it has been delayed by things pressing upon me: indeed I felt I owed it for all the comfort and refreshment I got at Westport. It is a refreshment now to sit down and write a line simply as in the Lord, from settling controversy with heresy, and looking over papers for [the] Witness and the like, all which I suppose needful, but in which one's spirit no way flows free and blessed in Christ as when in the sphere, and so unhinderedness in principle, of one's own joys—of Christ's joys (what a blessing to be made partakers of them—may we—and what holiness it requires!) of His sorrows, too. Oh, what holiness! for we must be partakers of the power of His resurrection in order, in the power of that holiness, to feel what sin is,

and enter in love into the conflict with the power of evil, in spiritual conflict and endurance, which Christ's Spirit has according to where He has been and where He is—in us according to where He is, where we are, and also for sympathy and comfort where He was. It always, or love in holiness, brings us into deep conflict, a holy conflict which can be carried on only in sympathy and intercourse with Him, whence indeed and where it flows: its result may be happiness, perhaps peace, and patience. Patience in the hall and before Judas was conflict in tjrethsemane: it was gone through with the Father there. Only that as Christ could say, "The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me," so we, as far as we walk in the Spirit, will and ought to say, to Christ with whom we are one, The reproaches "of them that reproached Thee have fallen on me. Then we must, like Him in some measure, take care to be faithful witnesses, "The spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you." Oh, if we could be much alone with Him, what fruit might we say would flow!

But I write to say, dear brother, rather how much I was refreshed and comforted in Westport, and I trust the Lord may continue and abound in His presence with you. It refreshed my spirit and quite set me up. I am afraid sometimes, from the difference I find in myself, [that] I find and do not bring the energy and the Spirit, and, instead of trying one's own work, rejoice in another and not in myself. (Gal. 6:4.) However at any rate they shall reap the benefit. I do not mean that I might not have desired a great deal more spirituality, more devotedness, more power of separated fellowship for us all; but still God is gracious and patient. I did find great spiritual comfort and refreshment among you, and I

thank God for you and them continually. May they abound more and more, and that which is lacking [be] supplied, and that which is worldly and hindering purged out—the conscience affected by it—and the power of the Spirit (the blessed Spirit of power and grace) shewn; and may He rule very detectingly among you, and in all uniting grace in love, that any that are lacking or in whom the world has power may grow up unto the Head in all things.

Do not faint, dear brother, for if we really labour we must be more or less in conflict, trial, and sorrow; for it is a work of faith, if a labour of love and patience of hope; because though blessed fruits be by the way, and we may see them ripening, it is the great in-gathering is the time of joy. And it is a distinct view and reference to that that gives our work a real deep holy character, such as His was, and will prove real in that day. You must labour in sorrow, for it is in the midst of evil, if you would reap in joy; and if we get our corn up into shocks, still it is unprotected out in the field, and we have the watchful care and anxiety till it is housed, though we may rejoice sometimes in a fine day while going on. I pray the Lord to be abundantly with you, and sustain your soul in patient abounding labour towards Him to whom we owe so much. My love to all the saints, and the whole church. I had an interesting journey from Athlone with two who discussed and entered into all things fully… Watching over the saints I feel a very primary thing. Ever, dear brother, with many prayers that you may be blessed and stedfast with all the saints.

Affectionately yours.

Plymouth, August 10th, 1837.

* * * * *

[From the French.

Very dear Brethren,—So long a time has passed since I saw you, without my having addressed to you one word, that you may well believe I no longer was thinking of it; but it is not so at all. I have been, during many weeks since my return, hindered, whether from reading or writing, by the state of one of my eyes, but I use the strength God in His great goodness has given back to me, to address myself to you all. I hope that several brothers, to whom I was also thinking of writing separately, will forgive my silence. I should feel myself, however, dear brethren, wholly unworthy, I say it in all simplicity, to address myself to you, as to a body assembled under the direction of the Lord, a church body, if our dear——had not requested me to do it; but if this is to be the expression of the strength of my remembrance of the love with which you have received me, which you have always shewn me, and of how sweet it is to me to call to mind always that love, I do it with all my heart.

The remembrance of it is extremely precious to me, and that has been to me, dear brethren, of great blessing, and by the Spirit of God who acts in me, I feel often at my dear Geneva amongst you, while blessing God with all my heart for the testimony of His love, which He has given me in the love of you all, my dear brethren, and my heart expands in thinking of the ties which His goodness has established between you all and my feeble heart. You do not know how it has opened my heart, and how I found the grace of God in my visit to the brethren of Geneva; and I find my joy again in beginning to write

this letter. A stranger previously, and for the most part unknown, I found a welcome which was the manifestation of the operation of the Holy Spirit, and one is always happy when one finds oneself in subjection at the work of God.

I will communicate to you news of us, dear brethren, persuaded that you will take interest in it. Our dear brother —— will have communicated to you something of this. Our meeting, where I was able to work in public almost for the first time since my return, has been I believe of great blessing. There was a spirit of love and of confidence and of liberty, which always flows from this, which struck even our enemies who were present, and which acted powerfully upon those who there took part. There were a great number of brethren, instructed ones of all classes, a hundred and more from nearly all parts of England and from Ireland. We should have much wished to see some of our Swiss brethren, but God orders all these things. Besides this kindling of love, and the communications of their light among the brethren, and these communings (so sweet) of brotherly love making us anticipate the great congregation which will assemble itself around the Lamb, the direct action, actually manifested, of the meeting was rather upon those who were not of the Anglican establishment. Several deacons who had left their society as not being based upon the word, were much strengthened and confirmed; there was a Presbyterian minister and an Independent fully convinced that their position was false, and they have both acted since in accordance with their convictions. This will produce much more effect in these countries than if it were an Anglican who had left his parish, and will bring out more into light what we

seek, and, whatever feebleness there may be, the gathering together of the church- of the living God and not any sect, and that we are not opposed to such or such a sect, in particular; and this is what already has taken place, for the report of it has been spread in the two most populous parts of England, namely, London and Lancashire. However, that does not as yet come to much; God only knows what the result will be. It will be, at least, of Him, for we are very feeble, whether as to the number of brethren or as to the number of ministers. So much the better, in a sense. But there is a great movement, though much hidden, among dissenters: those whom I have met, dare not defend their system by the word, and I hear everywhere that they confess constantly in private that there is something bad in their state somewhere; that is indeed the state of all the systems here, stronger outwardly and more active than ever, but all on the quicksands, and trembling within. What I remark is, that they are more openly attached to the world, and act consequently more openly for their private interests, whether established or dissenting. It is God alone who can withdraw His own from the judgment which must come upon the world. I feel it more and more each day; with much external display, the Establishment becomes every day more popish, the dissenters more feeble.

As for ourselves, our meeting has been, by the grace of our God, in very great blessing. All have felt it, more than any previous meeting. Its character was a little different. We were more in public, and there were other circumstances. God continues, my brethren, to bless our little flocks. They have much increased in Ireland since my leaving, and are walking happily in love; it is only,

however, a small thing: the enmity against them increases greatly every day. Their conduct, however, from that which I hear, produces effect, gathers strength in the consciences of those who surround them in several places. In England also there are several flocks recently formed; as that which —— visited at Hereford, whence I write; and a great increase in the numbers of brethren in the North (Cumberland), and I am invited this week to visit Edinburgh, where thirty-six are gathered together. As to our churches formed longer ago, several have also been increased since my going away, and there have been in several parts several conversions, insomuch that (although in great feebleness) we ought to thank God for what He is doing. Still, as in Ireland, the enmity both of Anglicans and dissenters increases also. It is what the children of God must always expect, “Ye know that the world hath hated me before it hated you,” the Lord says.

You see, dear brethren, I have believed that you would take interest in all that concerns us, as I do in all that concerns you, as if I were amongst you, as I have been, with my heart fully occupied and blessed, so many times. May God, who is good, who alone can establish and strengthen us by His grace and His power, be constantly with you, and may His presence be powerfully felt, dear brethren, amongst you. Be united, closely united, united in that charity which is the bond of perfectness. No blessing without that; nothing will be lacking where love abounds. Perhaps we are not perfected in the order in which we are, as to ourselves here. I am persuaded that we are very far from perfection. The only thing which would give me fear for our brethren here would be to see a high idea of

themselves, and satisfaction in their present state beginning to rise up among them; for when I compare this state with the Bible, I find such a distance, although we are, and we ought to be, deeply thankful for what God has given us and shewn. But if there are imperfections it is love and union which will prevent their bad effects, and which will give room to weigh circumstances and to find the remedies that the word of God can furnish to spiritual wisdom; at least that love is the bond of perfectness. I pray God with all my heart that you may be united in heart and in the practices of brotherly love which so much nourishes that love, and that your ties may be strengthened and drawn closer by the Spirit of God, bound fast together in the strength of our eternal union with Christ, and in the strength of the grace which flows like the precious oil poured on the head of Aaron, and which went down unto the skirts of his garments. If I may further, dear brethren, express the wishes of my heart for you, it is that you may be large-hearted towards all Christians, and rigid in discipline towards yourselves; a discipline, nevertheless, of love. We are priests, I believe, to separate that which is pure and impure it is true, but to discern, to purify, and to restore; to wash each other's feet—not judges of what is not of God.

The desires of my heart are towards you, dear brethren, that you may be more and more as true saints, full of love, the means of satisfying the heart of Christ, and accomplishing the object for which He gave Himself, of gathering together the children of God who are scattered abroad. I salute with all my heart, dear brethren, your pastors and your deacons, by means of whom I have so many times communicated with you all,

and all the church. How many beloved ones pass before my spirit in thinking at this moment of——. Indeed, dear brethren, I have a deep sense of your love. If God preserve us in life, I have still, if it is His will, the hope of seeing you again, and finding again that same affection that I have met when with you. I salute also our dear sisters. May the God of all surpassing grace keep them near Him. I have confidence that ——, although she may think me her enemy, has not been seduced by that fatal delusion of Irvingism. There was a brother at M.'s whom I was sorry not to have seen. May God keep him, or bring him back from such an error, if he has already fallen into it.

I desire so much, dear brethren, to receive tidings of you, how all is going on at——, how the little meetings in the town go on, if they still exist, if much work is being done among the unconverted, and if there are conversions and souls added to your number. Seek, dear brethren, personal holiness, devotedness, to have your hearts filled with the Holy Spirit, in order that your hearts may carry the savour of Christ, of whom that Spirit is the witness, and may all things enhance Christ to your souls. Oh what peace, what sweetness, what liberty there is when we are filled with the Holy Spirit. May He not be grieved. May God give you grace to seek that all your comings together may be the manifestation of the Holy Being who is in the midst of you, that other Comforter, that you may be the habitation of God by the Holy Spirit. I find that the flesh manifests itself in the impatience which seeks human means to reach some divine end, instead of trusting entirely to Him: may God keep you from this snare. I am persuaded, dear brethren, of the importance of your position. If you keep

simplicity, spirituality, and if you do not attempt to go farther than the strength God has given you, the strength that God allows you—if you keep yourselves from undertaking to be able, by human wisdom, for things in which God, on the contrary, will make the actual feebleness of His church to be felt, from making arrangements instead of following His word, God will use you as witnesses, in the world, of the assembly of His own, of His church, in spite of all your feebleness; a testimony of all importance every day. For every event confirms me in the conviction, in the faith, that we are in the last times, and that this conviction is absolutely necessary, I do not say for salvation, but for the walk of the church, and in order that a faithful witness, sure, and according to the heart of God, may be rendered. The gospel may be preached, and God may bless it, as perhaps at the Oratoire or at Pré l'Evêgne, but that is not the witness of the church of God to the state in which the world is, nor to its hopes in the midst of the disorder. If you are simple and faithful, full of love, united, and spiritual, separate from the world, waiting for His Son from heaven, you will be able to be it, and you will be it. I desire it with all my heart, for the glory of God everywhere, and in your country, which, since my visit, has been so dear to me. I desire it for you, my dear brethren; may God bless you and keep you. Again I greet you all with all my heart, praying God to keep you in humility. You will pardon me my letter, written in the midst of a work constantly increasing, and the produce of a feeble heart. If you receive it as the witness of my faithful love to all of you, I shall be fully content.

I am, very dear brethren, your brother and servant affectionately in our Lord and Saviour glorious and human.

Hereford [not before 1837].

* * * * *

Beloved Brother,—A little more leisure enables me to take up my pen to write to you, having long had your letter lying on my table for that purpose. I know not, but I have a little lingered in my energies or I should have been out of this before now; as it is, with what I have to do I shall hardly be in England before the winter is passed. The Lord however knows, but it seems to me—and yet who knows what the morrow brings forth?—that certain duties lie before me in——. There is considerable blessing in certain portions of the work, but in all the older Christians a certain languor seems to pervade. I know not, alas! whether I ought not to class myself among the number. It is not that I have not laboured plenty; but labour, and labour of faith or love is quite a different thing. The Lord fill us with His own Spirit.

Your letter, beloved friend, left the hope in my heart that you might have gone about and visited many places, whatever your centre or Antioch might have been; since then much time has elapsed, and many circumstances. Lately I have received more than one letter speaking to me of the propagation of Plymouth views, one adding that you had yielded. Whatever the first effect, my soul was with the Lord about them, so as to enjoy perfect peace. I trust His love. I feel more distrust of myself, still I trust in Him that He will be with me in all my ways as to it. But the subject is one of sorrow to me. As to mere details of prophecy my mind is quite open, nor do I find

that difference of view, when the view is kept open towards Christ, hinders the fullest sympathy in service. But I do feel the position of Plymouth in the testimony of the latter day is completely changed. It was the power of union and brotherly love, the Philadelphian spirit, which stood as a burning bush in the church; and this was a distinct and positive testimony; as poor dear ——said of you, Get into that slough of love at Plymouth and you are lost. Various portions of light and truth might be furnished by different brethren, and supposing difference or mistake, they dwelt together in unity and were glad to communicate to each other their thoughts even that they might be corrected; and progress was made in the truth. But this has, if not absolutely, all as one disappeared; a hard and rigid dogmatism of view has entirely replaced it: nor am I aware of any one place where the views adopted at Plymouth have been the means of gathering the saints, though they have been propagated in many gatherings, and this is not an unimportant feature to my mind and worthy of your study. I do not say that there is no love at Plymouth: there is in many a Wesleyan or dissenting church within. But Plymouth has ceased to represent this: it represents an opinion, and, alas! yet —— is not conscious of what an immense fall this is, but rather glories in it. If a strange Christian or a brother from another place were to go there, the consequence would be, not that he would find the testimony of the power of love in union and the truth delighted in and sought out, but that he would be instantly subjected to a process of imbruing his mind with certain views. Alas! how sorrowful! and as I have said—not to be aware of what a dreadful fall this is.

To me the testimony once rendered was the proof needed in the church of the presence of the Spirit: comparatively, a view of the details of prophecy was absolutely nothing, and the assiduity of their propagation a moral evil; but that I pass over. I have seen some of the statements, such as the manuscript letters once circulated, much of which were even contradictory, and some things to my mind absurd. Patiently proposed they would have been the subject of gracious consideration and separation of true and false. But this is not the style of the instruction. Of the future that this holds out I do not pretend to judge: whether the Lord means to sink the testimony into the general mass, and so annihilate it, and have views as the only result; or raise up a new one by the determinate action of His Spirit—of this I know nothing, but I have the most perfect and entire confidence in His fidelity and love, so that I am entirely happy as to it, looking simply to Him. I trust to be enabled by Him to walk abidingly near Him in respect of this, for I doubt not His fidelity.

If I know my own heart I am not anxious for an opinion: I feel assured that the doctrine of the church is lost in this teaching. This I think serious, but I am ready to hear everything; but the more I study the more I see (and it has greatly increased in clearness to me lately) this doctrine overlooked, or unknown, or obscured in their views. God’s teaching is not to me doubtful on this.

I have not read all, but I am perfectly assured that the papers on the Revelation are based on an entirely false interpretation of Psalm ex.: the basis is all false; but I desire to learn onward myself for the service of the precious church of God, and to move not a thought or a word in all patience but as He shews it to be for the

service of the church of God—His service, when it is His will, as well as if it is His will; for power is with Him and blessing as well as truth. The point important to me in truth is the loss of the doctrine of the church; in this I have no doubt that I am taught of God as far as I have gone, however much I may have yet to learn—alas! how much! but my desire is unity in love. God knows how long this is to last, or if St. Paul's sighs are to be ours also. At any rate, His will be done: as yet something of it subsists—at any rate in some parts where there is as much difference of opinion, but where brethren are more valued than an opinion. Peace be with you, beloved brother. My soul is in singular peace as to all this, though not without grave and serious thoughts; for we are in serious times. I trust my love is not diminished but increased, but I feel more and more the Lord's servant, and so of the brethren. He that is nearest to Christ will best serve Him, and there is no serving Him without it. The principle of anticlericalism is making way in and through all that is active for the truth, even where there is notable opposition to them that have been in testimony to it.

Love to all the brethren very tenderly in the Lord. May His abundant grace be shed upon and penetrate their hearts, and all holiness of conversation abound so that His Spirit may be free amongst them. Peace, peace be with them and His presence: my desire is brotherly love.

Very affectionately yours, beloved brother in the Lord.

[1844.]

* * * * *

Beloved Brother,—I reply at once to your letter. I did receive your letter, which lay a good while on my table

from constant occupation both of writing and ordinary service at Geneva, where I spent two months. I enter into and enjoy the first part of your present letter and profit by the connection of the passages with the seventh; as to the latter part, it is remarkable that the question you put had occupied me independently of these questions in a particular manner for a good while back; and I had added a long note to a tract on Romans 11.47 on other points which discussions here had given rise to, and I feel that I brought out the point very precisely. And it is precisely on this point, much more clear than heretofore in my mind, that I feel that Plymouth has lost, or for the most part never has attained, the idea which seems to me essential to the church—that is, which essentially distinguishes it in its privileges. I knew that the system which prevails there placed the church on the same ground as Israel in the millennium, and it was one of the things which convinced me that the notion of the church was entirely wanting. Israel will have many things which we have, but had not all that which distinguishes the church—those who have prohlpivkasi "pre-trusted in Christ," (Eph. 1:12.) Israel believes when they see, but "blessed are they who have not seen, and yet have believed." But my answer to your question, Has the church any spiritual things which it has not received through Israel? is—All that is properly essential to it as the church. The church can be looked at as coming in under the promises and grafted in on the spiritual things of Israel, but it is only the lowest form in which those who compose the church can be considered (nor is it then ever called the church that I am aware of) and only in respect of its administration down here; and in this point of view it will terminate and be cut off to make

place for something else. But is that all the idea we are to have of the church, and are those who believe in Christ, when He is not seen, in no different position from those who believe in Him when He is seen? Is union with Christ when He is hid in God the same thing as belonging to Him when He is seen in the exercise of judgment in the earth? Though His life [be theirs] the knowledge of Christ is quite other, as well as the position of the faithful. Will they suffer with Christ; are they conformed to His death having the fellowship of His sufferings; are there no sympathies, no knowledge of Christ which is connected with this which cannot exist when He is reigning? Even the very term Son has a different force here; when God sets forth His Son as King in Zion, He calls on the kings of the earth to kiss Him, and gives as basis of the [decree] which places Him there that He is His Son; "this day have I begotten thee." Is this the way we know the Son? I admit the truth of what is stated at Plymouth. The evil is this, that all the higher part of truth is left out, and everything which expresses it reduced to this level. Does "To us a son is born, to us a king is given" satisfy the desires of your heart in your knowledge of Christ?

And now let me take up certain expressions which bring this out. You speak of union with Christ risen: well, it is clear that it is with Christ risen, and not with Christ alive after the flesh or in the grave, that I am united. But I do not believe the scripture ever speaks of union with Christ risen simply as our portion; at least it is not what is habitually set forward as the acme of the glory. We are set down in heavenly places in Him—will the Jews be that in the millennium? Our life is hid with Him in God—will He be hid in God in that day? The fact is that the

highest privileges of the church are no matter, not merely of Israel's spiritual privileges, but of promises at all; because union with the Son of God one with the Father is no part of promise, but the basis of a mystery hidden from ages and generations, which gives a body to Christ independent of all question of Israel and Gentile, which knows the Son of God as its source above all distinction of Israel and Gentile. In the administration of the promises, I find Jew first and then Greek—in the church, neither Jew nor Greek; in the administration of the promises, I find Gentiles grafted in who were a wild olive, and natural branches never grafted in at all: but all this relates to the administration of promises here below, so that I find the seed of Abraham in the church, the Gentiles fellow-heirs and partakers of His promise in Christ. But I know not where union with the Son of God is promised, where to be loved by the Father as the Son is loved is promised, the result of which is to give us a place with Him in the kingdom— the immense privilege of suffering with Him now, to see Him as He is, to be like Him.

If it be answered that this will be the result, after the millennium, for Israel during the millennium, I answer: first, there is no such revelation in the word; and secondly, it cannot be, because the Son will have given up the kingdom and be subject that God may be all in all; and further, the distinction of Jews and Gentiles is kept up in the millennium, so that there can be no body of Christ, nor the Spirit, or consciousness in their relationships of the body of Christ which depends on union with Him hidden in heaven in virtue of a life which in its power, thus revealed in heaven, knows neither Jew nor Gentile. I do not recognise that resurrection shuts

out distinction between Jew and Gentile (though there be in it the power of a life which does, when its full result is revealed), for “the sure mercies of David” are founded on it—but the church union with Christ hid in God does. If you examine the epistle of St. Peter writing to the Jews he never names the church; indeed St. Paul alone does. St. Peter sees Jesus to the cloud, and sees Him when He is [manifested] out of the cloud again— St. Paul only in heaven and the church united to Him there, to Him who said, “Why persecutest thou me?” St. Paul justifies in its administration by the prophets, a system whose principle and root was above all that they had said. Union with a Saviour hid in God formed no part of the revelation committed to them, nor of the promises made to Abraham, though those who have this union are heirs of the promises, because one with Him who is so. But union with a Saviour hid in God, the Son one with the Father Himself, so that we are one body with Him, of His flesh and of His bones, is of the essence of the church; and I cannot see that this forms a part of Israel’s privileges in the millennium, for then there could not be Jews, and Gentiles their servants and dependants. They will enjoy the fruits of His resurrection, but they cannot be said to be risen with Him; they will enjoy the results of His having gone and received the kingdom from the Father, but they will not be sitting in heavenly places in Him, for He is not there.

In a word, all that is distinctive to the church is lost in this system, for that which is distinctive to it is not the subject of promise; though the church is heir by her union with Christ of the promises which are in Him as the true seed of Abraham; for “to Abraham and his seed were the promises made.” But is that all? Where is the

promise which conveys to me, “In that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you?” And even in administration, when all things are united in one head in Christ for the administration of the fulness of times it cannot be added for them “in whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things, after the counsel of his own will.” These words are the Spirit’s contrast of the church—“that we should be to the praise of his glory,” etc. Many, many are the consequences which flow from this: to be ignorant of it may be loss, but to set it aside—I will not say oppose it—is more than loss. I can only give you the outline of the principle. It is a matter of faith and divine teaching which God gives according to His sovereign goodness; but if this be a part of the glory of Christ, the privilege of the church, and the glory of God in the church throughout all ages, it is a serious thing that Christ should, in the minds of saints, be shorn of it, and their condition, and consequently their affections, reduced to those of Israel in the latter day, and deprived of Christ as He is given to the church. That is where I see the evil, and I trust, carry it to God.

I rejoice in all the joy and blessing of the saints, and I trust that a true apprehension of the relationship between Christ and the church will be manifested in holy and patient love, that others may profit by it if so it be. May the abounding of the Lord’s peace and grace be with all the brethren. “The wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated… without partiality and without hypocrisy; and the fruits of righteousness are sown in peace to them that make peace.”

Ever very affectionately yours, beloved brother.

Lausanne, November 14th, 1844.

* * * * *

My dear Brother,—I hardly know how to give you any answer without going into a long detail of evil that I shrink from when needless, otherwise than by stating to you what I stated to the meeting when I left. I do not know whether you are aware that Mr. Harris, though he did not leave communion, declines further ministry, and proposes leaving Plymouth. I stated that practically I felt God was displaced—that was the general ground. I then stated three things: subverting the principles of our meeting; evil and unrighteousness unconfessed and unjudged; and the refusal to re-establish a certain Friday meeting where anything occurred was considered, so that the means of remedy were cut off—this had been sought previously, and the proposal entirely slighted. I expressed my love to all and value for many, that I believed the great body quite innocent in it, but that there was one Table and one bread, and that they were therefore responsible, and as I felt so myself I could not identify myself any longer with the evil I knew. I did not go into any details then; since, I did, on the demand of a large body, but stated only what had led to my leaving, though, alas, much more was known to me. The great body have felt Harris's leaving very much; he was the only one (brother) who visited the poor.

The evil was both in the assembly and in individuals, and in individuals leading and taking a prominent part—I judge positive actual evil, and it seems to me of a very sad tendency. I have great peace since I left, only doubting very much whether I should not have done

better to have left before, when I first thought and spoke of it. It may have made my way clearer, but only by the most sad means of much more individual evil, and grievous evil in the public assembly. At any rate, patience has been had. I think they are comfortable at the results, but I see no softening of heart or repentance in those who have been leading it on—indeed much evil in many. Such is all the sad tale I have to tell you; to enter into all the details would only make you miserable and me, too, and I am not aware that it would do any one any good; publishing evil of others is seldom glorifying God. Kindest love to all.

Ever very affectionately yours.

Plymouth, November 10th, 1845.

Dearest——,—It is to know where the marks are not, not where they are, which is difficult. Compare Acts 2 and 4, and see; though I admit that did not last long. The great yet simple secret is the presence of the Holy Ghost in the body being lost as to power (for He is there), disowned. The ruin then shews itself in various ways, leaning on human wisdom; leaning on clerical importance to give decency and credit to the world; so that it can join the church without suffering or the cross; leaning on particulars, “I am of Paul,” etc., for schisms in the early church were not separations. I suspect the first separation to have been a godly, though an ill-formed thing, that of Novatus; corruption drove him to it, but he had enough of corrupt principles, or habits rather, in his mind, to go wrong in the formal ground of separation; the incapacity to discern the working of the enemy; the having ceased to expect the Lord; not merely divisions but the scattering of the sheep, so that they are

not in any division at all, but in the world (Satan's place) alone. Scattering I think much stronger than division: "he catcheth the sheep and scattereth them." Nay worse, the building up of immense worldly systems with perhaps some sheep in them, hidden, and starved often too, and calling these immense systems the church; setting up Satan in it as in popery, or selling what they pretend to be the bride of Christ, and where many of Christ's sheep are, to kings and princes for money; yea seeking them, as Jeremiah reproaches Judah, instead of their seeking it. Is not this ruin? Say a few of us have escaped and fled out. Why so? Because it was all ruin. The denial of the Spirit would be found in the denial of gifts, or in gifts denying the body, no matter which, for the Holy Ghost is in both. But ruin is found in this that the church, such as God formed and fashioned it, does not exist at all save as He sanctions two or three meeting, in the name of Jesus. When this is done, if it be in the spirit of the unity of the whole body (woe to them if it is not) the Lord will be there. I am not uneasy about a hundred meetings; they broke bread from house to house. If it were separating in heart from brethren, or a fleshly spirit of self-will or self-importance, or excluded any saints really walking as such, then of course it would be evil; and a spiritual person would find it out the first day; but, if in unity and love, twenty meetings in a town are all one to me. I like small gatherings provided they are really in the unity of the Spirit. The brethren may come to need them yet. Great power, I believe, would bring them; little power needs them. It is clear self-importance or chagrin may set them up without God; but that which has brought in the ruin I believe to be moral. "All seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's"; "All men forsook me." "All

they which are in Asia are turned away from me”—not from Christ absolutely but they would not go the whole path of faith with the apostle they feared the cross, the rough and unseemly road the Spirit of God led them. The world had come in in the shape of ease and respectability; it is the first form which the devil puts on for it is order and comeliness for the flesh; but it is the world and Satan, hence power is wanting for the purpose of resisting the other forms, heresy (in opinion) and clericalism; and the vessel of power becomes obnoxious because his standard troubles the conscience, instead of his spiritual power acting on the heart as well (for when the former is reached in a Christian, and not the latter, he kicks against it) and the church goes its own way into the hands of Satan in a worldly clerical road. Wise was God indeed to choose not many mighty, not many noble, not many rich; they find it hard to submit their comforts and comeliness to God’s. A rich body of Christians will become practically poor and simple, or practically worldly. Such is my thought said in haste.

The ruin I see how none can deny; our feelings in it are a further question because they depend on our sympathies with Christ, and that is spiritual power. Every one would not [have] wept over Jerusalem even though not going with its guilt. I judge that dwelling on divisions marks a very feeble estimate of the state of ruin the church is in, but if it be not a name for acquiescence in evil, which is an abomination, I hail every apprehension of the truth. Whatever the door of approach, once in the truth by divine teaching, it will be perceived on every side as men grow in the conscience of what the church is. For where is the bride of Christ,

His beautiful flock which He gave us? But, I judge, divisions are rather falsely apprehended, for what are called such in scripture were not separations, but divisions in spirit, etc., among those united; separation there was none but of abandoners of Christianity. I remember the text alarming me on quitting the Establishment, “They went out from us because they were not of us,” till I said, To be sure, because I was not of them; that is just the truth, and I would not be.

St. Hippolyte, April 14th, 1847.

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* * * I do not judge temperance societies to be good or scriptural, because they impose another law, and give other motives and other obligations, than scripture or the doctrines of Christ give, and though in particular instances where followed with an unfeigned desire for good, God may have in sovereign mercy overruled them for good (as I dare say may have been the case), yet their general moral effect has been harmful, as all unscriptural things must be. But this is not the ground I go on here, though it is a monstrous thing to substitute an unscriptural invention of man for the institution of God, in a matter which, as to institutions, forms the central expression of the christian system. Further, I think all vows or undertakings of this kind to be positive sin: and am I really to give up the scriptural remembrance of Christ to support a system whose basis I believe to be really (though unwittingly) a sin?

But what is the character of the act? It is not respecting the scruples of others, and leaving them free to act on them, even if seeking to enlighten them, but it is claiming to impose a law instituted by man on the whole

church of God, a law which they cannot pretend to see in scripture. This is not respecting individual conscience, nor could I tolerate that the institution of Christ should be subordinated or made to vary for the fancies of men. It is not a question of a certain number at ——, who may perhaps have no very clear idea of the importance of the question. You are changing the institution of Christ for the whole church of God, if indeed in principle you count yourselves one body with it, and imposing unscriptural inventions on the whole body of Christ. Supposing other Christians to come to ——who have clear enough judgment to condemn morally the whole notion and principle of temperance societies, and who felt scandalized at the institutions of Christ being subjected to the inventions and vows of men, what are they to do? I avow to you I would not break bread where I saw Christ's order (in a most touching part of His service too) made the sport of man's inventions. It is the very idea of the dishonour done to the Lord's institution which offends me: the acquiescence of twenty or thirty saints in ——, dear as they may be to me, could not affect that.

To me, therefore, I avow to you, it is intolerable: I mean the pretension to subject the whole church of God (for, let it be well weighed, that is what it amounts to) to a notion which is not or cannot be pretended to be a rule of scripture, and which I judge to be sinful in its very nature, and to subject the institution of Christ to it. I judge Christians ought not to break bread where it is knowingly done.

April 21st, 1848.

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Beloved Brethren,—I have no intention of commenting on the proceedings in the case of poor Mr. Morris, as I never had any part in it, and believe that the enemy and not the Spirit of God was working in the whole matter; but as some one has sent me “A Letter addressed,” etc. (I do not know who), I felt desirous to make a remark to you, beloved brethren, whose names are appended to it, as to all who concur, though there be but one to whom I am known after the flesh, and present to you a very important principle which seems to me involved in the statement you have made—or, at least, leaves it in a dangerous uncertainty: that union in “faith in the blood of Christ, the Son of the living God,” is to become a kind of allowance of error in those who may claim fellowship on that ground. This principle, I judge, it is of all importance to repudiate. Whatever means may be used, I am bound to see that no man fail of the grace of God, and that there be no root of bitterness, whether it be manifested in doctrine that alienates from God, or in any carnal workings. I should fail in charity towards humble, simple souls did I not. Heresy is a work of the flesh, as other grosser things, and surely has to be checked: words may eat, as doth a canker. Errors are often found to affect fundamental truth which many a simple saint may not perceive to do so.

There is another thing I apprehend sorrowful in your paper: you appear at least to excuse the doctrine, and you lay as a basis of this, that the only sense in which it would be said to affect the doctrine of the cross is asserting that there is another way of obtaining pardon of sin besides the death of the Lord Jesus. Do you think, then, that Satan will always declare his object? This is surely most dangerous ground to take. Supposing it was

said that the Divinity of Christ was not necessary seeing suffering was not eternal—an argument, I apprehend, difficult to answer—or for whatever other reason; would that not affect the doctrine of the cross? An inefficient atonement is as bad as another. I use the word suffering instead of punishment, because it seems to me that the word punishment is used a little equivocally; and that to call eternal punishment where the punished person no longer exists is something very like evasion.

What pains me is that you seek to justify the doctrine or excuse it, and not merely to blame the conduct of certain parties as to Mr. Morris. Degrees in punishment do not do away to my mind with what we mean by infinite punishment, no more than degrees of glory with infinite bliss. You give out a deliberate opinion and commit the whole of the meeting to it, not that M. was ill-treated, but that his doctrine does not affect directly, or undermine, the value of the cross or of the Person, work, or blood-shedding of our blessed Lord and Saviour. He who communicates with you must do so on the footing of accepting this theological statement—at least, that he is bound also to accept all such, and hold full communion anywhere and everywhere with Mr. M., and any others who receive and publicly propagate this doctrine. This is a very serious position you have taken. It effectually identifies you with M. and his doctrine. For if it does not directly nor indirectly affect that, and you pronounce him guiltless in holding it, you oblige communion with those holding it and teaching it. It is not, you say, connected with faith in Him: an astonishing statement, as I know of no truth that is not. If any person is convinced that your theology is wrong, and that the wonted doctrine of Christians is to be

maintained, and resistance distinctly to be made to the view in question, or that seeking followers for it is heresy, you exclude them completely from your communion: because that serious error and truth are to be on the same terms in communion is a principle insupportable in the church of God. You affirm it is not important, hence nothing ought to be done. You will find it hard to convince the great body of Christians of it. And indifference to error makes truth no truth at all.

I say nothing of the excommunication, as you well know I could have nothing to say to it; and I see in your tract the expression of that of which I have been long conscious—the result of what all know I have considered a work of Satan elsewhere. But I look to the goodness of God, dear brethren, to set it all right: His power is above all the workings of the enemy. I have never been at —— in my life, and it is very possible never may, but as your letter was sent to me, I should nave failed in faithfulness and in love, too, if I had not communicated with those who have signed it, and with all the brethren adhering to it. It is not a blame of the excommunication, but a theological judgment on the doctrine as a ground of the reception of persons teaching it. You have committed the meeting to the doctrine being harmless and blameless. I only want to press this fact, beloved brethren, on your consciences before God, and that you may consider the position in which it places yourselves and others. Though I address my letter necessarily to one, I shall feel thankful if it were communicated to all. I have nothing to add but unfeigned affection in Christ to all.

Taunton, May, 1848.

* * * * *

Dearest Brother,—Thank you much for your note. The prospect of the death of your dear mother gave me a peculiar feeling of rest and peace in the Lord. I felt it well, as it were, that one who had gone through many storms and trials, and known and served Him through them, should be at rest with Him; and that rest and His love seemed exceeding sweet to me. It is not that I do not feel what an object and link and centre of affection has been lost to you all, and your dear mother was so eminently calculated to be so; but the world is made for that, and whatever new ties and new affections come in, they never after all, though occupying while the mind is busy, destroy in the secret of the soul the consciousness that some are lost for man, as water spilt upon the ground that cannot be gathered up again here. There is one tie that never breaks, and that your dear mother has now sweeter and more intimate enjoyment of than heretofore and, freed from all hindrance, what her heart desired. It is all well, and far better. I had thought of running down, but on pondering it before the Lord, I have relinquished it. My place is rather in service, fulfilling as a hireling my day until I am called away too. Could I have been useful to your dear mother living; or if she had not been surrounded with love and honour from her own and the saints now she is gone, I would have gone twice as far; but that I know she will be in far better hands than mine, and that the dear saints at Hereford will surround her grave with all that could soothe those who are in sorrow around it. Give my kindest love, I beg you, to all your family… Peace be with you all, and much of His blessed presence in committing the body of your dear and valued mother to

the care of Him who will produce it in glory and beauty in that day. I had thought she might yet have been a blessing among the dear saints at ——, but the Lord had a shorter and therefore happier path to rest for her, and it is all well, for we are not at the end yet.…

Ever, beloved brother,

Affectionately yours in unfeigned sympathy, and I pray you to say so to all, for indeed there were few I valued as I did her who is gone.

[Exeter, June 20th, 1848.]

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[From the French.

Dearest Brother,—It appears to me that what is said in Romans 8:13 is, like a great many of the dicta of St. Paul, the expression of an abstract principle which belongs even to the nature of things, or rather of God Himself and His principles of government, comprehending certain great truths connected with them, as, for example, here, “through the Spirit.” Any man whosoever who lives according to the flesh, shall die; this is the end of a life according to the flesh. He reaps what he has sown: one may listen to the flesh, and that for long enough; and the remorse and anguish and distress, and, in the end, the getting out of this condition, shew that there was a principle which was struggling with the flesh, and to which God, at last, gives the victory. Still we may be in doubt for a time under what principle such a case ranges itself, but God knows those that are His. In Romans 2:6-10 there is a similar abstract principle, of which the apostle makes use in connection with the introduction of the Gentiles.

Also it is not a question of the Spirit in chapter 8; he had already said enough to introduce the power by “which this life acted, and the principles or the rule by which it was guided. In this point of view the passages seem to me very simple, only, as it has happened in so many cases, in the application there are to our undiscerning eyes some very equivocal cases—but this is a matter of discernment which, besides, does not concern us often, and does not touch the interpretation of the passage…

Probably at V— one needs to be steeped in love; love covers a multitude of sins, if they are not covered. For that matter there is no remedy but an increase of love, for if they are not covered, they ought then to be judged; and the spiritual feebleness which leaves them uncovered, shews plainly the incapacity to act aright with regard to them when they appear. We have to seek power from on high for such a condition of things, and Jesus ‘is faithful, perfectly faithful to intervene, and to answer the necessities of His people. The little public discipline is harrowing, and it is most hurtful to piety. But what is to be done if full grace does not sustain holiness? My comfort is that the Lord is watching over these dear friends at——dear to Him, thank God, and through His great grace, very dear to me. I hope that His goodness will cause them to avoid the snares that there are in the separation of the brethren into several meetings, and that it may grant to the brothers to watch as to this by an increase of mutual love and openness at other times, and in seeking each other out.

Greet them most affectionately from me. I desire earnestly to see all our dear brethren in Switzerland. I do not know when God will grant me this sweet privilege.

Your very affectionate.

[Plymouth, July 27th, 1848.]

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Dearest ——,—As regards Isaiah 66, there cannot be a doubt that the Lord's words refer to Hinnom, where they burnt the filth of Jerusalem; Isaiah 66 refers to the same; Gehenna is the valley of Hinnom. I take the passage as simply as possible, that the apostate Jews judged at the coming of the Lord will be then a memorial of their folly and the Lord's judgment, to those who come up; their carcases also I take simply as such (it is used, it seems, of man or beast), left there an instructive spectacle of divine judgment terrible to behold. But this is just what shews that it has nothing to do with souls, nor resurrection for judgment.

But the use of Gehenna in the New Testament, beyond all controversy, goes beyond this. In Mark 9:42-48, it is evident it is no question of the judgment of Jerusalem at the last day. But Luke 12 puts it out of all question, where the Lord says, "Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell;" and, Matthew 10:28, "Able to destroy both soul and body in hell." These passages shew that though the Lord uses the figure of the valley of the son of Hinnom, He uses it figuratively in reference to what is not of this earth; and hence "worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched" must be used in a like way.

The quotation of Isaiah 66 is absolutely futile, and proves nothing at all about the matter, save as a figure; and the figure is, that the judgment should not disappear, as in ordinary cases. I know they would use the word "destroy," but that is not the question here, but

the value of Isaiah 66. I have discussed it elsewhere; it is false to suppose it means to cause to cease to exist. I do not remember the three passages in which aijwnivwn is used for the past, but I think there is proV crovnwn aijwnivwn used in reference to all the dispensed ways of God. The promise of eternal life was in eternity, before the question of dispensational dealings, for in Christ was life, and we receive of His fulness; but the word crovno" here gives the clearest force (it is 2 Tim. 1:9) to aijwvnio" as aijw'na tou' kovsmou touvtou. There is no doubt that aijwvn is used in this way, the end of this aijwvn, etc.; that is not the question: is it not used in an eternal sense? Now several passages prove it is; as eternal God, eternal Spirit, eternal covenant, eternal life, along with which is eternal punishment. As to Romans 2:6-10, there is no doubt that eternal life is presented as the portion of those who are characterised by the conduct there described, leaving aside, that is, Jew and Gentile, and fixing the portion given of God on realities, realities of moral state, be they found in Jew or Gentile. I do not see any difficulty here; he shews plainly enough how this can be found in a man, that is, solely through Christ, but it is found in those that are really His.

As to Romans 5, it is not exact to say that all sinned in Adam; though, as a general expression, I should apprehend a person. All fell in him who descend naturally from him, and are under sin, katestavqhsan aJmartwloiV, which it is important to maintain; but in dealing with conscience we have always ejf* w|/, “for that all have sinned.” Death does not merely follow as a corruption of nature—that, is a terrible mistake; death came on Adam and all his descendants at once by sin, as

a judgment of God—a very different thing. Moreover, Satan has the power of death; that is not mere corruption of nature, as the Lord fully felt, who had no corruption of nature. “Sinned” is ambiguous, because it conveys the idea of personal responsibility in will; all were involved in sin, in Adam’s sin. If you have further difficulty in this, let me know, for it is important to be clear…

I have no doubt the Lord is sifting, most rightfully, and I am disposed to think God in grace has stepped in and turned the tide, and that blessing may flow—I speak of England. But the sifting was needed; corruption and laziness, Laodiceanism, was creeping in, and fearfully; it was quite polite to be a brother. Peace be with you. Kindest love to the brethren around you. The Lord be with them and all His beloved ones.

Your affectionate brother in the Lord.

Nimes, December 12th, 1849

* * * * *

[From the French.

Dearest Brother,—I apply myself to the critical questions in order. I see no proof whatsoever that either Elijah or Moses is one of the two witnesses; I see that the two witnesses are in the same moral position as these two saints, but no proof that they are identical. Besides, if John the Baptist was not Elijah, he never can be literally. That the same person should be “angel of his presence,” and afterwards be man, is indeed possible; but one who is not a certain individual can never become so literally. “In the spirit and power of Elias,” well and good, but we are speaking of personal identity.

I believe that the 144,000 of Revelation 7 are the twelve tribes as a whole; the mystical number of the elect of Israel in its totality; the 144,000 of chapter 14, the special remnant which will have suffered intelligently in the times of trouble at Jerusalem, and which, having been in the same position as Jesus on the earth (according to the thought of grace) will be with Him in the earthly royalty, although they will not be in heaven. They understand and learn the song, being more associated with heaven than any other. They form a part necessarily of the whole; this is the reason I said not absolutely.

Again, as to Hebrews 10:12, you are mistaken in supposing that there is transposition, for there is none; on the contrary, I say, that to connect eij" toV dihnekeV" with prosenevgka" is neither order nor sense, and that a person who in some measure seized the habits of expression could not connect them. Mivan …… prosenevgka" qusivan eij" toV dihnekeV" is not, I take it upon myself to say, without pretending to be very learned, which I by no means am, a Greek expression, nor is it even intelligible; whilst eij" toV dihnekeV" ejkavqisen, as the effect of this sacrifice is perfectly natural, and follows, and connects itself with the train of reasoning; and that no other way of taking the words is admissible. Besides, eij" toV dihnekeV" is not the same thing as eij" toVn aijw'na; it is used in contrast to the business of the Jewish priest, who got up, and remained standing, being a priest, and in order to renew the sacrifice, whilst Christ is seated continuously. This force of the word becomes so much the more manifest because the use of the word with sacrifices has quite a different sense in this chapter even, and to attach to it

the sense that you suppose in connection with the sacrifices would overturn the whole reasoning of the apostle. In the sense that I attach to it, all is simple (and it is its true sense). Look at verse 1. You have there sacrifices offered continuously eij" toV dihnekeV". Give to the word in this passage the sense that you desire to give it in verse 12, and the apostle cuts the ground from under his feet before beginning his reasoning. The priests offered them continually—nothing more simple. Efavpaz is the word to express what you desire to attribute to eij" toV dihnekeV". I take eij" toV dihnekeV" (ver. 14) in the same sense; there is no interruption in their perfection which demands a fresh sacrifice. (Apply this to the question of forgiveness.) This implies perpetuity, because if the sacrifice is not renewed, its efficacy is perpetual; but the conclusion that the apostle draws from it is oujk e[ti prosforaV periV aJmartiva". There are many of these things about which I have deliberate convictions, and of which I am more or less ready to give an account, but on which I do not insist when I do not see that the profit of souls is involved in it; and about which in any case I do not like to enter into a contest, because this very seldom tends to profit. Here, for example, I do not admit that the original bears any other translation than that of the English version…

As to myself, you should never consider it a reproach to have thought differently from me. In general, I like better reading what is not according to my own thought, because one always gains (if there is piety, and the foundations are solid) something by reading it. Divine truth is of such vast extent, and is so many-sided, taking up the nature of God, His dispensations, His ways with

men, their responsibility, the positive revelations of His counsels, the moral and eternal relations which flow from what He is, and from what other beings are; that on all points the truth may be looked at in many ways, and one fills up the gap left by the others. I see this even in the apostles. John speaks of the nature of God; Paul of His counsels; Peter of His ways. All have the same truths; only as one goes on everything becomes increasingly absorbed in Christ; and if even there were mistakes in what the man writes, one eliminates them through grace, and one takes what is given of God, which is not according to one's own way of looking at things. So that it does not trouble me to find in your work ideas different from my own. Besides, if the foundations are well maintained, I like that there should be great breadth amongst brethren, and not a party formed upon certain views, provided also that devotedness and separation from the world, and the truths that lead us to this, be also maintained in all their energy, because the blessing of souls is in question in this.

I think, indeed, dear brother, that, as you say, you have studied too much, and read the Bible too little. I always find that I have to be on my guard on this point. It is the teaching of God and not the labour of man that makes us enter into the thoughts and the purpose of God in the Bible. We search it without doubt, but the cream is not found through much labour of the mind of man. I do not think that any one will believe that I do not wish that it should be much read, but I do wish that it should be read with God. It seems to me that there is too much labour in your way of reading it; but in this, as in all else, man learns himself, and purifies himself. I doubt

whether the literal application which you sometimes make is warrantable, and whether the ways and the scope and the purposes of God bend and limit themselves to human accuracy, to what man divines as to accuracy. I am perfectly sure that all is divinely accurate, but the subject being vast, and seen only in part, to reduce it to human accuracy is, at times, simply to falsify everything. I see two ends of an immense rainbow, I suppose that they never meet. Were I able to see the whole, I should only deem that my parallel line has only destroyed the bow; that not only are the beauty and the unity lost, but that which was in the nature even of the refraction which is necessary to the existence of the phenomenon. The word of God is the communication of divine things to the understanding (rendered capable by the Spirit) of man; but we know in part, and the whole not being communicated as God knows it, as indeed it could not be, and ought not to be, we often lose it by attempting to put it into a frame.

After this long, but as to its principle, important preface, I come to the wise and foolish virgins. I think that the virgins who accompany the queen (Psa. 45) are probably the cities of Judah; but the use of the same figure to signify the same thing (a thing common enough among students of prophecy) often betrays the one who uses them thus into serious mistakes; and there is still less ground for this when the nature and the moral order of the writing is entirely different. That the virgins in Matthew 25 should be the cities of Judah, is a thought that never crossed my mind till I saw it in your letter, and it seems to me that the passage would not allow of it for an instant. I have never had any other thought than that which interprets them as Christians, from the

rejection of Christ till the rapture of the church. Bellett, for a moment, wished to make it the Jewish remnant. I did not deny the analogies, but he gave it up himself. I am fully and perfectly assured that it is disciples during the Lord's absence, not the church as a body, but those who take the place of professors in the responsibility that attaches to it. Up to the end of verse 30 in chapter 24, we see what concerns the Jews and Israel as a body complete and entire: all His elect are gathered from this whole people. He resumes (chap. 25:31) to shew the judgment of the Gentiles; between the two the Lord gives the instructions needed for His own during His absence. This is why the bride is not named. I admit that chapter 24:32 to 44 looks at the judgments in relation to the earth, and does not speak of the rapture of the church; but from verse 45 the Lord considers the conduct of His people as to their responsibility during the whole time of His absence. In the parable of the talents it is so unquestionably; in this (24:45-51) that of servants. The thing is clear in principle. Now, when responsibility is in question for any one, it is always a question of the manifestation of Jesus. This is what takes place here. The conduct taken account of is during His absence. When Jesus appears the effect of this conduct will appear; thus the Tore is but the time of the application of the manifestation of Jesus to the conduct which preceded it. Now the conduct here is the conduct of professors, I do not at all doubt. All the elements of the parable confirm for me the application that I make of it. I do not see in the case of the Jewish remnant, or of the cities of Judah, anything resembling the going forth of the virgins to meet the Bridegroom, the sleep during the delay of His coming, the awakening afterwards which causes them to rejoin the Bridegroom before He

reaches the bride— such as takes place in the case of the virgins. Nothing is more simple than the application of it to professors. Going out to meet Jesus is the calling of the faithful; alas! they have fallen asleep. The cry of the Bridegroom awakes them, because they accompany Him when He comes to Jerusalem. In the parable they have nothing to do with the bride. The heavenly bride is never the relation of the members of the church in their responsibility; the bride enjoys without fail her privileges in heaven. The Bridegroom does not enter, as you make Him do, into His earthly kingdom before the marriage at Jerusalem: it is there that He is king. There is no question of the Son of man in the parable; the passage where the expression is found (ver. 13) is rejected by all the editors.

As to your remaining explanations, I consider them without foundation, because when Christ will be at Jerusalem, Antichrist will be destroyed. It seems to me that you seek for details too much, instead of seizing the bearing of the passages. You say, dear brother, “that it is certain that the word of the Lord tells me that when the Lord shall descend with the church, then the kingdom shall be likened unto the virgins.” Allow me to tell you that the word of the Lord does not say so at all. You think, I do not doubt, that you can prove that this is what the passage means, but the word of the Lord does not say it. I admit that the church is not presented here as the heavenly bride, but the virgins are not presented as friends of the earthly bride, or in any relation with her whatsoever, but exclusively of the Bridegroom, which is the place of the church alone, that is, of its members, for we are not speaking here of angels.

As to the result of your researches, I do not see any harm in your having given it forth, but it is possible that you would have done better if you had kept your work for some time in order to weigh it in the presence of fresh light; but God makes all things work together to the greatest blessing of those who love Him. It is my habit scarcely to put one foot before the other in the study of the word, and to give forth nothing until I am able, in measure, to say (while still liable to make mistakes, of course), This is the mind of God. This makes me go on very slowly, but I seldom have to retrace my steps—a few details that I have adopted from others, without observing it, affecting sometimes, but rarely, the thoughts that I have received. And now I am about to make a confession to you which may perhaps annoy you; I have not read your work on the Revelation, except a part on the seven churches. 1 had more than one reason; amongst others, I do not like reading in fragments anything on which I have to form a judgment; I take the whole. I am waiting until the whole has come out, and I shall gain this by it, that the controversy will be over, and that I can with greater calmness make my own of what is good, and pass over the rest in silence. This is what I do when I have time to read works, which is seldom the case. We need to know how to use the word by the Spirit; without this the letter killeth; it is only a labour of which the mind of man is capable, nothing but a concordance is needed for it… I own that I think that you rest in the letter in such a way as often to lose the purpose of God…. I do not doubt that I shall find useful things, and others that I can profit by in many ways, although I do not accept the conclusion to which they lead you. I often find brethren who have received ideas from the Spirit of God, and I profit by these; the

conclusion which they draw from them, what they like as the system which they have formed from them, I totally reject; this is by no means an unusual case. A good many brothers seek edification, and are not able to suck the honey and leave the flower, however beautiful it may be, without further occupying themselves with it; sounding, comparing, judging between rival systems is not their part. This is the reason I have thought that perhaps it would have been better to devote Le Témoignage to what would not have required this kind of labour—but no matter. In short, when all has appeared, I hope to read it and examine… A want of agreement about details' is not for me a reason for controversy; it must be something essential.

As to repentance, God proposed it as a matter of government and of His ways with man, as a means of obtaining pardon; and if Israel had repented in this sense they would have been pardoned. In the end they will have received double for all their sins. In fact, God forgave His people individually, always in view of the work of Christ. (Rom. 3:25, 26.) We must never forget this; otherwise the foundations are shaken, and the meaning of all the sacrifices from Adam on. If man had received Christ, this would have proved that he was good, and there would have been no need of the sacrifices; but it was far from being so, as the rejection of Christ has proved.

As to the other point, it is impossible that our sins should be imputed to us; "once purged" we "have no more conscience of sins." God, as judge, sees the blood which has taken them away, and His unchangeable righteousness has now been manifested. It is here that we find the force of eij" toV dihnekeV". Besides, when

once sprinkled with the blood of Christ this sprinkling is not repeated, its efficacy lasts for ever; but with the Father I seek forgiveness as from a Father whom I have offended. I am humbled before Jesus because I have dishonoured Him, but I have no thought that anything can be imputed to me which demands the sprinkling of blood. The ashes of the red heifer, and the washing of the feet are the figures to apply here; the sprinkling of blood has been made, and it is not repeated. In the sense of imputation and sprinkling, forgiveness is not now sought; in the sense of having offended one's Father, it is. The confession of one's faults with humiliation is all right, if grace is fully maintained before the heart.

I beg you earnestly, dear brother, to be diligent about your temporal business. You know well that I am very far from wishing to see you leave your work, but what our hand finds to do we are to do it with our might. Limit your expenses at once, if they exceed your income, and arrange your business as a good steward of the Lord. Disorder in one's business is dishonouring to the gospel, as being careful to increase our wealth like the world dries up (one can do no more) the soul. The word has told us that it is the way and the root of every sort of evil. But the principles are simple; to live simply in order to be able to give of what one has, and to be faithful in one's own things, making use of them as having been entrusted to us to have in order to use them according to the Lord. The Book of Proverbs teaches us clearly in detail about these things.

There is a practical difference between oneself and one's sins. The renewed soul is much more pained at the discovery of the root which shoots up after the

knowledge of the love of Jesus, than at the remembrance of past sins, the forgiveness of which it much more easily understands. Besides, you put the judgment of self before the judgment of sins, whereas sins committed generally act first on the conscience; after that comes the experience of what the flesh is, and this is so true that often in the early days of conversion one thinks that there is no more sin in one. That of which I have spoken as coming afterwards is not exactly the knowledge of sin in oneself when judging it, but the fact of being in the presence of God—what we are in the presence of the light. To judge the flesh, myself, is a different thing from being in the presence of God in judgment, being such. What you quote from your letter to——is perfectly right. When he says that the knowledge of self is the business of the whole life, I think this a very sad idea. God makes us known to ourselves simply as a means; the object of life is to know Christ. Fathers in Christ have known Him who is from the beginning; and one does not even know oneself except by knowing Him. To be occupied only with evil (and there is nothing but evil in oneself) is a sad life, and it is not the thought of God. His desire is that for our happiness we should be occupied with Him. It is a thought as false as it is sad, and it means nothing but ignorance of the grace of our God. The truth is just the opposite of this, that I ought to be occupied only with Christ, and that this is the grace of God to me. Sometimes, when I have neglected to do this (so much the worse) to bring me back again He is forced to occupy me with myself; but I cannot say that the knowledge of myself is the first element of faith—the knowledge in general that we are sinners, and even that there is no good in us—be it so, but we know ourselves badly, very badly, and God causes us to pass through a

spiritual eighth of Deuteronomy in order to understand our dependence on Him and His grace, a very difficult lesson for the heart of man to learn.

I must stop; I am called elsewhere. Greet warmly our dear brethren, and after all my severe criticisms receive, dearest brother, the assurance of my sincere affection.

Your brother in Jesus.

Pau, March 25th, 1850.

* * * * *

My dear Brother,—I am at last come to England, and with the hope, the Lord willing, of working there a while, exceedingly happy in the thought that it is with the Lord's will.

My declaration at Rawstorne Street was, in general purport, that, without condemning or justifying any one, not having been here, nor even knowing what had been done, I began on my own definite ground of Christ, and the unity of the church of God; that I felt the need of being on the ground of, and occupied with Christ, and seeking the blessing of His church— not as undecided, but because the question was for me decided, and that, being on the Lord's ground, as I did not doubt I was, and a service to perform to Him, I could deal with each case individually as it arose, as His servant. I believe it relieved and set free many who were arrived there in need and desire, and this furnished the positive expression to their minds. I am very immovable on this ground, the Lord's strength helping me. I accepted the entire humiliation; and told them that I thought we should only have a blessing in proportion as we did. I believed I had failed but not in being decided, but in

being so too little, or rather too late; so that I bowed, but that I believed the Lord now permitted me to resume my course—I believe with more blessing than ever, though different (less agreeable, perhaps, but more real and deeper). I feel very strongly indeed on the ground I am on, and that it is the Lord's, of and with Him, however poor an instrument I may be when there.

I have not entered into the discussions on Craik's doctrines. I dread dissecting, if I may venture so to speak, Christ; it is not the way to honour Him. Very few will speak so as not to commit themselves; "No man knoweth the Son but the Father." We may know many precious things of Him which enable us to condemn error, but nice definitions of what He was, and how He was it, human language and human thoughts are not competent to, I judge. I do condemn many things I have heard said, but I have not examined into the details of the teaching objected to, having been out of the country. Most of the papers I have never read, nor have I an intention, unless for the need of some soul; that is the ground I go upon, each individual soul to whom my service applies, and I wait till the Lord brings things before me. I have seen and heard what I doubt not is very bad, and fear it is much worse. I have also looked at Bellett's paper. I see expressions liable to objection, but I have no doubt of his soundness of soul and doctrine as to Christ. I apprehend I judge what he says; but it says, I think, nothing; revelations of what Christ is, or unfolding of such, I accept—definitions, scarcely, for what is it that defines?

I had a letter from—— which I answered. I do not think his conscience is adequately awake to the evil at Bethesda; but I have never thought that souls have been

sufficiently individually dealt with. When one is on unquestioned ground with Christ Himself, one is able then to do so. That is the ground I take, and with God's help I shall not get off it. I act broadly as being right; we shall see whether God sanctions and justifies it. I hope to act in grace, being right.

I know nothing of how anybody has been dealt with anywhere; I am willingly ignorant of abroad: it is undesirable to meddle in the details of what you cannot be answerable for in principle, and are unable to set on any footing in which your conscience can act. I refer to your question as to Plymouth. I repeat, I begin and afresh on the broad ground of my service to Christ. If alone, I act alone; if with others, so much the happier for me. I apprehend things are opening out in a renewed and somewhat altered character of service in England — altered as to form and machinery of work, I mean, but this is only beginning, but so it seems to me: what our need is is spiritual energy and love to work. But God is, I believe, working to produce a new movement in work. Here they seem to me in a very gracious spirit, humble, and accepting the humiliation as of the Lord, and hence surely for good; and the meetings I have been at have been happy, serious, and godly, free too with a very godly freedom. I have been very happy at them. There is less dispersion than I supposed; I should think it had all done them a deal of good: indeed, the gracious Lord makes all things work together for good.

I close. I am working hard, having much study work, but happily; occupied somewhat with books in connection with attacks on scripture; it has at any rate enhanced it to my eyes. What a difference when you have found the universal mind of God in the word! In vain people reason

—if kept by grace— there they are, blowing 5 ith their breath at a mountain to upset it; it remains just where it was, and the character of presumption looks like madness if it was not malice, and the total ignorance of what they are, and what the mountain is— the only thing proved; but the believer gets truth out of it, and the eternal power of the word is more clearly recognised. Peace be with you, dear brother…

Many doors were open in France, and blessing; only I felt my duty here, I should have been unwilling to leave; but I am at peace because I did. The Lord grant you to walk in love and grace towards others, serving Him, for the time is short.…

Your affectionate brother.

London, July 25th, 1851.

* * * * *

To the same.]

Dearest ——,— I do not hold that the church is to be ignorant of the times because her period is not determined by them; “There are many antichrists, whereby we know that it is the last time.” Surely if Pharisees ought to have discerned [Matt. 16:3], we ought. She ought by the word morally to discern all things, but she is doctrinally by the word set outside these times and signs. The Revelation is given to the church that she may understand her place; that does not necessarily place her in it. She is not of time, though in it; not of the world, though in it. As to the second remark as to the author of the Apocalypse being the same as of the Gospel, etc., it is merely ignorance, which would lead me to judge the author incapable of any

sound judgment at all about the matter. The relation of the Father to His children never appears in the Revelation. It is the throne, and the language and style and spirit so unique as to prove totally the contrary to what you refer to. —— would have been wiser if he had heard both sides, but in his position he is not likely to be free from the deceit of the enemy… I do not meddle with other people's judgment as to Bethesda, because I have my own, and as I believe this is a deceit of the enemy; unless delivered from it I do not expect a sound judgment. The word abiding in us, and the unction of the Holy One can alone deliver us from the world, and Antichrist in his various forms. The world and its spirit are not discerned else, so that I expect delusion.

I have not seen the last edition of Horæ Apocalypticæ. I read the third, I think, a year or two ago. As to four parts of the earth, there seems no ground for it at all. The Vulgate follows the corrected order of the words adopted by all the editors. As to the "measure of wheat," others have had the same thought before him; still one man's daily food for his whole wages is at least a scarcity, for as the commentaries say he may have a wife and children, and at any rate must have a house and clothes; however it would prove scarcity, and exact measurement rather than famine: moreover, I pronounce nothing upon it.

As to Hebrews 12:22-24, kaiv divides the terms. You are come to Mount Zion; to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem; to an innumerable company of angels, the general assembly; to the church of the firstborn whose names are written in heaven; to God the Judge of all; the spirits of just men made perfect; Jesus, Mediator of the new covenant; and to the blood of

sprinkling that speaketh better things than that of Abel. It ascends from the lowest point of millennial glory uniting heaven and earth, the earthly seat of royal grace in contrast with Sinai the nation’s responsibility (Zion was after Ichabod), and then gives the heavenly Jerusalem in contrast with earthly Zion as in general the city of heavenly glory. He then opens out the whole panhvguri", the great multitude of angels just there meeting his eye; then as a special company he singles out the elect heavenly church: this gives the full display of grace in its heavenly character. Then he rises up to God, but in the character of righteousness which, whatever the life-giving grace needed, was His character in connection with the Jews or Israel, “God, the judge of all;” hence he next sees “the spirits of just men [an Old Testament designation, as Zacharias and Elizabeth in Luke] made perfect,” (perhaps from the use of that word for the winning combatants not yet crowned) that is, the saints of the Old Testament; then, to the means of establishing the new covenant with Israel, “Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant,” and the blood which cried for grace for the earth, for sinners and for Israel. The whole order of things in connection with millennial blessing is introduced, giving withal the present condition of souls, and the efficacy of what was accomplished to bring it in, leaving it, as continually in the Hebrews, open to heavenly or earthly accomplishment, though addressing those concerned in the heavenly.

I have no great light and no great difficulty as to the glorious place. I believe there will be a visible glory which will have in a certain sense a place for man to see it; it is the glorious state of the saints, not the saints

simply. But then we must not leave out what is the very object and value of a symbol, moral characterisation. In Hebrews it is a place, but that place is the church's glory hereafter, which, for instance, Abraham may enjoy, though not it. In Hebrews it is always an objective thing, for the epistle never rises to it as a condition…

Affectionately yours in Christ.

August 28th, 1851.

I think the seven angels are the mystical representatives of the churches in connection with the authority to be exercised on Christ's part in them, in whosever hands that may be found.

* * * * *

42 [Athanasius, Tertullian, Eusebius are here quoted, but being in Latin and Greek were not given in the copy.]

43 [Latin quotation not preserved.]

44 [The interpolated Epistle of Ignatius is here referred to, but quotation not given.]

45 [Clement of Alexandria, Latin quotation, and not preserved.]

46 [Copy defective.

47 ["Collected Writings," vol. i., p. 472, new ed.]

Appendix Section 2

To the same.]

My dear ——,—Not having any proper answer further on your mere summary of Mr. Brock’s, I put your letter to be answered as soon as I could, having already replied to the particular arguments you had asked me about. I am occupied with Newman, so that answering error and grasping systems of it, I had pretty near enough of for the moment, but I have made some progress in it. I have not the least doubt that Dr. Lees denies any real sacrificial atonement. The patristic Platonic form of denying the divinity of Christ is ancient now, and accompanied with the denial of atonement and everlasting punishment. Thus in Bristol, a man teaches that in Christ God was manifest in the flesh, not He was God, etc. They hold that the Logos or wisdom, not word of God, dwelt abundantly in Christ, so that what God was was manifested in Him, that He was Lord and is now glorified. They hold forgiveness by love, not by expiation. There are various shades, from a subtle Platonism, such as Justin Martyr’s, almost allied to orthodoxy, down to Newman’s, who went on to the denial that Jesus was the Christ and of all revelation. He passed through this phase, if phase it can be called, where really all is denied. The Logos is not held to be a person: God’s wisdom in God was manifested in Jesus. Hence he speaks of God’s being the spirit and source of all wisdom and love. One is manifested in Christ, that is, the lovgo" (reason or wisdom) was, and the love or mercy announced in the mission of the Messiah, and therefore in the forgiveness of sins. This excludes

evidently expiation, and denies that Jesus was God in any personal sense.

As to begotten, not made, it is ambiguous: he may believe Christ to be Son as born into this world, or he may hold the Platonic notion, modified by Christian doctrines as Justin Martyr (if my memory does not deceive me, though elsewhere orthodox), that is, that the lovgo" was eternal in God as His wisdom or mind, but was begotten and produced into a distinct existence before and for the creation. His creed does not say which, and I cannot determine; but the real existence of the lovgo" as a very Person, uJpovstasi", who could be with God from all eternity, I am confident he does not hold. He believes in one God the Father and one Lord Jesus, using this to exclude Jesus from being Himself God (though man also), and making Him only the wisdom of God manifested in this man, begotten perhaps in a remarkable manner by the Holy Ghost. As to the Holy Ghost, I cannot tell what he holds. I suppose some vague idea of an emanation. Newman calls it, though an avowed infidel, God in the heart.

It is a speculative Platonic system, using Christianity to enlarge its system and incorporate its ideas; but there is no faith at all in the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ, none really whatever, nor in expiation. This kind of thing is emerging now a good deal…

Affectionately yours, much pressed for time.

December 13th, 1851.

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My dear Brother,—I doubt the John the Baptist half week; the cycle system is interesting, at least that part

which relates to the time of judgment not counting, but it seems to me the reasoning is entirely in a circle. This does not make me reject it, because if the moral proofs are adequate they are the strongest for a child of God; on that I am not prepared to pronounce. But it is externally proved by what it has to prove. I am printing, or ought to be, on Daniel (I left it in France) a critique on Gaussen—short, but destroying in toto all his alleged foundation. I do not feel a very great inclination to nourish myself with all the errors propagated on the subject of prophecy, nor to occupy general readers with them. To say that 1 Corinthians 15:28 explained in the ordinary way makes the first coming an exaltation of Christ and the second a humiliation, is nonsense. God humbled Himself in becoming man, but man was exalted to reign. The passages quoted as to paradidw'/ (“delivers up”) prove nothing at all; they all relate to teaching. Who in English would reason that because I delivered a lecture, it was evident that when I deliver a prisoner I keep him still! If a kingdom be delivered up by man to God, that God may be all in all, it is that the human holding of it should cease—its mediatorial character paradivdwmi signifies giving up to another. I admit the emphasis on the word God, because man has held the kingdom, but it is precisely what shews the force of the passage. He must reign till —and then He will give up the kingdom. Nothing can be more simple. It is not Christ who makes all things new, but God. Christ reigns, subdues all things, work that God the Father has entrusted to Him, all in this creation. Then comes all things new of the new creation, where justice does not reign but dwell.

Citing 2 Samuel 7:13 is confounding His reign as Son of David with the universal glory spoken of in the New Testament, which is a totally different thing. Daniel 2:44 is the worldly kingdom also; 7:14 also—peoples, nations, tongues, languages. Luke 1:33 is the kingdom over Jacob, the throne of David. 2 Timothy 4:1 proves nothing at all save that His appearing is the time of His kingdom. 2 Peter 3 proves the instability of created things against those who based their hopes on their stability, and laughed at the coming-of the Lord. None of these passages, nor any in the Old Testament, touch the universal headship of Christ spoken of in the New Testament, the eighth Psalm alone giving in its general language the connecting link. In another sense, Christ does reign for ever and ever, and so do the saints; but it is not the human kingdom in contrast with God's being all in all. "We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty," is the language of Rev. 11—the worldly kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ, that is, it is the power of God as contrasted with man, begun in His taking in hand judgment and rule in the world; and that power could never cease. The kingdom thus viewed is God's in contrast with man's evil, and that is for ever. In 1 Corinthians 15, which is as clear as possible, it is Christ as man having held it for purposes of subjection, who gives up this special kingdom which puts down other authority, to God that the power may be God's exclusively. As partaking of the divine glory we reign for ever and ever (Rev. 22), but it is not in war or in judgment given to man.

I will examine the subject of eternal priesthood according to Aaron, which though not finding entrance into my mind, I have not, perhaps, thoroughly examined.

My mind had gone on to fresh inquiry on the sufferings of Christ in applying the sufferings of Gethsemane more exclusively to the effort of Satan as the power of darkness, though using the cup Jesus had to drink, in the view of oppressing Him; and that this was closed before He left it, and thus Satan's power of death properly closed. On the cross it was the wrath of God, and out of that also Jesus emerged before giving up His Spirit to His Father. This, connected with what death is, and what life was, had occupied and interested me a good deal. All that relates to Him is blessed.

Affectionately yours.

[1851.]

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[From the French.

Beloved Brother,—For a long time I have intended writing to you, but have been constantly occupied (thank God), happily, in His work, but in such a manner as to leave me hardly a moment free. This immense city absorbs one's time in a way of which those who have not lived here can form no idea.

I have received your translations of the Epistles to the Romans and Hebrews, which now constrains me to write to you to acknowledge receipt of the same, and testify to you my Christian affection, and all the interest I feel in your labour, dear brother. I had hoped to come as far as to you, but God has fixed me here for the present. Nevertheless, I still hope to see you and comfort myself at this delay with the hope of being able to acquaint myself a little more with German, for the study of which I endeavour to find a few moments.

In every case it is where God would have us to be, that we find His precious blessing. Without Him we can do nothing. When He works in His grace, how happy one is to be the instrument of His power and goodness! The exercises of our hearts even, in the difficulties of the work, lead us to Him, and everything that does this is in blessing for us. Besides, one acquires that kind of knowledge of self, which strips us of self. Alas! why are we not dead to ourselves in the practical sense, in order that we may be nothing but pure instruments of His wisdom and grace! Still it is good for us to feel our nothingness and entire dependence upon Him. There is.always much to learn in this respect. But if we keep near Him—and it is there alone we feel what we are—He is faithful not to permit us to be tempted beyond our strength, so that we always can walk in safety in dependence upon Him. One is conscious of it. When we are weak, then we are strong. No doubt, later we shall see, how much of self, alas! there has been mixed up with our labour. At the same time we shall see that God has not permitted this weakness to lead us to a fall, nor to do harm in His church, provided we have not pretended to do more than He has given us to do. But it is of all importance that our inner life should be kept up to the height of our outward activity; else we are near some spiritual fault. Elijah was able to cause the four hundred prophets of Baal to be killed, and Jehovah to be recognised by the whole people. A few days after he flees through fright at the threats of Jezebel, and tells Jehovah that all was in vain notwithstanding his zeal; though God had still 7000 who had not bowed their knees before Baal. This happened to a man who went up to heaven without dying. What a lesson for such as we! May God in His infinite goodness keep us near Him.

My brother has kept me somewhat au courant as to your labour, and my soul is much interested in it. May God keep you very near to Himself, dear brother. This is the best prayer I can offer to our faithful God for you. Everything depends upon that—humility and everything else. One is never really humble but there, and at the same time one has the precious sense and consciousness that He is with us, and what strength this does give us! At the same time it keeps us from going astray, our natural character is kept in check, our will is kept down, and we enjoy the light without trusting in self. May God Himself keep us there. It is sweet to feel, dear brother, that without seeing each other, love binds us closely together because of our common life in Christ, and for His own sake by the Spirit. May God bless and keep you, dear brother.

Greet affectionately all our dear brethren, though I do not know them. It matters not. We are one, in Jesus. But my brother has mentioned to me some of their names. May God help them and lead them by His Spirit in all their ways. Peace be unto you. If I have to make any remarks as to your translations, I will write to you when I have examined them.

Your very affectionate.

I shall be very glad to hear from you. I still have some hope of seeing you in the summer. But all depends upon the will of our God. May the Lord Himself come! This would fulfil our highest desires.

London, [1851].

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Dearest——,—I have very happy news in general from the south of France, but nothing since the Revolution save that they were quiet. I should feel cordially disposed to join in any humiliation with brethren, and feel it very desirable. I think Wigram dreaded a little the appearance of a distinct formal body. If this meant not owning all saints as one, I should indeed object to it as ruinous and sectarian; but that brethren so called, as such, should publicly (as far as that is used in a christian sense) take the place of humiliation, I should feel most desirable; I wait only the Lord's time for its accomplishment. I quite take this ground myself before God, and before all those who walk wrong, other Christians and all. I trust God is working, in His grace, very fruitfully in the hearts of His saints: may He keep us humble, and near Him, so that we may not yet more need humiliation.

I apprehend as to the passages, that Hebrews 6, they were called to learn, that is, go on from what had been learnt in a puerile way of truth and Christ, and go on to what the Holy Ghost had brought out of the powers of the world to come. If they had left this latter, it was no good to go back to lay the old foundation again: if they had it, they ought to go on to something else, so that it was no good his speaking of the old part. All short of the Holy Ghost's revelation of a glorious Christ would connect itself with the beginning of Christ, I apprehend. Paul was bringing Hebrews out, just before the destruction of Jerusalem, of what linked them with what was ready to vanish away—outside the camp—into that which he had founded as the church in connection with Christ glorified: only this, for this reason, somewhat

transitional, the church is not itself developed, only the power of the new thing.

Covenant is an obligation to another which does not enter into the idea of being my own body, or my own child; but then those who form this body, or are these children, are subjects of what in substance was a covenant, though I do not know that it is called so, for the word covenant is rather what God has condescended to assure man's heart by; but when Christ says, "Lo, I come to do thy will," He undertakes something, and the Father having given Him power over all flesh to give eternal life to those whom He has given to Him, He accomplishes all, so as to present them according to the thoughts of the Father's love perfect to Him. All this ordering of wondrous divine counsels, Christ having undertaken all needed, and obtained by redemption, and given, as the Father has sent, the Holy Ghost to accomplish the rest in us, being, so to speak, undertaken by parties, if one may reverently so speak, has been called a covenant; and I apprehend the apostle speaks so alludingly when he says, "through the blood of the everlasting covenant." But in general, save as an allusion, covenant is an inferior idea to this taking up their own place in this glorious counsel of God by the Persons in the Trinity. I doubt that scripture would speak of their covenanting among themselves, as if they had had to bind or assure one another. It is called for us an everlasting covenant, but this, though it embraces all this really, is rather the idea of God assuring man by its being an immutable, unchanging thing, secured to man by Christ's blood: not the Persons binding themselves among themselves. However, this is a matter of words, and those who use the expression; though they lower

the notions of divine things. It is well to be true to these, because one is here to God's glory, and no stumbling-block is put in the way of others; but those who use these ways of speaking are so in purpose of heart, and substantively; so that one may be at ease with them.

I should not answer very dogmatically as to Genesis 4:7. Those who take the sense of sin-offering argue on that on account of which you argue against it, the word being applied to the lying down of an animal, the victim is there before you at your door. "If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted?—and unto thee shall be his (Abel's) desire, and thou shalt rule over him." Then there is the parenthesis, "If thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door." Now I do not doubt that this speaks of the culpability of Cain; the only question is, if it does not present this culpability, as God has presented it to us, that is in Christ as the sin-offering. Other translations take the whole thing in another sense; I apprehend that the primary sense is, sin is there before you; you meet it in going forth; it lies at your door. He could not escape finding it attached to him: only God has laid it before us in the sin-offering in Christ. I do not doubt the English is right, and in general the other translations wrong. I believe these were all the passages you asked me about; so I close, dear——

Affectionately yours.

[January 14th, 1852.]

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[From the French.

Beloved Brother,—I have examined a little the passage in 2 Thessalonians 2. I do not think one could translate

ejk mevsou gevnmtai ‘rises out of the midst.’ Tivnomai means to be or to become; thus ejk tivno", a man who exists from another order than himself; but a man who comes out of the midst is, as to the sense, taken away from the midst. The only fault in this translation is that it expresses the thought that there is someone who takes away, which is not said. There is a passage quoted in our dictionaries—perhaps it is in Pape—of Plutarch’s, which has these words. The lexicographer quotes it as proof of the ordinary sense attributed to these words. He is no longer present. The English translation gives “he who letteth will let.” There is no need however of the addition. “Only there is now he that withholdeth until he be taken out of the way:” this is, I doubt not, the true translation, movnon oJ katevcwn a[rti e{w", etc.

God be praised that the brethren are walking in peace. I am at a good meeting of prayer and humiliation, which I believe will produce much good. God certainly helps us at this moment. He makes us go back over the effects of former negligence, but He brings us out of it. Conversions also are not wanting, and souls are added at least in London, and in other places. I believe the sense of His goodness spreads in hearts and encourages the brethren… The Lord reveals Himself more and more —this is what is clear, and places His children on a simple ground— only they must break with the world to walk there. But souls are exercised.

Exeter, March 20th, 1852.

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To the same.]

[From the French.

Beloved Brother,—Now for your reasoning on 2 Thessalonians 2:7. I see we have the same thought as to the truth, so that I am not very anxious on the subject of the Greek. I suppose that you think that from the midst of the mystery the wicked one will arise, who will embody iniquity, so to speak, in his person—the Antichrist who will be destroyed. I believe it; only if I have rightly understood you think that the beast will exist no longer. But it seems to me that whether it be Daniel or the Apocalypse, they require that the beast shall be there until the judgment that will destroy it. The question remains, whether Antichrist is the beast embodied in its last head, as France in Napoleon (the 1st emperor); or if he is the false prophet who accompanies him.

Now as to the translation; the usage of the language is the way to understand it. Now ejk mevsou is an expression which hardly leaves room for discussion with regard to a particular interpretation. A thing is ejn mevsw/ when it is placed before every one, as a prize for which they strive; for example, in a word, when a thing is there before (the object, or able to be the object of) the thoughts and pre-occupation of those who are there. Thus the adulterous woman, when all her accusers were gone away, was ejn mevsw/, still there. On the other hand, ejk mevsou gevnesqai, or eijnai, is an ordinary well-known phrase for being no longer there. It is not a question of being in the midst or from the midst of something; but in such a way as to be the object of the feelings and thoughts of the spectators. Take Pape if you have it: he will certainly give you proofs of it. I furnish you three from Wetstein, as you may not have access to it. nu'n ejk tou' mevsou hJmi'n ejsesqev. (Herod. VIII.

22.) mikroVn hJ teqnmvka hJ pantaV ejk mevsou, I have Anton. VIII. 12. e[gnw zh'n kaq* eJautoVn ejk mevsou genovmeno". (Plut. Timol., p. 238, 3.)

I believe that the aim of the apostle is not to designate him who hinders, but that there will be something that hinders, and that consequently the wicked one will not be revealed until that shall be gone— movnon oJ katevcwn a[rti e{w", etc. The wicked one would have been revealed before his time by the movement of the principles and will of man, if there had not been something which arrested, bridled. The exterior form may vary, I believe it has varied. God now restrains it until the moment known to Him arrives. Then it is ejk mevsou, and the wicked one is manifested.

Be assured, beloved brother, of the sincere affection of your brother in Jesus.

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To the same.]

[From the French.

Beloved Brother,—I hope that all occasion for uneasiness as to the representations made to the government may by this time have disappeared. In every case we have only to present them to Him who directs everything, and holds His high hand even over the counsels of the princes and principal men of the earth. It is a comfort to know that He makes all things work together for the very best for those who love Him.

As to the brother who has left you rather than give up the editorship of his paper, you must not be astonished about it. Alas! these things occur but too often. They have happened to the Lord Himself before they happen

to us. But this serves to keep the church and the heart in lowliness, a thing very important for us. We have need to remember that the world and the church—at least, if the latter be faithful—do not accord, and we shall cleave to the one and despise the other, or we shall hate the one and love the other. It is sad if it is Jesus that is forsaken, or even His words. One may forsake the faithful without absolutely forsaking Jesus. I do not believe that all those of whom Paul complains had forsaken Jesus. But they lacked the courage necessary for walking with Paul.

We must pray for that brother, and for all those whom the world still retains as captives in its chains of vanity. As to the contempt which this tends to bring upon us, this is just our true place. It was there that the Lord our Leader was to be found. He was the despised and rejected of men. It is good to be in His place; it is to be in His school. It is easy to leave the world. It is when the world leaves us that the heart is put to the test. As for the reproach which you may bear, my heart desires to bear it with you all, dear brother…

Thanks be to God, the work here, on the whole, goes on in peace, and with some blessing. There is nothing striking, but God gives us new souls, and the brethren enjoy the sweetness of mutual affection. In London it is not like in smaller towns and villages. In an immense town of two and a half millions of inhabitants, we scarcely see one another, and brotherly relations are more difficult to maintain; but here also God is sufficient, and certainly works in the midst of brethren, not in London only, but elsewhere.

I rejoice much, dear brother, at the doors which He opens for you. The work is our common work in the

Lord. In the South of France He has manifested His good hand, and the work proceeds with blessing. We have had some of our brethren in prison, but this has rather turned to a testimony. Take heed to testings and exercises of heart whilst pursuing the work. Our dear Master has had them. If only we look steadily at Him, all this ripens us for His presence, and He recognises it as a service rendered to Him. We are more than conquerors through Him who has loved us. Greet the brethren affectionately (though I do not know them personally); they are all my beloved ones in the name of the Lord.

Your most affectionate brother.

London, March 31st, 1852.

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To the same.]

[From the French.

Beloved Brother,—I have not been able since my last letter to continue the examination of your translations with the care required to do it properly, but I have only put it off just for the present. I was obliged to answer an attack directed against the views of the brethren in a pamphlet printed at Geneva, and to occupy myself with other writing, which was pressing and had accumulated because of the local work and the general work for this country…

As to the Baptist sect, I see, beloved brother, that God has guided you in your views and actions. This question has caused agitation (by means of some one who has laboured at it) in a department in France where the work of brethren has been blessed. But by being firm,

and leaving to every one full liberty of conscience, it has passed away, and God has granted full peace to the brethren, and the storm has passed by without doing harm. I do not wonder at people being in doubt in the state of confusion in which the church is, so that I have no difficulty in respecting the consciences of brethren who believe that they ought to be baptised. If their conscience tells them that they have not been baptised, they do well to get baptised, if they do it peaceably. I say peaceably, because it is no longer the confession of Christianity, but an act which seeks to repair a fault of negligence. But if one makes it a sect, it is a very great evil: baptism becomes the centre of union instead of Christ.

Baptism in order to receive the Holy Ghost is a miserable falsehood, for they receive Him no more than others do, but, on the contrary, are deceived by the enemy. I have seen this in South Germany and England and elsewhere. It is nothing but a miserable fallacy; facts are there to prove it. If people say they have received Him by this means the proofs are there to shew what it is worth. Now the Holy Spirit has never been received by the baptism of water. Samaria and Cornelius prove this. Finally the 120 had received Him without having been baptised. I do not deny that in general people were baptised before receiving Him, and that this was the rule because baptism was the public confession of Christianity. I am perfectly certain that the reasonings of the Baptists are false in principle and denaturalise Christianity. But if a brother felt [thus] in his conscience, I would leave him the most perfect liberty in this respect. Let him be fully persuaded in his heart. By so acting, avoiding a sectarian spirit, leaving

the conscience entirely free, and seeking unity in Christ, and asking of God the peace whereto we are called, you will be kept, I hope, and will get without loss over a trying moment. I will write to you more at length, beloved brother, what I think on the baptism of infants, but I care much more for the peace of the church than for any opinion about that. I have never tried to persuade anybody. I believe that every one must act according to his own conscience.

I believe that the children of believers are relatively holy, and that this passage (1 Cor. 7:14) has precisely that bearing, but I respect the ordinance, and those who think they have not been partakers of it do well to be baptised. I deny entirely that this is a matter of obedience, and those who treat it so, upset, without being aware of it, Christianity in its very first principles.

God be with you, dear brother, and with all our beloved brethren, and help you to get over this, to you, trying moment, and keep you from a bad sectarian spirit and from false and proud pretensions, which I consider to be something very different from respect for scruples of conscience. The doctrine of the remission of sins and receiving the gift of the Holy Ghost by baptism comes, I doubt not, from the enemy.

As to the conscience, I would leave it perfectly free on that point.

When they say that one cannot preach the gospel, that is nothing but nonsense, because God has blessed the gospel preached by all kinds of persons who hold the foundations of Christ without troubling themselves about the pretensions of ——, and others of the same kind.

I write in haste.

Your most affectionate brother.

London, April 28th, 1852.

Beloved Brother,—I stated at large in the meeting at. Bristol that I did not see anything wrong in the circular. I asked one who was there if he had known any principle of great evil working anywhere, would he have done wrong to warn brethren of it? The last phrase in the circular was the effect simply of the feeling that I ought to be open as to my own path and feeling with brethren, that if they did not wish this of course I need not repeat it. But I withdrew the letter as being alleged to be a stumbling-block in others' way, just on the grounds you have done. It had another effect in my case: as I had left (as I may say) every one when I left Ebrington Street, my circular, the meetings being clear of Newtonism, became a recognition on my part of the old meetings in a measure, and implied connection with them. The withdrawal of it placed me again personally out of all connection (formally) with any; but I said I trusted I should be only the closer knit to those who really walked with God in the best faithfulness they could. Bethesda would stand on its own merits without 'What have you written, and what have you said?' So that I feel my position clearer and more solid as to it.

Affectionately yours, dear brother. July 26th, 1852.

[From the French.

Beloved Brother,— … We are happy, that we have nothing to do here on earth but to serve our precious Saviour. When I think of His granting us such grace, and that we already possess the life of which we shall live

eternally with Him, my joy, however quiet in feeling my own littleness, is boundless at the grace that manifests itself towards me, and at the sight of the love of Jesus. Soon shall we see Him. May He deign meanwhile to keep us near to Himself, and may we walk in simplicity with largeness of heart and faithful conduct, until we see Him as He is, and be for ever with Him.

I now leave you for a moment, dear brother. Strengthen yourself in the Lord, and may His peace so sustain you, that you may be able to walk in peace. In spite of everything, Christ watches over us and over His church. This is our comfort and safeguard, whatever may betide.

Peace be with you.

Your very affectionate brother.

Paris, August 17th, 1852.

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To the same.]

[From the French.

Dear Brother,—I was very happy to receive your letter and those of our brethren. The account B——gives us of your position at——and in its neighbourhood has greatly interested the brethren at our conference. They were just discussing the question of how it could be managed to have more frequent intercommunion between the labouring brethren, and also to knit more closely the links of brotherhood among the labourers, whilst leaving each one to full individual liberty and to the guidance of the Spirit of God in his work. At the beginning this was less difficult. The field was smaller, and they saw one another oftener, the whole of the work was more easily surveyed, and all was done more in fellowship. Now that

the field has greatly widened and increased on more sides than one, sometimes a labourer and a flock find themselves rather isolated, seeing nobody else for a year or two. The brethren who travel in the work are, up to a certain point, a medium of fellowship; yet there is room for improvement in this respect. Your letters came just in time to make us feel how much these communications interested hearts in the labours and services of a brother. In the main this was what took place everywhere more or less, and it was felt one self-same work of the Holy Spirit which unites us in the ways of the love of our God. I hope to see you at the end of the summer…

Your very affectionate.

1853.

Dearest——,—I trust you will have found blessing at the meeting; I have no doubt the Lord's hand was most abundantly in it. Of course it can be only so far as our hearts really humble themselves, each one for his own evil, before God, that we shall find real and permanent blessing. At the meeting at Bristol, I declared that I had withdrawn my original circular as to Bethesda. This took a stumbling-block out of the way of others, and left the ground entirely on its own merits, putting me entirely out of the question. I was questioned on it and cross-questioned: I only resumed all my liberty, that is, position of duty to Christ for my future path; so that Bethesda stands on its own merits, and the discussion on it and its relationship with brethren I am totally free from, as that is the only act I ever had to say to. This I felt its effect, I withdrew it as taking away a difficulty from others, only taking care I should be bound to

nothing as to my course by it. It was asked; I have acceded. I did not see any great sense (feeling, I did) in asking the withdrawal of it; but if it met that feeling I was content, provided I was free to do what was right unconditionally in whatever I have to do; that is, that it was understood I preserved this liberty intact.

Now as to the millennium, Mr. Browne's reasonings are null, because at the beginning, the Fathers did expect the Lord as a present thing; during the 1260 years they thought very little about it, and at the end it did not hinder the present expectation.

As regards the word "hour" (John 5:25, 28), I know of no one who has spoken of an unbroken resurrection hour. @Wra has nothing to do with the continuity of other facts which may occur in it, but of the unity of the epoch, so as to make one time or season of it. Thus it is used for a year because it is one epoch; yet spring, summer, and winter, seed-time and harvest, very opposite and not continuous facts, are found within it. The hour is not the hour of resurrection, but resurrection takes place in it. This indeed is evident upon the face of the passage. If the hour derive its character from the resurrection, the whole argument is certainly unfounded; for there are two resurrections distinct in character, and no continuity derived from them. If it does not derive its character from the resurrection, then the fact of having two resurrections in it, a thousand years apart, does not destroy its continuity. Two periods were in the first "hour" (ver. 25) characterised by Christ's presence and Christ's absence: the w{ra derives its unity, not its continuity, from something else. There was an epoch when souls should rise at the voice of the Son, another (ver. 28) when

bodies should. What gave unity to that epoch is another question; of the answer to it I have little doubt —the presence of the Lord in glory, and the kingdom in that power in which He rose from the dead. They were not to marvel if He quickened souls, for, at another epoch, He would be in such manifestation of power that He would raise the dead.

I know nothing of a voice in 1 Corinthians 15:51. There is a trump (but the wicked hava clearly no part in the statements here); there is the archangel's voice in 1 Thessalonians 4:16: so that I do not exactly know what is meant about a voice, twice citing these passages. But a common resurrection is totally unscriptural, and the argument goes much further than the millennium. All scripture shews a distinct act of resurrection, if there be only a minute between; them that are Christ's are not confounded with the others, whatever the interval. There is nothing whatever said of a trumpet sound with the wicked; they are carefully excluded in the two passages where the trumpet is spoken of.

The argument as to 2 Peter 3 has, with equal confidence, been used for burning the earth at the beginning of the millennium. But I do not admit the day of the Lord to be a day, but a period; in that period, were it a million years, the heavens will pass away. In the passage itself twice the apostle declares to us its importance with God. I do not see anything very new or very wise in this settlement of the matter—very reasonable to put it out as his way of thinking; but the mass of testimony, of direct instruction which it controverts, makes the nice casuistry it is founded upon of no comparative weight. But it is all very well it should be discussed.

Affectionately yours.

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To the same.]

Dear Brother,—I forgot to notice 1 Thessalonians 4. Sir E. Denny raised the question on some statement of Trotter's, and was even anxious about it, which I was not. All were agreed as to doctrine. I have long hesitated over the passage, having thought of bringing the souls back, bringing them up from the dead, and their coming with Christ with the rest when He appears. You will remark that it is God brings with Him, not Christ; this had rather long ago made me hesitate if it was not God raising them as Christ (the sun would be as suzhvsomen): they will be brought from the dead as much as, and as Jesus. However, on the whole, I am disposed to think it is "bring with Him" when He comes and appears, the result of their resurrection. They will not be absent, or lose their place in the glorious appearing, no more than Jesus did by dying; they will rise first even. God's bringing them with Him is not out of the order of the apostle's thought; "which in his times he shall shew who is the blessed and only Potentate;" God shews the appearing of Jesus; so He brings the others and shews them with Him. But I am not prepared to dogmatise on it, nor to say as teaching, that is God's mind in the passage, at which Sir B. is astonished.

I have got on beautifully as far as this, but am rather obliged to travel like a gentleman.

Affectionately yours.

Paris, February 28th, 1853.

[From the French.

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Beloved Brother,—I was very glad to receive your letter, which has followed me here.

It is needful for us that we should pass through the sorrows as well as the joys of the work of the Lord, happy if our sorrows are His and His joys ours. The nearer we are to Him, and the more we thus reproduce the faithful image of what He is, the more we shall encounter the opposition of the world when it awakes; and still more shall we experience the want of sympathy from Christians who will not walk in His footsteps; and they will even oppose us, forming as they do for themselves a system on principles that are less according to God. What trouble St. Paul had because he insisted on maintaining the gospel at the height of the grace which had been revealed to him! We shall not escape it. But if we suffer with Jesus, we shall reign with Him. In short, your account has given me joy. For the testimony, it needs decided, morally decided persons, persons who for the, love of Christ have broken with the world. One such is worth more than a thousand laggards; I am speaking of the testimony.

The question of baptism has tried the brethren here also, but by having patience it has calmed down. They have had themselves baptised without opposition, and the walk of those who insisted much on it has not commended itself very much to the consciences of several. But one is quiet, and there has been no rupture nor trouble…

Peace be with you, beloved brother. May the presence of God sustain you and gladden your heart in all your labours. Greet all the brethren affectionately from me. I

have a great desire to be able to speak German better in order to converse with them. I read a little in order not to forget what I know. I hope that your imprisonment, through the goodness of God, will pass off easily, as it did before. We have in France several brethren in prison, or fined for the gospel; it is little, but still it is suffering.

Your very affectionate.

Montpellier, March 13th, 1853.

Dearest ——, —It would have been a joy to me to have assisted at your meeting at Torquay; I am most glad the brethren meet together, and thus place themselves before God. God alone knows what He can do in breaking down barriers, and uniting in testimony those separated. But I fear, humanly speaking, the world has too strong a hold on those with whom I cannot walk, to hope, humanly speaking, much. It is not as a reproach to them I say this, for there ought to have been spirituality to prevent it, and grace to overcome it; so that before God I take every share of blame and humiliation; but I fear, sadly fear, it is the part which, in a measure, accepts the worldliness, which is broken off, save some dear souls, who are just the grief of heart to me and others, who may have innocently entered. I should always more earnestly urge taking up each individual case; but I apprehend the path of those who walk by faith is to pursue in peace their course, seeking all that God can give them of souls for Him in earnestness of zeal in these latter days.

The only remark I have to make as to the meeting is that I judge the study of scripture would be a most useful part of it; to take a book or chapters, as God may direct

you, and study it detailedly and diligently onward; this kind of meeting, or employment of time in great part at the meeting, I am persuaded would be of the greatest use, and place the hearts of brethren most usefully before the word. We have at this moment a meeting of this kind at Lausanne…

I shall hardly, I expect, be in England so soon as October 5-12; but my heart will be with the blessing of brethren.

Ever affectionately yours.

Lausanne, September 13th, 1853.

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To the same.]

Dearest ——,—I had overlooked Liverpool…. They resolved not to receive without examination, perhaps more; but P——who, with a great deal of the manners of grace (what is called charity, of which I have the greatest dread) and, I doubt not, a good deal of real grace, which I trust I appreciate —like all Irishmen whom grace has not total mastery of (I forgot you were one!) has an amazing confidence in himself; so that, though there is a healthful change, I believe I should look before I leapt; for who could tell where an Irishman would lead you? There is an inconceivable looseness about them: excellent in Ireland where all are so, it has a strange effect in England where men are not so, and in religious things has a peculiar danger of its own.

The connection of hJma" and aujtou" is not so difficult (Rev. 5:9, 10) because the elders were offering up the incense of the prayers of others in their vials and the aujtou" is extraordinarily far from hjgovrasa"; though Revelation Greek is unusual.

As regards Maurice, it is a mind dissatisfied with the stupidity and narrowness of dead orthodoxy and having no spiritual reins from God by the word and Spirit, that has run loose to make a God such as he would have—and the common course of middle-age heresies. Often real witnesses and sufferers for God and the truth, but not guarding themselves from the seductions of mental heresies—sometimes, no doubt, this last alone; and the persecuting church, which kept nominal truth (a thing the Fathers never did), was very glad to lump them all up together, charge them all with the worst things, and burn them, doing the devil's work with both hands earnestly in another way. They seldom escaped the superstition and paganism of the hierarchical iniquity and corruption, without the mind getting loose, and meddling with and spoiling the things of God. It is this that shews what a total ruin the church of God was and is. I have found a solemn and most affecting consideration— what love God must have had to His elect to carry them through it all, and bear with them, as He does indeed with as cold and lifeless ones in, perhaps, things more hateful to Him than these helpless wanderings of mind. Such is M.'s case, in a measure, but he has the misfortune to be the original mover in the mental wandering. Will is in it, and hence, I fear, unless God steps in, that it is one of the many ways in which the devil is let loose in these days to unsettle everything. Men cannot be satisfied with death; God Himself is rousing them; and Satan would seek to bring in an activity not subject to, and outside God's word, the only guide in such cases, not merely into truth, but hindering the will from being active, which, acting by the mind, just makes heresy, and (whatever the thoughts) cannot profit, because it makes God subject to it. I do not see

much grace in M.; he will have, not truth, but liberty to put God out his own way. He is not willing to suffer, nor suffer for the truth; he likes the Establishment; it is a comfortable place—so it is, no doubt —and he would seek to maintain a liberty in it which would leave free his will without its costing him anything. God may lead him into subjection, but I do not see it yet. In the present universal unsettling it is possible God may allow this one in addition, and not allow the dead barrier of orthodoxy and authority to settle and quiet the matter; sometimes for souls for His elect's sake, He does. If I can, I will look into it.

I have been a little occupied with heretics lately, Paulicians, Albigeois, Waldenses, Bohemian brethren, and the like. I find historians generally superficial somewhat; but it is a deeply sorrowful inquiry on one side, and yet exalting God's grace, as I have said, on the other. The ruin was utter as regards man—the Reformation a wonderful thing, but Luther's flesh terribly strong—a mixed thing, though the action of the Spirit of God astonishing—God's work. It is not Luther himself by himself proves it to me; he was merely one remarkable instrument in it. It is just its springing up here, there and all around that proved God was at work. As far as Luther is personally looked up to, it has made one of the most stupid, bigoted churches (as they call them) in existence, where if piety entered—gave birth to rationalism because of the dull bigotry of their orthodoxy; for the Pietists are the historical parents of rationalism, strange to say. What a world we live in! "I have seen an end of all perfection, but thy commandment is exceeding broad."

I trust God is thus working around now in England: His good hand is surely seen among brethren; there is a movement of His Spirit in many places. Humbled we must be, and then God can bless…

Ever your affectionate brother in Jesus.

1853.

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To the same.]

Dearest——,—There is no doubt, I believe, of the emigration of a large part at least of the north and west emigrating from the east. The Cushites, Goths, Scyths, are all the same name and people. The Druidical religion is undoubtedly Persian, and the Druids have been traced across the north of Germany to England. The north of India was one great settlement of this race. They were called there Indo-Scyths, and settled in High Thibet and the Himalayas. You are aware of Epiphanius's division of the progressive corruption of barbaric (quære Patriarchal) religion into Scythism and Ionism, as some say original Buddhism and Brahminism in India, and Parseeism (Sabaism) and Hellenistic, Egyptian, Babylonian idolatry in the west. How old are the divisions of man, how little his history! Still Druidism partook too much of the elements of original Grecian or Babylonian idolatry to make this quite clear…

I apprehend as to seething a kid in its mother's milk, that one of the characters of idolatry, of Satan's power, is to destroy the order, affections and comeliness which God has established in nature. Christianity raises above it, but respects it all. He degrades in every way by what is unnatural. The way this was done in idolatry is

remarkable, and diligently and horribly. This was an example as to tender and kindly affections. If you are at all acquainted with the horrors of idolatry—a profitless learning, I am sure, morally—or even remarking what scripture refers to briefly, but perfectly, you cannot but see how true this is. All this the law forbade.

As to 2 Peter 3:10, 12, I apprehend it means but the materials of which the crust of the globe is composed. It will be melted down by fire (as it was, once inundated by waters) to form a new earth, atmospheric heaven, etc.

I had seen the Annotator, but did not feel much attracted by the company and olla podrida character it had, though writing in it crossed me. Quiet service I like better if I can.

In haste, ever affectionately yours.

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To the same.]

I am afraid I can help you but little with Zechariah. There is a difference in the characters of chapters 1 and 6. In chapter 6 we have not men, that is, we have merely the providential agents; in chapter 1 we have angels who stand before the Lord of all the earth, and overrule the working of these agents, though the agents are in view. The man among the myrtle trees, or angel, pleads for Jerusalem. I have thought that the red might be God’s judgment. Babylon had been this in the Lord’s hand on His people. Then the man upon the red horse was the one who on the Lord’s behalf had executed the judgments, and was now using Persia as His instrument of judging, and so favouring the Jewish people.

Abstractions alone meet symbols; the white are not Christ, the sun is not Christ. White are victorious triumph, and so a white horse; it is Christ triumphant, or His enemies, if they are on white horses. The sun is supreme power; when Christ takes it He is supreme power: so with the red or any other. If Babylon was judgment it would be of such a colour; if Persia, that also. But I do not pretend to give the sense as an "oracle of God."

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To the same.]

Dearest ——,—As regards Mr. Aitkin's letter, I think it the most arrant stuff I ever came across, but falling in with the current of the principles by which Satan is generally working now—very proper and likely to deceive rich or poor, putting conscience to sleep, and settling in the apostate form of self-righteousness; namely, the "voluntary humility" connection with ordinances. I have no doubt from some parts of it there is a direct power of Satan in it, the points of conformity to Irvingism and Popery leave no doubt at all on my mind. I stated long ago my fears to ——. This paper leaves me no doubt upon it.48 It does not follow that no Christians may not get into it, to their almost [certain] ruin but for Christ; as there did into Irvingism, and I dare say, and indeed know, there are into Puseyism. But it is entirely to be treated as Satan's work, whatever Christians may get into or work in it, as there are in popery itself. But it is to be treated as directly Satan, and it will have no force. I have been looking over Archdeacon Wilberforce's book, and noticing the main point of it. The letter falls in with a mass of previously

prepared habits of error in the mass of minds, and some fresh truth which gives a gloss of new knowledge calculated to take among the ignorant, to whom it is wondrous, so as to have an attractive and subtle character in this respect; but I denounce it as directly and positively Satan in se. I keep the letter to have a copy, but, as I do not know to whom it is addressed, shall not use it beyond myself without knowing to whom, and with their permission. I keep it for my own reference, which, as shewn to me, I feel free to do, not to mis-state or mis-conceive anything in it.

As to the day and star (2 Pet. 1:19); there are two ideas, but not two subjects. In the night as to the government of this world, prophecy, which tells of God's judgments, gives light as to it, and helps the soul till it has a better, the dawning of a day on the soul in spiritual understanding as soon coming, for He is ready to judge being exalted; which, being accomplishment, does not need prophecy, and which presents the Person of a Christ already come and known, with whom we have to do before the coming in of the day which will close prophecy in accomplishment. Both are the intermediate state consequent on the position taken by Christ between prophecy and the day; but Christ is the personal object in the Morning star.

I am weak and little able for work, but I have begun meetings again, but not much to visit.…

Ever affectionately yours in the Lord.

P.S.—I remember before I left the Establishment meeting a tract saying there were no priests under the New Testament, and Robert Daly and another putting in

‘sacrificing’ priests. Though great evangelicals, they are tied up by their system.

July 25th, 1854.

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My dear Brother,—I know the love of the brethren will be glad to hear of me, and that they will rejoice to hear something of the work.… The Lord has been most gracious to me; even the weather has favoured my work. I was at Haarlem and Amsterdam, besides breaking bread at Ostend with a Dutch family. The Lord so ordered it that a brother I well knew who was the means of their conversion, was on a visit to them, and I thus came to know them. The wife and her sister true and decided, the husband, a personal friend of the king, much less so, though very decidedly converted. Thence I went through Rotterdam to Haarlem, where I was able to hold a good deal of intercourse with those who speak French. I knew a brother there also, with his wife, having stood alone for the Lord’s sake. I felt the Lord with me. We broke bread there again on Sunday; there also I made acquaintance with another Dutch family, converted and safe as to their path through the means of brethren at J. I held a meeting in the room of a brother with whom some meet, rather in a disputing way, but amongst whom several are getting clear, and again in a fuller room where many came. I made also a good many visits and felt the Lord very much with me. The brethren I first mentioned accompanied me and stayed some days to make more. The door seems decidedly open in Holland, chiefly among the upper classes on account of the language… I can already use the Bible pretty readily in Dutch, but that is not speaking. I then left for

Germany. The first ten days the labouring brethren met together to study Scripture. We read John's Gospel, 1 John, Galatians, Matthew and a part of Luke, with very much of the Lord's presence, and I trust profit to all. Matthew and Luke were only a synopsis, but I never had Matthew so clear. On the Monday after I set off to the hills to visit one of the working districts, the first time. They were not in a happy state. They do not break bread there yet. The clergy are rationalists, but there is little life and union in those who meet to seek better edification; however, we had a meeting and I said some things in German. Then to a very dear brother's, chief smith in a manufactory, where I held a meeting and slept. Before the meeting I dictated an article on Romans 4-8, for the brethren's publication—also a compendium. Thence, three hours' walk to a village in the hills where we finished the paper and translated some of Romans, and had a meeting in the evening. The next day to a very wild village in the hills three hours further across the waste, mostly new, where we had a meeting and conversed on Scripture. The next day six hours' walk further up the hills to a brother engaged in the work, who has been greatly blessed there. I stayed there Friday evening, Saturday and the Lord's day, and it was pretty much a meeting, save Saturday evening, all the time. We read most of Ephesians through. They came from five hours round and more, so that we were many on Sunday and had a very happy day—not merely the joy that accompanies such a meeting with a little excitement, but I really believe the Lord's presence and blessing; we broke bread in the afternoon. Many could not get there. In the evening, I spoke on the Lord's coming. I cannot expatiate in German, but I can set forth the truth, and they understand me very well now. At 12

at night I got with a lantern through the wood and took the coach back. You may suppose it was not Hornsey Place or Tollington Park. In these villages no question of meat in four out of six places, but rye bread and vegetables and a slice of bacon. One night I slept on chairs, another on straw.

I made through mercy six hours' walk the next day, and held the meeting without being tired; but the beloved people give me their best with all their heart. In the last two places they were very hearty in the Lord. We had a sort of meeting on the way from the last named place but one. The evening before they thought it wiser not, so we held it where I mentioned on account of the police, and we visited them on the way. I thought to have gone further, but we deferred in the hope of getting through a version of the New Testament which is grievously wanted here—a serious undertaking—but I have been long exercised in it in English and French, so that it is easier for me of course. I have a native German for the actual form of the phrases, and I have a Dutch (which is the best I know), English (which rivals it), and pure German translations to refer to, with my two critical Greek Testaments. We have done Romans and now there is a moment's hindrance, but I trust the Lord to remove it, and I feel assured that I shall get through this work also. My journey up the hills was very happy and, thank God, on Scriptural subjects I can make myself very well understood in German. I have been of course at the meetings, but I only knew the principal brothers much, for usually they are occupied much at their manufactures, and at the study with the workmen; and having only an imperfect knowledge of the language, it is helpful to myself, I find, to get out into the villages

and be with the saints, where from their position it is as a stream in a thirsty land. The blessing is very real and continues; trials and proofs of the flesh accompany it. You will suppose I would draw no false pictures. In many towns I have spoken of there is trial from coldness and failure; nevertheless there have been a good many conversions, and the working of God's Spirit is large and undoubted, and most of those I saw are rejoicing in the conscious acceptance of it. Many of these poor peasants are as advanced in substantial knowledge as the brethren in London are, and in many the life of the Spirit is very sensible. The Lord bless you, beloved brother, and all the beloved brethren in London. My heart desires their blessing and their growing up into Christ in everything. Peace be with you all.

Affectionately yours.

Elberfeld, September, 1854.

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My dear Brother,—I am delighted that the beloved brethren in——interest themselves in the work of the Lord and beg you to salute them affectionately for me. I rejoice that they should pray for the Lord's work, for me, and for all saints that they may be fully blessed and glorify the Lord; but I am a bad hand at giving an account of the work, and I have an instinctive dread of publishing the work. Man gets in so easily and God's glory is hidden proportionately. However, I will do what I can, for with their interest in heart, my heart goes along thankfully and heartily.

I have been myself mixed up with the work on the Continent only since the end of 1837, and since then the Lord has certainly granted a large and rich blessing, at

least in proportion to our poor faith and efforts, and has raised up many dear labourers in His vineyard, though their number be, as the Lord has warned us, still so small. But His ways are perfect. It began in Switzerland. I preached and taught what I knew. And the full and holy liberty of the gospel, the assurance of salvation in contrast with the law, the standing and privileges of the church, and the coming of the Lord Jesus to receive her to Himself, together with the dwelling of the Holy Ghost in the church and in each member here below, were spread abroad and received by many. Gradually assemblies were formed by the truth; subsequently some young men who desired to work for the Lord wished to read the scriptures with me. I feared a little giving up my own work but would not refuse them, and for a year at one time and a good part of one at a subsequent period, I had ten or twelve, not always the same, with me, and we studied the word together. Most of them are now engaged in the work. They gradually got into work as the Lord called them. Others, already long labourers in the field, got clearer light and worked with it so that many conversions took place, and gatherings were formed by the working of God's Spirit. This took place chiefly in three cantons, Geneva, Vaud and Neuchatel, the whole extent of the three not being very great. Still many hundreds were gathered and through grace persevere. Perhaps small and great there are fifty gatherings in all, of which the largest may be about 200, another 170 or 180, one or two of 100, and so on to very small ones. The most of the work took place in the course of a few years, but then in some districts there was a decline of energy, in some places very sensibly; and there were no circulating active labourers, though the gatherings persevered.

The Lord had much blessed the word in the mountain valleys; there had been about 70 or 80 converted in three or four months. Latterly, thank God, the Lord has revived His work, and for three or four years back there has been pretty constant progress and conversions in Neuchatel and latterly a very considerable blessing to the canton of Vaud, partly on new ground, partly on the old. In general the accounts are happy. The Lord sent them back one or more active servants of His grace and labourers in His field. Some of them, young men, went to France, some of them having come indeed thence, and one or two others who had received the truth clearly and given up everything to serve the Lord. A brother whom God raised up in France and who devoted himself to the work, but preached the law, had through his devotedness opened the way in a very wide country though he was not clear. God had used him independently of the work in Switzerland. He fell sick and one of our brethren went to help, three of them who had broken bread with me being of that country. In some four years 300 or 400 received the truth there. God raised up some labourers also, one of whom has worked in Switzerland. Also one of our Swiss brethren went further on into the mountains; there are I suppose, in all there, some 700 at least or more who were converted. The blessing was remarkable these four or five springs in succession. They had leisure then. There was no preaching without a conversion.

Last year there was a good deal of blessing in a part of the field. The work under God’s hand went further south, where another French brother also who had received the truth went down to work. In general all was dark and opposed with the exception of three towns and

one village. I joined in the work at this time. There many meetings have been formed, some of them numerous. Last year in one station which had seemed motionless, first some sixty in a short space and then, after a smart persecution and fines and imprisonments, some forty more were converted, and in the east the Lord worked simultaneously, and some 300 came together in three or four villages. One of these has been dreadfully decimated by the cholera last year, but the brethren continue and even with more seriousness since. Quite at the other side of France (Casta Tarbes and Orthez) a Christian but lately deceased, who had laboured there before, returned and worked there. It is directly at the foot of the Pyrenees close to Spain. There also there were conversions and some 200 meet in five meetings; lately the Lord has been working sensibly afresh there, more truth; thence also in Lot et Garonne, the Lord has gathered a good many, and also on the Tey. Lately He has been at work also along the Rhone in the Departments (counties) of Upper and Lower Rhone. This is a work only beginning, where a French brother once a clergyman has been and is active. The first work I spoke of in France was west of the Rhone. It then extended east of the Rhone, and there a good many meetings were gathered and many conversions, in one part almost entirely Roman Catholics. There the brethren have been fined and imprisoned, but it did not hinder the work. In Marseilles and near to the foot of the Alps in the Isere, the Lord also has blessed the word and gathered souls; so in the Department Herault and Auvergne, the Lozere, though the gatherings are not so numerous in these, but in some lately the Lord has been working sensibly.

Lately, these two last years, the Lord has been working in Germany. Some years back the truth was brought into the neighbourhood and tracts of brethren setting it forth were pretty widely distributed. There were conversions and the truth spread and some gatherings were formed. But some two years ago in the town I am in, where there were many Christians connected with the Establishment, a new work went forth. They had learned that they were not under the law but under grace. There was a society employed readers and preachers. The clerical part of the society sought to hinder the liberty of their service and their preaching. Those whom God had called and who had learned what God's liberty is, could not give up their service, and they came out and laboured trusting to the Lord. These have been largely blessed over a pretty wide extent of country from the borders of Holland to Hesse and Nassau, perhaps some sixty or eighty miles; as has the first work I spoke of near the Rhine. I cannot say how many there are, but a good many hundreds of which the greater number far have been converted within these two years. The conversions, thank God, continue. In Hesse they are a good deal persecuted in every way. Lately the secretary of the local tribunal was converted. He was ordered out of the country in eight days; but the Lord blesses the work much. They have been persecuted around the country, but at present are quiet. The king personally favours the saints and religious liberty. He has received most, if not all the tracts and sent to thank me for them. He sent to see a brother who was in Berlin, but he was gone; perhaps the Lord so ordered it for good. There are here some seven or eight, more or less entirely devoted to the work, and others who labour in their neighbourhood.

It has extended into the province of Guelderland in the kingdom of Holland; the numbers are not great there, but they are getting on very happily. My own work in Holland was not much, but I was very happy there and felt the doors were open. I knew a brother who was travelling with his wife for her health—was brought to see clearly and remained faithful and I went to visit him. Another was blessed through means of a French brother in Italy, and others came to see clearly through a brother in Geneva, in Switzerland. So does God prepare things when He is pleased to work. When I landed at Ostend, I could spend my Sunday with the 2nd family and we broke bread together. The brother, set clear in France, opened Haarlem to me and Amsterdam, so that I had intercourse with many and meetings there, and he was holding meetings at Leyden which are well attended. The third is in Amsterdam and I hear he as well as another also got clear (long a Christian) through the tracts and my visits; they are going on very steadily and well. They have broken bread together. I know not whether they do it regularly, as it was all new to them; but desires were awakened in many and they wish me to visit them again. I do not speak Dutch, so that I can only speak with those who know French or perhaps German; but that does not hinder the Lord. For those who receive in French communicate it to others in Dutch. But I was very happy in my short work there, and felt that the Lord had opened many and happy doors there.

At Frankfurt also they meet; and at Hamburg in Lippe and nearer Frankfurt, Khenbach Büdingen, there are outposts and centres of work for brethren. But the Lord has strengthened and blessed the gatherings in these

places, and through them and the visits of brethren the work has reached other villages also.

Such, beloved brethren, is in few words a brief general account of the work. I rejoice to give it to the brethren; but I must beg that nothing like publicity be given to it. It is for brethren, for their hearts and prayers, that they may bless God and pray for the brethren that they may glorify God, that He may bless the work and guide those gathered in holiness and devotedness and love. But it is to be between them and God, and not to talk of to men. Were this done I should expect some chastening and humbling. I have so often seen works hindered and spoiled when brethren, perhaps with the best intentions, have made a noise about them, that I dread much anything of the sort. God is pretty jealous of it. He is working on—man frail is full of weaknesses and shortcomings.

I am sure I have felt (in my small though widely-scattered path) all sorts of feebleness of faith; but God has worked wonderfully and His blessed truth has been widely spread by it even outside those gathered. I ask (not a mystery) but that it may be between God and the souls of the brethren. Greet them heartily. I long to see them and hope to do so if God will.

Ever, beloved brother, most affectionately in Christ.

Elberfeld, 1855.

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Dear Sib and Brother in Christ,49—Since I saw you, I have been continually on the move, so that it has been difficult for me to prepare the account which you desired to receive. It seems to me that the best way will

be for me simply to mention the various circumstances as they transpired, in as far as I was personally concerned, at the time when this work of God first commenced. You will easily understand that numbers of others have laboured in that field, and many with much more devoted-ness than I, and with a far more marked result as regards the blessing of souls. But my concern now is with the work of God, and not our labours; so that you may gather from the account what will suit your purpose.

I was a lawyer; but feeling that, if the Son of God gave Himself for me I owed myself entirely to Him, and that the so-called christian world was characterised by deep ingratitude towards Him, I longed for complete devotedness to the work of the Lord; my chief thought was to get round amongst the poor Catholics of Ireland. I was induced to be ordained. I did not feel drawn to take up a regular post, but, being young in the faith and not yet knowing deliverance, I was governed by the feeling of duty towards Christ, rather than by the consciousness that He had done all and that I was redeemed and saved; consequently it was easy to follow the advice of those who were more advanced than myself in the christian world.

As soon as I was ordained, I went amongst the poor Irish mountaineers, in a wild and uncultivated district, where I remained two years and three months, working as best I could. I felt, however, that the style of work was not in agreement with what I read in the Bible concerning the church and Christianity; nor did it correspond with the effects of the action of the Spirit of God. These considerations pressed upon me from a scriptural and practical point of view; while seeking assiduously to

fulfil the duties of the ministry confided to me, working day and night amongst the people, who were almost as wild as the mountains they inhabited. An accident happened which laid me aside for a time; my horse was frightened and had thrown me against a door-post. During my solitude, conflicting thoughts increased; but much exercise of soul had the effect of causing the scriptures to gain complete ascendancy over me. I had always owned them to be the word of God.

When I came to understand that I was united to Christ in heaven, and that, consequently, my place before God was represented by His own, I was forced to the conclusion that it was no longer a question with God of this wretched "I" which had wearied me during six or seven years, in presence of the requirements of the law. It then became clear to me that the church of God, as He considers it, was composed only of those who were so united to Christ, whereas Christendom, as seen externally, was really the world, and could not be considered as "the church," save as regards the responsibility attaching to the position which it professed to occupy—a very important thing in its place. At the same time, I saw that the Christian, having his place in Christ in heaven, has nothing to wait for save the coming of the Saviour, in order to be set, in fact, in the glory which is already his portion "in Christ."

The careful reading of the Acts afforded me a practical picture of the early church, which made me feel deeply the contrast with its actual present state, though still as ever, beloved by God. At that time I had to use crutches when moving about, so that I had no longer any opportunity for making known my convictions in public; moreover, as the state of my health did not allow me to

attend worship, I was compelled to remain away. It seemed to me that the good hand of God had thus come to my help, hiding my spiritual weakness under physical incapacity. In the meanwhile, there grew up in my heart the conviction that what Christianity had accomplished in the world in no way answered to the needs of a soul burdened with the sense of what God's holy governmental dealing was intended to effect. In my retreat, the 32nd chapter of Isaiah taught me clearly, on God's behalf, that there was still an economy to come, of His ordering; a state of things in no way established as yet. The consciousness of my union with Christ had given me the present heavenly portion of the glory, whereas this chapter clearly sets forth the corresponding earthly part. I was not able to put these things in their respective places or arrange them in order, as I can now; but the truths themselves were then revealed of God, through the action of His Spirit, by reading His word.

What was to be done? I saw in that word the coming of Christ to take the church to Himself in glory. I saw there the cross, the divine basis of salvation, which should impress its own character on the Christian and on the church in view of the Lord's coming; and also that meanwhile the Holy Spirit was given to be the source of the unity of the church, as well as the spring of its activity, and indeed of all christian energy.

As regards the gospel, I had no difficulty as to its received dogmas. Three persons in one God, the divinity of Jesus, His work of atonement on the cross, His resurrection, His session at the right hand of God, were truths which, understood as orthodox doctrines, had long been a living reality to my soul. They were the

known and felt conditions, the actualities, of my relationship with God. Not only were they truths, but I knew God personally in that way; I had no other God but Him who had thus revealed Himself, and Him I had. He was the God of my life and of my worship, the God of my peace, the only true God.

The practical difference in my preaching, when once I began to preach again, was, as follows: When a parson, I had preached that sin had created a great gulf between us and God, and that Christ alone was able to bridge it over; now, I preached that He had already finished His work. The necessity of regeneration, which was always a part of my teaching, became connected more with Christ, the last Adam, and I understood better that it was a real life, entirely new, communicated by the power of the Holy Spirit; but, as I have said, more in connection with the person of Christ and the power of His resurrection, combining the power of a life victorious over death, with a new position for man before God. This is what I understand by “deliverance.” The blood of Jesus has removed every spot from the believer; every trace of sin, according to God’s own purity. In virtue of His blood-shedding, the only possible propitiation, we may now invite all men to come to God, a God of love, who, for this object, has given His own Son. The presence of the Holy Ghost, sent from heaven to abide in the believer as the “unction,” the “seal,” and the “earnest of our inheritance,” as well as being in the church, the power which unites it in one body and distributes gifts to the members according to His will; these truths developed largely and assumed great importance in my eyes. With this last truth was connected the question of ministry. From whence came

this ministry? According to the Bible, it clearly came from God by the free and powerful action of the Holy Ghost.

At the time I was occupied with these things, the person with whom I was in christian relation locally, as a minister, was an excellent Christian, worthy of all respect, and one for whom I have always had a great affection. I do not know if he is still living, but since the time I speak of, he was appointed to be archdeacon. It was, however, the principles, and not the persons, which acted on my conscience; for I had already given up, out of love to the Saviour, all that the world could offer. I said to myself: “If the Apostle Paul were to come here now, he would not, according to the established system, be even allowed to preach, not being legally ordained; but if a worker of Satan, who, by his doctrine, denied the Saviour, came here, he could freely preach, and my christian friend would be obliged to consider him as a fellow-labourer; whereas he would be unable to recognise the most powerful instrument of the Spirit of God, however much blessed in his work of leading multitudes of souls to the Lord, if he had not been ordained according to the system.” All this, said I to myself, is false. This is not mere abuse, such as may be found everywhere; it is the principle of the system that is at fault. Ministry is of the Spirit. There are some, amongst the clergy, who are ministers by the Spirit, but the system is founded on an opposite principle; consequently it seemed impossible to remain in it any longer.

I saw in scripture that there were certain gifts which formed true ministry, in contrast to a clergy established upon another principle. Salvation, the church, and

ministry, all were bound together; and all were connected with Christ, the Head of the church in heaven, with Christ who had accomplished a perfect salvation, as well as with the presence of the Spirit on earth, uniting the members to the Head, and to each other, so as to form “one body,” and He acting in them according to His will.

In effect, the cross of Christ and His return should characterise the church and each one of the members. What was to be done? Where was this unity, this “body”? Where was the power of the Spirit recognised? Where was the Lord really waited for? Nationalism was associated with the world; in its bosom some believers were merged in the very world from which Jesus had separated them; they were, besides, separated from one another, whilst Jesus had united them. The Lord’s supper, symbol of the unity of the body, had become a symbol of the union of this latter with the world, that is to say, exactly the contrary of what Christ had established. Dissent had, no doubt, had the effect of making the true children of God more manifest, but here they were united on principles quite different from the unity of the body of Christ. If I joined myself to these, I separated myself from others everywhere. The disunion of the body of Christ was everywhere apparent rather than its unity. What was I to do? Such was the question which presented itself to me, without any other idea than that of satisfying my conscience, according to the light of the word of God. A word in Matthew 18 furnished the solution of my trouble: “Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.” This was just what I wanted: the presence of Jesus was assured at such worship; it is

there He has recorded His name, as He had done of old in the temple at Jerusalem for those who were called to resort there.

Four persons who were pretty much in the same state of soul as myself, came together to my lodging; we spoke together about these things, and I proposed to them to break bread the following Sunday, which we did. Others then joined us. I left Dublin soon after, but the work immediately began at Limerick, a town in Ireland, and then in other places.

Two years later (1830), I went to Cambridge and Oxford. In this latter place, some persons who are still engaged in the work, shared my convictions, and felt that the relation of the church to Christ ought to be that of a faithful spouse.

By invitation I went to Plymouth to preach. My habit was to preach wherever people wished, whether in buildings or in private houses. More than once, even with ministers of the national church, we have broken bread on Monday evening after meetings for christian edification, where each was free to read, to speak, to pray, or to give out a hymn. Some months afterwards we began to do so on Sunday morning, making use of the same liberty, only adding the Lord’s supper, which we had, and still have, the practice of taking every Sunday. Occasionally it has been partaken of more often. About that time also some began to do the same in London.

The unity of the church, as the body of Christ, the coming of the Lord, the presence of the Holy Ghost here below, in the individual and in the church; an assiduous proclamation of the truth, as well as the preaching of the gospel on the ground of pure grace and that of an

accomplished work, giving in consequence the assurance of salvation when received into the heart by the Spirit; practical separation from the world; devotedness to Christ, as to Him who has redeemed the church; a walk having Him only as the motive and rule; and other subjects in connection with these—all this has been treated of in separate publications as well as by means of periodicals; and these truths have been largely spread abroad.

A good many ministers of the national church left nationalism in order to walk according to these principles, and England became gradually covered with meetings, more or less numerous.

Plymouth being the place where most of the publications originated, the name “Plymouth brethren” became the usual appellation given to such meetings.

In 1837 I visited Switzerland, and these truths began to be known there. I returned there more than once. The second time, I remained a considerable time at Lausanne, where God worked in conversions, and gathered a number of the children of God out of the world. There were already, in Switzerland, Dissenters who had suffered faithfully for the Lord during twenty years previously. But their activity had declined considerably, and it even seemed that the movement was about to disappear. The work of the brethren has, to a certain extent, by the goodness of God, filled the country, conversions having been numerous. In German Switzerland, the work spread to a much less degree. On two occasions of my spending a protracted time in Lausanne, some young brothers who desired to devote themselves to gospel work spent nearly a year with me

in order to read the Bible. We also partook of the Lord's supper together every day.

At the same time, quite independently of what was going on in Switzerland, a brother who was labouring in France had awakened an interest in a considerable district where the people were, in general, plunged in infidelity and darkness. Some also of the young brothers of whom I have spoken, and two or three others whose acquaintance I made, but who never stayed with me, went to work in France. Other labourers, belonging to societies, believing that they would be happier working under the Lord's immediate direction, and not as subject to committees, gave up their salaries, considering such arrangements to be unknown, both in fact and in principle, to the scriptures, since their very existence attributed to the possession of money the right to direct the work of the Lord: these began to work in simple dependence upon the Lord, trusting to His faithful care. God raised up others also, though it still remains true that "the harvest is great and the labourers are few." God has blessed these labourers by conversions, numerous, thank God, especially in the south of France. From the beginning I have visited these countries and shared with joy the troubles and fatigues of these brothers; but it is they who have actually laboured at the work. In some places, I had the first troubles; in others I have only visited, taken part and helped, when the work was, thank God, already begun. He gave us to be of one heart and one soul, mutually to be helpers of one another, seeking the good of all, whilst recognising our individual weakness.

Almost about the same time, in the eastern part of France, a like work had begun, independently of this

one. It has also been visited, so that at the present time the work extends from Bale to the Pyrenees, with a fairly large gap in the districts of which Toulouse forms the centre. The country is more or less covered with meetings, and the work, by God's grace, is still going on.

I ought to say that I have never meddled in any way with the calling nor with the work of the brethren who studied the Bible with me. As regards some, I have the conviction that they had not been called to it, and they have, in fact, gone back into the ordinary routine of life. As to others, I only helped them in the study of the Bible, in communicating to them the light which God had given me, but leaving entirely to themselves the responsibility of their calling for the work of evangelisation or teaching.

We had the custom of gathering together occasionally for some time, when God opened the way for it, to study scriptural subjects together, or books of the Bible, and to communicate to one another what God had given to each. During several years, in Ireland and England, this took place annually in large conferences which lasted for a week. On the Continent, and latterly in England, they have been less attended; and consequently, with fewer numbers, it has been possible to spend a fortnight or three weeks studying some books of the Bible.

My elder brother, who is a Christian, spent two years at Dusseldorf. He is engaged in the work of the Lord, wherever he may happen to be at the moment. He has been blessed to several souls in the neighbourhood of Dusseldorf. These, in their turn, have spread the light of the gospel and the truth, and a certain number of persons have been gathered in the Rhenish provinces.

Tracts and various publications of the brethren have been translated and largely distributed; and light as to the soul's deliverance, the true character of the church, the presence of the Holy Ghost here below, and the Lord's return, has been disseminated.

Two years later, helped, I believe, by the knowledge of these truths, but entirely independent of this work, a movement of the Spirit of God began at Elberfeld. There was in that town a "Brotherhood" which employed twelve labourers, if I am not mistaken, whom the clergy sought to forbid from preaching or teaching. Enlightened as to the ministry of the Spirit, and moved by love for souls, they would not submit to this interdict. Seven of these labourers, I believe, and a few members of the "Brotherhood" detached themselves from it, and certain of them, with others whom God raised up, continued their gospel work, which spread from Holland to Hesse. Conversions have been very numerous, and many hundreds assemble at the present time to break bread. More recently the work has begun to get established in Holland, as also in the south of Germany. By means of other instruments, two meetings in Wurtemberg already existed.

Gospel preaching in Switzerland and England has led to the formation of some meetings amongst emigrants to the United States and Canada; the evangelisation of negroes led to others in Jamaica and Demerara, as also amongst the natives of Brazil, through a brother who went there and has since died. I am not aware of any other who knows the language sufficiently to continue this work, which has been blessed. The English colonies of Australia have also meetings; but this sketch will be sufficient for you.

Brethren do not recognise any other body but the body of Christ, that is to say, the whole church of the firstborn. Also they recognise every Christian who walks in truth and holiness, as a proved member of Christ. Their hope of final salvation is founded on the Saviour's expiatory work, for whose return they look, according to His word. They believe the saints to be united to Him already, as the body of which He is the Head, and they await the accomplishment of His promise, expecting His coming to take them to Himself in the Father's house, so that where He is, there they may be also. Meanwhile, they have to bear His cross and to suffer with Him, separated from the world which has rejected Him. His person is the object of their faith, His life the example which they have to follow in their conduct. His word, namely, the scriptures inspired of God, that is to say the Bible, is the authority which forms their faith; it is also its foundation, and they recognise it as that which should govern their conduct. The Holy Ghost alone can make it effectual both for life and practice.

185—.

48 See Col. Writ., vol. xv. 293.

49 To Prof. Tholuck.

Appendix Section 3

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* * * I have been writing on Colossians with much instruction to myself, so that I am reading it once again. But all one does is so imperfect as to execution. It seems “Matthew” is enjoyed by the saints. I get on enough to be dissatisfied with what I have done before, though the truth into which one has been led by these inquiries retains its value.

I trust the bonds (or peace at least) between —— and the others is consolidating. He is uncommonly amiable were he somewhat deeper; but we must, and for good, take men and the saints as God gives them to us: they are His, not ours… A real workman, a “man of God” is a great, the greatest treasure in the world…

Elberfeld, February 5th, 1855.

* * * * *

Dearest Brother,— … As far as I have seen everywhere, this connection with Bethesda is united with the returning influence of the world and, through the appearance of devoted-ness at B., united to real worldliness, that is, a fair show in the flesh, universally falseness, want of openness and straightforwardness. It is a question of deliverance of souls from the deception of a system I left long ago, somewhat painted over. I have not a trace of doubt as to its character. It may be a matter of humiliation that there was not more power to stay and keep it out, but its character is clear to me as the sun at noonday. I have no more thought of walking with it than of abandoning all the principles on which

grace has made me act these thirty years. But separation is a very serious thing, or rather the attempt to form a second table, as men speak; because if the Lord removes the candlestick, He does not always light up another. It is not His way; He is judging and removing it, and power is needed for lighting it up. Conscientiousness, though equally honoured of God, is not this. Great quietness and isolatedness is the path called for in such cases. I met today, in a French tract which had no reference to these matters, a principle I have always accepted, that I would never separate where I could recognise the body as on the principle of the church of God after I had left it; and the principle is an evident and plain one. I might avoid going to the place if I could do nothing better. When one has to separate, then quietness and retiredness is the path till God comes in afresh… Things always find their level, individual level, in a sifting.

I had heard of poor dear——'s death. I was not surprised he died in peace; his head was all wrong, but his heart all right, so as to make me often ashamed of myself, and that is better.

As to——, circumstances, I forget what, led me to look at it when he was at one time here. I judged the expressions very unhappy, and in themselves unjustifiable, and he was very unhappy when he saw them (before I spoke to him), so that he had lost his rest for a night or two. To accuse him of any doctrinal heresy is mere malice; unjustifiable expressions, or even ideas, are totally different from explained and justified doctrine. He is not a person who discerns and is guarded in his expressions, but who follows his ideas; but of his soundness I have no doubt—indeed found him

much matured and grown, and more reason to be attached to him than ever. The simplest thing for him to say is that the expressions are not justifiable, while no false doctrine is maintained now, or ever meant to be. We had the case before with Bellett. The plainer he condemns them the more is it evident that he is in no error himself; and the Lord will honour him because he seeks thus only His glory; that is the secret of all happy walk and happiness. If he is with you, give him my kindest love.

In general there is blessing here and progress. It is a blessed thing to trust the Lord in everything, in light, and in darkness as appears. He always governs, and always according to the principles we love because they are the expression of Himself.

Affectionately yours.

Lausanne, May 29th, 1855.

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* * * It is a great mistake to think that I am less decided as to neutrals; it is quite the contrary. Neutrals, when Christ has been dishonoured, are in the worst position of all, and I think Christ has been dishonoured, I mean at Bethesda. I do not understand how any one caring for Him can think otherwise, and I believe the Lord is distinctly putting His seal on those who are faithful, and that the moral standing of those who are not is lowering every day. That is not saying that there are not a great many faults among those who have stood firm, but failure on a sound standard is a very different thing, bad as it is, from lowering the standard. —— wrote to me inviting me to Barnstaple, to come and have intercourse, more than half a year ago: I wrote word when the

dishonour done to Christ was judged, till then not. I leave myself, of course, entirely open to meet any one when the Lord leads to it; but it will not, the Lord helping, be on the ground of being not decided as to neutrals. My principle is the same as ever; my experience has made me more so…

As to the withdrawal of my letter,——said it stood in the way of some as a stumbling-block; on this ground I withdrew it, and said so when I did at Bristol, as I wished no particular act of mine to be such. But that changed nothing of my principles, nor did I think anything wrong in it; the only thing which might have been left out was the statement of what I meant to do, which I made as a matter of openness with brethren. I have no doubt the Lord is working, but I believe it is in connection with firmness on these points… I do not see the poor put about half as much as the rich. … I have not the thought of an unkind feeling towards any.

August 17th, 1856.

* * * * *

To the same.]

* * * Thank you very much for your kind note… In general it is a time of unequivocal blessing for the testimony of brethren, and the witness they have to give spreads beyond my hope, so that I often wonder. The brethren know I always felt they must get into the low place before they could rise. It is the truth of the church’s place. Plymouth got out of it, and the candlestick was taken away; God does not light it up as soon as He has put it out; but I am perfectly satisfied that if the brethren are content to wait on Him and abide His time, they will see His hand, and all the rest is

nothing. We must be content to take the place that faith has, but I am persuaded God will own this to be His, and that is what a heart filled with Christ wants. The Lord may sift till all that are not a witness, or for a witness, are gone—so He did with Christ's followers— but then He will make them one, and a plain one. The brethren are happy here; many new ones want perhaps building up. Give my kindest love to the brethren.

Affectionately yours in the Lord,

London, February 19th, 1858.

Dear Miss——,—Your question depends on many points in the state of the soul. The first question would be—have you ever got settled assurance of conscience before God so that that should be true of you which is said, "The worshippers once purged should have no more conscience of sins"? When we have not this, every fault mixes itself up with the question of the light in which God views us, and the question is not restoration, but recovering some sense of standing before God, which is a very different one. God is not really known in love, though we may believe generally that He is so since He has visited us in mercy. If I am not out of Egypt, that is, if I have not a clear knowledge of God as a redeeming God, and I am looking to God who defends me against His judgment by blood, my thought of Him is yet wholly imperfect, my failures give fears, not pain properly, to my spirit. The great point is then to know and believe that He has redeemed us in love, and taken us in the resurrection of Christ out of the whole state and condition I was in before; that He justifies me, not that I am justified before Him—and both are right, but the former only is liberty. When this is fully known love

is never doubted, but we are brought to feel it is grieved; but it is therefore still known to be there; and hence, when the heart really looks to Him it is soon restored, though the Lord may keep it so long in suspense, as to communion, as may be necessary to probe the heart as much as needed. If you have the full assurance that God is love to you at all times, the witness of His Spirit in communion will soon be restored to you.

But there is another question. When I have not a positive sin on my conscience, I cannot properly excommunicate myself. Hence, the separating myself (as' to profession outwardly, of course, I mean) from the unity of the body of Christ, of which the Lord's supper is the sign, is a very serious thing; and we are not justified in doing it except on very positive ground. If I felt there had been serious neglect of God, and He was positively dealing with me seriously about my sin, I should rather stay away, but it is. a very serious thing when once one sees that it is the unity of Christ's body; but then one ought to take up the matter very seriously indeed with one's self. In many, the abstaining from communion is much too light a matter. On the other hand, if it be as is the case in some souls, only a distrust of God's love, of which the enemy is taking advantage, abstaining from it would only increase the uncertainty of soul. The word of scripture is not, Let a man examine himself, whether he should eat, but, "Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat." This is the general rule; not to do it lightly—but, in judging evil, to do it. If the peace I first spoke of is not possessed, we cannot judge rightly, because restoring love is not known. The first great question for you is, Do you know really the love of God in an assured

conscience (not merely attracted heart)? If so, I should say, go—but do it seriously, so as not to trifle with any evil—unless some definite dealing of God with you about evil be in hand, then you would do well to refrain till that be settled. I know not whether speaking thus generally (I could only do this, of course) will be of any avail. Look to the Lord; He will guide the meek in judgment, and such as are humble them will He teach His way; and trust His love, only truly judge yourself. If I can be of any further use I shall be happy.

Very truly yours in Christ.

The table is the place of full communion; but it is a different thing to stay away voluntarily, when one is there, and to hesitate in going at first. Seek whether you have ever had your conscience fully at peace with God, and then, daily power for communion, which is surely in Christ for you when walking in the way of God's will.

London, February 3rd, 1859.

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* * * The common notion is that brotherly love is charity, and indeed its most perfect form: this is a mistake, as this passage (2 Pet. 1:7) shews. That brotherly love is a most sweet and precious fruit of grace, is most true—precious in the heart that is filled with it, and precious in its mutual development; but it is not charity. We are told to add to brotherly love charity. The reason is simple: if brotherly love, brethren are the object, and though when genuine and pure it surely flows from grace, it easily in us clothes itself with the character which its object gives it, and tends to limit itself to the objects with which it is occupied, and be governed by its feeling towards them. It is apt to end in its objects, and

thus avoid all that might be painful to them, or mar the mutual feeling and pleasantness of intercourse, and thus make them the measure of the conduct of the Christian. In a word, where brotherly love ends in itself, as the main object, brethren become the motive and governing principle of our conduct; and our conduct as uncertain as the state of our brethren with whom we may be in contact. Hence the apostle says, “Above all these put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness”; and another apostle, “And to brotherly kindness charity.” Now charity is love; but will not this seek to exercise brotherly kindness? Undoubtedly it will, but it brings in God. “God is love.” “He that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him.” Hence it brings in a standard of what true love is, which mere brotherly kindness in itself never can. It is the bond of perfectness, for God, and God in active love is its measure. Brotherly kindness by itself has the brother for the object: charity is governed by, exists in virtue of the conscious presence of God; hence whatever is not consistent with His presence, with Himself, with His glory, cannot be borne by the heart who is filled with it. It is in the spirit of love that it thinks and works, but in the Spirit of God, by whose presence it is inwardly known and active. Love was active in Christ when He said, “Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers”; in Paul when he said, “I would that they were even cut off which trouble you.”

Charity, because it is God’s presence, and that we feel His presence, and look to Him in it, is intolerant of evil. In mere brotherly kindness, the brother being the object before my mind (and, if God’s presence be not felt, we do not realise it, nature coming in so easily and here in its most unsuspected and kindly shapes), I put man

before God, smother up evil, keep kindness going, at any rate so far exclude and shut out God. Charity is His active presence though it will be in love to man; but it gives to God all His rights. He it is that is love, but He is never inconsistent with Himself. His love to us was shewn in what was the most solemn proof of His intolerance of evil, the cross. There is no true love apart from righteousness. If God is indifferent to evil, is not righteous, then there is no love in grace to the sinner. If He abhors evil, cannot suffer it in His presence, then His dealings with us as sinners shew the most perfect love. If I have ten children, and they go wrong, and I say, 'Well, I am to shew love to them,' and I take no account of their evil ways; or if some of them go wrong and I treat them as if there was no difference to my mind in their well doing or evil doing; this is not love, but carelessness as to evil. This is the kind of love looked for by unconverted man, namely, God's being as careless as to evil as they are; but this is not divine charity which abhors the evil, but rises over it, dealing with it either in putting it away or in needed chastenings. Now if God were indifferent to evil there is no holy being to be the object of my love—nothing sanctifying. God does not own as love what admits of sin.

London, February, 1859.

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To the same.]

* * * The words, "Judge not, that ye be not judged," are often employed to hinder a sound judgment as to the plain path of right and wrong. If a person is walking in that which I know by the word of God to be wrong, I must judge that he is walking wrongly, or give up my

judgment of right and wrong. I may trust he may be misled, or that difficulties and temptations may have overcome him, and consider myself lest I also be tempted, think the best I can of him; but I cannot put evil for good, nor good for evil. There can be no right motive to do what is wrong to do—a thing contrary to God's will. There may be ignorance, want of light in the conscience, and I may and ought to take all this into account, but I cannot say that the person is not doing wrong. Woe be to me if for any personal consideration I enfeeble my own sense that a wrong path is a wrong one. The saint must be very careful not to allow any sophistry to modify his submission of heart and conscience to God's judgment of good and evil. As regards the church of God, the scriptures plainly declare we are to "judge them that are within, but them that are without God judgeth." This is no imputation of motives, nor habit of forming an opinion on other people's conduct, which is an evil habit; but the duty of not allowing evil in the house of God. It is positively commanded to us not to allow it.

Again, many apply this to judging whether people are Christians; but this is founded on a fundamental mistake. It is assumed that people are supposed to be Christians unless proved to be the contrary. If the faith of the soul be a personal thing, and I value Christ, this cannot be. I am not called upon to be volunteering to pass a judgment on the point whether such or such an one is a Christian; the person who blames me for saying such an one is a Christian, is judging that he is so of course, which is quite false. The apostle says "The love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead." Believing this, it is

a joy to believe that any one has passed from death unto life. That is not a judgment: it is the rejoicing of the heart that faith in that person has brought him into the blessed place of a child of God. It is a most horrible principle that we cannot know who are God's children, Christ's disciples: it destroys all godly affections. If the children of a family were told that they could not know and ought not to judge who are their brothers and sisters, what would become of family affections? The Lord has said, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." How can this be if I do not know who are disciples, and towards whom this love is to be exercised? We must know each other to love each other as children of God, to "love as brethren." He who objects to judging that such and such are God's children objects to the love of the brethren; he is rejecting the spiritual affections on which the Lord and scripture so much insist.

There is a wrong spirit of judgment: if I occupy myself needlessly in thinking of others, and expressing an opinion of them; if in questionable cases I ascribe, even in my mind, wrong motives; nay, if I do not hope in such cases that the right motive is at bottom, I am in the spirit of judgment, and away from God. If severity of judgment on the person, when I am bound to judge he is faulty, possesses my soul, this is not the Spirit of God. But to weaken the plain, unequivocal and avowed estimate of right and wrong under the pretence of not judging; or to deny the knowledge of one another, and mutual love among the saints, under pretence that we have not a right to judge, is of the enemy, and a mere cover to a man's conscience to avoid the conscious pressure of that judgment on himself. If I am to maintain

a divine standard of right and wrong, I must judge those who do wrong to be doing so. I am not always called to occupy myself about them—then, if volunteered, the spirit of judgment comes: but if I am, I must judge according to the word of God. If I am to love the disciples of Jesus, the saints of God, "the brotherhood," I must know who they are. If there is a disposition to distrust, or to impute motives, then the spirit of judgment is at work.

Beloved brother, I have written in haste, when just about to start and half asleep, some general principles as to judgment on others. It will be seen if this may be useful. I am starting for Switzerland for three weeks, God willing…

Yours affectionately.

London, February 25th, 1859.

* * * * *

Dearest ——,—As regards the introduction of Matthew's version into Luke (11); it is remarkable enough that it is in the Itala and not in the Vulgate. Its presence in D is thus understood. It is a practical Latin arrangement. C however has it, not latinised, but has it substantially. A, I think, fails here. Jerome doubtless corrected from Eastern copies for the Vulgate. I cannot therefore myself doubt that B etc. have it right. All seem to be agreed as to "Deliver us from the wicked one" not being there, at least Scholz, who does not accept other changes. But I think Luke, who always takes up the general present principles of the kingdom and not its dispensational arrival, would very naturally leave out a phrase which I apprehend has special reference to Satan's power in that day. Saving out of temptation, watching and praying

lest we enter, is clearly of all times: deliverance from the wicked one is when he has special power, as he has for a short time.

I have given the paper to M. I am not anxious about its publication. My reason is that this contemplation of Christ's sufferings goes beyond the habits of christian thinking in general, and they get into it as a doubtful question. Were it direct truth for Christians, this would do nothing; because they ought to learn it then. But this concerns the Jewish remnant, the interpretation of the Psalms, and though thus most interesting when one gets beyond one's own wants, and useful to avoid wrong interpretations, yet one cannot expect the mass of Christians to enter into it. I am in the fullest way confirmed in the interpretation I have given and I doubt not received, though some expressions might be misapprehended. I have since written on Psalms 40 and box., and have been in the fullest way confirmed in it.

Where I think dear —— mistaken is in attempting to get over the word ejkklhsiva and contrast it with body; this I judge is a mistake. Body, as you already know, I think is in that sense contrasted with house; but assembly is a general word which determines nothing save that there is an assembling. I have written a part of my paper on it, and now that I have finished my French translation hope to go on with it. The scriptural part is nearly done, but the Fathers only just looked at.

The doctrine in the paper on Hebrews is just the same as that in the papers on the sufferings.

There has been a little persecution in France, but very slight; and unless perhaps one brother already twice in

prison, all passed, and graciously only turned to good; and what does not?

Ever, dear brother, affectionately yours.

London, March 5th, 1859.

* * * * *

* * * I regard all pretence in any to priesthood, save that which can be attributed, and which in scripture is attributed to all saints, as the principle of the apostasy in its present form of development, and the denial of Christianity. Judaism had priests, because the people could not themselves go directly to God where He revealed Himself; Christianity has none between God's people and Himself in their worship, because Christians are brought to God and have boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus. To set a priest to go for them as one nearer to God, is to deny the effect of Christianity. Besides, priesthood has essentially to do with intercession, or sacrifice and offerings: and in the Lord's supper there is no sacrifice, nor is it intercession. The whole idea of priesthood on earth is to be rejected, therefore, as utterly contradictory both to Christianity and the act of breaking the bread.

But, on the other hand, it is a mistake to think we partake by breaking the bread, or that we break it. The whole force of the thing consists (as to this point) in our partaking of already broken bread. It is His body broken for us that we take and eat. We are not the breakers of His body, properly speaking. So that, I apprehend, the true partaking of the Lord's supper is after the bread is broken. The breaking of the bread now is, of course, a necessary accident to such participation, but is no part of the communion at all. And every one acquainted with

scripture on the point, knows that “blessing” means simply giving thanks, and not consecrating the bread. See 1 Corinthians 11:24 and compare Matthew 26:26, 27; Mark 14:22; and Luke 22:19. So in Luke 9:16, the miracle of the loaves and not the Eucharist, He blessed them and brake; in John 6:11, 23; Mark 8:6, 7 (also Mark6:41), the terms are united; in Matthew 14:19 He blessed, and in chapter 15:36 gave thanks. In 1 Corinthians 14:16 we find incontestable proof of what indeed the previous passages can leave no doubt on to a reasonable mind. “Else when thou shalt bless with the spirit, how shall he that occupieth the room of the unlearned say Amen at thy giving of thanks, seeing he understandeth not what thou sayest?” Blessing is blessing God, a giving of thanks. So the apostle says, in chapter 11, “the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread; and when he had given thanks,” and in 1 Corinthians 10: “the cup of blessing which we bless.” Matthew and Mark, speaking of the bread, say He blessed; and speaking of the cup, say He gave thanks. In Luke it is simply, He gave thanks. Thus, the blessing which precedes the breaking of the bread is a giving of thanks; and in this, of course, all join, as in every thanksgiving, though one may utter it. Every saint is essentially competent, though in a large congregation godly order of mind may leave it to such as may have justly earned the respect of the body; yet, as the feeling of priesthood is readily slipped into, I should think it desirable that it were not always one.

The breaking of the bread is in itself no religious act; it represents the putting of Christ to death, and, as an outward act, was consummated by wicked men. But the Lord did break it in the last supper, shewing it was a

dead Christ they had to feed on; and hence he who gives thanks breaks the bread. The communion comes after and is on a broken body. The breaking is the killing of Christ, and though absolutely necessary as a figure, because His death was absolutely necessary and is the very point shewn forth, yet the act of doing it is no religious part of the thing which one has a privilege in doing. And as to pouring out the wine, it is done no doubt often, but is no part of the Lord's supper at all. The wine is, in the institution, supposed to be already in the cup, still pointing to the great fact, that the communion refers to an already dead Saviour. The blood is out of the body—"my blood which is shed for you." The act of pouring out would not represent death, because the body is not thus represented, and hence it is not referred to at all. The already shed blood is given thanks for or blessed, already poured out: "the cup which we bless," etc. There is the breaking of the bread as significative of the breaking of His body; but this is preparatory to communion.

It is this consideration which shews the terrible import of the Eoman Catholic doctrine as to the Eucharist, and how Satan has taken them in their own wisdom and, so to speak, mocked them. The laity are deprived of the cup and are consoled by what is called the doctrine of concomitancy; namely, that the body, blood, soul, and divinity of Jesus are in the bread (indeed in both species). But if the blood be in the body, and not shed and separate, there is no redemption. It is shed blood, not blood in the body, which is the power of redemption; without shedding of blood there is none. This confirms the view, taken above, that it is a body already broken, and blood already shed, of which we partake. Thus,

though the bread must be broken as it was by Christ, by him who gives thanks, this is but preparatory and forms, strictly, no part of the communion; and, as representing the putting Christ to death, it is no part of the holy service itself, though needed to shew that it is of a dead Christ we partake: it is of no living, existing Christ, but of a dead Christ, and there is none such. Remark further, how this sets aside transubstantiation and consubstantiation; for no such Christ exists as that celebrated in the Eucharist. As in the Passover a slain lamb, so a dead Christ is represented there, and shed blood; but there is no dead Christ now, He is alive again for evermore. As risen with Him, we remember the sorrows and sufferings which gave us a place there. That atoning death is accomplished and passed, and sin is put away for us, and we are alive with Him for evermore.

I would just add, that the expression in 1 Corinthians 10:16 has no reference to one or to many, but to what Christians do in contrast with Jews and Gentiles. The apostle is treating the question of idolatry. Jews were partakers of the altar, Gentiles drank the cup of devils. What we (Christians) partake of is communion with the sacrifice of Christ. We are identified with the sacrifice, we cannot be with the cup of devils too.

[1859.]

* * * * *

Dearest Brother,—Had I not known that several brethren would have been with you as a testimony of respect for your beloved departed one and sympathy with you, I should have at any rate turned my steps back to——, as they are just able to get about; and somewhat overdone

by getting up to London for fresh materials for study work, and through mercy beginning very slowly to get a little strength, I feel I should do wrong in attempting the journey and retracing my steps. I have indeed a fortifying reason. I feel that by this accident in my knee the Lord has set me aside for a while from outward work, so that I felt it the Lord's will to remain quiet; not, be assured, dear brother, from any want of sympathy with you in the—to man —terrible blow that is come upon you, when I think how truly she was attached to you, and, I knew, you to her, and of your four little ones.

I feel what a world of sorrow it is, and how real a share you have in that sorrow; but a world where, if sin and sorrow have entered in, grace has come in after them; and now love has risen above all the sin and sorrow, and, having entered into the worst of all it could bring on us, has given us a place out of it all: into the place from which it flowed the spirit of your dear wife has entered, and is with Him who entered into all that sorrow here that He might deliver us from it all; and, if you remain in the scenes of it down here, that very love has revealed itself by coming down into them that we might have it here. Jesus was a man of sorrows, and indeed none like His. And His love is perfect sympathy as well as deliverance. Look to this, dear brother, and you will find it in your sorrow, and raising you out of it, not by destroying the feeling, but by coming into it, taking all human will out of it which causes regret and bitterness, and bringing His will into it, and Himself in love with us in it. His grace is sure, in its path does not fail; nothing escapes or happens without it. This is a great comfort—first our will, subtle as it is and meddling with the best affections, is broken and there is submission; then

comes the sense of positive love. Any sense of failure even on our part, if such there be, is lost in the sense of the perfect love and ordering of God. He takes the place of the reasoning of our minds and all is peace. This is a wonderful thing, for after all even as to our ways we cannot answer Him nor account for one of a thousand. He does use all to set our hearts right, and gives softened peace like a river.

But I will not trespass on you, dear brother, with many words at this moment. Only look to Jesus, and believe in and count on the love of God towards yourself—towards her there is no difficulty, she is where all is clear—for your dear little ones and believe that He is sufficient, and wait upon Him who knows our sorrows and difficulties and trials. Be assured of my unfeigned sympathy, for indeed I feel that your loss has been very great, but I am sure my God is able to supply all your need according to His riches in glory. Peace be with you: be much with Jesus, and the God of peace shall keep your heart.

Your affectionate brother in Jesus.

July 4th, 1859.

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[From the French.

My dear Brother,—We were engaged in a conference when your letter arrived, which has delayed my answering though I had begun a letter. We have always had from time to time such readings here as they have also even more regularly in Germany, and growth of knowledge, and general unity of doctrine is through grace promoted and fellowship in labour and service.

They have such regularly in Somersetshire among the labouring brethren, and if carried on under the Lord's eye and grace I am sure they would be useful in Suffolk.

I am very well, but somewhat tired between conference, lectures, and work of all kinds. I am not so young as I was, and work almost, or quite as hard from early dawn towards midnight in my 60th year as in years past, but I feel it a little more. But I have singularly enjoyed the word in all its parts latterly, and particularly in John and now in Matthew. I think new divine light continually breaks in, and I am most happy in going peacefully onward to a sure, most blessed and divine rest, across the toil and exercises of the desert…

The Lord keep us in the way of His steps and in the abundant witness of His grace. It is a time in which the Spirit of God is evidently working in a wonderful manner, for which we have to be abundantly thankful, but I think I see signs of its being in judgment on the professing church. The Lord avert it, and prove me wrong, but I fear it is so…

Be ever content with quiet service and seek much communion and constancy with Christ in His work, and the Lord bless you in all things. He is goodness itself.

Ever your affectionate brother in Christ.

Nimes, April 3rd, 1860.

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* * * Our partaking of the divine nature is a real50 thing. "That which is born of the Spirit is spirit." All are born of God. Christ is become our life: He is "that eternal life which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us"; and hence it can be said, "Which thing is true in him and

in you." But that "light was the light of men." Christ was "the image of the invisible God." This life was a true, moral, subsisting thing, which could be communicated. There is a divine power in it which contains and unfolds all things that pertain to life and godliness. It is faith which lays hold, by the power of the Spirit of God, on that which is life, that is, Christ. We are "the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus." Christ is the Word —the expression and revelation of all that is in God; and we, in knowing Him, are renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created us. The word, as a testimony, is the seed of life when brought into the heart by the power of the Holy Ghost; because it is the revelation of Christ, and the bringing in, by that power, of Christ livingly there. It is Christ, by the word, by faith, in the power of the Holy Ghost, the operation being the operation of God. But it is by the revelation of Christ. Hence, we are said to be begotten by the incorruptible seed of the word (1 Peter 1:23); and James 1:18, "Of his own will begat he us by the word of truth, that we might be a kind of first-fruits of his creatures." And so it is expressed here. Grace and peace are to be multiplied, "through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord, according as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us by glory and virtue, whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these ye might be made partakers of the divine nature." It is not a law to flesh, calling them to walk rightly where man already was; but a call by glory and virtue to get on to this new place of peace in which Christ is, and that by the revelation of Him glorified, and the assurance of our portion in it. But thus, by divine power, it is livingly communicated to the

soul. But this is the glory of the divine nature in a man, into which we are to be formed: but we are livingly formed by its revelation in the power of the Holy Ghost now. It is the real communication of the divine nature. Only Peter looks at it, even in its affections, desires, qualities, as under the impress of the revelation of Christ, rather than as the simple fact of life. But all scripture tells the same truth. For every nature has its own character, knowledge by which it lives and is formed, its tastes, and spirit, and objects, which make it what it is, though its existence is the first and wonderful truth.

[1860.]

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* * * Two things require to be noticed in replying.51 First, the supposition of the same degree of knowledge in all is quite, as it seems to me, unfounded. Secondly, we are little aware of the immense difference of common knowledge current in the church by the presence of the Holy Ghost—that unction from the Holy One by which we know all things, which will not be then thus present with the remnant; though He will act in producing longings after deliverance and good in the hearts of the remnant, and directing their thoughts to the scriptures of truth, with an intelligence which the cravings of want alone give. Another point to be noticed is that there are wise ones, who “instruct the many in righteousness”—wise ones who understand. How many now appreciate the real calling and standing of the church of God? The godly of that day will cry to Jehovah in their distress, and the more profoundly convinced they are of their sins, the more will they understand the prophetic

declarations. They are directed to the law and the testimony, all that is in the Old Testament, and all short of the church, I apprehend, in the New Testament open to them, such as Matthew and Hebrews. Certainly all concerning Christ, as revealed in prophecy, is before them. They will not understand personal forgiveness and acceptance till they see Him: the rejection of Messiah they may feel as their national guilt. How many now have not found personal acceptance with God? The repentance after seeing Him will be wholly different in nature and kind from that before; it will be under grace, and less egotistic. Psalm 8 can be only hope, with a question—shall I be there? But the thought of Messiah, as they have not pardon, will be at the utmost as in an awakened soul who has not the Spirit—the sense of a guilty nation, uncertain whether they will participate in a blessing which faith believes will come. The degree of the sense of guilt will, of course, vary.

I apprehend the Psalms are specially calculated to minister expression and direction to their feelings in that day. Isaiah 53 gives hope to the nation, not peace then to the individual. They may know from Psalm 68 that He is gone to heaven, from Psalm ex. that He is at the right hand of God..How little the Jews understood it we learn from the Saviour’s question. (Matt. 22:43.) But though there will be individual wants, the nation, their common lot, will be more in their thoughts than personal forgiveness and peace; God’s government rather than individual salvation. And all is coloured by this. When they see Him, each will mourn apart. Some, I hardly doubt, will have seized the Old Testament instruction as to Christ—perhaps those who are killed and taken up, the saints of the high places. Yet even they

will, as to their testimony, be more associated with the God of the earth than we. As regards Daniel, the wise will understand. But he does not speak of atonement, nor any passage I know but Isaiah 53; and that is for the nation as they would then understand it. I cannot doubt the guilt of a rejected Messiah will shine in on some souls as regards the nation.

The difficulty for a Christian is to enter into the state and habits of thought of those concerned in these prophecies in that day. It is clear that all the Old Testament prophecies will be before them. But the Holy Ghost, not dwelling in them to guide into all truth, they will seek in distress of soul the answer to their need and circumstances with the feelings of a people. And the wise will instruct the many. I apprehend the church, and the divine glory of the Person of Jesus, will be understood by none till they see Him—certainly not the church—and then only from without.

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Dear ——,—As to John 1:16, I think you will find that ajntiv thus used signifies accumulation—one thing on another. For one blow comes another. Hence, it must be translated, “grace upon grace.” You may see passages cited in Kuinoel and Bengel on the passages. ‘Calamities on calamities.’ ajnt* ajniw'n ajnivai (Theog. V. 344): eJtevran ajnq* eJtevra" frontivda. (Chrys. de Sac.)

Further, in “denying the Lord that bought them,” the simple answer is, there is no reference to redemption at all. The ordinary word for redemption is ajpoluvtrwsi". The price for it is called ajntilutron, applied to all (1 Tim. 2:6), but ajpoluvtrwsi" is not. Redemption from under a given state is expressed by ejxagoravzw in Galatians

3:13; 4:5—deliverance from under the law. The only other two passages are in Ephesians and Colossians —“redeeming the time,” rescuing an opportunity (kairoVn) which offers, so as to profit by it for good —not making a good use of all time, as usually supposed. (Comp. Dan. 2:8.) I do not believe that ajgoravzw has ever the sense by itself of ‘redeem’: it is simply to buy. I know it is so translated in two or three passages, as Revelation 5 and 14; but it is simply “bought.”

The passage in 2 Peter 2, I am persuaded, refers to the idea of a slave bought in a market—the contrary of redeemed from a state of slavery—and who, though his Seo despovth" (not kuvrio", the Lord) has his right over him, will not own it. You may remark, that in the passage of Jude treating the same subject, despovth" is applied to God also: they deny “the only despovthn qeoVn.” The question of redemption out of a previous state does not enter into either passage; but the denial of a divinely inherent or acquired title over them. The strongest expression connected with this, and referring to all, is that which I have quoted—ajntivlutron uJpeVr pavntwn —“a ransom for all.” Nor can the well-instructed saint desire to weaken it. Christ has a title by His dying gift of Himself, not merely by creation, over all flesh. If rejected, He is rejected as the accomplisher of a redemption work, the guilt of the rejection of which lies on all who hear of it. And He has an absolute title by it over all flesh; giving, in virtue of it, eternal life to as many as the Father has given Him. But ajpoluvtrwsi"— actual redemption— is never referred to at all. But I comment as well as criticise. Lutrovw, to redeem, as well as luvtron, a ransom, or luvtrwsi", redemption, bear out the general statement above.

[1800.]

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* * * The Mediator,52 Christ Jesus, has appeared. The work is done—the blood shed. But the new covenant is not yet made with the two houses of Israel and Judah. Hence, in Hebrews, it is remarkable how the apostle, writing for those who now anticipatively enjoy its spiritual privileges, constantly waives the discussion of its direct application. In fact, that is reserved for converted Israel by-and-by. There is really no difficulty. Those of the Jews, and we of the Gentiles, who now believe in Jesus, come into a distinct position as one body, but possessing all the moral blessings of the new covenant. The fulfilment of it pertains to the Jewish people in the last days, when Messiah reigns over them. Jesus died "for that nation; and not for that nation only, but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad." His death will avail for both purposes: the time and order of applying it is another question. In fact, we know that Israel refused the message, and hence the blessing remains in abeyance till the fulness of the Gentiles is come in. Then, and when the Redeemer shall come to Zion and out of Zion (for both are true), "all Israel shall be saved." Of course, all the efficacious value for Israel then, as for us now, is in the blood of the Lamb. If Israel will have sacrifices, as well as an earthly temple and priesthood, they will be only commemorative signs of the one great offering of Christ. The epistle to the Hebrews excludes these for the Christian. The question of the Jew by-and-by is answered by their own prophecies.

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My dear Brethren,— I have hitherto been engaged in visiting France and Switzerland, though it has been rapidly gone through; I am far from having completed even hurried visits. But the Lord has been most graciously with me; almost everywhere I have not had room for those who came desirous to hear, or at any rate the place was exceedingly crowded, both in France and Switzerland. Part of my work has been in settled civilized places, part in most wild and out-of-the-way places, and mountains, far from all common comforts, but in both happy and helped in the work, and especially in the wild places in evangelizing. We had the Police after us once; they took the names of those who had taken part, but except two appearing before the Mayor it had no further troublesome consequences. A soul was brought to the Lord in the meeting. There are in France upwards of 100 gatherings and 25 labourers, besides those who act in the meetings locally, as in the meetings. I do not count parts of evangelization, nor do I count the Swiss gatherings, or workmen visiting all these or most of them once.

A country nearly as big I suppose as England without “Wales, you can easily conceive takes some time, but the door is opened, so that I have sometimes hesitated whether I ought not to give up more time to it, though I have had the feeling that having long been abroad in these countries, I owed more time to England. There is besides these countries, Germany, where there are many brethren, and now some 15 meetings in Holland. In Switzerland there are between 60 and 70 gatherings. All this has grown up under my own eye. A great part of the labourers having studied the scriptures, or doing so as

they can, with me, so that you may suppose it interests me duly. Yet I think I put it as distinctly as possible in the Lord's hands, and the work without a thought of myself; but this makes it the nearer to myself and the more interesting. It does not detach me from England. I feel that they and the work and gatherings in the latter land are in the Lord, and for the Lord.

The work of evangelizing spreads in France. The weakness in some of the elder gatherings still works. Yet oh, how I should rejoice to see more living energy in those gatherings and in all. Yet patience and faith is what we have to exercise, looking ever to the Lord who can help when all seems very low. It is sweet to count upon Him; in all circumstances, and in all states we can.

I have had a slight attack in my eye, and feel I am beginning to get old for going through hardships, but I never felt so free in the gospel, or its preciousness so much, or Christ so precious. His faithfulness too is unfailing. If I were able to serve Him —as I am sure He is precious in service—it would be famous. Outwardly in quantity I could hardly do more; what I want is a deeper well of Christ in my own soul to draw from for the blessing of others. That is the point, dear brethren. I do not doubt I have Him. I know His love, but I want more undistractedness in the purpose which moment by moment occupies me, but I know that He is all, and in Him my spirit has rest. Thank —— for his kind remembrance of me. Give my kindest love to all the brethren. Peace and the Lord's grace be with you.

Affectionately yours in Christ.

November 10th, 1860.

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* * * The remark is right as to the ambiguity of the English,53 because ‘come* is also the participle ‘have come,’ and the natural connection is, “sinned and come short.” But it seems to me that uJsterou'ntai does not refer to exhibiting. With a genitive, and particularly in later writers, it has the sense ‘destitute of,’ ‘wanting,’ ‘failing to have.’ Now that sin has come in, we must meet the glory of God or be excluded by it. In a state of innocency man enjoyed favour, and the question of consistency with the divine glory had not been raised. Now, we say, “All have sinned, and do come short of [fail in meeting, or standing in the presence of] the glory of God.” Christ, as Son of man, has glorified God on the cross, and human nature has a place in the glory; oujk uJsterou'tai, and so we in Him.

This point of meeting the glory I believe to be an important one, and to run through the gospels. John 13 specially treats it with immense depth, though briefly. I add that h{marton, the aorist, is the historic fact, which is the ground of the present state expressed in uJsterou'ntai. We have sinned, and are outside of, away from, morally wanting in what meets and gives us a place in, the glory of God.

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* * * It is not sound doctrine so to say.54 Abstractedly everything is eternally present with God, and there is no time with Him; but, then, I cannot say ‘when’ or ‘before’ in this point of view, because there is no when or before when there is no time. And in the scriptural view, such language is wholly unwarranted; because in due time Christ died for the ungodly, “when we were yet without strength”: and “having been justified by faith,” etc. We

are not justified without believing, but by faith, through faith in His blood—not without it or before it—nor hence without being at the same time born of God. “When we were dead in sins,” we were quickened together with Him, etc. “By grace are ye saved through faith.” We were by nature children of wrath, but God, who is rich in mercy, when we were dead in sins, quickened us. It is a new nature which we as persons never had before it was communicated to us, when we had only the old. To say we were eternally believers, is nonsense. In the same sense, we were eternally unbelievers, too, and eternally glorified, for all these things were before God’s mind together, without time. It is not true that Romans 4:25 means because we were justified; ‘because we were justified’ is not in the passage: dikaivwsi" cannot mean it, but ‘for justifying us’; it would have been, diaV toV dikaiwqh'nai hJma'". Hence, when the part, passive is used, faith is added; wherefore, dikaiwqevnte", “having been justified by faith.”

Ephesians 4:18 proves the contrary to what it is alleged. They were “alienated from the life of God” when they were in darkness; and then he talks of learning Christ—that is, when unbelievers, they had to learn Him: if they had, indeed, learned Him according to the truth in Him; namely, the putting off according to the former conversation the old man, and being renewed in the spirit of their mind. Now, here is a work clearly wrought in them; if they had really learned Christ, they knew what it was to put off the old man; they had it before, and put on the new, which they had not before. To say that a man is born of God when he is in sins, is false; that he is created again in Christ Jesus when he is a mere sinner, is nonsense. Scripture does not speak so.

Justification is referred to faith, which I have not, assuredly, before I believe. High Calvinists have this manner of speaking. If they merely mean, that all was in God’s thoughts and purposes, it is all right. But scripture never speaks as they do, but puts a man as a creature, who belongs to time, into time, and deals morally with him. If it be said, that the life which we get existed eternally, for it was Christ who is our life, it is all well. But it is not ours till we have Christ, and before that we are children of wrath; at least, so says the scripture. The work may be all viewed mentally in Him, when the power wrought; but if it be referred to the saints, so that it is only their knowledge of it which is now given, it is untrue and mischievous, because God purifies the heart by faith, as well as justifies us. Scripture says, “what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power,” etc.; not to the elect. It had been only wrought in believers. I do not know whether it is held that faith is eternal.

* * * No doubt, pwvrwsi",55 being the active form of nouns, like dikaivwsi", may seem to raise a question; but if adequately considered, the difficulty disappears. For pwvrwsi" has the simple sense of a callous place, as one might say, ‘it is a hardening of the skin,’ though the form ‘hardening’ be active, because it was a gradual act, while it is now a state. So nevkrwsi" is applied to Sarah’s womb; and again, we are to carry about the nevkrwsi" of the Lord Jesus. But this is, I apprehend, in no way the case with justifying, or dikaivwsi". Diav always means “on account of:” the question is, does it here signify previous to, or after, the resurrection of Christ? People often cite the verse, as if it meant that

Christ was raised on account of our having been already justified before He rose. This, I am convinced, would require some such phrase as diaV toV dikaiwqh'nai hJma'", which essentially differs from that which Paul employs. In the present case, there would be no process like that pwvrwsi", or nevkrwsi" (which words express a state as result), but a state existing by the simple act of another, a relationship in virtue of an act done. This, the active form, does not, I believe, express; an effect to be produced it can express. The great doctrinal mischief of the alleged rendering, ‘because of,’ is, that it excludes faith from justifying, which is Calvinism, or ultra-Calvinism, but wholly unscriptural.

* * * * *

My dear Sister,—I was right in reading the postscript of your sister’s letter, for, as I supposed, it shews much more of the state of her mind than all the rest. She has her mind bent on a place of ministry; and I do feel that, blest as she has been, she is on the brink of a precipice, though, as yet, she may not have fallen into it. I do not question that women had gifts. It is evident; the scripture is quite plain. So that all the passages brought to prove this, prove only what is fully admitted, before the real question is touched. Further, that women laboured in the Lord, that is also true, as I doubt not many have most sweetly, even in these days; and for my own part I should most entirely rejoice in it. But that is not the question. The question is about the assemblies of God: and these the word of God is as plain as possibly can be, to forbid it positively. In 1 Corinthians 11 after giving directions for the modesty of the manner of a woman’s praying or prophesying, he goes on to speak of their coming together in verse 17: the previous part

having nothing to do with an assembly, the directions for which commence with verse 17. He continues on through chapter 14 the question of assemblies, having treated of gifts in themselves, and compared with charity (chap, xiii.) as necessary to the subject, and resumes fully in verse 23 the assembly; and having spoken of “all assemblies of the saints” —God being the author of peace in them—He says positively, “Let your women keep silence in the assemblies, for it is not permitted unto them to speak.” In 1 Timothy 2 the apostle says, “I will therefore that men pray everywhere. … In like manner also that women adorn themselves…. Let the women learn in silence with all subjection: but I suffer not a woman to teach … but to be in silence.” Now if the gifts were denied to have been given to women, passages may be produced which plainly shew they had them, and overthrow such denial; but there is nothing whatever to modify these rules. Only two or three prophets were to speak in the assembly; there might be twenty that had gifts in it, but the order of the assembly was such for men: for women it was to hold their tongues. The possession of a gift by a man did not warrant their breaking the rule laid down by the apostle, whose directions were of authority; nor did the possession of a gift by a woman warrant her breaking the rule as to woman. There being neither male nor female in Christ Jesus has nothing to do with gifts in assemblies, but their unity in life and privileges in Christ. No question of expediency can warrant departure from scripture regulations, and departure from them will soon end in sorrow and confusion.

My advice to your sister is, that it is she herself that is setting aside one passage by another: because I admit

all her passages recognise the gifts in women and their labour. But as man's exercise of gift was regulated (the spirit of the prophets being subject to the prophets), so also was woman's, and differently: they were not to speak at all in the assemblies, nor to teach. You should urge upon your sister these passages, and that she is going positively contrary to the word of God; and I say to you, I do really think she is in a very dangerous path. Very faithfully yours, dear Miss——, in the Lord.

[Date unknown.

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* * * The scripture is plain,56 that it is forbidden to a woman even to ask questions. It is not seemly for angels or men. If any strangers are allowed to come in who wish it, I should consider it a public assembly; but if it be an individual meeting for any beyond the saints, then it has a private character, and I think the woman's place is as in any other private assembly: only that in divine things, and in christian women, modesty and a retiring spirit is of great price with God. If it be a regular meeting of the assembly, the woman's part is surely to be silent. In a private meeting, it is merely a question of the modesty that becomes them. We are called to peace.

[1861]

* * * Remember you are young at the work, and carry it on much before God. Seek to be emptied of self, and see only the Lord and souls in it: you know, if any real work is done He does it. Be much with God: do not suppose I say this to discourage you. If there is one desire upon my heart, after the blessing itself, it is that God would give and encourage true labourers to go between Him and souls: but this is what it must be, or surely we have

nothing to bring, nor (if not much with Him) any power, if we know the truth. He is to be revealed, and He alone can do this; but when much with Him we always learn, and oh! to what profit, our own nothingness.

1861.

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* * * Baptism has nothing to do with the church57 properly speaking; that is, viewed as the body of Christ. It is by one Spirit we are baptised into one body. Baptism does not, in figure, carry faith further than resurrection. For the body we must have the ascension of the Head, and the consequent sending down of the Holy Ghost to form it: of that the Lord's supper is the sacramental sign. Baptism is therefore individual, and is as a figure the bringing out of the individual from the flesh and his old life in Adam by death into a new individual position in life (but on the earth) in resurrection. Two great truths seem to me to accompany this: the revelation of the Persons of the Godhead, for the Father sent the Son, and the Son and the Father too have sent down the Spirit who reveals them. The revelation is a revelation of God. If thus born of God, even this truth enters into all my relationship. God is my Father; in Christ risen I have the form and power of sonship; and it is in the Holy Ghost the spirit of adoption is. It is, however, mainly the revelation of God as Father, Son, and Holy Ghost which is in question. The other great truth brought out in Christianity is, that Jesus Christ (that glorious Man) is Lord, our Lord Jesus Christ. This, while closely connected with the glory of His Person in the name Jesus, is the anointed man, the Christ.

This revelation of the Godhead and of the Lordship of Christ forms the basis and substance of Christianity itself as a profession, along with the subjective truth that flesh—fully proved already—can have nothing to say to it. I must enter by death into this new sphere, into relationship with God, and, as risen, become the servant of Christ, as Lord. Hence, in Ephesians 4, we have one body, one Spirit, one hope of our calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism. The first is the full heavenly and essential thing in connection with Christ; the second, the profession upon earth in connection with the Lordship of Christ. Hence, also Paul, who saw Christ only in heavenly glory, and to whom the ministry and revelation of the church was committed, was not sent to baptise; and in Matthew, where the commission referred to was given, we have not the ascension at all. Here Jerusalem is gone, and Christ is associated with the remnant in Galilee already around Him, and they were to disciple the nations. This does not connect itself directly with the millennium, but with the ministration of the gospel of the kingdom, which precedes it, and does go out into all nations before the end comes—the end of the age. The millennium is brought in by the coming back of the Lord in glory from heaven. This precedes it. Hence in Matthew He says, “and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age;” that is, the age which precedes the coming of Messiah in glory to set up the kingdom publicly. Hence, I do not see why this mission should not go on when the church is gone up. It does not directly contemplate the church, but so neither does baptism ever: it does profess Father, Son and Holy Ghost, and the Lordship of Christ, when He is not yet revealed from heaven.

Baptism, therefore, is the public testimony of reception by death and resurrection. That is, now Christ is rejected, we have the public witness that flesh has no place with God; that life is in the Son and given of God—that it is on the ground consequently of the revelation of God as Father, Son, and Holy Ghost (the Father who has given this life in sending Jesus, in whom it is, and the Spirit's witness of it because He is truth)— all this is on earth, as the Apostle John's witness always is; and that, walking in this world, we own and are subject to Jesus as the Lord.

The formula I only so far attach importance to as being the expression of the truth. If one were bonâ fide baptised in the name of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, according to the present Lordship of Christ, I should consider them baptised, though the words were not used. Though, in saying that, I think the maintenance and holding fast a form of sound words has its place and importance: and I need not say we have none better than those of scripture, of the Lord Himself and His apostles I only mean, if they were not used, but the person bonâ fide baptised in the acknowledgment of the thing, it would be real baptism. For my own part, I always use both. And I believe every one rightly baptised is baptised to the Lord Jesus, in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. He is given up to Christ, once dead, but now risen, and Lord, through death and resurrection—to Him as Lord, but according to the revelation contained in those words, "Every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord." We do it when He is not manifested as such before the world. We do it through the knowledge of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; that is God so revealed. They are not baptised to the

Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. We join the risen Christ as Lord by baptism: we are baptised to Him; but it is in the confession of this wonderful and complete revelation of God in grace, and in truth, too, through Him, but by the Holy Ghost, who is truth. Of course this involves the acknowledgment of the Lordship of Christ; and thus we are baptised in His name. It is the thing we are to look to, not the mere formula.

1861.

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* * * That the saints are caught away before vengeance58 bursts upon professors is quite certain, because it is when Christ appears that He executes vengeance. (2 Thess. 1:8-10 and a multitude of passages.) Now when Christ appears, we appear with Him. (Col. 3:4.) Matthew 13:41, 43 only proves that, when the wicked are judged, the righteous shine forth; but they had been previously gathered into the garner, in order to do so. In verse 49 the judgment severs the wicked from among the just. This is not the rapture. Judgment leaves the just where they were; one is taken and the other left, as in Matthew 24. In this last case the sphere is narrower, but the principle is the same. It is well to remark that the explanation does not refer to the same event as the parable explained, but gives further particulars. This is a general rule of interpretation. The public visible judgment of God explains what has to be understood when it is not visible. Privilege is a matter of faith.

As regards suffering and death for His name, it is a privilege compared with those left on earth; but it is only in this case for righteousness and the prophetic

knowledge of the name of Jesus, for “the spirit of prophecy is the testimony of Jesus.” They did not confess and know Him as Son of God, as the members of the church did. When forced by growing wickedness, through grace they would not deny divine hopes, and they will have their reward. They would have done better to have owned Him in peace, when not so forced; but God is wise and perfect in all things.

The tares are declared to be taken in hand before the wheat is gathered into the garner; but, as we have seen, when the tares are burnt, the wheat is already in the garner and then shines forth. As regards the unparalleled tribulation in Matthew xxiv., and the passages from which that is taken, it is exclusively Jewish. There is no passage to prove there is such a tribulation but those which prove it is Jewish. As to the more general tribulation mentioned in Revelation 3, it is only mentioned to declare that the saints shall be kept from that hour. Then, again, a countless multitude come out of the great tribulation in Revelation 7. Revelation 19:14 and Colossians 3:4, of course, agree with and confirm all other scriptures on the subject. These only go, however, to prove distinctly that the saints are with Christ before He appears; but not how long they have been so.

‘Some of the saints’ is vague. It speaks as if they were one common category. The day will not take any by surprise that go to heaven. They will be gone before the day which comes at Christ’s appearing. But there is a difference. The saints who have fallen asleep, and those belonging to the church alive, will be caught up to meet Christ in the air when He descends then from His Father’s throne. But neither 1 Peter 4:17, 18 nor 1

Corinthians 3 applies to this. One applies to labourers even in the apostle's days; the other to the contrast between the righteous and the ungodly. Those who are not manifested as members of Christ when He receives the church to Himself will either remain on earth as God's people during the millennium, or if killed, as we have seen, have part in the kingdom on high. 1 Corinthians 15:51 applies, as is there seen, to the manifested members of the church of God. Matthew 24:22 has nothing to do with the matter. It is the sparing the Jewish saints or remnant, saving flesh, in the time of their peculiar trouble. When Christ appears, all the saints, conformed to His risen image, will appear with Him in glory. He will "be glorified in his saints and admired in all them that believe, in that day." He will also come attended with all His holy angels. It is evident that He can come with only those who are with Him. The people spared on earth, when He comes and judges, do not come with Him.

[1861]

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* * * I see no reason to doubt that all saints59 who have died will be raised up when Christ comes and changes us—the living that remain to the moment of His presence—and both shall be caught up together in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. "They that are Christ's," in 1 Corinthians 15:23, seem to me a category put in an expressly large style so as to embrace the saints before the church as well as such as compose it. Compare Hebrews 11 And this is confirmed by the special communication which begins at 1 Corinthians 15:51: "Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all

sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." Here there is a secret beyond the Old Testament which revealed no more than the resurrection, and the coming with the Lord in the day of His appearing. (Job. 19, Zech. 14) But the apostle was inspired to add both the manner of raising the dead saints and especially the change of us the living, then found here below, who shall all be alike changed, and, according to 1 Thessalonians 4, caught up to meet the Lord above. Hence in this latter scripture, "put to sleep through Jesus," may be said of dead Christians (the occasion of the need of comfort to the living, ver. 13), while the next verse speaks with greater comprehensiveness of those fallen asleep in general. Again, "the dead in Christ" need not be restrained to those since redemption; it is in contrast with the dead in Adam, or after a merely natural sort.

There is nothing said of raising saints from the dead under the seventh trumpet, though I do not object to the conclusion that, as it is the winding up of God's appeals to the world and the introduction of the world-kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ, so it announces the judicial recompense in broad terms up to the end. The time of award to His "servants the prophets, and to the saints," etc., does not fix it as the moment of their resurrection—they may well have been raised before. At any rate, nothing of the kind can be built on a passage which is silent as to that for which it is alleged.

Nor is there the least warrant to connect "the seventh trumpet" with "the last trump" of 1 Corinthians 15, nor even with the "great sound of a trumpet" in Matthew

24:“The seventh” is of course the closing one of the Apocalyptic series and of the general course of the book up to the kingdom. “The last trump” of 1 Corinthians 15 means simply the final summons when the heavenly saints leave their earthly sojourn to join the Lord—a figure, like others in the chapter, taken from familiar military matters. The trumpet in the gospel is rather connected with the divine call to gather Israel from all lands according to the prophets. There is no doubt that when this point is reached all the departments of the kingdom, heavenly and earthly, will be occupied and displayed by Christ, the risen saints, and the people of God, nor will it cease till every creature, even of the lost, bows and confesses that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father. Daniel and Job will be there, of course, among the rest.

The scripture which is most to the point (of proving saint? raised just before the millennial kingdom begins) is Revelation 20:4; but I see no reason to doubt that the first class already enthroned includes the Old Testament saints with the church, while the two classes particularly described and then raised in addition to the foregoing are only the Apocalyptic confessors. This then gives no countenance to the view, that the Old Testament saints are reserved till then. The sufferers at the end of this age are specified as then made to live and reign with Christ: else they might seem to have lost all as regards the kingdom. No others are said to be raised at that time.

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* * * The sacrifices60 spoken of in the first chapters of Leviticus present to us, 1-3, the intrinsic value and

character of the sacrifice and self-offering of Christ, as estimated in communion. In chapter 4-6 7, the case is put, “if a soul sin;” that is, it is to meet the positive need of a soul, its positive sin, of whatever character; and he is, or they are, if it be all the people, forgiven. Atonement or forgiveness is not spoken of in the sacrifice for the high priest. The statement may be carried on, as all intercourse is interrupted for the people, to verse 20; if not, it is an exceptional case. In Leviticus 16 it seems to me more the establishment of relationship with God; or, more accurately, the ground of relationship. We do not hear of forgiveness. Sin is put away; the character of God is made good and glorified, and the sins all borne away—unclean-ness removed, so that things are clean. The priest goes in within the veil, so as to give God the ground of a relationship with the people by blood when sin was there, and the tabernacle was sprinkled so as to be suited for God’s dwelling, and then all the sins carried away into a land not inhabited. Thus God could be with the people. Personal, individual forgiveness was made good by the sin and trespass offerings. This double character was partly connected with the imperfect character of the sacrifices which required repetition, and the veil not being rent. But we acquire thus the knowledge of the double aspect of the work; relationship sinless, righteous relationship—and forgiveness.

This subject is treated in Hebrews 9, 10, where the day of atonement having been stated, as in chapter 9, as once for all—leading God’s people to look for Christ, for whom He will come apart from all sin, because He has put it away for them —chapter 10 applies it, and shews that the yearly sacrifices (Lev. 16) served as continual

remembrance of sins, that they were not put away: that Christ has offered Himself, setting aside through the body prepared for Him, all the sacrifices of Leviticus of every kind, in the work that He did as accomplishing the imperfect figure of Leviticus 16, because, by that work which He wrought to reconcile us to God, He bore and put away all sin for those that believe on Him, so that there is no more sacrifice for sin. The general statement of chapter 9:12-14, takes up the day of atonement and the red heifer, and shews the purging of the conscience by Christ. This is opened out in application in chapter 10.

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* * * The question61 is a mistake. The prophets are not considered as a distinct body of persons at all. It is not oiJ profhvtai, but such. In verse 31 it is stated, “You may all prophesy one by one, that all may learn and all may be encouraged.” “Let the prophets speak” is a false translation; so is “the spirit of the prophets.” It should be, “the spirits of prophets.” Hence the whole question falls to the ground. The passage is the same as if the apostle should say, ‘(As to) prophets, let two or three persons speak and the rest judge. If there be a revelation to another person sitting by, let the first hold his peace. For you may all prophesy one by one, that all may learn, and all may be encouraged. And the spirits of prophets are subject to the prophets (that is, he can control himself, and stop, if another has anything to say). For God is not the author of confusion (two or. three speaking at once), but of order, as in all assemblies of the saints. Let your women keep silence in the assemblies, for it is not permitted to them to speak.’

To all others, it is permitted, if the Spirit gives them anything.

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50 ‘What is meant by being “partakers of the divine nature” (2 Peter 1:4), and how and when is this effected? Does any scripture speak of it?’

51 ‘On the supposition of a Jewish remnant, distinct from the church of God now in process of formation, and the object of God’s dealing after we have been caught up, and before we appear with Christ in glory, how far will they all know Jesus? Will they enter into His sufferings, or His glory in heaven? How far will they apprehend the teaching of such Psalms as 8; 68; 80; 110; or of such prophecies as Isaiah 53; Daniel 9; Micah 5; Zechariah 12?’

52 ‘What are the views entertained about the new covenant with Israel and Judah? (Heb. 8:10.) Is it not made? If not yet, when and how is it to be ratified? The blood of bulls and goats is clearly unavailing to purge the conscience. (Heb. 10)’

53 Romans 3:23 interpreted to mean “have come short” instead of “do come short”: the tense contributing to make the meaning clear; namely, all have failed to exhibit the glory of God, rather than all fail to obtain it.

54 ‘Is it sound doctrine: that believers were justified, quickened, raised, etc., in and with Christ, when He died and rose again; that is, that they were justified before they were born, and that faith merely gives the knowledge of it?’

55 ‘I believe there is no sufficient reason to doubt that Romans 4:25 means that Christ was raised “for our

justification.” I hare heard it argued, however, that diaV thVn pwvrwtin, in Ephesians 4:18, which beyond question means “because of,” and not for “the hardness,” etc., sets aside the reasoning grounded on the form of the word dikaivwsi". What think you?’

56 ‘What is the woman’s part at religious meetings?’

57 ‘Is the instruction in Matthew 28:19, to baptise “in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost,” the formula of baptism for the Church? If it is, how is it we have no mention of the use of this formula in the Acts, but have repeated mention of believers being “baptised in the name of the Lord Jesus”? (Acts 8:16; 19:5.) Is being baptised “in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost” and being baptised “in the name of the Lord” one and the same thing? If not, what is the difference; and which are we to observe?’

58 ‘Whether the saints will be caught away ere vengeance bursts upon the professors. If so, how is Matthew 13:41, 43, 49 to be explained? And is it not a matter for joy when they are called upon to suffer unto death for His name?

‘Or will the saints be suffered, except those fallen asleep, to go through all the tribulation, and then delivered and blessed, after the tares have been taken in hand, at the revelation of Christ? If so, how are Revelation 19:14 and Colossians 3:4 to be explained?

‘Or will some of the saints be taken before the others, one class being abundantly, the other scarcely, saved; one receiving a reward, the other saved so as by fire; one consisting of those who will open to Him immediately, and the other of those whom that day will more or less take by surprise ? See, too, Revelation 3:10.

If so, how are 1 Corinthians 15:51, Matthew 24:22, and generally those passages which declare that Christ will come with all His saints—how are such to be explained?

59 ‘When will the Old Testament saints be raised? Are they included in “they that are Christ’s at his coming,” and raised when the Church is caught up; or are they only raised on the sounding of the seventh trump (Rev. 11:15-18), that being the final one of this dispensation, thus in keeping with the word to Daniel (chap. 12:13) and that which Job says (chap. 19:25-27)? Was not this expecting Him on the earth, as in the Millennium?’

60 ‘What is the difference of the offerings of sweet savour, those for sin, etc., and those of atonement day?’

61 ‘1 Corinthians 14:29. Does “the other” mean the rest of the prophets?’

Appendix Section 4

* * * It is important to bear in mind that, whatever62 may be the display and power of grace, the principles of righteousness are in no way set aside, but, on the contrary, maintained thereby. The day will declare that God renders to each according to his works. Life eternal He will give to those who, by patient continuance of good work, seek for glory, honour, and incorruptibility. He will give this, I say; because here eternal life is viewed on the side of glory, not as a present thing, as St. John does; and hence it appears as the issue of a holy, fruit-bearing course. On the other hand, to such as are contentious and disobedient to the truth, but who obey unrighteousness, there shall be indignation and wrath, tribulation and distress, on every soul of man that worketh evil, etc. (Compare John 5:29; Galatians 6:8.) Mark the two-fold truth. “Each of us shall give account of himself to God.” Yet shall the believer not come into judgment (John 5:24)—not into condemnation merely, but judgment. Doubtless, in the unbeliever’s case to give account of himself will be, in effect, both judgment and condemnation. But neither is true of the believer. Nevertheless, it is certain that the believer will be manifested (not judged) before the judgment-seat of Christ. All must be manifested there, in fact, whether saint or sinner; that each may receive the things done in (or by) the body, according to what he has done, whether it be good or evil. Even for the believer, all his ways are far from being the fruit of righteousness by Jesus Christ. As for the labourer, there might be work done with sorry materials, and this will have its

consequences in glory, though the person is supposed to be saved.

It is just the same principle in the last passage, as indeed in a crowd of others. 1 John 1:9 does not modify, much less contradict, this. It is involved in repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. Nor does Hebrews 10:17 clash either, as some might think. No sin is remembered as a question of pardon; nothing is forgotten as a question of divine vindication and retribution. We shall know as we are known, and God be magnified in all His ways.

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Dearest ——,—The objection63 as to Thyatira is all a delusion, as to the principle of the addresses. The churches are addressed as churches and in the character of churches; that is, as standing on the principles on which Christ had placed the church, though noting to the church thus responsible the evils that were coming in. The address is not to Balaam or Jezebel, but to the church, and therein to such as had ears to hear—to the church in character, and in fact to those who had the consciousness of the responsibility in which a Christian stood in that character: the character then, not necessarily the extent of the evil or state, whatever it might be, is noticed. If that state was general deadness, that of course is noticed; if seduction of false doctrine, that is, not to what extent it has acted; the principle of the church being the birth-place of children to Jezebel, and of her adulteries—not the number of her children, but that true saints accepted this condition of things—all this leading to the Lord’s coming. In the first church it had left its first love; it is

not said how far: that remains true up to Laodicea, but does not characterise the evil which those who have ears to hear have to judge (at the beginning it did), it was the evil with Jezebel allowed: it would have been out of place to say so, though of course it was true. The churches give the distinction of the character of evil, and those in whom good is found, as specially manifested and directed in respect of the state described. No doubt it literally applied to Thyatira at the time, and was to be so received; while for him that has ears to hear it has a voice in all times—what voice? something not applying to a church state at all. For the direct proofs we must go over the general arguments and details, such as the promise to Philadelphia. (Rev. 3:10.)

Lacking of love, tried faith, persecution, succeeded it—not how many were persecuted. Satan's seat. Then there was infidelity as regards evil in the professing church, and faith was called to look on to the Lord's coming and be faithful: given those who had not mixed themselves up with Jezebel, the rest would be chastened if not cut off. I do not think Protestants are the synagogue of Satan: they are much more Sardis—those who insist on traditional successional religion, religion of ordinances, the modern Judaizers—these are the synagogue of Satan as to the spirit of the thing; and that they thoroughly are, though saints, and Barnabases may be ensnared by them.

As to Revelation 17:12—the question is a wider one than the texts cited can decide, not that they are not to the purpose: w{ran in John 4:52 is the object of "inquired," as in the form 'inquired the hour at which'—as well as at what hour. So Revelation 3:3, ouj mhV gnw'/" poivan

w{ran. Whereas lambavnousi as its object basileivan: and in Acts 10:3 wJseiV marks it as a point. But all this is somewhat beside the mark. I apprehend it is as used to be said, katav left out; and the idea of period, a point, depends on the context in the nature of the word: kataV toV mesonuvktion [Acts 16:25]—a point evidently: kataV deV eJorthVn, during, at the time of [Matt. 27:15]: w{ran ejnnavthn points to the epoch evidently [Acts 10:3], which w{seiV confirms. But with mivan [see Rev. 17:12]—not prwvthn—it is a period. Indeed eJorthvn is not exactly time, but the time having that character. In general it is a known rule, the time at or in which a thing happens, genitive—during which, accusative. As to this I see no great difficulty: it would be merely technical. In Revelation 17:12 I do not see the smallest doubt. I have nothing to uphold here, for the kings receiving the kingdom at the same time with the beast is equally true: the other mode only determines the equal duration also. Acts 10:30, we have at the (ejnnavthn w{ran—there also it is evident) ninth hour: with mivan it is not so, it could have no such sense. See Matthew 20:12; Mark 14:37. Matthew 26:40. Whereas kataV mivan sabbavtwn, 1 Cor. 16:2, has necessarily the sense of the first, because it is after the sabbath. There is no mivan w{ran by itself but for during one hour.

The view of the temple is a mistake. The temple or house is always God’s house and always the same house. “The latter glory of this house” is Haggai’s (2:9) word, not “the glory of the latter house;” and whoever sets up in it or has built it, it has never ceased to be God’s house. So 1 Kings 9:3, “I have hallowed this house which thou hast built to put my name there for ever; and mine eyes and mine heart shall be there perpetually.” It will

be built as God's house, much more truly than Herod did it. So Christ calls it "my Father's house;" not in reference to who built it (nor did God in fact dwell there —in that sense He was the temple), but because it was by God's original declaration, at all times, God's house. Further, I do not believe in the vast power of Antichrist, though I do in the vast mischief, spiritually speaking. I believe he is the second beast. (Rev. 13)

As to life, it is all captious (though true souls may be troubled by such) from using life in two senses. When I lay down my life I live still with the very same soul I had before. Now I may use life for the state of living, and as living in that state. I live in flesh and blood, and that could not go to heaven: I lose my life, but that only in the state in which I had it—I am just as much alive as ever, "for all live unto him:" "He is not a God of dead but of living." But if it was said that I had the life I had before, it would be wretched and false; because before, or laying down, refers to the state I had it in. Yet I have the life I had before if I speak of my soul, and of the life of Christ I have received. I use this to shew it is merely a false quibble by using life in two senses. I never die if I take what my life is—I do, if I take its status and condition; I die and take, or am given at least, my life again. I say this, not that there is no difference in Christ, but to shew the point of the fallacy. But Christ clearly never ceased to exist if we take Him in His human soul, to say nothing of His divine nature. But when He laid down His life and took it again, it is not taking again the existence of His soul or His divinity, but the fact of reuniting His soul and body as a living Man. What was essential to Him as His life, He could not take again. It was a living status of soul and body united; as in dying

He had given up a living status: but the living status He took up was not the same living status He laid down. This last is distinguished as “the days of his flesh.” He has now as risen a different Condition in manhood than that He had, neither can He die any more.

But I have no wish to enter on these questions with objectors: [difficulties] produced in minds I may meet, but reasonings on them I am not disposed to meet, because I do not believe in the sincerity of the motives of those who do so. And there is no good in reasoning with such, unless to confound them personally where forced to do it. Half and much more of the cavillers I meet are best met by silence. It is the proof that you do not account that they really desire the truth. It is well to let some things die out, and not give importance to them by combating them. One may have to meet such in individual cases, and then may count on God’s help, but positive truth fully taught best meets error. Heretics are generally unsound on something beneath, and deeper than their motives.

I am at this moment doubting about arousing Maurice by a tract on annihilation, and resuscitating one who is evidently to me dying out. Yet he has exposed himself by the greatest effrontery of blundering and done mischief. My conviction is— God has raised up a standard against it (annihilation), though mischief has been done, and it has got into the churches (so-called)… I should hardly think a person who took ouj mhV… eij" toVn aijw'na64 for ‘not for ever’ worthy of replying to; it is evident perverseness. The Greek evidently would be … oujk eij" toVn aijw'na, etc., at any rate, not mhv.

[1861.]

* * * * *

Dear Mrs. ——,—Thank you for your kind note, and the many kind services you have rendered me in times past. I bless the Lord that now that you require more rest and less labour your soul can enjoy so peacefully the Lord's gracious and faithful love. It is a comfort, after the toil and labour of the way, to feel that after all one's own proper portion is preserved and kept in Him, so that even before we go hence we can, when He give us a little leisure, rejoice in His infinite and precious love. The perfectness of Christ, when the soul rests on Him, fills and satisfies when we can occupy ourselves with it, as it has sustained and helped us through the toil and danger of the road. He has been manna for the journey through the wilderness, and we are entitled to feed on Him as the corn of the heavenly land, when in spirit we pass beyond Jordan. This supposes that our souls have perfect rest in Him as the true sacrifice, and our effectual and accomplished redemption.

Surely indeed we may say that goodness and mercy have followed us all the days of our life. In the various scenes and many conflicts I have been in, and the experience of my own weakness, I can bear testimony with my whole heart to His most gracious, faithful, and unfailing love, and bless Him for His great patience, too, with me. It seemed, no doubt, here a somewhat changed house when you were not here; but all changes but that to which God would attach our hearts for ever, and He ever more weans our hearts from all that does change, to make us perfectly happy in Him.

You will be glad and thankful to hear that I have been greatly comforted and rejoiced in meeting the brethren

here. The Lord makes all things work together for good to them that love Him. Mr. —— had left, so that the brethren were left very much to themselves as to public ministry, but it has cast them much on the Lord, and I found them, I think, in a very gracious state. In their prayer meetings there seems a reality and humbleness so that you might be sure God was going to bless. The Lord keep us all there. It is not as if many answers from Him were not still needed; but they seem very truly before Him… Peace and grace be with you, and the joy, comfort, and strength of the Lord's presence, and believe me, dear Mrs. ——, Your affectionate brother and servant in Christ.

[From the French.

* * * I Was very glad to get your letter and news of our dear brethren in France, now that I am busy in England, where the work is extending. … I always hoped that our dear brother —— would one day be useful. I hope that he will keep very near the Lord, and that he will read the word much for himself. I say for himself, not for his work. That is the right way to read it—"If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink, and out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." You drink for yourself, you thirst for yourself, thus it is that rivers flow from us for others… Is the word always very precious to you, and do you read it with power? I see the practical power of the Spirit in the christian life more distinctly than ever; in the word, too, the absolute distinction there is between the life of the last Adam and that of the first. It is nothing new, but more distinct and deep in my heart, as well as the new position in which the Christian is placed.… What a picture that is of Acts 7 for the outward manifestation of these things; the man that

resists the Holy Spirit, and the man that is full of it. But I was speaking more of the things in themselves.

[1862.]

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* * * This is an important ordinance.65 First, there is tender compassion for the poor in the things of God. Next, as to the sacrifice itself, weighty principles are contained in it. No sin could be forgiven without a sacrifice or offering for sin. This particularly characterises this part of the instructions as to sacrifice. If one failed to discover what he knew, when adjured, to hide sin; or touched, without even knowing it, what was unclean; when he was aware of it, he was guilty. No poverty could bring compassion into play without an offering. Let one be ever so dull in the apprehension of sin, or, consequently, of atonement, still guilt was there if evil was touched. On the other hand, if truth of purpose was there in owning it, and owning it in such sort that the need of atonement before God was felt, which alone consequently is recognised as owning sin, the poverty of apprehension does not hinder the perfect forgiveness. That rests on the value of the sacrifice; only Christ must be seen as a sacrifice for sin as one rejected, a sin-bearer for us. The fact of its being fine flour without blood hardly affects the principle of blood-shedding. It comes where blood-shedding is universally required for sin, and is only an exception in view of poverty to shew that, in no case, without a sin-offering, is there forgiveness, and carries as an exceptional case the character of blood along with it as the principle. It is not that one kind of sin requires blood and another not; but incapacity by poverty puts this in place of a bloody

offering, and it is so accounted. Only if a real sense of needed atonement be there, the want of apprehension of the full import of sin and death, that is of Christ's death and blood-shedding, will not prevent the getting the benefit of that death and blood-shedding. The female sacrifice was accounted of less value. In Leviticus 5 it begins with a female. It was not in the first instance a bad conscience in doing it.

[1862.]

* * * As regards the estimate66 which the Old Testament saints formed of the sacrifices and types of the Old Testament, no one can speak definitely. That estimate was as various as we now see the estimate of renewed souls as to the value of Christ's work is, if by value is meant the intelligent estimate of it. All that any one could speak of now is what the Old Testament afforded them, so that the Holy Ghost could act by the word upon those who had spiritual intelligence according to the measure of that day. Now I know of no fact in Christ's history which is not testified of in the prophets—His birth, His sufferings (even the details), His ascension, His sitting at the right hand of God, His coming again, and all the glories that should follow His sufferings. The only truths, that I am aware of, which were not revealed were the church, and His present intercession at the right hand of God—truths, it is remarkable, equally omitted in John i., in the catalogue of the glories of Christ there given, as well as (but for another reason) the fact that He was the Christ. Hence, the only question is, when they had the prophets, how far they were spiritual enough to connect these revelations with the types in order to understand them?

This depended on individual spirituality and divine teaching; only we must remember it could not be said, “Ye have an unction from the Holy One and ye know all things.” They had not the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of truth, to guide into all truth. This makes all the difference as to intelligence. Further, it was not the intention of God, while the veil was unrent, to put the consciences of saints in the position in which the rending of it was to set them—so that “the worshippers once purged should have no more conscience of sins.” Alas! many Christians are in a Jewish state in this respect. Had this been the case, the free admission of the Gentiles by faith on the same footing would have been the consequence, as this was not intended. On the other hand, there was the thought, that the time was coming when the nation’s sins and iniquities would be remembered no more, and this faith could look forward to, as to the then rejoicing of the Gentiles with His people, and a heavenly portion for the departed saints. This leads back to the original promise of the seed of the woman bruising the serpent’s head; and it, again, held out to faith a full restoration of man from the ruin, which though vague might have been complete in expectation. The clothing with skins, and Abel’s sacrifice, and Noah’s, point to covering and acceptance through a sacrifice; Isaac’s, to the faith of resurrection. But when sacrifices were legally instituted and the law given, hopes of forgiveness and restoration in peace in a coming age, but no purged conscience, save occasional at the present time, marked the condition of the worshipper. Before that time it was a larger expectation of restoration and goodness, and founded on sacrifices and covering iniquity and nakedness before God; but, though larger and more complete, more vague, of course, by the seed of the

woman, resurrection and heavenly things coming in. For this both Enoch and Abraham, and even Job, furnished evidence. Under the prescription of the law the conscience was more brought under the yoke, present occasional forgiveness by a sin-offering more definite, but it was narrowed into present occasional clearing, and the hope of deliverance put into the age to come and connected with Messiah, as we know also it will be. With all this was connected a feebler estimate of sin and of the need consequently of divine righteousness, though this was prophetically intimated, but also in the age to come. There was sense of sin, of being shapen in iniquity (but no intelligence of a conflict between flesh and Spirit) and thus as a present thing righteousness looked for in the Lord; but, before the law, divine favour and the averting a curse by sacrifice; under the law, a definite sin-offering meeting the actual sins of the individual or of all, and a general sense of maintenance of heart in divine favour by the day of atonement—the state as I have said in which most Christians are.

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* * * I do not, in reference to the questions asked,67 attach any importance to the presence or absence of kurio". Griesbach retains it; the more recent editors give it up, with several Uncials and other authorities. As to the question itself, I judge the ejx oujranou' to be more characteristic than relative to any ‘descent’ from heaven, but that character to be drawn from the place He came from: origin is universally used as characteristic. Race and kind are the same word, gevno". Thus the genitive (or really generic) case, and ejk, which expresses origin, are in very many (perhaps all) languages used as characteristic, and in force are

adjectives. In Hebrew it is well known, as in Greek, in French, English, and other modern languages; so that it may be considered as belonging to the structure of the human mind. This may be drawn from place or origin, or the material of which anything is composed. It so far differs from an adjective that it is constitutive of character, not the character itself simply.

Here we have ejk gh'" coi>kov" (“of the earth, earthy”). The former is the constitutive cause, the latter the actual character. But the cause was from origin; so with ejx oujranou'. It is characteristic, but because of the place of origin. He has not ceased to be it now; but what is expressed is not what He is now, because gone to heaven, but His character because of His origin. It attaches to His Person. He is so now, because He cannot be otherwise: because His origin was such, He was so on earth. The full display of this is when He takes the place of the ejpouravnio". (ver. 48); that gives the fulfilled consequent place, and, from the subject, is more than characteristic, though it be that. I judge, then, that ejx oujranou' is character from origin, or the place the Lord belonged to, as ejk gh'". Not that He came from, but that He was from, and of, and ever is. The result is, that the first is coi>kov", the second ejpouravnio". This is on high, the natural, normal, and purposed place of one ejx oujranou', who is become a man. But still it is character and nature, though the ejpiV suggests a place, I think. Hence, there is for it an abstract consequence of conformity, not a statement of what will happen: “as is the coi>kov", so they also that are coi>koiv; and as the ejpouravnio", so they also that are ejpouravnioi.” Then the form, not merely character and nature and time, is brought in. It is in the second case future. “As we have

borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." Thus origin, participation in nature and character, abstractedly given, and then actual conformity in glory, are successively, each in its place, introduced. It will be seen that, without much affecting the question, what I have said tends to justify the omission of kuvrio". If it be retained, I apprehend it should be read—"the second man, the Lord, from heaven." Not that I desire to separate "the Lord" from "from heaven," but to preserve the characteristic force of the latter.

As regards any difference in meaning in "second" and "last," I think the Spirit of God means a different thing. "The second" contrasts Him with the first. It is not a modifying or sanctifying or setting right the first, but setting up a second (we cannot have both to continue together) One of and from heaven. "The last" declares that this is final and conclusive. There is no other afterwards. If He be ejx oujranou', that is easily conceived. In these days, both these truths are of first-rate importance— the non-restoration of man, the first man who is set aside and under condemnation, and a new Man, a second Man, is brought in; and then He who is made known is the last Adam, the One, and only One, in whom blessing is to be found. Men will own Christ, even infidels now, to set up the first Adam; they will with hardihood declare Him to be the excellent in His day, but that there is progress through increasing light. Scripture, which foresees all things, declares that He is a "second," in contrast with the first; and that He is the "last," so that there is and can be no progress beyond Him: the perfection in which God delights, and the

centre and end of all His ways, to which those who are to be blessed with Him must be conformed.

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* * * As to aijw'na", Hebrews 1:2, I am not disposed to reject Alford’s view;68 that is, so far as it accepts a course or plan of God in the idea-world. But no person can have entered into the spirit of the Epistle to the Hebrews and seen its connection (that is, the way it meets the Kabbinical and Philonic views, giving God’s thoughts on the subjects they were speculating on), and not see that cuwi/as is not merely “ages” or “epochs.” It is bymlou br, or more specifically <lwu arwb, the Creator of the worlds. You may see Bleek, Delitzsch, De Wette, Liinemann, Schleusner, Schirlitz, Wahl—not that I accept all they say, but for the use of the word. Schoetgen (Hor. Heb.) says it is so common that it is useless to quote examples. Further, Hebrews 11:3 seems to me to leave no possible doubt, because it continues, “so that the things which are seen were not made of the things which do appear”—distinctly intimating that he speaks of visible creation. I do not see how it is possible to overlook this, or after it to call.the interpretation in question. ProV tw'n aijwvnwn shews, I think, the connection of the two. The critics refer to Ecclesiastes 3:11, as proving the same use of <l*ou. Hebrews 11:3, and the evident and constant use of the words in Jewish literature of the time, and the character of the epistle, leave no doubt of the meaning on my mind.

The notion of the word of the Son, in connection with His being placed heir, I should demur to. That it was the Son who spoke69 when it is said, “He spake, and it was made,” I have no objection to whatever; but the heir

constituting the ages I cannot accept here, because the statement is, “God spoke”— ejn &Uiw'/. For oJ qeoV" lalhvsa" … ejlavlhsen hJmi'n ejn uJiw'/, and so dij ou| k. t. aijw'na" ejpoivhsen is one phrase with one subject; and He who spoke is He who established the Heir of all things. So that I do not see how there is any possibility for the interpretation sought to be given; otherwise there is much I agree with.

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* * * I send the Psalms. I dare say I may send you a paper on the Song of Solomon, its connection with the remnant. I am not disposed to take up the question on John 6:53-58 till the way be matured as from the Lord in my mind. To raise discussions on the nature of Christ, or the union of the natures is the last thing I should desire. All of us would go wrong, and piety be eaten out.

I have no doubt C. H. M. has expressed himself unguardedly in his expressions, but the accusing him of denying the true humanity of Christ is simple unrighteousness. He is just as plain and clear as any of us on it. The poor church people glutton on what attacks brethren. I am sorry for it, but how can we help it? That is all the feeling I have about it. Tt is a very bad sign for them. That tract of Dr. Carson’s70 denies the first elements of Christianity, and they cannot find it out.

July. 1862.

* * * “From the beginning”71 is Christ in flesh, the beginning of God’s ways in grace. Man, as man, was only a field for bringing this out, however real a place he had in moral responsibility for this (which assuredly he had); but as to counsel, Christ is the object. Man develops, progresses, changes. “What was from the

beginning” in what God does, is perfect. This is a root-principle of Christianity, and makes the Person of Christ the foundation of all—His work displaying God’s moral nature for others, but the Person being that in which He is; and adherence is to Himself. This cannot change. The essence of Christianity is, therefore, that there is no development in it. (1 John 2:24.)

The change from “heard and seen” (ver. 1) to “seen and heard” (ver. 3) is because of the manifestation, I apprehend, spoken of in verse 2. But as hearing His word was the way of knowing Him and having eternal life, Christ having given them the words the Father had given Him, and by His title the Word, hearing was the first thing. They had thus His authority, believing Him (not their sight) as groundwork. But they did see Him. He was a real, living man then: and this was all-important. So we have “looking upon,” or contemplating, Him added. It was not a momentary vision. He was seen as a man walking amongst them. They had “handled” Him too: He was a real man come in flesh. This was the very essence of what they had, Jesus Christ come in flesh.

“If we say” in verse 6, etc., is this: grace and privilege are always in John connected with the Father and the Son; responsibility with God as connected with His nature. The first part of this chapter (vers. 1-4) gives the privilege and joy simply and fully. Verses 5 and 6 test the profession by the divine nature—purity—which, as light, revealing itself, detects everything. If they pretended to have the joy and were not in the light, it was a lie. The true knowledge of God, revealed in the soul such as He is in holiness and truth, must exist to have fellowship in grace. Though it is not necessarily according to the

light, it is in the light—only reality is supposed, walking in the light. The next, “if we say,” is a question of truth in us. (Ver. 8.) If Christ be in me as the truth, I shall be conscious of another principle and nature in me, which in itself always has its own will and fruits. I have not the truth in me, as the life of Christ is the truth in spiritual intelligence in me, if I do not know sin, which it is conscious of and judges, because it— truth—is in me. Sin here is the whole condition of the old man, though learnt by indwelling sin—specially this last. Then, if I say that I have not sinned (ver. 10), I make God a liar; for He has declared all men have sinned: Christianity is founded on it, and the death of Christ declares it. God’s word, in such a case, is not in us; for it reveals that all have sinned.

[1863]

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* * * I do not think that 1 John supposes that a Christian does not live without sinning. It shews that a holy provision is made for him, in case he does. It declares that he cannot say he has no sin, but sinning is put in the past. James, however, declares de facto we all offend in many things.

1 John 1:9,72 speaks neither of the time of our conversion, nor of our failures after it. Like John’s usual statements, it is abstract confession, which, and which alone, is true integrity of heart, and actual forgiveness goes with it. We are personally forgiven all trespasses, and stand abidingly in the power of that forgiveness, so that nothing is imputed to us personally (that is so as to put our persons out of grace). There is the present grace wherein we stand. But as regards the government of

God it is another matter. Then I read, “If he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.” Hence we are to pray for those who have sinned not unto death, to confess our faults one to another, and to pray one for another. Hence in its place the church, and Paul in his, could forgive sins, as we read in Corinthians. There was a binding in heaven of what was bound on earth, and a loosing in heaven of what was loosed on earth. So, when at Paul’s first answer all men forsook him, he prayed that this might not be laid to their charge. The Lord’s warnings to His disciples that, if they did not forgive, they would not be forgiven, equally apply. It is not a question of justification with the believer, but of present relationship in divine favour, which some seem to forget altogether. It is not merely that we have the fruit of forgiveness in restored communion, though that be true; but in the positive present aspect of God. As a Governor over those in relationship with Him, He is displeased with certain things, may cause me to die through His displeasure, if I do not judge myself—has done so, as we learn in scripture, both historically and doctrinally.

The passage in John 13 (as does indeed the red heifer) shews distinctly the way of cleansing when a man has defiled himself in his walk. He is cleansed by the washing of regeneration once for all, but needs to wash his feet and must have them washed. And this it is which carries up, farther than mere discipline, the forgiveness of the church. We are to wash one another’s feet, but we need this washing in its place to have a part with Christ. God takes care we shall be clean; but we must be clean to be with Him, not by renewed blood-sprinkling in respect of imputation, but by washing the feet with

water, that we may have the truth in the inward parts with Him, and have no defilement of walk on us.

I do not know what the question as to Christ's prayer means. It was intercession. The character of intercession may be different now that He is on high, and refer to a different standing in which we are, but praying for him (Peter) was intercession. The Lord's intercession for us produces, as its result, the fruits of grace, of which confession is the fruit in every honest heart. Christ's intercession is to make good our present state in conformity with the place justifying forgiveness has placed us in. It is founded on "Jesus Christ the righteous, and he is the propitiation." These being perfect, our faults (instead of bringing imputation, or being allowed to harden the heart and produce falseness in the conscience) call out His advocacy and the soul is restored. Forgiveness in the absolute sense is righteousness, as regards clearance from all imputation of sins of the old man; but in Christ, we being in heavenly places according to God's righteousness, everything inconsistent with our relationship to God as brought there is a just cause of God's actual displeasure. God is not mocked; but Christ intercedes for us, and, by that which rests on righteousness and propitiation, the fault becomes the occasion of instruction and a deepened work and state in us. Now, for every true saint, this present condition of our souls with God is the capital thing, founded on the fact that he is reconciled to God, and accepted perfectly in His presence in righteousness. It is being thus in His presence which is the ground of all present relationship with God. God's character is not changed because we are brought perfectly near Him; but that character acts on our

conscience, and forms it. “We walk in the light as he is in the light”; and if we do not walk according to the light, we find it out, because we are in the light; and to this effect Christ’s advocacy comes in. We know God’s displeasure against sin. I do not talk of imputation. I say it is displeasure against sin; and if we have sinned, apprehend that in the light. It is not merely loss of communion, but knowledge of God’s displeasure with the thing. If we do not walk with God, we have not the testimony that we please God, but displease Him. “The righteous Lord loveth righteousness.” Christ’s intercession does not lead to forgiveness (as to imputation, it is founded on the removal of that), but regards God’s nature and character and our present actual relationship with that. By reason of righteousness and propitiation sin calls out (not satisfaction in us with non-imputation, that is hardness and sin, but) the advocacy of Christ. Sin is taken notice of, estimated as an evil in God’s sight, in my soul, but in grace— not in God’s favour, however, as simple non-imputation, but in Christ’s advocacy active about it, so that my feet are washed. Filth is there: neither I nor God are content— not I, when His word searches my heart. He is displeased when He sees it, and as to my present relationship He does see it. Ananias and Sapphira lied to the Holy Ghost—to God—and God knew it, and was displeased with it; those who profaned the Lord’s supper the same. The discipline exercised was only the expression of it, but it was exercised because of the displeasure. Judging ourselves, we should escape this. Godly sorrow works repentance. Are we to repent and not to be forgiven, nor rejoice in having it? For this, we must confess. It is absolutely stated, “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to

cleanse us." If my feet are denied, they are not cleansed till they are washed. Christ's intercession is the proper means of this. If any one sin, we have an advocate.

The meaning of John 16:25-27 is this. Up to that, they had never gone directly to the Father, nor in Christ's name. But as Martha said, "Whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee." Now He puts them in direct relationship with the Father: not as if He was to go instead of them and He only could, as Martha said; in His name they were to go themselves direct to the Father. That was when in gracious desires or wants they had to look for something. It has nothing to do with when they had sinned and got away from God in their hearts. Christ's interceding for them is unasked. We do not ask Christ to intercede. He is an advocate through His own grace when we have sinned, not when we ask. I return to the Father in confession, because He has asked when I went astray; as Peter wept because He had prayed for him—not that He prayed for him because he wept, or looked up to Him. What Christ says is, they should not be asking Him about anything, but go directly to the Father: that is the contrast—not with intercession, when we have sinned or need grace and do not know it.

It is not said, as supposed,73 Christ is able to save us from our sin, because He ever liveth. But He carries through all the snares, difficulties, dangers of the way, and Satan's power —restoring our souls if we have failed; grace to help in time of need, as well as restoration—because He ever liveth to make intercession for us, is on high immutably to carry on our cause. For we go through the conflict of good and evil, and have to overcome, though nothing is imputed and we are sure to be kept to the end; but we need to be

kept. He will deliver us from every evil work and preserve us to His heavenly kingdom, but we must be delivered.

The book of Job gives us a full account of the case in its operation in man, without reference to any dispensation whatever. He was a godly man, none like him. God saw defect in him. Satan appears, on God's speaking of him, as his accuser. God withdraws not His eyes from the righteous. He deals not first here with outward sin but inward working of ignorance of self, and then its breaking out through God's ways into actual sin; so that it got out, when brought into God's presence as a detected thing, into Job's conscience. The effect of the revelation of God's presence is, first, submission, and then confession. "I have uttered that I understood not … I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." And God restores him to full blessing. Elihu interprets these ways. These ways are interpreted—"one among a thousand to shew unto man his uprightness." Job was not upright in the full, true sense of it; there was not truth in his inward parts (though till he cursed his day there was no outward sin) till he abhorred himself and said so; that is, made confession. Then his flesh became fresher than a child's again. What we have to add is this: Christ's advocacy, founded on known righteousness and accomplished propitiation, carries on the administration of this for us in heaven, where we have to be in spirit with God: "such a high priest became us." Next, below, the church in its ministrations and acts ought to be an interpreter, and deal with the conscience, and administratively wash the feet here below: an individual may be by grace, the church (2 Cor.), elders (James), individuals (1 John). At any rate, in faithful grace, the

Holy Ghost by the word so deals with us. The result is always confession, certainly to God, it may be to man. There is no uprightness without this. If I have sin, know it, and come to God to commune with Him, as if I had none, I am in that a hypocrite—hiding iniquity in my heart. We see here where the accuser comes in: he is "the accuser of the brethren."

The advocate74 is one who manages our affairs, and carries on our cause. It has been said "patron," in a Roman sense; because he supplied the need of his clients—was bound to plead their cause and case for them.

[1864.]

* * * * *

* * * The main difference between Hebrews and 1 John 2:1, is75 that Hebrews refers to our drawing near to God, and includes the whole analogy of the priestly service, even including the sacrifice. Christ stands between us and God to this effect, and for the whole means of obtaining mercy and grace to help. The Advocate is with the Father and supposes a believer and a son, and is for the maintenance in practice of this relationship, that is, our life in it, and in point of fact refers only to the case of one who has sinned being in that relationship, one who has the privilege of fellowship. It refers to fellowship with the Father, not approach to God. I do not say the advocacy is confined to this case of sins. It is stated as a general fact, but it is only applied to this case.

We are and ought to be priests for each other before God, intercede for each other, wash one another's feet,

bear the failures of our brethren on our heart in intercession.

The sprinkling is not in itself, however, properly a priestly act: if my conscience is pure before God, I may apply the word according to the holy power of Christ's sacrifice to the heart and conscience of another.

The last question is answered already. We could not be priests at all, if we could not do this. But no man can doubt, if he loves another, he can intercede for him—in Christ's name and in virtue of His sacrifice, but still plead and intercede for him.

* * * The question is a very natural one, and the first part76 of it more obscure, for me at least, than many parts of prophecy. I give my answer under correction—I mean the precise, relative time of the return of the ten tribes. My present impression is that chapter 28 does not refer to the ten tribes as returned as such, but to the Jewish people localised in Ephraim. They are treated as the twelve tribes, and by a word expressing a whole even in the New Testament. Anna was of the tribe of Asher. In Chronicles several of the tribes have their part in the return from the captivity. Further, it is recognised in Ezekiel and as distinct from the ten tribes proper. (Chap. 37:16.) We have the stick of Judah and for the children of Israel his companions; and another for Joseph, the stick of Ephraim and the whole house of Israel his companions. They are then united and are all recognised as children of Israel, which is the subject of Ezekiel, not properly Judah. This final union takes place after the deliverance by judgment, when they then come under one head. The ten tribes are purged from transgressors before coming into the land. (Ezek.

20:33-38.) The Jews are purged from transgressors in the land. (Zech. 13:8, 9, and many passages.) Hosea 1, 2, confirms the thought that the final union under one head is at the close of all this process of purging, as it naturally must be if Christ is to take them. (Compare chap. 2:19-24.) If this be so, the ten tribes as distinguished from the stick of Judah will not be in the land when the king of the north comes up: their rebels never enter the land. I believe the last coming up of the Assyrian is Gog. The term is geographic, whoever is king of the north. In Daniel I do not believe it is yet directly Gog, though perhaps dependent on him; for he is mighty, but not by his own power. (Compare Ezek. 38:17.) Of course, the millennial reign will not commence before that invasion, but the then destruction of the beast by Christ from heaven will cause the Assyrian, or Gog, to find Him, the Lord, in Jerusalem, so as to be destroyed by divine power, but by that of His earthly government in Jerusalem. Christ will have established His power there; but He will yet have to destroy Gog and purge intruders out of the country belonging to Israel.

[1865.]

* * * * *

Dear Brother,—I send you a brief outline of the order followed by the Epistle to the Romans in treating the principal subject it presents. This exposition of the order of the epistle necessarily implies a development of its doctrine on the subject of our justification and of our standing before God. This outline, while pointing out the form of the epistle and the distribution of the subjects it treats, will, I think, be profitable to your readers, as regards the doctrine itself. At least, I can say, that I have

myself found this point of view both profitable and interesting. What I have to say will be very simple, while, at the same time, it connects itself in part, with the experiences— often so intricate—of Christians; but it explains them also.

The seven first verses of chapter 1 contain the address of the epistle: only, while presenting the claim the apostle had to the attention of the saints at Rome, they give the contents of the gospel which forms the subject of his apostleship, the fulfilment of the promises made with regard to the Son of David, and the testimony given by resurrection that the same blessed One is also Son of God according to the Spirit of holiness. Then, to the end of verse 17, follow a few explanations, as to what had hindered him from seeing them before: and these explanations close with the declaration, that it was not that he was ashamed of the gospel; for in that gospel the righteousness of God Himself was revealed, on the principle of faith, to faith.

This naturally introduces his subject. But he first of all declares the need there was for that gospel on account of the condition in which man was. The wrath of God was upon men, a wrath which the condition of sin in which man was had kindled. But it was no longer merely a wrath which was kindled on account of the repeated rebellion of a people, which He had taken unto Himself on earth from among the nations that had spread over its surface—a wrath which manifested itself and was appeased through punishments, which, as to their sphere, did not go beyond the world where the visible government of God was exercised and manifested; but it was the wrath of God, which was revealed from heaven upon all impiety, and upon the unrighteousness of men

who hold the truth while walking in unrighteousness (that is to say, upon all the world, both Gentiles and Jews). He develops his thesis from verse 19 to the end of the chapter. The awful condition of the Gentile world is presented. (Vers. 19, 20.) They are guilty, on account of the testimony of the creation (ver. 21 and following); they abandoned the knowledge of God when they possessed it.

Chapter 2 The apostle condemns the philosophers, who moralised and were not better than the mass, and who were thus treasuring up wrath for the day of wrath. For God demanded realities. The form of the law would be of no avail. All shall be judged according to their works, whether Jew or Gentile; and the Gentile who, pressed by his natural conscience, fulfilled what the law required, would be in a better case than the Jew who possessed that law and who broke it. As many as had sinned without law should perish without law, and those who had sinned under law should be judged by law, in the day when God should judge the secrets of the hearts of men (not the conduct of the nation by earthly judgments) according to the gospel committed to the apostle.

Such is the general exposition of the ways of God in judgment upon every soul of man, judgment founded on the testimony of the creation, the knowledge which man (in Noah) had got of God, the testimony of the natural conscience, the positive testimony of the law, adding that one despised the goodness of God which was leading man to repentance. But the Jews, who pretended to special privileges, needed a few words beyond this. The apostle, by the law itself, brings them out guilty. The Jew, towards the Gentile, boasted in the law, in the light

he had, in the divine teaching he had, and afterwards he did the very contrary of that which that light and that law required from him. Again, I say, God demands that which is real and true, and the Gentile, who, having no law, did what the law required, should be in a better place than the Jew, who had the law and broke it. Had not the Jew then any superiority above the Gentile? He had, without any doubt, and every way. Specially he possessed the oracles of God. Now, says the apostle, let us see what they say. The Jew was saying, They are for us alone; the Gentiles have nothing to do with them. I agree to it, says the apostle. Whatever the things the law says, it speaks to them who are under the law. It will shew you therefore what you are. Here you are: not one righteous, not one who seeks after God, not one who understands. According to your assertions, that is what it says of yourselves. The Gentiles have nothing to do with it: outside all righteousness and slaves of sin, it is no question of them here. Such then is the picture that God gives of your condition, and every mouth is stopped, and all the world become under judgment to God.

I come now to what led me to send you these lines—the remedy which God Himself has prepared, and which He presents to us, for the condition of wretchedness into which sin has plunged us.

From chapter 3:21 to the end of chapter 5:11, the apostle takes up the question of sins; and from verse 12 of this last chapter to the end of chapter viii., the question of sin. In both cases he shews the blessing which is the result of God’s intervention in grace. At the end of chapter 3 the blood of Jesus is presented to us as the means of our justification. God Himself has presented Jesus to us, as a mercy-seat, through faith in

His blood. The righteousness of God in the passing by the sins of the Old Testament believers is manifested, righteousness which becomes the foundation of our hopes in the present time, that is to say, since the accomplishment of the work of Ghrist. In chapter iv., he speaks of the effect of the resurrection of Christ on this question. He has been delivered for our offences, and has been raised for our justification. The efficacy of the death of Christ has been clearly shown by the resurrection, as well as the power of a new life for us— the life of Jesus risen— which has its place, when all our sins have been atoned for by Christ. But all this refers to sins—to what has been committed: He has been delivered for our offences, and has been raised for our justification. The first eleven verses of chapter 5 shew us the blessings which flow from this, peace and grace now, glory in hope, and the knowledge of the love of God by the Holy Ghost which is given to us; so that we also boast in tribulations, being made capable, through that love, to interpret them; then we make our boast in God Himself. This chapter goes even farther than the eighth in this, that the fifth presents to us more God Himself in His sovereign grace, and our joy in Himself; whereas the eighth chapter shews more our position before Him and what He is for us. Nevertheless, in the latter, there is deeper experience.

At chapter 5:12 begins the teaching of the apostle with respect to sin. The difference is evident. If it be a question of sins, you, my reader, you have yours, and I, I have mine. If it be a question of our nature, of our flesh, we are but one, one sole nature, one sole mass. Hence the apostle turns to the heads or sources of our nature, whether as to good or as to evil: Adam and Christ.

Now, to the end of chapter 8, it is a question of sin, and not of sins. Sin shall have no dominion over you—sin taking occasion by the law. Here Christ died to sin, not for our sins. I learn, not what I have done, but what I am. I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, good does not dwell. Thus the experience is deeper; often, also, gone through after having understood the forgiveness of our sins, and, consequently, casting the soul into perplexity and uncertainty. But peace, also, is much deeper when once it is founded on the truth which is taught here; but it is learnt in an experimental way. My faith here does not rest upon the fact that Christ died for my sins, but on the truth that, He being dead, I am dead with Him. Hence, mark it well, there is no question of forgiveness here. I forgive my child his faults; I do not forgive the evil disposition which produced them—I try to correct it. The correction of sin in the flesh is death. Now, we are dead in Christ. The apostle begins this teaching, by shewing that, by the obedience of Christ alone, those who are linked with Him in the sight of God, are constituted righteous; that, as Adam's disobedience placed in the position of sinners before God all those who were connected with Adam by descent, so the obedience of Christ placed all those who would be found connected with Him by grace in the position of righteous persons, and this in contrast with the law that killed each guilty sinner for his own faults. No doubt we, each one of us, have committed our own sins, completing the evil each one to his own account. But it is none the less true, that, if by the disobedience of Adam we are constituted sinners, the obedience of Christ, has constituted us righteous—us, I say, who believe in Jesus.

The objection made to the doctrine of justification by the obedience of Christ first presents itself to the apostle: the value of the work of Christ does not stop in Him who accomplished it, but it extends to others; it matters little, therefore, if they continue to live in sin. Here is the answer: How live, if we have died? It is a very simple thing. We are baptised unto His death, identified with Him in the likeness of His death. Our portion—in that He died to sin once for all, and that He lives to (or, for) God—is to reckon ourselves dead, and alive to (or, for) God in Christ Jesus. We thus obey, according to the new life of which we are made partakers. This same truth as to death applies (chap, 7) to the law, for it rules over a man as long as he lives. But we have died; nature, the old man to which the law applied, no longer exists. We were in the flesh: we are not in it (that is, not in Adam), but in Christ. The end of chapter 7 is the experience gone through, of the effects of the law on the soul of a renewed man still under law, known now as being spiritual.

In these experiences the soul learns, by the teaching of God, that sin is not the true I (which, in effect, detests sin), but is the sin that dwells in me; then, that sin has dominion over the I, although the latter wills that which is good. The soul learns that in it (in the old I, that is to say, in the flesh) good does not dwell. Such is the lesson which is so needful, but so humbling. One has come to the end of what man is viewed as he is, a child of Adam, enmity against God; but he who, though not willing it, had been a slave, is delivered through redemption. He is in Christ dead to sin, and alive to God by Him. He gives thanks to God; he is not in the flesh at all. It is not, as we have said, Christ dead viewed as bearing our sins in His

body on the tree, that the believer owns as his Deliverer, however precious and needful this truth may be; but Christ dead to sin, and the believer dead with Him. Our resurrection with Him is less in evidence here; but we must reckon ourselves dead, and alive to (or, for) God by Him.

Thus this second part of the teaching of the epistle shews us as dead, as to the old man, as regards the flesh, for faith (that is, as to our position as children of Adam), and alive to (or, for) God by Christ. The effect of the desires of the new man, when we are under law, is to render us unhappy; but we learn, through this moral discipline, to have done with the flesh for faith, by distinguishing between self and the flesh, and having learnt that the flesh is too strong for me. But then redemption comes in; and we are in Christ risen, and not in the flesh; we belong to the second husband, Christ risen, and not to the first. But we learn that the flesh has been—not forgiven, but—condemned. When? When Christ was made (a sacrifice) for sin. The flesh is dead and condemned already, when I belong to Him who is risen; but I am not in the flesh, I am in Christ. In this second part of the doctrine, we find therefore our place in Christ, before God; as we saw in the first, that God has blotted out our sins, as responsible beings in the flesh, by the death of Christ.

I do not develop the happy consequences which the apostle draws from this in chapter 8 We are children; the Holy Ghost dwells in us, shews us our inheritance, helps us in our weaknesses; while everything is secure, seeing that God is for us, as He who gives and He who justifies, and that His love in Christ (who has, in grace, gone through all our sorrows, and is now at the right

hand of God) keeps us when we realise the experience of it.

Chapters 9, 10, 11 conciliate there being no difference between Jew and Gentile, with the special privileges of the Jews; they form a supplement, added to the main doctrine of the epistle. But I have attained my object, if I have presented clearly to the Christian the difference of the work of Christ for our sins (chap. 3:21 to 5:11), and of Christ dead to sin, and ourselves dead with Him, so that, for faith, we have done with sin (chap. 5:12 to the end of chapter 8), sin having been condemned when Christ died on the cross, and ourselves as having part in His death, dead with Him to that which was condemned, belonging also to the second husband—Christ risen. We have peace through forgiveness; deliverance, by the Spirit of life, in that we are in Him, and alive by Him, in consequence of accomplished redemption.

Christ died for sins; Christ dead to sin, and we in Him, in consequence of redemption: such is the doctrine of the Epistle to the Romans, which distinguishes clearly its two parts.

Dublin, 1865.

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[From the French.

My dear Brother,—I received your note in due time, but waited to read your paper before replying; and I was going about to meetings from morning till night, sometimes because brethren from the neighbourhood were brought together, sometimes (in Ireland) because there was a remarkable movement there. I have been overwhelmed with work; still, I have read it. I have but

one observation to make. You give the churches a more formal position than they have in my mind. I do not speak of error, for I see plainly that you recognise the church as the body of Christ, but only of an impression left on my mind. I do not recognise that there may be members of a church; I do not know that you said so: it is only an impression. Perhaps what comes nearest to it is the expression 'the several members with their respective churches.' This does not say so, it is true; but it would perhaps imply it to those who are. accustomed to this thought. Do not think, dear brother, that I say this because I wish to find fault with the pamphlet; I thought it very good, and I am pointing out the one thing that presents itself to my mind as possibly raising a question. I hope it will be a summary very useful to your countrymen. I intended to have written to you when I had read half your paper over again, and had a little more quiet here in Edinburgh… Union is always good in itself, but faithfulness to Christ comes before even union. I am very glad that you saw those two dear brothers. I would beg you to carefully seek information on the subject of the meeting, before committing yourself in this respect: not—God forbid—to make difficulties, but to ascertain whether the holiness of the Lord's table is really maintained. I can rejoice in work if, in the main, souls are delivered, even if I cannot go along with it. With regard to Bethesda, certainly I should be very clear that they were fully delivered, before mixing myself up with them. I should never have thought of introducing these questions into Italy; but they have been introduced. It is this which has hindered my going there or mixing myself up with it. I said to myself that it was a cruel thing to occupy brethren who had just come out of Popery with these difficulties, and impossible to

walk with the Newtonians; and I committed the matter, with much prayer, to God, and have been waiting on Him, for the work has deeply interested me. Now, dear brother, Bethesda and the fruits of the spirit which reigns there shews itself more every day—the worldliness and the destruction of all integrity and all conscience in those who are implicated in it. It has been found to be so in Switzerland, France, Germany, everywhere; where one could not say that it was party spirit. So, if the meeting at M. is in fellowship with it, certainly I do not go there. Probably most of them knew nothing of the matter, so that they would not be personally denied; but when once they have taken their side (those who know it) they will be assailed. And it would be important that these two, and that other who is not ignorant of it, should be very decided. Do not be in a hurry. The Lord's table—secured from this known corruption—sufficient discipline—this is what would be absolutely necessary for me. I would yield to much weakness and infirmity in the condition in which they are, if only the foundation were good; I mean always that the principle of meeting was the unity of the body of Christ.

You must understand, dear brother, that if you mix yourself up with it, and do not continue in it, and others leave the assembly, you withdraw under the weight of an imputation of causing division. For my own part, I doubt that if the truth, as you possess it, should penetrate there, all would bear it. You must weigh all this, and not be in a hurry, while you receive these dear brothers cordially, and make things as clear to them as you can. Be brotherly towards them all; at least if they do not individually maintain what is wrong: in that case,

faithfulness, and even brotherly love, oblige you to shew that you cannot go on with evil. Do not relax fidelity to Christ and the truth for the sake of avoiding narrowness. Our normal condition is having but little strength, and not denying His name and His word. The Lord had but a hundred and twenty to gather (around Himself) after three and a half years' work; "the servant is not above his master." …

If they give up the salary, which causes endless trouble, they must trust in God, and not in the brethren. Still, I fully own the duty of the brethren to help those who devote themselves to the Lord. The path is a path of faith; for the wealthy in the established systems are annoyed when one gets free, and when their wealth no longer influences the course of the church as it once did. But this is just what is needful in order that the Spirit of God may resume His place, and His rights in her. God grant this; and may He give these brethren, and all who are labouring, faith to allow the Spirit of God to act freely. How good God is to go on working, in spite of the infirmity, the failure, the sins which are in the midst of His own people! Be cordial then, dear brother, not hasty. Take care that they are fully cleansed from the defilement of B.; and that in principle—even where there may be feebleness— the holiness of the Lord's table is preserved. I desire nothing more than what you set forth as true in your paper. Keep to that, with as large a heart as possible. I shall be very glad to have news of you, and of your work. There are many important details, but it is impossible for me to enter on them now. Eemember me to the brethren with you, though I do not know them. Many have lately broken with the Bethesda system; some of them were labourers in Ireland, who did not

know how the case stood. I believe God is working in this matter. I dare not say that they are all able to keep the meetings, which are being formed in pretty large numbers in Ireland now, pure.

We have lost, as far as this life goes, our beloved brother Trotter, and another well known evangelist can no longer labour; but He has raised up fresh ones, and the meetings are increasing very much.

Peace be with you; and may our good God, always faithful and full of grace, guide and sustain you. Never be discouraged or anxious about anything, but make your requests known to God, and His peace shall keep your heart. Remember that Christ is ever faithful, and cannot fail His own.

Remember me affectionately to those two evangelist brothers; I earnestly desire anyway that God may bless their labours.

Yours affectionately in Christ.

Edinburgh, December l3th, 1865.

* * * * *

[From the French.

Beloved Brother,— … You must ever keep before yourself and the brethren this truth of the unity of the church —of the presence of the Holy Ghost, and of the coming of the Lord. I say the brethren, because, I suppose, they are grounded not only in the forgiveness of their sins, but also in the precious fact that we are dead and risen with our precious Saviour. This is deliverance; we are not in the flesh. Not only has the blood sheltered us, but we have been brought out of Egypt by the power of God and the deliverance which

He has wrought. We are in Christ. The blood of Jesus has procured pardon for us; we are in Him. The first truth disposes of what we have done, of all the works of the flesh; the second, that we are dead with Christ, places us in an entirely new position, accepted in the Beloved. The first disposes for ever of what we have done; the second, of what we were in the flesh, and that we are no longer. To enjoy it, self must be judged—I know that in me there is no good thing. You will find that Romans 3:20 to 5:11 treats of the former question; 5:12 to the end of 8, of the latter. The first part speaks of sins, the second of sin. Remember me affectionately to the brethren, though I do not know them; to——, too. Let her be of good courage; if it is her turn to bear the cross for love of the Lord, she will not be sorry for having borne it in faith and bravely.

London, January 12th, 1866.

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To the same.]

[From the French.

* * * Keep close to the Lord, dear brother, and get your strength from Him. I have been struck the last day or two with how, at the end of John i., He makes Himself the centre of gathering outside the world; this is to be God, otherwise He would turn us away from God; afterwards He shews the way, as Man, through the world in which we are—“Follow me;” then, as Son of man, heaven opens upon Him. He is the object of the delight of God. The angels, powers in the world of creation, become the servants of man; we have part in it, as heirs with Him. Many other things in this chapter struck me, but I stop.

Your affectionate brother in Christ.

* * * A human attempt at precision sometimes leads us astray.77 The blessing meets the particular want of the church and characterizes the ways of God towards it as to the encouragement needed for its faith; but this does not mean that the church exclusively has the blessing. Thus in Laodicea he that overcomes will sit at Christ's throne—the lowest degree of promise, I apprehend; but that does not mean that only they will, for all will. Escaping the hour of temptation is not true only of Philadelphia; all who have died in the Lord before it comes will have escaped it. But this characterizes the blessing of Philadelphia, because they come so near towards it that a promise to escape it is of the greatest value to them—a cheering and welcome message and truth, in their weakness and consciousness of the power of evil and little strength. Others than those of Ephesus will eat of the fruit of the tree of life, others than those of Smyrna will not be hurt of the second death; but those were the suited encouragements to lead to overcome in the states and difficulties there described. We must seek elsewhere a positive revelation on the subject, and not draw conclusions, nor, I would add, the least weaken the warning; for the warning applies to the state in which Philadelphia is. A like conclusion has been drawn from "all those that love his appearing," and "to them that look for him will he appear;" but all the wise virgins were awaked to look for Him, and even others, too. We must distrust conclusions from scripture, for ever man's mind enters into them.

Those in Laodicea who open to the Lord reign with Him; and He enters in and sups with them, and they with Him — have their part with Him in fellowship and joy under

His reign. I do not say there may not be speciality in results which take the shape of reward; but the promises apply to the state of the church in which they are found, and woe to him who neglects them so applied, not to the exclusion thereby of others. Thus in Thyatira the whole millennial blessing of Christ Himself and the reign are promised, because it is the close of the ecclesiastical system, and the whole succeeding blessing is substituted for it: Christ, the heavenly Christ Himself, and the kingdom of power and judgment, for those who had been oppressed by the idolatrous rule of Jezebel.

The quotation from John 17 proves exactly the contrary of that for which it is cited.78 That to which ejk applies, they are to be kept wholly out of; they are not to be taken ejk tou' kovsmou, but they are to be wholly and absolutely ejk tou' ponhrou': so here (Rev. 3:10), wholly and absolutely, not ‘through’ and in, but ejk th' w{ra".

[1866.]

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* * * It is not as if God forgot the things, but He does not79 remember them—hold them in His mind—against them in any way. If I say I forget as well as forgive, it only speaks of the completeness, not, if the thing is called up, that my memory has ceased to know it as a fact. If I give an account of myself to God, I must do it completely or I should lose something of the goodness of Him who has called and saved me. Paul lost nothing in saying, “Lord, they know that I imprisoned and beat in every synagogue them that believed on thee.”

* * * As regards Romans 6:2, the wished-for translation80 is the result of a misconception of the whole passage. It makes it a motive drawn from a

previous evil result and no more; whereas it is perfectly certain that the passage contemplates our dying in becoming Christians, not by our sins. Those who have been baptised unto Christ have been baptised unto His death. “We have been made one plant with Him in the likeness of His death; and this is in order that we might walk in newness of life. Hence it is perfectly certain that the doctrine of the chapter is dying out of our old man, and living in newness of life—not our dying by our sin so as to be afraid of living in it now. And such is the whole tenor of the chapter; “our old man has been crucified with him;” and the use too of the dative at the close. How the writer can take novmw/ in Galatians 2:19, as “by the law,” is hard to conceive; because it is preceded by diaV novmou, meaning “by the law,” which makes it simply impossible. 2 Corinthians 13:4, is ejk dunavmew". I suppose he only quotes this for the sense.

Living in sin, and being dead in it, is not the same thing. One is the continuity of the old man in sin, the other is his state in respect of God; but both are true: “alienated from the life of God.” A reference to Colossians shews, in the analogous passage, nekrouV" o[nta" ejn toi'" paraptwvmasi kaiV th'/ ajkrobustiva. Now ejn can be used as an instrument or power too. But I think no intelligent Christian could doubt what it means here; and I do not see how it is possible with ajkrobustiva to take it in any other sense than “in.” Besides, nekrouv" would not be the word. It signifies properly “a corpse.” It is not dying as a punishment for them, but a state in which they were. Then God creates again. They are viewed not as dying by or for their sins. It is not ajpeqavnete, but being nekrouv" He has quickened. The first work in the corpse is quickening with Christ, God’s

act. In Romans and Colossians, being alive in sin, ye have died (ajreqavnete) in Christ. In Ephesians, being nekroiv, we have been quickened with Him: it is a new creation. It does not seem to me there can be the smallest doubt of what is the right translation.

As to 1 Corinthians 15:3, again, I know of no objection, if used in a general way of saying, Christ died for any man's sins. In the passage, however, Paul is addressing believers as such, but still speaks vaguely, so that "he that hath ears to hear" may apply it. "He is a propitiation for the whole world." But this is never said of bearing sins. That is carefully avoided in scripture. It will not be found other than dying for our sins. But 'bearing sins' in all parts of scripture is thus specifically confined. So we read, "We pray in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled… for he hath made him to be sin for us." Scripture is accurate here—a propitiation set out before all, and sure remission of all, if we come; but bearing sins never extended to those who are lost, or His doing it might be in vain for believers. "Our," to saints or sinners, is the scriptural way of putting it.

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* * * Your result in the tract paper,81 that is, fourth paragraph, is all right; but the third seems to me to confound a little the water and the blood: we have both in Christ. Living cleanness is practical, but does not cleanse from guilt, though the two cannot be separated because Christ is both and cannot be the one without being the other. But one is not the other; and if an exercised and troubled conscience had to find the living cleanness quite white, in order to know forgiveness, that is, non-imputation, the soul of such an one might be

perplexed and cast down, as is often the case. It is mixing internal and living righteousness with non-imputation. Being quickened with Christ, I have part in the righteousness in which He is before God, but the working and effect of that life is not the measure of that righteousness before God, nor for peace of conscience. Conscience will be exercised where the Spirit is, as to the living righteousness; but it rests on Christ as its unchanging righteousness before God. We are righteous by faith objectively before God, not subjectively by experience; though there will be experience according to the working and judgment of the Holy Ghost in him who is righteous by faith. The Holy Ghost witnesses to one and works the other in us, or refuses inconsistencies contrary to it. But it carries on this moral discipline within in those that are at peace through the other; otherwise judgment of practice always puts us and must put us under law.

Whenever we believe on Christ, or on Him that raised Him up, righteousness is imputed to us. It is not a question of progress, it is always simply true of the believer as such. It is God's judgment on his behalf of the value of Christ's work and His position as risen before Him; but grace reigning by righteousness is the principle on which the whole matter jests. It is the principle of Christianity.

Righteousness does not reign: it will in the day of judgment. Grace reigns yet. God cannot but maintain and require righteousness, but Christ has accomplished it in a divine way and it is settled for ever in heaven, and this not for any temporal blessing or particular promise but for eternal life. Grace reigns. Sin has reigned through man unto death: had righteousness thus

reigned, it was everlasting ruin. Now God who is love has had His work; and grace reigns and righteousness has now been established, divine righteousness through Christ. “Him that raised up Jesus” is not merely a confidence in power to be employed as Abraham, but in power already employed in deliverance, already accomplished in the very place and matter of our bondage, and in a God of love who has come down in such sort in power to our estate to take us out of it in Christ. God acts in love and power and the work of deliverance by it is accomplished. But death for offences and resurrection for justification is not a stage past; it is a work done outside us of eternal efficacy, [by] the grace that reigns through it. For now righteousness being accomplished and established for us, love is no longer straitened, as it was till God’s claim of death was satisfied, and Christ baptised with that baptism. And grace reigns through righteousness; and all blessings even to the fulness of glory, flow from and are dependent on this; but Romans 4 gives us the same basis. Only here we have the source and principle which was at work and has triumphed so as to have all its own way in this time and for ever in them who are brought in by it. God and His work has taken the place of man and his, as the ground of our relationship with God. Hence, of course, all blessings flow.

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* * * I have read your tract. I am not sure that scripture ever speaks of life being given because we have righteousness. God in giving life does so after righteousness is accomplished, so that when we receive life we enter into divine righteousness already perfect; but never that I know into life by righteousness, save as

wrought in the resurrection of Christ; so that the communication of His life introduces us into it. “If there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law.” But righteousness has been wrought out, life freely given by love and that in Christ, so that we become the righteousness of God in Him. We can say grace reigns through righteousness unto eternal life in the sense of our full ultimate enjoyment, and what Christ has accomplished for this purpose… Righteousness was accomplished in Christ before life was communicated to us; and when through grace it is communicated to us it places consequently in that righteousness in which He is before God, thus it produces it in us as fruits according to the power of the Holy Ghost given to us as seal of that righteousness, and which sheds abroad the love that is in God, who has done all this, in our hearts.

* * * * *

My Beloved Brother,—I have not the hope of satisfying every restless mind, unless they judge their own way of dealing with these questions, and the views by and from which they judge. I do not find a statement in any paper (it may. have escaped me) that Christ entered into the experiences of souls conscious of sins, and not knowing the fulness of grace. I think I recollect it in Mr. Hall’s accusations, but could not find it then. But such a soul, when upright through grace, dreads death, dreads judgment—is before God in view of it. Christ was perfectly upright, feared death, feared wrath, cried to God under the sense of it, and can enter into such a soul’s exercises, so as to minister needed grace to it.

As to smiting; I do not believe there was any direct infliction of wrath from God on Christ by reason of any state or relationship He was in, save only as atonement, when made sin for us. But since all these questionings, I have examined scripture, and I cannot find there smiting used for atoning work, but always for the fact of the cutting off of Messiah, and not for the atoning value of His work. I have no objection to the vague using of it, giving it this force; because as I said, all infliction of wrath from God was atonement, and smiting is so understood. But the question having been raised, I have done my best to ascertain what scripture says, how it speaks, and "let God be true and every man a liar;" as far as I can find it speaks so. Divine wisdom has decided how to speak, and how to express itself. I have sought here by positive statement as to what I do not believe, to relieve the mind of a brother from the effect of false statements; but a Hebrew and Greek Concordance will give the best answer to the question, where the word smite hk*n` or patavssw) are used in scripture.

I believe Christ is competent to enter into all the sorrows of the human heart by means of what He went through, sin apart. I believe in a special manner He entered into the sorrows of Israel. The fundamental and mischievous error of my accusers is, assuming (just Newton's error) that entering into the sorrows of any one's position meant being in the state or relationship which brought the sorrow on. But I think the doctrine of my accusers horrible, and a total denial of the truth of Christ's sufferings. It is those who have been under the pestilent influence of thinking sorrows or sufferings of heart in Christ implied the state that had brought them on man (an error on which all H.'s reasonings with me

depend), who are troubled and uneasy. My good friends will have to learn that they can go wrong as well as those they are in such a hurry to condemn. If they fall into the snare of taking other people's representations of my doctrine, or read my words under the effect of them, they will have to deal with God about it, and see why.

As regards my taking up the matter on my return, I did fully take it up, and searched my own publications, scripture, and my accusers' correspondence, as fully as I could. I replied to every one who wrote to me honestly to inquire. If brethren think I am going to give up my direct service committed to me (however unworthy I may be) by the Lord, to pander to what I believe to be mere wicked accusations, I can only say I cannot do so. I am persuaded that more spiritual apprehensions of the sufferings of Christ, and true knowledge of conflict in their own souls, would have made brethren capable of juster decision in the matter. Not suspecting the kind of attack and accusations, expressions might be found in my papers which gave a handle to them; hence I have taken no high ground, but patiently awaited brethren's minds clearing up.

I do not think an upright willing mind could for a moment have interpreted what I have said as has been done. It amounts to the allegation that Christ was a condemned sinner, a saint through grace, and learning when a sinner. I do not believe my adversaries think I hold this, however my expressions may afford a handle to what they say; and I must take them (my accusers) as I find them, seeking to feel as God would have me feel; but I do think that their views ought to have awakened brethren's minds to a sense of the false grounds on

which their accusations rest. What they deny forms an integral part of my Christianity. I should as much think of giving that up, as of accepting their views. But I have not neglected the subject since I left England… But see what I have to deal with, or rather what troubles the minds you speak of. It is alleged that I say Christ entered into the experiences of souls, etc., which I cannot find—this means in their minds that He had these experiences, and He is then considered as Himself involved in them from God. And it is next added, it must be from the relationship He was in; not one word of which I have ever said or thought, and it flows from the abominable false principle that Christ suffered only from atonement or sympathy; that is, that besides atonement He never really suffered at all, and if there were any other, He must have been in the relationship that caused it. I must again express my astonishment that such doctrine, which is avowedly Mr. H.'s, has not opened people's eyes.

The only real ambiguity I know in what I have written is the word suffering, because suffering may have the sense of outwardly inflicted pain, and inward sense of any evil; and when I say Christ passed through these sufferings, it may be taken as inflicted on Him (and as to circumstances, outwardly in the main He did go through them), or as inwardly entering into the pain and grief of it, in whatever way brought to His soul. As to His being in the relationship and meriting it (or, as Mr. H. wrote to me, God smote the wrong person), I can only look at as an evil denial of all Christ's true sufferings except atonement. But the ambiguous sense of the word suffering gave probably a handle to those who sought it.

You will please to bear in mind, as to my not satisfying people, that I have answered to every one who has written to me. I much prefer giving people's minds time to get clear on the subject, than being in any hurry to defend myself. I can trust the Lord if they cannot; nor do I expect to be able to satisfy the cravings of those who do not. When I think of what doctrine it would have been the acceptance of, I am quite thankful I did not withdraw my papers.

As to the alleged entering into the experiences, allow me to ask: Do you think Christ can enter into the sorrows of a broken and contrite heart, fearful, and pressed within? If so, further, do you think what He went through on earth enables Him to do it in a special way? Yet it has nothing to do with His being contrite—though I by no means think this is the highest way of looking at it. The true aspect of it all is objective, the "man of sorrows and acquainted with grief." I believe I have no more to add as to the papers called in question. Ever your affectionate brother in Christ.

Those who have written against me were fully aware that I denied holding what they allege to be my views long before their pamphlets came out. There is another source of their error. Having assumed that smiting is infliction of atoning wrath from God, or, at any rate infliction from the state or position Christ was in, they have concluded I involved Him in this position. Now Messiah was cut off, the necessary consequence of Israel's state. In this He did go to accomplishing the work of atonement, or wrath against sin, which He bore from God; but in scripture it is not used for the atoning part of the work. In God's wisdom that in which Messiah was cut off was made to be the accomplishment of

atonement for Israel and for us. It is this the Jews discover in Isaiah 53. The mingling both would not stumble me, but it makes the Psalms unintelligible and has led those who deny scriptural language as to it, to deny all Christ's sufferings, except atonement.

New York, November 2lst, 1866.

62 'I much wish to know your thoughts on the following passages: "Who will render to every man according to his deeds: to them who by patient continuance in well doing, seek for glory and honour and incorruptibility, eternal life, etc. etc., but glory, honour, and peace, to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile." (Rom. 2:6-11, 16.)

"So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God." (Rom. 14:12.)

"For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether good or bad." (2 Cor. 5:9, 10.)

"But he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done; and there is no respect of persons." (Col. 3:25.)

'Note the last passages in reference to "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive, vs our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness," and Hebrews 10:17.'

63 Elliott's.

64 John 8:51, 52; 10:28; 11:26.

65 'What way are we to understand Leviticus 5:11, which speaks of the offerer bringing a sin offering of the

fruits of the earth (without any sweet savour it is true)? We know “without shedding of blood there is no remission.” In chapter 4:28, we have a female offered—why?’

66 ‘How far did the Old Testament saints understand the types and offerings, and sacrifices; and what was the extent of their knowledge of Christ; and did they see Him in those types, etc.?’

67 ‘1 Corinthians 15:47. Does the expression, “the Second man is [the Lord] from heaven,” necessarily mean descent? That is, is it affirmed of Christ, as now on high, or of Him in incarnation? It is known that “the Lord” is expunged by the best editors. Is there any difference in meaning between “the last Adam” (ver. 45) and “the Second man?”’

68 ‘For whereas Ebrard includes God’s revelation of Himself in a sphere whose conditions are time and space, and so would understand by it all things existing under these conditions, I would include in it also, these conditions themselves.’

69 ‘It is not the word spoken by angels, or fathers, or prophets that made the ages; but the word spoken by the Son. This follows from the Son being made or placed heir of all things, and that the heir constitutes the ages,’ etc.

70 See Col. Writ., vol. 10:49, et seq.

71 ‘What is meant by “from the beginning”? (1 John 1) Why the change from “which we have heard, which we have seen,” etc., in verse 1, to “which we have seen and heard,” in verse 3? Why have we the further words, “which we have looked upon and our hands have

handled”? And what is the point of the three “if we say” (ver. 6, 8, 10)?’

72 ‘How does our being forgiven if we confess our sins (1 John 1:9) agree with chapter 2:12, and many other similar passages?’

73 ‘Is Christ’s being able to save us (Heb. 7:25), from our sins eternally, or from all the dangers of the way, to the end? And what has intercession to do with it?’

74 ‘What is the meaning of Christ being our Advocate? Is it in sense of pleader, or more as a friend at court? It has been translated “Patron.”’

75 ‘How do you distinguish the office of High Priest and Advocate, especially as reference is made to sin? “If any man sin we have an advocate with the Father.”

‘In what sense can we be said to act in our priestly character towards each other? We cannot say we are priests to each other; but may we not be for each other before God? In the type of the heifer, the clean person was to sprinkle the unclean: is this, spiritually, a priestly act?

‘Practically, we are not always in priestly condition of soul. May not, then, a spiritual believer draw near to God on behalf of one who practically cannot, without allowing the thought of any one coming between the soul and God?’

76 ‘Isaiah 28, 29—If these chapters are mainly prophetic of the last days, how is it that the first attack of the Assyrian falls on Ephraim? Will the ten tribes be in the Holy Land when “the king of the north “comes against “the king”? Can his second attack and fall be identified with the invasion and ruin of Gog in Ezekiel 38, 39? Will

the millennial reign begin before that invasion, or will there be a transition, after the judgment of the beast and the false prophet, before the Lord reigns with His saints over the earth?'

77 'Revelation 3:10.—The promise here seems made to a particular class described as those who have kept the word of Christ's patience, and who appear to be contrasted with those who "dwell upon the earth," which, I presume, expresses a moral condition. If this be so, on what ground can the whole Church take this promise to themselves?'

78 'When the Lord prays that His disciples should be kept from the evil of the world, it is plain He does not mean that they should be taken out of it.'

79 'Hebrews 10:17.—"And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more." How is this to be understood in connection with 2 Corinthians 5:10? Will the sins of a believer's unconverted days be again brought before him at the judgment seat of Christ?'

80 'Dead by sin. If sin is such a dreadful thing as to have exposed us all to the punishment of death, from which Christ's death alone frees us, how can we think of continuing in it any longer?'

81 "If you whitewash your cabin, it gets dirty again, and you must give it another coating. And lo! it gets dirty again. So it is with confession and absolution (as far as that goes). Trespasses and sins return, and you go again; and bo it goes on like the whitewashing.

"Now ask any one that is anxious to please God, and whose sins are a real trouble to them, whether this is

not so. Is it not, therefore, a poor remedy that never brings a surer cure?

“But if the walls of your cabin had a pure and living cleanness in them, would they not be freed continually from this growing dirt, and be purified continually?

“So it is with the heart that receives Christ into it by faith, and loves to have Him there, that looks to Him as the true and living righteousness given to us freely of God. Such a one shall find a living cleanness springing up in their heart, purifying them continually, and they rejoice in Him who bore all their sins.”

Appendix Section 5

* * * * *

My dear Brother,—I thank you for your letter. I have always been ready to explain any expressions, and have admitted the human infirmity of them now these eight years. For, strange to say, my papers have been published these eight years, a plain proof that it is, as of God, some other cause than mere doctrine, and of man and the enemy too. It is this which one has to weigh. I am not afraid of the result, but as a passage it has its importance. I have no wish at the present time to have an exhibition of a controversy among brethren. But it is not only that I have been willing to explain, I have done so whenever I have been written to; and, of course, should; and many minds, I know, set at rest. You will remember as to reading Mr. D.'s and Captain H.'s pamphlets, that I had a long correspondence with each; and I am told that D.'s is substantially his letters without mine. Did I read them I might have to answer them, and that I should with difficulty be brought to do. There is a day when all will be brought to light. I bow, I trust, sincerely to the present chastening; feeling a great deal more for brethren than for myself. I am persuaded with patience everything will find its place… God's meaning in what takes place, I should, and do, weigh with him. It is, of course, an additional pressure on me in my more direct work in this very difficult country, but I do not feel it much now. I am still very glad I offered to stand outside. If it was not to be so, God has His own purpose and blessing in it. If it were to be so, yet I have not as far as yet a thought of giving up a hair's breadth of what

my real meaning was. The world with me or against me, I hold [it] firm and unmoved. My judgment is that while I might relieve them by leaving them (and the doctrine is no proper bus ness of theirs) their yielding to D. and H. would be the first step in their ruin.

What I always desired was that they should go on quietly on their own ground; that is their business; but not be terrified by the adversaries.

Was death as death a suffering and' sorrow to Christ, for instance in Gethsemane (where H. admits Christ was not accomplishing the work of atonement) or not—I do not mean man's pure action in it, but death as death—when the sorrows of death compassed Him? Was His cutting off as Messiah nothing to Him? Atonement was in the cup, suffering for righteousness all His public course (at any rate) through. Was there no heart-suffering, but man's outward persecutions because He was righteous, and His feeling them—nothing that pressed on Christ's heart but atonement or persecution? They do not seem to know what suffering means, and apply it only to outward actual things coming on a man; nor the true mind of good in the midst of evil. Heart-suffering for others, I suppose, they have never known; I do not envy them. It was neither sympathy for others, nor atonement, when Christ looked for compassion and found none November, 1866.

* * * I thank you much for your account of Ireland. I had heard of dear——'s departure. I had heard, too, that the world had enticed away her husband, and, I trust, this may have awakened his conscience and heart. I feel such cases as——'s overwhelming. I ask myself why such things occur, for there have been one or two—if anything

in myself, or in the ways and teaching of brethren even, to give occasion to what we all abhor. It is well we should judge this. I have no doubt as to the utter dishonesty of ordinary evangelical teaching, nor do I hesitate a moment on the need or glory or truth of simple full grace and salvation. It cannot be separated from Christ's glory, nor Christ from it. It is a part of eternal truth. I know the stupid objection of unconvinced and self-righteous sinners was alleged against Paul's doctrine, and that Peter had to say, "As free, and not using your liberty for a cloke of maliciousness." All this is foreseen of God. But, I ask myself, Is there any check in practice or doctrine overlooked, any onesidedness in the way of putting it? That in the late revival, not among brethren as much as elsewhere, but generally, there was un-scriptural language, I judge, as to repentance and sanctification. The reaction against error over-stepped the bounds of scripture; but I think there must be more than this—something in our ways, in mine it may be, that God judges. I have seen that God has never allowed any allowed evil in brethren to be hidden, and I can thank Him for it; while elsewhere it is hushed up. Still it is very sorrowful that the Lord should be grieved, and those we love dishonour themselves and Him He can restore, that is the comfort; I trust he will poor ——. I am sure He is righteous in all His ways, and such falls are not the beginning of departure from Him, not sudden, but the result— I would trust, the end—of departure from Him. Still I would trust that in a certain sense he was taken in a fault, and our part is to restore such an one in the spirit of meekness, considering ourselves. Judgment on evil is all right, but the restoration of the sinner is the object of divine love; he will never, nor any one, be restored till the origin of the

evil be judged. Christ does not reproach Peter with denying Him, but He does say, “Lovest thou me more than these?”—he will have to judge all that led him away from God. If we go down into Egypt, we have no altar till we get back to the one we had at the first, when God brought us to worship Him where our tent and our altar were in the land of promise.

The question you speak of in London has been pretty strongly before brethren. H. sought to make them independent churehes, saying London was as populous as Galatia. ——intrigued with all his energies to excite jealousy against the Saturday meeting; and a man, whose name I forget, who also was seeking to play this all off at the Priory, wrote and printed and insisted on their being churches. The difficulty in practice is real, in principle none; in practice because of the size of the town, and fidgetiness of individuals as to their local responsibility being meddled with. But hitherto a little grace and patience have met these difficulties, and God’s grace can, and, I trust, will. It was this W. meant when he said, what was laid hold of for their purposes, that the one church of God in London, judged ——, in referring to cutting it up into churches—taken hold of to mean we only were the church, and all else outside. But the point was then pretty fully up and met. I took my part in it, and should again, if it came up; only I feel the fruits of righteousness are sown in peace, and I have had toil enough in this world to seek the ministration of the fulness of Christ for myself and for the saints. It is as clear as daylight in scripture that the church of God was one in each city or place. The size of London makes difficulty; the sending the names round was that all might help each; and such cases have arisen. In ordinary

ones one has to trust the brethren of each locality; and even the few of them who inquire fully alone are acquainted with the facts, and we have to remember it is not really admission to membership with us, that is a sect, but ascertaining that they are members of Christ, walking godlily in the truth. There was no trying at first. We have to try because we are in 2 Timothy. The Lord lead the beloved brethren on in peace and godliness…

1867.

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* * * I have been very ill, perhaps I should say very low, it was an attack with night fever accompanying it when already quite worn out. My first part when so low (and God graciously set me to it) was to repass and judge all my ways—not my activities, which, however wanting, were really for Christ, but all that had passed in my own mind according to His Spirit where I had allowed any evil in my mind. Then I got into a spirit of direct worship in which I was very happy, and full of God's presence, not exactly dwelling on His love, which I had often enjoyed, but worship—God put in His place, God enjoyed in and for Himself as God; and then much thought, happy and profitable, how I should feel if Christ came—looked at humanly, so to speak, I suppose Mary's would be the place, she sat still in the house. I felt the unspeakable joy of one look of His favour; and so I passed my time (most kindly cared for) but alone. I had flowers from the famous poet Longfellow's garden, for God can provide even these from where He will.

1867.

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[From the French.

* * * Thank you much for your letter. God knows I have never sought to have dominion over the faith of any one whatsoever, whilst seeking to help their joy, and I think I have this testimony in the conscience of all the brethren: I am heartily their servant for the love of Christ, but I do not accept that they should have dominion over mine.

I see in what is really the object of the attacks of some, an inaccuracy of expression which exposes truths but little examined, and little realised amongst brethren, and where I have exposed them without suspecting their evil will. I see expressions which one might use in a bad sense if one sought to do so: chiefly because suffering means either inflicted pain, or suffering of heart, a distinction that is not made in the statement of the sufferings of Christ. But as to the substance of the doctrine, I maintain it fully, and I utterly reject and as sorrowful error what has been opposed to me. The doctrine of my adversaries (I am sorry that I have any) sets aside the most touching truths of Christianity, and the best affections of the Christian. So much so, that whatever my affection for brethren (and it is very great —you know that this has been the labour of my life), if it were necessary to renounce what I have written in the substance of it, or brethren, I should renounce brethren; not as to seeking their good, but if they will not have me, whilst avowing what I teach there, I should remain alone and leave the decision of it to God.

Thank God, it is not thus; the attacks have only drawn closer the bonds of affection. The influence of these poor brethren, whom I love with all my heart, had already

become null by the state in which they were found; it was the effect of their position and not really the cause.

Meanwhile a mass of brethren have gained much in their souls in meditating on the sufferings of the Lord. If I must go through sorrow of heart that brethren may arrive at this result, I do not complain. It has been extremely painful to me because of the persons engaged in these attacks, being very specially connected with one of these brothers. But all this is good. I have not taken it haughtily. I have carefully examined my writings, the word, and the objections of my accusers. I have allowed time for others to examine them; I do not fear the result, whilst admitting my infirmity and weakness. I believe that this will turn into great blessing. I wait…

Meanwhile, by the grace of God, I pursue my work as usual. I am rather encouraged in New York though it is a day of small things. We have no meeting place, but souls begin to come together. It is a terrible country, morally and spiritually, but there are many true souls who groan and suffer from the state of things. Worldliness, heresies of all sorts, politics—this is what characterises Christians. There is a certain activity, and generosity as to giving; but the word has no authority; they seek the amusements of the world like the people of the world, and politics perhaps still more. But God has a people. Our privilege is to keep near Him.

The more one goes on the more one knows whom one has believed. Then He knows how to keep what we have committed unto Him. No one, I believe, can have a more true and deep sense of his nothingness than 1 But the love of Jesus, and of our God in Him, is an inexhaustible depth of happiness, happiness which is called eternal, to

our hearts. We wait for His Son from heaven. The sorrows down here are but for a moment. If only we can be faithful and glorify Him—that is the desire of my heart, I believe it is of yours, although you are by circumstances more in relation with this poor world. Count on the Saviour, so good, so faithful. He is so through all the circumstances everywhere that the will of God places us in. How happy we are to have to do with Him! My heart rejoices deeply in His love and goodness, poor and worthless as I feel myself to be.

May the grace of the Lord keep you at rest and cause you to enjoy abundantly fellowship with Him.

* * * * *

Dearest —— … I have not read brethren's tracts, but when I have, I find many things to question, or not well founded. I have found what I utterly rejected … but God works through a great deal of inaccurate statement, if real truth and grace is there—only the effect bears the mark often of its origin—so He does through imperfect work. One can only trust Him quand même… Things are, as I have often said, in a shocking state here, and people are beginning to feel something better is wanting, and come to see that Christianity according to scripture is quite another thing. These of course are few, but truth is working its way, meanwhile the loose principle is there to hinder decision of conduct if possible. The loose meeting here avows, or rather positively holds (for they never avow as a meeting), the non-immortality of the soul; but their leader and teacher has publicly declared he glories in it, and the emigrants from neutral meetings go there; but there are others equally loose who do not

go there or anywhere, but would be a hindrance to any one's being decided…

There is a work to do here, and God is working, but it is a work of patience as yet. Brethren are more accustomed to go full sail, or work in simple evangelisation, blessed work too, but the fruits come out naturally. Here the existence of brethren has to be made good where there is no such thing, or if any be thought such, connected with a broken up loose meeting, denying the immortality of the soul. That there is such a thing as meeting in the unity of the body, holding the faith more than any here, is at least known now.

The churches, so-called, are awfully afraid of this annihilation doctrine, but let that and everything else in. They are a nursery for indifference to godliness and truth. Did I look as a man I should not be very sanguine. There have been hindrances I cannot enter into here in the elements to be dealt with. Still truth, and a testimony, has been before souls, and has penetrated far in many. The manifested fruits may be delayed, and others reap what has been sown, which I shall be delighted at with all my heart… Mere apparent success (God can of course work a special work) I should dread here. I know what succeeds here, and it is few who can get on even as Christians without it. I would rather have what God approved.

New York, May, 1867.

* * * * *

My dear Brother,—I am sending you some lines,82 by which you will see I have been more happily occupied with the sufferings of the blessed Lord than our friends in England. As to the lines, they are to go if you desire to

put them in without initials or any sign of authorship. You are perfectly free to put them in or not: so many are disposed to find some heresy in what is written, at any rate by me, that you had better look closely to it. I am not the least concerned about it for myself. It is a very small matter to me to be judged of their judgment, but I should not commit other people to the inquisition; so you had better look close. I had not an idea of writing more than a verse or two as a hymn, and it spread out under my hand. Nor had I an idea of entering on what might give occasion to these amiable comments; but I found when I got on to the latter part I was on that part of the subject which might afford a handsome occasion for their investigations. So that while I enjoyed my meditations I should not expose others to their criticisms. I do not write any articles now for brethren's journals. I have written a good deal, and I bide my time. I ought not to commit them to my position or views. The editors have no distrust, but I prefer for the present taking my own ground. I am publishing some tracts here. I thought a mere hymn I might be safe in, but it has extended to such a review of Christ's sorrows, that though for me it is mere meditation and self-edification, others might find some awful doctrine in it, so that I make this long preface. It is rather long and not very poetical. But I enjoyed the meditation with my pen, and others may, too. I was very glad to get your letters.

Affectionately yours in the Lord.

The second part of the lines begins at "I pause." The three last verses, if you like to leave from "I pause" out, come in after "To every soul in need."

May, 1867.

* * * * *

My dear Brother,—I cannot but regret that this thought has laid hold of your mind. It goes far more deeply into the centre of Christianity than mere human notions of measured punishment. The immortality of the soul lies at the root, and with it, responsibility, repentance, and atonement; all of which are wholly gone in this human scheme. The character and evil of sin, and divine judgment, are equally involved; and where-ever it acquires power over the mind, the whole state of the soul is changed and loses reality and integrity before God. It is not merely a question of comparatively obscure passages in the Revelation, but of our nature, and the whole nature of our relations with God. If the soul be immortal its state in judgment continues; if not, we are only a superior kind of animal, more intelligent perhaps, but morally the same, and our responsibility, as such, gone. If temporary punishment is adequate, Christ had to bear no more. I say this not to prove anything, though for one who possesses the truth in his conscience it proves a great deal; but to shew you what is involved. If a man was to prove to me that a doctrine involved unholiness, I should know without more it was false; as was said to me yesterday I am free to sin—that must be false interpretation.

But I will first shew you how false your presentation of things is, as to “all live unto him.” There is no implication. The doctrine to which it is an answer denies the immortality of the soul and holds consequently that as the soul is not immortal, death is ceasing to exist, as in the case of the beasts that perish. Now the passage quoted is a direct formal proof that death is no such thing, but that when dead, they are alive to God as

before. It formally and explicitly denies their doctrine. But you say, “These shall go away into everlasting punishment,” implies everlasting punishment. It implies nothing about it, it states it; just as it states that the others go away into “everlasting life.” Neither imply anything, they state the fact. If it had been said “everlasting fire,” it might have been alleged truly or falsely, that though the fire was eternal, they were not. But they go into “everlasting punishment,” which is not so, if they do not exist. There is no punishment if no one is there. Again, you say “the smoke of their torment” modifies. How does it modify it, if it is their torment, not the smoke of the fire? It is the smoke of what they are undergoing. If death is not ceasing to exist (and scripture is carefully certain as to this, killing the body is not killing the soul); if the duration of punishment is the same as of life, as of God, as of redemption, the case is clear statement, not implying. The truth of the ground taken by those who hold these doctrines is that we have existence as animals; all their arguments turn on this. If this be so, responsibility is gone. A dog and an elephant are not responsible, have not to repent, Christ has not to bear their sins. Give them eternal life! no gospel is needed for them. Christ has nothing to bear for them. They need no atonement. They do not hate God as man in the flesh does. If, as in your theory, men endure temporary punishment (a cruel system unworthy of God), then Christ had only that to bear for me. Sin has only that measure of evil. All the glory of His work, and my sense of sin, sinks down in proportion. Nor did I ever find one person who held these views, who had not at least mentally lost the atonement, nor can it be otherwise. For one who has only an animal soul cannot be responsible; be he saved or not, no atonement was

needed. Christianity is gone in this system. If I have an immortal or undying soul and hate God, when judicially cast out (being such) my torment is infinite, as far as a creature can use the word. This I understand—feel in a measure— only not with finality of course present—but if it is only inflicted punishment for a term, without any object, but purely gratuitous, it seems an easy scheme to man, but it is God taking pleasure in useless punishment when they are going to end their existence after all. What “eternal” means is clear from scripture: “The things that are seen are temporal, the things that are unseen are eternal.” It means what is the opposite to “for a time.”

Isaiah 66, as all these Old Testament passages, refers to the government of earth and what happens there. But it shews this much, that the fire and the worm do not destroy, the carcases subsist without being consumed. Hence the Lord does not cite it, but uses it as the expression of enduring torment. He does not speak of carcases, nor an “abhorring to flesh.” It is not true to say it abstains from statements of duration of pain. Eternal punishment (kovlasi", torment) is expressly the contrary. So is “everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord.” Your explanation of a continual stroke seems to me as unfounded as possible. The stroke was not removed; he was always under it; it was not instantaneous but continual. It is not only the beast and the false prophet and those who worship the beast’s image who are cast into the lake of fire, but whosoever was not found “written in the book of life:” and it is a simply gratuitous assumption that there is a third death after it—not in the gospel, not given as a hope or as perspective deliverance, but invented to satisfy the

thoughts of man, as possible as you say, but which denies the statements of scripture as to many, being spoken of when needed (they are “in danger [ejnoco"] of eternal damnation”), which makes the threatenings of scripture a bugaboo to frighten people with what is not true. But when it says “their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched,” it is all groundless fear. It is not their worm very soon at all; for though the worm is not dead, they have ceased to exist; so that the terror for them is unfounded. And remark, that at the judgment of the great white throne, the intermediate state is closed, death and hades. The dead have been raised, and these (the wicked) cast into the lake of fire, where we have seen others tormented for ever and ever, and of which it is said in general, “where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.”

Responsibility, repentance, atonement disappear; and instead of the offspring of God, sons of Adam (“son of God”) into whose nostrils God breathed the breath of life, turned to hate God and so, persevering in it, excluded from His presence, cast into outer darkness—privation of God now judicially, for whom by His inbreathed spirit of life he was made, you give me with no need of atonement for me, a set of animals punished for a time, with no possible purpose or possible fruit; and on the ground that you say ‘may it not be possible?’ I say, impossible, if God’s word be not a bugbear, and Christianity not true—if my responsibility, repentance, and atonement be true.

I reply to your letter; I do not argue out the question, because you have what has been written, to which you may add F. W. Grant’s book “Life and Immortality;” but still more the word of God, but the word of God for

conscience. I have always found it to be a question of the sense of sin, and so the need of atonement; what my sin has deserved from God. Your own letter proves this, for temporary punishment is adequate to it. I thank you for writing to me about it, and reply at once. My being in America of course delays my answer. I earnestly pray God your soul and conscience may get clear, may get that sense of sin which makes it impossible to accept these reasonings. It is a common thing now, but issues (though saints are deceived by it too) in infidelity.

Affectionately yours in the Lord.

* * * * *

My dear Brother,—I have got frightened on seeing the title page of what you are publishing of my old papers: I thought nothing—as all but two had been published, and they gave some historical insight into the first starting-point of brethren— of their being published again; nor do 1 It is the title page only that frightens me. It has a kind of pretentious look, making a kind of author of me who attaches himself to his works and his works to himself, which is not really the case. I feel as little as it is possible to feel I believe of authorship, save in the first place that what God does not give is useless in the church, or worse; and, not having naturally that kind of pride, sometimes I do not like what I have written, sometimes I do.

Do you know, I am somewhat afraid that this publication has brought out Hall and Dorman, worked on them, I mean, to take the place they have. They will have felt that it was committing them to a kind of system of leadership, not by anything I am doing now, for, as you know, I have not been, so to say, in England; but as a

programme of doctrine which was put forth. I have never had the most distant idea of any unsoundness of doctrine in what they took up, nor have not; nor have any peculiar views at all on Christ's personal or relative position. So that while, of course, willing to correct or improve expressions, I believe there is edification, not error, in the papers. I should be sorry that deeper apprehensions as to Christ's sufferings should stumble any, for that is all there is. I know not that charity could have done more to remove it; or that it would have been right to deprive the saints of blessing (which has been some five years before them) as if it was error; but I leave all that to God.

It is the title page of the book I speak of as having a somewhat pretentious air on my part, though I had nothing to say to it. I do not know if it could be remedied now, and another title given—"a collection of tracts and papers, some out of print or never published, by J. N. D.," or some such thing. I have not the least objection to their seeing the light, though the form frightened me. I never liked putting "the author" in any tract of mine, feeling there was no good in anything God was not the author of.

There is a little progress here, but all is in its infancy. The denial of the immortality of the soul is so common among Christians of fair profession, all but universal where Christ's coming is known and the state of the church seen, that one has to be greatly on one's guard. I have had to contend earnestly about it here. Thank God, the brethren who had been decided about it have, through raising the question by others, seen clearer than ever. They have seen that it really upsets atonement…

I mourn over D., but my judgment is as clear as daylight: brethren, if I can; Christ at all cost.

Ever affectionately yours.

Some were much helped and some brought out at the Guelph meeting.

Milwaukee, Wisconsin, August 8th, [1867].

* * * * *

Dearest ——,—The West Indies are a question of service, and he that saveth his life shall lose it. I like neither winter seas, scorpions, nor heat; but the gracious Lord will take care of me, if it is His service and His will that I should go. It will cheer and encourage them, and I do hope interest others as it has in Canada and the States. But I feel that in the present state of the church of God and the world, if spared, there is a serious work to be done in England in the breaking in of the latter-day evils, and that my present service with what strength I have left, is mainly there, and I trust, ere some six months be up, the Lord helping, to be there. There is blessing here just now so that I linger…

Our life here is but a passage, West Indies or anything; but there is a government of God, a dealing in grace, but in respect of our state, as in Deuteronomy 8 I feel my visit there is a trial as to my mere nature; but I feel that is nothing, and if God be with me, all will be well…

I trust all will be peace as to ——. I fear narrowness, but long experience has made me feel continually more the importance of respecting the actions of those habitually engaged in service in any place.

Peace be with you, kindest love to all the beloved brethren.

P.S.—I have been much struck lately with the fact that in Luke we have more of suffering in Gethsemane and none on the cross.

September, 1867.

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* * * When I got your letters and read them, the effect on my mind was, and I said so; well, it is a simple thing to go to heaven when one is going there, and that was my feeling. I have long growingly felt—and every storm leads to that port —that that was where one was going, and when the time was come, it was a kind of natural thing to go there; and dear Mrs. —— was surely as little of this world as any one I know of at least, and went to where her home and rest are. Still I feel the loss of one so dear to you for you; and it is not those who gently lean upon us, and trust us, whose loss we feel the least; but all leads on to where our true home and rest is. As for her, all is rest.... Peace be with you.

Toronto, September 16th, 1867.

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To the same.]

* * * Your testimony now is to be enjoying Christ for yourself, and not to be looking at your testimony to the saints. As you enjoy Christ for yourself saints will find it out, and that will be your testimony to them.

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My dear Brother,—I am on my way by Montreal to New York, where they look for me. I found your B. T. and pamphlet here. I have nothing to reply. I suppose the paper was one in my MS. books, and so not guarded

against expected adversaries; but I have had the question before me often. The opposition is only ill-will, and were I to seek to cavil, I might reply that Christ shed no blood in dying at all. It was not by taking blood from Him as a victim that He died. The water and blood that were shed were when He was dead—and it is vital to hold that He gave up His life and that it was not taken from Him by shedding His blood. I quite admit He had really to die. But the reality of His drinking the cup of wrath, which unquestionably from scripture was accomplished before He gave up His spirit, is of the last importance. I do not believe there is in the objection any love of the truth, any real, serious concern about Christ, any deep sense of need met by the blessed Lord's sacrifice, anything but ill-will, and I have no answer to give, and am quite unmoved at such an one's accounting it heresy.

It is not true that it is only attributed to blood-shedding and death. It is attributed to suffering including death. And in the act of dying Christ did not suffer, but peacefully commended His spirit to His Father. Death was dreadful to Him surely, but it was not in the act of dying it was so.

I have run my eye hastily over J. M. C.'s. There is nothing new in it, unless a denial that scripture suffices to direct us in certain cases, which I wholly deny. I do not say any gathered part of all believers is the body. They only may be meeting on the principle of its unity. It is a stupid paper. It says, "But we can only stand unmoved by holding the Head with doctrine and practice undefiled." I believe their practice is very wicked indeed —heinous contempt of Christ; and so I do not go with them, and that is all about it. I do not reject people

because they do not agree about the one body. It is all, as all these documents are, an effort to sanction evil, calling it therefore an infinitesimal degree of alleged complicity. The true ground of gathering is a de facto protest against evil, when a man purges himself from it in the midst of church corruption. And that is what they hate. But to carry it on faithfully, and not to be perpetually debating it, is our business. I have never seen one tract on that side whose effect was not to excuse or allow evil—in most I have seen, and I do not it is true read them—vexation of having faithfulness firm, their own conscience being bad and galled by it.

Ever affectionately yours in the Lord.

Ottawa, November 8th, 1867.

* * * As regards the first query,83 the intelligence of the passage supposes a clear apprehension of the Christian's individual position before God, and is the expression of that position in, if I may so speak, its dissected characters. It does not speak simply of full and perfect forgiveness of sins through the blood of Christ and of a righteousness of God manifested therein (that is found in the end of chap, 3); but unfolds the elements of the position of the believer before God as reckoning himself dead to sin, baptised to Christ's death and alive to God through Jesus Christ our Lord, as having discovered not that we had sinned, and come short of the glory of God (that again is found in chap, 3), but that in him, that is in his flesh, dwelleth no good thing. He has learned not what he has done merely, but what he is. Hence the simple fulness of grace is more largely stated in chapter 5, which closes that first part at verse 11—God's love to the sinner, so that we joy in Him, knowing

His love. It is God towards the sinner and so known. Chapter 8 is the believer before God, his privileges fuller, but grace and divine love in itself not so absolutely stated. One is God Himself to the sinner, the other the believer's standing with God. In chapters 3-5. Christ has died for our sins when we were sinners: now is added, we have been baptised to His death and are to reckon ourselves dead; the bearing of which, moreover, on the law and our experience under it is reasoned out by the Spirit in chapter 7.

Having prefaced this, which will make the answers more intelligible, or at least lay the ground for them if apprehended, I reply, Old Testament saints could not be described as not in the flesh, but in the Spirit. The Spirit is the seal of our new position in Christ, promised in the prophets and by the Lord, and received by Him for us after His ascension (Acts 2:33), and given as the Spirit of adoption, and uniting us to Him ascended. The distinction of flesh and Spirit is founded on the descent of the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost, and the possession of the Spirit promised by Christ, and the present fruit of His redemption work. In His time on earth John could say, "The Holy Ghost was not yet, because that Jesus was not yet glorified." And lust was in the Old Testament saints, but now the flesh working lusts against the Spirit, and freedom by the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death is known only to those who have the Spirit, given consequent on an accomplished redemption. It is clear they could not be in the Spirit if the Spirit was not given, and scripture is as clear on this as words can make it. The gift of the Spirit was such and so dependent on Christ's going away, that it was expedient for them He should do so.

I have said above ‘if apprehended,’ because it cannot be but by experience. Forgiveness I can understand in a certain way, if I have it not, for men are forgiven their faults by parents, etc., and the burden of debt being removed is also intelligible. But being dead and reckoning myself dead when I feel myself alive is not so easy even to understand, till divine grace, teaching me to submit to God’s righteousness, has set me free in the consciousness of a new position in which, alive in Christ, I treat the flesh as dead. It is called “the Spirit of Christ,” because it is that which forms us in living likeness to Him: it is Christ in us in the power of life. This was perfectly displayed in His life in itself: in us it is realised in the measure in which we walk in the Spirit, as we live in the Spirit.

Some further remarks will clear this point. The inquirer may remark, that it is called “the Spirit of God,” “the Spirit of Christ,” and “the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus.” I need not say that it is the same Spirit. But in the first, it is in contrast with the flesh. (See Gal. 5:17.) In the second, it is that form of life in which its own qualities are displayed as in Christ Himself. In the third, it is the pledge of final deliverance and glorifying of the body itself into the likeness of Christ glorified—here spoken of however not farther than the quickening of the body by reason of it; but it goes on to the quickening of the mortal body itself.

As regards oujk e[stin aujtou' (ver. 9), all here is spoken of the Christian as such, subjectively perfect as to his christian state: he who has not Christ’s Spirit is not His. It is not a question of what he may be afterwards, or whether he is a sheep, or, so to speak, aujtw'/; but even if God be working in him to lead him to Christ, he is not

yet His in fact until he has His Spirit. Redemption and assurance of faith have been so set aside in evangelical teaching (though not at the Reformation—assurance was insisted on then as alone justifying faith) that many persons who have the Spirit of Christ, which is that of liberty and adoption, are afraid to be free and to say they are children, and yet they have the Spirit of adoption. Such are surely His; but none can be said to be His (aujtoi') till they have His Spirit. All men are Christ's in a certain sense; all His sheep are His own in another: but none can be said to be His when they have not His Spirit.

The saVrx is not dead; saVrx would not do at all here (ver. 10); when the sw'ma is alive, active in will, it is saVrx, and there is sin. Hence if "Christ be in you"—not simply, if I am born of God (which a man is in Rom 7), but, if Christ be in me I reckon myself dead; I am, in the true christian estimate, dead (compare Col. 3)—"the body is dead" because its only produce, if alive, is sin. It is for the Christian a mere lifeless instrument of the new man, of the Spirit that dwells in me. It is to be remarked here, that in this part of the chapter the Spirit is looked at as the source of life, though as dwelling in us: it is the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus. Afterwards, it is looked at personally as acting in us; hence it is said, the "Spirit is life." I own and recognise only the Spirit that dwells in me as the source and spring of life in me, because righteousness is what I seek, and its fruit in contrast with flesh, a contrast fully made previously. Pneu'ma is surely the Spirit of God, but dwelling in us, and the source of and characterising life. The Old Testament saints could not be said to be of Christ thus, as is apparent from what has been said. The saint really

under law, in the Romans 7 state, could not either be said to be aujtou'. But we must remember, that many are practically under law by false teachers keeping them there, who are not really, but in secret look to God as their Father.

[1867.]

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* * * The whole of the beginning of 2 Corinthians is founded on the circumstance, that the apostle had just been in a violent persecution, in which it seemed impossible to escape with life. The sentence84 referred to declares that this outward danger of being put to death had no power over him whatever, because within he held himself for a dead man, and trusted in Him that raiseth the dead. What was killing to a dead man who only looked for the power of resurrection to be exercised? Apovkrima I take to be a judicial sentence, not an answer, though it has this sense also. He held himself as a child of Adam under sentence of death. It was a condemned, sentenced, nature. But he says more than this; he had this in himself—he held himself for dead. His own life was condemned for himself. As far as the natural man moves, and wills it, it is flesh; but holding the flesh as actually dead in one’s own mind is holding the body-to be dead, as far as any mental sentence can go. “If Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; and the Spirit is life.”

Nevkrwsi"85 is stated to have a passive or rather neutral sense as well as active, it is not simply deadness. It is not the state of death, but (where not killing) the act of dying: so putting to death even is used in English; only agency is supposed there. I may say, ‘his putting to

death’ was inexcusable, that is, his being put to death. In Romans 4 it is not simply death, as if Sarah were dead, but the losing the power of life which had taken place: he did not think of Sarah’s womb losing its vital powers. In 2 Corinthians 4:10 it is not losing, as in Romans 4:19, but he realised in the body the applying death to it, as death was Christ’s portion. It is not, as to Christ, the Jews’ act of crucifying and slaying, which is in mind. Hence killing does not suit, but the fact of the setting aside of life. No English word exactly answers. Dying is looked at as the fruit of something at work; but it is not the working of the instrument which is looked at, but the effect on the person. He held his body down as dead because, as regards Christ in this world, he knew Him as one who had died to it, for whom putting to death was His portion and the source of all blessing. It is the cross applied to the flesh’s life. Nevkrwsi" is making a corpse of, depriving of life; this ended with his body because it has so been with Christ. So Peter says, Christ having suffered in the flesh, we are to arm ourselves with the same mind.

[1867.]

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* * * The epistle to the Ephesians contemplates the church86 all through in its perfectness and privileges, and does not touch the question of its decay as entrusted to man’s responsibility, which is in 1 Corinthians. God has provided for the accomplishment of the object here spoken of in spite of failure, but it is here looked at without reference to it. The adding of the knowledge of the Son of God was necessary, because it is up to His stature thus known that we are to grow. The

arriving at common unity of faith is the general basis, solidity as freed from the vacillations of wind of doctrine; but besides that, we are to grow up to Him who is the Head in all things (as in Col. 1:28), “that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus.” The perfect man means simply the state—a full-grown man; but the measure of the stature of a full-grown man in Christ, is Christ Himself, all the fulness that is in Him wrought into the soul, so that it should be formed by it, and like to and filled with Christ in all its thoughts; its subjective state measured and formed by the objective fulness of Christ, so that there should be no discrepancy and no separation from Him; the saint grown up to Him in everything. How wondrous such a thought is, I need not say; but this is what is before us. A perfect man as to the expression is simply a full-grown man. So Hebrews 5:14 and 6:1. !Anqrwpo" is the race including man and woman, and would not be appropriate here. Speaking merely of men, I say pavnta a[nqrwpon, as Colossians 1. *AnhVr is the word of dignity in the race, and so he is looking at it there. You would not think of a woman, in saying one was growing up to full manhood.

[1867.]

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* * * The change from “we” to “ye” is very simple. “We,”87 Peter and all, possess the word of prophecy; the “ye” applies to those he was exhorting. The mystery is not in the passage at all; but the “word of prophecy” is here in contrast, not directly with the mystery (though that connects itself with this), but with the day-star and the day dawning. Prophecy is a light in a dark place, this world; and refers to the events happening in this world

and the judgment. And it is very well, as regards this world, to take heed to it. When the day is come, it will be Christ revealed, judgment on the world (compare Mal. 4) and resulting blessing. But there is a better hope for those who watch, and in contrast with judgment: the dawn and the star not seen by those who only appear when the sun is risen, but for saints who look for Christ before He appears, not warned merely and detached from earth, but associated in heart with Christ in heaven.

There is only a shade of meaning different oJ ajsthvr oJ prwi>nov", Revelation 2:28, and fwsfovro" here, one referring to the early appearance, the other to its introducing dawn or light. Peter is speaking of prophecy as a light, a candle shining in a dark place—God's light in the darkness of this world; with which he contrasts Christ's heavenly coming, the hope of the saints as bringing in the light of a new day. &O ajsthVr oJ prwi>nov" is merely what it is—its appellative, Christ Himself, still not in the kingdom: that precedes in verse 27, and is found rather in "the Root and Offspring of David" in chapter 22.

[1867.]

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* * * The firstfruits were to be offered but not burnt, because88 leaven was in them; and they could not be in themselves a sweet savour: hence a sin-offering was offered with them. (Lev. 23:17-19.) They represent the church, being (as may be seen in Lev. 23) the offering of the day of Pentecost: not the church in the unity of the body, but as formed among Jews on earth on that day. The first of the firstfruits, the corn out of full ears, is

Christ risen, offered on the morrow of the sabbath after the Passover; it represents Christ Himself, and hence (Lev. 23:12, 13) there was no sin-offering. If we look at it in Lev. 2:14, it is still Christ. Oil and frankincense are put on it. It is an offering made by fire without leaven. It is Christ looked at as man, tried by divine trial of judgment, but perfect to be offered to God. The expressions are somewhat remarkable—geres carmel, "corn mature out of full ears;" it may be, "produce of the fruitful field," the latter being the known sense of carmel; the meaning of geres was certain. But the general meaning of the offering is pretty plain: Christ in His manhood, sinless and full proved, presented to God with oil and frankincense of acceptable odour, the firstfruits—fruits of man to God.

[1868.]

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* * * It is important to pay attention to the place where89 these passages are found in the gospels. In Matthew, chapter 11 marks the transition from the presentation of Christ to the nation, the Gentiles being excluded. What is found in chapter 10 speaks of this presentation until the return of the Son of man, and the new order of things which took place in consequence of the rejection of Christ. Verses 20-30 of chapter 11 present this change in the most striking manner. The Saviour upbraids the cities where He had laboured, for their deplorable unbelief, and submits to the will of God in this dispensation. This submission opens for His heart the enigma of that grace which appears in all its simplicity, and in all its power. It is a question of knowing the Father, and the. Son alone can reveal Him;

but He invites “all that labour and are heavy laden” to come to Him, and He will give them rest. His Person, and not Israel, is the centre of grace and of the work of grace. He alone reveals the Father. The judgment of Israel is developed in chapter 12, and the mysteries of the kingdom are brought out in chapter 13. On the occasion of this transition we see the testimony of John and that of Jesus equally rejected.

This transition is, if possible, still more clearly marked in Luke at the end of chapter 13. The rupture between Jehovah and Jerusalem is complete: the house which belonged to the children of Jerusalem, once the “house of God,” is abandoned, and they will not see the Lord until Psalm 118 is accomplished in their repentance. Then in chapter 14, the change in the ways of God is clearly shewn, and the sphere of the activity of His grace is no longer the now rejected Israel, but the whole world, after having gathered in the poor of the flock of His people. (Vers. 16-24.) Then the ways of God in sovereign grace towards man—towards sinners—are brought out in that treasury of grace and love, which is found in chapter 15; and in chapter 16, the Lord shews the use that man ought to make of that which he possesses according to nature, being now that which had been particularly proved in Israel—a steward who was dismissed. He should make use of it in grace, in view of the future; instead of enjoying it as a thing possessed in this world. He should think of eternal habitations. It is here that the passage relative to the kingdom and to John the Baptist is found. His mission was the pivot of the change. In this point of view the mission of Christ on the earth—His ministry—was but the complement of that of John the Baptist. Compare

Matthew 4:17; 3:2. Only the latter sung the doleful dirge of judgment, and the former the joyful song of hope and of grace, just as our chapter explains it to us.

In the passages which occupy us, Matthew speaks as thinking of Israel; Luke, as thinking of all men.

Two great systems of God with respect to the earth are found included in His counsels, and revealed in the word. One depended on the faithfulness of man to the responsibility which weighed upon him, the other on the active power of God. These are the dispensations of the law and of the kingdom. But there was a moment of transition, when the kingdom was preached, and preached in the midst of Israel by John the Baptist and by Christ, without its having been established in power. The people were put to a moral test as to their use of the right of entering in. For the rest, the Prophets and the Psalms had indeed announced beforehand the character of those who were to have a part in the blessings of the kingdom. See Psalms 15, 24, 37, and many others; Isaiah 48:22, 51, 57:21, 66:2, and a multitude of other passages. The sermon on the mount has put a seal to this testimony by giving it actuality. Now the preaching of the kingdom had for its effect to separate the remnant (namely, those who had ears to hear) from the evil and hypocrisy which reigned in the midst of the people, to prepare them for the entrance of the kingdom, if it had been established in power; and in fact, Christ being rejected, that they might become the nucleus of the assembly which, according to the counsels of God, was about to be revealed. Then the kingdom took the character of sowing and other similar forms, and not that of the kingdom of a king in power, and it continued to be preached as about to come; although the salvation

and the glory of the church were to occupy, from the coming down of the Holy Spirit, the principal place in the doctrine of which the Spirit is the source.

It was therefore at the moment when the relationships of Israel with God by means of the Messiah had become impossible, and when the relationships founded on the law, and maintained by the testimony of the prophets, were drawing to an end, through the publication of the kingdom ready to be established and, in a certain sense, present in the person of the King—it was at that moment that the Lord pronounced these words. Now the first thing that they state is, that “the law and the prophets were until John.” Israel was placed by God on that footing until John’s ministry. They had but to observe the law, and to rejoice in the hope given by the prophets, and all was well. This was no longer the case after John. The kingdom was not established; if it had been, the power of God would have settled everything. Order and peace would have reigned; the remnant would have been blessed in the kingdom where the King would have reigned in righteousness. But it was not so; it was preached, and preached by prophets—and by those who were more than prophets—and by prophets who were reviled and rejected, and for whom the wilderness and death were an abode or a reward. The hypocritical nation, a generation of vipers, would have nothing of it. It was only the energy of faith, going through sufferings, which could seize on it. Satan and the heads of the nation would do all they could to prevent people from entering, and even soil their hands with the blood of the righteous. Those who preached the kingdom suffered, and those who entered it were to have their portion with them. The kingdom was not being established in power;

the King did not reign; He was preached. It was only by violence that one forced one's way into it. It was the violent ones, those who were not stopped by obstacles and opposition, but who opened to themselves a way through all, these alone it was who were securing a place for themselves.

There is only this difference between Matthew and Luke, that Matthew speaks exclusively of the character of those who seize on the kingdom, and the position of the latter, and does not therefore go beyond the application of these thoughts to the Jewish people. Luke had formally spoken of the highways and hedges, and had by his expressions opened the door to the Gentiles without formally pointing to them as the "whomsoever," so often quoted by Paul. "Every one," he says, "forces his way into it." Since it was a matter of preaching and of faith, the Gentile who would listen to the preaching and have that faith would enter in, like any other. Nevertheless, he only opens the door by a principle, according to the doctrine of that gospel from chapter 4. The parable which follows these verses in Luke goes farther. It decidedly opens heaven, and completely overturns the Jewish system, which made earthly blessings to be a proof of God's favour.

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* * * The difficulty suggested as to the date can have no90 place whatever. Other questions may arise as to the force of words. In Revelation 12 Satan is cast down, clearly before the last great tribulation, greatly enraged, because he knows he has but a short time, and persecutes the woman for the "time, times, and half a time." In the passage in the gospels, where the mark of

time seems precise (Matt, 24, Mark 13), the shaking of the powers of the heavens is after the tribulation. That is, the casting down of Satan in Revelation 12 is before, and introductory of, the last tribulation; in Matthew 24 and Mark 13 the shaking of the powers of the heavens is after the tribulation. Thus, as events, they have nothing to do with one another. In Luke 21 the expression is vague, and gives a general ground for what happens. The inquiry then is simply, without any reference to the fall of Satan from heaven, what these terms mean.

It seems to me that in Luke there is a mixed metaphor; in Matthew and Mark it is more in the style of Old Testament prophecy. I have little doubt that the scene will be as mixed as the metaphor—terrible signs actually given (compare Luke 21:11); and, besides that, an actual disruption of all existing powers, and terror on every heart, with the tumultuous swellings of peoples. Compare Psalm 93, where I do not believe it is mere literal waters. Further, I find in Daniel 8:10 the host and the stars clearly refer to rulers (Jewish priestly rulers) on the earth. Now I do not doubt the shakings and subversion of the future (before the great and terrible day of the Lord) will be much greater and more terrible than what is in Daniel 8; but this gives an inlet into what those expressions mean. I would not confine this tremendous breaking up of existing powers and rule to Jewish ones there, though it is in Daniel 8, because Gentiles and Jews are all mixed up together, the sacrifice taken away, and idolatry come in. But there will be more than a revolution—a subversion and upsetting of all manifested and organic powers. There is an analogous upsetting of all powers in Revelation 6, supposed by the inhabitants of the earth to be the great day of the

Lamb's wrath, which it is not, but only a precursor of it. I refer to it to shew that such subversions of all constituted powers are so spoken of, without any raising of the question whether Satan is cast down from heaven or not. This is before the trumpets and the vials; the end of the last tribulation comes after it—somewhere at the end of the second woe-trumpet, and then God's judgment by Christ Himself. The.beast and the final tribulation are a special subject, besides the general government under which these shakings come; and they are so given in the Apocalypse. The general government of God applies to the nations at large; the beast is in connection with the rejection of Christ and enmity to Him. They go on concurrently, but the latter is a special matter.

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* * * There is, I think, no difficulty in Exodus 6:3. If we91 compare Exodus 3:14, 15, we find there, "Jehovah, the God of your fathers." It was the personal name of God as having to do with men, and particularly with Israel—man in the flesh set in relationship with. God. It is His abiding name as to this world, either who was, and is, and is to come, if we take Him historically, or more perfectly as in Revelation who is (oJ w]n), and was, and is to come, the oJ w]n, the existing one (atta hu), and past in time, and to come. But in Exodus6:3 it is different. It speaks of the character in which He revealed Himself in order to their walking before Him. And note, when the revelation of Shaddai, as the name to be owned in walk took place, it is said Jehovah appeared unto Abram; and the word was, "I (Jehovah) am El Shaddai; walk before me." Hence, in Exodus 6:3, "I am Jehovah; and I appeared unto Abraham (3) as El

Shaddai: (in) my name Jehovah was I not (made) known to them." This refers to the appearing to put them according to the nature of that revelation' in relationship with Himself: so to Jacob (Gen. 35:11), as soon as God revealed Himself to him. To Isaac, who stands connected with Rebekah, the risen head of the church, He is not revealed by any name. The historical name is always Jehovah or Elohim. The One who appears is always Jehovah; but He appears to Abraham as El Shaddai, and so reveals Himself as the ground of, and that which gives its character to, his walk before Him. But it is always Jehovah who appears, as in chapter 12:7. In chapter 15:7 it is no appearing. The word of Jehovah came to Abraham and said, "I am Jehovah that brought thee out of Ur." And in Psalm 91, the title of Shaddai is used as the expression of almighty protection; the Messiah says as knowing the true secret of who the Most High is: "I will say of Jehovah," etc. And so He is kept by the power of Shaddai. Thus, I judge, that though Jehovah, as the expression of the constant being of God, was taken as the specific covenant name of Israel's God—the God of man in the flesh who had to say to God—yet it was, as the name of constant being, the abiding historical name of God. Almighty and Father are special names of character and relationship taken with those to whom God is so revealed. The name of the one true God, the name of the being, is His abiding name, in relationship with the earth—the name. The Israelite had "blasphemed the name." Most High is another relative name taken. Hence it is only in the millennium fully. But it is still Jehovah who is the Most High. Hence you would not have 'the angel of Shaddai' or of the Father, or Elion, because he represents His

power as such, not a name of relationship; but he took His name, as the name of relationship with Israel.

It was not that the name of Jehovah was not known as the proper name of the true God, but that His making Himself known to them, as the One before whom they were to walk, was in another specific name. He did not take His name, His own name so to speak, as the name by which He was to be in relationship with them. It is a very important circumstance as to Israel that God's own name, what I may call His personal name, at least in connection with man on earth, "the name" became the name of relationship with that people. Hence in celebrating that name, even in the wide extent of the unopened glory, in the past which belongs to earth, we have (Psalm 8), "O Jehovah our Adon, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!" He had set in that His glory now above the heavens. Elohim is the One who stands in the position of the divine being. Jehovah is the personal name of Him who truly is so. He became the Elohim of the Jews as a nation who had been called out of the world to and by Him when idolatry had come in. (Josh. 24) Jehovah, He is Elohim. And now we say, Father, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom He has sent; but withal of the Son, He is the true God and eternal life. When it is said "then Jehovah shall be my Elohim" (Gen. 28:21), we must refer to verse 13, whence Jacob drew that which he then said, and so verse 16. But in Exodus6:2, we have equally, "I am Jehovah." But in Genesis 35, when Elohim reveals Himself to Jacob as the present God with whom he had to do, it is again (ver. 11) El Shaddai. Jehovah is found in chapters 31:3; 32:9. In a word, Jehovah was not unknown to their own thoughts or in intercourse; but it was not the name He took in

relationship to the patriarchs in their character as such: it was with Israel after the bush.

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* * * The meaning is that, if Christ died for all, it was92 because all had died: otherwise there would have been no such need for Him to die. You need not go down into a pit where one will perish, if he is not there perishing. That it is not all died to sin is evident from the correspondency of “all” in the sentence; and further that “they which live” are taken as some out of the “all” in what follows. “He died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live,” etc.— oiJ zw'nte", not zw'nte". Hence he does not know even Christ after the flesh, as a living Jewish Messiah, whom as a Jew he would have known: “God was in Christ, reconciling the world.” Nor does he know Christians as belonging to the old creation to which they had died, nor others, for they were all dead—their whole history. But if a man was in Christ, it was a new creation: he belonged to that in which all things were of God.

The whole subject is the power of life in Christ as triumphant over death. Hence, when he applies it, he does not say merely “who died for them,” as when he speaks of all, but “rose again” also. It is the power and fulness of a new thing for those taken out of death through Christ’s going down into it. There was neither Jew, Gentile, sin, flesh, nor any other thing of the old Adam or legal estate, but a new creation.

[1869.]

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* * * The first miracle was, as noticed heretofore, the expression of the change from Jewish purification to the joy93 of the millennium, when Jehovah shall restore Israel in truth; as the subsequent acting at Jerusalem was the judicial cleansing part of the same period. But from that act all is changed.

Jesus receives not man's acceptance of Him as a present thing by mere human faith. A man must be born again. Instead of the Messiah received by Israel, the Son of man must be crucified. And heavenly things are behind this; and "every one," and "whosoever believeth," the sphere of action. John Baptist reveals Him fully as to His Person and testimony (if not also His relationship with Israel as bride). (Chap. 3:29-36.)

Hence in chapter 4 He goes Himself through Samaria, and God's gift, man's conscience, spiritual worship, the Father's seeking such around Him as worshippers, and the Saviour of the world, are brought out. Then He goes to Galilee (that is, not established Judaism, but the slighted objects of God's mercy in a really fallen Israel), where the second miracle is the life-giving power of faith. He arrests the power of death, when approached in need as able. This was His present service. He comes in His second character into Galilee, His Messianic reception being out of question. An analogous and larger expression of the full state of things dispensationally (which this is not) is His going down to heal the ruler's daughter, but she is really dead. Meanwhile He heals, by virtue going out of Him, by the way, when He is touched by active faith; and afterwards He restores to life Israel, being really dead but in God's eyes only asleep (that is, hid for a season though morally dead). This second

miracle then is in special connection, but contrast, with the first.

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* * * When the dative94 is used for time, it is always viewed as one whole point or object; when the accusative, it is a space during which. Thus, taking the common reading, Judges characterized the period of 450 years, as we hear of them during forty years in the desert. (Ver. 18.) So iJkanw' crovnw in Acts 8:11, and Romans 16:25. Thus trivth hjmevra and trivhn hJmeran would not have the same force, though in result the sense would be the same. In the first phrase I should think of that one day so characterized. With trivthn hJm. I think of two days elapsed before. In a word the accusative is duration, as the dative is epoch, though in sense running often into one another. Thus according to the common reading of the dative, in Acts 13:20, the statement would not be during 450 years, but up to, as far as (i.e., counting from the end of the desert). Thus Joshua, Elders, and Cushanrishathaim would have to be deducted—say some forty-five years. And the chronology is in no way changed. But then the reading of the more ancient authorities gives a very different sense.

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* * * We live diaV ton Crivston (John 6:57), not merely diaV tou' C., as if it95 was merely a means of living, but on account of Christ, because of Him, and hence according to what His life is derived from, as He lived diaV toVn p. It is not cavrin, but the continuous cause, only objectively so, for we eat this blessed food. The force seems to be the moral source of the character of what is produced: thus in Galatians 4:13, dij

ajsqeneivan, “in infirmity.” Infirmity of the flesh was the moral source of the character of his preaching; as in Philippians 1:15, envy was the moral source of the character of the preaching for some, as goodwill was for others. So here the Father was the moral source of the character of Christ’s life in the world, as Christ is of ours.

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* * * I do not see any difficulty in God’s answering prayer96 connected with general laws, if we allow God to be free to act in His own world—as free as I am. Do I change general physical laws when I go, on request, to visit some sick person? My will—how, I know not—acts on and by these physical laws. Gravity is in my foot or in the earth, force is in my muscle, electricity in the nerves which set it in motion; yet I in my poor way have answered a request. Now I recognise fully power in God because He can, I need not say, not only change His law, but, without doing so, give force to agents in them, produce gastric juice more powerfully, or more electricity in the system at His will without introducing a single new element or law which governs it. Laws remain the same: His will interferes to produce agency by them. He may work a miracle, as raising the dead, which is by no law—He has done so. But I do not speak of miracles which take place when He changes a law, as when He makes the hatchet swim, but when He works by law to particular effects of His will. This may be miraculous, as when a strong whirlwind acted on the sea, and another took away locusts or brought quails. But He may give special activity or quantity to agents which act by laws regularly. I am sure, at any rate, that He bears and answers prayer. The very action of mind

on man’s frame that more results may be produced, and God’s on mind (as to external circumstances), is so wonderful that I see no difficulty at all. Laws which bind nature I admit; laws which bind God I do not.

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Dear Brother,—I am not surprised at Jowett’s exercising influence over those who breathe Oxford atmosphere; but for such the least sparkling of truth is an amazing coruscation, and he has heart and pleasure in truth he finds: but I was struck in reading his book, how little bits of truth which thousands of poor saints possess, as a matter of course, were the mountains of the moon for him, wonders of discovery. But he has a mind which would interest the young. But the ignorance of the clergy is astounding. And now for your questions. There can be no doubt women prayed and prophesied by inspiration, as Philip’s four daughters; but the assembly was to be the expression of the order of God, and there they were to keep the woman’s place. 1 Corinthians 11:17 begins directions for the assembly, what goes before not. Only we nave general instructions in Timothy, that they are not to teach but be in silence. The men are to pray everywhere, women to be modest in demeanour. I should hardly use Isaiah 8:20 against the Quakers, save to take the scriptures as the test of all they say. I hardly think djv could bear the sense of “light” in the Quaker sense. But Romans 8:9, latter part, is clear on the point. I wrote a tract “On Light and Conscience”97 once, having a good deal to say to Quakers.

There is a difficulty you have not weighed as to ejntoV" in Luke 17:21: that the Lord is speaking to Pharisees

who had not the kingdom of God in the spiritual sense. Kingdom of heaven is used only in Matthew as a dispensational word; that is, the kingdom of God when the King was in heaven. So kingdom of their Father. Kingdom of God is the generic term, and can be used therefore morally, “is not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.” The kingdom of heaven is developed into the kingdom of our Father, and the kingdom of the Son of man.

As to Luke 21:19, although ktavomai is in general ‘get’ as contrasted with kevkthmai, yet it is used for keeping in possession, possessing so as not to lose. (Acts 4:34; 1 Thess. 4:4; Matt. 8:9; Luke 18:12.) Its direct reference is to the being spared, kept of God, saved in the dangers of the mission which they had among the Jews. There may be analogy, but possessing is not the working out. Salvation in Philippians is always viewed as at the end of the course.

1 Corinthians 7:14 and Hebrews 10:29 are only the same in the most general way. The Jew who married a Gentile was (not profane) but profaned, the child was profane, and had no title to be accounted a Jew or have part in their privileges; they were to be sent off. Under grace, the converse was the case. An unbelieving partner was (not holy, but) sanctified, and the child holy, not unclean, that is, had title to the privilege. In Hebrews the people are looked at as such, as objects of divine favour. Christ died for the nation as such. “Whoever, therefore, owned Him as Messiah, did not reject Him in unbelief, was looked on as set apart by blood. Once Loammi, not my people, but now Ammi, according to Hosea 2:23, only it was by blood. Hence so much warning in Hebrews against falling away.

Luke 8:46 and 6:19: it is the power to heal which resided in Christ, and became efficacious when the touch of faith was there.

As to Melchisedec, scripture makes him purposely a mysterious personage, not as you say the Son of God, but made like Him; no priestly genealogy, nor beginning at 25 years, 30 years, and ending at 50 years of age, and the like. It is not image (Heb. 1:3) of the Father, but of God: the Father as such, is not the subject of Hebrews. I do not think that chapter 9 gives co-existence. It shews that the tabernacle, etc., pre-figured as to sphere and general relationship of place and principle the heavenly places; but was not an exact representation. There were many dying priests, here one. There many sacrifices, here one once for all: a veil saying men could not go in, now for us at any rate, boldness to go in, and the like. After the person of Christ, the main subject of Hebrews is access to God as such, not relationship.

I write in haste, but glad to help you in any way. I shall be very glad, if the Lord allow, to meet any young men at Oxford. I hope, ere long, to be free here, as my new edition of New Translation is nearly finished.

Your affectionate brother in Christ.

1870.

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* * * The words used for people, peoples, nations in the98 Hebrew are these. <u^ “people” in the singular in general signifies Israel, <yM!u^ in the plural “peoples.” This is very often indeed wrongly translated “people” in the Authorised Version, I suppose because “peoples” is not correct English; but the sense is quite different. I

believe the <yM!u are the peoples in connection with Israel, brought into relationship with Israel. <y]oG on the contrary, are the nations in contrast with God's people. It is used of Israel, where it is disowned, in Psalm 43, rys!j*-a{l yoG an impious nation. There is another word, and quite general, <yM!a%l=, "tribes," "races," and so "nations." This is the word translated people in Psalm 2, and often elsewhere. The word toMa%is found in Genesis 25:16 (of Arab tribes), and in Numbers 25:15, in the same sense. We have <y]Mu^ in Psalm 18:47. In Psalm 3:6, it is <u^ Israel. In Psalm 7:8 it is <y]Mu; that is, while a general word, not the nations looked at in contrast with Israel, "Gentiles," as we are accustomed to say. In Psalm 9 God is viewed as clearing the land of His enemies. He is known by the judgment He executes. The wicked (which may be of His people in the land) are turned into Sheol, are slain and go down into the pit, and the Gentiles also who give no heed to God but go their own way, despising Him. In Psalm 67:2, it is "all the nations" everywhere, contrasted with Israel who speaks. Verse 7 is the effect. In verse 3 they are looked at as brought into relationship, <y]Mu. In verse 4 it is <yM!a%l=, all the various tribes of the earth. Then He judges them, not in destruction as <y]oG, but as peoples (<y]Mu^) under Him: then <yM! a%l= the various tribes or races He shall lead or govern. In verse 5 it is <y]Mu^ all the various peoples, but viewed in relationship with Jehovah.

We have in Luke 2 "before the face of all peoples." Were the laoiv expressed in Hebrew, it would be <y]Mu^ a general word (not I think here <yM!a%l=) but viewed as brought into relationship with God. Then the nations, e[qnh, (<y]oG) were viewed as wholly invisible, unseen

and ignored. The light of Christ was to reveal them, bring them out into visible existence, so that they became <y]Mu^ so to speak. Then “people Israel” is plain enough.

[1871.]

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To the same.]

As to the divine names, Elohim, <y]hOa# is the common99 name for God, Him with whom we have to do; hence for all who are viewed in this place by man, or represent Him who is rightly so viewed, as judges in Israel (Ex. 21), or angels. (Psalm 8) Of course there is but one true God, but gods many amongst men: but hence,. in Elijah’s history, “Jehovah is the Elohim, Jehovah, he is the Elohim.” It is the word in universal use for God as such. But constantly, when Elohim is distinctly used for the one true God, the article is added Ha Elohim. Eloah is the singular of Elohim.

El (la@) is the strong or mighty one, who stands, so to speak, by His own power. Hence we have El-Elohe-Israel, El (God, the mighty one) la@, the God of Israel. El and Eloah are constantly used in Job. (la@ chap. 5:8; 8:13, 20; 9:2; 12:6; 13:3, 7, 8; 15:4, 13, 25; 16:11, etc. Hola$ 3:4, 23; 4:9; 5:17; 6:4, 8, 9; 9:13; 10:2; 11:5, 6, 7; 12:6; 15:8, etc.) It is said to be Aramean. So we have in Daniel El Elion (most high God).

I can say nothing satisfactory to my own mind as to Jah. That it is used as an ancient poetic name for Jehovah is clear, as in Hallelujah. So in Exodus 15:“my strength and my song is Jah.” If you look into most dictionaries, you will find it stated to be a shortening of Jehovah. But then

I find them used together, as Isaiah 26:4, “In Jah Jehovah is everlasting strength.” So Isaiah 12:2, “My strength and my song is Jah Jehovah.” It is found in Psalm 68 where a B= precedes, translated “by His name Jah” in English, but which may be doubted, though a name of holy song and praise at any rate.

Jehovah is God’s name of dealing and relationship with men, specially with Israel, derived (I suppose) from hy`h*, to exist; and practically translated “who is and was and is to come,” not, “who was, and is,” which is true, but “is” (exists, that is, in Himself eternally) “and was and will be” in past and future true. Hence He is one who having spoken makes good. “Thou art the same and thy years shall not fail.” Hence we have in Genesis 1, “Elohim,” the Creator; in Genesis ii., “Jehovah Elohim,” because the relationship of God with men is spoken of; for there it is not His place simply over creatures as such connected with God, but all His various relationships: how Adam was placed, warned, and dealt with, his wife’s place with him, creatures’ subjection, etc. These words, Elohim and Jehovah, are never confounded in scripture. The senseless scissors’ distinction of rationalists shews only their want of looking intelligently into the written word of God. God is God as such; Jehovah, One who enters into relationship with His people and with men.

There is another name yD~v^ la@ by which God revealed Himself, that is to Abraham and the patriarchs, El Shaddai. See Exodus 6:3. where Elohim takes specially the name of Jehovah as the God of Israel. These two names are beautifully brought out in 2 Corinthians 6:18 to take the name of Father with us. “I will be a Father and ye shall be my sons and daughters,” says

Jehovah Shaddai, the God who was the one to Israel, the other to Abraham. In Genesis 2:3 it was of all importance to connect Jehovah, Israel's national God, with the only one creator God. So in Exodus 9:30 the God of the Hebrews, whose name was Jehovah, is declared to be Elohim; Pharaoh would not yet fear Him. Otherwise Jehovah is a name, Elohim a being: only Jehovah is Elohim, but the former a personal name. <l*ou la@ El Olam is the everlasting God. See Genesis 21:33.

Elion (/oyl=u\ la) is the Most High God. This is a fourth name God takes in connection with men; His millennial name above all idolatrous gods and demons and all power, and then said to be "possessor of heaven and earth." Hence, when Nebuchadnezzar is humbled, after being a beast till seven times had passed over him, he owns the God of the Jews to be the Most High God. So in Daniel vii.; but not when connected with saints: there it is plural (Elionin) and refers, I believe, to the high or heavenly places. (Vers. 18, 22, 25, 27.)

hy\h=a@ Ehejeh in Exodus 3 is merely the abstract tense in Hebrew, and "I am that I am" I believe to be right enough. [Some take it as "I will be that I will be."]

Adonai (yn`d)a&) is simply "Lord" (in the plural of majesty as is said), but hence, I believe, is used for Christ, exalted as man, but Jehovah withal, as Psalm 110:5. It is also Adonai in Psalm 2:4; Isaiah 6:1, 8; Daniel 9:17.

There is another word which, though it may be used as an attributive, can hardly be excluded from being a name of God. aWh Hu, Atta Hu, "thou art the same," the unchangeable One (see Deut. 32:39); "I am He, the same

and besides me no god." I am He, aWh: Psalm 44:4; Isaiah 41:4; 43:10, 13; Jeremiah 5:12. It is in the sense of the immutable existing One, which is true of God only, as Psalm 102:27 cited in Hebrews 1 oJ aujtov".

Though the Psalms afford in the most interesting way the difference of the use of God and Lord, I just refer to Genesis 7:16. God commanded him, it was Elohim's order; and Jehovah, the personal God that cared for him, not merely the divine being, shut him in. The scissors must be very small and fine that cut this into two documents, while the Lord's mind shines out with the deepest beauty and interest to those that have eyes to see. So in chapter 8:21 we have "Jehovah smelled a sweet savour," because it was a personal relationship and dealing with men. All the rest of this part is Elohim, God as God dealing with a subject world in the flood, and sparing, as such, Noah and his family. In chapter 9:26 Jehovah comes in again in evident relationship. As to all these, readers have only to take an "Englishman's Hebrew Concordance" and seek the passages where these various names occur, generic, personal, official, or compound. It will not be lost labour, nor anything which is an inlet to the divine mind—God's revelation of Himself.

* * * * *

* * * If we compare Hebrews 5:7 and Gethsemane's100 cry, I think the force of the Psalm will be evident. The answer in the Psalm is not being preserved from dying, but life as risen in glory above, made most blessed for ever; not sparing life for a time here, but honour and great majesty laid upon Him as man in a higher and more glorious condition. Christ as a man, though mighty

to do all things, asked everything of His Father. Dependence was His perfection. At Lazarus' tomb He asked, knew His Father heard Him always; asked in John xii.; asked that the cup might pass. Only the word out«o is not used of Him. The necessity of an event does not hinder asking. Everything in God's purpose will be necessarily accomplished; but He leads men's hearts to ask, as the moral filling up of their relationship with Him. In Christ, as man, this was perfect.

* * * * *

82 "The Man of Sorrows."

83 'Romans 8:9. 10. What is the special teaching of this part of the epistle? Could Old Testament saints be said to be not in the flesh but in the Spirit? If not, why not? What is the meaning of "the Spirit of Christ"? and why the different forms of describing the Spirit here? What is the force of "he is none of his?" why is it oujk e[stin aujtou' rather than aujtw'/? Does it mean merely a sheep of Christ, or one born of God, or what more? Again, why is body (sw'ma) here and not the flesh (savrx)? and what is the distinct connection of "because of sin," and "because of righteousness?'"

84 '2 Corinthians 1:9.—Does the "sentence (answer) of death," spoken of by the apostle, mean nature's death, that is, the penalty of death? or does it mean that, by the cross, we have the sentence of death, so as to have no more hope or expectation, in ourselves?'

85 '2 Corinthians 4:10. What is meant by nevkrwti" (translated in the English Bible "dying") here? Is it "deadness" or the state of death, or "killing," or what else?'

86 ‘Ephesians 4:13.—Why is the “knowledge of the Son of God” added to “the unity of the faith,” and what is meant by each? and by “the perfect man”? and “the measure of the stature of Christ”? and why not a{ndra rather than a[nqrwpon (as in Col. 1:28)?’

87 ‘Can the prophetic word here (2 Peter 1:19-21) be said in any just sense to include the revelation of the mystery? or is it not rather in contrast? Why the change from “we” to “ye” in verse 19? What is the meaning of “the day dawn” and “the day-star arise in your hearts?”’

88 ‘Why were the firstfruits to be offered and not burnt? (Lev. 2:12.) What was intended by the corn out of full ears (ver. 14)?’

89 ‘What is the bearing of Matthew 11:12, and Luke 16:16?’

90 ‘Matthew 24:29.—Is there any ground to identify the shaking of “the powers of the heavens” (or, as in Mark 13, “the powers that are in the heavens”) with the fall of the dragon and his hosts from heaven in Revelation 12? The time does not at all agree. If not, what is meant?’

91 ‘I have difficulty as to the exact meaning of Exodus 6:3. The word Jehovah occurs 195 times until Exodus6:3. In 144 times there seems little difficulty, it is Moses shewing Israel their Jehovah was Elohim, and therefore it is always in the form of reported speech. I have classified the 49 [remaining] different passages. First, where persons speak of Elohim as Jehovah, not in reported but in direct speech, as Genesis 28:21; 32:9. If they used the word Jehovah, then Elohim was known to them by that name. Secondly, men calling on the name Jehovah, not on Elohim, as if at that time they began to know Him as Jehovah, this, however, in the form of

reported speech, does not present the same difficulty. Thirdly, angels using the name Jehovah directly to men. Fourthly, God Himself using the name directly to Abram and Jacob. (Gen. 15:7; 28:13.) If “Jehovah” was known before its formal revelation, without knowing its meaning, is this analogous to the other [names]: namely, Shaddai not known till Abraham; Abba not known till Ha declared it and sent forth the Spirit into our hearts? Is Jehovah exceptional?’

92 ‘2 Corinthians 5:14, 15.—What is the force of Christ dying for all? and in what sense are all dead as proved by His death?

93 ‘What is the special connection or the contrast between the two miracles at Cana of Galilee, with the bearing of what lies between? (John 2-4)’

94 ‘What is the difference in the use of the dative and accusative of time, as in Acts 13:20, etc.?’

95 ‘Why is it diaV toVn patevra and not diaV tou' p., as the Authorised Version might imply? And why not cavrin.?’

96 ‘How do you reconcile God’s answering prayer with general laws?’

97 [Col. Writ., vol. iii, 87.]

98 ‘What is the distinctive force of the words used for people, peoples, nations in the Old Testament? And to which would the different Greek words in Luke 2:31, 32 correspond?’

99 ‘What is the true distinction in the names for God, Lord, Lord, etc.?’

100 ‘Psalm 21:2, 4.—What is meant by “He asked life of thee, and thou gavest it him?” and when did He ask? Was it as the Messiah, as in Psalm 102:24, and answered in resurrection? But why asked for? Was it not of necessity, so to speak, that as a man He should ascend to His Father?—Psalm 16:11.’

Appendix Section 6

* * * I take prophecy in this passage to mean the subject101 matter of the prophecy when the actual declaration of the mind of God in the revelation made to the mind of the prophet is given, which is the force of ejpiluvsew". But this cannot be gathered like the words of an oracle merely from the words, not carried on beyond their own force on the subject of which the utterance speaks. Coming from the Holy Ghost, the words are a part of the great scheme of God with His ends always in view. Hence I apprehend “prophecy of scripture.” A particular prophecy may be recorded in scripture, not in the sense of a prophecy of scripture. Thus when Pharaoh’s servants dreamed, it was not a prophecy of scripture. Joseph gave the ejpivlusi" (the word used in Aquila), and they were as thus interpreted a prophecy of the fall of the two servants; but could not come under the character of prophecies of scripture. They ended through bringing about God’s purpose as to Joseph in diverse fate of the two servants. In prophecies of scripture the Holy Ghost gives as from one mind, though partially revealed what is in that one mind, what is a link in the chain of all the counsels and purposes of God. Givnetai is practically tantamount to ejsti. Still there is more thought of result. The prophecy (that is, the mind of God in what is said) does not derive its being from a particular interpretation of an isolated communication, like the servants’ dreams.

Prophecy among the heathen was not in the proper sense of the word the revelation itself, but the carmen which expressed the god’s mind. That is, it expressed

the import of the revelation as expressed in the language into which it was put for the inquirer; only, as the word of God, He took care that the communication should be as divine as the revelation. (1 Cor. 2:13; 2 Peter 1:21.)

So I should not call Agabus' prophecy a prophecy of scripture, though it be more connected indeed with the scheme of God in Christianity. Thus the prophets sought what the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand; and the prophecy to ejpilelummevnh gave the mind of God as to its place in the divine plans. Prophecy is not properly the revelation of the thing to the prophet, but the communication of it by the prophet as the Holy Ghost moved him to speak. This, when a prophecy of scripture, was not an isolated communication which began and ended in itself in what it had to tell. *Idiva ejpivlusi" ("private interpretation") does not characterise a scripture prophecy.

* * * * *

My dear Brother,—I have no doubt at all, that a person, who never has been baptised, ought to be, before they break bread. If a person be inside without one's being aware of it, or even were dying, or only waiting the possibility of doing it, one might bear and wait, but it is clear that in scripture they came in externally by baptism. I have baptised a great many Quakers' and Baptists' children who never had been, and when I found unbaptised persons breaking bread, spoken with them, though then waiting till they saw clear. But it is not order. I look at it as the orderly entrance among Christians —the company God has upon earth. I think from scripture the children of those within have the

privilege to be brought in; “Of such is the kingdom of heaven:” and they are holy, not unclean as the children of a Jew who married a Gentile. The being a member of the body is through the baptism of the Holy Ghost. But precepts are given to children, and they are to be brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Having been once thus admitted, they cannot be admitted over again. But I never seek to persuade any one of children’s baptism. The only commission to baptise was to the twelve to baptise Gentiles (not Jews), and it went from resurrection not ascension; they were (to) disciple nations and baptise them. This they afterwards left to Paul, who tells us he was not sent to baptise; though clearly it was not abrogated.

I do not add any argument against baptist views. Its being obedience is given up by all who have really looked into scripture. The Lord’s supper is the sign of the unity of the body, and that is the bond we own; but it is quite clear from scripture, that when people become Christians they were admitted by baptism amongst the rest: but it has nothing to do with the unity of the body, but admission by a form which expresses Christ’s death as their way in. When thus admitted, they are in once for all, and cannot be admitted again. Hence, even Baptists, if they found a person, baptised by them, unconverted, who afterwards believed, they would not baptise them again; and they are right in my judgment. If a person breaking bread was found never to have been baptised at all, I should merely rectify an irregularity as quietly as possible. It is as men speak, the cart before the horse. We have a case here of a young person just brought to the Lord, and it is quite understood she was to be baptised first.

April, 1871.

* * * * *

To the same.]

* * * I do not like the tone of——'s letters. I always regret any question being raised on the subject, because baptism forms no part of that mission from Christ on which the church now stands, though never abrogated. I entirely differ from him as to his views of baptism. The answer of a good conscience (1 Peter 3:21) is a mere mistranslation; but I have no quarrel on this score, no more than I have with views which Baptists conscientiously hold. Were it only the health of his daughter, that might, I dare say, be easily arranged, either by modifying the way of doing it, or, if fully purposing to do it when possible, bearing with the lack for the moment. But what I do not accept is, his imposing his views of it on the assembly, and forcing them to give it up entirely, on the ground of his views as to it. This I could not accept. But on his own shewing they ought not to be received; because, if it be what he says, they are not prepared to give the answer of a good conscience towards God. The work of the Holy Spirit in the heart to that effect is not done. But what I object to especially is, that he should impose his views of the matter as the ground of reception. The paedo-baptist, even supposing him mistaken, comes on the ground that he has been bonâ fide baptised: there is no setting aside Christ's ordinance, even supposing him wrong as to his manner of doing it. I think the Baptist quite wrong, but he does it bonâ fide, and I heartily respect his conscience as to the manner of doing it. I am perfectly satisfied from scripture that ——'s view is wrong; but I

leave it there: but he wants the assembly to drop it altogether on his view, and impose his view on the assembly as their ground of action. This I cannot accept. I should convince the assembly, and they had better wait till they see their way clear about it, and not be in any hurry, not as rejecting them, but leaving them time till they see clear. My own disposition would be not to press it, not to have any correspondence about it, but leave it as it is till they see clear about it. At present their ground is, that they are not ready to give the answer of a good conscience to God, but that the assembly must receive them without it. I do not so interpret the text, but—— does.

Your affectionate brother in Christ.

June, 1871.

* * * I do not think them102 the same. For eij mhV supposes already that there is that one of the kind to which the negative generally applies; it is an exception. But ajllaV retains its adversative force as to the whole, but something modifies it in result. Thus in Matthew 11:27, there is one who knows— no one else except;—in chapter 12:4 it was lawful to none else except. In Matthew 17:8 they saw no one, oujdevna ei\don eij mhV toVn *I. In Mark 9:8, “and suddenly looking round,” oujkevti oujdevna ei\don, ajllaV toVn *I. Here the scene had disappeared, but they saw Jesus alone with themselves. So in Matthew 20:23, Mark 10:40, oujk e[stin e[moVn dou'nai, that is all denied—only modified by ajllaV oi|" hJtoivmastai. He does not give places at all as His will, or His patronage, but to those for whom, etc. In Mark 10:18 and Luke 18:19, if not Matthew, we have

oujdeiV" ajgaqoV", eij mhj ei\", oJ qeo". Naturally, good ones were before His mind: He excludes all but God.

* * * * *

* * * I do not think the smallest doubt can rest on the sense of Galatians 2:16.103 We have only to read the rest of the verse to make the meaning of the apostle perfectly clear, and more than clear if possible, earnestly contradicting such a sense: ejk pivstew" Cristou' kaiV oujk ejx ejrgwn novmou. That makes his meaning incontrovertible. But he adds as anxious to insist on the point, diovti ejx e[rgwn novmou ouj dikaiwqhvsetai pa'sa savrx. How this can be an explanation that we shall be justified by works of law by the faith of Christ, I am at a loss to understand. But it is a mistake as to the force of eij mhv or eij deV mhv. Not that it is not used as “unless” or “except.” But its connection with the main idea of the previous phrase, and opposition to the manner there stated, is common: it is really stronger than ajllav having the force of only, or but only. Compare Romans 14:14, where the dij auJtou' must be left out, and the “unclean,” or main idea taken by itself. Only in that case a thing is unclean, and the point is the opposition to the way or manner. It is exactly so here. There koinov" is the common idea, justifying here — dij auJtou' the special case hypothetically put and denied. Introduce dij auJtou' into the second member of the sentence and you make nonsense of the whole. And so you do here if we read what follows. So Matthew 12:4. It was not lawful for him to eat nor those with him, but only for the priests. So Luke 4:26, 27, but (or but only) to Sarepta, which was not in Israel: so as to Naaman. There is always the contradiction of, or opposition to, something in eij mhv. The question is to what? In the first case it is of priests

to common Jews; in Luke it is to “in Israel;” in Romans “by nature” or to him who so esteems it; in Galatians law and Christ; and there is always a common idea too, as in Matthew, lawfulness to eat; in Luke, widows or lepers; in Romans uncleanness; in Galatians, justifying. Hence the common idea is not uncommonly left out, and only eij deVmhv put in, and the contradicting matter only stated. Meyer, Ellicott, De Wette, Hammond, Fritzsche on Romans 14:14, all take it as “but,” ox “but only” in Galatians 2:16. The difference of ajllav seems to me to be that there is not necessarily a common point or subject as well as contrast, but simply contrast (not this, but that); with eij mhv there is always a common point about which the contrast takes place. But it is a great mistake to think that it makes the whole antecedent clause the common point, which is what the question would do, so that the clause following it is a condition simply of the whole. You may see the grammatical statements in Klotz’s Devarius, Hoogeveen, or Viger, Bos’ Ellipses, and Winer 654 (sec. 66), the rest under eij mhv and the Commentaries in loco. In both, passages from the classics will be found. The point of the difference of ajllav and eijmhv, has not been noticed that I am aware of; but I think it will be found just. There does not seem to me to be the smallest doubt as to the sense of the passage; at any rate, that it means what the question supposes by the grammatical force of the words is a mistake. Passages such as Romans 14:14 demonstrate it, and others, too, as Mark 13:32; Revelation 9:4. In 1 Corinthians 7:17 it stands elliptically by itself for “only.” Romans 3:27 fully confirms what I have said of the difference of ajllav. When the supposed common point is set as to be, and a condition or way of it is negatived, what follows eij mhv is exclusive and

contradictory of the condition or way. Thus oujdev ti" a[llo" ai[ti" ajqanuvtwn eij mhv nefelhgerevta Zeuv". A cause is supposed, a[llos negatived, eij mhv exclusive and contradictory of a[llo"; when there is no negative and the case supposed, the eij mhv negatives the supposition and says why. Maraqw'ni eij" toV bavraqron ejmbalei'n ejyhfivsanto, kaiV eij mhV diav toVn pruvtanin eJ evpesen a[n: “if it had not been for the Prytanis, he would have fallen into it.” There are cases where mhv is left out, and eij dev put with a possible substitution. It answers in the cases of exclusion to sp#a# in Hebrew. See Wolff’s Curse in loco.

When the whole sentence is negative, the eij mhv becomes a positive affirmation of what follows, as 1 Corinthians 10:13, Mark 8:14, and others. Schiitz’s Hoogeveen gives a pretty full explanation under the words eij mhv. In result, the negation of works, or faith in Christ to the contradiction or exclusion of works of law, is clearly the sense of the passage.

* * * * *

* * * I was thankful indeed to hear that the doors open to you, for real work (if we are in our place), I do not doubt it. It may not be as seemingly multitudinous as when those connected with the world are at work, but as much and more is done, and not in a way to nourish the flesh, and the testimony to the Lord much greater. If we seek His face He will always lead us right…

I dread intellectualism, too. But following the word in evil days is not intellectualism. Still watching that love and active love be in full play is important. But it is well to take a warning from any. I do not believe comparatively there is inactivity amongst brethren as to

their labour of love, though I doubt not it might be more perfect in detail.

Your affectionate brother in Christ.

Boston, March 21st, 1873.

* * * * *

* * * I allow myself to send a brief reply to your inquiry. 104 Agreeing entirely with your view of the subject in general, there is, it seems to me, one mistake which embarrasses you in this interpretation. It is this: that these Gentiles are brought to the Lord under the outpouring of the Holy Ghost in a larger measure than the day of Pentecost. That comes after the full restoration and blessing of Israel. There is an action of the Holy Ghost more in the character of John Baptist, an Elias work in Israel; and, as regards the Gentiles, it is a regular part of the service of the remnant of the Jews called thereto of the Lord. This testimony is found as to Israel in Matthew 10 which to the end of verse 15 gives the three missions; from verse 16, or more generally, that which went on after the Lord's rejection, and to the end when the Son of man should come. This ground as to the Gentiles in chapter 24:14 closes the general instruction, verse 15 beginning the time of special tribulation.

It is not "our gospel" with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, but "this gospel of the kingdom" that was preached when John Baptist was there, and by the Lord Himself. Let it be remembered now that we have no date for the rapture of the church—that the dates begin with a week of Daniel 9, and half a week of great tribulation when the sacrifice is made to cease. But this does not affect the general testimony of Matthew 24 which may

begin before the week, and be carried on among the Gentiles during the great tribulation at Jerusalem. Only the Church must be caught up, it seems, before the accomplishment of a renewed testimony of the kingdom apart from what has gathered the Church. The final previous testimony to the nations is found in Revelation 14:6. This takes away all date from the testimony to the nations, save the relative one that the Church is gone. But when we remember that all is done with accelerated rapidity in that day, a nation born in a day, a short work to be made on the earth, that before Zion travailed she brought forth, that for the elect's sake God has shortened the days, we may look for a more rapid accomplishment of this work of testimony among the Gentiles also. There is another mission in Isaiah 66, but this is when the Lord has appeared in glory and judged all flesh, and it results in bringing up scattered Israel. The dispensational value of the gospel of Matthew has not (I think) been adequately estimated by students of the word.

[1873.]

* * * * *

Dear Brother,—I must answer Yes, and No. The Lord by His death has annulled his power (Heb. 2), but death is not yet formally abolished: it is the last enemy that will be. The church and the Christian ought to be out of Satan's power: Christ has so gotten the victory that those who are His when He comes will not die at all. Still in himself Satan remains, having the power of death, and death itself is not gone. Hence we read of delivering to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the Spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord; but the

Christian is not properly under his power at all. Death belongs to him: Paul, Apollos, life, death, things present and things to come. But if he gets out of christian walk he may be subjected to it, yet not so as to be out of the control and reach of God's hand. We see the connection of God's chastening and Satan's power in Job. He is not yet bruised under our feet. When allowed he may have this power. "Satan shall cast some of you into prison." "Be thou faithful unto death and I will give thee a crown of life." … Hence, so far as we are not walking in the power of that life we may come under it, but not without God's hand who uses it for chastening.

November 26th, 1873.

* * * * *

My dear Brother,—There are many points to be made clear in your letter: first, as to Hebrews 12, it has nothing to say to continual cleansing; "the blood of sprinkling" is a general expression drawn from Judaism, blood being so used for cleansing. But it is used in contrast to Abel's blood which cried for vengeance, Christ's for mercy, and indeed speaks of prospective millennial blessing, and the gathering together in one of all in heaven and earth. That the blood of Christ remains in perpetual value before God, I do not doubt a moment; but, spiritually speaking, it has been sprinkled, and that is presenting it to God, not sprinkling it on anything of ours.

But the great point which wants clearing up is confounding imputation and communion and its interruption. First John speaks of fellowship or communion, not of imputation. The priesthood in Hebrews is not for sins, save in the one great act of

reconciliation—it is for mercy and grace “to help in time of need” (chap. 4)—for the simple reason that “by one offering he hath, perfected for ever them that are sanctified” through it; and “for ever” signifies without break or intermission: as He is sitting constantly (Heb. 10:12) at the right hand of God, we are constantly perfect. (Ver. 14.) Hence “the worshippers once purged should have no more conscience of sins.”

As to sins after conversion, the whole thing is a mistake, leaving out Christ’s work, and thinking of the state of our conscience and the Spirit’s work in us. The sins we have committed can alone be on our conscience, but as to the effectual work that puts them away, all our sins were future when Christ bore them. Did He bear our sins up to the day of our conversion and not after? If so they never can be forgiven at all, and we must be lost; He cannot die any more; “for then must he often have suffered.” Head Hebrews 9, 10, which treat these questions elaborately.

Washing with water is quite another thing; it is the application of the word by the Holy Ghost. Once thus born, that work cannot be repeated, but the least word or evil act interrupts communion, and the soul must be restored to communion. So Christ is Advocate to this effect; but there (1 John) fellowship is treated of; and the ground of this advocacy, instead of imputation, is, that the righteous One (our righteousness) is always there, and the blood of propitiation always valid. We are in Christ, and there is no condemnation for those who are in Him; and in another aspect He always appears in the presence of God for us. The sprinkling of the leper does not affect the question: there was no repetition of fault for renewed cleansing; it was, when cured, the ground

of all restoration to communion. Sins are worse after believing, for it is sinning against known love; and the measure of responsibility is greater; we are “to walk as he walked,” and manifest the life of Jesus in all things. Nor is anything passed over. Advocacy may restore, and we judge ourselves—else we are judged, chastened that we may not be condemned. I think it is a mistake to apply “the blood of Jesus cleanseth us” to past or present faults. It is an abstract statement, as I may say, Medicine cures the ague. “If we walk in the light, as he is in the light,” is the same; it is the Christian’s place as such. “Hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience,” etc. (Heb. 10:22), refers, I have no doubt, to the priest’s consecration which was done once for all. The value of Christ’s blood was the ground for everything, we cannot account of it too highly; but it was the golden plate with “holiness to the Lord” which met the iniquities of their holy things.

I believe I have answered from scripture all that you inquire of, or given what’meets them all, at least. If anything remains not cleared up, I shall be glad to write again. It is well for the saints to be clear on these things, and in these days especially.

December, 1873.

* * * * *

Dear Brother,—I am always glad to get your letters with news of the work. Thank God it seems a moment of blessing in general, not that there is not conflict, that the enemy does not seek to embarrass our service by his manoeuvres; still the Lord works, and everything is made to work together for good. All I seek and desire is, that brethren should give a thoroughly faithful

testimony, so that the Lord can be with them and put forth His grace with them… But oh, how much more there is to do! but the Lord will assuredly do His own work…

I hope you have learned to nurse your baby: we heard bad accounts of you in this respect. It is a charge the Lord has given you for higher purposes than this world; and thorough confidence in the parents, begotten by tender care and laying oneself out a little for them—is what creates it under God's goodness, though of course your little one is too young to be much in your care now; but affection begins early. This world passes and ends, but what we do, and are in it, never does— save the poor vessel.

May the Lord bless your babe and you in it.

January, 1874.

Dear——,—My answer has been a little delayed by moving, and then the press of parting for the Continent, where I now am on my way to Italy and then Switzerland. I was much affected by your account of dear——, and his death… It shews what a world we live in, but what a gracious God we have. Death is written upon our fairest hopes and our fondest joy; but where sin and death have come in, grace and the Son of God have come in. after them to more than make up what was done. If we look at what is eternal and real, then at dear—— and ——, both with Christ, and soon to be manifested in glory through sovereign grace: bright hopes cut down, fine expectations and affections blighted here, but the death to them only the seed of what never ends, in joy and rest with God and Him who loved us, and at all cost to Himself obtained it for us.

Most thankful was I to hear of——'s confessing Christ before he went. I was not surprised. Sorrowful as his path had been, it was much through that amiability of character which does not know how to resist, and his affections for home remained constant. None of these things are grace; and the former—for such as we are and the world around us —is a channel of evil; but neither are positive will in evil. But all is in that word that he owned Christ according to his need of a Saviour, and it is very gracious of God to have given you all this comfort. What a difference for the heart if all had ended in darkness, or even far away where none might have been to speak to him! It really is a very great mercy, and I am most thankful to God for it, that your——'s course should have ended in owning the blessed Lord, resting for forgiveness on Him. Ah, it is good to have Him, with the love in which He gave Himself for us, without which none of us could subsist, for after all there is no difference. I rejoice that your father and mother have received this consolation; God has been very gracious to them, for death cannot be staid save by sovereign power immediately exercised, but love is sovereign and free in that grace which saves. Death is the wages of sin, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. Blessed be the God of all grace! and we wait here or there to be like Jesus and see Him as He is. The more one goes on and gets out of the vain show in which men walk and into reality, the more Christ is everything. As it is said, death and destruction have heard the fame thereof (of wisdom) with their ears: they have not got it, but they tell a tale that ends falsehood if it be not yet truth, and that is something. Infidelity may do to amuse and deceive the mind while the spring of life flows, but when it begins to ebb, and more when it dries up, what

can it do or say? You may be an amiable, clever animal with it, not by it, but a divine affection never crosses its path.

Remember me kindly to—— and all at the house, and tell them how seriously I take in all their troubles and Borrows. Still God has been most gracious to them, and even in human things makes everything work together for good to those who love Him. The Lord be with you, dear——.

Affectionately in the Lord.

Paris, February, 1874.

* * * * *

Dear Mrs. ——,—I find the same confusion of sin and sins as among them all consciously and wilfully, the same gross mistake as to where we are to be conformed to Christ. It is the fruit of the generally low estimate of what Christianity is, and in judging this may be useful. Do doubts and fears depart by surrender to Jesus? Take his use of 1 John 3:6 and compare 9, and see if it be just. In 13 all is the same confusion and a perpetual cleansing by blood, which though to be borne with as ignorance, is all wrong. Also it applies to sins, not sin. Again in 1 John 1:8 confusion of sin and sinning, “an omission deliberately decided on,” puzzled her, and trust in Jesus settled it. But, he that knows to do good and does it not, to him it is sin. It ought to have been a cause for distress, and was not inventing a cause for it. I judge there was very real mischief done her by her new views. She was intensely happy after a thorough evil working of sin in her, various ways of gratifying suggesting themselves to her mind; she was delivered, and no doubt the Lord makes us happy in delivering us, but she

appears to me to take this sinful nature and positive dominion of sin in her for a time, uncommon easy. I admit all the grace that delivers, the positive intervention of Christ that delivers, but I should have been, while blessing Christ for His grace, miserable at having had all this working in me; have said, 'if you had been fuller of Christ this would not have been the case—there has been negligence in prayer, want of diligence of heart, consequent want of the sense of God's presence—my fault has given Satan an advantage over me.' I see no trace of what she ought to have felt after such evil working in her heart. I do not stop to notice a very demonstrative nature and much reference to feelings, not that I think that the most expressed are the deepest; but all these traits tell me the low ground they are upon, comparing themselves with themselves—themselves it may be set free, in which I rejoice, but all judged of by feeling of deliverance compared with previous bondage, all about themselves, and I may say, nothing about Christ. It is a sign of christian youth, not of maturity—a babe in Christ speaks of what it feels, a mature Christian of what is in Christ.

All this may be useful in rousing to wants of soul something better than what is going. But it is a pity that if so, there should be so little knowledge of self and knowledge of Christ in it. It is interesting to see deliverance, but to give it out as a kind of wonderful standard is a mistake. It may be well that this side of what a Christian may feel should be set before souls. But you cannot but see that it is all what is produced in us, not what is in Christ and what Christ is. I do not want to depreciate spiritual attainment nor faith in promises. There are cases where we have to watch that mere

knowledge does not displace and enfeeble it, but I cannot accept its being substituted for Christ where too the heart has not given itself up altogether to the Lord, the declarations of those who have may awaken the conscience. Many, alas, are far from having done it, and if not watched the world and self creep in, let it be judged. But I ask after reading the book, if Miss F. K. H. and Mr. W—— do not rest on the mind more than Christ. This may be useful to awaken, not to mature. And now mark how dangerously and mischievously scripture has to be changed for the system. He adds to sinning, wilfully and consciously. Scripture says if a man sin wilfully there is no remedy, and what so grieved Paul certainly was not sin in Romans 7. Further, unconscious sins if they flow from carelessness are a more serious ground of judgment maybe than conscious ones. Again, "goes on cleansing," which was what comforted this lady, is quite false, and mischievously so. It is a bad sign when we have to change scripture to make it do. So, complete in Him; this is what all Christians are said to be. I do not doubt true heartedness and sincerity—superiority to myself in many feelings, but I cannot see maturity in Christ. As I have said, a young Christian speaks much of self and what it feels— natural when they are young—old ones who know themselves, much of Christ. I do not find in any of them Christ has His place. It is well to awaken, but putting it as a model lowers the standard and means of advance towards it. What is beneath the surface is hidden by the glowing expressions of what is in it. 1 want to get the spectrum of what the sun is made of, and not merely the photosphere, and then Christ will have a larger place Himself.

Ever truly yours.

August, 1874.

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* * * In the external learning of the Old Testament, my work has advanced me. But it all makes the word of God more precious to me, and as such. The questions and difficulties of men's minds belong to men's minds; the proof and sap of God's word belong to God's word, and to Him who gave it: and the contrast of the power, riches, depth, moral instruction in which God's own nature is displayed in it, with the arbitrary suppositions of men, make the latter appear in their naked poverty and littleness. In it I find the whole display of God's nature in Christ, in reply to all that came out of the heart of man: goodness in the midst of evil; the heart of God meeting the need of man's heart. We shall see Him as He is, and be like Him; but oh! how is the word its own proof, and how has it its own power, though surely nothing but the Spirit of God can give it that power in us. But in walking with God, alone can we draw out its sweetness and feed upon it. I believe that the Spirit of God is a positive teacher in this respect, and may give, if He sees fit, developed thoughts of its contents; but if rivers are to flow out we must drink for ourselves as thirsty for it.

* * * * *

Dear——,—I have long had the conviction, and expressed it, that half the gatherings on the paper should be off. Some since then are. This has been the real evil; the thing was cumbersome, and, what was worse, factitious and fictitious… I should not think of hindering any brother from these places coming on

Saturday evening if he wished. In many cases it might be desirable, as so near London people move more about. At the beginning of these meetings, when they were young and weak, desiring the help of older brethren in London, and there were only one or two gatherings, it was all well; but they are grown up, and letters of commendation, as from any other gathering, should be given.

As to the printing I am indifferent. I should prefer writing, because more connected with personal intercourse in giving them in, and less routine; because, too, if sent to printer, then they are without any consultation at all, and if the visitors do not come, which is then very likely, they must be given out without more, or struck out without communication with those who send them. But all these are merely instrumental means of getting things done, and if it all works well I am content… The printing is to gain time; if all non-London meetings were off, half the time would be saved, and more real work done; and the casting of the responsibility on the different gatherings in each place I believe to be most important. In London we are all in one place, however large. I never could have said, If the papers are given up—I might have said that if they were made independent churches—I could not go with them. The papers were a real means of hindering this, and with all defects they had worked well…

The meeting had lost its true character, it has ceased to be real. If brethren who cared for saints in each gathering in London, met to carry out that care in unity, as servants to the different gatherings, it would be a most useful meeting, while admission and exclusion I hold to be the act of the whole assembly and not rightly

done otherwise. Practically, as I said in the letter you sent me, in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, it is the local gathering which has come to the conclusion, but unity is maintained by intercommunion in it; and in such a place as London it is a great safeguard, and in special cases all are actually concerned in it together—a person may have been teaching false doctrine in many gatherings or troubling them in other ways… A little patience, and weighing the matter before God, and all would be straight.

It is not by much discussion, but readiness to serve, and wisdom as to practical plans, that such things are carried out. But it is not so much plans as work in love that is required. My old letter (I do not know who printed it) I still believe perfectly just.

Your affectionate brother in Christ.

* * * * *

To the same.]

* * * It is fair to tell you that reflection has made me much more averse to printed papers than I was. I have not heard anything new from others which acted on me; the grounds of my increased objection have arisen in my own mind. I do not enter into details, for my difficulty has arisen from details in the first instance, and then from the whole tone and bearing of the thing. The mere fact of printing, or writing, is still nothing in itself to me. I still insist on all being put off the list who are not within London itself—I have long done so. Not doing so was all very well to help little assemblies, newly formed, where no principle was concerned in it in any one’s mind; but it subverts, as it stands now, the whole principle of local unity, which is the scriptural one as to

localities— holding the unity of all saints, as gathered into one, with that local unity. Helping, as a matter of grace, an assembly that was weak, was all very well, and all that thoroughly maintains general unity. Now the question as to the principle has been raised… Grace will settle it peacefully. But my objection to the printed papers is quite other than it was when I wrote the reply to your letter.

Your affectionate brother in Christ.

[1875.]

My dear Brother,—The work goes on so uniformly here, that there is little to relate. It wanted rousing so far as the brethren went—no gospel, or even a room or a preacher. Yet my work has been of a peculiar kind, receiving all that came to the Tract Depôt at 3 and 7.30. Various persons have come, ministers and others. Several have found peace, and what the true gospel ground is, and also the Lord’s coming; and there for the present it rests. … I hope too, and with many, a plain gospel and a full one has been learned: some feed really on the “Word, and are constantly there. But the state of souls, and even the best gospel they hear is deplorable, and the state of things felt. … Oh, if the Lord Himself was not the workman, how hopeless would be the thought of reaching all the souls that are in need. It is a comfort then to be able to look to Him, that His eye and grace may reach them. We read of the eyes of the Lord running to and fro through the earth to shew Himself strong in behalf of those whose hearts are perfect towards Him; and we may reckon on His grace too, to follow in faithful mercy all the need of His beloved people, and this is a consolation.

We have had through this perfection question, which is only deliverance from Romans 7: the difference of full acceptance through Christ's work, as in Hebrews 10, and the washing of the feet with water very clearly brought out. The last is unknown to the Christians here: and making all forgiveness through re-sprinkling with blood diminishes the depth of holiness. It is men getting clear—not clean really. I have been struck in connection with this, with the extreme jealousy of defilement in Numbers 19. It was no sprinkling with blood, but that being sprinkled in the tabernacle, and sin consumed—then for communion, all unholiness and nature consumed on the cross, all defilement measured by that cross, and the word and Spirit (the water). Whatever touched was unclean; the priest was, the sprinkler was till even, all in the tent and that were not purged out—all the value of the day of atonement supposed, and the question of communion raised.

I hear from dear——who is anxious about a certain change in himself from evangelist to pastor. I covet evangelising, but the latter gift is more… I got a good shake at New York, but I am through mercy quite well, but it was a notice from the far country a little. Most thankful am I for the blessing vouchsafed to the work around you.

Boston, February 25th, 1875.

* * * * *

Dearest Brother,—The subject you write on has occupied me lately. The Romans is simply forgiveness and grace taken by themselves, as noted, down to chapter 5:11. The full state of the Christian also is clear. These, though distinct, you cannot separate—John 20:22 and

Pentecost—as Romans 8 shews. Thus far all is simple. "Justification of life," I have lately seen, refers to chapter 5:16, 17: still it is a real thing, meeting death coming in, and all sinning, and many offences. Still it seems to me liberty or deliverance has a double aspect—before God, and from the law of sin. It is all in redemption, it is true; but, though brought to God—delivered as well as forgiven— there was no circumcision in the wilderness. The Red Sea brought out, the Jordan brought in; yet they coalesce. The wilderness formed no part of the object or purpose of God, but only of His ways. He does not say a word of it when visiting Israel in Egypt, nor is there in the song in Exodus 15. Deliverance is complete as to redemption at the Red Sea: they are brought to God. Through the death and resurrection of Christ we are forgiven and delivered: forgiveness sets us free before God. But Romans always looks at the Christian as a man on the earth, alive in Christ and justified, but here. There is no life but the life of Christ, in one sense never was; only now that He is risen He gives it according to the power and in the relationship into which He is entered. But life is not what is preached but Christ—repentance and remission of sins: the state of our relationship with God in ourselves or in Christ. "Ye must be born again"—however true is not gospel. The display of life in us will be according to what faith holds as to these relationships. The ordinary scriptural order was, when convicted, remission of sins, and thereon receiving the Holy Ghost. This gives not a new life, but a life in the relationships into which such an one was entered; and this gave not.only liberty before God in the knowledge of forgiveness, but freedom from the law of sin and death. I then know not merely that Christ died and delivered me,

put me in a new place relating to what was past (then does not go any further), but as in this new place that it is identified with power of life and death to sin, as Romans 8:2, 3.

We have no rudiments of the world spoken of in Romans. It is guilt, sin in the flesh, law, justification, life in Christ, being in Him, but so as to have no condemnation and freedom from the law of sin, as the flesh condemned on the cross. I learn then that I am risen with Christ, and talk of rudiments of the world, having put off the old man, and so on. It is all true that I am in Christ and Christ is in me (Rom. 8:1, 10); but a person is not in the christian state till he has the Spirit of Christ. (Ver. 9.) To chapter 5:11 it is simply God for us in respect of guilt and all its consequences in relationship with Him—from chapter 5:12, experimentally learned, our state. You have the Spirit in chapter 5; the love of God shed abroad in the heart. A person may go through chapter 7 before being in the beginning of chapter 5; it may be after, though it will be modified.

But however full the gospel you preach, if effectual it brings the soul to the consciousness of its then actual state with God. But it will never get into peace till it ceases from the search whether it has life, and looks to Christ as a Saviour. It is a matter of teaching that Christ is our life, nor is there any other; and now it is life as risen, but its movements must be according to our conscious relationship with God. The disciples had life in John 20:22. In Romans 8 the Spirit is first named as source and power of life, and then as a personal Spirit in us: that is, both as John 20:22, and Pentecost. But this only is the proper christian condition as chapter 8:9 shews. I would not say with the fullest gospel a man

might not get into Romans 7, possibly by mixing it with ideas he had already. But the knowledge of salvation by the remission of sins, and thereon sealing, is the gospel order—whatever we learn afterwards—and life in that relationship; and that is life in resurrection in itself. But faith in the Person of Christ gives life, and thereon a person is not sealed nor has peace, but there is confidence—not law—forgiveness known, but imperfectly: so the poor woman in Luke 7.

The truth of risen life in Christ and the coming of the Holy Ghost are distinct; but now that both are fulfilled the divine order is the knowledge of the remission of sins and receiving the Holy Ghost, and thus the two are inseparable. Then I know, or may know, that I am in Christ; whereas the forgiveness known before by the gospel is of past sins—what my conscience needed. The life we receive is in Christ risen, but I am not consciously—much more than knowledge—in John 20:22, now that the Holy Ghost is come, till I receive the Holy Ghost. Romans 8 puts them inseparably together. I have to see that a man in faith’s relationship is in Romans 7, or whether it is merely lack of knowledge; for in Romans 7 he has not in fact received the Holy Ghost, is not married to Christ. A man may have to learn himself afterwards, but if he has the Spirit he is married to Christ, though he may have to learn things experimentally.

As regards Titus 3 the renewing here is an absolutely new thing ajnakaivnwsi". Renewing when connected with justification always comes first. Justification is true only of a renewed person: we are sanctified to the blood of sprinkling. Brought into this new place administratively by baptism, and effectually by being

created anew, we have this justification in hope of eternal life. The Holy Ghost does renew continually ajnaneu'sqai (Eph. 4:23.) Colossians 1:12 is always the state of the Christian, and the apostle looks at the Christian as in the christian state (should even his mind be warped as in Galatians). Receiving the Spirit is an actual change of status not of title; but not merely knowing something.

I write with my head or nerves only just above water, but better and fully taken care of. It may be well to remember that, in a certain sense, the Red Sea closes the history. It is the salvation of Jehovah: the wicked come under death and judgment: the people of God are saved and brought to His holy habitation, as the thief went straight to Paradise.

Philadelphia, April, 1875.

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Dear Brother,—Your friend must be very prejudiced to think it Jesuitism, and not meeting the point that brethren are exclusive, because they will not go on in what they think disobedience, while they receive all true saints: as if my refusing to walk with some of a family who were doing what their father forbad proves surely [the want of] love to the rest of them, when I am free with all who are not disobeying. This is a poor piece of reasoning—a want of any clear conception of the case.

I have run over M. Rainsford’s: it is better than nine-tenths of what they get in the Establishment, but is as far as possible from clear truth”. But his explanation of dead to sin is not sound at all, and leaves a person undelivered: it is a question of living in it pr not, not of a penalty. No doubt Christ has taken the penalty, but there

is a great deal more. And he leaves the Christian where he finds him, as to the point the apostle is treating, and I think, with a fuller statement of Christ being all, leaves saints where they generally are in the Evangelical world. His explanations and applications of scripture are very commonly incorrect. He knows nothing of the presence and anointing of the Holy Ghost—union is by faith. Nor do I think there is real acquaintance with the exercises of a soul, nor of how scripture truth meets it. If a man is in Christ (and he puts him there at once as the first thing), penalty is gone (sin and sins being confounded), the man is judicially perfect but that is all: as to all else he is left pretty much where he was. Hence the extreme weakness of 13, and the false teaching of 14. Of deliverance from the power of sin in being out of Romans 7, he has not an idea. See again pp. 190, 191, 214. This absolute identifying of "justified from sin" and "freed from sin" (the difference of which he notices to confound them again) characterises his state and doctrine— besides confounding sin, and sins or guilt. Many other things I might remark, but the point of error in his teaching is the upsetting the special teaching of chapter 5:12 to end of 8, specially 6, 7 and 8. That he makes Christ all for any souls is all well…

Chicago, June 3rd, 1875.

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* * * What I think serious in the state of all these bodies is, not one is really outside the camp. God has opened out much truth from His word, that is widely spread outside all gatherings; but there they do not move, and spoil it; but the loose brethren have generally lost it. For my own part, I feel what I have to do is to minister

Christ to the want of the soul with which I have to do. As to a public testimony, though we may be humbled, the Lord is wise. If it were merely a question of New Zealand, Canada was worse till R. Evans went there. He was decided, and only one brother would let him into his house; now such a thing as a loose meeting is hardly known, and blessing has spread very widely. Christ suffices for the present state of the church, as for all. But one man in Israel's history went up to heaven without dying, and the state of Israel was such that he could not find a faithful man, though God knew such. There is no epistle where the apostle so much insists on courage as in 2 Timothy, when all was gone to the bad. My own deep conviction is that the church failed immediately the apostle was gone, just as Adam, and Noah, and Israel in Sinai, and the priesthood. The church as an historical body never knew what it was to be perfected for ever, and did not continue to own the Holy Ghost. God has taken us back to the Scriptures, to the word of God, and faith rests there owning the Holy Ghost as present till the blessed Lord takes us away. The standing of the Christian and of the church was lost at once with those to whom it was revealed, save as consigned to the written word. There I turn, owning the need and power of the Holy Ghost, while perfect acceptance in Christ is the starting-point for all our service as for all our hopes… But I must close, casting myself on the Lord for all our service. The more we know of Him, the more we know He is everything. All else passes but He abides for ever, the Son of the Father's delight, and we associated with Him—wondrous thought! but God's purpose, and now due to Him who has suffered that He may see the fruit of the travail of His soul and be satisfied—satisfied in having us

with and like Him. What infinite blessedness, and all to the glory of God for ever and ever. Must not our hearts be filled with it, and His love is our present joy!

Your affectionate brother.

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* * * I entirely acquiesce in the general purpose of ——. The I of individuality needs no proof; it is in the consciousness of everybody. I cannot use the word without declaring it. So that I have not accepted the famous dictum of Des Cartes: 'I think, therefore, I am.' The moment I say "I," all is said and proved, and better known than if attempted to be proved.

The thought of excusing oneself because it is the old man who acts is utterly false and evil. I am responsible and ought through the power of Christ who has set me free, to have kept the old man, or the flesh, if we are so to speak, down; not merely reckoning it dead, "but bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus may be manifested in our body." But it seems to me this paper105 is {pb 2440defective in not adequately recognising the existence of flesh— of what lusts against the Spirit.

I do not think there is any difficulty in scriptural statements where difficulties have not been made by those who wished to obscure the truth. When I say, "Not I, but Christ liveth in me," the soul taught of God knows that the I which does not live—is not owned—is the old Adam 1 And when it says, "Not I, but sin that dwelleth in me," it gets the comfort of knowing, though not yet delivered, that the new life is a distinct thing. To the heart that walks experimentally, and is taught of God, all

this is light, not obscurity. It is only so when false teachers seek to puzzle the soul.

‘As in Adam he has died’ (p. 13) is an unhappy phrase (though I understand it) because in scripture it is used in the exactly opposite sense, and all have died in Adam. “By man came death,” but that was by, not to, sin, which is what the writer means here.

Next, I do ‘attribute all evil found within to the old man.’ Negatives are always dangerous things. ‘As though’ qualifies it, I admit, but very inadequately, because the evil is in and from the old man, or at least the flesh. The object of the sentence is right, but the form regrettable. So again: ‘Strictly speaking, the old man has no present existence.’ Now what is the meaning of this? Has the flesh no present existence? and am I not to distinguish it? I admit my responsibility fully to keep the flesh down, and I am to blame if I do not. But, though the old man may be used to signify my Adam existence without Christ, yet it is so used here as that the distinct existence of what lusts against the Spirit is ignored. We are told: ‘If he find sin there, he must not plead for it in excuse that it is his old man [so far very well, only I should leave out ‘for it,’ and say ‘in excuse’—meaning plead for himself in excuse, not for it], but must honestly confess that it is himself.’ I admit his fault, his responsibility fully. Through the Spirit he should have mortified the deeds of the body, and been full of Christ in the new man. But to say that it is himself, with the rejection of its being the old man, destroys, it seems to me, the force of the apostle’s words: “Not I, but sin that dwelleth in me.”

I admit the personal 1 I admit the responsibility, and no excuse because the sin is there; but there is an ignoring the flesh, the two things contrary the one to the other, because scripture teaches, which it does, that the old man is put off. “We are told the old man is of the past. In one passage the fact is admitted that the flesh lusts against the Spirit, but then how is what people really and experimentally mean by the old man, a part which has no present existence? If the paper adequately recognised the fact that the flesh is a present thing, I should not object at all to saying that the old man is a past thing; but this is not the case. I have put it off and put on the new; I am not in the flesh; and this is important, very important, to make clear. But the old man being habitually used for the flesh, even if incorrectly, and this being said to have no present existence, while the flesh is practically ignored—I fear that defectiveness as to this latter point may mislead, as well as the error the paper justly combats.

1875.

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* * * Man is here as everywhere—perhaps rather more—occupied with earthly things… I hardly feel any difference between England and Canada. When one is near heaven, when Jesus is all, one place scarcely differs from another; God remains God, holy and love, and man remains man.

Toronto, 1876.

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* * * The Lord be with you, dear brother, and help you in your work. It is a mercy to be allowed to work for Him.

The time will come when we shall know all else is vanity. Keep close to Him; there only is strength or help or wisdom. We must expect combat, and sorrow over failure, but let our eyes look straight forward. The Lord exercises us in these things. We have only to do His will, and walk in grace to others as those who may be tempted themselves.

Your affectionate brother in Christ.

August, 1876.

* * * * *

My dear Brother,— … I write at once as to Hebrews 9. Diav is used for a state or condition, which affects the principle on which we act or receive anything, on which anything takes place. Thus, Romans 4:11, dij ajkrobustiva"; Romans 2:27, diaV gravmmato" kaiV peritomh'". So it is in Hebrews 9:11. As to paragevnomeno", though it be having come, it is not the act of coming e[rcomai, but being present in or for something by coming; coming into a certain condition, so that He is there, or come, in view of what is to be done when arrived. The verb in the sentence is eijsh'lqei ejfavpax, verse 12. He had taken the position of High Priest of coming good things; and this office was to be fulfilled, not in the present earthly tabernacle, but in a greater and more perfect one. The tabernacle is not, therefore, I think, the incarnation, for His priesthood (save the fact of atonement) was not on earth; it is exercised in connection with heavenly things, though there securing earthly ones for Israel: paragevnomeno" is entering into the condition of priesthood, not incarnation or glory, and that is connected with the heavenly tabernacle. The fact of His going in is in 24 as

in 12; this referring to eternal redemption, which He had found; that, to the fact of His abiding presence before God there for us; but in both eijsevrcomai, the act of going in— not paragivnomai what He had come to be or do, the condition entered into or in view. I do not consider diaV ai{mato", or tou' ijdivou ai{mato" as instrumental, but to be used in the sense already referred to.

The “end of the ages,” or “consummation of the ages,” are all the dealings of God with man to test his general condition. In this general sense the state of innocence comes in; but the proper connection is what is after the fall, yet not looking at man as lost, but testing his state and whether he was recoverable, or was lost and had to be saved. Without law; under law; God manifested in the flesh, were the great features of this. Hence in John 12 the Lord says, “Now is the judgment of this world.” Though there was testimony, there were no religious institutions before the flood, unless the fact of sacrifices. There were after: government; promises to Abraham, shewing it was grace to one separated from an idolatrous world and head of a new race; the law; the prophets; and at last the Son as come, not as offered. Then God laid the foundation of His own purposes in righteousness.

The difference is that in John 1:29 it is the sin of the world; in Hebrews 9 it is to put away sin more generally. Neither will have full accomplishment till the new heavens and the new earth. In this last passage we have to distinguish between it and bearing the sins of many. The last concerns us, and purging our conscience. I do not think it has been adequately seen how all good and evil has been brought to an issue in the cross—in that

place of sin before God, that is, in Christ made sin (though in the last words it is for us, 2 Cor. 5:21). We have the absolute wickedness of man and enmity against God in goodness; the complete power of Satan, “your hour and the power of darkness;” the prince of this world leading all men, the disciples having fled; man in his absolute perfection, in whom that prince had nothing, but there was perfect love to the Father and perfect obedience; man in absolute perfection, and that as made sin before God, where it was needed for God’s glory, for it was where He was made sin that the obedience was made perfect, obedient unto death; God absolute in righteousness against sin, and perfect in love to the sinner. This, therefore, is the finished and so immutable ground of eternal perfectness. We cannot say as to the result sin is actually put away, save for us (2 Cor. 5) who by the Holy Ghost know it; but the work is perfectly done on the ground of which there will be a new heavens and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness.

We must not confound “sin” and “sins.” He has borne the sins of many (they never can be remembered against us); loved and washed from them in His own blood—our conscience, once purged, is made clean for ever. But sin is that alienation of all things, and first of all of our hearts, from God, which requires reconciliation of things in heaven and earth, which is not yet, and of ourselves which is; see Colossians 1:20, 21, and many confirmatory passages. Christ then has been manifested for the total abolition of sin out of heaven and earth, defilement and alienation gone, besides our guilt being atoned for and our sins remitted; but both are by His sacrifice, in which God withal has been perfectly

glorified in all that He is. The result is not yet wholly accomplished, nor will be fully till the new heavens and the new earth. The katacqovnia of Phil. 2:10 are another thing; they bow but are not reconciled. I say this to avoid mistakes. The burnt-offering alone took the ground of sin, the sin-offering of sins. Romans also, 1:17—v. 11, treats of sins; 5:12 end of 8 of sin only, here only as to man on the earth: fevrein is as to sins, ojai{rwn goes on to sin; sins are borne, sin put away. Of course our sins are wholly taken away, but that is “our.” He is never said to have borne the sins of all or of the world, or taken them away, but our sins, or those of many; but He is the oJ ai{rwn of sin out of the universe, the taker-away of it, the result being not yet accomplished: eij" aJqevthsin (Heb. 9:26) is the result proposed, hJqevthse is not said. The work is done, the full result not yet brought about; but it is all in virtue of that, though power comes in to make it good, just as it does in the microcosm of ourselves, even as to the body in due time.

As to the question of “covenant” or “testament”: “covenant” is always right, save in Hebrews 9:16, 17. Even here it has been contested; but it seems more simple to take it as “testament,” an observation or allusion by the bye, SiaOijxr) being in Greek covenant or testament or disposition. The voice of tou' diJaqemevnou has been the great bone of contention where it has been discussed; translated, if covenant, “the appointed” [sacrifice.] But this has seemed to me forced. Some have even made Galatians 3:15, 16 “testament,” but this, I judge, is entirely wrong.

Ottawa, America, Oct. 27th, 1876.

Dear Mr. ——,—I do not know if you were at the meeting, and at any rate I can answer your questions undistracted here. Both sides of the gospel ought to be preached, and personal conviction of sin too, or repentance only founded on grace “my name.” As regards saint and sinner, a great many saints want a clear gospel, and at any rate rejoice in it, if they possess it. If sinners come, there ought to be a gospel for them. But a full plain gospel is good for both.

There is what I have called a teaching gospel, say, like Hebrews 9 and half 10, 2 Cor. 3, and other places. The facts are generally known, and much gospel preaching must be on the worth and bearing of facts, and that on heart and conscience, but the more the facts are insisted on, the more power I believe there will be. Christ, and what He has done. Dwelling exclusively on meeting the sinner’s need, though true, and revealing God’s love, always sweet to the soul, lays a narrow basis for after-growth.

As regards the arrangement. If there is a desire in the assembly to have the gospel, and there is an open door, both being most heartily to be desired of the Lord—and there is no evangelistic gift in the assembly—I know nothing to hinder, without a dream, their saying “Come over and help us.” The individuals being employed to seek one to come, is merely that the whole assembly cannot do it, and get one they trust to do it for them, and it is to be supposed that he does it in fellowship with the assembly; but except the moving spring of love to souls, the assembly merely furnishes the external opportunity, as I might open my house for the same purpose. He who comes to preach does it in the free exercise of his gift in his own responsibility to the Lord;

for such ministry is directly from the Lord, and to be exercised in responsibility to Him.

Your affectionate brother in Christ.

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Dearest Brother,—Not one of the passages which Mr.—— quotes applies to the question. That those who have occupations, as —— and others, should evangelise all they can, is all very well, but that is not being given up to the work of evangelising where God has called us to it. —— speaks of deacons or evangelists. But deacons are not evangelists. Serving tables was set up that the apostles might not be hindered in evangelising; and when Stephen and Philip became evangelists, they gave up their place as deacons, at any rate Philip, for he left Jerusalem.

Next, that when a person is an aged widow, or an elderly matron, she should teach young wives to be stayers at home is all well, but what it has to say to an evangelist haying an occupation—I am at a loss to see.

Providing for one's own—though, of course, a man is bound to cherish and care for his wife—speaks of a wholly different and indeed opposite case; that the church should not be charged with widows who had children, but that they, or young members of their family, should provide for them.

1 have gone through them all, and none apply at all, unless 2 Corinthians 12:13, 14; nor does that. Paul had no wife, and no home, and no fortune, and tells us he had no certain dwelling-place. He would not take from the Corinthians because they were fond of money, but talks of it as a wrong, and that it was an extraordinary

thing (but he took from others for the gospel's sake); and in 1 Corinthians 9 he discusses the whole matter on the ground that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel. Peter led about a sister, a wife, and Paul insists that he and Barnabas had the same right, so did the brethren of the Lord, and the apostles. (1 Cor. 9:5.) So that the direction of the word is quite plain: and heaps of brethren have done so on the Continent. If they have families, no doubt they must have a house; but the Lord has taken care of them, and their families have been educated, and get on just as other people's have. In one case there were eleven children. Of course, such cases require faith in a woman to undertake when in it. I have often seen them have more courage than men. My experience is wholly against him, called to be an evangelist, taking up a means of providing by other occupation. It is putting this world and human care before God's calling; and their spiritual work is spoiled in its very root. It is a wholly different thing, and the opposite as to faith, where those who have occupations break out of their bounds to evangelise. If a man be called of God to give himself up to evangelising, that is another matter, but departing from the path of faith is a serious thing.

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"Trust in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him."

My dear Brother,—There are two quite distinct truths or objects of thought brought before us in the Lord's supper: the death of the blessed Lord, and His remembrance now He is gone: and the unity of the body as partaking of one loaf. We have to avoid at the same time any breaking away from scriptural truth on the one

side, and harshness and narrowness of feeling on the other. If love to all the saints is not present in my spirit, I break the unity of the Spirit, while keeping it up in form rightly according to scripture in outward practice. On the other hand, I cannot deny in practice what scripture teaches, and especially in that which is given as a sign of the scriptural truth. The words, Table of the Lord, are used to signify that identification with Him in confession which was found in the priests partaking of the altar, and the heathens eating of what had been offered to idols. I do not therefore object to use “the Lord’s table” as an expression significant of this. Hence it necessarily embraces in principle all that are His, if not excluded by just discipline.

Now, as the various denominations either let in anybody, or meet professedly as such denomination, though they may allow, being such, a stranger to partake of it, the unity of the body and Christ’s presence in the assembly is lost to faith, and they are still the church. But pious persons going to the communion at one of these places can enjoy, according to their piety, the remembrance of Christ, and of His dying love. I believe they lose by it, and certainly do, the present sense of the unity of Christ’s body as a present thing on earth, for their faith does not embrace it; and in a measure the sense of Christ’s presence —that is, as there in the assembly, though they may realise it by the Holy Ghost for their own souls. I do not attach importance to words; but I could not own, with the light I have as to the unity of the body, that these denominational ordinances are the Lord’s table; but I am quite ready to believe that souls may go there with a deeper sense than myself of the Lord’s love personally. I do exceedingly enjoy the sense

of His love there; but more than that, I own, as associated in heart with Him, the unity of the body, of those He gave Himself to gather together into one,106 and own it scripturally according to His will in practice in that in which He has given expression to it; and denominationalism by being such does the contrary. But if I walk with my feet in the narrow path, from which I dare not stray, and find blessing in it, I desire to have my heart large enough to embrace all God's children walking before Him; and I lose in spirit the very blessing I am speaking of if I do not. "Your love," says the apostle, "to all the saints," "to comprehend with all saints." We cannot properly realize the love of Christ in communion without taking in in its place all He loves as His. "Fellowship one with another" is one of the three elements of the christian state, its import far larger than we are apt to think; and if hindered in its manifestation by others, it ought only to be stronger within in our hearts in grace, and thinking of them with the Lord Himself. "Everyone that loveth him that begat, loveth him also that is begotten of him." But then, if it is love for His sake, this will be in obedience. Hereby we know that we love the children of God, if we love God, and keep his commandments. I cannot go out of the path He has marked out, to be with those I yet love. It would not be true love to them, not the love of God, to be disobedient, and set them at ease in what was wrong, treating it as no matter.

[1877.]

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My dear Brother,—I have read the Lösepenningen of Dr. Waldenstrom. I had previously read his Latin thesis on

the Lutheran symbolical books. There he was all right in combating the common error, that Christ's work changed God's mind, and that God was then but a Judge, and practically that love was in Christ, and only judgment in God, as if the work of Christ procured His love. I have very often insisted on the truth as to this. You have both sides in John 3:14, 16. But he drops out "the Son of man must," and holds only that "God give His Son." And thus it is a very wrong production. Still the error that is in it arises from having got hold of the love, and so getting onesided. The interpretation of the passage is all wrong, but that is not so material; but he confounds purchasing and redemption. If what he says means anything, all sins of all men are put away.

Dr. W. is also careless in his use of scripture. He contradicts himself; for though sins are blotted out the curse abides on sinners continually. Wrath and the curse remain for those who are sinners, yet there was no wrath in God! The justified are taken from under the curse; but they had been under it then it appears, and, in their sins, were under the wrath of God and condemnation. He mixes up all this confusion and contradiction with just refutation of errors. And note, What did Christ suffer and be forsaken of God for? It is all well to say God's love gave Him, and that was the source of all. No doubt. But why did Christ suffer as He did? Why had He the stripes? He is a propitiation, an iJlasmo", He suffered iJlavskesqai. God had not to be reconciled, but His righteous holy nature required the sin to be put away. Then he uses "we" and "us" in the mouth of believers, as if it was all the world. His doctrine as to not living under law and experience is dangerous. I resist looking to experience as much as he

does; but, in citing the lost sheep and the father of the prodigal, he has dropped the return of the prodigal, so carefully brought out in detail by the Lord to make the difference between conversion and salvation clear. I reject utterly self-examination for peace; but a soul will have to know itself—not merely its sins forgiven, but that “in me, that is in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing.”

He resists reconciling God, in which he is right. But he has neglected one side of scripture truth; has quoted scripture without heed, and contradicts himself. It is confusion of redemption and purchase that has made all his doctrine wrong. Christ is an ajntiv lutron uJpeVr pavntwn: but that which is the strongest statement is very different from ajpaluvtrwsi". It is a pity that he could not be set straight, for the point of departure of his mind is just: but he has followed it out hastily, not weighing scripture. He has lost the iJlasmo" side of the work, and this is dangerous. It has not gone to denying that the sins had to be put away, and therefore has thrown all his teaching into confusion. The blood of the goat was presented to God on the mercy-seat, and Christ is entered in not without blood; why if it were not needed to iJlavskesqai taV" aJmartiJa" tou' laou'? Why was it presented to God? Not surely to change His mind or make Him love (a horrid thought), but needed for His righteousness and holy nature. “It became him … in bringing many sons to glory.” So He says to Israel, “When I see the blood, I will pass over you.” There is wrath and the curse he admits—why? and what met it so that it should not be executed on us? Hence he always confounds God and the Father, making us all His children. “God so loved the world.” It is never said “the Father” loved the world. The Father is a name of

relationship with His children, not with the world. Dr. W. admits they are not all saved. The question is not, Did Christ undertake a partial restoration? but, Did He undertake the restoration of all? He died for all, I believe, but that is a very different thing. Here you have purchase and redemption as the same, and their perfect restoration the same as He undertook. All this is confusion and mist. He is wrong even in saying purchase is always spoken of all. In 1 Corinthians 6:20 and 7:23 it is not so; and 2 Peter 2:1 is quite another thought, and so is Matthew 13:44, where the field is clearly bought to have the treasure. There are two other cases in Revelation where it is distinctly not all, and peripoiou'mai, where the same is true. I cannot find one passage where it is all. To state that it is so always is not careful.

Boston, U.S., January, 1877.

My dear Brother,— It seems to me that you are only acting unkindly with ——, going on with him as if nothing had happened. “A man that is a heretic after the first and second admonition reject.” You encourage him in this error and enable him better to mislead others. I wrote to him, but as I shewed him plainly from scripture it was unsound, I got no answer. What Bellett says may be obscure, but is what all believe, that eternity returns after the course of dispensations. The heavens which had disappeared since Genesis iii., has no real sense. But all this has nothing to do with the error in question. It is when the Son delivers up the kingdom that without are the fearful, unbelieving, etc. Scripture says that “The things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.” All this use of Greek and Hebrew by persons who do not really know them,

with those who do not know them at all, is a very bad sign. It is just what—— is partly deceived by, and it is not honest. When God says, “It is done,” and the judgment of the great white throne is over, and God’s tabernacle is with men, then the evil doers are without, cast into the lake of fire “which is the second death.” “I am” is as much applied (indeed only so) to the present time, as in the eternal state; and God is as eternal now as He will be then. It is never used of that state itself, though always true. All this is gossamer and cobweb, and the various applications of eternal are taken up without the smallest reference to the passages in their sense. Who is spoken of in Isaiah 9? But this word has been fully discussed.

It is not true that revelation is only of the ages. Proverbs 8, and every statement of God’s counsels and plans must be before the ages, for they are the source of this: so 2 Tim. 1:9; Titus 1:2; where it is expressly before them, and yet the life is aijwvnio". Is that for the ages? “In the beginning was the Word” is not in the ages. Nor do I admit that God is a relative term, nor Spirit. “I am” is not the only term that implies abstract being. It has been seriously called in question whether it does at all when first used, whereas another word does in Hebrew. The LXX have so taken it, namely, as ‘being:’ but thus aijwvn is the same word and so defined by Aristotle and by Philo. But the whole thing is fancy, unwarranted by scripture. And it seems to me a real want of charity to encourage him in the propagation of error, which must shut him out from the fellowship of those who respect the word of God, strengthening his hands in misleading others. I feel this part deeply.

See what folly all this talk about aijwvn and aijwvnio", when the word is applied to the life of God Himself; His characteristic name in Revelation 4:9, 10. And this is exactly the one of whom——puts eternity at beginning and end of chapter 4:8, and further puts the “who is” (what he calls ‘the being’) only in the dispensational part, whereas “was” and “is to come” applies to time. Hence as in chapter 1:4, and frequently, oJ w\n —“who is”—is put first. The whole thing is an unfounded mess. Next he tells us that we look at the things that are agial (aijwvnio"): this is too bad. The scripture says exactly the contrary, “for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal”—agial if he likes— aijwvnio". It is deplorable to see any one setting about to teach things with no trace of divine guidance. Many have known and loved —— years before you ever saw him; but the truth is he has been off the track for years, and this is only the result. He knows I never had any unkindly feeling, but the contrary; but it will not do to sacrifice those, with whose faith he is tampering, to any personal kindness. I send back the paper, I could only notice what was palpable.

Affectionately yours in the Lord.

New York, February 14th, 1877.

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[From the French.

My dear Brother,—Our brother —— has communicated to me the state of your mind regarding our brother——. It is no question of brotherly affection, but of the truth of God. Many of those who are most firm with regard to his position as teaching the error, have known him much longer than any among you, and have loved him before

you knew him; but it is a question of the effect of the error on souls, and “he that loveth father and mother more than me,” said the Saviour, “is not worthy of me.” The point to ascertain is, if this error is such as to touch the foundations of faith and the integrity of the word of God.

I know that—— speaks of the Greek, but the force of the word eternal is perfectly clear in the word. “The things that are seen are temporal, but the things that are not seen are eternal.” (2 Cor. 4:18.) The word signifies that which is not for time: it is the opposite. I am alarmed when they talk of Greek to those who know nothing of it. I know Greek and have examined it carefully, and I do not at all accept what they say of it. But the passage 2 Corinthians 4:18 is there, without any need of the Greek; and when it is said, “these shall go away into everlasting punishment,” the word has the same force. It is said that God shall be all in all. But that takes place when Christ shall have given up the kingdom to God the Father, but at that time it is said (Rev. 21:8), that the wicked “shall have their part in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone.” This doctrine touches then the authority of the word, and thus the foundations of faith. For when God shall be “all in all,” will the devils and the demons be saved? What they say [of the expression] is but a fable. It is only the human race that have profited by it, and God is not “all in all” according to their idea. But if the demons are saved, it is not true that the death of Christ would be necessary for salvation, for here are those who are more wicked saved without His having died for them. Further, Revelation 20:10 says expressly the contrary.

What we need to know then is, whether affection for an individual should lead us to renounce the truth of the word of God. I do not believe it would be charity to encourage a brother in evil doctrine by acting as if it did not matter. I have seen a long list of passages quoted by our brother that had no reference to the question. I have already read numbers of books that propagate this doctrine, and it is only an effort to twist the word, by human sentiment and reasonings to decide what God ought to do, and by no means submission to what He has said. It denies the expiation of Christ, for one can be saved without it: Judas himself, though "it had been good for that man if he had not been born," and the wicked, saved by means of long personal suffering, and not by the perfect redemption of Christ through faith, and that after their death in a sort of purgatory. Thus the evil of sin is attenuated. They invent on behalf of the man who has rejected Christ a sentimental mercy, which is not the mercy of grace, and which makes little of the blood and of the sufferings of Christ. Those who have openly rejected Him are saved like others, and it is a salvation that is not preached through Christ, who says that he that believeth hath everlasting life, and he that believeth not shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him. They must find life somewhere else than in the gospel. I know they speak of "the restitution of all things," but they leave out what follows, the end of the sentence, "of which the prophets have spoken." I do not deny that a Christian may be seduced by these things—then it is desired that we should not judge him; but this is not according to the word. We only judge those who are within, and the word of God tells us to reject a heretic "after the first and second admonition." I repeat, dear brother, there are those who have loved—— before

you knew him, but that does not alter the truth of God. True charity is firm, whilst at the same time gentle, for the good of others. May God keep you, and restore our brother——, is the wish and prayer of yours Affectionately in Christ.

New York, February, 1877.

Dear Brother,—I must be short with you. I received some fifteen or twenty letters and seven or eight paper proofs to correct, besides others since. … I was troubled in the same way when a clergyman, but never had the smallest shadow of it since. I judge it as Satan: but going from cabin to cabin to speak of Christ, and with souls, these thoughts sprang up, and if I sought to quote a text to myself it seemed a shadow and not real. I ought never to have been there, but do not think that this was the cause, but simply that I was not set free according to Romans 8. As I have said, I have never had it at all since. I went through a day's mental process as to the word, at the time I was set free. This may have strengthened me as to it by grace. But God's word has ever since been God's word, from God.

Halifax, April, 1877.

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To the same.]

Dear——,—People will have to take the truth for the love of it, and live it as Christians. The apostle has warned us about those in the Christian's place not enduring sound doctrine. I have already had to do with the Swedes on the subject of the atonement, and similar subjects are current here. But oh, how different is the simple word of God! How refreshing and strengthening, and from

Himself! I dread filling my mind with notions, but reading any quantity of them only shews how wretchedly poor they are. How should man's mind reveal God's thoughts? nationalism and mysticism may resist or mingle them up, but they remain themselves and only themselves. Revelation all these things deny, and that is the real point. And what a thing it is to have one! …

Your affectionate brother in the Lord.

August, 1877.

101 'What is the proper force of givnetai in 2 Peter 1:20? Is it true that the verse refers to the coming of prophecy, whence it draws its origin, rather than how its meaning is to be interpreted! Is it true of all prophecy alike (for example, 1 Tim. 4:1) that it is not of self-interpretation?'

102 When ajllaV is used substantially as eij mhV, are they precisely the same, as after the transfiguration scene, etc.? Compare Matthew 17:8 with Mark 9:8.

103 It has been lately asserted on the strength of ejan mhv in this verse that, since it is by faith of Him who is the end and fulfilling of the law that men are justified, it involves in itself the full virtue of a legal righteousness. The apostle does not say, as he often does elsewhere, that man is not justified by works but by faith simply; but that he is not justified by works of law, "except through faith of Jesus Christ," etc. Is this just? Is it true that this is the natural force of the words here as contrasted with ejk pivstew" cristou', and that it would be possible to justify the authorised verse only on the assumption of a large ellipsis, "man is not justified by works of law (and therefore not justified at all), except by faith of Jesus Christ"?

104 In Revelation 7, taking it for granted that the Church has been taken up; that verses 4-8 are the expression of God's providential care of the elect of Israel, that verses 9, etc., are the same care of Gentiles, other than the risen saints brought to the Lord by the ministry of restored and converted Israel, under the outpouring of the Holy Ghost in larger measure than on the day of Pentecost—does not all the above indicate that the time between the raising and taking up of the saints, and the destruction of Antichrist and his host, must be larger than is generally supposed to be?

105 "The Old Man," "The New Man," "I." ("Food for the Flock." Vol. 2:1.)

106 This is more as Christian than in the sense of the body, the church— till as all one.

Appendix Section 7

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Dear Miss ——,—Conscience—besides the sense of responsibility, obligation to God, which Was before the fall, and belongs necessarily to all morally intelligent creatures—is the knowledge of good and evil entered into at the fall, the sense of things being right and wrong; not a law imposed by authority, and the measure of the right and wrong, but the sense in ourselves that a thing is right, or a thing is wrong. “The man is become, as one of us to know good and evil.” Heart is a very general expression for all the inner man: “if our heart condemns us”— then it is conscience; my heart sheweth me, then it is spiritual perception; we are to love God with all our heart, then it is the ordinary modern sense; but in scripture, heart is all in which moral exercise is in us. “Once purged” is the conscience, as sin being imputed; (see Heb. ix.) “perfect as pertaining to the conscience;” and being done on the cross once for all, when known by faith it cannot change, for it is that one work known which changes not. Our feelings may be dull, and we may look to them, but the blood of Christ has always its same value in the sight of God. He cannot, as undervaluing it, see iniquity in us. Hebrew 10 develops this fully. There can be no altering or repetition of the blood. Imputed guilt does not exist for the believer: but he may fail, and by this his communion with God is interrupted; the operation of the Spirit is to humble him, and lead him to confession—most profitable, but not communion. The word applied by the Spirit works in the soul to judge sin according to

Christ's death, and then its putting away according to it, and so the enjoyment of the love which did it; and then communion is restored. Numbers 19 and John 13 and 1 John 2 develop this. Compare Ephesians 5:26 of the church. The feeling and joy of assurance may be dimmed, but faith rests assured of the acceptance by God of the blood of Christ.

As to temptation, I believe a person may so walk by the power of the Spirit, realising Christ, that no conscious evil thought may be there; but a state in which there is no temptation is a delusion. Nor is temptation all: there is the second class of flesh's working where there is no temptation, "now ye also put off all these." Then there is failure in that sense of Christ's presence which hinders idle words, impatience of spirit. What is called the higher christian life is only the getting out of Romans 7 into 6 and 8—a very real thing; and that which the great body of teachers would have you content without, and this is all wrong, it is not the christian state.

Sincerely yours in Christ.

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My dear Brother,—The case is evidently an exceptional one. Other considerations too enter into it, as to which I have no information, as whether the providence of God carried them to a place where they have no opportunity of breaking bread, or their own will, or worldly motives. Of this I say, because I know, nothing. But it would affect the question. The presence of one sister, if not sought, would not affect me much. They ought not, I think, to do it as a regular gathering so to speak; if they could occasionally get a brother to come, they might wait for such an opportunity. But if all this be impracticable, I

could not say that they should for ever be deprived of it. But in a country where other opportunities may evidently occur, they should do it only when their souls felt the need of it, and assuming that there were no other means of meeting that need, with no teaching or pretension to be a regular assembly. It is only a case of meeting a need when there is no other means. There is neither male or female in Christ Jesus; but everything has its place and order in the church of God. And I repeat, it should not be as a regular assembly, but as meeting a need which could in no other way be met. May the Lord keep them near Himself.

Your affectionate brother in Christ.

My dear Brother,—I entirely dissent from the view you refer to as to the bread at the Lord's supper.107 There is nothing new in it: Bellett took it up at one time and had to give it up as untenable. The name of the ordinance is sufficient to shew its wrongness. Some refer the breaking to each individual's taking a part; but if this were so, then each individual ought to break the unity of the body for himself, which is absurd. It puts the unity in the place of the memorial of Christ, as the principal thing. Christ, when He had given thanks, brake the bread: the disciples never partook of any but a broken loaf. So Christ was made known to them in the "breaking of bread" —not the full Lord's supper, I admit, but bearing the stamp of the same truth. That breaking is of the essence of this institution of Christ: it is "the bread which we break;" "they continued in … the breaking of bread."

There is no such thing in scripture as partaking of an unbroken loaf.. The unity is referred to our partaking of

one loaf, not to its being unbroken—which it certainly was not when Christ gave it to His disciples to eat. There is no variation in the account given in the gospels, nor in 1 Corinthians 11, nor in the Acts at Troas. The not doing it departs from the original institution, and what gave it its essential name. We shew forth the Lord's death in it, though as all partaking of one loaf (not breaking it, which would be absurd) we are all one body: "the bread which we break," "the cup which we bless" (a word identical with giving thanks)—both of them the actions of the Lord previous to the disciples partaking, and this the apostle did at Troas. It is an entire departure from the original institution, and from the essential character and meaning of the ordinance, which shews forth the Lord's death till He come; though the unity of the body is betokened in its, in partaking of one loaf. But the body is the body of Christ in the ordinance, as is expressly said. (1 Cor. 10:16.) But you, dear brother, must guard against any restlessness or uneasy feeling as to ——, and seek to walk in unity. I dread notions, but peace we must pursue.

[1877.]

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Dear ——,—I send my reply to —— 108. A child can be a Nazarite; but this is the work of God. We have two instances of Nazarites from their birth: one who went on blamelessly, and another who failed sadly—John the Baptist and Samson. John the Baptist was also filled with the Spirit, and walked obediently and faithfully, and died (we may say) a martyr for his integrity. There was none born of women that was greater. Samson served God, and did great things too; but also sought and did his own

will, so that his life ended in his being taken prisoner; and though God in a measure restored his strength to him, yet his last great deed brought death upon himself also. So that you see it is not all to be in the place of a Nazarite: there must be self-denial and patient perseverance in the ways of God.

London, April 22nd, 1878.

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My dear Brother,—If the assembly decided that this person could not be received, as refusing to give up the 'Oddfellows,' the absence of some brethren would not be a reason for rescinding the decision; because that depends on the Lord's being there when gathered in His name, not on such and such an individual being there—assuming that they have been regularly gathered in the Lord's name. I do not know much about 'Oddfellows,' but from what I do know I am surprised a Christian can be a member. It is a thoroughly worldly society. They could not be there in the name of the Lord. You say —'nothing against his walk;' but this was part of his walk. I could understand giving him time to think over it, if he were in before taking up the case. His refusal to give it up till he saw fit, when it was brought before him, was a proof of his state of soul, and brings in another point: that the conscience of the individual is to judge of right and wrong, not the assembly. Now there are things that we must have latitude to individual conscience; but to lay it down as a rule, that an assembly is to submit in its walk to the judgment of my conscience is a bad state of soul.

The meeting of the assembly as such is not confined to the breaking of bread: whenever they agree to meet,

due notice being given of it, they are met as the assembly. If it were done so as purposely to exclude some, that would be another thing. If godly, serious, brethren have difficulty in putting out, it is better to wait till the Lord makes the case clearer. But this did not apply here, because it was the positive act of receiving which was in question: but his admission might be provisionally suspended in the same case till the matter was cleared up. But if it were merely factious opposition to the common mind of the assembly—one who identified himself with evident positive evil—he must cease or become subject to discipline himself. Such is the rule of the apostle in Corinthians. But such rules are only carried out by grace and the power of the Spirit of God. I can speak only of general principles, for very small circumstances change a case completely, and of course I have only heard one side.

I as a rule, too, object to brethren not in the gathering meddling with its discipline, because the conscience of the gathering is in question; though of course they may be helpful if given grace by God to judge maturely of things. But we are called to peace, and even a mistake in judgment ought not to disturb it. I attach great importance to the judgment of the assembly, but it must be the assembly as such, not individuals however true and wise, because of the promise.

Your affectionate brother in Christ.

If the Lord be waited on He will give unity of mind. I trust the refusal may awaken the conscience of this Christian.

Zurich, August 1st, 1878.

* * * My judgment is (but I should seek peace, and there is no rule save that “all things be done decently and in order”), that young children should be with their parents at the meetings, and that growing girls should be so too. When the boys grow up to a certain age, they are better sitting back. If girls are at school, or under a governess, they can sit with the other scholars; as it is only a question of comely protection and shelter, which grown boys do not need. But formal rule there is none: decency and order is one.

As regards the second question: the principle of meeting is the unity of the body, so that a person known as a Christian is free to come: only the person who introduces him should have the confidence of the assembly as to his competency to judge of the person he introduces. In London and elsewhere the name of the person introducing is given out; or if many know him, that is mentioned and they are responsible. Looseness is so prevalent now among the denominations that more care is needed; but I hold that every known Christian has the same title as myself; and membership of an assembly I totally reject. But I do not accept running out at a person’s fancy: they may have been sinning or walking disorderly; and a person breaking bread is thereby subject to the discipline of God’s house, if called for, just as if he had been constantly there. Nor do I accept any condition from them, as that they are free to go anywhere: the assembly is to follow God’s word, and can bind itself by no condition. Nor do I impose any; because as the assembly is bound by the word and can accept none, so is the person subject to the discipline of the assembly according to the word.

I have never changed my views at all. The practice is more difficult because of the growing looseness in doctrines and practice of all around. But if an assembly refused a person known to be a Christian and blameless, because he was not of the assembly, I should not go. I own no membership but of Christ. An assembly composed as such of its members is at once a sect. But the person who brings another is responsible to the assembly, and should mention it; for it is the assembly which is finally responsible, though it may trust the person who introduces another in the particular case. If it were a young Christian, or one of little maturity and weak in the faith, I should like to know what sure ground there was before allowing him to break bread, on the same principle as in all other cases.

Yours truly in the Lord.

[Date unknown.]

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* * * The doctrine of the Reformation put forth the view that Christ died to reconcile His Father to us—a statement every way erroneous, confounding the name of relationship in blessing with God in His nature; and teaching, what scripture does not, that Christ's work was to reconcile God to us, to change His mind. But others have used this to deny real propitiation and atonement.

"God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son." He did not need to have His mind changed. But a righteous and holy God could not pass over sin as nothing, and if God so loved, the Son of man must be lifted up. God was not (as a heathen god) one who had to be propitiated that He might not be against us; but He

did require that the righteousness and holiness should be maintained in the universe. I think you will find that the New Testament never says God was propitiated, but you will find Christ was an iJlasmov" for sins. (1 John.) And that Christ was a priest iJlavskesqai taV" aJmartiva". It is not, as in Homer, [II. á 386] qeon iJlavskesqai. We have the imperative in Luke 18. iJlavsqhti, “Be gracious.” We have never God for the object of iJlasqhti, in the New Testament; but we have sins; and it seems to me to set the point on very clear ground.

I have elsewhere109 fully shewn that to apply ajnhvegke (1 Peter 2:24) to anything but what was done on the cross is simple ignorance of the use of the word. I add a confirmatory remark here that the three preceding words are in the imperfect, giving them a continuous character—ajnhvnegke, the aorist, shewing one special act.

* * * There is no doubt that ajdovkimo" (1 Cor. 9:27) has its simple force of “reprobate” or “good-for-nothing.” I never could find out the difficulty people have found in it. There is no difficulty in being a preacher and oneself rejected; and that is all he says.

I only add that when the wilderness comes in, as he goes on to introduce it here in chapter 10, it must be crossed, and the ifs come in. I have not a shadow of doubt that God will keep His own to the end: 1 Corinthians 1, John 10, and other passages are far too clear, thank God, to leave a doubt. But we have to be kept. The wilderness forms no part of the counsels of God, but of His ways. No transit is found in Exodus 3, 6, or 15. His purposes will be infallibly accomplished; but more—Christ could

take the thief to Paradise from off his cross, perfected by His one sacrifice, and we can say, “Giving thanks to the Father who hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light.” We are in Christ and Christ in us. There is no “if” there, and no condemnation.

But as a general rule God makes us pass through the wilderness. There (Deut. 8) He humbles us and proves us to know what is in our heart, only learning what is in His, that He withdraweth not His eyes from the righteous. He does not suffer our foot to swell, nor our clothes to wax old. What we learn then is not salvation: that is the Passover, the Red Sea, and Jordan. But we learn dependence as our part; we learn to know ourselves and be humble, and we learn the sure watchful faithfulness of God—“kept by the power of God through faith;” but we have to be kept, and, if His, surely will be. But why kept if we had not need of it? No one can pluck us out of Christ’s hand; but why say this if there was not real danger, and keeping of us in it? The wolf “catcheth” (same word as “pluck”) the sheep and scattereth them, but cannot catch them out of Christ’s hand: and here our responsibility comes in, our dependence on Him, our leaving ourselves to His infallible care; and one is as precious as the other is necessary. Hence, wherever the journey is spoken of, “ifs” are found-when righteousness and our place in Christ, never. In chapter 10 he goes on to put this to the Corinthians. Many were delivered out of Egypt and fell in the wilderness; but he does not say many were true believers, and fell in the wilderness. When I can talk of beginning and end, I find “if.” Where one is in Christ, that is not the case; nor if righteousness and justification

are spoken of. “By one offering he hath perfected for ever.”

Let me add to this note a remark: wherever falling is spoken of in Hebrews, it is always fatal and hopeless, drawing back to perdition. It is never a fall, but “falling away.” Christ’s priesthood in heaven is not for sins; but that we may not sin.

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* * * As to Romans 5:17, it is not the same as Romans 8:4. There it is the fact that, in walking in the Spirit, the sum of the requirement of the law (and so only) would be fulfilled, the dikaivwma. Much more, perhaps; but as the flesh was not subject to it, that dikaivwma could not be accomplished when in the flesh. But, living in the Spirit, the Spirit of Christ living in us, the body dead, the sum of the law’s requirements, so walking, was fulfilled. Against the fruits of righteousness there was no law. The Christian has a higher rule—to be an imitator of God, as manifested in man in Christ (Eph. 5:1, 2); but as people were looking for legal righteousness, what is in verses 2, 3, was the way of getting it.

Chapter 5:17 is dikaiosuvnh, the abstract thing righteousness given to us, and though taken abstractedly, that thing in its nature and quality; yet as being free gift (dwreav), and that of God, according to grace, goes much farther than the requirement or dikaivwma of the law, which, if fulfilled, was no more than man’s righteousness.

Verse 16 is dikaivwma. But it is not toV dikaivwma tou' novmou: that was measured by the requirement of the law. Here it is of many offences to a sum of recognised righteousness: it is a cavrisma—a gracious gift of a sum

of adequate righteousness, judicially estimated and satisfactory. Keeping the law makes that out as a requirement from man: it would be his righteousness as rightly measured by it. But here it is cavrisma; krivma came upon men to katavkrima: it is now a cavrisma dealing with many offences, and so giving us, according to God, an adequate judicial righteousness, but now, according to God's free gift, not man's responsibility; the dikaivwma of the law and God's dikaivwma are different. We have hardly words in English to make these differences, but dikaivwma, is the sum of requirement, the thing righteousness; so 1 Corinthians 1:30. Hence, in Romans 4:23, it is dikaiosuvnh; dikaiosuvnh is ejlogivsqh. These words in osuvnh are the quality. Then the persons of the perfect passive, as a rule, give the thing done, the doing, and the doer: krivma, krivsi", krivth"; dikaivwma, dikaivwsi". We have not dikaivwth"; it is not an office like krithv" but dikaiw'n. (Rom. 3:26; 4:5.)

* * * In Hebrews110 God is approached in His nature as God; we go into the holiest. It is not the relationship of the Father with His child, nor is it union with Christ and the church, the entirely new thing; but ‘‘first began to be spoken by the Lord;” had “by the prophets;” and in “the last of these days.” It connects Christianity with the old thing, only substituting the heavenly reality for the forms or patterns of things in the heavens. We are pilgrims on earth, and Christ in heaven for us. Hence, though it is for partakers of the heavenly calling as we are (not union in the church), it reaches out like Joseph's boughs over the wall to the persecuted remnant in the last day, who, though not having a heavenly calling, will have a heavenly portion; though Christ has to do with it

when we go to God, in that we have a High Priest over the house of God. We go to the “throne of grace,” our great High Priest being there (never to the Priest), though as Lord we do. But while we go in Christ’s name, and so only can, there is no priest with the Father. Deuteronomy 26 does not go beyond the Jewish order developed in Hebrews, and is very beautiful in that aspect. The defect of a tract on worship I saw in old times was that it was only Hebrews’ worship, not the worship of the Father.

The priest in Deuteronomy 26 was the necessary administrator of such things in Israel, and we are all priests; but it was the offerer said all directly. Any thing offered to God must have been by the” priest then. Still we have a High Priest over God’s house, who is at the right hand of God, in the presence of God for us; but this is not as coming to the Father.

* * * As regards the sleep of the soul, it is a miserable doctrine that comes simply from Satan acting on man’s reason. It is generally connected with annihilation, but not always in this country; but it is a heartless doctrine. The Lord tells the thief he shall not wait till the kingdom, but that he should that day be with Him in paradise. Was he to be fast asleep, knowing nothing of Him, or anything else? It is monstrous! We are “absent from the body, and present with the Lord;” but if that means being fast asleep, we might as well be at the other end of the universe! “To depart and be with Christ is far better;” that is, being fast asleep and unconscious is better than serving Christ and ministering to His glory! The apostle did not know which to choose, to live, which was Christ, or— be fast asleep! It was gain, that is

to be unconscious, compared with serving Christ faithfully here!

But not only do these passages shew the moral absurdity of this notion to every spiritually-intelligent Christian, but there is no such thought in scripture as the soul's sleeping. It is a beautiful expression, signifying that death was only falling asleep to awake again; but it is the man always that falls asleep, never the soul. Thus in the case of Lazarus. Then said He "plainly, Lazarus is dead [or has died]." That is, falling asleep means, plainly expressed, dying. So when Stephen was killed, he fell asleep—Stephen did, not his soul: so "some are fallen asleep;" it is in contrast with, "some remain unto this present." "All live to him." Were the souls of the rich man and Lazarus fallen asleep? They tell me it is a Jewish figure. I agree with them: but it is not a figure of the soul being asleep. The falling asleep is always attributed to the man, never to the soul, and always means the Christian's dying; and is a beautiful expression for his not being, as we say, 'dead and gone.'

Another thing to remark is, that it is never said of the wicked that they will not be raised, or that their souls are asleep, for they will be raised; but it shews the true and lovely force of the expression as to the saints; they have fallen asleep to the day they lived in, but that is all.

But there is no such statement in scripture as the soul sleeping; nor is there such a thought any more than such a statement. It is the living saint who falls asleep, and, according to scripture, it means dying.

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* * * The baptism of the Holy Ghost111 was on the day of Pentecost. The Comforter came; He cannot come

twice in this order of things, because He was to dwell for ever. But He is given, says Peter, to all them that believe. Again: “Repent, and be baptised every one of you for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.” Cornelius was a special case, God demonstrating that He would receive the Gentiles, when even the apostles would not as such. He was not previously baptised, which was the regular order. (Acts 2:38.) Samaria is nothing to the point, but to shew how He was given by the laying on of the apostles’ hands: so with Paul proving He had the same title. (Acts. 19) The pouring out of the Spirit is what happened on the day of Pentecost (so Peter tells us), but individuals receive it on believing in Christ’s work for the remission of sins. That giving of the Holy Ghost to the individual is the unction and the sealing, and becomes the earnest. Being filled with the Spirit is another matter. It is the Spirit which is in me, so taking possession of all my mind and faculties that nought else is there, and the things He reveals occupy the mind, and there is power from God in the soul as to them.

As to a person subsequent to Pentecost being baptised with the Holy Ghost, I should say he was introduced into an already baptised body, but by receiving the Holy Ghost by which he is united to the Head—Christ. I am not anxious as to the word baptism, but it is not generally employed as to the individual reception. Acts 11:16, 17 and 1 Corinthians 12 are the nearest to applying it to an individual or individuals; but it is not actually used. But the receiving of the Holy Ghost is equivalent; they having what was originally treated as baptism of the Holy Ghost, and are looked at, as they are, as partakers of this same thing. The sum of the

gathered disciples were baptised on the day of Pentecost. An individual receives the same Holy Ghost, and is a member of the same body, and is one, and is looked at as one of the baptised body. Acts 1:5 tells us when; but Acts 2:38 tells them, that on repentance and baptism for the remission of sins, they will receive this same Holy Ghost; so did Cornelius (see his case before). Thus they were incorporated, and were the same as those to whom the Holy Ghost was first given; and that continued when all the first were gone, for the Comforter was to abide for ever. As to 1 Corinthians 10:3, 4, there is a certain general analogy, but that was baptism with water, the sacramental assembly— not the body. It is only in verses 16, 17 we come to the inner circle of the body.

Abundance of scriptures shew that it was not merely for testimony the Holy Ghost was given. It is the Spirit of adoption: the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost. I know that God dwells in me by it, and I in Him; that I am in Christ and Christ in me; the body is dead, and the Spirit is life. A thousand precious things concerning my state with God and the Father depend on the Holy Ghost dwelling in me, and my consciousness of these things abounding as life through Him. He is the Comforter come down withal, on which all our condition depends. He is sent by the Father in Christ's name, and by Christ from the Father—one giving conscious relationship as sons, the other knowledge of Christ's glorifying and its consequences; and a great deal more than all this, for He is the power of all good here. No doubt, therefore, He is the power of testimony, and so the Lord plainly declares. (Acts 1) The word itself is the sword of the Spirit. All true power and wisdom so flows

into us. All truth is revealed, communicated as revealed, and received by the Holy Ghost.

As to 1 Corinthians 12:12, 13, it is the aorist (ejbaptivsqhmen) and therefore says nothing of continuity: it is continuous, if we speak of individuals receiving the Holy Ghost. But people look for a re-giving of the Holy Ghost, as if He did not abide for ever; and the thought of re-giving denies that, and also the responsibility of the church, consequent upon it, which is a great evil. Asking that an individual who is not free —is not sealed—may receive it, is quite another thing.

Asking in general for the Holy Ghost, for the church, says He is not here, which is wrong; yet I doubt not, where sincerely desired, though expressed ignorantly, God has answered the desire, and blessed. But that leaves the ignorance; and the conscience is left unmoved as to the responsibility in respect of a present ever-abiding Spirit. It is not accurate language I look for, but faith working in the conscience.

[1878.]

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Dear Mr. ——,— Baptism is not communication of life. Resurrection may (though all critics do not) be attributed to it, according to Colossians 2:12—it depends on the construction of ejn w|/ —and it is in a certain aspect more than life, because it is being transported from alienation from God, into the place of blessing which He has constituted on earth; it is figuratively washing away sins. Resurrection is not the communication of life. They are formally distinguished in Ephesians 2: and when Christ is mentioned alone in Ephesians 1, resurrection is spoken of, not quickening.

Communicating life to Christ is a dangerous expression. Resurrection involves the reunion of soul and body, not the communication of life. If resurrection be connected with baptism, it is coming up out of the water. The baptism proper is death or burial, but it is at any rate connected with faith in the operation of God, which does not refer to death in the act of baptising. “Resurrection of life,” in John 5, is not communicating life, but refers to those to whom life had been given, and explicitly to their coming up out of their graves. Resurrection may be the quickening of the mortal body, but never the communication of life to the soul; and in its full power it involves a vast deal more. The saint is raised in glory, because of the Spirit dwelling in him; the sinner to judgment.

I deny entirely what is called “sacramental grace.” That we are blessed in communion with Christ, in partaking in the faith of the Lord’s supper, I gladly recognise. He is present with two or three, gathered together in His name, in that special and blessed remembrance of His death, according to His grace, in which He, in sovereign goodness, cares that we should remember Him: the soul enjoys fellowship with Him, and in the most excellent way. But it is not grace in the elements. I do not believe there is any grace in the bread or the wine. It is a mere mischievous superstition. There is in scripture no consecration of elements, though they are appropriated with thanksgiving; since they are to represent Christ’s body and blood, and hence to be reverently used in doing so, “discerning the Lord’s body.” But what we break is bread, and nothing else. The history even of the progress to Romanist views is easily traced, though of no importance. We must have “what was from the

beginning” or else not abide in the Son and in the Father.

I suppose the chapters alluded to are John 3 and 6. Now the latter chapter proves conclusively that it does not refer to the Lord’s supper, for it affirms that every one is surely and finally saved who so eats of Christ. Christ Himself is the bread of life, and he that eats of it lives for ever. (Ver. 51.) The ‘sacrament’ is nothing here; but more particularly, “he that eats my flesh and drinks my blood hath everlasting life, and I will raise him up at the last day,”—that is, he has present and final salvation. We have, too, e[fagon, as well as trwvgw—original faith as well as present exercise of it. In chapter 3 we have only entering into the kingdom, nothing even attributed to water, whatever it means; and then life distinctly attributed to the Spirit, only as communicating a nature, “is spirit”—is water, would be simple nonsense. I have no doubt that it is the word as in Ephesians 5 and John 15, and the necessary sense of chapter 6 confirms it; but in any case it has nothing to do with the communication of life, and verse 6 shews it; and a reference to Ezekiel 36, to which it so very plainly alludes, leaves no doubt, I think, of its force—hence verse 10, and the expression, “earthly things,” in verse 12. I may refer to another chapter, perhaps, as none is mentioned: communion of the blood and body of Christ (1 Cor. 10), but as it is the same word as “partakers” and “fellowship” in what follows, as in verse 18 (not 17), there is no kind of difficulty or uncertainty. It is moral identification with what is set forth there (see verse 20).

As to union with an exalted Christ, what Acts 2:33-36 has to say to it, it would be hard to tell. It shews that the writer has nothing serious to object, and no more. I have

no doubt that the exalted Christ authorised Peter, and gave to Peter, by the Holy Ghost, to say, “Repent and be baptised.” Why that makes baptism union would be very hard to tell, and so much the more that it is distinguished from the receiving of the Holy Ghost, which is a consequence of it: repent and God would give. This is hardly serious.

I say that a man must be born again before he receives the Holy Ghost. “Ye are all the children [sons] of God by faith in Christ Jesus… and because ye are sons God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts:” “in whom, after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise.” “He that stablishes us with you in Christ, and has anointed us, is God.” I might multiply passages. (It is so according to the writer’s theory, for they, he says, are born by baptism; and Peter says it was consequent thereupon—they would receive the Holy Ghost.) And the point is important. By one I get a life and a nature; by the other my body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, and I am sealed for the day of redemption. One is a nature derived from God; the other, God dwelling in me. Indeed, as to the practical state of the church, I know of no truth more important—the christian state hangs upon it. It is through the presence of the Comforter I know I am in Christ. (John 14) By it we were baptised into one body on the day of Pentecost; by it we are sealed for the day of redemption. Confounding finally the mission of the twelve in Matthew 28 with receiving Peter’s as well as Paul’s teaching, is a mere blunder of mind. For the believer, Peter’s and Paul’s writings are the word of God, and received as such. The commission of the Twelve was from a risen, not an ascended, Christ, and only to

Gentiles—Luke's from an ascending, and embraced the Jews. The point which makes it of any importance to us is, that we learn, in Galatians 2, that the three great apostles gave up the mission to the Gentiles, and-agreed that Paul should undertake that; and none mentions the church but Paul. What he calls "the mystery" was committed to him, and he was a minister of the church as well as of the gospel, declaring he was not sent to baptise — which would be incredible if such received life by it.

As to Matthew 16, all the false system of the Papists and Ritualists flows to this point, from their confounding Christ's building and man's. "I will build," says Christ, against that the gates of hell cannot prevail. That building is not finished yet. In 1 Peter 2, the living stones come, but we hear of no human builder. In Ephesians 2, all is fitly framed together, and "groweth unto an holy temple;" but no builder is named. In 1 Corinthians 3, we have a wise master-builder, Paul, and wood and hay and stubble—the contemplated fruit of man's responsibility—and warning against it (not Christ's being the builder) and corrupters: reward of labour lost, and the person saved, the person purged, in these cases. Now, these men attribute the title and privileges of Christ's progressive building to the wood and hay and stubble of foolish and bad workers among men; yea, many to the corrupters and corruption themselves. In all this they are not taught of God at all. He tells us where there is the form of piety, denying the power, to turn away. To say that the wood and hay and stubble built in by bad workmen, or positive corruption, is the body of Christ, is a very monstrous thing; nor is the house the same thing as the body. There is no

recognition of a finished salvation, and that I am in Christ, and for ever, and united to Him by the Holy Ghost. The failure of the outward professing church is a positive declaration of scripture, and that perilous times would come in the last days. And we are referred to scripture as the only sure guide in those days. (2 Tim. 3)

I believe I have touched on most points you have mentioned. I can in a letter only touch on them, but I think I have met them all.

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Dear Mrs.——,—I am somewhat surprised that——should be so far back on these subjects. But I can only touch on what is important in it. Thank God it has never injured fellowship amongst us a moment. Those of baptist views were—a few of them, really only one I think—excited for a moment, not (as ——thinks) by some retaining tradition, but by a very great many who had had baptist views giving them up, and when there were families, having their children baptised. I had last week two letters from such to get their children baptised. This those seeing otherwise, cannot understand. The great and mischievous mistake which baptists make is not seeing that there is a place of blessing set up by God, besides the fact of individual conversion. “What advantage then hath the Jew?… much every way: chiefly that unto them were committed the oracles of God.” They were not converted, the apostle is proving them all under sin, and as to the Jews just by reason of this. Then they say that was of Jews. No doubt: but this the apostle transfers to the christian body. The Israelites he says, warning Christians (1 Cor. 10), “were all baptised to Moses in the cloud and in the sea, and did all eat the

same spiritual meat, and drank the same spiritual drink, but with many of them God was not well pleased." … That is, there is a sacramental introduction into the place of blessing which does not secure a person. The apostle goes on to warn them of the like thing happening to them. I am not using this to prove that infants are to be baptised, but that there is (the ignorance of which is the spring of all baptists' thoughts, namely) something set up by God on earth where He has set His promises, His blessings—now His Spirit. "Ye are God's building," says he. But if a man build in wood, hay, stubble, his work will be burned: that is, what was set up according to God on earth may be spoiled when entrusted to the responsibility of man, but it did not cease to be God's building. Again, Romans 11 is the direct assertion that the Gentiles were graft into the tree of promise, where the root and fatness of the olive tree were, and were to take heed lest they also should be cut off, if they did not continue in God's goodness. That could not be if it were real conversion; here they are brought in where the blessing was, and yet are cut off for unfaithfulness. Judgment begins at the house of God.

The tares are the devil's sowing by false doctrines: that does not apply to a child. The Lord received children entirely differently; "of such is the kingdom of heaven," "their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven." Again —— calls them heathen, the word of God calls the children of a christian parent holy; that is the opposite to heathen. If a Jew married a heathen the Jew who was holy profaned himself, and the children had no title to be received as holy. Grace reigns now, and if one party be converted, this one sanctifies

the unbeliever, and the children are holy, and have a right to the privileges of the place of God set up in blessing, as in the Jewish case he had not. The child is not sanctified, but holy in contrast with unclean; that is, in scriptural phraseology, has right to come in.

God does not recognise individuals unconverted as such, save as to responsibility and judgment, as to which He does fully recognise them. But—— is quite wrong when she says that God recognises no third class. He does recognise as the church (Christ does) what He spues out of His mouth in judgment. He does recognise as His servant him whom He cuts asunder and appoints a portion with the unbelievers. “Blessed is that servant … But and if that servant say in his heart, …” and he is judged as such, and by much more terrible judgment because he has been in that place. All this I refer to to shew that a state of things, and a relationship with God, is positively contemplated and taught in scripture, and on which judgment depends, which is not founded on personal conversion: not merely responsibility because of what they knew, but which is called church but spued out of Christ’s mouth, or servant yet has a portion with hypocrites and unbelievers, yet the Lord is “the Lord of that servant.” We get plain directions in 2 Timothy 2, 3, what to do in this case: turn away, purge ourselves, etc., when the corruption and evil have taken the form there designated. But it does not cease to be God’s building because wood, hay, and stubble are built in; the Holy Ghost is there which makes it God’s building. Scripture, therefore, does speak of a third class; that is, of persons in relationship with God and responsible according to that relationship and cut off, rejected, judged, but whom the Lord judges as “Lord of that servant,” and

individually even cut off from the olive tree into which it had been grafted.

Besides, children of God and children of the devil are not called so till manifested. Take a person unconverted, afterwards brought to the Lord: I do not call him chaff, he is not burned with unquenchable fire; dead and lost he is, but not chaff: that is manifested in judgment, may be before. This seems to me precipitate. Further—— would have them presented to God and sanctified, that is flesh (chaff) presented to God and sanctified. Nothing can be more totally unscriptural. When a parent comes to me, to the church or assembly in principle, to do this, as they naturally would as——feels; I say I cannot receive what is born of the flesh but by death, the death of Christ, and I baptise them to His death: ——presents them, sanctifies them without it. As to putting on Christ, ——does not believe what she says. Does she mean that a believer when baptised really and actually puts on Christ, as to life and being in Him? In contrast with becoming or being a Jew or Greek, barbarian, Scythian, bond, free, he puts on none of these things. A circumcised Gentile puts on Judaism in his profession and place, a baptised person puts on Christ. If not, every baptised person would be saved, and those not would be lost. But——does not believe that by baptism they put on Christ thus. It applies professedly and explicitly to every baptised person absolutely, without any condition or limitation, and so I take it.

These views then to me are in every respect unscriptural, nor did I ever find a Baptist who could stand on scripture. They are conscientious, and if they think they are not baptised at all, of course they ought to be so; I have no quarrel with them. Paul was not sent to

baptise—the Twelve were to baptise the Gentiles—but baptism was accepted by Paul as already instituted. But he had no mission for it; whereas a special revelation was given to him of the Lord's supper, though both were alike instituted by the Lord. The commission of the Twelve was never that we know fulfilled. It was to disciple the nations and baptise them. The commission was on and from earth, not from heaven. Luke's was from heaven, beginning with Jerusalem. Mark makes it necessary to salvation, because it was professedly becoming a Christian; and I have so used it with a Jew who said he believed but would not be baptised, it would kill his mother. I cite it to shew the force of the passage. The cases of Philip and Cornelius prove conclusively that it was not obedience, but admission into christian privileges and position. I am now in the midst of a great baptised profession in which 2 Timothy 2, 3 tell me how to act. I may add, it is not a testimony to privileges already conferred, but the act of admission to them. I am baptised to His death, not because I have died. I wash away my sins, not because my sins are washed away. I put on Christ, and am not baptised because I have put Him on. That is, it is the formal entrance into the privileges, not a witness that I have received them. I see no trace in scripture of its being a testimony to others, though every faithful confession of Christ turns to a testimony. Most of the ground—— takes is given up by those who maintain baptist views among brethren as untenable before scripture. I have never sought to convince or influence any one, and have no intention to do so. If they are content to follow their conscience I have nothing to say. But I am sure if scripture be right their views are wrong. If there be any light which I have not got which would lead me to it, that is another thing;

but I am sure they have false views of the whole matter according to scripture. The root I conceive to be, making it all individual and obedience (which is absurd, for a man cannot baptise himself), and not seeing that there is a place of blessing, and ground established by God on earth, which is not individual conversion, but is responsibility— branches grafted in but broken off.

Yours very truly.

Dear Brother,—I have no wish to keep up the Bethesda question, not that I judge the evil as less than I thought it, but that from the length of time many there are mere dissenters, and know nothing of the doctrine; so that they are really in conscience innocent, though gone in there as they would into any dissenting place. If this brother had never had anything to do with B. as such, I should have asked him nothing about it, as happens every day. But your account is that his separation was on account of looseness in discipline. What I think I should do would be not to discuss B. but shew him, say J. E. Batten's confession, where he states what they taught, and ask him simply if he held any of these, as they were the things that had made the difficulty. I should not ask anything about B. If he does not hold them I should not make any difficulty. I should gladly have patience with a godly brother who had seriously a difficulty. If it were merely wilful I do not feel that an assembly is bound to satisfy his wilfulness. This principle is recognised in 1 Corinthians distinctly. Otherwise one perverse person might keep evil in the assembly perpetually.

He would allege his conscience being governed by the word of God, and not yours.

November, 1878.

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My dear Brother,—I am very thankful your conscience has been exercised about the music. I can sympathise with you, for as far as ear goes, music had the greatest power over me, though never taught to play. But the ground of those who wrote you to keep it up is all wrong and not true. It is not for Christ they wish you to keep the harmonium, and that decides the case. I am not a Jew, nor am I in the New Jerusalem where all will be to God's glory, though not in the highest way, for the Father does not come in there. I could suppose a person earning his bread by music, though I think it a very dangerous way, as Peter did by fishing, which is no excuse for a person spending his time fishing to amuse himself.

All these pleas of gifts of God are bringing in nature when it is fallen into the worship or service of the new man and the Lord, and spoiling it. I have known hunting justified by the hounds having scent. No instrument can equal in effect (Haydn said so) the human voice. Besides, as I said, it is not true. It is merely helping the pleasure of fallen nature, not a thing evil in itself, but connecting sensual pleasure with spiritual life. It is not the thing to begin with with a ruined soul, but we have to live by God's word. Harps and organs down here began in Cain's city, when he had gone out from the presence of the Lord. In point of fact, artistic musicians as a general rule are not a moral class; the imagination is at work, not the conscience, nor the heart. Judaism did take up nature to see if they could have a religion of it, only to prove it could not be, but end in the rejection of Jehovah and His anointed. We are dead, and risen with Christ, and belong to another world. Hence I

cannot seek my own enjoyment in what belongs to the old, though I may recognise God's work in it, but not seek it as a world I belong to now. It is not a legal prohibition, but the heart elsewhere. If I could put a poor sick father to sleep with music, I would play the most beautiful I could find; but it only spoils any worship as bringing in the pleasure of sense into what ought to be the power of the Spirit of God. They cannot go really together, save as water may take away the taste of wine. It is a wholly false principle that natural gifts are a reason for using them. I may have amazing strength or speed in running; I knock a man down with one, and win a prize cup with another. Music may be a more refined thing, but the principle is the same. This point I believe to be now of all importance. Christians have lost their moral influence by bringing in nature and the world as harmless. All things are lawful to me. But as I said, you cannot mix flesh and Spirit. We need all our energies under grace to walk in the latter, always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus may be manifested in our bodies. Let Christ be all, and the eye is single and the whole body full of light. The converse is if our eye be evil, because it shuts out Christ; our affections are not set on things above where Christ sits at God's right hand. That is the point for us, happy affections there, and steadfastly, not being distracted.

Your affectionate brother in Christ.

1881.

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My dear Brother,—Your questions all are really questions as to spirituality. The spiritual man discerneth

all things, and if thine eye be single thy whole body shall be full of light. There are as to many details directions as to speaking in the assembly. These of course we have to follow. Not more than two or at the most three to speak, and all for edification. As to being led of the Spirit, while clearly scriptural and characteristic of the Christian (Rom. 8:7, etc.), the realising it depends on the spiritual state. When we are washed in the blood of the Lamb, the Holy Ghost comes to dwell in us, and then leads us on following Christ. We know Him because He is in us. (John 14:17.)

Now the word is inspired by Him, and no path can be His which is not according to it. But in many details of life there is no positive direction. Here the Spirit will guide us, sometimes by motives, love to others or practical righteousness; charity to a soul, or christian kindness, may make me take a long journey, but in all Christ must be the one motive. Then and then only the eye is single, and when not single is evil and requires attention or one may take human kindness for christian love. When the blessed Lord heard, “he whom thou lovest is sick,” He abode two days in the same place. Then God’s time and will, living there He went. God had allowed death to come in for His glory and Christ’s!

This connects obedience, and being thus led. In the days of scripture there were voices of the Spirit. I do not expect this, but it shews that in its nature it was not unscriptural, and I believe He will guide us and may suggest things to do, but the mind must be subject and lowly to enjoy this guidance, and if any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God who giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him. Such as are meek, them will He guide in judgment, them

will He teach His way. But it will be in the spirit of obedience, not the acting of our own wills, however hidden the motive. The state of the heart and the word hidden in it is always in question here. The word forms the judgment in forming the state of the heart without perhaps a particular text being in the mind, and God is faithful not to suffer us to be tempted above that we are able.

Christ must be the only motive. His Spirit and grace form our spirits, besides His being ostensibly to oneself the motive (Luke 9:55, 56), and the motive and tone of heart do correct and guide us from deceiving ourselves. But in everything we should be led of the Spirit; this supposes true liberty in Christ and known salvation. The Holy Ghost first shews us the Father's love is a Spirit of adoption in us; next shews that we are in Christ and Christ in us, and sheds the love of God abroad in our hearts. Its fruits are love, joy, peace, then the walk, long-suffering, temperance, etc. Thus if living near to God He may specifically lead us to special efforts in which the life and spirit of Christ is displayed. But general precepts help to guide here. Let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath, etc. This will guide in any suggested service. The mere fact of intending Christ's glory, though right, is not enough. Is it what will glorify Him, not me? Paul was to preach to every creature under heaven, but at a given moment not in Mysia, nor Phrygia, not in Asia. A reading meeting is in a general way a most useful thing, and I do well to use it diligently as other things, but we have to seek. But while the one object is the first great thing for light, the principle of obedience must come in; if not self-will, that is, our own will, is a spring of action.

There is one point I have not noticed, though I must soon close. Acts 3:19-21 are quite clear, but God knows beforehand how the testimony will be received, and acts in that knowledge. Our responsibility is quite another thing. Christ presented Himself as Messiah to the Jews to confirm the promises, and they were bound to receive Him, yet His rejection was the basis of the accomplishment of all God's purposes. So in Jeremiah you will find calls to repentance and promising blessing thereon and actually accompanied by a declaration that they would all go to Babylon. One was the present responsibility of man, the other the way and purpose of God's counsels which always go far beyond the result of responsibility even if attained, as Christ's heavenly glory and universal lordship go beyond the accomplishment of Messianic promises, though in another way I believe these will be. But long ago it struck me as a remarkable thing that Acts 3 should come after Acts 2. I shall be very glad, if anything occurs to you, to help as far as God enables me. Love to the brethren.

Your affectionate brother in Christ.

1881.

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My dear Brother,—Another word is used for death as to the saints falling asleep, otherwise, in reasoning on man's state, death is often spoken of. But death and going to heaven have mischievously taken the place of the Lord's coming and being like Him. Going to glory when we die is quite unscriptural. As to funerals, I would not go to any where the clerical system is kept up, I did not to my father's. If it gives offence, you cannot expect other than the offence of the cross. As to the age

of infants, the statement you refer to is as to when conscience begins to work. I have no doubt that little children are saved. We cannot fix a date, for it varies with each. Matthew 18 seems to me quite clear.

It is true that when justification and sanctification come together in scripture, sanctification comes first, because the Spirit of God sets a man apart to enjoy the efficacy of Christ's precious blood, and this is important because evangelical teaching sets justification as a kind of imperfect work, and that we were made meet afterwards for something higher. This is not scriptural, as the thief was fit to go and be with Christ. There is progress, or ought to be; little children, young men, fathers, growing up to Him who is the Head in all things, changed into the same image from glory to glory, and perfecting holiness in the fear of God. But as to acceptance, "As he is, so are we in this world." By faith in Christ I am quickened, and that life is in itself a perfectly holy thing, and believing in Him and His work I am perfectly justified. The actual state I am in then comes in question, but as to my person I am set apart to God. As to an assembly meeting, it is when those who compose it meet as such in Christ's name. What Paul's heart was upon was first to possess Christ; that I may win Christ, then that he might have part in the first resurrection. He was running for these. Philippians, though based on it, never treats of a finished salvation, but of the race we run towards the glory, towards being like Christ.

I should not frequent my uncle's house, as I might meet the infidel there; did I find him there I should not stop. What deference to his relationship demanded I should shew, but should not be free with him while he makes no difference with an unbeliever.

Yours sincerely in the Lord.

1881.

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My dear Brother,—The ordinary rule of scripture is in the calling wherein a man is called he should therein abide with God. The blessed Lord was a carpenter till called to His own fuller service, and Paul was a tent-maker, and at times supplied his own wants. In a certain sense all things are lawful for me. There are many where the motive is everything. Christianity does not change the order of the world, even where sin has given rise to it. I could not systematically sell gin. If gin was of use I could give it to the sick, unless it were a stumbling-block to others. The disciples were taken out of the world to represent God in it, walking in His ways, not its ways, deriving their life and all their ways from Him, to live as Christ did. The world is an immense system built up by Satan around fallen man to keep man insensible to his ruin. (Gen. 4:20-22.) The Lord does not pray we should be taken out of it, but kept from the evil.

Your friend is solemnised by the voluntary! Is he content to be unfit for worship till he hears the organ? This is a poor plea and putting nature instead of grace, which has even boldness to enter into the holiest. This lowers and falsifies the whole nature of our relationship with God and Judaises it. As to conversion, wherever Christ is presented souls can be converted, but this is not worship but preaching. Christians becoming more and more worldly is no reason for our going with it, but the contrary. No doubt people may be attracted, but so they are to gin palaces. The Puseyites recommend it in church on that ground, so they are largely as popery.

God may rise above all mistakes in grace, but it is one of the strongest marks that worldly attraction has taken the place of grace and Christ. Did you ever find Christ or Paul have music or a band to draw people? It covers the whole character of Christianity. The earthly promises to the Jews do not directly apply to us, but in general God's faithfulness and loving care is, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee," is used in the New Testament as well as in the Old. Read the latter as written for us for our instruction on whom the ends of the world are come, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope. 1 Peter is, after redemption stated, a treatise on the ways of God, now using the Old Testament for it. The Old Testament scriptures cannot give us an accomplished redemption nor glory into which Christ was not yet entered, but they are able to make us wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. You have to discern what is earthly Jewish promises. It is important to do so; but what is in God, faithfulness, grace, love, condescending care of us is always true. We get it perhaps more clearly applied in the New Testament. Thus, "seek ye first … and all these things shall be added unto you." I should be sorry to reduce Christianity to mere Jewish promises, but what is in God is always true. 2 Thessalonians 2 shews that where people would not receive the love of the truth that they may be saved, they are, when Christ rises up, given to darkness.

What I said as to the transfiguration was that those three men were going to be pillars (see Gal. 2) and that this was to clear and strengthen their faith. The tendency of having a companion with less faith is to weaken ours, still faith may overcome this.

Your affectionate brother in Christy

1881.

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I doubt whether Mrs. N.'s case was not one for warning, prayer, and pastoral care, and not for exclusion.

It is a mistake sometimes made, and the fear of a reproach and discredit arising from having a person who does not honour the gospel in our midst, leads the saints, who desire it may be honoured, in a false course. Righteousness, specially when connected with character and honour, is rigid and repulsive because it is afraid of itself and for itself. Grace which dwells in perfect righteousness being above the thought of self, because it is divine in its nature, and being secure in perfect righteousness within, is gracious in tone without, can think for others. Such was Christ. How perfect in all His ways and love. He had never to think nor did not think what the effect for Himself would be of His intercourse with sinners. He thought entirely of and for others. This is the effect of intrinsic holiness and grace. He was holy enough to have no thought of aught else, and thus to be the companion of sinners for their sakes to deliver them, regardless of self. Now the Christian ought to be able through grace to do this, only he has to be on his guard for himself. There is this difference that the church has to be jealous and watchful for the glory of Christ and the holiness of the walk of its members. Still, I am persuaded that were we nearer the Lord, more thoroughly identified ourselves in spirit and walk with Him in the security of His grace, there would be more capacity to seize the good grace had wrought in others and be above the evil, dealing with it to heal in grace.

For this no doubt straight paths must be made for the feet.

May the Lord guide the feet of His saints in all things.

1880.

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Dearest Brother,—Thank you for your very kind letter We both believe that the blessed Lord is at all times sufficient for His church both in love and faithfulness and power. Nor does the state of the saints expose them by the departure of any one to what it was at the first. The church is not a concentrated whole as it was then. Still I believe my going would make a change; not that I have an idea that anything depends on me. God forbid it should. How could it? Depend on what? A man can receive nothing except it be given him from above, but the last link with the first start of this truth would be gone. If it does come, may it only link them more together.

But I am much better. I was as low as I could well be and the bad fall I had at Dundee shook me I do not doubt more than I thought. My heart and lungs were a feeble spring to my body, but this like all the rest is in the Lord’s hand. Last night, I did not even sleep any part of the night. At first I had to sit up all through propped up and sleeping. I take a little food, too, at night.

I had long felt my place was to be quiet here, so the Lord in His wisdom kept me here. Thank God my mind is as clear as ever and I enjoy the word and the Lord’s goodness, I suppose more than ever. At first I could not long fix to work. Now I do as much as usual, only I do not hold meetings, save one reading of labourers at the

house. I went last Lord's day morning. My lungs are the most sensibly weak. I have not been ill but knocked up and overworked.

There is a great desire for the Word I may say everywhere, and blessing, too, in the way of conversion in a good many places. The shake112 has done the brethren a great deal of good, though we are far from what we ought to be, but there is more health perhaps of tone, and regard towards God.

A great effort in S. L——to make a party, but some active in it I think that any body who knows them respects, and they labour under God's hand to bring about His judgment concerning themselves. And the rest go on quietly and leave it all to Him, and so I trust they will. I am sure He is faithful and true. What a comfort it is to think He watches over us and condescends to take notice of all we need and to order our ways.

I work morning and afternoon as far as I can and in the evening let the strain go and indulge in the Word and feed on His own love. One of my present studies is Adonai.

Please tell R—— that I will write when I can; though I answer some daily, I have still an arrear of close on 30 letters which are a pull upon me.

The Lord be with you and guide you in your work. Love to the brethren.

Affectionately yours in the Lord.

February, 1881.

J. N. Darby

Departed to be with Christ

29th April, 1882

Aged 81 years.

107 ‘That the loaf should not be broken before it was passed round, and that each should partake of an unbroken loaf, as a symbol of the unity of the body.’

108 “Can a child be a Nazarite?”

109 [“Collected Writings,” vol. vii., p. 445.]

110 ‘What is the worship of the Epistle to the Hebrews?’

111 ‘Is it once for all, or continuous?’

112 This refers to a crisis among the saints.

Section 7

* * * In Christ Jesus there is neither male nor female, so that abstractedly the prayers of and communion amongst sisters is in itself as valid as amongst brethren, and if in their right place He would be in the midst of two or three sisters as of two or three brethren.

But there is an order in the house of God, as to which we have passages in scripture, shewing there is a difference. Thus the woman's head was to be covered when under the power of the Spirit. Men were to pray everywhere: women adorned with modest apparel, etc. Women were to keep silence in the assembly. This last passage shews that an assembly composed of women is not contemplated in scripture. I do not think if three women were cast upon a desert island, or in similar circumstances, it would preclude them for ever from taking the Lord's supper; but it is evidently an extreme and exceptional act to be resorted to only in an extreme case, and acknowledging the special character of it, and relinquishing when not compelled to do it, and done with the utmost privacy if done at all, because there is no other means possible of enjoying the privilege. As a matter of order, it would annul itself (if done, save as a resource, where it was otherwise impossible) with discipline exercised by sisters, or by some other persons outside. I do not think scripture would recognise it as an assembly, so that while I should not dispute the fact that the Lord's supper is partaken of, except in the impossibility of doing it in any other way it would not be according to the order of God's house. Where other

means of doing it exist, it is clearly disorder, because such sisters would be doing it apart from the assembly.

[Date unknown.]

Dear Sister,—Yes, doubtless, the loss of your dear daughter will be a sorrowful blow and a great gap in your family: but in one way or another I have for a long time accustomed myself to death in Christ; and as far as Christians are concerned, to my mind it comes with smiles—in itself a terrible thing, I fully own, but now a gain. God will have us in the perfect light. For Christ, because of us, the way of life was through death. It is not necessarily so for us, because death is completely overcome; but Christ, who has overcome, is there with us, if we have to take that way to get out of evil and defilement, to enter into the light and the perfect joy of His presence. If there is something that has not been settled with God, there may be a painful moment; for the soul must respond to the joy which is prepared for us." But in itself death is only the unclothing of that which is mortal, and the passing of the soul into the light, into the presence of Jesus. One leaves that which is defiled and in disorder; what a joy that is! Later on, the body will be found again in power and in incorruptible and immortal glory: we have but to wait a little while.

Salute with much affection all your children. I feel truly for them the loss that they are about to sustain. Your dear daughter would have been the joy of any family where she might have been found; she is going to be the joy of that of Christ, for we are entitled to say this. It is a comfort for those who are still journeying here below. God prepares us for heaven by cutting little by little the ties that still attach us, as children of Adam, to earth.

Christ takes the place of everything; and thus all goes on well, and for the better. May God deign to bless to the whole family this so real sorrow of heart, in which God ever good has mingled with the bitterness of the cup so much of that which is compassionately sparing and gracious.

I send this short letter26 for your daughter; I have been afraid it might be too long; but I feel sure that through the goodness of God she will enjoy this little word, reading it at leisure and when her strength allows of it. She will think of Christ and be refreshed. May God bless you, and make you feel His goodness even in this loss.

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Dear M.,—I would have much liked to see you once down here before your departure: but He who directs all things with perfect love has ordered it otherwise. You go to heaven before me. Death is not an accident that happens without the will of God; it has no more dominion over us; the risen One holds the keys of it. How immensely blessed to know that He has won a complete and final victory over death and over all that was against us, so that there is entire deliverance! We are delivered, save as to the body, out of the scene where evil has its power, and transported where the brightness of God’s countenance ever shines in love, where there is light and love only, where God fills the scene according to the favour that He bears to Christ as the One who has glorified Him in accomplishing redemption, according to the perfections which were shewn forth through that work. There was a needs be for God to be manifested in these perfections in answer to the work of Christ; it was due that He should respond

to the work of Christ in love, in glory, in the expression of the delight that He found in it. The name of His God and Father in love was unfolded in all its splendour; "Thou hast heard me from the horns of the unicorns." He was "raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father." He then declares that name to His brethren, and Christ praises Him in the midst of the congregation. This is where I wanted to bring you by these remarks that might otherwise appear somewhat abstract. All this favour shines upon you: what God has been for Christ as man, because Christ glorified God as regards sin that dishonoured Him—what God has been in bringing Christ into His presence in glory—that He is for you, who are the fruit of the travail of His soul. Think of that, dear sister. Moreover, Christ has become infinitely dear to us because of what He has done for us. He gave Himself because He loved unboundedly. There is nothing in Christ that is not yours; He cannot give more than Himself, and what a gift that is!

I wrote to you, some time ago, that it is in thinking of Him —of Himself—that one has joy. You are not a joyful Christian. I understand it, I know it: there is discipline in that. Christ has not had the place that He ought to have had in your soul. You see, I hide nothing from you. But that is not all: you have not confidence enough in His grace. Own all that might be a cloud between your soul and His love. You do it I know; but the grace, the deep perfect love of Jesus, the love which is above all our faults, and gave itself for all our sins, the love which took occasion of our very weaknesses to shew its own perfection —of it you do not think enough. That love divine but also personal of the Saviour will fill your heart; Jesus will fill it; and you will then be not only in

peace but joyful. I attach more importance to peace than to joy. I should wish to see you habitually in a joy more deep than demonstrative; but if Jesus is in the bottom of your heart, that Jesus who has blotted out all trace of evil in us, in whom we live before God, then your joy will be deep. May it be so. Oh! that your heart may be filled with Jesus Himself, and with His love, and with the sense of His grace. He has saved you, He has washed you, He has become your life, in order that you may enjoy God. What could you have more than Himself? You can see His goodness in the peace that He gives you and in the way in which He surrounds you with such care and affection.

For me, it is only a member of the family going a little before where the whole family will soon dwell. Anywhere else one is only en passage. Soon all will be over for us. How blessed when every trace of that which has kept us bound in some way or other to this world of misery and evil will have completely disappeared, and when we find, ourselves in that light where all is perfect! Therefore trust yourself to His love. I repeat, that He has completely overcome all that is between us and the pure light, as He has perfectly blotted out in us all that did not suit that light. How good He is! What grace! And you are going to be with Him! How blessed! Rejoice therefore, dear sister; soon we shall all be there. Yet a little labour, and all will be over in the pure glory and in love. You go before us, and in heaven you will have to wait, while the others wait and fulfil their task upon earth. God be with you. May the presence of that faithful and all good Jesus sustain you and rejoice your heart. I trust that such a long letter will not have tired you. I could say many more things yet to you: soon you

will know them better than I do; it is a great cause of joy and an immense grace. Peace be unto you. I ask God to bless you and that does good to one's heart.

* * * * *

Dear Sister,—So your dear daughter is already in heaven! I thank you, dear sister, for having given me these particulars. Not only did I love her very sincerely, but I also see in her so true a picture of the work of the Spirit in connection with her whole life. When I say true, I mean that it was not feelings only, such as friends reproduce to enhance the piety of a deceased person, but just what shews a genuine work of God, such as He produces in a soul, with the real experience of that soul. That is worth much more than a few artificial flowers spread over a grave. I feel indeed that the death of your dear daughter will make a great gap in her family, for you and for all. But God disposes of all, and He does all things well. And she is going to be laid, at least her mortal remains, by her father. Well, they will be raised together. We shall not go much before one another in leaving this world; we shall all be together, blessed be God, when we are raised from the dust. With pleasure I think of that dear brother, that he will awake where there is no care and no pain. He will be near his Saviour, then his daughter with him, and then all the rest, on whom the grave has closed and who have disappeared from this troubled scene. It seems to me that there is a certain change in my way of feeling touching those who die younger perhaps than I am. There was a time when I used to say to myself, Why, it ought to be your turn, since these go. Now I have more the sense of being dead, and of seeing them file off before me to reach the Lord's presence—young or old, what matters it? And I

remain here to serve, perhaps until the Lord comes, poor in service (I own), but giving my life to it, and to it alone. Immense privilege! if one only knew how to realise it, a privilege which makes us to be strangers everywhere, and that is, on the whole, a true gain even for the time being.

[1874.]

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* * * Our part is simple; to hold close by the Lord, and to do His will; all else is loss, and disappears. With Him all is blessing, and for ever, only now we have to go on by faith. It is a blessed thing, too, to be strangers where He was a stranger. Soon we shall be with Him in the house where no stranger comes —all are at home there.

I think our readings in Switzerland were blessed; several of those who were at the Nimes study were at them, and enjoyed and, I believe, profited by them greatly. We were more able to enter into the word than when at Nimes. Hearers came, too, considerably to the evening lectures. The need of something surely true and solid is felt. Everywhere it is felt that religious institutions axe breaking up. In Geneva the state has abolished ordination, and names the pastors. In Neuchatel the rather larger half of the National body has left the State, all having been left by law to their own consciences. The doctrine taught, however, is as bad as elsewhere. This kind of thing is going on everywhere, and felt to be going on by those who are in these systems, but they have no faith to act, trusting God. I believe our two months' studies have been blessed. I feared when I got to Germany, my long disuse of the language would make my fitness for service more

than doubtful, but when I got into the German atmosphere, it seemed to come back naturally, and many words I had forgotten came back to command. Of course I made mistakes, but not so as to in any way hinder my intercourse with the brethren, or my speaking m the assembly, for which I was thankful.

I am very thankful for the news of your last letters. It seems to me that God has especially manifested His power in Italy. Years ago I felt I could not go there to oppose what was in presence of the poor Roman Catholics, nor could I go with what was, and I laid it up with the Lord to abide His time, and if He had anything in which He could use me, He could keep it for me. I believe it is just going on right: founding in godliness, and though seemingly small in extent, it may spread hereafter, but the basis most important in such a country, is that evil be not allowed. The gracious Lord be with you.

Dillenberg, June, 1874.

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Dearest——,—Your letter reached me in Elberfeld. I have been in Italy, Switzerland; in both through mercy the work goes on well, small in Italy… In Switzerland there is blessing. But I was there almost entirely occupied with two months' reading with labourers, as two years ago in France, which was blessed, as was this. Here there is a good deal of blessing, in some places remarkably so, but they are strong baptists, but simple-hearted. All things are so breaking up everywhere, so much infidelity, materialism, and church dissolution, that service here in Europe has a peculiar and urgent character… But I await God's time for any service I can

hope to do in it. He alone does the work—that I know, and He will watch over His own. Indeed He is working in a remarkable way… I expect, the Lord willing, to be in America; my place even is taken, somewhat later than I thought, but I have work in England, so it is all right. The States are my object.

As to New Zealand, I wait to see the Lord's hand; were I young, I should think pretty surely of going there, but I shall be half way between seventy and eighty before I start for that country, and a year then is a long while, specially if I have anything to finish before I depart home to be no more seen, and the Lord be not come. But I find going home a sweet and happy thought, and the Lord is there. And what more can one ask save to occupy till He come, if that is to be the yet brighter way? Find out His will and do it, and all is bright. I find His word, I mean the account of Him, just now (though all is blessed and daily clearer, and Himself daily more precious) food till we get to Him. What a smash for poor ——, I do not. Know how to think of it, but we must expect nothing in this world, and all these things pass for others, and the stream flows on, and God's work goes on, and then we shall see what is—"the first-born among many brethren." Peace be with you… A dear sister, a faithful labourer m Syria among the women, and who helped to open the door to ——, has just died, but was faithful and blessed to the end.

Affectionately yours in the Lord.

Siegen, Prussia, June, 1874.

* * * * *

Dear——,—Only a word in reply to your letter as to your boys. It is of importance that boys growing up, though

yours are somewhat young for this, should have companions: the heart grows with the body. Also it is important that they should have exercise. The important point is that their companions should be desirable ones: if they are strongly attached to such, mere companionship for games for exercise is not of much consequence—still always to be feared. If your boys have young friends enough to give zest to their walks and excursions, and any other things that are good for bodily and even mental development, it is enough, but young ones (not exactly children) must have opportunity to let their hearts out freely. It is of all importance; and salutary companionship of all moment. It is of the last importance for parents to get this through God's mercy into a right channel.

Your affectionate brother in Christ.

Elberfeld, June 25th, 1874.

Dear ——,—Intercession27 is a general term, used even of the Holy Ghost in us (Rom. 8); but priesthood (in Hebrews) is with God, for mercy and grace to help in time of need: advocacy with the Father, to restore communion when we have sinned. You could not have it for sins in Hebrews, because the worshippers once purged have no more conscience of sins. This answers your three first questions save the end of the third; Why do we fall? Because it is part of the government of God to have us responsibly exercised, though not without grace sufficient for us and strength made perfect in weakness. But if we forget our weakness and dependence, we forget the grace too, and are in the way of a fall: see Peter's case, and the Lord did not ask he might not be sifted; he wanted it. The evil is not in the

fall, really grievous as that is, but in the state it manifests. God may allow it that we may learn this.

Washing the feet is in connection with the advocacy—we have dirtied them. “Save,” in Hebrews 7:25, is securing across the difficulties and dangers on to the end, as “if the righteous scarcely [movli", difficulty, across what brings ruin if [we are] not kept, as Noah, Lot] be saved.”

“Able to succour,” as in chapter 2:18, refers not to strength, chough of course it must be there, but experimental knowledge of the opposition, difficulties, trials, which are on the road, so that He could understand, be touched with them. The priest does represent us, “appear in the presence of God for us,” but that is before God, but He also obtains for us all needed grace and help, as regards the way down here. And learning our dependence, and to trust in God’s faithfulness is a great thing; man would be independent, and has to learn his relationship to God, or rather know himself and God in it. This has its importance as well as being perfectly accepted.

Ever affectionately yours in the Lord.

July, 1874.

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To the same.]

* * * I apprehend that both “the righteous” and “propitiation” (1 John 2:1, 2) intimate to us the double character of perfectness—actual state, and work—of Christ, as the basis on which advocacy is carried on to restore the soul. If any man sin, there is an unchangeable and accepted righteousness in Christ, and a perfect work which has been presented to God for our

sins, and indeed in view of the whole world. So that neither the ground of our acceptance nor the putting away of our sins are in question for our access to God. It is a question of restoring, not of accepting the soul—both according to God's glory. Our place and cleanness for it are that in respect of which, and according to which, advocacy is carried on, and that positively and negatively.

"He" (chap. 1:9) must, I think, apply to God here, from verse 5 dealing with God in His nature. But you will find God and Christ wonderfully put together as one object in this epistle. See chapter 2:23-3:3, and other passages. It is abstract, as all these passages, and applies to saint and sinner. There is a difference between God's forgiveness in the sense of non-imputation according to Romans iv., and governmental forgiveness—for us the Father's. Matthew 6:14, 15, as referring abstractedly to a state of soul might apply to both. But the difference is very real, because justifying forgiveness (unknown in the Old Testament) is complete once and for ever, as Hebrews 9, 10—"no more conscience of sins"; whereas fatherly forgiveness one may daily need. We are not exactly called to seek it, but to confess our sins and we get it. But confession applies to our starting-point also.

The Lord be with you in your work and in your soul. I trust the Lord has blessed the word round here, and cheered up the saints too by it.

Yours affectionately in the Lord.

* * * * *

Dear ——,—I have no difficulty about printing more than writing, save that it takes the character of aggression; I have always refused it myself. My objection to the

Baptist action is not that they act on “their consciences as to it: I would not seek to hinder them; but they have a feverish activity and propaganda about it, which is not Christ. And clearer views so set one on Paul’s ground—that he was not sent to baptize —and sets it in the background, that we lose our intelligent place when we propagate it.28 Your affectionate brother in Christ.

London, July 1st, 1874.

* * * The first principle commonly stated is that of obedience. My answer to this is an absolute denial of obedience to ordinances in Christianity. It is a mischievous anti-christian principle, called “subject to ordinances,” and deteriorates the whole character of a person’s Christianity. As regards baptism in particular, it is perfectly certain that according to scripture it is not a matter of obedience. The proof is this; when the eunuch of Candace comes to water he asks, “What does hinder me to be baptised?” an expression, which if it were obedience, could have no place. Further, the obedience of a heathen or a Jew to a christian precept when not yet within, not yet admitted among Christians, is an absurdity contrary to the whole nature and principle of Christianity. Another case shews evidently that the notion of obedience is foreign to baptism. Peter says, “Can any man forbid water … which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?” Both these cases prove that it was a privilege desired or conferred, and not an act of obedience—admission amongst Christians, the act of the baptiser on behalf of the assembly, not of the baptised. The truth is there is no command of Christ to be baptised—there was to baptise, and it could not be otherwise. Christ could not as to Christianity give a command to those without. If the man is within it is by

baptism, so that there can be no command to be baptised. The importance of this is that it shews that the baptist system falsifies the whole nature of baptism. Hence the apostles were not baptised. They—the twelve, not Paul—were sent to baptise, to admit into God's house. They could not be admitted.

I am aware that Baptists plead John's baptism, but this is too gross a confession for me to dwell on it, because John's baptism had no reference to death and resurrection—nay, was the opposite to it, for it proposed to receive Christ, and, as far as it went, that He should not therefore die at all. Of course, in fact this was impossible, but then those who had received this baptism were as Christians baptised over again. (Cf. Acts 19)

The next principle asserted by those who insist on re-baptising, is that baptism is the public confession that a man is already dead and risen again in Christ. This is entirely contrary also to scripture. Baptism is the doing the thing in sign, the declaration that it is not yet done, as far as man has to say it, or make confession, not that it is. "Arise," says Ananias, "and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord"; not to be baptised in testimony that thy sins are washed away. Again, "Buried with him in baptism." (Col. 2) "So many of us as were baptised unto Jesus Christ were baptised unto his death." And so in every case. "As many of you as have been baptised unto Christ have put on Christ." They were not baptised because they had already done it. None but those who are in principle Roman Catholics suppose that the work is done in it, but it is the sign of dying and rising again—not of being dead and risen. No

sacrament is a sign or profession of what is done, but of the doing of it.

This leads me to another point—what baptism is to the being members of Christ's body. This is another unscriptural fallacy. Baptism has, even as a sign, nothing to do with the unity of the body. "By one Spirit are we all baptised into one body" —not by water. The baptism of the Spirit is the seal of faith, as scripture repeatedly declares. "In whom after that ye believed ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise." And if this was given, as in the case of Cornelius, they were baptised afterwards to be received amongst Christians. Baptism as a sign does not go beyond death and resurrection, and hence is individual. The church does not die—has nothing to do with it: it is taken out of death in Christ, and united to a Head in heaven by the Holy Ghost; but for this Christ mutt be ascended there. He sends down the Holy Ghost and forms the church. (See the end of Eph. 1) Of this unity the Lord's supper is the sign, not Baptism. We are all one body, "for we are all partakers of that one loaf." But here again it is not a sign that we have eaten His flesh and drunk His blood. We do so in figure, as we are one body inasmuch as we partake.

But baptism presents the doctrine that I, a living sinner, die to sin, and arise again to be accepted in Christ's name, as alive unto God in the power of His resurrection, of that operation of God that raised Him from the dead, that this is the only way to be received before God. Hence by it we are received into the assembly on earth—the house builded on earth for a habitation of God—not into the body. In this we are looked at in scripture as seated in heavenly places in Him the Head. Hence Paul who was sent a minister of

the church to complete the word of God was not sent to baptise. He accepted of course baptism as already established in the church of God, as (some Quakers excepted) I suppose every Christian does; but he had a special revelation as to the Lord's supper which is directly connected as a sign with the unity of the body. The twelve who, though the church existed, had not ^his mission, but had been sent forth by Christ in connection with the kingdom— though subsequently as we know empowered by the Holy Ghost after the ascension of Christ, and that the church was formed by His descent—were sent to baptise, but before the ascension though after the resurrection, and continued to receive of course into the outward public body on earth by baptism, with no examination however as to the reality of faith. But men were openly received out of heathenism or Judaism among Christians, so that it became a public profession. But this mission was not a mission for believers' baptism as it is called. They were sent to disciple all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost.

I am aware that it is said, But is it not said in Mark, "He that believeth and is baptised"?—I know it is, and something more, "shall be saved." Now I do not in the least accuse Baptists of any want of honesty in suppressing this, which gives its whole sense and character to the phrase, but I do say that it does shew that their views of baptism obscure entirely their perception of the force of scripture. Why do they not quote it all? Do they deny that I, or other Jaelievers who are not re-baptised according to their ideas, are saved? They dare not, nor do they desire to say so, but then why do they quote the passage? They cannot use it because

of their views of baptism. To say that a man's obedience is to be added to his faith for salvation, is, save for a few extreme persons, too monstrous to be received. Whereas supposing, as it has happened to me, a Jew or a heathen is really convinced that Jesus is the Christ, and feels his own sins even, but says, 'My mother is a pious Jewess; it would kill her if I were to be baptised,' I say to him, I cannot recognise you as saved. It is not a poor obedience to an ordinance when already a Christian which is in question here, but a shrinking from being one.

It is in this sense of saving that baptism is referred to in Peter, which, though the expression be obscure, is clear enough as to the point we are upon—"the like figure whereunto baptism doth now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience towards God) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ"—not the form of washing, of course: it must be real. It is a matter of a good conscience by the resurrection of Christ, but baptism is the sign of this, of dying and rising again in Him, so as to be on this ground before God. Can obedience to an ordinance save us, even in figure? We are before God on the ground of death and resurrection when baptised, and received into the house to be brought up and educated in divine life. Hence Christendom, and this is to me a very serious point, is judged as Christendom, and is in point of fact, till God finally judges it, the place of the habitation of the Holy Ghost. It is said, "But if that servant say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming … the lord of that servant" etc. He stands on the same ground as to his responsibility as the one made ruler of all his goods—is spoken of as the same servant. Baptism receives into the

house. There was no other method of receiving into the house, and no one could be received but on the ground of Christ's death and resurrection.

We have seen the scriptures never speak of baptising believers, nor any one, because they are dead and risen again in baptism. The question then is, as it is receiving grace, not man's acts or obedience, is it the mind of scripture that children should be received or not? No flesh can be presented to God, or be received, but on the ground of death and resurrection: on that scripture is clear. This is in baptism. Is it then God's mind that they should be received into the house where the Holy Ghost is, to be brought up by Him in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; or left outside in the world, where the devil is prince and god? For there is this without and within, whatever confusion exists through man. Scripture is clear—"Of such is the kingdom of heaven." Men say this was being received by Christ on earth. The kingdom of heaven was only at hand, and was only set up when Christ left the earth. Further, the question arose, Is the Christian to put away his heathen wife and children as among the Jews, because that, profaning him, the children were profane? No: grace was at work, and the heathen was sanctified (not holy, no more than the Jew was profane; he was only profaned and the children profane), and the children of the heathen women among the Jews were not. They are to be received, and then as within to be brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, which while without they could not be. Hence they receive precepts: "Children, obey your parents, for this is well pleasing to the Lord."

Two things are added: What can the children do? and, What good does it do them? The children do nothing: grace acts towards them. No one is brought nigh by doing. Baptists may think so. Scripture speaks of grace. They are consecrated to Christ and brought to God, but as ordered with the sign of death and resurrection—the more significant because they have not yet actually sinned. The good done to them is that they are brought within, into the house where the Holy Ghost dwells, to be brought up, etc. I admit there is no commandment to baptise infants, nor is there to baptise believers, and there is no commandment to be baptised at all. But the Baptist notion of baptism, and all that he grounds on it, is unscriptural. And the scripture will have infants received. They that receive them receive Christ, and of such is the kingdom of heaven, and the child of a believing parent is holy. I do not doubt for a moment that children dying are received as saved into heaven. (See Matt, 18) It is monstrous to think they cannot be received by the church on earth. It is said, Why not give them the Lord's supper? Because that is the symbol of the unity of the body, and they are not of that till baptised by the Holy Ghost.

I can only give a sketch of the great principles which the word of God furnishes to my mind, and all on which the Baptist views are founded seem to me to be contradicted by it; and the truth of what the great house is shews the mischievous character of it, as well as the way in which individuals are directed to ordinances from Christ, and the confusion which diverts from true separation or godliness within to the reception out of Judaism or heathenism without. In this point of view it seems to me practically deplorable.

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* * * The subject you refer to is one on which I so far unwillingly engage, that it is one which I feel is to be left entirely to individual consciences. If a person has never been baptised, clearly he ought to be; if he has, he cannot be again. The mere testimony—save as any honest sacrifice of self, in which sense it may be accompanied with felt blessing— is to me null, because, were I to be baptised to-morrow, no one would say I had become a Christian; they would merely say I was become a Baptist, or, at least, as it is expressed, that I saw baptism. At the first, it was a further testimony that one put on Christ, and bowed to the grace of the gospel.

In the first place, I am quite clear that the whole system of Baptists is wrong in principle from beginning to end, and in their idea of the import of the act. They speak of obedience; now, obedience to ordinances is setting aside the whole spirit and character of the gospel and of Christianity itself. In all cases it is unscriptural. Baptism, moreover, is the act of him that baptises, not of him that is baptised. He is received by it; he bows to it as the appointed way of his reception by the church; and this is what is suited to Christianity, which is grace that seeks and admits into the place of blessing—not the voluntary act of the person coming, though he is made willing: a voluntary act of obedience being the introduction of a sinner into grace, is contrary to the whole nature and spirit of Christianity, and christian thoughts in their fundamental character. Hence there is no command to be baptised, but to go and baptise; and this marked in a very signal manner, as the twelve apostles never were baptised with christian baptism (with John’s only, which has nothing to do with the matter), because, being an

act of admission, they were sent to admit. Had it been one of obedience to a command, surely they would have been the first to do it; and who was, then, to baptise them? This shews its real character most clearly.

The whole adult baptism view falls before my mind, as utterly unscriptural and ill founded—scripture, moreover, in practice, never speaking of a testimony, but of a benefit conferred: “What doth hinder me to be baptised?” (the following verse, I apprehend, is not authentic scripture, though I doubt not in such a case very right, but not the then way of dealing, however), and “Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptised, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?” Hence the question as to children is entirely changed. It is a simple question of who is to be received. All the arguments from the mere incapacity of the infant, have no weight. It is a question of grace, and whether the infant is to be brought into the place where the Holy Ghost dwells, or left in the world where Satan governs.

But before I turn to this—the one point with me—I would notice another principle of Baptists which is wholly false—that baptism is the expression of the state in which the individual already is. This, I apprehend, is wholly unscriptural. It is an external reception, it is true; but in its meaning, it is the reception or entrance, not the expression of a previous one. The believer is dead and risen with Christ; the reality of this is, of course, by living faith; but as to the further act, “as many of you as have been baptised unto Christ have put on Christ”—not witnessed our having previously put Him on: we have been baptised (it is really unto, and so always) into His death—not because we were there before: we are

“buried with him by baptism into death”—“wherein, also, we are risen with him.” Baptism signifies, undoubtedly, death and resurrection, but it is then and there, as to the meaning of the form, we die and rise again. We enter into the church by dying and rising again. We enter into the outward visible body by that ordinance, which signifies our dying and rising again.

Now, as to the reception of children, Matthew 18 seems to me to have great force. The question is, Are children to be received by Christ? Is the kingdom of such? I am aware that He is giving them as the pattern of our spirit, but there was an actual infant there of whom He was speaking; and if it were a saintly person, who was as humble as a child, there would be no sense in saying, “it was not the will of your Father that one of these little ones should perish, for their angels,” etc. That is, it is the infant. This being, I think, clear, the passage becomes remarkable—“Of such is the kingdom.” They are spoken of as in the way of perishing, but that they are not to be rejected, because, as the shepherd saves a lost sheep, Christ is come to save that which was lost. (Matt, 18:11-14.) I refer to this, as defining the character of the persons admissible into the kingdom. As to the manner of admission, all are agreed.

But there is something much more positive than this. If a Jew married a Gentile, the wife was to be sent away and the children were to be rejected as “unclean,” and not admitted into the house of God by circumcision. This question arose when one parent was converted, and instead of the Jew being relatively profaned, though still a Jew, so that his child was unclean, the heathen or Jew was relatively sanctified, so that the child was holy—not intrinsically, of course, but relatively, so that he would

be received among the people—“else were your children unclean, but now are they holy.” People have talked of their being legitimate, but this has nothing to do with it: the Jewish principle brought out in Nehemiah is perfectly clear. It is said, Why then not give them the Lord’s supper? The Lord’s supper is symbolic of the unity of the body, and it is by one Spirit we are baptised into one body; hence, I apprehend, it is he who is made really partaker of the Holy Ghost who can be properly partaker of the Lord’s supper. Now, I admit that there is no command for infants to be baptised: it would suppose a moral effect. But there is none for adults— there is to the apostles, to go and baptise the nations they had brought into discipleship: and households are spoken of in scripture. We know it was the habit and thought of those sent. I am told that Christianity is the opposite of this in its nature. This is true as regards individual salvation. But I do not think introduction into “the house” the same thing as that. If one parent be converted, they are, it seems to me, entitled to that, and unjustly deprived of it, if it is refused to them. This thought was soon lost, and individual salvation connected with it and the new birth.

As regards Acts 2, I think the passage is of moment as confirming the habits of Jewish thinking; for the Gentiles were in as those “afar off,” by sovereign grace, as far as God called them. But it did inspire the hopes of the Jews, that their children would partake of the benefit, and such was their thought. It is true, they rejected, as a nation, this testimony of the Holy Ghost, but I do not think that the remnant who did receive it would have let go the privilege as regards admission to the house in which the Holy Ghost dwelt; the result would shew itself

independent of ordinances, where the operation of the Holy Ghost was manifest, and the liberty and understanding He gives to members of the body there; then they would enjoy the privileges belonging to members and to the unity of the body, according to the intelligence of faith, brought up, meanwhile, in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, and the precepts of the house addressed to them in their place. When the call of the Gentiles came in a new shape with Paul, and the unity of the body was made the basis of his ministry, nothing was professedly changed, and he preached still the kingdom, and said to the Jews still, “unto you first”; but while having people and households baptised, he speaks less of it and attaches less importance to it: the making it a matter of obedience never crosses his thoughts. Such I believe to be the true scriptural history of this subject.

But if any one thinks that he ought to be baptised, or that he has not been, surely he ought, or he will have his conscience ill at ease about it, and that is evil, no matter what the subject is, only he would do well to search the mind of God first. Obedience to an ordinance is, I am satisfied, wrong; and there is no command for it in scripture. It is not the act of the baptised nor a public testimony. All this I believe to be most unscriptural, and in its principles unchristian, though often most honestly done.

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* * * I regret the occupation of minds with baptism, and pressing it on others as is done. It is not Christ nor the church, but ordinances; and I judge it is a very great evil, always injuring the person who is so occupied. The

person who spoke to you probably had been baptised as a child, and only meant that he had not been immersed as an adult. The ground they take, I am more than ever assured from scripture, is wholly false.

As to christening, it is the word which most truly expresses what baptism is—being made, as to outward position, a Christian. This, which your baptism as an infant did, no present immersion could possibly do. There would be no public introduction to Christendom of a man born of Adam—no becoming a Christian by profession. There would be what they call obedience, which is in the teeth of scripture, and the reputation of what they call “seeing baptism,” or adopting Baptist views, which are every way false—and that is all. To a scriptural judgment you cannot be baptised now, because you have been; for I affirm, according to scripture, baptism is just christening—that is, the introduction into Christianity, and nothing else. Every other view of it is unscriptural and false. I fear much the falsifying the position and testimony of brethren by the way some press it. It is simply confounding the house and the public profession with.xthe unity of the body of Christ. The public body exists, corrupted, no doubt, but exists, and to form it again by baptism is all false; it exists by baptism: and we are called to maintain the unity of the body, of which the Lord’s supper is the sign (not baptism); to follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with those that call on the Lord out of a pure heart. A testimony by baptism I should consider a false testimony, and should take no part in. If a person never had been baptised, it is irregular, and should be remedied, and if a person falsely fancies he has not, I respect his conscience; but his making a point of it tends

always to disunion, not unity; and if this testimony were practically founded on it, I should leave it as a false one. Still, I have never meddled, nor should, with those who think they have not been and ought to be baptised, nor make their ignorance a reason for troubling them, as they trouble others by what I am perfectly satisfied is only ignorance. I am as satisfied as that I am sitting here writing, that all their views of baptism are utterly false and unscriptural. I repeat, the only true sense of baptism is what is expressed in the word christening. The great point now is maintaining the unity of the body separate from evil; with this, baptism has nothing to do. It is either public Christendom or christening which we have, or the badge of a sect.

What we have to look for is not subjection to ordinances… but spiritual mindedness (not sinking, as you say, into the quiet possession of mighty truths without the power of them) and unity of those who love the Lord. Baptism, so-called, helps neither, but the contrary… I only add, that your baptism, though in the midst of confusion, was bonâ fide, the same as your child's. I was exercised in the same way; but I felt I was introduced, and meant to be introduced in good faith, into the church as a public profession in the world, and this is what baptism is—I was christened. The state of individuals in their souls has nothing to do with it. It is not communion in the unity of the body, which is by the Holy Ghost. I admit the same confusion in mere expression of the service, not of the baptism, that there is among Baptists; but the name christening just shews the justness of the appreciation of the rite and the true purpose of those concerned in it. In this the

Establishment is right; the Baptists, according to scripture, clearly wrong.

The Lord bless you and your home. Seek, dear brother, that not the freshness of a soul just out of prison, but the deep and living power of a soul in constancy of communion with God, may be found in you, and pray for me and fellow-saints that it may be so. The Lord is working remarkably here; not now, in adding outwardly, but what I think more of, giving His word power in souls.

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* * * The first thing I must do is to set the principle of baptism on its right grounds. It is not obedience: obedience to an ordinance is unchristian ground altogether. Baptists have gone so far as to allege the Lord's words, "Thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness." It is inconceivable that Christians should speak so—fulfilling righteousness by ordinances! It is Galatian doctrine—a denial of the first principles of truth for a sinner. Further, if John's baptism had been submitted to, it is nothing as regards christian baptism. The twelve at Ephesus (Acts 19) were baptised as Christians after that. But more particularly, a command there was to baptise, not to be baptised; but this was not even to baptise believers, but to disciple the nations, baptising them—a commission which supposes Jerusalem and the Jews received—a commission which St. Paul declares was not given to him, who was appointed minister of the church. Not only so, but when we read how it was administered, we find the directest evidence that it was not a matter of obedience but of according a privilege—entrance into the professed external assembly of God on the earth. "What does

hinder me to be baptised?" says the officer of Candace, a question which precludes the thought of obedience, and speaks of an admission which he counted a privilege: so with Cornelius —"Can any forbid water that these should not be baptised, who have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?" Hence, the first Christians gathered by the Lord during His life on earth (the disciples) who were baptised with the Holy Ghost, were never baptised: they were sent to baptise, and did. Paul was baptised, because he was received like any other. Thus the testimony is complete from holy scripture as to its character.

Next comes the question, Into what were they received? Not into the unity of the body, for then the twelve would not have been in it, nor is there ever a hint in scripture of baptism being into the unity of the body. It is a symbol of death and resurrection (for which reason John Baptist's baptism was nothing for Christianity as such), the admission into the assembly gathered on the earth to the name of Christ; people were baptised to (never into) something—as to Moses (not into Moses) —it is the same word: so to Christ (not into Christ), and to His death (not into, here, either); and thus were individuals held figuratively to be on the professed ground of resurrection; but this was not the unity of the body; that was a real and essential thing, and came by another kind of baptism. "For by one Spirit are we all baptised into one body," not by water. The ordinance that symbolises this is the Lord's supper, not baptism: for we are all one body, inasmuch as "we are all partakers of that one loaf." The baptism of the Spirit, not baptism by water, is that by which we are baptised into the unity of the body.

Further, it is alleged that these ordinances are signs of the state of him who partakes of them—not of an object of his faith. This is entirely contrary to scripture. We are baptised to Christ's death and raised in baptism—not baptised because we are dead and risen. It is objective: what is represented in baptism? I am figuratively buried into death and rise again, not as a witness that I am. The principle is false and mischievous. "Arise and be baptised, and wash away thy sins," not because faith has washed away. It is the outward public sign of that whereto Christ's death and resurrection are available, a witness of that—not that the person has availed himself of them: that may or may not be true. To receive of the Lord's supper, I do not go because I have remembered Christ's death, or have fed upon Him, but to remember Him there.

No one can read the statements of scripture and not see these statements of the Baptists are wholly contradicted by those of scripture. It remains, then, to inquire, who may be outwardly received into the public assembly of God on earth by men; God alone Himself in Christ being He who unites to the body. Now, when I turn to scripture, I find, when children were brought to Jesus (Matt. 19:14), that His reply to His objecting disciples is, "Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven." Now, I am told that this was merely the gracious kindness of Jesus then, and does not refer to our receiving them now, or merely to personal gracious reception now. The answer is evident. The kingdom of heaven was not set up then, but only at hand. It is not, "I will build my church," but "the kingdom of heaven," the keys of which (not of the church) were committed to Peter—and see the

consequence. In Matthew 18 (and all these chapters from 16, the Lord is shewing the principles of what was coming in after His departure) we read, “Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven. For the Son of man is come to save that which was lost.” Mark that ground on which it is laid; was it only when He was on earth? Then note the parable. (Vers. 12, 13.) “Even so it is not the will of my Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish.” But we may not receive them. Though the Lord does not give the sign of this privilege by the death and resurrection of Christ (though He lays that privilege on the ground of His coming to save the lost), He tells me, “And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me.” How can I receive a sinner—and the little child is a sinner—in Christ’s name, but on the ground of death and resurrection? A Baptist tells me I am to receive him to God as a heathen —without the death and resurrection of Christ—because they have perverted the sense of baptism. I receive him on the ground, “The Son of man is come to save that which was lost.” The kingdom of heaven being of such, am I not to receive him on it in Christ’s name—or if in His name, not by death and resurrection into the kingdom of heaven? But more, I am positively assured they are holy when one parent is a Christian (not intrinsically, it is the outward reception on earth which is before us), and the passage applies directly to the point in question. If a Jew married a heathen he had profaned himself, the wife was profaned, and so the children and wife were to be put away; that was law. Grace came—one parent was counted a believer, the other not: were they to separate as the Jews ought to

have done? No! The unbelieving was sanctified as the Jew was profaned—not holy more than the Jew was profane—and the children were holy just as the Jew's children were profane. What was the consequence for the Jew's child? He could not be received into the outward privileges of Judaism by circumcision—he was profane; the child of the Christian could—it was holy. It was thus a definite decision on the point; not upsetting the very nature of Christianity by giving a commandment contained in ordinances as Baptists would and do, but giving directions as to the principles on which we are to act. I am told "that an immense system of evil is built up by it. In the first place, if the sanctity of the Lord's supper had been maintained, which is the unity of the body, and the place of discipline, this would not have been so; but, as far as the principle goes, the great house is contemplated in scripture, and does not cease till He judges it. It is His house in which the vessels to honour are. It is not the body, but it will be judged as His house, responsible as such. I receive, then, the children of a christian parent, all, if born bonâ fide and brought into the house where the Holy Spirit dwells, to bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. I receive them because Christ received them, and said that the kingdom of heaven, to be set up after His death, was of such, because they are holy. The precept, "Obey your parents in the Lord," could not be given them without. If it receive them within, baptism is appointed by the Lord for it: it is not the Lord's body; but they cannot be received but on the ground of Christ's death and resurrection. The Father, I know, does receive as such.

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* * * In reference to the subject about which you inquired of me, I have first to ask a question. I know that there are in Strasbourg Baptists who belong to a system well known in Switzerland, which, however, is so bad—so morally bad—that I should not think of considering this secondary subject with you, concerning which, I am, with my whole heart, ready to leave every conscience free. Now, it is very possible that these Mülhausen Baptists belong to the same system as the Strasbourgers: with people who hold such doctrines I should never speak about baptism. A brother, however, just now tells me that the Mülhausen Baptists do not belong to the Strasbourgers.

I confess I would rather treat on any other subject than this of baptism. The great evil of their system is, that they occupy themselves with ordinances instead of with the Lord, and one is obliged to do the same when speaking of it. The subject has been discussed in all its bearings amongst the brethren assembled here, among whom there were brethren who had allowed themselves to be baptised, and who had left the Baptists; and no doubt the falsity of their system has been made very evident, even for those who, in my opinion, do not see clearly. I can only touch on the main points. The first is, that the Baptists' system places Christendom outside the responsibility of Christianity as not forming part thereof: they consider them only as Gentiles who have not been received through baptism, though those who form Christendom are, according to them, not a part of the christian system, of which the true Christians form a part. This is of great importance, because thereby the position of Christendom, and the house, involving responsibility, are destroyed. In a great house there are

vessels to honour and dishonour: they are both in the same great house. To this it will be replied, Am I then not called upon to leave it? It is impossible, for one has been received into it by baptism, and through the christian belief. I am not called to leave it, but to separate from the vessels of dishonour. From this point of view, Baptists entirely falsify the position of the Christians in the latter days; moreover, their principle makes baptism the bond of the unity of the body, and through this they are Baptists—that makes them Baptists—but this very principle is quite false, and contrary to scripture. The act of baptism is not the reception into the body of Christ; one may have been baptised a thousand times, and yet not be of this body. It (baptism) is not even the symbol of it. That which makes us members of the body of Christ is the baptism of the Holy Ghost: we are, through one Spirit, all baptised into one body. Of the body, the Lord's supper is the symbol, and the participation of it the outward confession of unity: for as it is one bread, so we, being many, are one body, for we are all partakers of that one bread (loaf). Baptism is the sign of death and resurrection (or, rather, in the participation of it); he, therefore, who rests the oneness of the body on baptism, or intends through baptism to lead into the body of Christ, is quite wrong, and this is an important point.

Then, again, they take obedience as a basis, and subject us to an ordinance as duty of obedience. The principle of being required to obey an ordinance Christianity rejects, because it make3 an act of the outer man a condition for entering into the enjoyment of the privileges of grace… Baptism is a privilege granted, which admits into the number of the faithful and into the great house.

According to the Baptists' principle, the apostles ought not to have partaken of the Lord's supper, for they had not been baptised; nor could they have been, for there was no one to baptise them. That would evidently be an absurdity, but according to the Baptists' system, such an inference would be necessary. Again, they pretend the sacraments to be signs and seals of things received—a principle which is false. I do not partake of the Lord's supper as a sign that I have eaten Christ, but I eat Him there—I drink there His blood in the sign. Moreover, the word is very precise—one is buried into death through baptism; so that their doctrine in reference to these precepts is quite false.

Lastly—and this is the worst—there is the way in which they occupy souls with a legal prescription of obedience, and engage their attention with an ordinance, instead of occupying them with Christ, which gives the soul a false direction as regards its whole state. It then (without knowing it) accepts a principle which breaks down Christianity in its foundation, like him who keeps days, but in a more serious case, because they make the oneness of the body to depend on it. St. Paul was not sent to baptise. I, for my part, feel convinced that the commission to the twelve was "to make disciples of all nations," not a body of elect converts. Now, since this has been done (be it right or wrong), and they have been baptised, they (the Baptists) will not acknowledge it, and commence to re-baptise, or, rather, encourage Christians to do so, because they despise what was done. The difficulty now lies in this, that the Baptists who are sunk into subjection to ordinances necessarily conceal from themselves the ways of God—often, no doubt, dear children of God, to whom I, with my whole heart, allow

liberty of conscience, as to him who only wants to eat herbs; but really to make ignorance and conformity to law the condition of the oneness of the body is a little too strong!

In the condition in which the church is, I easily yield to it, and one can only hope to protect souls through the details and precise statements of the word of God, leaving the conscience perfectly free; but a religious union in the so-called body of Christ (of the Baptists) which would exclude the apostles is a little too absurd!

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Dear Brother,—I must repeat what I said to you, that I have not the most distant wish to persuade any one on the subject of baptism. I believe it is a rite established at the beginning; but I was not sent to baptise, nor was Paul. (1 Cor. 1:17.) It was not abrogated. The circumstances of my own baptism, though done bond fide, and in the main with right intentions, were not such as I should wish, but I do not think it can be repeated. And while Paul gets a special revelation as to the Lord's supper (1 Cor. 11:23-26), though already long instituted and in use (he being the minister of the church and the teacher of the unity of the body), he is not sent to baptise, which was the introduction into the outer circle of public position as a Christian. What is special to brethren, so called (for the foundation of salvation, even if made clearer, must in itself be the same everywhere, where it is true), is the presence of the Holy Ghost forming the unity of the body down here, and gathering saints into this unity out of the great baptised mass. If any such have never been baptised, I apprehend they

ought to be, as Quakers, grown-up Baptists' children, etc.

What I see in baptism is admission into the professing body or house. It has nothing to do with the body of Christ; hence, if one had received the Holy Ghost, as Cornelius, he had to be professedly introduced. (Acts 10:46-48.) God not only converts souls, giving eternal life, but has established a dwelling-place consequent on redemption, where His blessings are. So with Israel. He came and dwelt there. (Exo. 29:45, 46.) So "what advantage hath the Jew? Much every way." He had the law and the covenants and the promises, and even Christ, as concerning the flesh. Not that all were Israel which were of Israel, but these blessings were distinctively theirs (Rom. 9:1-6), not amongst the heathen. So now, the Holy Ghost and all other christian blessings are found within the christian calling—not amongst heathens, not amongst Jews, not amongst Mahometans. The gospel may be carried to them, but christian blessings are not among them as such; they are among Christians: the basis of the truth is there. The state of things may be awfully corrupted, and is so, but till God judges it (like Judaism) it remains the place where His blessings are found. Baptism is the formal admission into this—it is christening. The person is received outwardly into the habitation of God, as set up in this world. (Eph. 2:22; 1 Tim. 3:15.)

It is the act of the baptiser, not of the baptised. The latter cannot do it for himself, he is outside, and cannot receive himself in. So it is written, "He commanded them to be baptised in the name of the Lord." (Acts 10:48.) Hence there is no trace of the one hundred and twenty being baptised at all. Where was the place they

were to be received into? or who was to do it? They were made the place, and in this case the body too, by the descent of the Holy Ghost. (Acts 2:1-4.) It is not obedience; first, like the hundred and twenty, man could not obey; he cannot baptise himself: but more, Peter says, “Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptised, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?” and commanded them to be baptised. It was a privilege conferred. Who could refuse to receive them, seeing God had put this seal upon them? So with the Ethiopian—“here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptised.” You are aware probably that the verse following—that is, Acts 8:37—is not genuine, and has been foisted in, though long ago, by those who thought confession of faith needed. No such confession, or examination if it was with all the heart, was ever made in the apostolic times. The Lord did take care it should be pure at first—added such as should be saved (Acts 2:47), sealing them with the Holy Ghost. Nor is baptism the sign of what we have received. People are baptised to something, not because of their having it—to (not into) Christ’s death, to Moses, to John’s baptism, buried to death, to (it is the same word) the remission of sins. Hence it is always, “Arise, and be baptised, and wash away thy sins” (Acts 22:16), not because the sins have been: to Christ’s death, not because they have died: “The like figure whereunto baptism doth also now save us… by the resurrection of Jesus Christ.” (1 Pet. 3:21.) Hence, when one entered believingly, he got the blessing, as far as forgiveness went, administratively here below, and was thereupon sealed by the Holy Ghost. (Acts 2) It is not a testimony to others (though it may turn to such) as the case of the Ethiopian shews, nor is it ever spoken of as such.

When I come to the history, it is very peculiar, as if God had meant to make us feel we were in the last days in a corrupt Christendom, not founding it. The only commission to baptise is to go and discipline the Gentiles (the command from Galilee with the remnant, not from the ascended Christ), baptising them, etc. There was no command to baptise the Jews nor known believers. I do not doubt they were baptised, and accept it as an apostolic fact. But this commission was never carried out. In Galatians 2, Paul having been expressly called and sent to the Gentiles (ver. 7), “to whom now I send thee” (Acts 26:17), the apostles at Jerusalem agree that he should take up this mission, and they go to the Jews, and so it was. They had stayed at Jerusalem when the assembly was scattered (Matt. 10:23), whether rightly I do not say, only God took care that unity should be preserved by Cornelius, and Acts 15.

The subject of baptism is death, as Romans 6 shews—that is, Christ’s death and partially resurrection in Colossians 2 perhaps, but other words are added there. The person enters into the christian circle (analogous to Israel) by it (see 1 Cor. 10), where the sacramental position is carefully distinguished from personal safety.

As regards children, my object is not to argue, but to shew the nature of baptism. I believe that 1 Corinthians 7:14 especially authorises it, not to speak of Mark 10:14. (Compare Matt, 18 and Eph. 6:1.) The boundaries of the assembly of God and the world have been so broken down and both intermingled, that the fact of the Holy Ghost being in the assembly (not in the individual here), and Satan in the world, is eclipsed by the state of things; but it was not so at the beginning, and the word of God abides. The question as to children is not are they

converted, but are they to be left in the devil's dominion, or brought where the Holy Ghost dwells, to be brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord? But assuming it to be done bonâ fide, done according to the "one faith," I should leave every person to his own conscience. It is sometimes argued, Why not give them the Lord's supper too? The answer is simple, It is the sign of the unity of the body, and it is by one Spirit we are baptised into that. (1 Cor. 12:13.) The Lord's supper gives the sign of that unity, as spoken of in Ephesians 4:4, as baptism of outward position in Ephesians 4:5.

The root of the question as to baptism is, Is it the act of the baptised individually, or reception into the public assembly? On this point scripture leaves no doubt on my mind. And, is there (besides individual conversion) a place or system which God has set up on earth where He dwells, and where His blessings are placed? which He set up right at first, and has been utterly corrupted, but which has to be owned in its responsibility and character until God judges it—just as the Lord called the temple His Father's house, though it had been made a den of thieves. (Matt. 21:12, 13.)

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Dear Dr. ——,—I feel it is a great undertaking. Strange to say, I feel less horror of infidelity than of Popery. My tendency is to despise their reasonings, which always seem to me shallow and despicable morally. Still, I admit it is all right to meet them, and seek to guard, or, if possible, deliver souls; but this is very difficult, and sovereign grace, revealing what the soul does not know before as truth, has its own power on the soul. The false principle of all human philosophy is, that the powers of

the mind of man are the measure of that which he can know or acquire. This is based on the utterly false thought that he cannot be acted on; that there is no superior power capable of acting on him; that susceptibility of impressions, or receptivity, is measured by active power, which is wholly false. And if the superior power be good, that receptivity is a surer way of truth than mental power, because will does not, per se, mix itself with it. Now, this thought of philosophy is merely the pride of self-importance, which will take itself, that is, its own mind, as the measure of everything. It is a departure from the subject state which is the only right creature state—the subjecta veritas quasi materia of Cicero, which must be false as to everything above us, and absolutely of God. It makes me the superior measure of everything which is supreme, which is morally despicable folly. And this is man's mind always now as departed from God, because he is so departed; and philosophy, which may be entertaining as to what is subject to man, or even the investigation of faculties— though here man is capable of very little [and] as always, false; for if it leaves God out, its measure is false: if it bring Him in— it is religion —the principle is wholly changed; man receives, and does not give or measure. Hence the profound truth of the Lord's remark—for He was the truth—"Whosoever receiveth not the kingdom of God as a little child, cannot enter therein." This is so in the very nature of things.

But there is another point arising from your friend's letter, 'approaching the word of God under certain influences, such as christian education.' Does he dream man does not undergo influences? He is always, and must be brought up, under some, and through his life

they are acting—are there to act on him. Does he fancy his German associations have not acted on him? He told me these thoughts were working before. I do not doubt unbelief was. Where mind works it is always the case, for in itself it is always unbelief, because it is my mind away from God or against Him; but this is educated, nourished, pabulum supplied to it, by the questions and difficulties suggested. But a child always undergoes influences, is meant to do it; and if the influences are true and good, or, as far as they are, true and good, it is a great mercy. There are always, and even in manhood, influences—why, the very state of the atmosphere affects my mind—acting on us. They cannot give true, that is, divine faith, but they remove or anticipate obstacles, and put me, without a positive hindrance from false influences, or natural working of unbelief, in presence of revelation. My conscience and His work have to do with one another, as if God spoke there; and if He has spoken there that is a great mercy. It is not divine faith, but it puts me with right human thoughts—rather with conscience instead of thoughts—in presence of the object of faith; and conscience only (and the heart) is receptive of divine truth; not mind, because mind actively judges, and that in its nature puts God out of His place. Conscience may so far give me a right thought of God, for it holds out to me evil and good—good so far as the nature (not the rule) of the faculty goes, and that is like God. “The man is become as one of us, to know good and evil.” But the moment man begins to reason therefrom he is in error, because be cannot measure God rightly, for He is supreme, and man subject. Conscience refers to Him as above it, as under obligation mind does not, cannot. It has things subject, quasi materia, and is at once false, for God is above us,

not subject, and if subject, not God. The word of God acts on conscience which is in man, and allows no reasoning—judges man, is not judged by him—must take that ground if it be God's word, or it would not be in its place—may reason in grace, and does, for God is love, and shews Himself so, but never gives up His claim—it would not be grace or truth; but there is no rest except in conscience, for there the true relationship is established. "Come, see a man that told me all that ever I did," gave intelligence to the woman, and that only. "Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet." The word of the Convincer of conscience has, all of it, divine authority over the soul. It is not, You have now told the truth, but, You are a prophet. So it always is.

As to your friend—mine too, if he will allow me—he speaks of the particular passage acting. He does not know yet, because it has not acted, and his will has not bowed to God. Conscience, reached with adverse will, gnashes with its teeth—does not repel the particular word, but stones the object of it. Conscience reached and will bowed, bows to God and His word—may inquire as to the details, if all be genuinely so, but believes God has spoken in men and in His Son, and bows to the revelation given. It is a state of soul, not a subject settled—a state of soul flowing from the power of the word brought home to the conscience by the Spirit of God. He says, I am receiving the Bible because of what it says, not what it says because it says it. He is a little mistaken, because there is still the power of early influences—a very gracious provision of God, as I have said; but it is another thing. My answer is, he cannot tell what the effect will be of this reception by simple faith of the revelation of God; till he has so received it, he is

reasoning without knowing what the effect will be; but his reasoning is wrong, as is evident, because if he receives the Bible because of what it says, that is, as a revelation of God, he must then receive what it says because it says it, unless he make God a liar. But this reasoning I well know will not give him faith. He says it is only the particular passage which he receives which acts on him. I assume he cannot tell till he has. In fact, it is never so, because the speaker or vessel is authenticated by it. I may fairly inquire whether such or such are really His words, but He had authority in the revelation He has given and in the Christ who is revealed. I may detect an interpolation in my father's will, but that does not destroy its authority by which I inherit his estate, once it is owned his will. And God's providence has watched around His word, with His saving grace behind it, though man's mischief has been there as in everything which was left to his responsibility, as everything religiously has.

To a spiritually intelligent mind, the word of God carries an authority beyond all cavils; and a poor, unintelligent man would pass over what is contrary to the mind generated by it, as evidently false, or as unable to understand it, so that he escapes what is false inserted by men in it. They shall be all taught of God; and when the conscience is reached, and the will subject, and therefore the mind silent, we have the peace which certainty gives (and uncertainty as to what is all-important is misery), and blessed growth in what God Himself has revealed for divine blessing and joy. I do not receive the Bible, that is, a revelation of God from the hands of men. I receive paper and ink. The revelation I receive from God directly—"They shall be all taught of

God.” The revelation is a divinely-wrought conviction, and, I repeat, in the conscience. I know I have done what is wrong: your friend knows it of himself; he knows he is responsible to God. Where is what meets it? The Holy Ghost always produces a want when He acts—answers the want in Christ revealed in the word, but produces one always. This brought Nicodemus by night, when his mind was exactly on the same ground as the others, who got nothing. There was all the difference: thus it always is.

I hope the will of our friend is not wrong, though it may not have bowed; and hence he should be treated with all kindness and. patience. He has been mischievously set wrong in his mind. It is possible the grace of Christianity, and his need of that grace may, as acting upon another part of his soul, clear away the mists which surround it. The population of England could hardly clear away two inches of snow—the sun arises and it is gone.

Yours sincerely in the Lord.

London [1874].

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Dearest Brother,— … When we have settled we are going Home, we have to wait here till He calls. He may keep us for service if He do not take us to rest. It is this dear Bellett would not hear of: I suppose his time was come. We are His, not our own, and it is a privilege to serve, if better to be gone. I find it a good thing to think of going, and feel my life depends on Him—not simply on age. The old Psalm version says, “Tarry thou the Lord’s leisure, be strong, and he shall stablish thy heart.” Some have to wait [as] in His hands; and as

service is a privilege from Him, so the work is done by Him, but we ought to work from Himself. I have not felt any such call to work this time in London, though I have gone on—more entering into scripture latterly than ever, yet not a bit of it, directly at any rate, for use in speaking. I have been working up a little in case I go home and be no more seen. Much peace be with you.

Affectionately yours.

London, July 24th, 1874.

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My dear Brother,—I was very glad to get your letter, and hear something of you, and most glad to hear you were getting on happily at ——. It is a comfort too that these converts stand fast. It is a great thing in these days, though I console myself sometimes with the thought, that the Lord looks to one out of four bringing forth fruit… The interest in the word and the desire to hear seems general, and more striking as in the midst of the infidelity and superstition which lifts up its head so boldly: but the Lord is above it all.

As to my movements: as at present, my departure would be on August 11th, at Liverpool. I may have a week before to visit on the way. I am not going to Canada, but to the States, though attached to the brethren in Canada from having early laboured among them: they are in the ordinary stream now, launched and the crew on board, proportionately a fair supply of labourers, and blessing. In the States it is really only in my last two visits that anything really American began, and the doors are very open; so, despite my age, I go out there again, though I crave quiet here a little, and a clear testimony is needed.

On the Continent we have much to be thankful for; there is generally progress, in some places a good deal, while all around is breaking up; and in parts of France where they were somewhat asleep, they are rousing up a little. The breaking up is extraordinary. In Geneva the State has abolished the ordination of pastors…

Affectionately yours in the Lord.

London, 1874.

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[Dear Brother,—I should not say, ‘is put away from the table,’29 but ‘if no longer in communion with us’; he has left you, and you cannot put him away. But I should not in the least avoid saying that we meet around the Lord’s table. I could not own sectarian tables as the Lord’s table with the light I have; but saints who may honestly think us in disorder go to it as such, and I do not doubt enjoy individual communion with the Lord.

The “Lord’s table” is used simply as a title of Christ in contrast with devils. In itself a title of authority, it has nothing whatever to do with communion: where communion is spoken of it is not used, or, that I am aware of, is Lord of an assembly a scriptural idea. He is either Lord absolutely, or of individual servants.

To call tables of Nationals, or sects, tables of devils is a simple absurdity, in defiance of plain language of scripture. I could not go to them; but what “devils” means is distinctly stated in scripture, and means nothing but the gods of the heathen, and is a reference to Deuteronomy 32:17, “they offered to devils, and not to God” to refer this to Baptists or Independents is a gross abuse. The apostle speaks of communion with

devils (in idol temples) and heathen sacrifices, and nothing else, and to apply this to wrong ecclesiastical principles, where the Lord is owned as the only object, is trifling with scripture and nonsense in itself.

Saying that all professing Christians are of the church of God may be questioned. The church of God is employed in two senses—or better, two things are spoken of the assembly—one, that it is the body of Christ; of this all professors were not, so soon as false brethren crept in; it is also the habitation of God through the Spirit, the house of the living God, and in this hay, wood and stubble may be built in, and professors are of or in the house. It is not true if we speak of the body, though they take the place; it is true if we speak of the house.

As to the fifth question, I do not doubt that a Christian bolding he stands for acceptance in Christ's imputed righteousness may be quite sound as to the nature of Christ. I have known most true and beloved saints who were muddy on the point —though I think they lose a great deal. We must not impute even true consequences of a doctrine to the persons who hold it —it may be if they saw the consequences they would give it up: we may use them to shew the doctrine false, seeing it leads to such.

As to "communion of the body of Christ," in verse 16 it is the body of the Lord, as in the same verse the blood, but the other is closely connected with it. What the apostle is speaking of is that the priests in eating of the altar were identified with it—the heathen, of what was offered there, identified with the idol—had koinwniva not merely mevtoco", nor partook, but were morally completely associated with it, hence with demons: so Christians

with Christ. But then if all were associated with the body of Christ, they were with one another, and only one body themselves. It was included in it, but verse 16 refers expressly to the body of Christ; verse 17 shews the other, our unity in one body, to be included in it.

I have only to add, dear brother, have patience and grace; a servant of the Lord must not strive. I know by my own experience how difficult it is. Without the most distant thought of an unkind feeling, we are not always gentle to all men. We have just been over all this ground here, and have had it out pretty (perhaps I might say, very) clear, and in full and happy unity. May it be so with you too. Our meeting has gone on, I trust, with real comfort in the Lord's presence—most of the Irish labourers, and a few English, with the local brethren in the evening, but no sisters and no lectures; all which, I feel, is much more to the purpose. I have, of course, little time at such a moment, and a heavy correspondence too, but I believe I have answered all your questions. You should read the passage in 1 Corinthians 10.

Affectionately yours in the Lord.]

Belfast, August, 1871.

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* * * As to your question, it was up in——at the Tuesday labourers' meeting, and there was a unanimous feeling in it as to the substance of the matter. Technically perhaps you cannot put a person out who has withdrawn, but this is a mere question of the form of words: he ought to be out by the judgment of the assembly as well as by his own act. In the ——case they had excommunicated him after his withdrawal. I might

have said, Such a person having withdrawn under a charge of sin (where investigation was refused by him and the guilt was not proved) is out of communion till the matter be cleared up before God. If, as in this case, guardedness was not needed, as the guilt was proved, it needed but to say, Such an one having withdrawn when guilty of sin clearly proved, is out of communion, and can only be restored on fresh repentance.

It is absolutely necessary in such a case that the judgment of the assembly should be clearly pronounced, otherwise the assembly has not judged known sin to the Lord's dishonour. Nor is that all; the person might march in without the assembly's having any right to refuse him, as he marched out. The form of words is not to me material. What is essential to me is that he should be out by the judgment of the assembly as well as by his own act. Or the assembly is passing over sin known in its bosom. I have known many cases where a person being charged with sin has declined coming any more, but it is always dealt with. Even if they deliberately withdrew to join other churches, it has been noticed after visiting, etc., so that it was known to be deliberate. There was a time in —— of a kind of revival-working when people did not come for a long while, and it was unnoticed, but it was felt (and it was only through neglect and not being noticed in the immense number)—but it was felt that this could not be. They had never formally withdrawn.

In this case it was worse, because he withdrew on purpose to hide it, though in vain. Only he had taken counsel of others, so that modifies his act—but why did he do so? I do not see the wrong of this in the first instance, save that in these cases they are bound to see

after the person, know why, and if it is deliberate, and even then give it out. Otherwise he might sin and run riot, and come back, having never been put out—why should he not? Had this been done, it would only have remained to say that it was alas! discovered it was by occasion of positive sin, which confirmed the judgment that he was outside, …

Auburn, Maine, September 7th, 1874.

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[From the French.

Beloved Brother,—Your letter contains two questions to which I ought to have replied sooner. First, when a brother excommunicated by the assembly, and who lives elsewhere, seeks to be brought in again, it is for the assembly in the place where he seeks restoration to judge of his state at the time he seeks it. It is there naturally that that state will shew itself. But it is suitable, as you say, that the assembly in which he seeks to be re-admitted, should put itself in communication with that from which he was put out. It may know of many things that ought to be settled, and that the other is ignorant of; then too community of interest and the unity of Spirit are maintained by this means.

As to the second question; the Roman empire may be in possession of the countries you speak of, at least, of the land of the king of the south—not, as far as I believe, of the land of the king of the north; but the body of the Roman empire is found in the west of Europe. Palestine will be the centre of the conflict. There will be Gog on one side and the Beast on the other.

Salute the brethren affectionately.

1874.

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[From the French.

Very dear Brother,—I was very glad to have tidings, and to see your name at the end of the page. I trust God is keeping you very near Himself, and that He maintains the freshness of His grace and love in your soul. We need to be constantly renewed; without that, spiritual energy does not keep up— “they shall renew their strength,” it is said, “like eagles.” And it is not progress in knowledge that effects that; although this is profitable for teaching Christians, and even for rendering, the gospel which we preach more pure: what is of moment is the keeping of oneself near God. There love mamtams itself and grows—His love in our souls, which finds its activity and comfort in exercising itself towards poor sinners and towards the saints: one seeks the glory of the Lord in them, and their own well-being. God gives you to enjoy Himself; but God reveals Himself not only as infinite blessedness in Himself—but also in the activities of His love in which He finds His delight. And when His love is shed abroad in our hearts we enjoy assuredly what He is, but this love is active towards us by His grace. Activity, unless renewing itself in communion with Him, may be sincere, but will degenerate into routine and into a habit of acting, and is even dangerous; the soul gets far from God without knowing it. But abiding in His love in Jesus and His word abiding in us, we can count on an answer to the requests we address to Him in our hearts.

Here I do not see much movement in souls: what there is does not turn away from human ways in the christian

path, and presses them to activity in doctrines not scriptural. But there is not activity in the gospel among brethren. They walk very well. There is not any gift; but in general there is a good deal of movement and need in this vast country, and even conversions are not wanting. The state of the churches is scandalous indeed: pious souls groan, but where are instruments to be found to guide them in the good way? God has raised up a few, several ministers even have left their systems, but it is a drop of water in the wide sea, and there is a great effort to keep souls in the various systems while taking advantage of the light which brethren have and preaching their doctrines. They do not even conceal it. One of the most active who has visited Europe told ministers that they could not keep up with the brethren unless they read their books, but he was doing everything he could to prevent souls leaving their various systems called churches. It is a new wile of the enemy. Thank God, that does not discourage me. I have seen that God is above all that; but it is an additional difficulty. If there is activity of grace with brethren, it is another victory to carry off. He also tries to hold them by presenting a false perfection as an object to attain to, which is none at all, where Christ the precious Saviour is so terribly veiled.

I had to stop. I had a very good meeting last evening, and some strangers came to hear. I do not doubt that if a gift were exercised here in a continuous way there would be blessing. But the harvest is great and the labourers few: we know where we have to go to have them—may God give us to do it with faith! Study the Bible, dear brother, with prayer. Seek the Lord there, and not knowledge—that will come too; but the heart is

well directed in seeking the Lord: the eye is single, and then the whole body is full of light. Greet affectionately all the brethren. My earnest desire is that they may be near the Lord, and the Lord very neat them—not conformed to this world, but transformed by the renewing of their mind. Christ is all: the more one travels on down here in His ways, the more one feels it. Your affectionate brother in Christ.

Boston, September 27th, 1874.

My dear——,—One thing that you relate gave me much to think of, as indeed it has been a subject of thought pretty often for a long while, nor am I sure that I have the Lord's mind clear upon it. I think evangelising the greatest privilege of any in respect of gifts, though I am not an evangelist, only when I can, do the work of one as, well as I can. That is not my difficulty, but what you say: that the evangelisation has enfeebled the teaching the saints. The gifts are clearly distinct, but I do not see that one should enfeeble the other. Paul assuredly evangelised, and as surely taught, and taught in evangelising: witness the Thessalonians: and if he did not look for, he certainly found, present fruit. He distinguishes being a minister of the gospel and a minister of the church, to fulfil (complete) the word of God. This is not in the Thessalonians: all is personal, not corporate. We must be with God for each, as called of Him to it; and then I do not see why power should not be for both. But a certain salvationism, instead of Christianity, I think has to say to it, which God may bless, but which carries its effect with it. Few carry in their mind, "I endure all things for the elect's sake." It is a general idea that God is love, and would have all men to be saved, which is blessedly true; but thus it ends in

being saved, man's safety. There is no purpose of God in it, no glory of Christ—all called upon to bow to and own Him. Hence as to the preacher's state of mind, when he has got the person saved, and this confessed, he is content, goes no further: God's interest in His. own is lost, which leads on to building them up. If we were with God about them, the heart would soon be drawn out in testimony to them. There is another thing—glory to Christ in His church. This I confess greatly absorbs my spirit, though I be a poor hand for this work too: but this leads us to prayer for saints, so also to testimony to them.

The evil is not earnest devotedness to evangelising—it is itself the way of blessing to an assembly, or rather God's working in one by His presence builds up the other—it is being absorbed by it. But this affects the evangelising itself; there is less of Christ in it, more of man's importance, and when pursued in a revival way, more of delusive work; it never gives a solid foundation to build upon. I should be most loath to weaken evangelisation: I believe God is blessing it, specially for gathering out in these last days, and it is healthful for an assembly that their hearts are engaged in it. At the very beginning it characterised brethren, and I trust still does, though it be more common now on all hands. The love exercised in it binds also saints together. But God is in a great professing body, awakening them to their state, and this has its importance also: the cry that awoke the virgins was not the gospel, ordinarily so called. Finally, the hand cannot say to the foot I have no need of you. I do not reject the joy of counting converts, but we must not lean upon it: "When ye shall have done all these things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants;

we have done that which was our duty to do." The bond of service to Christ is kept up, and that is of great importance. It is not referring the effect to our work, but our work and heart to Him.

I am sure if we were near Christ we should do both well, assuming of course that Christ has called us to it. Do not be content to put one in place of the other, but see what Christ means by it. Be with Christ about the saints when you have to say to them. Be with Christ as to both, and then see what is the result. The question in general has very long pressed upon me in connection with the spiritual activities of the day. I have never been allowed to see much fruit, and have been more blessed in bringing to peace than in awakening. There is One, thank God, who is above all, and does all: let us look to Him. The Lord be abundantly with you, and guide you both in heart and work, and keep you in much enjoyment of Himself, serving from Him as well as for Him.

Your affectionate brother in Christ.

New York, November, 1874.

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Beloved Brother,—My life is such a routine here outwardly (I hope not inwardly), that as to work, I have not much to tell you of. People come to hear, and with interest. In Brooklyn souls are making progress in the truth, and learning what it is to be a Christian. There are some young men who follow them up in grace—here less. They come, and continue to come, and I trust there is a quiet work going on, but it is at present more preparatory in the dissemination of truth. There are, I trust, two new workmen whom the Lord is raising up…

I have no doubt that evil is increasing, as we are warned of it, but I believe the getting into the truth of real Christianity —the light it brings—makes the darkness and evil more visible. Heartlessness for God is what is most striking, and the pretensions of reason and man in making a god of his imaginings. Growth in knowledge is needed. That is a return back to original truth as in the word, and the light it gives—both, in what is essential in our relationship with God. Blessed truth it is, and throws light on all that is around us! But while this is needed to walk in these times, yet assuming this, what I feel anxious about as to brethren is their being devoted, and not conformed to the world: simplicity and undistractedness of walk, and in their ways, non-conformity to the world, that the testimony may be distinct, and the effect of these truths. This, and walking in living communion with God, is what I pray for the brethren. “The word of his patience,” and we as men that wait for their Lord, is what we are to have at heart. But the Philadelphian state connects itself distinctly with Christ: “my word,” “my name,” and such He will shew that He has loved, and this is worth all the rest.

We must not forget, in the sense of the evil around us, that the Lord remains the same. What was heart infidelity before, as return to truth develops itself, becomes open and positive infidelity, and Christianity must take its relative place of positive faith: faith wrought by the Holy Ghost in the word —direct faith in it, not by education nor by the church. Any profession, merely such, will be rather the corruption and moral apostasy of ritualism—a very real thing, but which makes the church the ground of believing, for faith it is not. Direct faith in the word, that is in God, is the test of

real Christianity. The church becomes a judged thing, not the ground of believing. This is a very definite position, but which allows nothing but real faith—always true, but brought out to light by growing corruption and evil. But then it is of all moment that devoted-ness and a holy walk be maintained; because men judge more by this, and as a testimony, this ever was and must be so. “He that is holy” is with “He that is true” in Christ’s character for the Philadelphian state.

One thing is needed for the workman: good courage because of the Lord, not terrified by adversaries. See Joshua 1; 2 Timothy —beginning the work, and when the evil had come in and the last days were in view. The Lord is above the evil, though He does not set it aside till judgment; and faith recognises that He is. Did He set it aside He must judge, and then the time of grace would be over…. The gracious Lord be with you. Love to the brethren.

Yours affectionately in Him.

New York, 1874.

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Dearest Brother,—Though I have with others received accounts from New Zealand and from you, it is now a good while since I have had any direct correspondence, and I write not with any special object, but that you may know I do not forget you all. I know not whether I, shall ever get to New Zealand. Our accounts are happy thence. … I suppose Mr. —— is leaving or has left. His having been so long in the Island makes me feel the call less urgent to go there, and in many respects he would be of more use than myself. I am too much on great general principles, and deal too little with people.

I came here, though I thought I had done with these parts, because the last time I was here I found the doors opening among the Americans. The difficulty is that a diligent effort has been made to disseminate the truths we have been taught so as that people should have them, and not act on them— remain where they are. Eminent ministers preach the Lord's coming, the ruin of the church, liberty of ministry, and avowedly from brethren's books, and stay where they are, and there is a general deadening of conscience. Now people come, are interested, surprised at all the truth they find in scripture, but for the moment with most it ends there. This casts me on the Lord. It was so the last time out west; still the Lord called out some, and new gatherings were formed. It is His work, but the wide spread of brethren's truths alters the character of the work. At present it is sowing time. After all, they spoil the truths where they do not act on them. Assurance of salvation has taken hold on many now. When I began it was, so to say, unknown. Still the Lord works where there is simplicity and devotedness. There is very little fixed principle as to anything here. If the brethren are devoted and unworldly, then there is a testimony, but mere knowledge of truth does not bring out, as when no one had it at all. In spite of what I said above there is progress, more than one soul has found peace since I came here, and some have been added. It is pleasant to see simple souls full of joy, and that by the Spirit, for it is eternal joy, while wise ones are ever learning…

One thing is a comfort, that Christ will cherish and nourish His own: one can count on His fidelity. It is a comfort when all is adverse. No epistle looks for courage like 2 Timothy, when all was in ruin. Paul surely had it to

found, but this was when apostolic energy was gone. Nor is there a time when spiritual nearness to God is more known, where there is faith, than when all is gone wrong. But the great thing is to be near Christ, and to be constantly near Christ, where the soul is kept in peace (is not recovering it for itself), and thus in the sense of love, that then our service may flow from this dwelling with Him, and carry the stamp of it. How did Christ reveal the Father? “The only-begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared Him.” He declared Him, and could declare Him, as in the present sense of the love of which He was the object, which He enjoyed in His bosom. He was perfect, and we are failing servants, but that is the only way of all carrying the unction of His presence.

You will be glad to hear that I received yesterday very good news of the work in Italy. In Switzerland there has been renewed blessing, and the work in Holland and Germany is blessed. So we have a great deal to be thankful for. The Spirit of God is working. The Roman Catholics in France I hear are discussing the Lord’s coming, in consequence of the disasters of the country. It is a comfort to have settled truth. Protestantism is breaking up everywhere, but peace is our portion.

Affectionately yours in the Lord.

New York [1874].

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[From the French.

Beloved Brother,—We must take care not to pretend to know all that concerns the union of humanity and divinity in the Person of the Lord. This union is

inscrutable. “No man knoweth the Son but the Father.” Jesus grew in wisdom. What has made some Christians fall into such grave errors is, that they have wished to distinguish and explain the condition of Christ as man. We know that He was and that He is God; we know that He became man, and the witness to His true divinity is maintained, in that state of- humiliation, by the inscrutability of the union. One may shew that certain views detract from His glory, and from the truth of His Person; but I earnestly desire that brethren should not set to work to dogmatise as to His Person: they would assuredly fall into some error. I never saw any one do it without falling into some unintentional heresy. To shew that an explanation is false, in order to preserve souls from the evil consequences of the error, and to pretend to explain the Person of the Lord, are two different things…

New York, December 10th, 1874.

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[From the French.

Dear Brother,—There is nothing surprising in your experience, in a case in which there is a tendency to fall back upon oneself, and when the conscience is really engaged in it. It does not appear, from what you tell me, that you were much exercised before being brought to believe. In such a case experience has to be passed through after conversion. In my own case, I went through deep exercise of soul before there was a trace of peace, and it was not till after six or seven years that I was delivered.

Now, when there is not at first the experience of what one is, and there is much turning in on oneself, we must

pass through it and if there is carelessness Satan uses it to throw everything into uncertainty, to make us ask if we have not been deceiving ourselves, to give us the idea that we have committed the sin against the Holy Ghost (a very common experience, although the thought even is not found in the word). But it is always in such cases that one has not given up connecting the state of the soul with the question of acceptance. Now, any one who does that is under law, and he who is under law does not believe himself to be already lost. He may accept this as a truth and in relation to his guilt; but that means that we have deserved condemnation, so that we dread condemnation; and it is quite another thing from believing that we are already lost. When we connect our state with the question of acceptance, a better state would get us out of the difficulty. The law always supposes the possibility of a state which would give peace, of a “salvable” state: now such a state does not exist. If we are already lost, it is no longer a question to be resolved. Moreover, this condition may be prolonged, because if one is not in the presence of God, we do not openly and really come to the consciousness of our state; and this must be in order to have solid peace; for no state, either existing or hoped for, is the righteousness of God.

When this work is complete, we give up looking at ourselves in order to solve the question as to whether we are in the favour of God—though not in order to cultivate piety, and to walk in communion. We are accepted in the Beloved, the righteousness of God in Him: He appears in the presence of God for us; we have the consciousness of our relationship;—we cry, Abba, Father, in the same relationship with God as Christ, in

divine favour. We seek to keep close to God, to our Father; we seek not to grieve the Holy Spirit; we seek to please Christ and not to displease Him; but all this according to the relationship and the favour in which we are, as “the elect of God, holy and beloved.” The affections have to do with the relationship, not our judgment as to the relationship with the affections. “Thou shalt love”—that is always law: it is not, “God so loved.” We are made perfect in love by dwelling,in Him; and “we love him”—not, we ought to love Him —“because he first loved us.” Love, for a superior, consists in a deep consciousness of His love which binds the heart to Him, and makes us feel how little (when the ‘ought’ comes in) we love Him as we ought to love Him. We feed on Christ: we judge ourselves as to all that is not pleasing to Him, we desire to be devoted to Him because we owe ourselves to Him. Save this judgment of self, and watchfulness, always necessary, we think of Him and not of ourselves: by judging ourselves, we ward off what is evil; by thinking of Him, we make progress. We have the consciousness that nothing separates us from Him, from the love of God in Him. I draw a conclusion, a just and holy one (Horn, v.), that if I am reconciled by His death I shall be saved by His life. Yea, we joy in God; and if I say too God is for me, nothing shall separate me from His love, fully manifested in Christ—that is where I am. What happiness! This is the joy now which will also be our joy for ever.

Let us exercise all diligence, all watchfulness: let us watch and pray, that we may not be deceived by the enemy; we need this. There is all the more need of it if we have been at a distance from God, in order that we may acquire renewed strength in His love. But when we

have done with ourselves, as having no good in ourselves, we no longer look for it. Only we must get there; then we know that by the cross of Christ, we have done with sin in the flesh, for it has been condemned and judged there as a whole. Then we think of love and of God, instead of thinking of ourselves; we feed on the Bread which came down from heaven, we become attached to Christ, we feel that He is precious, that He is everything to our souls. But, I repeat, we are occupied with what is in Him, not with what is in ourselves. That is far better.

Peace be with you, dear brother; seek His face, and that diligently, but begin with confidence in Him; He is worthy of it. He being what He is, if you were the woman that was a sinner, you might have it.

Your affectionate brother.

1874.

* * * * *

[From the French.

Beloved Brother,—I am glad, at least, that you are encouraged. To judge oneself is often necessary and useful, but if that produces distrust, it is evil; the spirit of legalism is there; the heart of God is judged according to what we find in our own—a sad way, if we desire to know Him. The law says, Love; it is a righteous demand. But the gospel, Christ Himself, says, “God so loved,” from this the new nature, and power to conquer sin, flow. The demand to love does not produce love, and the demand for holiness does not make holy. But also the fact that we have a new nature, does not give liberty—desire for holiness, no doubt, but not strength nor

liberty. Redemption gives us first of all liberty, placing us before God, justified and accepted in the Beloved; the conscience is purified, and we recognise the love that is in God. Then comes up the question of the dominion of sin, and if we are not clear as to redemption, liberty in the soul is lost. This is what remains still to be settled, in part, in your soul.

You speak of having practically done with self, and of holding it for dead. But it is with this latter truth that you must begin, and that as crucified with Christ. “Ye are dead,” says God. (Col. 3) Faith recognises this truth, and the experience which precedes is but the means of bringing us to discover that we do not succeed in delivering ourselves, nor in dying. We must reckon ourselves to be dead. Experience is useful to make us feel the need of a deliverer—our own weakness. When we have made the discovery of it, we come to know that God in sending His Son, has condemned sin in the flesh. There is no acceptance of sin in the flesh. We learn that it has been condemned, but in the cross of Christ, the matter being settled by that sovereign grace; sin which tormented us has been judged: then having been judged in the cross of Christ, we have the right to hold ourselves for dead; the practical carrying out of it comes afterwards. God says, “Ye are dead”— “crucified with Christ.” I accept it, quite convinced that good does not exist in me, and I reckon it of myself that I am dead. Then, after that I bear, more or less faithfully, in my body, the dying of the Lord Jesus; but it is a consequence —an important consequence, for our communion depends on it. But it is also important to look constantly to Jesus, and to the love of the Father, because that encourages the soul. There is positive goodness in Him,

strength also that He exercises on our behalf, but by looking to Him we are enlightened. It is not only that our state is ameliorated, but the grace that is in Him above all that we are, is revealed to the heart, and we know where strength is, and what the grace is on which we can count. If you are tempted, tried, look straight to Him; little by little you will become accustomed to believe in His goodness, though it be necessary to recur to it constantly; but the eye directed to Him makes Him known to the heart. Looking to Him who delivers us from ourselves, is what excludes the thought of self, and sanctifies us much more in a practical way…

Salute the brethren warmly. May God keep our dear Swiss brethren, cause them always to make progress, and detach them ever more and more from this poor world.

1874

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[From the French.

[* * * If a child habitually neglected his father, and did not take the trouble of knowing his mind and will, it is easy to foresee that, when a difficulty presented itself, this child would not be in a position to understand what would please his parent. There are certain things that God leaves in generalities, in order that the state of soul of the individual may be proved. If, instead of the case I have supposed of a child, it were a question of a wife towards her husband, it is probable that, if she had the feelings and mind of a wife, she would not hesitate a moment as to knowing what would be agreeable to him; and this even when he had never expressed his will about the matter. Now you cannot escape this testing:

nor will God allow His children to escape it. “If thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light.”

As to a convenient and comfortable means of knowing the will of God, as one might have a receipt for anything, no such thing exists—of knowing it, I would say, without reference to the state of our own soul. Another thing—we are often of too much importance in our own eyes; and we deceive ourselves in supposing some will of God in such or such a case. God perhaps has nothing to say to us thereon, the evil being altogether in the stir we give ourselves. The will of God is perhaps that we should quietly take an insignificant place. Further, we sometimes seek God’s will, desiring to know how to act in circumstances where His only will is that we should not be found in them at all; and where, if conscience were really in activity, its first effect would be to make us leave them. Our own will places us there, and we should like nevertheless to enjoy the comfort of being guided of God in a path which we ourselves have chosen. This is a very common case.

Be assured that, if we are near enough to God, we shall not be at a loss to know His will. In a long and active life it may happen, that God, in His love, does not always at once reveal His will to us, in order to make us feel our dependence, when there is perhaps in the individual a tendency to act according to his own will. Nevertheless, “if thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light”; whence it is certain that, if the whole body is not full of light, the eye is not single. You will say, That is a poor consolation. I answer, It is rich consolation for those whose sole desire is to have the eye single, and to walk with God—not, so to speak, to avoid this trouble in learning His will objectively, but whose desire is to walk

with God. “If any man walk in the day, he stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of this world. But if a man walk in the night, he stumbleth, because there is no light in him.” It is always the same principle. “He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.” You cannot exempt yourself from the moral law of Christianity. “For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding, that ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing by the knowledge of God.” The mutual connection of these things is of immense importance for the soul: the Lord must be known intimately in order to be able to walk in a way worthy of Him; and it is thus that we grow in the knowledge of God’s will. “And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all intelligence, that ye may approve things that are excellent, in order that ye may be sincere and stumble not till the day of Christ.” Finally, it is written that “the spiritual man discerneth all things, yet he himself is discerned of no one.”

It is then the will of God, and a precious will, that we should only be able to discern His will according to our own spiritual state; and, in general, when we think that we are judging circumstances it is God who is judging us, judging our state: our business is to keep close to Him. God would not be good to us, if He permitted us to discover His will without that. It might be convenient just to have a director of consciences; and we should thus be spared the discovery and the chastisement of our moral condition. Thus, if you are seeking how you

may discover the will of God without that, you are seeking evil; and it is what we see every day. One Christian is in doubt, in perplexity; another, more spiritual, sees as clear as. the day: he is astonished at the uncertainty of the other; he sees no difficulty, and ends by understanding that it lies only in the other's state of soul. "He with whom these things are lacking is blind, and cannot see afar off."

As regards circumstances, I believe that a person may be guided by them; scripture has decided that. It is what it speaks of as being "held in with bit and bridle." "I will instruct thee, and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye"—such is the promise and privilege of him who has faith, is near enough to God to understand by a single glance from Him. God who is faithful, has given the promise to guide him thus. He warns us not to be as the horse and the mule which have no understanding of the will, thoughts, or desires of their master. They must be held in with bit and bridle. Doubtless even that is better than to stumble, fall, and run counter to Him who holds us in; but it is a sad state —and such it is to be guided by circumstances. Undoubtedly, even then, it is merciful on God's part so to act, but very sad on ours.

Here, however, there must be a distinction drawn between judging what one has to do in certain circumstances, and being guided by them. He who allows himself to be guided by them always acts blindly as to the knowledge of the will of God: there is absolutely nothing moral in it; it is an external force that constrains. Now it is very possible that I may have no judgment beforehand as to what I should do: I know not what circumstances may arise and consequently I can

make no resolution. But so soon as the circumstances are there, I judge with a full and divine conviction what is the path of God's will, and of the Spirit's intention and power. This requires spirituality, and abiding in communion with God. It is not to be guided by the circumstances, but to be guided by God in them, being near enough to God to be able to judge immediately what one ought to do, as soon as the circumstances are there.

As to impressions, God can suggest them, and it is certain that He does in fact suggest a thing to the mind; but, in that case, the propriety of the thing and its moral character will be clear as the sun at noon-day. In prayer God can remove from our heart certain carnal influences, which, being annulled, permit of certain other spiritual influences taking all their place in the soul; or He makes us feel the importance of some duty, which had been perhaps entirely thrown into the shade through pre-occupation caused by some desired object. This may be even between two individuals. One person may not have enough spiritual discernment to discover what is right; but the moment another shews it to him, he understands that it is the truth.

All are not engineers, but a simple waggoner knows a good road when once it is made. Thus impressions which come from God do not always remain simple impressions. But they are ordinarily clear when God produces them. I do not doubt, however, that He often makes them on our minds, when we walk with Him and listen to His voice.

When you speak of obstacles raised up by Satan, it is not said that God Himself may not have permitted these

obstacles to the accomplishment of some good desire—obstacles caused by an accumulation of evil in the circumstances which surround us.

Your third question supposes that a person acts without having the knowledge of the will of God, a case that should never exist at all. The only rule that can be given is, never to act when we do not know what is the Lord's will. The will of God ought to be the motive as well as the rule of our conduct; and until His will is in activity, there is an absence of any true motor for ours. If you act in ignorance in this respect, you are at the mercy of circumstances, God making all turn, nevertheless, to the good of His children: for this is ever the case supposed by your question. But why act when we are ignorant what His will is? Is the necessity of acting always so extremely pressing? If I do something with the full certainty that I am doing the will of God, then it is clear that an obstacle is no more than a test of my faith, and it ought not to stop me. It stops us perhaps through our lack of faith; because, if we do not walk sufficiently near to God in the sense of our nothingness, we shall always lack faith to accomplish what we have faith enough to discern. When we are doing our own will, or are negligent in our walk, God in His mercy may warn us by an obstacle which arrests us if we give heed to it, whilst "the simple pass on and are punished." God may permit, where there is much activity and labour, that Satan should raise up obstacles, in order that we may be kept in dependence on the Lord; but God never allows Satan to act otherwise than on the flesh. If we leave the door open, if we get away from God, Satan does us harm; but otherwise his efforts are only a test for faith, to warn us of some danger or snare, or of something that would

tend to exalt us in our own eyes. It is an instrument for our correction. That is, God allows Satan to trouble the mind, and make the flesh suffer outwardly, in order that the inner roan may be kept from evil. If it is a question of anything else, probably it is only our ‘buts’ and ‘ifs’ that stop us, or possibly the effects of our carelessness which has opened a door to Satan to trouble us by doubts, and apparent difficulties between God and us, because we do not see more clearly. For “he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not.” In a word, the question is wholly moral. If any particular question is raised which at first view we cannot decide, we shall find that often there would be no such question there at all, if our position were not false —if we had previously been in a good state of soul, and a true spirituality had kept and preserved us. Then all we have to do is to humble ourselves for the whole affair.

Now let us examine whether scripture does not present some principle suitable to direct us; and here it is evident spirituality is the essential thing—is everything. The rule that is given you is excellent, where and when it can be applied; that is, to do what Jesus would have done in such or such a circumstance. But are we often in the circumstances wherein the Lord would have been found?

In the next place, it is often useful to ask myself whence comes such a desire of mine, or such a thought of doing this or that. I have found that this alone decides more than half the difficulties that Christians may meet with. Two-thirds of those which remain are the result of our haste, and of our former sins. If a thought comes from God and not from the nesh, then we have only to

address ourselves to God as to the manner and means of executing it, and we shall soon be directed. There are cases where one has need of being guided, not always without motives; as suppose, when I hesitate about a visit to make, or some such other case. A life of more fervent love, or love exercised in a more intelligent way, or set in activity in drawing near to God, will make clear the motives on one side or the other; and often, perhaps, we shall see that our part in the thing was only selfishness. Do you say, But if it is no question either of love or of obedience? then I answer, that you ought to shew me a reason for acting. For if it is nothing but your own will, you cannot make the wisdom of God bend to your will. Therein also is the source of another numerous class of difficulties that God will never solve. In these cases, He will in His grace teach obedience, and will shew us how much time we have lost in our own activity. Finally, “the meek will he guide in judgment, and the meek will he teach his way.”

I have communicated to you on this subject all that my mind can furnish you with at this moment. For the rest. remember only that the wisdom of God conducts us in the way of God’s will: if our own will is in activity, God cannot bend to that. That is the essential thing to discover. It is the secret of the life of Christ. I know no other principle that God can make use of, however He may pardon and cause all to turn to our good. But you inquire of me still as to His direction. He directs the new man, which has no other will than Christ. He mortifies and puts to death the old man, and in that way purifies us that we may bear fruit. “Lo, I come to do thy will, O God.”… “I delight” to do it. It is the place of a porter to wait at the gate; but, in doing so, he does the will of his

master. Be assured that God does more in us than we for Him; and what we do is only for Him just in so far as it is He Himself who works it in us.

I add with regard to a principle expressed above, that we are sanctified to the “obedience … of Jesus Christ.” Now He came to do the will of His Father, without which He did nothing. Thus, in the temptation in the wilderness, Satan tried to make Him act according to His own will, in things where there was not even an appearance of evil. The Father had just owned Him as His Son; Satan tempted Him, saying, “If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread.” But Jesus was a servant, and His answer consists in doing nothing, because there was wholly no will of His Father in the matter: “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.” As there was no word from God for the actual circumstances, Jesus did nothing. Satan could do nothing more. Although ever active to do good, He did not stir, when Mary and Martha sent to tell Him “he whom thou lovest is sick.” His Father had not sent Him there. When He goes later, the wisdom of God is thus manifested, in that a testimony to the divine power of Jesus as Son of God was rendered by the resurrection of Lazarus. So then, when the will of God is not manifested, our wisdom often consists in waiting until it should be. It is the will of God that, zealous of good works, we should do good always, but we cannot go before the time, and the work of God is done perfectly when it is He who does it.]

1856.

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* * * As a general truth30 we may surely look for guidance, and to “be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding.” What I said as to this was, not that God should not direct us, but that, as the general principle, it was not independent of spiritual understanding; that if I were directed right, even in every act as a Roman Catholic, by their confessor, called their director, I should lose by it—it would save me being in a spiritual state myself—though, surely, a more spiritual person might help me because he was so; that God did not mean our perception of His will to be independent of our spiritual state, though He can, of course, lead any, at any given time. Psalm 32 speaks of this also. If our eye be single, our whole body shall be full of light. But this is always true; He makes everything work together for good to them that love Him. He overrules as well as rules.

I will suppose for a moment you were not led of Him in going to England—which I do not the least say, as I know nothing of it or your motives, but suppose the case: He makes you know what the world’s giving you up is; He overrules it. Supposing you had had a tide of blessing, you would not have felt this in the same way, you would have tided it over the shoals at flood. I remember saying to dear Captain W., that our giving up the world and the world giving us up, were two very different things. It is the latter tries all the elements of self-importance, which lie much deeper rooted than we are aware. There may be some little sacrifice in giving it up, but we have a sufficient motive, but what motive for being despised? it is really our glory, for Christ was, but then He must be all, and that is saying a good deal. We are poor feeble creatures without a stable centre—what would be so,

has to be broken, and Christ take its place; I do not speak of failure, but what we go through. He was the despised and rejected of men. Nor does He seek insensibility to it, but superiority over it, by His being all; and that is blessed, that only lasts. It is the production in us of what is eternal joy, and capacity for it.

And, now to your special inquiry,31 more in detail. There are many points to consider. First, I believe this casting on, dependent, seeking His will spiritually, to be a privilege, though connected with the ruined state of the church. He cannot cease to guide us, or where should we be? But He may not, and does not, manifest His action with a fallen as with a fresh and nascent church. He never does so. “We see not our signs; there is no more any prophet; neither is there among us any that knoweth how long.” Yet Haggai says, “My Spirit remaineth among you,” as when they came out of Egypt. I believe faithfulness, in such a time, special privilege. “Hast not denied my name” does not say much, but when this happens all around, it is a great deal, and great grace to be kept. You cannot be expected —“according to the prophecies which went before on thee, that by them, thou mightest war a good warfare.” You came out with a true heart to One who loved you, and seek souls for Him—All right, and great grace given to us; but there was no “separate me Barnabas and Paul,” which, though present grace must after all sustain, still was a source of strength—“by them.” I do not believe it is any loss, but it is different; and he that has the secret of Christ, while he will not limit His power, yet will know the difference and enter into it. “Thou hast a little strength”; and these were pillars

when God built His temple. We find they were forbidden to go into Bithynia, sought to go into Mysia, the Spirit suffered them not; they were forbidden to preach the word in Asia, and then by a vision in a dream were led into Macedonia. Now I would not the least deny that God can by His Holy Spirit suggest to us a special place of service. I do not doubt He may; but it is not an open manifestation as that which we here read of.

I repeat, I believe it is a privilege to be thus cast on the Lord's heart, if we only trust it; but it is a different thing, if we are cast on it, that there is imperfection in us, which affects this question: even an apostle had. to learn this. A great door was opened at Troas, "but I had no rest in my spirit, because I found not Titus my brother," he leaves it. "In Macedonia my flesh had no rest; without were fightings, within were fears." He was sorry even he had written an inspired epistle which really wrought as such with power in producing its effect, as in blessing to this day; but here there was trust. It is quite the contrary to the English translation, "causeth us to triumph" (2 Cor. 2:14); the word means, "leads us in triumph"—and the savour of Christ for life or for death, spread by him whether at Troas or Macedonia. He trusted in Him who led him where He pleased, and that by his anxieties, as by His Spirit. He could not say he was right to leave Troas, and all was distress in Macedonia; it was love to the Corinthians; and God comforts them that are cast down: that is His way. And this is the picture I got of this great and noble heart, sent, as he was, openly by the Lord Himself and the Holy Ghost. He was a man, and must learn it, and that the power was of God; and so must dear —— perhaps as cast down, but any way as led about in triumph, for it is

as true of you. God is as faithful as to you, as He was as to Paul.

But there is another point, we are such little ignorant things that though we may have the spirit “of power and love and a sound mind,” not of bondage and fear, still, as I said, things have to be overruled as well as ourselves guided. In the case you suppose32 you do not find the man at home. This may have been just the right thing, that you should have shewn the purpose and desire, and yet not have seen him, nor he received the visit. It was not the ripe moment for that; it was for seeking him. I admit, were we perfect this would not be so. Again, He might have sent you on that road on purpose to meet the person on the way, and another day as good or better for the visit; perhaps he was not at home. I grant this shews imperfection, but not that there is no guidance. We should like to go always with a full, favourable wind, but this does not make a good sailor. It does tell us of weakness and imperfection, but that is something to learn, and dependence too. We cannot make a visit right without His hand.

But now take an example of where power was. Paul, apostle as he was, cannot succeed in persuading the church at Antioch to leave the Gentiles free. Where was his apostolic power? What a defeat! what a failure! He must go to Jerusalem. Now suppose he had succeeded: humanly speaking, two churches were started—one at Antioch, free; the other at Jerusalem, Jewish and circumcising Gentiles; but Jerusalem is forced by God to pronounce the Gentile free, and all goes right for the time. No doubt it was connected with imperfection and wretched ignorance of heart and prejudice; but it was divine grace and wisdom, God working in this

imperfection and prejudice and overruling it, and Paul must take his place under this, like others.

We are not aware what poor creatures we are, and the wonderful grace which watches over, deals with, and uses such; and we have the treasure in an earthen vessel, “that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of us.” (2 Cor. 4:7.) Thus the service we have to perform, becomes also a process in ourselves, by which we have to learn ourselves, and that all is of God, and our dependence on Him. This does not hinder our seeking to grow up into increased spiritual understanding, so as to be filled with the knowledge of His will; nor does it hinder the truth that the Spirit may guide us in details as to what we should do, and where we should go. Only, while God is sovereign to do so in grace when He pleases, it does not separate this, as a general thing, from our spiritual state and singleness of eye, nor from a process in which we learn our own hearts and are weaned from self and the spirit of the world, and learn more complete dependence on God, and His gracious, tender faithfulness; only, that after all we are men and feeble creatures, and He Sovereign, and the One who is to teach us. But surely, beloved brother, we may ever look to be guided by His eye, led by His Spirit suggesting the right thing to do, and place to go to—only that our state has a great deal to do with our ascertaining it. “He that is spiritual discerneth all things.” And God is full of grace: Paul, if he could not succeed at Antioch, had a revelation to go to Jerusalem.

I know not that at this moment I have more to say to you, only that Paul (Acts 20:22) was not, I believe, bound, “in the Spirit,” but in spirit, his own. It was the overruling hand of God upon him, not the actual

guidance of the Spirit of God. God so ordered it for His own divine purposes. Morally, Paul was not going for testimony, but with collections for the saints.

[1875.]

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* * * As a rule, reward is in the Kingdom, ten cities, etc.: in Matthew 25, ten and four talents being alike into the joy of the Lord. Fitness for heaven is not connected with progress in scripture: “He hath made us meet.” It is natural to suppose greater spirituality is more capable of enjoying; but the object is so great after all, it eclipses us, and we must remember Christ is our life, and there, all else gone. Scripture, as far as I know, never speaks of spiritual capacity, or growth in it, to enjoy more. Here surely there is such a thing. When God is all in all, there is no such thing spoken of. God may have in His eternal purpose fitted us for more or less. But, as scripture does not speak of it, I do not. Reward in the kingdom is clearly spoken of.

[1875.]

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* * * It is not the first time that our beloved brother has been exercised on this subject. I once exchanged a letter with him on the subject. But where it is a process going on in the soul it is impossible, as far at least as I can say, to give counsel as to it; but many collateral questions come in. I should be greatly grieved if brethren ceased to be an evangelising set of Christians. Indeed, they would fade in their own spiritual standing, and get probably sectarian, not in theory but in practice, because the enlarging principle of love would not be

there. Thank God, it is not as yet so. But grace alone can maintain the testimony. I confess I feel a sort of envy of those whom God has called to evangelise. My want of courage keeps me humble, but it would be better to be humble without it: but our part is to be where God calls us, and I trust I am ready to feed, if it be given me, the weakest of the flock, and count it a privilege. To souls getting peace and liberty, God has blessed me, but comparatively little in awakening, though He has where I have served in this way. I have said there are collateral questions. God is not always awakening souls in a marked way. It is done in a place, and ceases, though souls may be converted afterwards. An awakening may again occur through other means, another layer being reached, and by those morally nearer their state. The evangelist may have to go on elsewhere. I have known it cease and go into a neighbouring village…

At the beginning brethren were engaged, and pretty much alone, in the roughest evangelising — fairs, markets, races, regattas, and everywhere in the open air. Gatherings grew up, and the care of them became needful, though evangelising went on, and was blessed, and in a measure is in many places. Others since have occupied the field who are really their followers under God. If even contention mix itself with this—if Christ be preached we ought to rejoice. But the care of the scattered gatherings is most precious work, not altogether neglected, but the labourers are few. There is no reason why —— should not exercise this local care for a time, and there is large room for it. If God still calls him to evangelise, he will find the craving after souls forcing him out to do that work. At all times in a general way we have to do it, as Paul says to Timothy. Often

those nearer the state of the unconverted are more apt for it. This may be imperfection, but so it is, and if then they go on holding to that, they grow little, and meet little the spiritual wants of these last days.

As to dear——, I should say let him, while in the kind of retreat he is in, while evangelising ever, where he can, look after these small gatherings, a thing I have greatly at heart, and visit them elsewhere; and, I repeat, if filled somewhat with their company, he will feel urged out, if God so call him, to seek souls among those without, both in nearer and more untouched places, or in large towns where there are always masses unreached. Mere evangelising does not cause to grow, though God may allow and bless it. Thank Him that He does, but see what was taught the Thessalonians at starting. But evangelising in Christendom is different from doing it in heathenism. A full salvation does give a basis for growth, but in Christendom it is necessarily separative, and hence the need of wisdom in that work, but sorry indeed should I be if it was given up. I see joy and gladness in conversions, even in heaven: it is the making a fuss about them and writing up the people I dread. But God bears with many things. Still the feebleness of work is felt afterwards. Hitherto we have got on happily here, and there is some life and progress. If younger I should look to a longer sojourn if spared; as it is, I am the Lord’s servant, desiring only His will, and when my work finishes there is its end, and He will gather His own people, in which I shall rejoice in that day. The Lord be with you and keep you near Himself, humble and serving, but having more of Him than you spend in service. I am very thankful for the blessing He gives you. We are His, and may we so walk.

Your affectionate brother in Him.

There is another point, in passing from the love of God in mercy to sinners filling the soul, and the love of God to the saints as such when we have become interested in them through the other. It requires both distinct gift and being very near Christ in consecration of heart to carry on both.

New York, February, 1875.

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To the same.]

As to “the Christ,” there is no ground whatever for making the Christ the church. Nine-tenths of the cases where we have Christ in English, it is the Christ in Greek. Christ was not properly a name, but a title, meaning (the same as Messiah in Hebrew), in English ‘anointed’: “Jesus is the Christ”; but it very soon became a name, but the personal name is Jesus. The only place out of, I suppose, hundreds, where the Christ is used for the principle of union among saints, is 1 Corinthians 12 — tantamount to ‘so it is in the case of the Christ.’ It never means properly the body, but is used for a name which brings us into relationship with Him, because the anointed One is the Head of all the anointed ones. (See John 1:33.) Hence the change in Romans 8:11, where Jesus is used as the personal name, and Christ not at all as the body, but as the Head of those who will be raised, because of Him.

Your other question is more difficult to answer, as the objection is more subtle. The special object of John’s charges was those who denied the real humanity of Christ, which was done in those days. But the apostle

enlarges the thought in speaking more generally of the doctrine of the Christ (2 John 9); the christian doctrine of the Messiah. Still the subject here is the person of Christ, more especially as characterising the Antichrist. (Compare 1 John 4:2, 3.) Only in neither is it “that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh,” but confess “Jesus Christ come in the flesh.” But this is not all the instruction of scripture on the subject. Supposing a person denied the Holy Ghost for instance: and damnable heresies are brought in privily, and we have to see whether the doctrine of the Christ is involved in them, and this is often the case. But in 2 Timothy 2, those who were overthrowing the faith of some, only said that the resurrection was past already, and the apostle calls on the faithful to purge themselves from them. (2 Tim. 2:17-21.) It is no charity to set people at ease who are teaching or receiving what “eats as a canker.” I make a difference. With a teacher I could have nothing to do. It is the duty of positive testimony against him, “knowing such are perverted,” if his doctrine touches “the faith of God’s elect.” With those misled I can make a difference; those deliberately in it I should avoid, they support the evil and sustain it; some are merely misled, and while I had hope of recovering them, I might not wholly repulse them, but evil communications corrupt good manners; it is danger to one’s own soul to have to say to what the devil teaches, unless called upon by God to meet it. I should not dare to do so. And even with those misled, it is no kindness to go on as if nothing was the matter, when they are really led of the enemy. I do not want to set them at their ease there. As to the word “God speed,” it is associating oneself with their work. He is speaking of those “deceivers” who were “gone out into the world,” and going about with this false doctrine; and

wishing him well on his journey, was associating oneself with them in it. Such I would not receive into my house. I trust I have made plain to you what I desired to say from the word. It is one of the great evils of the day to the truth. “Whom I love,” says the apostle, “in the truth” and for the truth’s sake. None urge this point more than John, whom men count as the apostle of love.

Your affectionate brother in Christ.

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Dear Brother,—We must look Moody’s work, and Pearsall Smith’s, in the face. It is one of the phases of the kingdom of God, like the revival in Ireland and Scotland some years back: the brethren went on all the same—some took part in it—nor did the work in result hinder or affect their testimony. A popular testimony such as theirs never could be deep or extend its influence (save in its general effects) in Christians many years, and in this respect it does good. One rouses Christians from their slumber, and in respect of the poor dying world; and the other, as regards the state Christians are in. In this, I doubt not, God’s hand is in it. But M.’s work, to say nothing of false doctrine in details, avowedly mixes up Christianity with the world and worldly influences, and uses them because it tells in favour of his work, and fosters worldliness and the evils of Christendom. And P. S.’s, while it recognises the deliverance of Christians from the bondage of Romans 7 to the liberty of Romans 8, which Christians greatly need (and in this respect will be useful), mixes it up with the lowest doctrines, man’s power and ability. Both do this, though I hear M. has got on. And it does not even possess the true ground of abiding peace with God.

There is much evil teaching mixed with both; and man's power for good being their basis, all is based on experience, not really on Christ's work—and, I think, poor experience where searched out, though beyond the state of Christendom, but tending to fix them at this low point. But if the brethren are devoted and unworldly, so that there is a practical testimony, their testimony remains where it was. They have to bring in these fuller elements of truth, and truer ground of peace. And if they are possessed really in faith, the rousing of heart and conscience will open them to them. If they have nothing better, it is no matter their being dropped in God's hand. They have; but they must possess it really, and have heart to use it for the saints of God.

P. S.'s is largely modified, and brought more to its full bearing, its real character, since even my little tract; and its true ground and meaning made clear. Its trusting to human power I have barely touched. I have not attacked it—save in one point, Christ's personal holiness, where it is on very sad and dangerous ground—but brought out the truth, in which it is wholly defective. M., I am told, has made progress; but when I knew him he denied openly all grace in conversion, denounced it publicly when fully discussed and held, and preached at Edinburgh that none were condemned for their sins, only for not believing—a pretty common notion now, and which is a salve to the conscience. The brethren have the truth of the word largely where these have not. Some have gone on to make Christ peccable. If they are faithful practically, they will, with their little strength, have an open door. All depends, I believe, on their being in the practical power of the Spirit of God. "To him that

hath shall more be given." It is He that is holy, as well as true, that makes the promises for this time.

I am not uneasy or afraid, only if brethren are to have the testimony of God with them, they must have it, and be it, in themselves. The salt must have its savour, or what is it good for? What would be permanent in both these systems, when the impulse and energy of them is lost, would I think, tend to infidelity and evil doctrine. It is not the energy and impulse that is to be resisted, though excitement may accompany it, but this evil which is to be met by grace and energy in the truth itself. The mere excitement will soon be over, a matter to be talked of as past. But brethren have something that is permanent, and the word of God abides for ever. Only they must live it.

Yours affectionately in the Lord.

February 15th, 1875.

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Dearest——,— … I am most thankful you had conversation on holiness and devotedness. It is for me the great point now; everything evidently breaking up, efficient testimony lies there: people look for something real. Things are hastening to this point. … I am going (D.V.) to Boston to-morrow, pushing on to Concord for a visit, but it is evident the Lord is drawing attention to the truth and the way opening up. I do not know how to give time enough to New York with calls from other, places. I think even that the power of heretical evil has sunk, through the testimony, however small, to the truth; we have more inquiry, and evil doctrine seems less rampant. The brethren have acquired the character of knowing scripture better than any one, and this I may

say everywhere, so that in this respect they are sought. If they are humble and devoted, this may lead to blessing. I am not in a hurry, yet I long to see Christ's work go on, and a people waiting for Him. The usual difficulties of faithful walk are there, still souls are added, and they are walking happily. The feeling that things are all in confusion is widespread, and it is known we are outside the worldly profession which is current.

I find the brethren the subject of discussion everywhere — attacks of course, but then they are defended by others, and this not only in books, meetings, but in worldly journals. If only the brethren are godly and devoted—this I earnestly pray for. … A notion of perfectionism accompanied by a wild looking for the Spirit, is one thing one has to contend with—merely deliverance really, with a taint of Wesleyan perfectionism, but a good deal of pretension, and some good. There can be no doubt that a testimony is so far raised up; if we look at what is visible, it is a cloud as a man's hand; and if there is faithful devotedness others will reap. That is my great desire now. We have more to do now with inquirers than with heretics. Yesterday I had the two principal Wesleyan ministers and their chief members, and some others, all the afternoon on deliverance from sin, full acceptance, the Lord's coming. It was on the whole a satisfactory meetmg, one of the ministers was deeply interested in the truth, and said he should return, also the chief Baptist minister. Truth spreads, that is clear, but acting it out is another thing… I am kept busy enough, but I go on I trust in patience, and the truth goes on. What fruit there may be here I know not. As yet it is in the way of propagating truth… I have been knocked up in a way to make me remember I

was old, but it was just overwork and the Lord's gracious hand, and I am better. We have a pretty steady winter, and a good deal of snow, but fine and seasonable.

Affectionately yours in the Lord.

Finished from Boston, February, 1875.

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[From the French.

* * * Most Christians need to be enlightened as to salvation and their position in Christ. They confound their standing and their state. There are very few among them who understand the first verses of Hebrews 10. For my own part, I teach, but I am always learning.

If the brethren are devoted and holy in their walk, their testimony will always be acknowledged by God; if not, they will not do much. The Lord, who speaks to us now, is "He that is holy, he that is true"; there must be these two things, as well as the grace and the patience to commend them. There must be truth, and the Lord communicates it to us, but there must be holiness, otherwise the truth itself will fall into disrepute. It is the important thing for the brethren, and then devotedness.

New York, February 21th, 1875.

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[From the French.

* * * The Saviour is indeed coming, and in that day all that has not been of Him will be vanity and nothingness; and even now it is nothing more, but faith alone perceives this. May God give you, dear brother, to live close to Him! I reject wholly the theories of Mr. R. P. S., and his false perfection; yet there is a power which

keeps us close to God, so that sin does not enter, the wicked one does not touch us, the flesh is not brought into activity. The soul is then occupied with the Lord, and with what concerns Him. It is not only kept from what is corrupt in its thoughts, but from irritation and passion, from that which is not lust, but the fruit of unmortined flesh. Observe the distinction between these things in Colossians 3:5-8. Humility accompanies this condition, but we need diligence, and the word “watch.” “Watch unto prayer,” as well as “in prayer.” When one allows oneself to go after folly, after those things which belong to the old creation, the soul has no longer the divine strength which is needed to walk with Him without distraction; but, on the other hand, to walk thus is liberty and peace: it is a good atmosphere. (Phil. 4:8.)

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* * * And now dear ——, what are we doing, living near God, waiting for His Son from heaven. What else have we to do? What else would we have done when the end comes, when we see His face? We have to work with a force sometimes secret to us, follow His word, have His motives, depend on His strength, but wait for the result (though possibly partially manifested now, cheering and rejoicing us) when Jesus shall come; and then the work will be pure and its motive pure— not fall back on us as now, that is, self be mixed with it. The brethren rejoiced when they heard of the conversion of the Gentiles, and the apostle related to the church what God had wrought. (Acts 14:27.) But for Paul’s own soul it was at Christ’s coming that he saw the fruit of his labours. And that is when we shall rejoice in them, the labourer’s crown no doubt, but Christ’s glory eternally, and their own blessedness: it is identified with divine love and His

glory. In this our path is a path of faith, and this carries through the dark and difficult passes of ministry with a single eye, and makes Christ everything. We are satisfied with “I know thy works.” But we have to be manifested to God, to walk as if we were before the judgment-seat as to ourselves, and in love to others, seeking what they need from Christ, not thinking of party or sect. An exercised soul is a great thing; “herein do I exercise myself” day and night—yet well imbued with love. There I feel myself weak. Care for the saints I do, but divine love I find too feeble in my soul. I have no object but Christ, but that is another thing. See what ministry flows from. (Eph. 4) Christ has overcome Satan, and having received the promise of the Father for us as man, has made those delivered the vessels of His power and gifts for the warfare that has to be carried on. He has gone down into the lower parts of the earth, and thence far above all heavens, filling all things in the power of redemption, and so gives apostles, prophets, and the rest, for the perfecting of the saints, making them to grow up to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ. “Who, we may well say, is sufficient for these things? But I must close. May grace be with you, and peace, and strengthen your hands, keeping you close to Him. Kindest love to the brethren… May the Lord keep all His saints, and hasten His coming.

Yours affectionately in Him.

Boston, February, 1875.

My dear Brother,—You will think me lost, and that I have forgotten the West, but it is not so, so I write a line to give sign of it. I have been a couple of months at New York, and there has been blessing, whether through

others or myself. I was knocked up the last few days. The brethren are getting on happily. At my age I should like it to go faster, and see the fruit, but it is the Lord's work, not mine. Here at Boston ministers and all sorts come, and the great truths of Christianity have been fully out in daily readings. The effect the Lord knows. Perfectionism has been useful in rousing Christians to the sense that there should be something better; but it is accompanied with error, and some points which have deadly mischief in them, but by weighing it all calmly it finds its level. It has been accompanied with wild exaggerations, and pretensions which its leaders disown, but which are the firuit of their principles. The truth of it is merely getting out of Romans 7 into Romans 8, but grace is little owned in it, and man made a great deal of… I often say, were I younger I should look for protracted work, if the Lord spared me in this country, but in one's seventy-fifth year one must leave it in the Lord's hands, as it always really is… Have you heard that the Japanese Christians have left the missionaries as being sects, and. meet together? … The missionaries, however, are seeking to form their own churches. Poor Christendom! What a sovereign mercy to be out of the camp!…

Your affectionate brother in Christ.

Boston, February, 1875.

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Dearest Brother,—As regards Colossians 1, it is long a settled thought with me that there are here two ministries. You may see two headships, two reconciliations, and two ministries; ministry in the whole creation under heaven, and ministry of the church to

complete the word of God. The revelation of the mystery had been reserved till now. S. is very anxious that these ministries should not be separated, that is, the church and the gospel of salvation. They sometimes are partially, outside brethren: revivalist preaching characterises the separation. One visit I made to Canada for six weeks only was to connect the two, and they have gone pretty well since. It is a question which occupies people often. —— is greatly exercised by it, but now passing from the first into the second: ——partially from the second to the first. Few can so adapt themselves to all as to be each in its place; but where Christ is fully known, and His claims, it gives a tone to the first which leads on to the second: where it is only man's salvation this is not the case. God may allow this to carry out and hurry on the last testimony. Blessed be His name! He is above all our weaknesses. I am not sure but that there was more union of the two at the first of the work of brethren. So many evangelists have come out since on all sides without church truth that the two have been more separated. It is one of the serious practical points of the present day; but, I repeat, God is above all this, and will accomplish His work.

Of the work here I know not what to tell you: inquiry, a good deal; several found peace; a little conscience, but an unheaved or rather unmoved mass, for it is heaving within itself, and all whose souls stir dissatisfied. I have at the least a dozen ministers, one or two several times, but, with rare exceptions, they are the farthest from spiritual wants and spiritual intelligence of any. It is especially a sowing time. I do not know that I have much ground for staying here very long: I wait to see the cloud move, probably passing by Philadelphia to see them.

Thence I suppose west, by what route I know not. The Lord be with you, and keep you all in peace.

Affectionately yours in the Lord.

Boston [1875].

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Dear Brother,—I trust dear ——'s little one has found through mercy strength again, but at any rate, it is all well. It is the world, for many mercies and traces of the hand that made it, and a mother's love among the rest, but not to forget where we are. You will be glad to hear something of this. I hear that there is more interest in New York since I left it than when I was there. I suppose this includes Brooklyn. S. F., where all was in confusion, seems to be righting itself, but he who is timid with evil has had a hard time of it: it was partly the superficiality of revivalism, partly the terrible character of the place which ever tends to infect the church. But there is a lack of active labourers, and we must recollect that it is a country half as big as Europe. Moody and Sankey have given an impulsion to revival work everywhere, and I doubt not God's hand is in it. I cannot but trust there are real conversions, but it is a very shallow work, and encourages shallowness and worldly Christianity. Besides, all things work together for good to those that love God. Conversions apart, it strengthens evil in the church, and the evil that is so sad now. I trust it may stir up brethren to more devotedness. The effect, save the conversions, is not a thing to last, save general effects. It leaves people professedly where they were, and all church work has to go on just as it did before when the excitement is over. We have more to do with perfectionism hereabouts. But R. P. S. owns in his last

book, it is only passing from Romans 7 to 6:13. But I have not attacked it. This confession was the consequence of my shewing this was the real point. The movement has been useful to rouse Christians to the sense that something better was wanting than current Christianity, which is as low here as low can be, a grief to all godly people. And one has, as to R. P. S., to realise what got hold of me at first, to separate the precious and the vile. I have another tract on this movement under press; and have just published one, quite simple, on the immediate happiness of the saints at death, at the request indeed of the Secretary of the Y.M.C.A. in New York. Brethren could not do R. P. S.'s work. He must be popular to do it, and that I trust brethren never will be. But they may, if faithful and devoted, lead it into a scriptural channel, besides ever evangelising…

I am quite well through mercy, mais je commence à me fain vieux.

Affectionately yours in the Lord.

Boston, February 20th, 1875.

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My dear Brother,—Thank you very much for sending me the account of your dear mother, whose simple-hearted and faithful walk has now ended so brightly. At her age it is but a natural and happy entering into rest, into what is far better. Abundant thanksgivings for your brother's conversion… We must be more than content, if the Lord says "He hath done what he could." We, at least I, cannot say it, though I seek to serve Him. It is a comfort that He says to Philadelphia, "I know thy works"—without saying more—and, "thou hast a little strength," so as we are kept faithful, not denying His name, and

keeping the word of His patience. How very gracious of the Lord to let your mother know that your brother was converted! It changes nothing, it is true, but we should notice these ways of the Lord; He is gracious on the way as He is at the end, and it is always Himself. I think it is striking, the Lord letting Moody's and Pearsall Smith's work run over the world as it does. In Switzerland they are full of the latter, at least in Basle. I do not fear it: it is wakening up, as all these revivals work. God graciously allows the work to go on, that there may be this, and people called out; but it has a popularity most useful to it as service (but which it would soon lose—perhaps would never have—if they were faithful), which I certainly do not covet. The Establishment missions wrought of old somewhat similarly, and I doubt not there were many conversions, and rejoice with all my heart in it; but all beyond is worldly, and lowers the standard of Christianity. If the brethren keep it up their testimony will have its full place, besides the preaching of the gospel of the grace of God; and may it be with renewed energy! Church and remnant work, and the Christian's place, of which they know nothing, remains where it was. A full plain gospel I have to work through with all of them—the perfectionists, as Moody's people. They teach what ignores and denies it; but then we have only to add this, and make it plain, not oppose. For this I have a full opening, both at New York and here. In general we have cause for thankfulness here, but I should, as man, like to see things go faster, but you have to bring in a full gospel everywhere. No one has an idea of what God's children get as their teaching. But I must close.

Boston, February 23rd, 1875.

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Dear——,—I told——if the assemblies were not separated which lay outside, it would take place of itself, and in a more disagreeable way. I have not doubted it, but he would not listen to it, and talked of less communion, which has nothing to do with it. I should certainly leave … all not actually within London to their own responsibility…. The thing is a blunder in its present state. Croydon and Plumstead are not London—the unity of the assembly fictitious. It was all very well when they were young assemblies, and glad to get help from elder brethren, but this is no longer the case, and their own responsibility would be more in exercise. Nor would communion be the least hindered. Already they bring a note from some places. But within London the unity of the assembly ought to be preserved, or we are Congregationalists, which I assuredly am not the least disposed to be. May the gracious Lord guide you, and keep you all in peace as to it. The putting (off) such as those I have mentioned, would have been a more practical and evident step—the retaining them raise a question of principle or resistance to existing means of blessing.

The door has opened at Boston, so that if it goes on I could hardly leave it for a while; chiefly of converted persons coming to a knowledge of salvation, and grace and the Lord's coming. All is stirred up, and it is known that we look for a knowledge of our place in Christ, which is, I may say, nowhere possessed. The effect upon old Christians is curious to see; one loose brother got clear also. In New York we had a good many conversions; here it is converted persons finding salvation, but two or three are looking out for a room, hoping to try and work in the gospel…

The perfectionists say I want people to be more perfect than they do. I said, Certainly I do. Their system denies (not wilfully) the true christian position, and thus lowers holy exercise. Its greatest evil is in connection with the Lord's temptation, and lust not being sin. I wrote to Dr. W. as to the Moody question. We have only to leave it. God may arouse by it and convert souls, as He awakens Christians by P. S., who now says this better life is only going from Romans 7 to 6 and 8, which is just the truth, with a good deal of error into the bargain. What is needed is to carry the truth on to clearer ground without the error. As to stir, there is no mistake, God is working evidently, doubtless for the last days, for things are hastening on; we have only to hold steadily our path with increased devotedness. The truth comes clearer and stronger to me than ever I knew it.… There are many such cases as W. speaks of. We have only to act on the steady principle of receiving all saints apart from evil they know of, or what is personally false to Christ.

I think had we a good labourer there might be something of an open door at——, but we must leave the work in the hands of Him whose it is: one feels it daily more.… Revivals are on every side, but by thundering legal preaching, which I do not regret.

Yours, dear——, affectionately in the Lord.

Boston, March, 1875.

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Dear——,—I do not alter my judgment as to the Saturday meeting. Tuesday monthly, partially supplies conference, though only on general subjects, not inter-communication of receiving or exclusion. But if these meetings, you call county meetings, do not come, why

are they kept on the list? A certain obstinacy, under the idea that it ministered to communion, made the thing fictitious. At South Croydon, they only read what concerned themselves, and give letters of commendation; and the proper local responsibility of these meetings which are not London, is in several cases weakened. I do not at all want to weaken the Saturday meeting, but to make it real. For the meetings in London, it was very useful, it did maintain the consciousness of unity, difficult in such a place as London. Had there been timely pliancy in dropping off meetings outside, the thing would have pruned itself. It became unpractical, cumbersome, and fictitious. Croydon, Mitcham, and Plumstead, are not the unity of London.

In ninety-nine cases out of a hundred the local gatherings must form the judgment, but if they are to walk in unity in one place—in such a place as London, where people slip about not to be known, mention of cases in all the gatherings ought to take place I have known a case where a person was known, far from the place where he sought entrance, and the brethren spared the admission of a bad person. The difficulty of a person copying beforehand is that it is on the paper before any conference. The received names might be so copied, and if even objection came from a gathering, a stroke of the pen suffices. I see no objection to brethren from suburban places coming if they wish… My objection to it is, it is not real now. Begin by not putting a quarter or a half as you say on the papers, and make it real, letting these brethren freely come if they wish. But the character of the meeting has falsified into a registry, useful in its place and way, and a reading-meeting for

young men if there was time. It ceased to be a collective work of those interested in the gatherings. No discipline, I quite admit, could be exercised there, but cases might be spoken of and conferred about with the common light of brethren from the various gatherings in London. Generally the local brethren alone know the details necessarily, but many general principles of the word and correctives might come in by common counsel.

I have seen nothing in print of what you sent me, but I feel it useless to read such things. We have to give our testimony in the midst of acknowledged ruin; the more we feel it, the better. What you refer to here, is a regular plan, forming union by exchange of pulpits, but godly souls are feeling it. It raises the question, Is truth to be held to? The coming of this state of things exercised me deeply in 1827, now I work in the midst of it: “save yourselves from this untoward generation.”

The clergy are simply evil, and as such minister to evil, but our business is with positive truth, and good, a testimony as clear and full as we can, and a walk holy, devoted and unworldly. If we look to Christ’s people, the Lord will work His work as to them—and preach the gospel with earnestness while time yet remains. The testimony of the truth has certainly told on many consciences here, in the east of America.

Save a short sojourn at Philadelphia, perhaps a run to Washington, I am on my way west; but labourers, efficient ones, and patient ones, are wanting. I am told doors are open at Washington, and some good going on there.

Affectionately yours in the Lord.

Concord, 1875.

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Dearest——,—I think the brethren are entering into a new phase of existence, which increases danger to them, and brings greater, or at any rate more manifest, responsibility. It is not merely the justifications or excessive praise of men like ——, which good taste would let drop, though flattery be dangerous to any heart, but the now generally spread feeling (whatever effect it produces, for it is very diverse) that brethren have something which other Christians have not got. This is often refuted, hated, opposed, may be often a matter of curiosity, sometimes (and may it be increased!) of true inquiry; but it is felt. The world feels it, would use it to scorn the inconsistency of public profession. In many cases they would be sought and courted from their knowledge of scripture, their books read to have the truth without acting on it. Others., who still cling to the professing church with partial apprehensions of truth and much error, make their boast that it can be had without leaving the systems around us—nay, sometimes openly urging continuance in them: but it is felt they have what others have not. I believe they have. But what is important is, not the brethren, but the truth they have. I could state it definitely, and have ere now done it; but it is not my object here. God could set them aside, and spread His truth by others—would, I believe, though full of gracious patience, if they be not faithful. Their place is to remain in obscurity and devotedness, not to think of brethren (it is always wrong to think of ourselves save to judge ourselves) but of souls, in Christ's name and love, and of His glory and truth only—not to press brethrenism so-called, but to deal with each soul according to its need for Christ's sake.

But if attention is drawn, and it is, to the truth they possess through grace, their responsibility is very greatly increased. If more general and persevering devotedness is not found in them, they would be a stumbling-block against the truth. Unworldliness, non-conformity to the world, self-denial, abnegation in love to others, is what is called for, for love is the end of the charge committed out of a pure heart. Let them walk in love, in the truth, humble, lowly, unworldly, and all for Christ, as little, and content to be little, as when they began, and God will bless them. If not, their candlestick may go (and oh, what sorrow and confusion of face it would be after such grace!) as that of others. Let there be no mixing with the church-world, what are they if they do?—but grace towards it, separating, that early beacon-light to me, the precious from the vile, and they will be as God's mouth. I repeat, let them in no wise mix with the mixture of church and world—the meaning of their existence is a testimony against that—with the earnest gospel energy to souls that Christ may have His own, but the fullest testimony of God's free love (for God would have and delights in that), or it would be as though faithfulness chilled that— doing the work of evangelists, making full proof of their ministry, humble, lowly and devoted, and simple, because lowly in heart, separated to Christ.

As regards all the activity outside them, it is one of the signs of the times, and they should rejoice in it—if Christ were preached of contention, they should, save where they have given occasion to it by failure in themselves, which is possible: but it does not give their testimony at all. God is sovereign, and can work in love where and as He pleases, and we should rejoice in it; but there is no

separation from evil, but the contrary in general. It is, as to this, just the mixture, which God is bringing out of. For a year or two, at the beginning, I preached everywhere they let me, and others have done it, but it was, after all, another thing; though the trumpet gave an uncertain sound, it resulted in bringing out, even if the gospel only were fully preached. Now the question is fully raised, and the testimony has to be clear, yet the fullest preaching of the gospel and of the assurance of salvation.

I do not believe attacks on anything to be our path, but superior and fuller truth, in grace. Peter never attacked the chief priests, but went on his own way. It is a descent from the true high ground of the truth we have of the christian position. That, and a full gospel used in-grace, should distinguish us: the testimony against evil should be in our own walk and ways. Be assured, when real, it is fully felt. Occasions may arise where truth is in question; self-defence is every way to be avoided: the Lord will answer for us if we do His will.

Union is sought now by indifference to truth, in this country avowedly so, as exchanging pulpits with infidels, and indeed openly everywhere: I say avowedly. Patiently waiting, where in present darkness it is only ignorance or error, is most necessary; but truth and holiness, love in the truth and for the truth's sake, characterise Christ's revelation of Himself, and His influence in the last days. God has no need of us, but He has need of a people who walk in the truth in love and holiness. I find in the Old Testament, "I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord"; and I find the same spirit in Jude, who speaks of the mixture that would bring on

judgment: “But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.” The gospel we may, and must, rejoice in, but it only makes the testimony of brethren, outside the camp, more necessary than ever; but it must be real. May they indeed be waiting for the Lord, and as men that wait for the Lord! His love is not wanting. May we, in earnest love to Him, be waiting for Him, because we do so love Him, and be found watching!

I thought of writing to you, dear brother, not having heard of you for a long while, and my thoughts flowed on, for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. Now I cannot doubt the work—at least, the testimony—is going on. The way it is telling, though only as a sowing-time, and what I hear and know of Europe, have partly led me to this train of thought, for it presses just now on my mind. May the beloved brethren be found of Him in peace, and watching; devotedness maintained and increased; their whole body, soul and spirit, be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ! I have just published another tract on perfectionism at Boston. Error, from Germany, is largely mixed up with active religious minds here: I have written on it, but I do not know what I shall do with it; but the subject calls for watchfulness. The brethren are getting on happily here, and with blessing, and I hope roused up and cheered, with some nice persons added in Boston. There has been some blessing outside too… Let me hear of yourself.

Affectionately yours in the Lord.

If brethren fall in with the current Christianity inside the camp, they would be just another sect with certain truths.

New York, April 8th, 1375.

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Dear ——,—You will be glad to hear that at Boston the readings ended in acting on not a small number of souls, and some eight or ten are come into communion, and some doors, small as yet, but real, opened for work. ——, whom I named, is in Ohio with an uncle, where there are souls inquiring. The said uncle, being blessed through the tracts, has sent five hundred dollars (nearly a hundred pounds) for free distribution tracts. Here there are more than twenty going on happily, but save one or two emigrants, the work is yet to do. M. spoiled it, they are in two or three divisions, but annihilationists and all came to hear me. I had a growing audience; I have been down to Vineland. I leave, if not to-morrow (Thursday), Monday (D.V.), for Chicago. I have been (my brain) quite done up, seriously so, living in boarding houses, thank God, however, with a testimony; but it is dreary work. The cold has been great, and for the time, is—thick ice the day before yesterday, but I have had the kindest care here at L.'s, who is himself ill and laid by, and am very much recruited, but I had a somewhat serious warning that I am not so young as I was. But there is One who is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. I look more and more for Him. What you say is sorrowful, but I felt it more, I think, forty-eight years ago, when I saw it coming on, now I take it more for granted, and look above, and then to see what has to be done. It is a sifting-time, but those that are His will be more and

more weaned, and learn to look above. I should, in view of these things, humanly speaking, be glad to be back in England, but I have a toilsome look-out before me in the west, but with no distrust as to the Lord's will, only I am grown old to do it… New Zealand remains uncertain.

Affectionately yours in the Lord.

Philadelphia, April, 1875.

Dear Brother,—I thought probably baptism was on the mind of——; with him it would be taking on the responsibility of a Christian, and till he fully knows grace this would be a difficulty when a man is conscientious, so one would wait, only putting the grace clearly before him. But in his case it should surely come first: it is the just order, and for the above reason not without its moral bearing. But at any rate it would be the just order. We must come into the house, naturally, before we sit down to the table in the house, though the Lord's supper is the expression of the unity of the body, and by one Spirit we are baptised into one body, and with that baptism has nothing directly to do. Only as I said, it is the natural order, and his own soul's state has to be considered in connection with it, not to slip in easy, though I do not think he is inclined to that.

I have been down to Vineland, where I thought all was broken up, but there are four steadily breaking bread, so that the testimony is there, and I suspect on more solid ground than ever. But it is only a testimony just born. —— walks, as does his wife, in most patient grace in trying circumstances. Whether it is that my heart sees more what ought to be I know not, but I feel more deeply daily the utter ruin Christendom lies in all round. It is a narrow path to keep from the evil— unspotted

from the world, and yet in the full grace of divine love towards all. Here the work is to do, some twenty souls walking blamelessly, but no action outside. But if God opens the door there is no difficulty with Him. We are poor instruments, but Ho is able to do anything.

Your affectionate brother in Him.

To the same.]

I was near forgetting your question. Hur (rWj) means in Hebrew clean, white, white linen, particularly fine white linen (or as some, cotton). And without dogmatising where imagination may come in, I have always taken it for purity—"the righteousness of the saints"; as sustaining in the combat, it is you know the breastplate, and armour on the right hand and on the left. But if any questioned I should leave it there, though natural enough, and the thing assuredly true.

I do not doubt that the Lord will direct the activity of our brother —— into the right channel, and that it will turn to practical usefulness in spreading the truth. I have often thought of it, though the how I do not know. Probably it will spring up gradually, and perhaps so best, but I quite trust the Lord may have this in His plans, only it must be done according to His mind to have His blessing.

Affectionately yours in the Lord.

Philadelphia, 1875.

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Beloved Brother,—Thus far I am arrived westward, but my movements are governed by what the Lord may give from day to day… I came out again, though old, feeling doors were open in America, and so in grace it has been.

The strain of work at Boston and New York broke me down; I had to stop short for a while: I was warned I was not as at forty-five. Philadelphia set me a good deal up again. But the Lord has been with me in grace and His own sovereign mercy.

The difference of John is that it is family unity, not corporate. I do not mean by this that there is no gathering. It is of John He gave Himself "to gather together in one the children of God who were scattered abroad," but it is not the body. There Christ is Head, and we are members of Him; He is the Man raised by God on high. Here (John 17), though never leaving the recipient place He has taken, He is Son, and says "us": it is joint ("in us"), but in communion: "one in us" is a wonderful word. It is the Son, a Man indeed but not a man, once dead whom God has raised and exalted. His Person is always prominent in John. He is not dying, but going out of this world to the Father. It is "glorify thy Son," and if glorified (for He now, being Man, receives it from the Father) it is the glory He had with the Father before the world was, with His own self. Verses 22, 23 are clearly in glory, but the two other unities are distinct; first, of the apostles only, and so, as going forth in entire unity by the Spirit—absolutely in that power one. Then, of those brought in, and there it is "in us," communion, the power of the Spirit carrying them up as all one in this communion with the Father and the Son; but the difference of the position of Christ is the clue to the distinction of this unity and the body. The unity of the Spirit (Eph. 4) is the connecting link. The body is in connection with the risen Man; this, with the Father and the Son: in both, the unity of the Spirit is its realisation. "Ye in me, and I in you," I have habitually used as

shewing our perfectness before God, and our responsibility before men. John 17 was literally fulfilled in Acts 2:4. There, like all other things, it comes under the responsibility of man—always true in principle, however lost in practice. The former part of chapter 14 gives what was theirs on earth, the latter, what was by the Spirit, besides the few last verses…

The Lord be with you, dear brother, in your soul and in your work… As to circumstances, "heaviness may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." My experience is that gatherings after the first start go through a sifting, and then take their start afresh from the ground of faith. As to those who remain behind with you, "Be to their faults a little blind, Be to their virtues ever kind."

Act in grace towards them. The christian place is "overcome evil with good."

Affectionately yours in the Lord.

Chicago [1875].

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Beloved Brother, I have no happy news to give you of ——— I still hope in the Lord for him, hence too I have said nothing about him. He has taken hold of the thought, that no one is ever recognised as in the place of service or as a servant, or part of the temple of God, in any sense, unless really so. Hence Judas was a saint, Balaam a saint, etc. Further, that there is a justification of saints by works, as of sinners by faith, and that if we do not actually suffer with Christ we cannot reign with Him. Hence the saints who are not thus wholly following will not be caught up, but pass through the tribulation.

Casting the servant into outer darkness is this tribulation; he gets out of it again. The saints fallen asleep of old will be raised up in mortal bodies, and be sentenced in judgment to go through the great tribulation (appearing in Rev. 7), and have to die again: drawing nigh unto perdition is getting into it; and when urged that it is in contrast with believing to the saving of the soul—it means to the saving of their life; scripture thus losing all hold on the conscience. He said he did not hold so strongly on the bringing back the dead saints; but when asked if their spirits were to come out of heaven to be mortal men again in the tribulation, he said there was no proof they were in heaven. A good while ago he was resisted by the brethren, and his teaching refuted… I do not think many have received it.

The brethren here are going on well, and their number increases; many come to read and inquire, with less depth, perhaps, than at Boston. I had a terrible discussion last night with an adventist annihilationist preacher; but he was fully exposed, and several were delivered from the influence of the system. But this is wearymg work. As at Boston, I know not what the readings will give, I wait to see; but time runs on, and what about New Zealand, I know not. —— is popular, clings to brethren’s principles, he says, for I am suddenly in great vogue with a certain number, but I hold on my way, I trust just as before, knowing my own utter worthlessness, Christ and the truth being all. It is a work, as I said at Boston, of patience, but godly people ill at ease everywhere…

3ince I have been here I have been revising the hymn book, excluding and altering where old erroneous views had passed unperceived. I have no means of adding

here. There is a lack of worshipping the Father in them, but I know not how that suits hymns, or hymns it, and who is to give them…

That we are in wonderful times is evident, but the Lord, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever, and all that is needed for this and all times. Here I am called to trust Him, not only as to ordinary work, but as to——. He had greatly cherished the thought of a kind of heaven among brethren. But I do trust Him, and am at peace. If you had two meetings a day, to meet every mind and every question, and all the dishonest subtilty of adventists and annihilationists, from time to time, I ‘guess’ you would be sometimes tired, but if the Lord is with one He helps us on, and goodness and mercy will follow us all the days of our life. My letters were full of good news. Since our conference at Vevey, the work has quite revived in Switzerland, and some workmen have been added in France.

Whatever is done as to Saturday night meeting, cut off the out-lying gatherings. The whole thing was a mistake continuing them in connection with it. Let the principal brethren of the London gatherings meet—all well to keep unity in common action—while not forgetting that they are not the assembly, nor excluding from being there those who are in out-lying gatherings. I had no doubt it would come to some break up, from the course pursued, and said so. A little patience and looking to the Lord will set it on a sound and useful footing. I read, “Strengthened with all might according to his glorious power, to all patience.” What do you think of such a result of glorious power? I think a great deal of it.

Ever affectionately yours in the Lord.

Chicago, May, 1875.

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Dear, ——,—I did hear of your dear father's death, and wrote a line to your mother, to express my sympathy; he was one we had known and valued for years. I have not given up the thought of going to New Zealand. It has rather increased with me. Present work is the difficulty of deciding—something of "Satan hindered me,." I am at Chicago in a work of patience, and great patience, but we have to do the work before us. It is too long to- go into. If I do not go to N.Z. I doubt I shall go to San Francisco. I felt less need of going to N.Z., as Mr. Wigram went just when I was going, and the claims through progressing evil in Europe, and the growing infirmity of age, check the impulse to go. Younger, I should not hesitate, but it is still before me if the Lord graciously set me free here. My mind, through mercy, is as fresh as ever, and scripture seen clearer, but my body not up to fatigue as it was: no wonder at seventy-five, and no sorrow either. Work while it is called to-day is all I look for, and then rest, blessed rest. … I had heard of the blessing in Auckland, and was thankful. Bitter opposition, I am, alas! used to, and am afraid sometimes of taking too much for granted. May we be kept in entire dependence on the Lord, and with full confidence in Him; in that dependence may He guide and direct you, dear ——, in all things! It may be well you should see the old country again. There are sometimes steps in our career. May you only have one object; to follow Him wholly!

Yours affectionately in the Lord.

Chicago, 1875.

Dearest ——,—I have not much to tell you of the work here, plenty to do if a person was staying here regularly… The penury of all food for Christians here you have no idea of: the churches a simple hindrance, and worldly to an excess. The world and newspapers attribute all fresh truth to brethren as its source, and they are occupied with them. I quite feel the claim of the old country, and am anxious to get back; only the awakening I had seen here brought me back here the last time, and I was not mistaken. The Lord, I believe, led me, though I am not fit to rough it as I have done. I have also contemplated a villeggiature, but not I trust for idleness… I consider my journey to New Zealand as turning homewards, and then visiting this country on my way. I must leave it, where surely it always is, in the hands of the God of all grace, who has so graciously enabled me to serve thus far. The toil makes you see the difficulties, though He makes us look to Him in and through them: in rest you feel the sure power of His grace, without much else, but toil and rest are all with Him. In looking back I feel His grace to me has been wonderful, grace towards a poor unworthy creature—that I feel deeply—but wondrous with it. More and more, as one goes on, He is all to the soul, and beyond all our thoughts; yet we know the love that passeth knowledge. I am glad some one is going to Jamaica, I thought the door was open when I was there. Kindest love to the brethren, whom I shall rejoice to see again, if the Lord will.

Chicago, June, 1875.

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My dear Brother,—Not quite at the end till I turn round towards England again, the Lord sparing me, and holding me up. I have just made ninety-six hours of railroad without stopping, and am all well. My mind fully turns to England when I have done in these parts. Were I young, with (humanly speaking) life before me, there would be ground for staying, for the work is opening. It is in many respects on a new footing, and the question of this position and the truths of scripture as to the full position, and the walk too, of the Christian is round everywhere. But I am not young, and cannot think to carry out the work myself; and God, I trust, will raise up instruments, as He has a few. It is not His mind, I believe, to take out of weakness. In the state of the church it becomes us to take part in her sorrows.

As regards your first question, I think there is a mistake as to the position of the assembly, both in the sister and also of the brother who objected, perhaps in all. When persons break bread, they are in the only fellowship I know—owned members of the body of Christ. The moment you make another full fellowship, you make people members of your assembly, and the whole principle of meeting is falsified. The assembly has to be satisfied as to the persons, but, as so receiving to break bread, is supposed to be satisfied on the testimony of the person introducing them, who is responsible to the assembly in this respect. This, or two or three visiting, is to me the question of adequate testimony to the conscience of the assembly. At the beginning it was not so, that is, there was no such examination. Now I believe it a duty according to 2 Timothy 2. Nobody comes in but as a believer. This again makes the distinction of member of the particular assembly.

Still, I do not think a practice such as this sister's is satisfactory. I admit fully every case must stand on its own merits, and so be dealt with. Where breaking bread is intermitted, it is all well to mention it, though this be in some cases uncalled for, where the assembly knows about it and is satisfied. But if persons break bread, they are as subject to discipline as if always there, because it is the church of God which is in question, though represented by two or three: Christ is there. If it is merely an occasional coming as a stranger, and the person not known, it is well to mention. What is not satisfactory in such cases is: first, it is accepting the person by the assembly as if he had another fellowship besides membership of Christ, which I do not recognise at all. And, secondly, I should fear there was a reluctance to take honestly the reproach of the position, the true separated position of saints, and [the wish] to be able to say to others, I do not belong to them, I only go as a believer: I only go as a believer, only I accept the position. Waiting for them to get clear is all well.

A true believer has title at the Table; but if they meet as members of Christ's body, they are all one body, as partakers of one loaf. I do not admit them. I own their title, wait upon their want of light, but would not allow them to put me in the position of a sect (and, 'full fellowship,' means that), making allowance for their ignorance and waiting upon it. They do not come really to break bread with us on the ground of the unity of the body, if they think they are not one with us in coming; for if we are true and right, they are not one with the body of Christ, the only principle of meeting I know at all. I repeat, in the present state of the church we must have patience, as their minds have been moulded in

church membership; but I ought not to falsify my own position, nor sanction it in the mind of another. If the person is known to all, and known to be there to break bread, all mention is needless; it is a testimony to the unity of the body: if an occasional thing, the person who introduces is responsible. I remember a case, where one growing in truth came to help sometimes in a Sunday school, and from the other side of London, and asked the brethren if he might not break bread when there—time even did not allow of him to get back to his Baptist service—and he enjoyed the communion of saints. The brethren allowed him gladly; and, if my recollection is right, his name was not given out when he came afterwards. Very soon he was amongst brethren entirely, but his fellowship was as full when he was not: and had he given occasion, he would have been refused in discipline, just as if there every Sunday.

The other question is for me a more delicate one, because it is a question of the state of the soul, as of the church, when darkness covers it. Many, many souls cry Abba, Father (that is, have the Spirit of adoption) which are clear in nothing, save that their confidence is in Christ and His work only: and as doubting is taught in the church, and a plain full gospel unknown, and even rejected by teachers, this state is the natural consequence; and it often requires spirituality to discern the real state of a soul, if really under law undelivered or legalised by teaching. Hard cold knowledge of doctrine is not what I seek. Then there is the danger of throwing back a soul just when it wants to be encouraged. Doubts brought in by conflict, when a soul can really say Abba, are not a ground of rejection, though it shews a soul not well established. But a soul exercised, but not yet

resting in Christ's work, is not in a right state for communion. So with young converts: it is far better for them to wait until they have peace, only carefully shewing it is not to reject them, but for their own good. I should not look for understanding deliverance, but being personally able to say Abba, Father. The intelligence of deliverance is the consequence of sealing. But if a man be not sealed, he is not in the christian position: "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." Peace through forgiveness is, as to Christ's work, the evidence of faith in Christ's work, and that work received by faith is the ground of sealing: then one is delivered. But the intelligence of this is another thing. Israel, out of Egypt, was brought to God—delivered. Through Jordan they entered in, were circumcised, and ate the corn of the land. But a sealed person alone is in the true christian position; and this is founded on the sprinkling with blood—that is, faith in Christ's work, by which we have redemption, not in the knowledge of deliverance: that is its effect.

San Francisco, August, 1875.

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My dear Brother,—Mrs. —— came in and occupied me with Springfield affairs: as regards these, I have not much more to say; you have only to go on and seek the Lord to minister blessing to you. I have no doubt it was all needed. My impression is, unless the Lord specially interpose in grace, that you will be under the discipline of having another assembly there for awhile, and then He will set you free, if indeed you walk practically with the Lord. I have no doubt some discipline was needed in the assembly, and crudities to be removed. The way of

doing has been to me most painful, not merely as to S., but as to the whole work; but there it is now, and we must abide the Lord's time. What you have all to do is to walk all closely and quietly with the Lord, and the blessing will come when the Lord has finished His work. There is a sifting government of God as well as a perfect redemption, and He is full of patience. His purpose is glory, His ways are the wilderness.

I got here quite well, and with less fatigue than I thought, but so perpetual a desert for near 1,500 miles, save the fir-trees of the Sierra Nevada, I never saw…

My best love in Christ to all the brethren; they have only to walk on, seeking the Lord's presence.

Your affectionate brother in Christ.

San Francisco, August 9th, 1875.

My dear Brother,—I know the love of the brethren will like to hear of my arrival here. I deferred answering your letter till I arrived. I visited St. Joseph after Chicago, Alton and St. Louis. Thence going on to Omaha, my host at St. Joseph being superintendent of the rail, I had every advantage to Council Bluffs, opposite Omaha. There I slept, and then had ninety-six hours in rail to San Francisco, getting out only to eat. Everything went right, through mercy, and I, taking the sleeping cars, got on perfectly well to San Francisco: but such a desert I never went through: for 200 miles a plot of corn occasionally, then a few small herds of antelopes, and then for some 1,400 miles barrenness, occasionally a solitary rabbit, but an event to see one, occasionally prairie dogs and their burrows, one wolf, not even grass, sage brush and bare ground, emigrant wagons from time to time. You rise to more than 8,000 feet, the Sierra

Nevada woody mountains, some 1,400 miles square, a desert called Rocky Mountains: at Salt Lake the Mormons by irrigation have some poor crops. I stayed a week or ten days at San Francisco… There is everywhere work to do. Thence about 6,000 miles by sea to Auckland, by Honolulu, but the most favourable voyage possible, through mercy, scarcely any sea, and faster than usual, the ship very steady, so that I worked on as usual. Some little opportunity of testimony though no preaching, so that I was thankful… We stopped an hour at the Samoan Isles, where were genuine natives as you read of them: the prow of one boat was stove in, and all had to swim, perhaps (if not met) a good mile or more to shore, four or five leaping into the sea as they found the ship leaving —fine men, of a yellowish red. There are missionaries there. Mercy has accompanied us thus far, and surely will. 1 have never, since I decided to come here, had a cloud on my mind as to my coming. All has been without difficulty, and many mercies. I still doubt that I shall go on to Australia. It is a week or so farther, and their circumstances are not the same, but the Lord will graciously shew. My thought is, if spared, to return the way I came.

Peace be with you: kindest love to the brethren. May they not only hold fast, but be every day more devoted and unworldly! I feel this of all moment now. Many are seeking to introduce brethren's truths into the systems as they are. True separateness to the Lord in the truth is what will give the testimony now, in home, life, spirit, and walk in every way. And what is there that remains but doing His will while waiting for Him?

Affectionately yours in the Lord.

Auckland, September 15th, 1875.

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[From the German.

Dear Brother,—I think of——, and though I find myself in a distant land, I will not remain longer without inquiring after the state of his soul, whether the Lord, full of love, has brought him back to the faith, to acknowledge the Saviour as Lord, and his Saviour. It was quite clear to me that the enemy had deceived him through sin, and so led him into unbelief. The truth is uncomfortable for the sinful soul, and the enemy acquires power over the soul if it be unfaithful. I hope indeed that there exists the root of life in him, and then the Lord, faithful and long-suffering, will restore him.

I was old perhaps to come out; I thought of doing so three years ago, but the steamers were suspended. Then Mr. Wigram came here, and I thought I would perhaps give up the long journey. But the brethren were always expecting a visit. Besides, God had delivered them from a bad state, namely, false principles, and help and teaching were in a certain way necessary. So I came 4,000 miles by land and 6,000 miles on the ocean…

I hope, if God preserve me till then, to return to Europe in perhaps eight months. Two or three are required for the journey. This will probably be my last long journey. But it is wonderfully sweet to feel that we near home: long, often difficult and painful work (although it is a wonderful privilege to do it), and then, eternal rest with the Lord. Soon the glory: the grace of God, the word of God ever more precious, the Lord Himself—all soon, not for faith, but for sight. God be with you, beloved brother,

and keep you, and all the brethren. Your attached brother in the Lord.

Do you know how the history of P. S. has ended? I believe that he is true at heart, but much occupied with himself. He has enunciated such doctrines that people would tolerate him no longer in England. God has preserved him from outward immorality. But puffed up, and accepting the truth of the two natures, mixed with his perfection, he said that one could be at the highest pitch of inward spirituality and in the depths of the flesh at the same time; and that he could place himself in circumstances of temptation without being overcome by it. This was the snare of the primitive church. They have despatched him to America, and all is left in obscurity. He told me that my tract was the only one that had affected him; the others aimed at keeping one in Romans 7. He contemplated altering his tract. He did not appear to me to be clear, but to endeavour to get rid of the points of attack. But he has expressly said in his last work, that the better life he spoke of was the transition from Romans 7 to 6, 3.

Auckland, New Zealand, 1875.

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Dearest ——,—I was thinking of writing to you and just got your letter, and there will soon be a mail. I waited till I had been a little here, though there is not a large sphere as in England, etc. But though anxious to get back to England —for besides service there, which I feel I owe, at my time of life the besoin d’arriver is stronger than the plaisir d’aller—I have never hesitated as to being led in coming here, and the Lord has been graciously with me. At Honolulu we saw no one, were

only there part of a day to discharge packages and reload. The voyage was very favourable indeed. There is a book favourable to the Church of England which gives a very adequate account of the Sandwich Islands, and the establishment of the dynasty of Kanuhawicha, and the destruction of idolatry—on the whole a very remarkable history. I did know some in the States, one now in California, interested in the truth with the work there, but it never resulted in any direct connection with it. The population is still dying out through licentiousness, but it is a civilised country like another: parts of it barren volcanoes, others tropically fertile. We passed the Navigators' Islands, a fine race, where there are missionaries, but they are still in their savage state.

As to this place, it is a really charming country, the most of it of course very inaccessible; mountains and bush—the bush though always fine, not as our trees, always brown, which gives it a sombre hue. I have been at Auckland, Motueka, and neighbourhood, and now Nelson, a beautiful spot, quiet, clean, and orderly. The relief to my spirit after the States is very sensible, though where the Load's work is there is joy… The deliverance of a great body of the saints is very decided, and in these parts in fact all are right and clear, unless perhaps one. I feel the Lord graciously led me here too, and I believe there is inquiry—a nice gathering: many of the others come, and I hope may get blessing. I have got Wellington, Christ-church, and Tuscarora unvisited. We had two or three shocks of earthquake while I was at Motueka, (one) enough to awake me in the night. I still purpose returning, if the Lord will, by the States, seeing them in Canada.

For the States we must look to the Lord to raise up labourers. I am thankful three brethren have gone to Canada. I have no doubt that a considerable number have been converted through Moody, but I still judge there were more outside than in. For conversions, one must be thankful they are saved, but the effect will be to make Christians worldly, and to produce, what is the pest of the United States, the substitution of work for Christ. I said fifty years ago, when I thought more, and believed perhaps less, that awakenings in Christendom were like water poured out upon the ground, fresh and clear, but after a while it made mud. I think those not exclusive were in a state prepared for this, this mixture. There is, I think, a difference as to brethren in this, that what really characterised that work, besides the stirring up devotedness, was the bringing in a mass of biblical truth long hidden, some I believe never current in the historical church. This, since I reflected on the movement, I have always felt, and as to the substance of it said so: that as the cross and justification by faith were brought out at the Reformation, so the coming of the Holy Ghost uniting us to Christ in heaven, and His coming again, were brought out now: the three positions of Christ as a Saviour—Christ on the cross, Christ at the right hand of the Father sending the Holy Ghost, Christ coming again to complete the result—and so the mystery, throwing back immense fight upon the value of the cross. But this blessed unfolding of light spreads, and if there be not devotedness in brethren they become mud like others, and that is the great question now. “To him that hath shall more be given,” otherwise it is just current truth and no more; and indeed that is what Satan is at now, to deaden devotedness among brethren while he spreads truth known at any rate among others.

It produces exclusivism so-called, but exclusivism will not do the work. Christ who is all—this must be all. Activity is all right, but activity instead of Christ—and that is Moodyism and United States religion—is a most deadening and worldly-making principle. The stir gone, the worldliness remains, and the world despises it. Kindest love to all the dear brethren. I shall be glad to see them all again, and most thankful for many prayers…

Affectionately yours in the Lord.

Nelson, October, 1875.

Beloved Brother,—I do indeed sympathise with you as to ——, a real and profound sorrow. One can only look to the Lord to deliver him. I had heard he had got astray, but thought it was morally. See if this has been the case, for thus it often is; not having kept a good conscience, shipwreck is made of faith. The root may still be there. Modern science is rife with all this. Darwin has given up a good deal of his system as exaggerated, and those not Christians have shewn its fallacy: he admits his proof fails, geological facts giving no support to it. There is a book called “Blending Lights,” which may be of use to him, but see where his conscience is.

We have to go through P. Smith and Moody like all else. God will make everything work together for good to those that love Him. They (are) in some aspects signs of the last days; our business is to separate the precious from the vile. You will see a large increase of wickedness and of worldliness in Christianity by it, but souls converted to God. I dread the Americanising effect of it; religion and activity where Christ has little place. They are all groaning under it in America, and the revivalist

standing up to confess Christ—— does not allow in his own chapel through experience of its effects. But it will have aroused many. The peace men have got by it is a kind of provisional peace. Thorough work will only be the more needed.

As to the first question—I dread questions, notions—I believe the body is redeemed, the Lord for the body and the body for the Lord, and that He holds it by His power for resurrection glory—some changed consequently without dying; but death and corruption in themselves are the effect of sin and Satan's power. But the body is not under his power; Christ has the keys of death and hell. Its state is the fruit of his power, but it is through redemption not in his power: only redemption is not yet applied to it in its effect in power. We are waiting for the redemption of the body. But the redemption-price is paid, and the power belongs to Christ, is His, so that Satan has no title over it.

As to the Lord's supper. They [saints in systems] may partake of it in personal communion and piety, and I doubt not do, and enjoy His grace, but they have lost the proper corporate enjoyment of it in the unity of the body…

Affectionately yours in the Lord.

Nelson, October 18th, 1875.

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Beloved Brother,—I was glad to get a few lines from you, and to hear something of brethren too. I have never had a cloud on my mind as to my path, since I fixed to come, the Lord helping me, to New Zealand. As to my strength, I found it after ninety-six hours constantly in the train in

that dreary wilderness, nothing the worse: the voyage rather a rest, having as a whole very fine weather, and the ship unusually easy; and were I health-hunting, I might stay in this beautiful country with pleasure. The climate is admirable here, and the locality charming. Of course I have been, through mercy, working as elsewhere.

Having been put off before, and dear W. having been here, I had doubts about coming; but as they still looked for me, I thought I should come, and all has been ordered. I do not know when I have had such earnest and attentive congregations. The word is enjoyed, so that I trust there may be blessing for all outside as well as inside … and the Lord has been graciously with me. Of course the exercises of soul in others, and in oneself, are found, and practically the same as everywhere; still it remains joyfully and thankfully true that God has wrought us for the selfsame thing, and has given us the earnest of the Spirit. On the whole, all hitherto has been encouraging, and I trust will be so yet.

I feel sometimes a little envious of those called to be evangelists—still happy that they have it—but it is good for me and keeps me low; and I know and feel that I should be willing to serve where He sets me, and rejoice to do it, because it is His will—only pray I may serve thoroughly, happy to be allowed to do it. As to all the translations, though very thankful to give the word of God to others, I feel I am only a “hewer of wood and drawer of water”—always have. It is a joy to me to have been permitted to do it, but it is the word in the soul which is the power of life. I only hope in the midst of all that is going on, the brethren may be devoted, and continue to evangelise, and increase in it, but earnestly,

soberly and devotedly. I am not (though I am sure the Lord does all things well) entirely at ease as to the way Moody sets all to work. I have seen the insecure lowering of Christianity it occasions in America, and the mischief it does to souls, and partly in England; though earnest working, when called of God, and confessing Christ with all, is a great privilege. But work is made the means of getting peace, openly so, and systematically too, in the States: besides that, many in whom there is no deep work—yea, because there is not—set out to work. Yet I do not deny that where it is deep and simple, one in the freshness of grace and forgiveness can deal better with sinners than one more advanced: I do not speak of positive gifts. But the setting to work in a superficial state of soul I dread for the person. I do not doubt that M.'s setting forth the love of God more freely and fully has done good. He has got on in truth unquestionably… As to sects and the church, this question remains just where it was.

My thoughts, though I have to finish here, turn towards England, if the Lord will. Still, day by day we have to follow His will, and Christ is the same and all everywhere; and we have to work while it is day, and then be with Him in the fulness of God's rest, when He comes—when He shall be satisfied, seeing the fruit of the travail of His soul.

Affectionately yours in Him.

Nelson, New Zealand, October 25th, 1875.

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My dear Miss ——,—I know of no books which give an account of the brethren. I looked at the account in the ——, and I should desire to add, at any rate, my own way

of looking at it, so as to express what has governed myself. One or two expressions might lead I think, though I understand them, to misapprehension.

The great principles which govern me are two, though both flow from one great truth, namely, that the Holy Ghost has been sent down from heaven consequent on the exaltation of the Lord Jesus to the right hand of the Father, witness of His infinite love in redemption and uniting the saints into one body. This mission, therefore, develops itself in two branches just alluded to: the presence of the Holy Ghost in the church, which He has formed in unity, and in union with its Head, Christ; and His testimony in the midst of the world—the gospel, in a word, and the church. This presence of the Holy Ghost down here, as truly sent from above as the Son was (though in a different manner, and consequent on the accomplishment and establishment before God of divine righteousness by Jesus Christ), is the key and centre of all that belongs to the christian state. Righteousness has been established before God in heaven, and perfect love shewn to the sinner on earth. Christ has made good both perfect love on God's part towards man in his sins (for God so loved that He spared not His Son), and perfect righteousness for faith before God (for Christ is our righteousness before God). Of this the Holy Ghost is witness in the gospel (being sent down because Jesus is on high) in the whole creation under heaven. See 2 Corinthians 5:19, 20; Colossians 1:23, where Paul declares what his ministry in the gospel is.

But this gospel gathers the heavenly joint-heirs of Christ, and having gathered them from Jew and Gentile, unites them by the power of His presence into one body, and that as members of Christ in union with the Head.

God had made Him “to be Head over all things to the church which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.” “By one Spirit we have all been baptised into one body.” “We are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.” Hence the saint is the temple of the Holy Ghost individually (1 Cor. 6:19); and the whole body collectively. (1 Cor. 3:16.) Hence on earth they are “builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.” (Eph. 2:20.) “Ye are the body of Christ and members in particular.” Hence Paul is also a minister of the church “to complete the word of God.” The unity of the whole body is to be kept in the bond of peace: and if men and the influence of corruptions have scattered the members of Christ, or substituted another unity or organisation for the unity of the body, the duty is not set aside by that, whatever power we may lack to accomplish it; meanwhile the promise remains sure, wherever two or three are gathered together in Christ’s name, He is in the midst of them. They enjoy His presence as really, if not as completely, as if all the church were gathered together.

Ministry, though coming directly from God by the power of the Holy Ghost, and making him that possesses the gift of it thereby the servant of Christ (1 Cor. 12, Rom. 12, 1 Peter 4), yet is exercised by each as a member of the body, while his responsibility is to the Head—saving needed discipline exercised by the church in Christ’s name—each member filling up the service which belongs to it according to the will of Christ, and the power of the Holy Ghost working in it. It is exercised in the world by the evangelist—to say nothing here of the original work of the apostles—and in the body by pastors, teachers, and the like. The gifts which were signs to the world

have disappeared, but not those by which Christ gathers and nourishes His church. He cannot cease to call and bless it. All Christians are members of the body. Sinners, by evangelists' work or other means, may become Christians. It is the working of God's love, founded on accomplished righteousness, in virtue of which that love can flow effectually forth to the chief of sinners, and is addressed to the whole world; and scattered saints, wherever placed, may be brought into unity by the power of the Holy Ghost working to this end by light and love. Nothing but what constitutes a person member of the body of Christ, can be the ground of union; but in union the whole will and truth of God is to be maintained in truth, holiness, and grace, according to the word arid by the power of.the Spirit. If through ignorance anything not constituting a person a known and recognised member of Christ cannot be settled, saints must forbear, and God will reveal it, while such is the ground of communion.

I believe it is of the last importance that the church should have a right hope. That hope is, the coming of the Lord to take the saints, already called, into glory with Himself, the church taking her place as the bride, the Lamb's wife. Consequent upon this He will set aside the power of evil and establish the kingdom in power, blessing and glory. The nominal church, not members of Christ, will be spued out of His mouth: Babylon judged, as well as all power of evil set aside: full communion and glory for the church with Christ, and the judgment and then blessing of the world as. that which we ought to look for.

As to life: that eternal life which was with the Father has been manifested to us in Christ, and He is become our

life. His precepts, walk and words, in which it was expressed in Him, become the rule and direction of that life in us. This is the rule, the Spirit is the power. God has given to us eternal life, and that life is in the Son; and “He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.” Hence, through the Spirit, since it is in the Son, we have fellowship with the Son, and therefore with the Father. Inasmuch as this life is in Christ in the power of resurrection, we shall never fully have our place and glory till we are risen, though to depart and be with Him be far better.

The presence of the Holy Ghost, and the coming of the Lord, are the practical hinge of the true character and position of the church. The great orthodox truths I do not touch upon, as I receive them as all true Christians do. I only speak here of what has distinctively governed my course in the professing christian world. I would add, that the death and resurrection of Christ is the witness of the world being in itself wholly lost “All were dead”—and of the founding of the working of God’s love towards the lost on the ground of the righteousness established before God in Christ, the Second Adam, so that it is to a new creation we belong as Christians. But the presence of the Holy Ghost forming the unity of the body, I feel to be the centre and keystone of the whole doctrine of Christ, now exalted on high, till He comes again in glory. I have seen as to the manifestation of that unity, all ruined and scattered, and even an immense system established under its name which is not it. Hence the difficulty of obtaining the realisation of the blessings connected with it. But this difficulty has not altered the duty of the saint, nor is the love or power of the Head, nor His interest in the blessing of His saints diminished

or enfeebled. And the Christian is bound, according to the grace given to him, to seek souls in the world in the testimony of God's love and righteousness, and the unity of the body, in all patience, and the edification of all its members for the building of it up, in dependence on the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Such are the great principles of scripture on these points as I understand them. The account in the —— might lead to suppose, that the work known under the name of brethren was a mere abstraction of persons, already believers, from other bodies; whereas, in England, the greater number are converted to God from a state of worldliness, and abroad nearly all have been so.

Ever your affectionate brother,

A Servant in Christ.

[Date uncertain.]

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[From the Italian.

Here I am, dearest brother, still in New Zealand, but disposed to Bet out, but not quite yet; however, I am on the move. I have some thoughts of visiting them at Melbourne, where they think of having a conference; then returning, if God preserves me in His goodness, by the United States to Europe. I think God has called me here; I have not done much, still there have been conversions; some have been added to the meetings; the brethren have made progress in the knowledge of the word, and of principles; and in the difficulties, and some great troubles that have arisen, dreadful cases of discipline, my presence has been useful, raising the eye

to Christ, so that they have been encouraged, and God has given His blessing; also some new assemblies have been formed. But where the case of discipline took place, they still need to be established in the path, and there are elements of difficulty, but the Lord is above all difficulties…

I have gone on working on Acts as time has permitted. I send a few more sheets. The history of Paul has interested me much, because in writing I gain knowledge, and the subject becomes more familiar to me. What a noble figure that of Paul, even when he was unable to do the Lord's work; what dignity, and how he rises morally above the greatness of this world! We shall see him in heaven, but what is still better for him and for us, we shall see the Saviour who has so loved us. What joy ineffable, that of seeing Him face to face—yes, the One who has so loved us! It will be true joy to me to see all the saints perfect, according to the Lord's heart, when He shall see of the fruit of the travail of His soul, and shall be satisfied. But amid all, He alone will be the object who will fill the heart: we shall be eternally satisfied, being with Him, and filled with His presence, and the fruit of His lore in the Father's house. Grace be with you.

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To the same.]

[From the Italian.

Here is the end of the Notes on Acts. I am not satisfied, but I hope they have been useful; as to myself, I have profited by them. It has been sweet to me, and useful, to follow the phases of the Lord's work to the beginning. They are the history of the preaching of the gospel by

Peter; then freely, and by Paul, the action of the Spirit of God, which was straitened by Judaism—the continual enemy of the truth of Christ. The more we study the history of the beginning of Christianity, the better we understand where the conflict is at all times.

Your affectionate brother.

Wellington, New Zealand, 1876.

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My dear Brother,—I now hope to come to Melbourne. They talk of some general meeting about Easter, and I hope to be over. I do not expect to go beyond Melbourne, save that if going to San Francisco, I may go to Sydney, whence the packet starts; but I must be wending my way towards England.

As regards the subject of your letter—evangelising, I should assuredly seek to serve in and promote in every way I could. And I can quite understand that an assembly, not having one gifted to preach, but desirous to reach souls in the love of them, seeks that it may be carried on, and helps those who do, and—I mean if the door be open in the place—where they are. But I do not reckon as scriptural ‘our evangelist.’ The evangelist is the Lord’s servant only, though the sympathy of brethren is most happy and desirable. It is just the old denominational plan, so—‘the assembly sought him to preach the gospel for them.’

The meeting of a few caring for the saints and serving them, is very desirable, but they cannot act as the assembly, though they may serve it in every way. This question has arisen in New Zealand. They had got into this habit; so that the conscience of the assembly as

such was not exercised. It may be the means, if godly care of souls be carried on by those so meeting, of sparing the assembly many harassing details: but where the conscience of the assembly is concerned, there the matter must be before the assembly, that the conscience of the assembly may be right before God. This habit of a few judging for the assembly (nominally giving notice to gather brothers) has become pretty general in N.Z., resulting in leaving it to two or three, often to one of more active mind; but we have the matter before us, that the conscience of the assembly may be in exercise when it is called for. In putting away it is always so, though in investigating and getting the real moral bearings of the case, grave godly brethren may be most useful here too.

I have no doubt that the case at —— is a proof of the mischief of opening the door in this way because the person naturally acquires influence, and all becomes loose; but 'our evangelist' is itself a mere dissenting church position, and does not recognise gifts in the body, each in its own place serving the Lord according to the grace given…

Your affectionate brother in Christ.

Wellington, New Zealand, February 11th, 1876.

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Dearest ——,—I have had your letter a long time on my table waiting for a seasonable [moment] to write, not as to mere time, but to give you some real news of what was going on here. It has been going on so evenly from day to day that there was little to relate. It has never been God's way to give me much apparent present effect of work: it was good for me, I doubt not, to be kept

doing it as work to Him. Besides, very often there was nothing very positive. In a few places I have had manifest blessing in evangelising, but my faith and courage are feeble in looking for present fruits; only I am willing to serve the Lord and His saints—I hope I can say to be nothing, if He is everything; and we are nothing, but if God gives one to serve, it is a wonderful mercy. I have gone on here just labouring as the opportunity served and the door was open. I have some hope that it has cheered and strengthened and refreshed them…

Patience it is while we are here, and patience must have its perfect work, that we may be perfect and complete in. all the will of God. I feel, though desiring assuredly to see the saints happy, and the prosperity of His chosen, my heart looks more to His coming and to see Himself. That will be joy, and He will tell us what He thinks of us, and I am not afraid of that, for I am sure it will be true, and infinitely full of grace. Of good in myself I have no idea; of evil I know, alas! much: but I know what He is to me, and yet it passes knowledge. Yet that is a step further on; it is knowing His4ove in itself, apart from all judgment or grace in view of service, though a word of approbation would be untold delight, but that between Himself and oneself: but His love I am sure is a source of infinite delight. One has, in working here, to lay up one’s happiness, so to speak, with Him; and I have little leisure to quietly enjoy. Still, when one gets it, it will be wondrous the joy; and one ought to get enough of it in spirit to know what it will be, and this I sometimes feel I do not enough. Well, we must east it all on Him and trust Him. To serve as well as I know how. I think I am ready, but enjoy I sometimes think I do not enough; but I am

content, and, if I have to blame myself, leave all to Him…

In about a month, if all be well, I shall be off. They have a Conference at Melbourne, and then I purpose leaving by Sydney for San Francisco, and so by America and Canada for England.

Affectionately yours in the Lord.

Christchurch, March 2nd, 1876.

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[From the French.

Very dear Brother,—I was told of your meeting on my arrival here; also in a letter of invitation to the conference in Canada, and I have since counted the days; it would have been a happiness to see the brethren of Iowa, and you all also. But thev had arranged for a kind of little conference here, having invited the people before my arrival, so that I shall be here until the 20th of the month… and it will be impossible for me to be at Vinton. When I learnt that there was a conference there, I felt that I should not be there. But I beg you to salute the brethren very affectionately on my behalf, and. I earnestly desire for the Lord’s glory that He may bless you abundantly, and that the fruit of your intercourse and of His presence may be permanent. My heart longs that the Lord may be glorified in the walk of His own; that they may glorify Him, not only by avoiding evil, but by maintaining close communion with Him, and, separated from the world in all their ways, may be to Him for a testimony, and for a testimony that their hearts are elsewhere because their treasure is… It may

be I shall never see them again. But it is well if I finish my course; our meeting will be elsewhere.

I sympathise with you, dear brother, in the loss of your children. I was told of it. It is a sorrowful blow for the heart of the parents—that one can understand, and I believe not less sensibly on the part of those who are not, according to the measure of the Spirit of Christ. He felt, in a manner a little different it is true, the death of Lazarus, more than those who took part at it. But all this belongs to that which is down here, where everything is passing and everything is changing. But He is all the time our God. He wept, but He raised. He sympathises with us, but He has introduced the power of good, of God Himself, in the midst of evil. For us, we have to wait for the result, but it is none the less sure. I in nowise doubt that all children that die are with Him; and it is there we find that which abides, that which is perfect, that which is all of Him. We wait, but He also waits to have us. We wait with longing, but He who shall come will come, and will not tarry. We have need of patience, that after having done the will of God we may inherit the effect of the promise. I trust that Mrs. ——'s heart rests in the Lord in this sorrow. It is comforting to do so; His grace is perfect…

God be with you, dear brother, and may He bless your conference. Once more, salute warmly the brethren.

Yours affectionately in Jesus.

San Francisco, June 9th.

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My dear Brother,—Thank you for writing to me about your dear A.; you judged rightly in thinking I should be

interested in hearing. I was thinking of seeing her before she left this, though knowing she was declining. Most thankful I am that peace and Christ was her portion to the end: not that I doubted she leant on the Lord, but when I saw her, though she left no trace of doubt on my mind that she was His, there were moments that the full peace and liberty in Christ were clouded, though never attachment of heart to Him. I should have been glad to have seen her; but for her, oh! how far better to be at rest and with the Lord: that is joy and blessing, yet we have it in His grace here, though as yet in a very poor earthen vessel. Dear child! I so rejoice in seeing her with Him who loved her, and now has taken her where He is, and evil and sorrow cannot come. And I rejoice for you, dear brother, and Mrs. ——, that you have been given to see her peace and joy before she went. Her affections were all right with Jesus, and they have not been disappointed; and my heart goes up there where she is. It is our home and our rest… My true sympathy with Mrs. ——.

The Lord, dear brother, be with you and yours, and multiply His blessings. May He keep you near Himself in lowliness and joy of communion! It is not our rest—there remains one for God’s people—but what a reason! “it is polluted”: we belong to what is of God and is holy.

Affectionately yours in the Lord.

San Francisco, June, 1876.

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* * * The unity of the body is a turning-point with loose brethren; many brethren may not have learned it, but with the loose brethren it is a necessity to deny it. It makes an essential difference of the true position of the

saints. Those loose had long been drifting there; the annihilation question brought it to a point, because some would, some would not have them. It was what brought me out and put me where I am, and made the difference of leaving the National system, not a point objected to as a dissenter, but on the positive real ground of the church of God united to the Head—the real ground of God's assembly formed by the Holy Ghost. The doctrine of the House came out much later: but 1 Corinthians 10-12 formed the basis of the ground I came out to; Matthew 18 giving the practical feasibility of it now. All my Swiss controversies, for it was there I had them, turned on this point— the dissenters, semi-brethren, there rejecting it.

San Francisco, June, 1876.

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Dearest Brother,—Very glad to hear from you, and to get your account of the work. Fruits you assuredly have, perhaps apparently greater than we at home. Still it is conflict everywhere, and must be till He comes, when power will put an end to it. Our part is to overcome, and that very much by patience—"strengthened with all might according to his glorious power unto all patience." So it is "let patience have her perfect work." The first sign of an apostle was "in all patience." It is very striking the place it holds in scripture. What grief of spirit if the saints are not going on well, when in conflict with such as ——, or false doctrine rising up! These things are all in our path here, more perhaps than with you even. Infidelity too is sweeping over the profession amazingly. But Christians are getting forced to be such. Then the mixture of doctrine even, when men are

earnest, all exercises our patience. It must have its perfect work. Still we have “much to be thankful for.

Poor P. S. broke down in his perfection personally. I do not doubt his being a saint, but he got mixed up with spiritualists, and there were charges as to morality; and his teaching that there could be a gross carnal state and a high spiritual state at the same time shocked his friends, and they broke with him. Yet I doubt not there was rousing both through him and M. in different ways. He never knew himself; and M., who has greatly got on in truth, mixed his activities with what was of the flesh, so as to injure Christians, and mix up the saint and the world: their songs are everywhere in the mouth of the drunkard. Still God has been working in His great and gracious patience.

These —— troubles I suppose may be, if the Lord permit, a hindrance to you, but He holds us in the hollow of His hand, and will turn all to His glory. There is One who opens and no man shuts, and in these last days, gloomy as circumstances may seem, He opens a door and carries on His work by, or in spite of, man. He will never leave us nor forsake us; and keeping close to Him, we can reckon on His guidance and the help of divine wisdom… The Lord be with you and keep you, dear brother.

Affectionately yours in the Lord.

Chicago, June 23rd, 1876.

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* * * As to the work, dear brother, our path is through conflict. If brethren do not walk consistently, and apart from the world, they will and ought to be chastened

more than others; and the worst thing for those whose hearts are in the Lord's work, is to see the saints going on badly. I am thankful, in the main, for the news from Italy. I am not surprised at the gathering at —— going to pieces, for the foundation was a poor one… I see many bad elements at work: may the Lord keep us feeling that the Head can never fail.

June, 1876.

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Beloved Brother,—I was most thankful to get your letter, though long delayed by my absence in New Zealand. On arriving here I found the second one, with that from dear——, apprizing me of his return to England. It was an additional motive for writing to you. It may have been quite right he should go, being trustee; but I feel a Christian engaged in the Lord's work ought not to be in such an office—hardly any other Christian, as it may involve law suits, which they are bound to institute as responsible for their wards. The Lord will guide him in this, and I trust he may return to you, unless the Lord have other work for him. When he had just passed surgeon, he wrote to me about working: I told him the first question was, was he a surgeon that preached, or a preacher that practised by occasion. He understood it well, and has worked diligently ever since, practising when occasion offered. I do trust this trusteeship may not divert him from the Lord's work. Trustees are easier to be had than labourers—true trustees of the Lord's word and grace in service… I do hope and pray he may keep up to the calling he has already wrought in. Labourers that work from Christ and with Him, are not so plenty.

But you must not be discouraged, dear brother, if for a time alone. No one ever knew what it was to be alone as the blessed Lord did. It is a great comfort that some solid brethren are already with you. Besides, there is One above all; and it is a good experience. We may glory in infirmities that the power of Christ may rest upon us. We fancy often that the apostles soared above human feelings: it was not so. Where the apostle [Paul] was most largely blessed, he was among them "in weakness and in fear and in much trembling." I have the habit of working alone, have always had, though cordially united with brethren. I am almost afraid sometimes there is fault in me, but I am cast on the Lord, and am more with Him—quite recognising that the Lord Himself sent them out two and two, and seeing in a measure the wisdom of it, and how it makes the work wholly the Lord's own. Plymouth business, I believe, sealed this path on my spirit…

What a comfort to know that "grace and truth came" (not 'were told of,' not a rule of what man ought to be)—took place by the coming of Christ! We are in the truth and all the grace and relationship with the Father in which He stood, and which were revealed in Him. Be of good cheer, dear brother, and work away, looking to the Lord. This, as to doing, is all we have to do here; in due time we shall reap if we faint not. There is always a moment in our spiritual life when our faith must be individual and direct. In one sense it is always so, but where we are put upon it—a critical time for the soul—as Lot was, we may not be aware of all involved in it, but our condition and resolve under grace is tested. But His grace is sufficient for us, His strength made perfect in weakness… When the right time is come, God will send

help to you: we must lean on Him. Sorrows on our path we must expect. It is the time of conflict, and we must expect it: only still go on, keeping in that presence which hides us from the provoking of all men. For my part, I do not doubt my object, but I feel my love very poor. But I think the Lord is working and helping on brethren, provided only they do not become worldly: if they do—are conformed to the world—what are they worth?

Ever affectionately yours in the Lord.

Chicago, June 21th, 1876.

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[From the French.

* * * We must bless God for that goodness which restores things after having sifted them. I have seen many an instance of this. He humbles us, makes us feel the evil; but, if there is patience, He restores. He exercises discipline towards those who have not known how to exercise it on themselves; then He blesses. Patience plays a great part in the work of God, in the individual, and in the assemblies. “Strengthened with all might, according to the power of his glory”—there is some extraordinary fruit which is to be produced—“unto all patience.” (Col. 1:11.) “The signs of an apostle were wrought … in all patience” (2 Cor. 12:12); and, “Let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.” (James 1:4.)

The work is spreading much, and in general we have reason to bless God. The door is open to us among those who are seeking the truth. This is a new phase of our spiritual life: a blessing, for many are interested in the

truth as they were not formerly; a danger, for this tends to place those who do not know themselves on a pedestal, which is nothing but pride—as if they knew a great deal, and this is only folly. I we know ourselves, we understand our nothingness, and know that God does everything, and that we have nothing which we have not received. I feel myself, dear brother, nearer the eternal salvation; then one does not fail to recognise one's nothingness, to be content that Christ should be all. Besides, this is the desire of my heart. I am, more than ever, wholly His; I do not say this in the sense of true purpose of heart, but I mean that He has entire right over me, and that He is all. All else is but vanity; everything else is passing too, everything else changes. My heart is content to serve Him, as a poor redeemed one who owes himself to Him, as long as He can use me; content that He should be fully glorified, and He will be.

July 10th, 1876.

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[From the Italian.

Dear Brother,— … We have had a very blessed conference here at Brantford in Canada. Many new souls from the south (Pennsylvania, Maryland, etc.) of the United States, who went away filled with joy, blessing God. Generally, the work is prospering and spreading, not without conflicts and difficulties; we must expect it, but God is full of goodness… I am ever more convinced that it is needful to water that which has been planted, to care for ignorant souls and those lately converted, if we desire' that a testimony should be rendered to the Lord. May God, ever good and faithful in hearing us, take care of those who are His in Italy, and

greatly extend His work in souls! … The Lord is faithful, and He nourishes and cares tenderly for His assembly, and with what patience; but labourers are few…

Your affectionate.

Hamilton, July 18th, 1876.

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[From the German.

Dear Brother,—You will be pleased to hear something of the Lord's work in these distant lands. But first a word as to ——: I am full of hope about him. He is open, and loves his family, and that is a good deal. Pure unbelief hardens the heart and nourishes pride, and pride is never open. But the work will begin in the conscience. If the head thinks, it is always sceptical, can be nothing else, because it is altogether unable to comprehend God. He would not be God if human understanding could measure Him. God sets the conscience in activity in its true position through faith alone: we are subject, and acknowledge God in His transcendence. I do not believe that his conscience is asleep: I do not say that it is brought into the presence of God, but I am full of hope that the grace of God will do it.

I remained some months in New Zealand, and God has, I doubt not, blessed the visit. But I feel that I have left my work unfinished, only I could not stay there longer. New assemblies have arisen, and the old ones are confirmed and increased. But there was more still to do. Now the condition of things is quite peculiar. Brother Deck, long known and loved, had, through various circumstances, fallen under the influence of Bethesda. Much blessed in England and in New Zealand in conversion, of gentle

spirit and godly, he had not the courage to investigate the matter, and fled. But it followed him, and he could not escape from it. A tract by his own son opened his eyes, and shewed him where he was; not only that he had abandoned the principles of brethren and denied the unity of God's assembly—the tract had shewn this—but that he had lost his spiritual communion with God, and entirely forgotten and lost precious truths. He has, with most faithful and subdued spirit, openly acknowledged this: it was beautiful to read. God opened many hearts, and the intelligent brethren have almost all come back, except in two localities. He is himself very happy, and there are thorough-going assemblies everywhere, and new ones have arisen, some rather numerous. There was undiscovered evil in some, and all this was brought to light and put away. Our brother is encouraged and happy. But all is not yet done. The work is spreading in Australia, and there are some rather numerous conversions… After thirty-one days at sea, by Fiji and the Sandwich Islands, and five days and nights upon the railway without leaving the carriage except for meals—and not that always—I came as far as Canada to attend a conference. It was numerously attended, and the Lord's presence was abundantly discerned. Many fresh brethren from the United States were present, and had never experienced such blessing. There was liberty in the Bible readings and they were full of blessing. All have returned blessing and praising God, and we hope that an abiding blessing will flow from it. Not that because there is blessing there may not be conflict upon the path. We have great cause for pain, because an old brother, long blessed in Jamaica, is now disposed to embrace the doctrine of the Restorationists. Our hope is ever that he will be brought back. Those in his

neighbourhood have been warned, and do not accept the doctrine at all. The truth spread in an extraordinary way in the neighbourhood, so that it is very sad. It was discovered at the right time, thank God; God is ever faithful. For long as I think, God's guidance has been lacking.

I relate what is sad just as what is joyful, dear brother; I believe that the communication to brethren of all is strengthening, and produces more fellowship in the Lord, and much more, with hearts faithful before God—not only to send bright accounts, but to share in the whole work of the Lord, to sorrow with the sorrowing ones, to rejoice with them that rejoice, to pray for all. What I fear for brethren is, the world; gradually does it creep in, without one's perceiving it. In general it is a time of blessing, and the work extends wonderfully. The enemy often enters by the back door, because we are occupied at the front door. There is One, His name be praised! who is ever watchful; my confidence is in Him, He nourishes and cares for His assembly as a man his own flesh. What consolation! I can say, weak as I am, He is ever more everything to my soul. What else should He be?

Hearty greetings to all the brethren! God knows if I shall see you yet again, I am not yet clear whether the work will leave me free to go to Europe, as I hoped, before the winter. There is much to do, and I am getting old, only every year affords more and more the motive for praise and thanks to God, that He gives eternity to praise Him more worthily.

Your attached brother in the Lord.

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Dearest ——,—I hardly know when I shall get away. I thought only to visit here, the States (and then New Zealand) being my object, but, arriving, under God's hand I doubt not, work was called for… Stray sheep, there had been no looking after; persons, too, with no hold on brethren in England, and unable to get any, are apt to come over and set up to minister here and make confusion, when labouring with their hands would be much better. However, the brethren he.re have felt the case of a good many scattered ones, and are setting about to look after them, so I trust all will be well… Revival work had left many stranded that, save by the regular operation of grace, now will never be regathered. They may be individually.

The notion of work as pressed by Moody, etc., I believe to be a most mischievous one. That they who are called to it should work devotedly is all clear; that if any one knows to do good, and does not do it, it is sin, is equally clear. We have all to serve. But people are set to work, when they ought, as new-born babes, to be receiving milk for themselves. The consequence is that they are full of themselves, light in their way of working, and Christ's name is dishonoured. In the States generally they have no idea of getting peace but by working, and where sincere in this case dare not stop; with the rest it is a flighty self-sufficient forwardness. The revival work with everybody has nine-tenths of it everywhere come to nothing. In one place I know where two or three hundred were added to the so-called churches; they do not know what to do with them, they are going on in such a way: and mothers, who had mourned over their children being passed by, rejoicing that they made no profession at the season of supposed blessing— just the

same where brethren have had to say to it. Some, no doubt, were converted, but there is a levity in it which is not Christianity. Working is all right when it is with Christ, and serious, when a person is led of the Spirit of God to it, but setting to work is another thing. The whole tone of Christianity suffers by it. I have said to them, I have worked unceasingly forty-nine years. I was set to it as positive ministry four years before: I preached nothing but Christ, and had not peace, and had no business to be in any public ministry. The whole system is a mischievous mistake: it has in the States done immense mischief. Devotedness and unworldliness, I believe to be of the last moment, and that especially in these days. But Martha's running to Jesus was not what Mary's state was, who waited till she was called. God makes all things work together for good, and will this. Still we have to discern the true character of things by the Holy Ghost and the word. Christians who are not content with Christ's approbation may throw themselves into this activity to keep things going, and it may be a trial to some to be in the shade, but Christ's approbation is worth it all. A loose course may more easily gather those that are loose, but they are always connected with the camp, out of which God calls.

As to myself, at my age, I shall hardly return to America, and I may feel anxious to see all I ought to see before I leave. If this carries me into winter—that is, beyond October, I shall hardly, if there be no positive duty, cross the Atlantic till winter storms are over. The earnest care of souls is greatly to be looked for. In the cases I have spoken of, some might have been saved thus from wandering or worldliness. In general there is blessing and an open door: it is the care of the gathered that

lacks. But the joining churches, so-called, has in no way done the work, only maintained them in the greatest inconsistency of profession.

Affectionately yours in the Lord.

Toronto, August 20th, 1876.

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Dear ——,—I see I shall hardly get away before winter, I might start during the winter, but that I should hardly choose unless duty calls. I have been kept longer in Canada than I thought, for my object was the States. We have had two conferences, both blessed; in the first, out of town, more enjoyment of communion, perhaps; in the second, in Montreal, more instruction—a good many fresh souls from the States. But another thing kept me awhile: the loose gatherings which emigrants and others have formed have been nearly broken up among themselves, and several were desirous of coming into communion; and the local brethren, many of them little informed of the facts, were glad of help; and I have been occupied in two or three places with that disagreeable but useful work. Many have seen what it is all about, and are clear, and a good many have come in. I have always found that knowing the blasphemies that were really in question has dissipated the fog they had managed to produce in many minds where there was real conscientiousness. The older gatherings have been sadly neglected. This I have a little attended to also, and all this kept me, and I have not done yet. Meanwhile, conversions continue…

I shall very possibly go after some gatherings in these quarters, and by Ottawa, Montreal, Quebec, Halifax, to Boston and New York, visiting Concord; but this runs

past hundreds of miles, and will take some little time. But I am desirous of returning. I shall hardly return here: if seeing those I ought to see before I leave, it will hardly be before October, and then comes winter.

The Colonies, and much of the States, are a difficult field, in this, that people come out to get on—own land—in a word, the world. I am sure Christ only and His service are worth anything. All else passes away, to say the least—well, if we are not hindered by it here. What I feel anxious about as to brethren is, that they should be devoted, not conformed to this world, which has crucified the Lord of glory; but which grace has visited from on high to take us up there, giving us now our citizenship in heaven, and leading us to wait for the blessed Lord. Nor shall we be weary of the way when we see the Master's face; nor now, if our eye is fixed on Him—sad we may be, but not weary. But there is a sad want of looking after souls—the first confiding commission of Christ—what was on His heart, "Feed my sheep." Peace be with you. Kindest love to the brethren, whom I shall be glad to see again, the Lord favouring my journey.

Affectionately yours in the Lord.

Belleville, September, 1876.

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[From the French.

Deas ——,—You have done well to count upon my interest in you. There is no loss more real, more keenly felt, than that of a beloved wife, mother of your children, the help given by God, the one dear to your heart. We are in a world of suffering and death, but "the Son of God came into it after death, and has conquered it, and

takes part in all our sufferings in the path of His will. It is worth while to be cast down when there is a God “who comforteth those that are cast down.” What grace, when one thinks that tbe high and lofty One who inhabiteth eternity stoops to think—and that with infinite tenderness—of all our trials and of all our infirmities; and that even His Spirit, who dwells in us in the midst of these infirmities, intercedes in us when we know not what we ought to ask! Besides, He makes all things work together for good to those who love Him. If rest were down here, it would be another thing; but it is not so. We are on a pilgrimage, and God makes us feel it in our circumstances. He detaches us from what is dearest down here; He weans us, and thus, without being aware of it, we ripen for heaven. There is a wonderful difference between a soul which is weaned and whose will has been broken and made subject, and one which, while seeking to do right, does it according to its own will. Then, dear——, God will guide you. He takes knowledge of your difficulties; I am thinking especially of your children. Only keep close to Him, consult Him; spread out before Him your difficulties and your requests; above all, dwell with Him in your soul, feeding on the Bread of life. This sustains us, fills our hearts and affections, and we go on satisfied. The peace of God, which passes all understanding, keeps the heart.

The account which you have given me of the details of the work has much interested me. I do not know, but I doubt whether this will continue. If the brethren do not continue to keep honestly outside the camp, they will not be borne with very long. However, God is acting in the present day in such a remarkable way, that it is hard to say what the consequences will be. I only hope that

these dear brethren will hold themselves, spiritually and in their individual walk, outside the world-church, the camp. I have always said—the feet in the narrow path; the heart as wide as possible. If we cannot tell out all the truth which is suitable to those to whom we speak, we cannot be faithful. When Moses pitched his tabernacle outside the camp, those who sought the Lord went thither. Joshua departed not from it; Moses carried the testimony to those who were in the camp. In our spiritual and heavenly life—for Joshua is the heavenly Christ—we can by no means return to the camp; we are in the tabernacle pitched outside; we carry the testimony. But Moses went into it, caring for the interests of the people, while not being of them. We cannot mix ourselves up with evil and testify against those who are in it. But grace and patience are needful. "If thou take forth," God said to Jeremiah (chap, 15), "the precious from the vile, thou shalt be as my mouth." This verse acted powerfully upon my mind fifty years ago, when I began; for in a few days it will be fifty years since I left the camp.

Peace be with you, dear brother; may the Lord sustain you, and keep your dear children under the shadow of His wing.

Belleville, September 2lst.

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My dear Brother,—I was very glad to get your letter, for though I was but a short time in Australia, I never lose toy interest in brethren I have seen—I trust, not in those I have not seen: and I write quite as much in the hope I shall hear again as from having much to tell you of. What I hear is in general happy. So that we have reason

to be thankful, but faith might look for much more. What is wanting is care for souls when converted, and pastors —little prayed for. The idea of converting shiners absorbs the mind. We have had two conferences, one out of the town, Brantford, the other in Montreal: the first, most enjoyable communion with many new souls from the States, the second more instruction, and many from outside at the lectures; in both there was much blessing. I have been kept by all this longer in Canada than I thought. I shall hardly get to England before winter, as I suppose I must get to Boston and New York before leaving.

Detroit, 1876.

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[From the French

Dear Sister,—I write these few lines to express to you my cordial sympathy, for I have just now heard that you have lost your dear husband. This news has moved me deeply, and how much more must it have you. I knew him a long time before you knew him; he was still quite young, in his father's house, and I was interested in a journey which he took into Germany in search of a situation as tutor, and in which he did not succeed. God had provided a better work for him. When he returned home, there was a struggle in his soul between the call of the Lord and his duty towards his parents, who had made many sacrifices for his education. At length, during a storm on the lake of Neuchatel, which he was crossing to visit one of his sisters, being at the point of perishing, he felt he must devote himself to the work of the Lord. When he returned home he told his mother so.... Since then you have known him better than I,

though our intercourse has always been full of love, and I was heartily attached to him, so that this blow from the hand of the Lord touches me deeply. The work of the Lord, too, in a field where, as far as we can see, few will be able to replace him, is apparently left without help. For the work, for yourself, we must look to the Lord. Your part now is to have entire confidence in Him, the Father of the fatherless, and the Husband of the widow. Your large family gives you the opportunity of glorifying the Lord much, because you have so many things to trust Him about. He seeks this confidence. If the heart of man loves confidence, much more does the heart of the Lord, for He is goodness itself. Commit to Me, He says, your widows and your fatherless. And not only has the Lord Jesus compassion, but circumstances awaken His pity, as in the case of the son of the widow of Nain, and when He saw the crowds who were as sheep with6ut a shepherd. Your task is great, but it is not too much for the goodness of the Lord. By this stroke He can make a comfort and support of your children themselves. But your trust must be in the Lord, for yourself and for everything.

I did not intend, dear sister, to say so much to you, being on a journey in a village in Canada, but I would not and could not receive the news of the departure of your husband without expressing how I participate in your mourning and loss. For him it is joy and peace, for you and your children it is separation from that which is most dear, but to find solitude with God. But God is sufficient for everything, and when sin brought in death, trial and mourning, the Conqueror of death and of the enemy afterwards entered, become man to participate in all and to give us a hope, which has made a gain of

death itself—a perfectly certain hope, a love from which nothing can separate us.

Your brother in the Lord.

October, 1876.

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[From the French.

Very dear Brother,—I have followed all that is going on in —— with unfailing interest; but my part in this painful story has been rather to be with God than to busy myself with men.... Unless called by God, I would not directly enter into the difficulties of assemblies; I think this is done rather too much, while it is a question of arousing the conscience of the assembly which is disturbed. I grant that an assembly may avail itself with advantage of the advice of a brother more experienced in divine things, and I fully recognise that we are all one, and that if one suffers, all suffer with him. What I fear is lest individual influence should take the place of the awakening of the conscience of the assembly. I have full confidence that this painful commotion will turn to the profit of the brethren. God's hand will be recognised, and there will be more seriousness. Truths which have been a little neglected will come to mind, worldliness will be judged—everything by which the Holy Spirit has been grieved—dependence on the grace in which we stand will be more felt. What one has to look to is that souls do not lose their way in the conflict, and leave the Lord's path.

I have heard that there has been a separation at——. Grace, patience, and firmness will be needed to meet it; firmness, especially in the walk of those who, I believe,

left the meeting-room, and are not under the influence of ——; firmness too with regard to those who have retained the room; but expression of sorrow towards those who are led, and meekness and patience with all. It is plain that the separation is an evil, and this offence has been committed under the influence of those who were not of the assembly. Romans 16:17 clearly shews us our path in this case, and 2 Thessalonians 3:10 shews the spirit in which we should act, in order that all may be brought back, and that not one may be misled altogether, and in a permanent way. But all this, in whomsoever it may be, is not of yesterday; and there has been too much weakness, too little spirituality in general, for it to be a matter of astonishment if God should chasten. This is why those who suffer from it ought to be before Him, owning His hand; and He who has wounded will heal. The Lord did not take the cup which He had to drink for us from man, nor from Satan, but from His Father's hand. This, in what concerns us, sweetens the bitterness and sorrow, and also makes us more humble and more serious; then we can pray for others. I have confidence in the Lord that He will restore order and peace: for some, this may not be just yet; but in order to this, those who are right must carry themselves graciously, considering that it is the hand of God, but with firmness in rejecting the schism, and making those who caused it feel that it is no light thing to have done. I have already said that this should be done with sorrow of heart, a thing far removed from haughtiness and hatred. May God Himself work by His grace in your midst…

October, 1876.

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My dear Brother,—As regards ——, I do not pretend to judge of the matter with the knowledge I have of the facts. There are many things to think of in such cases; people may be wrong, yet not wisely dealt with. Do you be calm and leave it to the Lord. He knows how to justify us where judgment is unrighteous, and shew us our wrong where we have failed; and, with Him, the rest is of very little matter. I rather object to brothers being called in to settle things. I quite recognise that we are all one, and that brethren in an assembly can seek, and have a right to, the assistance of any brother who is a man of counsel in communion with the Lord. But it must be getting the conscience of the assembly right, not settling it for them; for if the other be not done, nothing is really settled. So Paul acted. And we must have patience to separate the precious from the vile. The great thing is to get the consciences of all fully before God. There are those who did not go with those who condemned you, but you must not lean on this, but condemn yourself wherever God does not approve your way of acting. Never mind, if others have made mistakes. It is one of the chief sorrows of one's christian life. But God is above all, and always right, and will bring out things as they ought to be, without us, and so best. It puts us in our place of nothingness—our true place. The church of God has failed; but God only the more glorified, and the Lord, in it; and so in us. Even in details, Paul could say, "I stand in doubt of you," and then, "I have confidence in you through the Lord." We ought to be all perfect, but we are not, and if we are, the church is not, so God cannot unfold and display all His goodness and glory in it. I know nothing more sad than the end of Acts; yet Paul could say, "This shall turn to my salvation," and "the things which happened unto me

have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel." And I have always found reason to humble myself in these cases. Sorrow is a good thing, and makes God a more abundant source of joy. Of the present details, I am, of course, in considerable measure ignorant; but God makes everything work together for good to them who love Him.

If war comes on, I may be in England sooner than I thought. I have been a good while anxious to get there, though desirous of finishing here first and feeling it right; and though much longer in Canada than I thought, my visit, I believe, has not been without benefit. The Lord has been graciously with me from San Francisco to this place. May His savour be with His unworthy servant, whether it be an open door unfilled at Troas, or fightings and fears in Macedonia. I think I may say I never knew anything but sorrow as my portion, though with ceaseless mercies, but rejoice in it all, though I see, and rejoice in seeing, weakness and infirmity in myself all through, and what I now judge as fault. Take heart and be patient— "strengthened with all might according to his glorious power unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness."

Your affectionate brother

In Christ our Lord.

We have much to be thankful for in ——, though many a withered or cankered leaf of former work has fallen off.

Quebec, November 20th.

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Dearest ——,— … The Lord has been gracious to the ——, for though some have been left aside, the mass of

the brethren having been firm, the body, through the Lord's great mercy, is preserved, and it is only a certain number who have put themselves out, and already some are coming back.—— is still on the gridiron; but the Lord is turning, though by a sore discipline, all to good. I remember him a pedlar, godly and useful; now he is a comparatively wealthy wholesale merchant, and upset; that is really his history. ——was very much blessed as an evangelist, turned to the trade in wine, and lost proportionately spiritually. It was a dreadful bane to many; they used to sell their crops to make three shillings and sixpence so called, and all was well; the tariff was lowered, they made wine, employed brethren to sell it, and it was the ruin of more than one. I trust the gracious Lord will be a repairer of breaches.

For myself, I feel more quiet here; the blessing on the work is evident, and generally the framework is getting on solid ground… My work in Canada I felt provisional; I was doing it because needed, and because thus I had to do it. Still I can look back on it with thankfulness to the Lord. I visited a quantity of gatherings where others had been working besides the chief centres which I meant to visit. They had been greatly left to themselves, and were cheered and refreshed so far… I feel thankful for my journey, though it has delayed my getting to England, and I felt in a suspended state, doing not my own purposed work all the time. My heart was towards England much, all the time in Canada: now working where I purposed working. I wait the time the Lord may give for my return. I feel a call in England, but it must not be ease or Jerusalem. May the Lord graciously guide me in everything— I say me, for He will surely make all things work together for good. There are subjects I have

on my heart to treat in connection with the state of the church in general. Things are going on pretty rapidly as to the ecclesiastical state, and it is well that all the light that may lead them in the breaking up should be there. The brethren—or God I doubt not in grace working in them, has laid the basis of what should be in principle; but a more general breaking up is going on, a good deal of light gone out, and we need what shall help people generally. If brethren get worldly they will be nought, set aside, or a hindrance; and they must now care for sheep without a shepherd, and what may gather, and. be a refuge for souls when the foundations are casting down. I want to. see— both pastorally, and as to the truth—caring for souls. Activity is everywhere: this, not any direct blessing, is the effect of Moody's work. Fifty years ago that was more in brethren's hands—efficient lasting work they have to look to.

Boston, November 29th.

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To the same.]

Dearest——,—My date—a rare thing—will say where I am. I felt, as I have said, on the perch in Canada, but, thank God, I get constantly fresh testimony to blessing from my visits… So that though I was going as called for, more than any previously set purpose, I am comforted by the Lord's goodness. But I still feel, though peacefully working here, my work is more sedentary now; and then it would be in England, without precluding visits according to my ability. I have happy news from Holland.

I doubt the wisdom of making this young person ask her father's leave, he being unconverted. If it is professedly a question of owning Christ, a person must "hate" father

and mother. I know not who gave this advice. The letter seems a strange one: if it was merely a question of waiting awhile, she fully intending to do it when she had an opportunity, she might, I think, have been let in, but I do not see why she should not have been baptised. The case was not, I think, dealt wisely with. As to any busy activity of baptist brethren, we have only to let it pass: I do not believe it to be of God, but I believe it to be of God to bear with it, profitless as it may be.

Here the work is individual, no preaching does much—may help those who hear, but it is not so the work goes on: it is in reading meetings and personal intercourse, and this has gone on with blessing, and I trust is doing so… What is important for brethren is not to take the world for granted and be conformed to it. I used to say fifty years ago that God's renewed actings in grace, revivals, in the old sense, were like fresh water poured on the ground; the next step was mud mixture: only I hoped since that the Lord might come before it happened. It was so with Christianity at the beginning; but that is the question for brethren now. The first were a testimony for separation; that brought in many. Are they so now? is the question; not speculating about Philadelphia. But I trust the Lord. But brethren's work has spread out far and wide beyond them as an effect, and these products of it are a hindrance. At the beginning it was faith acting on the word—conscience; now it is looking to see the state and effect. But while conscious of all around us, we have to go like a horse with blinkers, looking straight forward, undistracted, an afflicted and poor people that call upon the name of the Lord. He remains the same, and the word remains the same.

Affectionately yours in Him.

Boston, December 22nd.

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[From the Italian.

Dear Brother,—It rejoices me much to learn that the faithful Lord has turned your thoughts and your steps in the direction of brethren, or rather, as I believe, of the path appointed by God. I own fully that it is a question of obedience to the word of God, not of walking with me, or anybody else, but positively to do the will of God. At first, when I left the Episcopal church, there was no one with whom I could walk; I was led on and guided simply by the word of God. Afterwards four of us met together; I thought only of satisfying my conscience according to the word of God. The work extended, and that everywhere, and I am deeply convinced that it is a testimony which God Himself has raised up for these last days. I have been walking in this way for fifty years; I have seen weakness in myself, and mistakes, I do not doubt, in the way of walking; but I have never doubted for a moment that it is the work of God. But it is needful that each one should be convinced of this for himself by the word of God. It is a path of faith, and faith only can sustain the soul in this path; but I know that the peace, the approval of God are there; and those who walk in it by faith are made happy by them. I hope that my love for the brethren with whom I cannot walk will be always increasing. We cannot realise the blessings which belong to us if we do not comprehend all the saints in our christian affections. (Eph. 3:18.) Not to walk with them in a path that is not according to the word is not saying that one does not love them, but just the contrary.

I want no more than this, that you should search the word of God in His presence, and He will certainly guide you. Glad as I should be to find you in the path which I believe to be that of God, I shall not cease to love you, even though you should condemn me: it is a delight to me to know that God has blessed you in your labours amongst these dear souls in Italy.

It was the unity of the assembly of God, of those who are united to Christ by the Holy Ghost, which forced me to leave the Anglican church, and prevented me from joining any other; and I have found in the word of God all the directions needed for walking according to the will of God, amid the ruin and confusion which surrounds us. I own then every true Christian as a member of the body of Christ, but I cannot walk with them when they do not walk according to the will of God, according to the word. May our God bless your soul, and your labours, and may He lead you in the path of Christ and of faith, the “good and acceptable and perfect will of God”! He is blessing the work in this place; many are sounding the word, and the expectation of the Lord is continually on the increase.

Your affectionate brother.

New York, March 5th, 1877.

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My dear Brother,—I have had extra work with replying on the Bible to Free Church professional infidelity in Scotland. I only wish I could do it better. I have had pleasure in doing it, but wish I could do it better. Faith.in the word is the operation of God’s Spirit giving it power, and I find it—with the deepest conviction of the whole, as a whole, being of God, and stamped with this

character in the most marvellous way —difficult to bring the proofs out to many minds; but it comforts and strengthens those who have eyes to see, and God can open the eyes of others. I have sent some rapid papers to ——, and have some more in hand. Meanwhile I have been writing on James for the Italians, and this I could profit by myself.

New York, 1877.

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Dear——,—It is a long while since I wrote to you… I still think of returning to Europe when winter storms are over. The progress of infidelity and evil made me anxious to be back. Not that I delude myself by fancying I could do much; but a testimony, however feeble, is a trumpet to which the Lord answers, at least for His. But I have been sending an article to ——, who wrote to me for it, which has a little quieted my spirit in that direction; a paper written at his request in great haste, that is for immediate use, but which I hope may be so far a testimony. There are other points I see plainly coming up, hidden in general evangelicalism, but which is becoming a root of great evil. The great affair is to hold fast the simplicity that is in Christ: then all goes in clear atmosphere of life and health—if brethren are only practical and devoted, and serve. I dread too much writing, and thinking brethren are something; if they do, God will make nothing of them. Do they say all is in ruins? Well, do they take part in it as Daniel did, or do they fancy they are going to be something out of it, and so deny that it is so? The ruin is our ruin if we are identified with Christ’s glory in the world. We may, if enabled, separate the precious from the vile, and if so be

blessed in faithfulness; if continuing humble, the Head can never fail those who wait on Him. I find the word ever opening up, and new light opening into those vistas which come from and reach God Himself. One does get more at home in these things as one grows old; yet we have it after all only as' the thing revealed, not the thing itself, though through the Holy Ghost we realise what is revealed, have the witness in ourselves. Still, we wait for the thing itself, for Him who has loved us. May He be with us!

The work in New York and all around is very interesting, a great deal of inquiry and desire for the word… A great deal of the work goes on in reading meetings, though in New York they hear the gospel with interest. I hope in England this will not be neglected… Best I should be glad of, but work on till the Lord gives it to me. I had to read infidelity at Boston, but it was not new to me. But I also read two books on man's antiquity, of the Evans and Lubbock school; but while the word of God is ever, and more and more God's word to me, I found these books, though crack books, a total failure on the points they drive at, not to say that each upsets the other.

Kindest love to the brethren, whom I hope, the Lord helping me, to see, ere very long. We have had a long hard winter, but after a long spell of very fine weather we are again in snow.

1877.

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My dear Brother,—I got your letter and enclosures with some thirty others, besides MSS. and books to answer. I see the Lord working through wisdom and unwisdom, to accomplish His own gracious purposes, where He is in

the main honestly sought. While quite admitting that a brother may give counsel, and most usefully, I dread brethren coming to settle things, because the conscience of the assembly is not set in exercise. Paul did not go, but roused the conscience of the assembly. I have seen it in France, and not with blessing always… I look to the Lord through it all—there are other places too —and feel peaceful as to them all as trusting Him.

Do you trust the Lord as to your service as to the money? Do not seek to get money to give, but let it flow naturally, and give it under God's guidance, in seeking His face as a responsible service. To stir up others to give is quite a distinct service. Merely referring to a particular want privately is another thing again. All right that assemblies should send to whomsoever they see in need or interested in the work. If I or any one feel disposed to give my money to you to give away for a good reason before the Lord, I am perfectly free to do it; perfect liberty as to both if done under divine guidance. Individuals are free, and so presented in scripture, and assemblies are free. There may be right motives or wrong ones for entrusting it to another to distribute. Do not seek it, though free of course to mention individual cases of need to any: but let the wisdom of love guide you in what you do receive. I have given all three ways—directly, through a brother, and as in an assembly, and I have not seen anything to shake me in any of them as yet, having scriptural reasons I think for all.

Halifax, N.S., March 21st, 1877.

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Dearest,—I am thinking of England, though there are many places here where I shall regret to see their face

no more, as is probable. But so it must be here below. But there remains a rest when all will be gathered—a blessed rest of God… As to a missionary register, I should oppose it with all my energies. As long as brethren are an afflicted and poor people they will be blessed, and serving for God's approbation; if they begin to recount their own deeds and prowess they will sink to the level of the bodies who think of themselves, and whose accounts are really distressing and not true. They will be a sect like others, and have lost their own proper testimony. The truth they have had is spreading outside them, and the mere possession of this will not do. They must be a separate people, purified to Himself, zealous of good works. I do not want them to think themselves so. I am rather afraid of all this talking about Philadelphia. When John Newton published his account of A. B. C. Christians, one wrote to him he found himself in C. Newton replied there was one trait he had forgotten, that such an one never knew himself as such. God resists the proud, and gives grace to the humble, I have no doubt the brethren have been used to bring out the testimony of God in these last days. I have always hoped and prayed the Lord might come before they failed, as everything since Adam has done. They will lose it if they are not lowly. An absence of towards three years enables one to look at it. It is not a question of particular failure, but of change of spirit; but I trust the Lord.

Halifax, March 23rd.

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To the same.]

Dearest Brother,— … I have a letter from poor——, who is naturally in deep sorrow. We have had a similar case in Germany. For my own part, the present infidelity seems to me superficial, but we know that only God by His grace can keep the heart straight. I find when examining their arguments they are superficial—I do not say untrue: truth rests on other grounds. On the antiquity of man question there is a capital book by a man named Southall, of Virginia, thoroughly versed in their favourite subjects, and has pulled them all to pieces. I had read the principal books—Geikie, Evans, Procter, etc.— and come to the same conclusion, noting them, but Southall is master of the subject. Smith's article, which merely copies the learned Germans, is a very poor one. Yet the state of things is very serious, but it is a break up of that which can be moved, that that which cannot be moved may remain, and the word of God abides for ever. The brethren have the place, if God gives them grace to use it, of maintaining the testimony to the truth, not by extraordinary learning, which is very rare (reading is not), but by holding the truth of God from Himself, faith, and knowing the scriptures, which are able to make wise unto salvation.

I do not like brethren from outside meddling in sorrows of gatherings to settle them. God's way is to rouse the conscience of the gathering itself. Advice, or stirring up the conscience, they may be used in, but all settlings I have seen have done mischief, because not God's way.

Halifax, April 2nd.

My dear. Brother,—I was most glad to hear of the dear saints in Australia. Ere this you will have had the arrival of ——, who has been blessed in England, and I trust

may be out there also. I am thankful to see the spiritual energy which has at heart to go forth and serve the Lord in what is not nature and habit's home. I am, though still hard at it, getting too old for it, but happy in the thought of drawing near home. "Now is our salvation nearer than when we believed," a happy thought! You will be glad to hear the Lord is working here, too. At Halifax, which I visited lately, weekly, while I was there, souls were added to the assembly, and others found peace; and the doors are opening there and in New Brunswick.

There is a fresh stir among different denominations. Presbyterians, Methodists, and now Baptists, have consulted at their conventions how to hinder the progress of Plymouthism, and we have of course therewith writings against us. One cannot say the word grows mightily, but it grows. The testimony is before men's consciences, and they take notice of it. The Lord's coming also is much more before people's minds; the testimony as to it spreads considerably. What I long for, and some little pray for, is that the brethren may be devoted, and a real testimony, as "men that wait for their Lord when he shall return from the wedding, that when he cometh and knocketh they may open to him immediately." How all will appear vanity then that is not Himself and His glory! We ought to realise this more now.

I am not surprised at ——. There is really no common or middle ground between faithfulness and loose brethren. They go with the camp when they know it is all wrong. When once there is compromise all is given up: compromise with evil is admitting evil. Truth and truthfulness is always itself, and ceases to be itself when it is not that; though it should be in no haughty spirit,

but in lowliness and obedience. It seems to me that, though here or there it may flourish through an individual, its day as such is over. Conversions may take place by individual action, but the testimony is gone, that is, it is getting its true place. It suffices to hinder those who are of a like spirit and are glad of a hindrance. But the testimony of God is with faithfulness. May we only be faithful! …

Infidelity has broken out in the Free Kirk of Scotland; the foundations of human systems are breaking down everywhere: the word of God abides for ever. What a thought that when the Saviour comes, He will make us sit down to meat, and gird Himself in those heavenly places, and come forth and serve us! But to be with Him and like Him too is our everlasting joy. My spirit has been wearied lately with reading these infidel papers, which they had asked me to answer; but it has only made the word, and the truth that God and the living word has given to us, more precious to me. The poverty and one-sidedness of these poor but evil reasoners is striking. But faith is of God.

Ever yours affectionately in the Lord, and always glad to hear of the work.

To the same.]

I was very glad to hear of you all, and of the work in Australia. I am also very thankful that our dear brother —— not only has laboured, but been blessed… Not that labourers are not wanting in England, and indeed everywhere, as the Lord has told us. It must be in combat we get on. It was so with the blessed Lord Himself, perfect in all His ways, so that He gave assuredly no occasion, as we sometimes may, to the

enemy— none; yet they would easily find occasions of reproach. But we have actually difficulties such as you speak of, those who preach Christ, but do not really take His yoke. I do not ask any one to join or own brethren, as they speak, but I do look to their full submission to the yoke of Christ. I have been struck lately how much the Epistle of James looks to self-will to be done with and broken, that we may be perfect and complete in all the will of God… You will be glad to hear that here the work proceeds cheeringly. There is great inquiry into the word… God is evidently working all around, and indeed in other places; the brethren are happy, and labour according to their gift: it is a happy feature of the work here. The coming of the Lord is evidently spreading, and taking effect in souls. Infidelity meanwhile raises its head… But we wait for the rest that remains. I am content to labour, most thankful to be permitted to do so, but my heart longs for it too. Here, but from the happiest cause, as at Boston, the labour is very severe, and from distances, the hours late; but it is all well…

Ever, dear brother,

Affectionately yours in the Lord.

1877.

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My dear Brother,—I have been excessively occupied, which has delayed my writing. I hardly think I shall get west again, but there is more possibility of it than there was. I had a strong pressure on my spirit as to being in Europe, to do what I could as a testimony against the flood of infidelity that presses all around. Meanwhile, it has broken out in the Free Kirk of Scotland, so that the whole question of the authority of the Bible is in

question there. I was sent to for an article for the Bible Herald, and I have sent, and am sending an article to it. It holds up the standard on divine ground, if there be no hope of convincing those already infidel. This has somewhat —though done hurriedly in the midst of constant work, perhaps overwork, at Boston—quieted my spirit in this direction. I have held up the flag, or, to use the scripture figure, blown the trumpet, and I hope, as He promised when they did so, the Lord may appear, acting in grace. I feel how utterly powerless I am, indeed, in certain respects anybody can be, because the eyes with which we see what is divine the adversaries of the truth have not got. Still the Lord can work, as He has promised, if the trumpet be blown. Whatever comes, unless the Free Kirk act decidedly, its influence is gone for all godly people…

Affectionately yours in the Lord. 1877.

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[From the French.

Very dear Brother,—We know well the system of the Adventists in the United States… They are numerous but divided. They had announced the coming of the Lord for a day named in 1844, which has failed. The greater part are entirely removed from all the truths of Christianity: one party amongst them, more orthodox—separate in the large towns, but in small localities walking together. But all hold the darkest errors. We do not go to heaven at all: we sleep until Christ comes; then He establishes His reign in resurrection on the earth, and then only we have eternal life, which is not possessed now at all; we have only the promise of it. That is the doctrine of those who have the least departed from the truth. The others

deny the immortality of the soul, and a good number amongst them almost all christian truths. A small section wish to maintain the observance of the sabbath on the seventh day of the week, but I do not think they are numerous.... The mass of Adventists is composed of the worst heretics of the country, denying at bottom all that is important in Christianity, and really infidel... I hope the brethren will avoid them... May God keep them in His goodness.

Ottawa, June 4th, 1877.

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[From the German.

Dear Brother,— I have long delayed answering your affectionate letter, not at all from indifference, but from press of work. Three meetings as a rule daily, long journeys, together with correspondence which required attention because it concerned the state of assemblies, and that for six weeks, and also because of the infidelity which has appeared in the Free Church, articles having been sent me that I might write on the subject and offer some opposition. Finally I was quite overcome and wearied by work. I now purpose to depart for Europe on Saturday, God willing, embarking at Quebec, and if God in His unfailing goodness grant a quiet passage, I hope to obtain some rest. The position of the brethren is in some slight respects altered. There is an acknowledgment here in the United States of their acquaintance with the word such as nowhere else. They are not the less opposed to us; but they buy the books, and come in numbers to the Bible readings: they feel they must reckon with us, as they say. The Presbyterians, the Methodists, the Baptists, are minded

to oppose. The first are unanimous, the ministers, as everywhere, opposing our work, and some write about it: the remainder study much what this (to them) new movement means. The godly ones are discontented with the sermons, and some, like Moody, endeavour to help by a strenuous effort of activity… But I let all these movements pass. The truth is spreading; that truth of the Holy Spirit's presence consequent upon the Lord being glorified, for that He as Son of man, glorified God on the cross; and the coming of the Lord. These are the fundamental truths of the gospel, based upon the finished work of Christ. Our controversy is essentially with unbelievers—that I deeply feel—and with the thought that the incarnation was a union of the Lord with humanity, the human race; because, on the contrary, it is lost, and our union is with the glorified Man at God's right hand, and thus of believers only through the Holy Ghost. The two springs are in Germany, but they are spreading in Europe and in America. But we are at the end of days. For some time the coming of the Lord has wrought in souls far and wide, and the doctrine is spreading wonderfully.

My mind is much occupied with this controversy, not that I believe I can do much to deliver unbelievers: I do not think so at all. But I hope, if God wills, by His grace, to establish the weak and troubled ones. We must follow holiness and truth, with energy and constancy; for everything and all will be tested. Many indeed celebrated ones vanish in the fight, and some thought not of are found to love the Lord. Greet all the dear brethren warmly. It may be that I shall see you yet again; God knows. All is haste, and I must spend some time in England. It will soon be three years since I was

there, and it was but for a short time. Assure —— of my hearty sympathy. It is nothing if the Lord Himself do not make up for such a loss. He ploughs up the heart, but only to sow good seed. With cordial love.

Your attached brother.

June 7th, 1877.

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Dearest——,—Your letter gave me comfort, because I see you yourself are getting into liberty. I think there are many who are not, where even it is not apparent, because there is no pressure on the conscience from without, and no exercise of it much within. But grace has set us in Christ before God. Holiness by law will not do; it is not holiness…

We had a very calm passage, for I continue my letter from Dublin, as you see. We broke bread, and——had preaching every evening but the first and second and the last, as we were approaching Lough Foyle… We went on to Liverpool, and had a telegram that dear Mrs.—— was to be buried yesterday, so started the next morning. We had a peaceful and happy meeting… So goes this world, but life and death are only parts of the same passage, and life far the hardest of the two; for to die is to go to Him, to live to be present in the body, but absent from Him. Still it is a privilege to represent Him in this world; but who is sufficient for it? for, if we walk tolerably, still if the heart is not full of Christ, what issues from it is not properly from Him; there is not the spiritual intelligence of what suits—"Worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing."

There is plenty of work in America, and my heart longed to see the brethren in the west again, but it could not well be; but the Lord sees them always, and I reckon upon His grace for them. I trust I shall hear of them. The brethren here are at peace and happy, thank God. Still there ought to be more power, and loose activity is rife enough, though as to gatherings there is nothing solid among them… It is of all importance to keep a large heart, with the deep conviction that a close following of Christ ourselves can alone maintain a clear testimony, alone is faithfulness. My impression is they want being fed with Christ in England, but the personal faith which feeds on Him alone keeps the soul, and keeps it in true progress.

Do not be afraid of full grace. Be well sure that does not mar holiness; whatever deadens the conscience does, but this does not. Would a child's sense of a mother's love weaken its desire to please her? And as to power which we need, in grace alone it is found: then press consistency with our calling as much as you please, you cannot do better. Fellowship in the heart with Christ keeps the sense of our standing in Christ steady, and is the saving power of the heart practically in our walk. May He—oh, may He keep us near Himself!

But I must close. I expect (D.V.) to go to London the coming week, and July 9th or 10th turn north for a meeting, and to visit various gatherings; but I look for leisure for study work, when the Lord grants it me. I trust there was blessing in Canada from my last visit, but it is that that must be continually renewed to go on well: we cannot live on yesterday's manna. My voyage has rested me a little, for I was quite knocked up, and I am at work pretty much as usual. Thankful for all the

kindness received in Canada, and the Lord's goodness to me wherever I have been, looking to His grace to occupy till He comes, and then see Himself—infinite grace!—and all perfect, and so infinite rest, God's rest.

Ever affectionately yours, dear brother, with thanks for frequent care in love. Christ be with you.

Dublin, June 23rd.

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Beloved Brother,—My answer has been long delayed, but I have been on the ocean, and towards the end in Canada, had three meetings a day, and could only just get through them; but I was fully interested in your account of the work. Infidelity is rampant here, and the question is daily becoming more and more, Christianity or antichristianity; and so as to the word of God. But we have only to work on. "Let thine eyes look right on," it is written.

As to "my body which is broken for you"; as "broken" is not, I suppose, in scripture, it is well to avoid it: the bread was clearly broken, and as a sign of death I do not doubt, and the blood taken as shed; and this I think essential to the meaning of the ordinance; nor does the word therefore trouble me, because the sense is true and essential; and I think "a bone of him shall not be broken" misapplied, with you: and I should insist on the thought that it is shed blood, and that the bread should be broken, a sign that it was Christ's death. It is being given as one in whose life, so to speak, a breach was made by death; and care must be taken in losing the word, that the sense of the thing be not lost. Criticism in divine things is dangerous ground for the soul, and

resting on words where things are in question. But scripture is wiser than we are, even in language…

The Lord be with you! May He keep us single-eyed and simple, looking to Him! We shall soon find, what we know to be true, that He is all. The saints, thank God, are far more looking for Him—I do not mean merely those in communion— than they were. Holiness is closely connected with the glory He is in, and that we shall be with Him in it when He comes, everywhere in the New Testament.

Your affectionate brother in Christ.

June, 1877.

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* * * The worship that involves priesthood, though true, is not of the highest kind. It is worshipping God as such, and not the Father. The former is treated of in Hebrews, where priesthood is found, and looks for mercy and grace to help from a throne of grace. We draw near, having boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus; but it is drawing nigh, more than properly worship. No doubt we worship and adore there, and cannot but do so; but drawing nigh is what characterises the Epistle to the Hebrews. Can a man draw nigh to God? Israel could not. We can in the holiest, and find mercy and grace to help in time of need.

What I said as to not needing a priest was this, that Christ does not now exercise His priesthood for our sins who go into the holiest. That priesthood in the Hebrews is not for our sins (chap. 2:17 is now finished and over), because we have no more conscience of sins, in that by one offering He has perfected us for ever. It is in respect

of grace to help us in time of need. He is as Priest between us and God, in that we are looked at as feeble creatures on earth, and He appears for us in the presence of God on high. In the doctrine of Hebrews we are never in Christ, or united to Him. The word even for worshippers in the Hebrews is not the same as in John 4. It alludes to service among the Jews only, as only a shadow of good things to come, not the image.

July, 1877.

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Dear Miss——,—Mr.——'s objection is the common one of loose brethren, but the question is elsewhere than where he has put it. What does scripture say about it? Whether men carry out successfully is a grave question for their consciences, but has nothing to do with what is right. I asked myself this question years and years ago, How if all this should fail? Well, I said it would prove I was a bad workman as far as I was concerned in it: but there it is in scripture just where it was, and that is what is to govern us. 1 Corinthians 12 clearly states this unity of the body on earth. Besides the whole teaching of scripture. But the answer as to circumstances is clear. The ground is not the wisdom of a set of individuals, but the promise that where they are gathered to His name He will be in the midst of them. And I have always found that respecting the action of an assembly primâ facie is the way of wisdom and what God owns. And Mr. —— forgets that the fact, that we are all one body, gives the title to communicate and remonstrate if called for, and in an extreme case, where evil is deliberately allowed, to disown the meeting altogether. The loose brethren have given up the truth of the unity of the body on earth and

have gone back into the camp, and are mostly Independents without a regular minister, or merged in a general looseness that has spread everywhere. But this has not changed the word of God.

Yours sincerely in Him.

Leeds, July 27th, 1877.

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Dearest——,—I was very glad to hear of——. The Lord can of course take a candlestick away, but with a little patience we will always find the Lord meet us with blessing. He only blesses. No doubt righteous judgment will come, but still as love and revealed as love, His only work is to bless. I trust all may go on there with blessing.

Here infidelity is rampant. McCosh has warned the Free Church of Scotland that it is a crisis, as I told them, which they denied, and recommends the rationalists to leave, but they are too cunning and not honest enough for that. But young men who go to study at the universities are every way in danger now. The work goes on, and doors are pretty generally open. Here we are in general getting on happily. What pressed on me as to return here (two things) I feel was of God. I have had, and still I suppose shall have, to do with infidelity; and here in London——'s persistence in trying to keep gatherings in London unity, which I warned him long ago would break down, did so while I was away; and instead of quietly letting meetings really outside drop into their own responsibility, the whole thing had to be constituted on some known basis, and before I returned they had high discussions as to what is London and what is not, and then came a not surprising thought, to make

independent meetings of all. It was drifting into that. But in general there is a happy spirit among the brethren and growing confidence, and patience under the Lord's grace, I do not doubt, will conduct us into a happier local bond than ever.

Morally and spiritually the brethren are getting on happily: only there have been a good many cases of discipline, but— what I am very thankful for— restorations… Meanwhile, thank God, positive work goes on, and there is hunger for the word. The brethren are in a new position: the world and the church's eye is upon them. I had a letter from a politico-religious journal of Paris (the editor a serious man) to know what they are and what is their work.33 It is felt we have gospel and scripture. Now comes for me the anxiety— living up to the testimony, so that it may be a real one. What use is full doctrine, blessed as it is, if the saints walk [as if] full truth and worldliness can go together? It is worse than nothing. And as numbers increase, and men of business getting on in the world come in, it is very hard to keep it out. The Independents are generally —at any rate, their clergy—sunk in infidelity: the rest ritualist or time-serving; but the Spirit of God is working manifestly. We need labourers, but we need, above all, more looking to God.

If you are troubled by objectors as to the age of man, there is a book published at Philadelphia by Lippincott, Southall on "The Recent Origin of Man," who has made mincemeat of the Lyells, Lubbocks, Geikies, Evans', and company, and is thoroughly versed in the subject—a much more complete thing than your Blending Lights. I had read enough to throw them overboard, as having no solid foundation, but this man is thoroughly up in the

subject, and has not left them a leg to stand on. I have been reading the German rationalists, Ewald, Bleek, and even Kuenen (Dutch), having to meet it everywhere. I find it poor and impudent, rejecting all idea of inspiration out and out, and making a system of legends and compilations each after his fancy, and even changing from edition to edition. ——has on his own leave published my (Pacific) notes on Mill, quite unfit to be published.34 I only hope they may be useful to some. If a trumpet be blown, the Lord will sometimes come in if it be His trumpet. I have gone through what is material in Kant too, and noted—a real labour from his style, but I have sifted it. I do not wonder, though he did not mean it, in its un-deifying God in Germany and deifying man: his system does it. But we must wait on Him; He only has power, and He works in grace. Prayer and supplication to Him will surely be answered. Constant dependence in the sense of our own nothingness, and in us no good thing, and Christ all, and the utmost simplicity of truth fed by the word, and that in our ministry, and we shall be happy with Him and serve Him.

I have a new tract put out on the Presence of the Holy Ghost, and the Coming of the Lord, being the practical substance of christian truth where His work is relied on. All this, with meetings every day, you may see is not idleness. In Yorkshire I had to stop at conference meetings: speaking all day for a good while, brought my head to a standstill. I am very thankful for the spirit of the brethren here, and I think they are all encouraged.

Affectionately yours in the Lord.

London, 1877.

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* * * Positive work must be looked for in order to have fruit; and for the moment, unless God shews an open door which would lead on, the part of labouring brethren seems to be to look for growth and establishment in the centres where they are at work, pursuing it earnestly and steadily, so that there may be a solid nucleus of testimony according to God. It is a great thing to follow God in His work. The apostles were forbidden to preach the word in Asia, and then only going to Ephesus, “all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord.” I do not mean that we are to give up any place, but to work patiently and fully where God is working. So Corinth, so Ephesus, so Antioch. If there is an efficient work, God Himself spreads the testimony. We must pray that the Lord raise up labourers for His harvest, and look at it as His work. God has blessed, and is even now blessing, but I think the brethren are in a critical moment. How far, as a body, they are in a state to maintain their testimony, I do not know. There ia occasion for much prayer, for the light they have received has spread out beyond them, and is held by those who do not walk with them. If their separateness and devoted-ness be made good according to Christ’s heart, they will stand; if not, I do not see what good they are. What I fear is, their thinking well of themselves; but my trust is in the Lord. That the testimony confided to brethren was the truth of God for these days I have not a shadow of a doubt. Their maintaining it requires lowly and constant application to God.

Here the testimony is distinct, and has gone on. The opposition is very strong, but that we must expect. May the Lord keep us in earnest prayer, that He may

maintain a true testimony to the glory of His own blessed Son, in times which He has taught us to look upon as perilous! In all my recent journeys the Lord has blessed, and given peace and growth— I mean in America.

[1877.]

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* * * We are in England, and even more in Scotland, assailed with infidelity and attacks on scripture, the Free Church being specially [prominent] in retailing German infidelity. I have been reading thus these German books. It makes me more familiar with scripture, for there is not a text they have not scrutinised. But oh, what a difference! to dwell with God, and to be treating about the thoughts and cavils of men who do not know Him, and seek to get rid of Him. It is terrible; but only makes one feel the grace that has made us know Him by, and only by, the blessed revelation of Himself. Not a trace of anything— not an atom of the beauty of grace or a moral thought! And His word shines out in itself, as superior in its nature in it all, as the sun and all the beauties it displays to pitch darkness and a trackless marsh. Thank God, the desire to seek and search the word on the other hand, in those whose hearts God has touched, goes on freely too, and pretty widely God is working. But it is as a barrier—that is, it is warfare to the end: rest is elsewhere when this poor world will be over.

I have been interested lately in noticing that the desert is no part of God’s purpose: it is of His ways. His purpose was redemption and glory in Christ, the second Man. But.in the desert the old man and new are

contrasted, are denned, and we learn God and learn ourselves. If you look at Exodus 3, 6 and 15, you will find nothing of the wilderness, but of Egypt and Canaan, or Edom and Moab conflict; in Deuteronomy 8 plenty. Thence too the Lord made all His quotations in the wilderness. The Lord can take the thief straight to paradise. But then sin, the cross and the world, and the old and new man, were clearly defined and in their true colours. So we give thanks to the Father who hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light. But we learn the wilderness by degrees. Hence even if perfect according to our light, all our dealings in it are imperfect. But God can, even so if He pleases, work by us, but it is He that gives the increase… Peace be with you.

[1877.]

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Dear Mrs. ——,—I believe Hebrews 1035 is absolute and for ever. It is a question of imputation and a purged conscience, not of sensibility to failure and confession of it, which is a state of soul connected with communion or fellowship to which 1 John 2 applies. But here the apostle says if this were not perfecting for ever, eij" toV dihnekev", Christ must often have suffered from the foundation of the world; but He was once offered to bear the sins of many. And when I go to God, even to confess failure, He is there and all the value of His blood, so that imputation is impossible. Hence in 1 John 2 we have Jesus Christ the righteous, and He is the propitiation: that is the basis of advocacy. And the very ground in that part of Hebrews, that the falling into sin is fatal and final drawing back to perdition is, that there is no more

sacrifice for sin. But this for such and for the believer is finished, in there being but one; but then that one for the believer must finally and for ever settle the question, or it never could be. And this is to the furthering of holiness, because what would be otherwise a question of acceptance and righteousness, is now a question of holiness and walking with God, and present divine favour and communion. But as to conscience of sins, I cannot go to God and not find Christ there, not without blood, who bore them all; so that it is impossible they can come in question as to imputation, or my conscience be burdened with them as yet unsettled between me and God. But it makes them doubly hateful as to holiness, that one in the light as God is should do them, and find even momentary pleasure in what made Christ's agony—but if it did it cannot be imputed. Numbers 19 is applicable here; the great day of atonement was valid, or he would not have had that, and he was an Israelite. I believe it to be of great moment to true holiness to know that the worshipper once purged has no more conscience of sins: when He had by Himself purged our sins, He sat down. It is absolute for the divine glory, eternal in its value and unchangeable, and wholly finished, and eij" toV dihnekev".

It is a good thing to dwell in God, and He in us, and know it by the Spirit.

Affectionately yours in the Lord.

August, 1877.

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* * * Romans 836 takes up the Christian as having died with Christ, and having the Spirit of Christ who is his life. He is in Christ (ver. 1), and Christ in him. (Ver. 10.)

But the Romans, though in the second part (beginning chap. 5:12) it goes on to the full christian position in Christ, and Christ in us, never looks at the Christian but as a living man on the earth; not as risen with Christ, which introduces entirely another aspect of the condition, nor does it take up, consequently, union with Christ. It is only our standing in Him (chap, 8), and He in us our life, and justified; hence “one in us,” or members of His body, do not come into view, only it is taken for granted as truth in the hortatory part. When we speak of risen with Christ, Christ is looked at as a raised and exalted man, not as quickening Son of God, nor exactly our life, but God has raised us with Him. This is Ephesians, where men are looked at as dead in sins, and it is a new creation. Romans looks at them as responsibly living in sins, hence death is brought in, as well as removal of guilt: but resurrection is not only that the Christian is alive to God in Christ, but has the Holy Ghost, and so (according to John 14) is in Christ, and Christ in him, as to his standing before God, and state in this world. But union to the glorified Man is not the subject of Romans. Of course, if we have the Holy Ghost we are united. Colossians gives Romans doctrine, adding resurrection with Christ, only it does not go on to setting in Him above: we are risen, but on earth—hope laid for us in heaven to have our affections there. —— forgets that ‘resurrection-life’ is a term (as a short statement suitable enough) invented by Christians to express the state in which we are, not a scriptural one. In essence divine life is always the same: only that now Christ, who becomes our life, being not only a quickening Spirit, but also Himself raised from the dead, we have this life as ours according to the condition into which He is entered as man. In one aspect He quickens whom He will (John

v.); in another He is raised from the dead, we are quickened together with Him; and though all this is life in divine power—Christ our life— yet the difference is important, and involves a great deal. It is not only being born, but born as dead to all that is passed as Christ was —death, sin, Satan's power, and judgment passed, forgiveness and justification possessed. (Colossians 2:13, and so Ephesians.) It leads to, though it be not in itself, the unity of all saints in the body of Christ. Hence the connection of life with resurrection with Christ is of all importance, because it is consequent on the death of Christ, and seals on God's part the efficacy of this work, and leads us (the question of sin, and judgment, and the power of flesh and Satan settled) into the new place or sphere to which it belongs. But the life is always essentially the same, or it could not enjoy God. But the state of that life is modified by the consciousness of that place into which it is, in all its relationships, brought— where Christ is, which affects it in all its thoughts and affections, according to the power of the Holy Ghost which is in and with it. "It is the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus." This affects its whole state and condition, in fellowship with God and with Christ; for morally the life lives in that in which it is. "He that hath the Son hath life," and that Son is the risen Man.

Now, as to life, this is always the state of him who is a Christian, that is, who has the Spirit. (See Rom. 837) But he may not have realised what it really means, though all be his; and in Romans 7 we get one quickened so as to delight in God's law, but not delivered so as to have the place that belongs to one who knows the power of Christ's resurrection, and having not the Spirit. This last state is developed in chapter 8 No one in the christian

state but has this life; and all this belongs to whomsoever is quickened now; but till he is sealed with the Holy Ghost, his state and condition, as alive in Christ, is not known to him, he has not got into that state in relationship with God. It is his, no doubt, but he has not got it. Resurrection-life is life in another condition, the only one now owned by God, but not another kind of life in itself. Charcoal and diamond are exactly the same thing chemically, but they are very different actually. But the only state owned of God now is life connected with Christ risen.

By the Holy Ghost we are baptised into one body. But baptism is never “into” anything, but “unto.” In this case the difference is not very great, but it is always the object to which we are baptised. It is the object of the Holy Ghost’s baptism; but as that is in power, they become members of it, and so it is treated here [1 Cor. 12:13] as in verse 19.

As to John 14:17, it may be taken as “will,” as it is solely the question of an accent, menei' or mevnei. But I think it quite immaterial. Christ could not remain with them, this other Comforter could; Christ was with them, not in them; that other Comforter would be in them. But it does not at all mean that He was dwelling with them in Christ. He is speaking of another Comforter not come yet, and putting this in contrast with their present state. I prefer mevnei as it is, because of qewrei', ginwvskei. The Father would give them another Comforter, who could not come till Christ was gone. It is of Him, and this new state of things, the Lord is expressly speaking, as to the world, and as to the disciples. It would not be for the world (Christ had been, though rejected), because the world did not see or know Him (that is, when come). Not

so the disciples—ye know Him (present), because He abides with you (in contrast with me who am going), and shall be in you (which I now cannot be). “Is in you” would not have done, as affirming not what characterised the Spirit as the new Comforter but a positive existing fact.

August, 1877.

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My dear Brother,—I have nothing very especial on the points you speak of, save holding fast the great foundations that it is a new life communicated. “He that hath the Son hath life; he that hath not the Son of God hath not life”; only 2 Peter 1:4 is more conformity to the divine nature, as you say, though not merely attainment.

The word is the instrument as it is said, “faith cometh by hearing [ajkohv, report], and hearing [ajkohv] by the word of God.” It is hard to say how the word merely works, save that it is God’s method of the revelation of Christ, and where accompanied by the quickening power of the Spirit, it becomes thus the means of life: what is spoken as the word communicated to the soul by the Spirit becomes life. In Paul’s case it was sight, yet revealing His Son in him: indeed the words of Christ too came to his ear. The Holy Ghost gave reality in his soul to that which his senses told him of. The written—or spoken word, if true, is a revelation of that which is true of Christ, and of Christ Himself, so that while it is the divine power of the Spirit by which we are quickened, it is the revelation of Christ to the soul [which] is objectively that which quickens me, what the Spirit brings to my soul; so that it is faith, faith in the report, which is the outward means, while it is the thing

contained in the word which is life, Christ. The word in itself is merely the outward means or instrument, and by itself, though all truth be in it, produces nothing (unless to leave us without excuse).

The “incorruptible” seed is clearly in contrast with corruptible, or nature. But as the living Word was the carpenter’s son, without the work of God in the soul, so the revelation of truth, and Christ, and grace in the written word too. His words were the expression of Himself, and the Spirit of God has given us what is needed for salvation and blessing, and also revealed Him as in glory. Each make us responsible to receive them; but to have life-giving power, the Holy Ghost must reveal what is in them. It is a comparison or allusion to natural birth, but there is a divine nature communicated — a new life, Christ our life, brought spiritually into the soul by the operation of the Holy Ghost, with the word which reveals them. God reveals His Son in us, and so we have life, Christ our life, and so morally and intelligently, by the word which reveals Him. God begets us; though it be by the word, we are born of the Spirit, the Son quickens us, the Spirit is the immediate power as in all God’s works, but He is pleased to do it by the revelation of Christ by the word. By the word in James, and in 1 Peter, is either meant “by” as an instrument, or what is called the instrumental dative. It is of all importance to see that a new life is communicated, that Christ becomes our life, just as we had the life of Adam in the old man, the flesh.

[1877.]

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My dear Brother,—I think that brethren of, or coming to, the gathering to break bread, ought not to bring in friends with them, unless received by the gathering to break bread on such occasion as known members of the body of Christ.

There is no fixed age as to children. Grown up boys had better sit back; those under their father's wing had better sit with them; they are as part of themselves, being under their immediate care: there is order, not disorder in this—it would be far greater otherwise. It is when under the personal care of the parents, this should be so. Girls remain longer under the eye of the mother, hence may remain with her till older. The point is their being still not independent persons, but directly under parental care. In a school a number of elder girls may very well sit together behind; and little ones who are quasi under parental care, with the mistress or governess if she breaks bread. The school as a body of grown girls, does not exactly take the place of members of a family dependent on the parents' or a delegated authority. It is mischief and disorder to leave young children by themselves behind.

London, August 14th, 1877.

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Dear ——,— … As to the sects' table being the table of devils, it is simply monstrous folly: the apostle is speaking [1 Cor. 10] of idols according to the passage in Deuteronomy [32:17], I have heard an individual saying it, but only proving his own ignorance. With my light I could not own them to be the Lord's table; but dear saints, I do not doubt for a moment, go there with delight in the Lord, and get individual blessing from Him

who loves them. I think they lose much, but may enjoy Him in their souls by individual faith.

All I see in chapter 10 is that, in partaking at the Lord's table, they are identified with the Lord as the Israelites with Jehovah and the Gentiles with their devils; and these last could not go with the other. In chapter 11 they were not eating the Lord's supper, but their own, and so abusing shockingly what it professed to be, for which they were chastened severely. I think you would find it hard to make out peculiar church or future blessing, save that it is, besides its immediate purpose of remembering the blessed Lord, the symbol of the one body. There is in the gospels a special reference to founding, on God's side, the new covenant in His blood, "shed for many" as well as Israel; but this is referred to in general in chapter 11…

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To the same.]

Your principle is all wrong.38 It is not on a word I rest; but the Lord's table is not the expression of the external thing. The one loaf is the expression of the one body: baptism is the rite connected with the external thing. The table of the Lord therefore expresses unity, association with Christ; and this is the whole ground of the apostle's argument in 1 Corinthians 10. Now they are avowedly in division: Baptist tables where others cannot go; others, where they are not members of the church even if admitted—they are members of such a church, but not of Christ, as being there. They may individually remember piously the Lord's death, and in that sense have the Lord's supper; but they are avowedly, on church ground, on other ground than the

unity of Christ's body. I am fully satisfied that from Paul's death they never were even on the true ground of salvation, and identified the body with the corrupt external thing; though till, say a.d. 240, there was no external division —at which period some separated because they received back those who had denied the Lord in Decius' persecution.

If they are the Lord's table, why should not I go to them? it would be pure schism.

September, 1877.

Thank you, dear brother, for the account of what you found in the A… We must pray for the saints, otherwise, if there be no bellows to blow the fire, it will die out. I am not surprised at your reception by the French brethren; I always found them cordial and affectionate, and full of thankfulness for visiting them, although I was just as glad to see them, and my heart is bound up with them as ever. These affections are like the honey on the top of Jonathan's rod, which enlightens the eyes in the fatigues of the conflict. I believe, too, it is often useful that some one should come in not mixed up with the difficulties and trials of the locality, but who can bring in Christ with a freshness which lifts the saints above them. We have to go through the difficulties and trials of the way, and wait on the Lord as to them. We must face them, but wait upon Him for a solution when the path is not clear, patience having its perfect work. It makes us feel our dependence, and teaches us to wait on Him, and He brings out the result of His power and wisdom through (à travers) men's perverseness, conscience being exercised, man manifested, then His grace. We must not, cannot, hurry these things, for He must deal

with reality and conscience. It is a great thing to trust His love, and to walk with His secret in our hearts. We go through these things, seeing the difficulties, and perhaps in trembling, but obedient, and led of the Lord in duty. The result He brings out in due time, and more than we looked for or expected. The Lord said, “Now I go my way, and none of you asketh, Whither goest thou? But because I have said these things sorrow hath filled your heart. Nevertheless,” etc. All this requires confidence; patience must have its perfect work, and diligence too is needed, in crying to the Lord. See even the Lord Himself all night before choosing the apostles, and with strong crying and tears in Gethsemane: perfect obedience and entire dependence. I must close. Give my kindest love to the dear brethren. I should be glad to see them; I may, if God spares my strength, but at my age it must be a little uncertain.

Yours affectionately in Christ.

London, October 24th.

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My dear Brother,—My thought has always been to connect baptism ecclesiastically with the house, one of the two characters of the assembly. (Eph. 1, 2, and elsewhere.) As a general thing, the house and the kingdom now have the same limits, though not strictly; so that I have not made any difficulty about people saying it, but the ideas are quite different. I was not aware of having connected baptism with the kingdom; I have never published anything upon it, but carefully abstained from it. Some private letters were privately printed. I have used Matthew 18 as shewing the way the Lord recognised little children as objects of divine

favour, and that of such was the kingdom, and thus giving a warrant for our receiving them, as also the children being holy in 1 Corinthians; but not as speaking directly of baptism, only that was one way of so owning them. The house itself is only a figure, though a scriptural one, as where the Holy Ghost dwells. The Quakers as to formal order are not in the house, but that does not hinder the sovereign pleasure of God, as in the case of Cornelius —thereupon he was received: but baptism is only the formal and orderly entrance into the place of privilege. The hundred and twenty were never baptised at all, that scripture speaks of, and could not be.

I do not believe that 1 Corinthians 15:53 speaks of two classes. “This mortal,” speaks of the body, but as connected livingly with the soul, and corruptible as its nature when not kept alive, but in neither aspect fit for glory, where an undying and incorruptible body alone is fitting.

As to John 17 I apprehend that “I have manifested thy name” is the revelation of the Father’s name, never before known. It never was till the Lord came. Before that it was Almighty with Abraham, and Jehovah to Israel. The name of Father belonged to another world, and in Christ brought eternal life: the making known at the end [ver. 26] is something more intimate. It refers to the world not knowing the Father, to whom in righteousness the Son appeals, as man down here (He had said “Holy Father” to the disciples); and Christ had known Him, and walked perfectly according to all that He was to Him. In making known the Father’s name to them, He had associated them with the blessing contained in it. He had done it while with them on earth,

and should continue to make known to them His Father's name, as He had known it as man down here, that the love the Father had loved Him with might be in them, and He in them. And this last is the present time. He had done it (little as they understood it) while here; He does it [now] when through the Holy Ghost we can apprehend and enjoy it.

London, October 25th.

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My dear Brother,— … I have not been sorry to be a little quiet here, working still as usual; but when I get here, it is more what is called for the priests a retreat. My own soul wants sometimes to be alone, and I always find myself more at the resources of grace when alone here: I may be very happy working elsewhere, and blessed, and very glad, as I am, to see the beloved brethren, but I find I am more in the sanctuary. I do not know that it ought to be so, but I am thankful that at least here it is so. We should find Him a sanctuary everywhere. But out, here and there, we are more in public (en scene), and I am glad to shrink back to be alone with Him, and more in His company; my work even is more directly with souls, does not distract, but the contrary. We may always be called out again to serve…

London.

Dearest——,—I was glad to hear—— was encouraged in his work. May the Lord be with him and keep him near Himself! That is our great affair, and our spring of joy too. I always get happy when I get here, a little more alone with Him, though my work in different parts has been very happy.

The churches, so-called, are flooded with infidelity: the times are most marked: the brethren, on the whole, are getting on happily—increasing plenty, as far as that goes, but in the main godlily. In two places there is confusion, but what I dread is the world. As a body in ——, they are certainly a godly set, and many with whom one can have real communion, and desiring to get on in the word. Mere Bethesda gatherings are, I think, losing any definite place, and a general looseness taking the place of it. Now that people have the idea they can meet thus, it in some respects increases the difficulty, it is so indefinite; but it may lessen it in result, everybody being on his own hook. But there is such looseness of doctrine, one has to be more than ever on the watch…

Soon, dear brother, Christ will be all fully. May He be all to us in the time of faith!

London [1877].

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Dearest Brother,—Discipline is not merely for restoration, though it be one object. It is to keep the Table pure. It is sometimes a very delicate question to settle whether the individual is so thoroughly restored as that the conscience of the assembly is not engaged, and that specially in a recent case. An old case, where I was thoroughly convinced the person was, I should not bring up, and clearly not where it was before conversion, unless in some special circumstances… If ‘there were serious evidences’ against genuine repentance, clearly these few should not have taken it on themselves. There seems to have been effort in this case all through to conceal it—a bad sign. Bringing up evil needlessly is a bad thing, it defiles: but without—at

this distance, or hearing those concerned—pretending to judge the case, I confess there seems here to have been, where the consciences of many were engaged, an effort to screen more than to purify. The assembly remains pure, as it has not been engaged in it. If it has cognisance of it, it has to decide if it be satisfied with the report of these four. If not, it must take the case up. Bringing out sin is neither grace nor purity, but slurring it over is not the way of blessing to an assembly.

I copy a letter just sent me, written to a brother at Lyons many years ago. 'In sin is very vague. One who is disciplined for fornication is not engaged in the sin when they excommunicate him. He is always in the sin he has committed until he repents and confesses it. There lies the whole question. If there be a long time since he sinned, and the state of his soul is entirely changed, I should not bring up the sin again. The question is, has he really repented; otherwise, the time that is passed makes no difference, be it two days or two years. If the sin was committed before his conversion, his state is totally changed; if since, then it is that of which the assembly has to judge. If the assembly leaves the sin unjudged when it knows it, it makes itself responsible, and is identified with the evil doer. This 1 and 2 Corinthians shews very clearly, and it seems to me of all importance… to have a firm hand as regards this sin—love towards the sinner surely—seek his restoration; one ought to do so, and there is sometimes failure in this—but the holiness of the table of the Lord must be maintained. To separate because there is a difference of judgment is to break the unity of the body. If the assembly cannot come to any decision, it is a proof that its spiritual state is bad, and then it is well that all

should humble themselves together; but if there be a determination to allow the sin (in any one), God will judge them if they separate.'…

[Date uncertain.]

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[From the French.

* * * In meetings called for the examination of cases of discipline, I should insist formally that sisters should be excluded. If they were present, I even would not go myself. It is entirely contrary to the word of God, and as unseemly as it is unscriptural. How examine certain cases with young sisters present? It would be a shame for them to desire it. Besides, the word is plain… For my own part, I do not think it even much to be desired that all the brothers should be present. If there are a few wise brothers, who occupy themselves habitually with the good of souls, true elders given by God, and that it be not official, but according to 1 Corinthians 16:15, 16, that is better than all the brothers; it is thus more evidently not the assembly, which is not equally clear when all the brothers are there: and the danger of an assembly of brothers is, lest they should believe themselves to be the assembly to decide.

But a whole assembly cannot make investigation of facts and the character of facts: two or three must do this. When all the information has been obtained, and the matter weighed before God, they communicate the result at which they have arrived, and it is the assembly that decides: if no one says anything, the matter is decided. If a brother of weight were to make an objection, or if he had anything to communicate, or knew of any circumstance likely to throw light on the

subject, they might wait, or re-investigate the matter. If it is but a trifling opposition, the assembly may easily deal with it. I have seen such a case. If it is some one upholding the evil which has been judged, he becomes himself the object of judgment. (2 Cor. 10:6.)

Two things render it necessary that the action should be that of the assembly: first, because it is there that Christ is; secondly, because it is the assembly which purges itself. (1 Cor. v.; 2 Cor. 7:11.) It is rather striking that this question should have arisen in so many places, in New Zealand, and at the other end of the world—not in England, that I know of.

October 29th, 1877.

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[From the French.

* * * I much value the maintenance of the responsibility of assemblies, a principle which, according to my mind, is very important. One may help them, but the conscience of the assembly must act. In the case of which you speak, the exercise of discipline has been unnecessarily complicated: but the' thing has been done, if the brothers' meeting, having decided what ought to be done, has presented the result to the assembly, gathered as such, so that opportunity was offered for any remark. But the assembly ought to purify itself, and a meeting of brothers is not the assembly… I do not desire the least in the world that the sisters should speak; I have never seen a woman take part in the affairs of the church without doing harm. They are blessed, and very useful in their place, but that place does not belong to them.

A decision taken by a few brothers for the assembly may become a frightful tyranny, and does not purify the conscience of the assembly. All the brothers may have united for a matter of discipline, I allow; but after all, the investigation, if any is needed, is made by a few—only, a few can neither exercise the discipline, nor pronounce the excision: it would not be 1 Corinthians 5:13, nor 2 Corinthians 7:11. The object of the apostle was to awaken the conscience of the assembly. The best thing is that a few grave brothers should make themselves acquainted with the facts, assuring themselves of the assent of the brethren who have most weight in the assembly, and that then the matter, being ripe, should be brought before it; only, let there be full liberty for all the brothers, if need be, to make their observations. If nothing is said, the matter is concluded; if any grave brother has difficulties, they wait: if it is only ill-temper, the assembly judges it, and passes on; if it cannot do so, it is then the state of the assembly which demands attention. When the brothers who are acquainted with the facts have judged excision to be necessary, there remains only to present to the assembly the conclusion which has been arrived at, and if nothing is said, the thing is done. Experience has taught me to fear the rule of individuals as much as the jealousy of a radical spirit; the conscience of all must be exercised, and the business of the individual is to awaken it, as that of the Corinthians was awakened by the first epistle of Paul.

October, 1877.

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To the same.]

[From the French.

* * * The “last trump” is but a military allusion, neither more nor less. There were three trumpets for breaking up the camp among the Romans. At the first, they folded the baggage; at the second, they fell into rank; at the third, they started all together. The trumpet of 1 Corinthians 15:52 is simply that of the resurrection of the dead, not that of the change of the living. 1 Thessalonians 4 confirms the above explanation: kevleusma, a word of command, is the military word for recalling the scattered ones (it applied, in its primary sense, to those who rowed in the galleys); the archangel gives the word, then the trumpet sounds, and each takes his place.

The nearness of the Lord’s coming is of all importance, and the enemy naturally seeks to turn souls aside from it; but that will only draw the attention of those who are taught of God to it. The present expectation of the Lord is connected with all the feelings, all the duties, and all the relationships of the Christian.

London, November 2nd.

* * * * *

My dear Brother,—My answer39 has been delayed by incessant occupation. The state spoken of in Romans 5:12 to the end of chapter 8 is, though founded on faith, experimental, and carefully made so; the former, save as owning guilt, is not so. The two parts are quite distinct. The Holy Ghost is given, as a general truth, on believing; but this supposes “the gospel of your salvation,” and if we look into details we shall find, as in Acts 2, that the sealing is on forgiveness—that is, the work, as well as the Person of Christ; which is confirmed by Acts 10:43.

Romans 5 states the whole condition of the Christian as saved by grace up to joying in God, and there the Holy Ghost is given to us. From verse 12, we have not guilt, forgiveness, justification and grace, but “by one man’s disobedience the many are constituted sinners,” and what is taught is to reckon ourselves dead with Christ, He having died to sin once. But this does apply to our state and experience, though faith be the means: “I know that in me … dwelleth no good thing.” It is self-knowledge; and this is by the use of the law, as leading through the consciousness of lust to the knowledge of what I am, what the tree is. Hence, as a general principle, it must be experience, and this self-knowledge God would have, that there may be depth and reality in the state of the heart. The only point to remark here is that, as its principle is law (that is the reference of our standing to our state, and not to sovereign grace and Christ, whether dying for our sins, or our own being in Him), it is discussed by the apostle on the pure ground of law. But the question of forgiveness does not arise, but of sin in the flesh, disposed of in chapter 8:2, 3. But the person in chapter 7 is not looked at as sealed, but as under law, and the point is absence of power, and an evil nature to which we are captive. If, in point of fact, we have known forgiveness, and afterwards discover our weakness and the power of sin, it takes the shape of, ‘I trust I have not deceived myself; I thought I was set free and happy.’ This does arise where there has been revival preaching, and no depth of conviction, or exercise of conscience; or where the soul is suddenly made free by the gospel—without knowing itself, without having been under the law, exercised under it previously—merely that it could not answer for sins in the judgment, not its lost estate. It has to learn that under the law it cannot

succeed, and gets, not forgiveness for what it has done as a child of Adam (and in this case it goes no farther than sins previously committed), but Christ, and being in Him instead of itself, a new place and standing; not a purging of the conscience as to what was previous, but a change of place before God. Now this is not known till we have discovered that we have no power; and if we have the knowledge of the forgiveness of past sins up to the time of faith, this is not the knowledge of our place in Christ, nor even of our place out of Him; for this, we must learn what is passed through in Romans 7. The Hebrews teaches us the purging of conscience, and perfecting for ever by one offering. This, though it goes further than past sins, does not give us a place in Christ, which connects our living state and our no condemnation—acceptance. This is known by the Comforter given to us (John 14), we in Christ, and Christ in us. This is not membership in the body, but our individual place before God; it is fully developed in both parts in Romans viii.

We are sealed when we believe in Christ for the forgiveness of sins; but when it is only a clearing of conscience as to past sins, we have to learn afterwards, what we are, the state being vague and uncertain as to the present: the forgiveness of what is actually on the conscience is real, but goes no further. If I have learned my weakness by a legal process before, I find myself in Christ, through grace in Christ, and my whole case is clear. The church having in its ordinary gospel neither this, nor even Hebrews 9, 10, is at a loss to know what to do when sin recurs. It is absolution, looking back to baptism (Calvin), re-sprinkling with the blood of Christ—all the ignoring that “by one offering, he hath perfected

for ever them that are sanctified." But it is by the Holy Ghost given we know that we are in Christ; and this is in contrast with law (see 2 Cor. 3), and connected with the knowledge of God's righteousness. The forgiveness of past sins is not being in a forgiven condition; were it not complete as to the work, Christ must often suffer: and if sealed thereon, we have to learn—in a modified form perhaps—complete forgiveness, "Blessed is the man to whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity" learnt after forgiveness when that is only of the past—relieving, but not purging fully, the conscience. Being sealed, we get into a wholly new standing, and conflicts where we did not succeed looked back on; for that is the true character of Romans 7—the estimate of it, "we know" (ver. 14) when we are out of it, and at liberty through the presence of the Holy Ghost, who, being present, makes us know our place in Christ, and Christ in us. But forgiveness as to the past is different from "imputes no sin."

As a general truth then, sealing takes place when we believe —but believe the gospel as preached by Paul, "the gospel of your salvation." Present forgiveness is a true and blessed thing; but, as at present preached, it is only administrative forgiveness, thus Jewish forgiveness, with which Christian is contrasted in Hebrews, in Romans 4, as in Acts 13, "By him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses." Being in Christ is yet another thing, known, with other blessings, through the Holy Ghost given to us. But even forgiveness is, "Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace." Where a soul is, is a matter of spiritual discernment.

Your affectionate brother in Christ.

December, 1877.

* * * * *

My dear Brother,—I do not like the style of the tract40 I confess; it is what we call in French a style ampoulé (I do not use a hard English word), but sets out to say wonderful things in a wonderful way. But to doubt that Christ is glorified, is to doubt the plainest passages of scripture. See John 13:31, 32; 17:5; 1 Timothy 3:16, and practically many passages, if the word glory be not used, as 1 Peter 3:22; Acts 2:33. The passage the tract alludes to is plain enough too, Ephesians 1:20-23. John 7:39 is specific in its statement: the Comforter could not come till Jesus was glorified; but He is come according to promise. John 12:16 is equally definite. I might go on citing passages in numbers, for it lies at the basis of Christianity, but it is hardly necessary after these.

It is a mistake to deny actual union with Christ. It is true that it is not a material union of flesh, but Spirit is as real, and more real than flesh, though not material. “Of his flesh and of his bones” should not be insisted on, because it is not found in the best copies. Dead and risen with Christ is the scriptural language. Union with Him in death is not exact, because real union with Him is only when He is glorified, and we have received the Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost is the power of this union (see 2 Cor. 1:21, 22), and the reality of this union is definitely stated in 1 Corinthians 6:17. Christians may not have learned this, and then we must have patience. They lose a great deal, but God can reveal this also unto them. The other point belongs to simple faith in the plain statements of scripture, and belongs to the basis of Christianity, because the baptism of the Holy Ghost on

the day of Pentecost was dependent on it, and it is part of Christ's glory, as the foundation of all we are entitled to. See Hebrews 2, as defining the position: He is glorified, but all things are not yet put under Him.

If you put these passages peacefully and graciously before our brother, he will doubtless see it is so, and that may lead him on to the other point, which, though plainly stated in scripture, is more connected with experimental acquaintance with that state.

Birkenhead. December 7th.

* * * Some English are now doing, what I was long alone in, in ——. It is an element which makes me thoughtful as to the Lord's working. The English cannot bend or adapt themselves in general to those amongst whom they are, but must bend them to their ways; this is a mistake, but I see the Lord carries on His work through many defective agencies. Here in England things are going on fast: undisguised and general infidelity and heresy, man's will working defiantly as regards God. The last days seem hastening on, and we shall find Christians more definitely separated from a world that is not christian. I sometimes feel anxious as to whether there ought not to be an open testimony in power as to all this departure from God, but God has His own way of doing His work.

* * * * *

To the same.]

We have to remember that we are in the last days, and hold fast the truth in simplicity of heart, and trusting the Lord, and looking to Him; but I believe, if faithful, they are happy times. At any rate the rest is near, and soon

we shall meet Him, and see Him as He is, and that will be worth all the trouble. In general the brethren are getting on happily here, and in a good spirit. There are restless ones, who seem formed to exercise one's patience; this is very useful, if it is there to be exercised, and not overcome. But patience must have its perfect work, and in due time we shall reap, if we faint not. How simple it is that God alone does any good; and now that the machine is out of order, few can come in with authority, and, when attempted, it only makes confusion. I do trust the brethren in the A., and all in France, will walk faithfully. The eyes of men are more on them everywhere than ever they were, and if this witness were to fail, I do not believe there could be any other as to the truth witnessed for until the Lord comes, He might set us aside, and raise up other witnesses to the same truths, but I have not a doubt that the truths are final and full ones for the saints… Paul says, "I count all things but dung, that I may win Christ;" and, alas! he had to say to the Philippians, "All seek their own." He can awaken us to live more to Him: may He give this to us!

It is a blessed thing to serve Christ in the present course of service, though we have laid up all our happiness with Him for that day.

December, 1877.

* * * * *

My dear Brother,—I am always glad to hear from you, and of Australia, even if I do not answer at once, which excessive occupation sometimes hinders my doing. I am very thankful that they are happier at ——. The Lord is sufficient for all things; that we must carefully

remember. It is the great thing. I am the more thankful, as it would seem to be a real work of grace, not merely what is called settling things. I think we have to remember that our part is to go in the strait and narrow path, to follow the word, and let all move on around us under God's hand. It is quite possible there may have been faults in the path of exclusives: I think there were —fruits of weakness—myself the first. I do not doubt of our path, and that we have to follow the word in peacefulness and grace—as I have often said—the feet in the narrow path, the heart as large as we can, by grace. I dread narrowness excessively—what does not embrace the interests of all that are Christ's. We have not to promote 'brethrenism,' but the interest of every soul we meet with, just where its need is. I can honestly say I never thought of 'brethren' with a single soul I ever met with—never—but what that soul wanted from God, as far as I was able.

I have the fullest persuasion that the testimony we have is God's testimony for the last days—the gospel Paul preached, brought out to light—what I never suspected when I began in this city, just fifty years ago now. I sought to walk for my own conscience as the word taught me. The loose brethren are just gone back, with some bad ecclesiastical habits changed, to the camp and its principles. I do not think we should be occupied with them as such. If they had the truth brethren are built upon, they have given it up to get on with the church-world. I admit the difficulty of combining Joshua, who did not leave Moses' tabernacle outside, and Moses, who, having established it outside, went back into the camp in testimony; but this is a question of spiritual capacity, in grace. Jeremiah 15:19 laid hold of me in

starting as a guiding verse, reading the chapter as shewing the working of his soul. We have only to go on right, firm in the exclusion of evil and bad doctrine, but seeking the good of all souls, separating the precious from the vile, and being as God's mouth, according to what is given to us. Brethren are in a new position; attention is universally drawn to them. The Spirit of God is working, the emptiness of what is had in churches is felt: it is commonly owned that they have more of scripture. This is a new, and in some respects, a dangerous position, but I pray the Lord may keep them. It is a call for faithfulness and lowliness, not to lose their nothingness—to be an afflicted and poor people, calling on the name of the Lord. This is what I earnestly pray for. What I dread is the world slipping in. What use are they if it does? Very full truth compatible with worldliness—that is a poor testimony, and cannot last. God will not allow it. The Lord keep us little in our own eyes!

As to——, dear brother, let patience have its perfect work. It is the secret of triumph according to God: "strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness." The signs of an apostle were wrought in all patience. I admit in the fullest way, the ruin of the church in the world, but this is no reason for continuing in the evil that brought it in, and into which it has led. "From such turn away" is the word. And then "follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the name of the Lord out of a pure heart." Such are the plain directions of scripture—and to put away from among ourselves the wicked person: no question of elders nor anything else: nor of the apostles' authority to

act (save to deliver to Satan), nor to make them act—which we have in his words, namely, the commandments of the Lord: and the promise, where two or three are gathered together in His name there is He in their midst. All these screenings and favourings of evil fail in spiritual honesty.

My post is regularly in London; for these countries I have a good deal to do to combat the tide of infidelity. When this reaches you, all may be changed in the state of things. Affectionately yours in the Lord.

Dublin, December 19th.

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[From the French.

Very dear Brother,—I was delighted to receive this good news from ——. We must remember that the Lord is above all the elements which are hostile to us in the path appointed by Him, and that He even makes everything contribute to the blessing of those who love Him. Then, too, it is not always in the correction of the failures which come before us that sources of unhappiness are healed; they disappear when souls are nourished upon the riches which are in Christ. We must think of this; we must, while ourselves feeding upon Christ— and He gives us to feed on Him without stint—cause others to breathe a new atmosphere, where Christ is; and, if souls are exercised before God there, they are transformed into His likeness, so that their affections flow out even as His flowed out in this world. It is a great thing to say, and undoubtedly we find ourselves far from our Model, but in proportion as we realise Christ in our hearts we reflect Him without being aware of it. The "I" disappears as a motive principle, and the life of

Christ is manifested. Real exercise of soul is necessary to produce this result: “Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus,” says the apostle. “Death works in us.” There are, however, these three things. “Ye are dead” (Col. 3); this is the judgment of God. “Reckon yourselves to be dead;” this is what faith does, in answer; it is liberty through the grace of the Holy Spirit. “Always bearing about in the body the dying of Jesus;” this is the practical carrying out of it. If we had not the two first, the third would make the monk; with the two first it makes the saint, where Christ is all.

Remember, dear brother, that it is redemption which brings us into the wilderness; death with Christ (Jordan) gives us circumcision and Canaan. The wilderness forms no part of the counsels of God; it is a very important part of His ways. In chapters 3, 6, 15 of Exodus, it is not in question. Redemption and glory, this is what is in the heart of God. Deuteronomy 8 gives us His ways. The robber went straight to paradise, fit to go there. As a general thing, we pass through the wilderness, but God has “made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light.” But patience must have her perfect work; then we must count upon the Lord, and commit everything to Him. He will accomplish all for His glory. It is in the wilderness and in conflict that we have “ifs”; only there is the sure faithfulness of God to keep us to the end—but, at the same time, testing and dependence. With regard to redemption and our place in Christ, there is no “if”; the one is accomplished, the other is our actual position…

I feel myself called to throw myself a little into the breach against increasing infidelity, and not, I believe,

without the help and approval of God. Peace be with you.

Dublin, December 19th.

* * * * *

Dearest ——,—You will have dear —— with you before this letter reaches you, which will have relieved you for the moment, at any rate, from what presses upon you, but I fully sympathise with you. It is often my lot, and it grieves me. One can only cast oneself on the Lord, and pray to Him to develop what is wanting. It is not always a bad feeling, better than mere forwardness any way. Some people have more gift in drawing out others than others have (not of course at the meeting). But it is natural that at the first they should not feel much courage; but in looking to the Lord, He will draw this out. The work is His, and He alone can really do it. Meanwhile we have only to walk in simplicity. If opportunity is given, and we see it is only timidity in a person morally ripe, encourage them—I do not say invite, for this is another thing which does not do. It is taking the place of the leading of the Holy Ghost; and, while leaving every opportunity to others, as really desirous of their taking part, serve Christ yourself, as the Holy Ghost may lead you for the edification of all. God will develop what is right in due time…

We have only to go on quietly with the truth, taking care through grace to have our hearts large in love, without leaving the narrow path, in lowliness and weakness doing His will, and carefully avoiding anything like “us.” Let Christ be fully before us, and every right feeling will be engendered in our heart. We may be grieved for Him, but our hearts will walk as His did through the world.

The brethren here are generally getting on happily, and with mutual confidence, which is a great thing. They remember you with all affection… You have to be very thankful for the Lord encouraging you and helping you on. Remember, with all evangelical earnestness, which I greatly crave, that as a remnant we are an afflicted and poor people trusting in the name of the Lord. My kindest love to——, if with you, and to all the dear brethren, though I have never seen them; not one is deemed a stranger, though never seen before. May grace and abounding mercy and peace be with you, dear brother. May He keep us both, simple, humble and devoted, Christ our all!

Dublin, December 21th.

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Dear Mrs. ——,—I dare say you are a nervous person, and your mind upset by it, and this doctor's word thus took possession of it. But if you had peace with God, it would give you a rest and quietness of spirit, which would greatly relieve you. Now I do not doubt that God has wrought in your soul, and therefore all is yours; but the first effect of His working is to distress and trouble us, because we cannot say that all is ours, and then look to our state and our fruit and our feelings, to know if we are His; that is, we look to the work of the Spirit in us, and so to the imperfect fruits in us, of His working, which cannot give us rest, and ought not. Jesus does not say, Find out your state, and you shall have rest, but, "Come unto me, all ye that labour, and are heavy laden," as you are, "and I will give you rest." Our rest comes not from our being what He wants, but His being what we want. He has made peace by the blood of the cross. That

is all settled for those who believe in Him, as you do; but then, besides that, He has a tender gracious care over, and interest in us, can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities. As to our conscience, He has done what purges our sins, and so our conscience. As it is written, “Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity,” and for this God will have nothing but Christ’s work known by faith, no feelings or fruits or anything; we believe it only, that it may be by grace. Otherwise we should have our part, and be able to boast, but then the tender loving kindness of Christ enters into all our trials and weaknesses.

Now you want to have done with looking to yourself—“In me, that is in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing”—and know that the Lord imputes nothing to you, and it is not till we submit to God’s righteousness that we get strength. You look to getting the victory in order to get peace: we must get peace to get the victory—peace already made by Christ’s work—then you will get strength; we do not find it till we see we have none. Conflict we shall still find. You may remain possibly a nervous person, but you will know that God is for you, and that changes everything. He has proved it in giving His Son, who died for us when we were mere sinners. Look simply to Him who has died for us and finished His work, for “herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us.” I do not ask you to accept anything, but to believe that God has given and accepted His Son for you. “They looked unto him and were lightened.” … Look to Him who is God’s wisdom, and He will give you rest.

Yours sincerely in the Lord.

December 21th, 1877.

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* * * I was most glad to hear your account of——, and the dear brethren there, and parts around, and the rather as it was happy. My heart has not left the dear brethren in America, though my body has, and I am happy that you are getting on happily in your meetings… They say in England, 'Well begun, half done'; I suspect the meeting was begun not well, not knowing what they were about, though with right and godly intentions. I have no doubt with you, as in our case in England too, our part is to pursue with patience a right path, and leave the results to God: I mean not occupied with the path of all around us, only keeping the heart and fellowship open for every child of God walking rightly, or we lose blessing ourselves. "Love to all the saints" is an element of the blessing spoken of by the apostle, and even as to intelligence —"able to comprehend with all saints"; because they are in Christ's heart, and if not in ours, He has not His place, and self has so far excluded Him. Yet I believe faithfulness in the path we walk in is of the last importance. My old song is— the feet in the narrow path and the heart large; because it makes the eye single and banishes self. But we have great need of patience and grace of God, and heart reference to Christ, that we may have wisdom and true love in our intercourse with others. The present good of a soul (besides receiving good and communion) according to its then actual need, is what we should always seek: never mind 'the brethren'—true brethren will do that according to the love of Christ working in them.

As to ourselves, it is what is said to Israel—“I will leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord”; it is true we have joys and a spring of service they cannot have then; but in the character of a remnant in the midst of a ruined dispensation, which is one side of our position, it is the spirit in which we have to walk: a clear apprehension that Christ as man has entered into a wholly new position, where Adam innocent never was, and is now glorified, all being finished as to the work, and the Holy Ghost thereon come down, so that we stand with the Holy Ghost dwelling in us, between an accomplished redemption of His procuring (and a Man in glory in virtue of it—the full work at His first coming and its results in His Person—our place in spirit), and the second coming, when we shall actually be with Him and like Him in glory. Meanwhile we are to be as men that wait for their Lord when He shall return from the wedding, that when He comes and knocks they may open to Him immediately; set down to table in heaven, and He minister to us, and serve while He is away, and then reign—both in Luke 12.

I am most thankful that the Lord has helped and blessed you elsewhere in the word. It is a joy and refreshment by the way and a cheer to the saints in their walk: most thankful too that temporally things are going on well with you. He chastens to subdue us, and blesses in His own, that is, the good time.

Here in Europe we are kept, and, as to numbers, there is constant progress, and that always enlarges the danger we are in, not to keep all knit together and think nothing of ourselves. The world, too, becomes more a snare. However, in general, thank God, they are going on well,

and, I trust, growing confident in one another. In one or two places we have had trial, but in one of them the Lord seems coming in in blessing. In Holland they are getting on nicely, and it spreads in Germany much. In Switzerland there is reason to be thankful. In France, too, where there was considerable danger of mischief, the Lord has used it to come and bless them… But in England we are full in face of almost universal infidelity. Still the Lord is working, but apostasy bold and the religious world dallies with it. I have felt called, and it was on my heart in leaving America, to meet this according to what God gives me. I believe in God's word; and how few, save a few wise, simple souls, really do! But everything is being tested. We wait for His Son from heaven, patience and devotedness our path. Soon there will be nothing but the glory. The Lord keep us in the simplicity that is in Christ!

Give my kindest love to the brethren. May the Lord be abundantly with them.

[1877.]

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[From the French.

* * * The principle of which you speak in the postscript of your letter, is monasticism, where that is sincere. I gave way to it at the beginning of my conversion. I said to myself, If I fast two days, three would be better, seven better still. Then that would not do to go on, but I pursued the system long enough. It led to nothing, except the discovery of one's own powerlessness. I took Romans 6, and wondered at it, but I understood nothing of it. One cannot put the flesh to death, except by killing oneself. It is as dead and risen with Christ that we

mortify our members (the apostle will not allow that we live in these things) which are upon the earth; and, in order to do it, we must have not only life, but deliverance by the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit dwelling in us—we must be set free. “If ye then be risen … mortify therefore,” etc. (Col. 3) In Romans 8:3 we have the secret of it; it is that God condemned sin in the flesh, when Christ was a sacrifice for sin. He took the condemnation, but it was in death, so that there is no more condemnation, and we are dead, crucified with Him. We have not only the life (we find that in Rom 7) but the resurrection of Christ, and the power of the Holy Spirit dwelling in us. The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has delivered us. Now this is the order of the realisation of this. In Colossians 3 God declares, “Ye are dead.” In Romans 6 it is the effect through faith: “Reckon yourselves to be dead, and alive unto God in Jesus Christ our Lord.” Then in 2 Corinthians 4 we find the thing put into practice: “Always bearing about in the body the dying of Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body.”

Some of——’s phrases do not perhaps go further than this passage; provided that we can suppose the possession of life already to be recognised, as the passage expressly supposes. But this, and the Holy Spirit, are absolutely necessary, for we bear about in the body death, in order that the life of Jesus may be manifested; therefore it must be there. Thus we find in Romans 8, “If Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin,” etc. The difference here is that the death of Christ is the efficacious cause. But to have part in it we must be quickened. The Red Sea is before, Gilgal after

the, passage of the Jordan. So Romans 6:12 comes after verse 11, as Colossians 3:5 comes after 3:1. But, on the other hand, we must not use the truth that we are dead with Christ and risen with Him, to weaken 2 Corinthians 4, or Colossians 3:5. There is diligence and realisation in us, also God uses tribulations to prove or to produce this realisation. “Death works in us”: we mortify, etc., only we must have the life first and count ourselves dead with Christ: “I am crucified with Christ.” If we have understood this, we mortify, etc., having the life to be able to do it, and having understood deliverance. What precedes is only Romans 7, useful to find out that we have no strength. We are never called to die to sin, but to hold ourselves for dead because Christ died, and we, believing, are crucified with Him. We are called to mortify our members, but mortifying is the reverse of dying; it is power acting against another object.

Deliverance is not only the blood of Christ, the basis of everything, but death and resurrection. It is not the pardon of that which is produced by the old man, but the enjoyment of the efficacy of the death and resurrection of Christ; it is to have passed from the old man (“when we were in the flesh”) into the second Man, Christ risen (“those who are in Christ Jesus”), where the law of the Spirit of life has made me free, the foundation being that, in the death of Christ, God has condemned sin in the flesh. The element of power is the presence of the Holy Spirit. “Ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if Christ be in you,” etc.

I fear my letter is rather unconnected, for I am very busy, but I am anxious that we should not weaken 2 Corinthians iv., because we know Colossians 3 and

Romans 6. Besides, your postscript shews that this ignorance exists. …

Dublin, January 5th. 1878.

* * * * *

[From the French.

Dear Sir,41—My reply to the letter which you were good enough to address to me has been delayed by unceasing work which has left me no leisure. I have no difficulty as to informing you what my belief is, but a public newspaper is scarcely the place where I should wish to use my pen. I believe that the christian calling is a heavenly one, that the Christian is not of the world as his Master is not of it, and that he is placed down here as an epistle of Christ to manifest the life of Jesus amongst men, whilst waiting for the Lord to come to take him to be with Himself in the glory.

As Editor of the “Francais” you will quite understand that articles written in order to inculcate such principles as these would little suit a political newspaper. Now I live only for these things—a life feebly realised I am quite ready to confess —but I live only for them. However, I will communicate to you what appears to interest you, namely, what has led me, and others with me, to take up the position in which we find ourselves as Christians.

It is well perhaps, in view of the infidelity which is spreading everywhere, to begin by saying that I hold, and I can add that we firmly hold, all the foundations of the christian faith—the divinity of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, one God, eternally blessed—the divinity and humanity of the Lord Jesus, two natures in

one person—His resurrection and His glorification at the right hand of God—the presence of the Holy Ghost here below, having descended on the day of Pentecost—the return of the Lord Jesus according to His promise. We believe also that the Father in His love has sent the Son to accomplish the work of redemption and grace towards men —that the Son came, in that same love, to accomplish it, and that He has finished the work which the Father gave Him to do on earth. We believe that He has made propitiation for our sins, and that after having accomplished it, He ascended to heaven—the High Priest seated at the right hand of the Majesty on high.

Other truths are connected with these, such as the miraculous birth of the Saviour, who was absolutely without sin—and yet others; but, you will readily understand, sir, that my object is not to give a course of lectures or a theological summary, but to make it quite clear that it is in nowise on the giving up of the great foundations of the christian faith that our position is based. Any one who would deny one or other of these fundamental truths would not be received amongst us, and any one who, being amongst us, adopted some doctrine which would undermine one or other of these same truths would be excluded, but only after all proper means to bring him back to the truth had been exhausted. For although these are dogmas, we hold them as essential to living faith and to salvation, to the spiritual and christian life of which we live as born of God.

But you wish, sir, to know not only the great truths which we hold in common with others, but also what distinguishes us from others.

Now, without in the least professing to give a course of christian doctrine in connection with the truths I have just pointed out, I am anxious, indeed I would heartily desire, to set them forth as the foundation, recognising as true Christians and members of the body of Christ all those who, by the grace of God, and by the operation of the Holy Ghost who has been given to them, truly believe these things in their souls. Converted by the grace of God, I spent six or seven years under the rod of the law, feeling that Christ was the only Saviour, but not being able to say that I possessed Him, or that I was saved by Him; fasting, praying, giving alms—always good things when done spiritually—but not possessing peace, whilst at the same time feeling that if the Son of God had Himself forgiven me, I owed myself to Him—my body, soul, and means. At length God gave me to understand that I was in Christ, united to Him by the Holy Ghost—"At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you" (John 14:20), which means that when the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, should have come, the. disciples would know these things. With this were connected other blessed and reassuring truths —"There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus." (Rom. 8:1.)

The promise of the Spirit is given to all those who have part in the remission of their sins, for "he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit." (1 Cor. 6:17.) Hence Christians are temples of the Holy Ghost—"Your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost who is in you." (1 Cor. 6:19.)

I should say that at this time the word of God became for me an absolute authority as to faith and practice; not that I had doubted it previously, but it had now become

such from conviction, implanted by God Himself in my heart. In this way the assurance of salvation through the work of Christ, the presence of the Holy Ghost dwelling in us, by whom “having believed, ye have been sealed for the day of redemption” (Eph. 1:13, 14), salvation known and possessed, and this indwelling of the Holy Ghost giving us the assurance of it, constitute the normal state of the Christian. He is no longer of this world, save to pass through it peacefully, doing the will of God. Bought with a great price, he is to glorify God in his conduct.

This brings in the thought of the church and of its unity. For me the body of Christ was now composed of those who were united by the Holy Ghost to the Head—Christ in heaven. If we were seated in the heavenly places in Christ (“Even when we were dead in sins… hath he quickened us together with Christ—by grace ye are saved,” Eph. 2:1, 5) what were we still waiting for? For Christ to come to place us up there in fact. “I will come again” said the Lord, “and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.” (John 14:3.) “Our citizenship is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Lord Jesus Christ as Saviour, who shall transform our body of humiliation into conformity to his body of glory.” (Phil 3:20, 21.) We have been converted “to wait for his Son from heaven.” (1 Thess. 1:9, 10.)

Hence the presence of the Holy Ghost dwelling in him, and the attitude of waiting for the Lord constitute the normal state of the Christian. But all those who possess this Spirit are, by that very fact, one body. “For by one Spirit are we all baptised into one body.” (1 Cor. 12:13.) Now, this baptism took place on the day of Pentecost.

“Ye shall be baptised with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.” (Acts 1:5.)

All those around me had not reached that point, at any rate they did not profess to have, and it was easy, reading Acts 2 and iv., to see how far we had got from what God had set up on the earth. Where was I to look for the church? I gave up Anglicanism as not being it. Rome, at the beginning of my conversion, had not failed to attract me. But the tenth chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews had made that impossible for me: “For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified… Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin.” (Heb. 10:14, 18.)

Then again it rendered impossible the idea of a sacrificing priesthood down here between me and God; seeing that our position, as the result of the work of Christ, is that we have direct access to God in all confidence. “Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus.” (Heb. 10:19.)

I am stating facts, sir; I am not entering into controversy: but faith in an accomplished salvation, and, later on the consciousness that I possessed it, hindered me from turning in that direction; whilst having grasped the fact of the unity of the body of Christ, the various dissenting sects no longer attracted me. As to the unity to which, as we all know, Rome pretends, I found everything in ruins. The most ancient churches did not want to have anything to say to her, nor did Protestants either, bo that the great majority of those who profess Christianity are outside her pale. On the other hand, it was not a question of seeking this unity amongst the

Protestant sects. Besides, whatever their ecclesiastical position might be, most of those who call themselves Christians are of the world, just as much as a pagan might be.

Now the 12th chapter of the first Epistle to the Corinthians shews clearly that there is a church formed on the earth by the descent of the Holy Ghost. “For by one Spirit are we all baptised into one body”; and it is evident that this is on the earth, for “Ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.” (1 Cor. 12:27.) Besides, the apostle speaks of gifts of healing and of tongues, which only apply to the state of the assembly down here.

The assembly of God, then, has been formed on the earth, and ought always to have been manifested. Alas! it has not been so. In the first place, with regard to individuals, the Lord had pointed this out beforehand. “The wolf catcheth them and scattereth the sheep,” but, thank God, “No one shall catch them out of my hand,” said the same faithful Shepherd. (John 10:12, 28.)

But this is not all: the Apostle Paul, bidding farewell to the faithful of Asia, said, “I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock, and of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.” (Acts 20:29, 30.) Jude declares that already in his time, deceitful men had crept in among the Christians, and, which is of all importance, they are marked out as being the object of the judgment of the Lord when He comes again. “Certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men.” “The Lord cometh with

ten thousand of his saints, to execute judgment upon all." (Jude 4, 15.)

These men were corrupters within the church, but there will be those who will entirely abandon the christian faith. "Little children," says the Apostle John, "it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists: whereby we know that it is the last time. They went out from us," etc. (1 John 2:18, 19.)

But even this is not all. The Apostle Paul tells us, "Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of the Lord depart from iniquity. But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honour, and some to dishonour. If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel to honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work." (2 Tim. 2:19-21.) Here is the church: it is a great house with vessels of all kinds and a call comes to the faithful man to purify himself from the vessels to dishonour. The following chapter is still more definite. "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud," etc. (2 Tim. 3:1-5.) These are almost exactly the same terms as he uses when he charges the heathen with sin (Rom. 1:29-31), but he adds here, "Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof." (2 Tim. 3:5.)

He warns us that "All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. But evil men and seducers shall

wax worse and worse" (2 Tim. 3:12, 13); but he gives us as a safeguard the knowledge of the person from whom we have learnt those things which we believe—it is the apostle himself; with the scriptures, which can make us wise to salvation by the faith which is in Christ Jesus. He assures us that "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof," etc.

Thus we have the proof that evil, having entered into the church, would continue and would not be healed. "The mystery of iniquity," says the apostle, "doth already work: only he who now hinders will hinder until he be taken out of the way. And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus shall consume with the breath of his mouth, and shall destroy by the brightness of his coming." (2 Thess. 2:7, 8.) The evil which was already working in the time of the apostle was, then, to continue until the wicked one himself should be revealed. The Lord will destroy him then by His coming; and although it be not spoken of the church properly so called, the same thing is revealed to us in regard to Christendom, for we learn that tares have been sown in the place where the Lord had sown good grain. When the servants desire to pull up the tares, the Lord forbids them, saying, "Let both grow together until the harvest." (Matt. 13:24-30.) The evil done to the kingdom of God was to remain in the field of this world until the judgment. Christ will doubtless gather the good grain into His garner, but the crop is spoiled down here. You will tell me, But the gates of hell are not to prevail against that which Christ has built. Granted, and I bless God for it with all my heart, but we must distinguish here as the word of God does. There is on the one hand the work of Christ, and on the other what is done by

men and under their responsibility. The enemy will never destroy what Christ built (we speak of the church of God), nor will he prevail against the work of the Lord. Whatever be the evil that has come in—for that there are heresies and schisms we do not deny—that which Christ works has endured and will endure for ever. It is the house which we find in 1 Peter 2, the living stones coming to Christ as to the living stone, and built to be a spiritual house. I find this house also in Ephesians 2 —"Ye are fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto a holy temple in the Lard." (Eph. 2:19-21.) Here it is again the work of the Lord Himself; living stones who come, a building composed of saints, growing to be a temple which is not yet completely built.

But, in scripture, the house of God on earth is viewed in another way also. "As a wise master-builder," says the Apostle Paul, "I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon… If any man build upon this foundation gold… wood, hay, stubble; every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work, of what sort it is." "Know ye not," he adds, "that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are." (1 Cor. 3:10-13; 16, 17.)

Here then I find the responsibility of man and the judgment of his work; the whole is called the temple of God, and the judgment of God commences there, at His

house, says the Apostle Peter. Already, during the lifetime of the apostle, the time had come for that (1 Pet. 4:17), although the patience of God, acting in grace, still waited.

I recognise, therefore, the responsibility of the house of God, of the whole of Christendom. That which Christ Himself builds is one thing, and the fruit of His labours will not be lost; that which responsible man builds is another thing. At the beginning “the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.” (Acts 2:47.) Soon “false brethren” crept in, tares were sown, and the house was filled with all kinds of vessels, from which faithfulness was to purge itself; and with a form of godliness without power, from which the faithful one was to turn away.

This is what the word of God presents to us historically and prophetically in the New Testament: this word, addressed by the teachers to the faithful, is our resource when these perilous times should come; and, if that were necessary, the facts have borne out all that it says.

What is to be done? The word declares to us that where two or three are gathered to the name of Jesus, He will be in their midst. (Matt. 18:20.) This is what we have done. There were only four of us to do it at the first; not, I hope, in a spirit of pride or presumption, but deeply grieved at seeing the state of that which surrounded us, praying for all Christians, and recognising all those who possessed the Spirit of God, every true Christian wherever he might be found ecclesiastically, as members of the body of Christ. We were not thinking of anything else, dear sir, than of satisfying the need of our souls according to the word of God, and we had no thought

that the thing would have gone any further. We have thus found the promised presence of the Lord. Salvation through Christ has been preached, when there was gift to do so. The same needs caused others to follow the same road, and thus the work has extended in a way of which we had not the remotest idea. It commenced in Dublin, to spread in the British Isles, in France, where a great number of persons, open unbelievers, were converted: in Switzerland, where the work on the Continent had commenced, in Germany, in Holland, in Denmark, where it is commencing, in Sweden, where a great religious movement is going on at this moment. The path we follow has spread to a considerable extent in the British Colonies, and more recently in the United States, in Asia, in Africa, and elsewhere. The Spirit of God acts and produces needs of soul to which the religious systems offer no answer.

In a word, this is definitely the position of those brethren who rest on the authority of the word of God. Christ is seen, in this word, as the Saviour, in three different positions:— first, as accomplishing redemption on the cross; then, as seated at the Father's right hand, the Holy Ghost being thereupon sent down here; finally as coming back to take His own to be with Himself. These Christians believe, these things have the assurance of their salvation, having faith in the efficacy of this redemption; and finally, being sealed with the Holy Spirit, who dwells in every true Christian, they wait for the Son of God from heaven without knowing the moment of His coming. "For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father!" (Rom. 8:15.) We believe in the promise "I will come again, and

receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." (John 14:3.) Absolute faith in the efficacy of redemption; the seal of the Spirit which gives the assurance of salvation and the consciousness of being children of God; the attitude of waiting for the Lord—this is what characterises these Christians. Bought with a great price, they are bound to regard themselves as no longer belonging to themselves, but to the Lord Jesus, to please Him in everything and to live only for Him.

I do not mean to say, sir, that we all walk at the full height of the heavenly calling, but we acknowledge the obligation to do so. If any one fails openly in what becomes a Christian, in point of morality or in what concerns the faith, he is excluded. We abstain- from the pleasures and amusements of the world. If we have evening parties, it is for the purpose of studying the word and of edifying ourselves together. We do not mix in politics; we are not of the world: we do not vote. We submit to the established authorities, whatever they may be, in so far as they command nothing expressly contrary to the will of Christ. We take the Lord's supper every Sunday, and those who have gift for it preach the gospel of salvation to sinners or teach believers. Every one is bound to seek the salvation or good of his neighbour according to the capacity which God has given him. Feeling that Christendom is corrupt, we are outside the church-world, by whatever name it is called. As to the number of those who follow this course I cannot tell you what it is: we do not number ourselves, wishing to remain in the littleness which becomes Christians. Besides, we reckon as a brother in Christ every person who has the Spirit of Christ.

I do not know that I have anything else to put before you. I am almost ashamed, six, to have given such a long explanation of the principles which govern the walk of the Christians in question. We recognise that the church is one, the body of Christ: then, too, the house of God by the Spirit.

You ask me what is the advantage of this course. Obedience to the word of God suffices to decide us. To obey Christ is the first requirement of the soul which knows itself saved by Him, and even of every soul acknowledging Him as the Son of God, who has loved us so much and has given Himself for us. But in fact, in obeying Him, in spite of weakness, faults and failures — which, on my part, I own—His presence manifests itself to the soul as an ineffable source of joy, as the earnest of a bliss where failures, blessed be His name for it, will no longer be found, and where He will be fully glorified in all believers.

You will tell me that these pages scarcely suit a newspaper. I admit it, but it is because the current of my thoughts scarcely flows in that line. I have explained to you in all simplicity what you asked me, and as well as I could. Having had to take up my work more than once owing to unavoidable interruptions, I much fear that it may contain some repetitions. Please excuse them and accept the assurance of my esteem.

1878.

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* * * There is no telling what folly man’s mind will run to: still, soundness in faith, fundamental truth, will keep the soul from these human wanderings. I have heard of this folly once. When he says, ‘Of Jacob’s seed God made

no selection, but accepted them all': what does accepted mean? That nationally Israel is accepted for earthly things, and called so (John iii.), scripture teaches, but who told him they were accepted for heavenly things, or as righteous? This is inventing, not believing. That Jacob or Israel is elect for earth, scripture does teach; and that as a nation they will be blessed—the gifts and calling of God being without repentance—scripture teaches. But this says nothing as to their souls being saved; but the positive testimonies to the contrary are clear. (Isa. 65:9.) Read the whole chapter, which teaches positively that only a remnant shall be saved. Chapter 66 shews the same truth if there be intelligence. Romans 11, while plainly declaring their certain blessing as a nation, yet lays it in an election according to grace, and at the time of the people's deliverance—when "all Israel shall be saved." Daniel 12 is quite clear that an elect remnant only who are written in the book shall be delivered, and that many shall arise to shame and everlasting contempt. Zechariah 13:8, 9 is also clear as to there being only a remnant spared from the great tribulation; if the Lord had not left them a very small remnant, they would be as Sodom and Gomorrah. And note, these statements apply to the time when it is said all Israel (not all the Israelites) shall be saved. Isaiah 4 clearly teaches the same truth, that it is in a very small remnant this blessing will be effected: not all Israel, because they are not gathered to the church, but saved as a people—all that are spared.

As to the ten tribes we have the same testimony, that only a remnant will be delivered. Zechariah shews us two thirds cut off in the land—Jews. Ezekiel 20 teaches us that the rebels of the ten tribes will be purged out,

and not allowed to enter into the land. And in this very place where the rebels are cut off, and not allowed to enter into the land, there it is said of all the spared ones, “There shall all the house of Israel, all of them in the land, serve me,” making the teaching of scripture too plain to leave a trace of doubt. But the truth should have hindered such a delusion, because where Israel’s restoration is taught, it is not only said they were blinded, but they did not attain to the law of righteousness. The application of “mercy upon all” is an utter mis-application. What the apostle is teaching is, that as the Gentiles had no promises, and it was sovereign mercy to them, so the Jews, having not only broken the law, but rejected the promises in rejecting Christ, in whom they were, come under mercy like a Gentile, though the promises would be fulfilled. The “all” in verse 32 (Rom. 11) refers to Jews, and Gentiles in verses 30, 31. In the last you must read, “Have not believed in your mercy that they may be objects of mercy.” (See Isa. 10:20-22.) Nothing can be plainer that the deliverance is for the remnant only.

But again, the blood saved them, he says, in Egypt; but what utter darkness is this—confounding the type and the antitype. The blood of bulls and of goats could not take away sin. God was passing through to destroy the firstborn, and He did not enter into their houses: nor is there one word in the passage about saving anybody. No doubt the firstborn were not destroyed. It is never said in the antitype that He died to save all the individuals. The nation will be restored. Whatever has their deliverance at the Red Sea to do with their souls? But two were saved after all. Even with that outward salvation, in result their carcases fell in the wilderness.

Aaron's priesthood never saved a single soul, was a shadow of good things to come; and even so only carried them nationally, not individually, on his dress. And in the covenant with Abraham quoted, the promise is of the land of Canaan.... This promise though obtained through Christ, and mercy (Rom. 11), is distinguished carefully there from the promise of Christ (Gen. 12) the one seed, confirmed to the seed, Genesis 22. There is a distinction between the literal and spiritual seed (but which he confounds), and the literal will have the land, which is not personal salvation: and "they are not all Israel which are of Israel," the apostle tells us. So that the ceasing of the distinction (which he teaches) when we come to Israel, is exactly denied by the apostle. And it is just where the apostle is insisting on the privileges of Israel that he makes the distinction which this dream denies: "They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God." The whole ninth chapter of Romans is an elaborate argument to destroy this Jewish fallacy, yet secure the earthly promise to a spared remnant by sovereign grace. What the paper argues for, the Holy Ghost carefully shews to be folly.

The purpose of God in their fall has nothing to do with the condition of those who did fall, rejecting Christ, yea, blaspheming the Holy Ghost, so that there was no forgiveness in that or the coming age—"never forgiveness"—and on whom the Lord pronounced the damnation of hell. And what he says as to the Holy Ghost excusing them because of their ignorance is wholly false: there was a suspension of judgment through Christ's intercession; and the Holy Ghost by Peter says, "Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out"; but they did not repent,

but stopped their mouths, and Stephen, summing up against them, declares that they resisted the Holy Ghost as well as incurred all other guilt under law, prophets and Christ. The spared remnant will be all righteous; all the rebels will have been cut off. If two were in one bed, the one would be taken in judgment, the other left. For God will then return and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth Him not. They will be graffed in again into their own vine… Christ, and Christ only, is the true vine, and even there fruitless branches are broken off: but though, as a nation, Israel was a vine brought out of Egypt, it never was the true vine. I have no doubt that the nation will be restored, and have the promises in the land; but what has that to do with all their souls being saved—unless to turn people away from the truth?

There is only one thing more to mention, the giving up the kingdom—it is “that God may be all in all”; and the earth will be destroyed, and the elements melt with fervent heat. The making Israel priestly to slay Christ is too bad. If the words Christ spoke will judge them in the last day, they have no cloak for their sin; they have seen and have hated both Him and His Father. They were blinded in rejecting Christ, lest they should be converted, and Jehovah should heal them. “He that believeth on him is not condemned, but he that believeth not is condemned already”—because these believed not, would not come to Him, that they might have life. “He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; he that believeth not shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him.” (See John 8:4H8.) Paul taught they were “the children of wrath even as others,” and “he is not a Jew which is one outwardly.” So Christ said they

were not Abraham's children, though outwardly so. They were not to think within themselves that Abraham was their father: and John anticipated the terrible words of Jesus—"Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, How can ye escape the damnation of hell?"—"He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life."

I have forgotten to notice Ezekiel 37 I deny it means any resurrection of bodies at all, and for a very plain reason, that it is explained otherwise in the passage (ver. 11), "Then he said unto me, Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel: behold, they say, Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost; we are cut off for our parts." And we have a prophecy which explains it all besides, where the whole house of Israel is explained to be contrasted with the Jews, and the stick of Israel and the stick of Judah are to be united in the land, and God will take them from among the heathen, whither they be gone—He does not say, the good and believing ones; but He does say He will purify them and sanctify them, in words which, if not quoted, are referred to by the Lord in John 3, where He insists that unless born again (speaking in Israel) none should see or enter the kingdom of God. And we have already seen that in chapter 20 this prophet declares from God that He will purge out the rebels in the way, and they shall not enter the land. The whole thought is a denial of the constantly repeated declaration that a remnant should be saved, and what is worse, of the plain declarations of the word of God as to being saved or lost.

1878.

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* * * The pastor as such fed and taught: it is directly connected with teaching (under one article in Greek, Eph. 4:11), but goes further than teaching, as not merely expounding and putting forth the word, but suiting it to souls, and caring for them in a shepherding way. An elder is an overseer, looks after them in moral oversight. It was desirable that he should be didaktikov" not a proper gift of teacher, but able to use the word in his oversight, as it of course added weight and intelligence to his inspection of their ways; but some had, some had not, this desirable qualification, for it is said “especially they who labour in the word and doctrine.” What was proper to them was mature habits of family care which qualified them for the exercise of oversight in general, and subduedness of self, and order. None of these things were looked for in the pastor; it was a positive gift from Christ on high, and exercised in the whole body wherever a person was, whereas an elder was a local overseer of people. The word “elder” which seems to imply generally age enough to give weight to the position, seen also in his having a well-regulated family, but it is not the word used for an old man: married men with a well-ordered subject family they had to be.

As to a majority in discipline: I know nothing of majorities, but of Christ’s authority connected with the action of the Holy Ghost. But I do find a principle that, when obedience to the word is secured by the power of the Spirit, all disobedience may be avenged by discipline. If an individual supports positive evil, he comes under the discipline like the person who committed it; but a serious and grave difficulty in a godly man moved by the fear of God may be waited on,

that it may be the act tw'n pleiovnwn (2 Cor. 2:6), of the conscience of the body, for they have to prove themselves clear in the matter. In the case of the Corinthians the evil doer stood alone, and was thoroughly humbled, and the oiJ pleivone" were all, the word of the apostle having had power in their conscience, and oiJ p. is as to sense justly represented by ‘the body at large.’ It is not pleiovnwn without the article, which in such case makes all the difference, like oiJ polloiv in Romans 5. Where there is not capacity so to act, recourse must be had to looking to the Lord, as is said in 1 Corinthians 5:2. Still now we have a plain direction what to do. Only we have to wait on the Lord where the conscience of the assembly is dull, for the principle is, “Ye have approved yourselves to be clear in this matter.” Individuals he still feared might not have personally judged themselves, but as a body they had acted on his letter, and put the person out, and he was humbled. A majority can never act as such: it is a mere human arrangement to come to a conclusion; the conscience of the assembly is not purified, but the assembly divided: nothing is done of the scriptural purpose. When the apostle speaks of Satan’s devices, he refers to the effect of self-will in a case of discipline, and a party separation from himself. The object is the conscience of the assembly being pure: a majority denies this. It is possible if evil be sanctioned wilfully by some, the rest (but it must be individual conscience, for conscience is always individual) may break with them, but the assembly is broken up. But in the order of God’s house a majority has no place at all. Men must have it, because they must decide somehow to get on. As to one disagreeing, if sustaining proved evil—a wicked person —it is disobedience to be avenged in itself; the assembly

judges it: if a grave and real difficulty, or supposed, and facts in the case, the assembly would wait. The power of the Spirit of God produces unity (I can suppose an individual not being clear bowing to the general judgment) or judges all disobedience. Only we have not an apostle now, but we have the word, and the Lord to wait upon, and this suffices where He is looked to in grace. If at a loss, we must wait on Him till He shews the way; it may be the Lord is judging the state of the assembly. It is well for grave brethren to ascertain the facts to inform the conscience of the assembly.

1878.

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Dear Mrs. ——,—There is only one question which this brother definitely puts which I consequently answer, quite disposed with Mr. W. to let him work his own result out. It seems to me inconsistent to bring up those held to be outside, in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. But the substance of such things is far more important than the forms, and the duty is a plain one, and the Lord will bless him in it, if he does it in truth and conscience, though I recognise baptism as an ordinance of Christ. The mischief I see, is occupying people with that which is only an ordinance. If a person has not been baptised, of course he ought to be. But it is not what the Lord is occupying souls with, but separating His saints from the evil that is around them in a vast professing mass and to wait for His Son from heaven. Baptism has been pressed, and there has been a reaction: such airs pass often over the church in its present state and pass away. No one will begin the church over again. I should not rebaptise a person sprinkled in infancy; though I do not

like the form, because the intended signification in the form is lost. There is an analogy between baptism and circumcision, but such analogies must be used with intelligence, as the dispensations are different. Believers do take their place no doubt in baptism; but that is not the question, to them it is only an outwardly taking it, but whether none others (as believers' children) are not admitted to that place. Taking their stand is an ambiguous term, as if a man be a believer fully he is dead and risen, and it is only the place which God has set up on earth that remains to take. The Baptist looks at it as an outward confession that he was already dead and risen; that is intelligible, but it is not taking a place. The ideas are wholly distinct.

But I say no more, as this occupation with the forms of Christianity (though bowing to them as such) I find has little edification and much wearying of the mind. Only of course one is the servant of others, if they have it on their minds. Our brother could not do better than wait on the Lord. My mind is clear, but I should accept him as cordially if he walk close with Christ, whatever his views may be: and with the Lord close to him he will be guided. I do not rebaptise those sprinkled as children, because if a person has been he cannot be again, though I do not like the form. The Lord give our brother peace in his spirit by His own presence.

Ever truly yours in the Lord.

[1878.]

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My dear Brother,—The judgment seat of Christ has nothing to do for saints with the question of righteousness. Christ is their righteousness; and indeed

judgment is not spoken of in the passage (2 Cor. 5:10), but receiving the things done in the body; this takes place, as does giving an account of ourselves to God. Further, we shall be perfectly like Christ, and not have the nature at all in which we sinned, “blameless in tlie day of our Lord Jesus Christ.” The passage in 1 John 2 tells them to abide in Christ, that he, as workman, may not be ashamed. So in 2 John 3, “that we lose not those things we have wrought, but obtain a full reward.” So 1 Corinthians 3 applies to ministry. In a word, they all apply to service, not state.

Your second question42 assumes two falls of angels, of which scripture does not speak, though it be very possible. Satan is spoken of as fallen; he “abode not in the truth”—but of his angels we have no account, though we must suppose they are fallen, but not the same as those reserved in chains of darkness. These last are simply kept in chains for the judgment of the great day; nor are they ever called demons that I know of: those are active in evil. So we have “the devil and his angels:” but no further account of them.

April, 1878.

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Beloved Brother,— … I am over here for a conference and to see the brethren. The Lord has been, I believe, with us, and they have enjoyed, and I trust profited by the studies. We had readings before and after with the principal workmen, and it was practical. Conversions have been very numerous, through free workmen as well as through brethren. Indeed, the Lord is working, and in many places. But infidelity is rampant and undisguised. My writing is now chiefly in connection with that,

though some has been printed I never meant to be. I hope they may be used, that is all. I think of going into Switzerland by Frankfort and Stuttgart. My German, which I thought had pretty much withered down, when in the association of ideas in the country, left me though imperfect and rusty able to get on; and I have lectured to large congregations not as freely as six years ago, but practically to the same purpose, and I hope with fuller and more positive truth, and my intercourse with brethren was without difficulty.

The Lord is very gracious; but I am only on a journey, ever more so, to the rest I wait for, and (though desirous to labour to the end of what the Lord may have prepared for me) long for. My soul is at peace, and though I desire for others to see them and feel I am doing God's will (they needed it), yet my heart tends to quiet and work I can do in quiet; I believe I am called to it even down here, and I shall feel happy when I turn my face towards London again. Not that I like the smoky city in itself, but it is my place of solitary labour, and, when my heart is able, of looking to the Lord. His grace, and the truth that makes it known to us, is ever more astonishing. I at least pity the poor infidels. And it so connects itself with every fibre and want too of our hearts in Christ's becoming man, that it brings us into a place which none can know who are not in it. And yet one is nothing in it, though united to Him who is everything—and nothing is a blessed place.

The infidelity in Germany and Prussia goes to the giving up God and everything, and unbelief among them (even converted Christians) is terrible. It is partly scientific, partly impudent, partly attacks on scripture—the last by professors and clergy chiefly, though of course going

wider. For us who have the things, if kept by grace on the road, it only makes us see the more how all is grace, and live them. But I must close. The Lord be with you. My love to the brethren.

Ever affectionately yours in the Lord.

Elberfeld, May, 1878.

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* * * I have been here for a conference, four days, for a general meeting, but reading with the chief workmen for a week before and after—I fully trust for blessing and reception of the truth, and we were happy, and had communion. There have been a vast number of conversions all round the country on to the borders of Russia, not only through brethren, but through free preachers also. Infidelity is rampant, and so in America, but the Lord is working too.

I have been writing for the Italians on Galatians; nothing new, but truth and God's ways more distinct, and the character of popery, not speaking of its abuses. Indeed truth is daily clearer to me, and I hope heavenly objects too. All is laid up for us there—I suppose to be more fully enjoyed, but the same joy—and that is satisfying: let us work in hope. He has blessed us with all spiritual blessings, yet all is still to come: we have it now in an earthen vessel. For some time past the weather has been so bad that the swallows have left in despair—gone in a body, not one left! But higher up it is always fine, and there our hearts have to live.

Elberfeld.

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To the same.]

* * * I was very glad you went to Italy. There may not be a great deal to do, but these poor things want help, and if the Lord please to work, it is by working the sphere of work grows. If there were energy among some of themselves, they might spread the truth, but it is His grace and will that does the work. From ignorance and poverty generally, it is a work of patience there. We must pray to God that He may work, and send forth labourers into the harvest. The last days are rapidly coming on, or rather developing themselves. Open, impudent, infidelity is now the order of the day, and the dark desert of popery: but, on the other hand, the Lord is evidently working; He is working, too, I fondly hope, amongst the brethren. Not only there are conversions and increase, but there is increased confidence and purpose of heart, and more sense that we are called to be faithful, and that the Lord is coming. Even the abounding of infidelity presses this upon them, and in one or two places the Lord has come in to bless in difficulties… In a little while we shall be with Him for ever. For me it is a pleasant thought, and the time is near. All is bright, very bright, before us. The Lord only keep us very humble.

Affectionately yours in the Lord.

1878.

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[From the French.

* * * As one advances in age, Christ becomes all; always all in principle, He becomes it more in the habits of the soul. The apostle does not say ‘I believe’ but “I know whom I have believed,” a sweet word that discloses the certainty and the realisation of what Christ is in the

soul. There is a calmness in heavenly things which is not found elsewhere, even in the activity of love, most blessed as it is. Things are hurrying headlong in the world. Infidelity in England displays a boldness to which we have not been accustomed. In America it is the same thing, but the word, the promise, and heaven remain as they were, and we are a little nearer. I wait for the Lord, but as long as there is something for me to do, I am here for His work. I have a deeper feeling than ever of what we are, and of the times in which we live. The struggle against infidelity pre-occupies me, but I go on my way as always, as far as my strength permits me.

For my part I believe that we scarcely know what Paul was. We have the same salvation, the same Saviour, the same grace, and for the end the same glory, namely, to be like Christ—but to bear always in his body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that shews a life of continual abnegation and of devotedness. He was separated from the Jews and the Gentiles to be connected with the glorified Christ, the alone source, and point of departure of his whole life; but whilst he was in the body he had always the sentence of death in himself. Death wrought in him, and life wrought thus from him in others. This is saying a great deal, but he was an elect vessel, and the Lord shewed him how many things he must suffer for His name. There is this true and deep consolation for you and me and for all who are His, that, be as it may, He will be perfectly glorified in us all according to the counsels of God. For me, I know it well, it will be His grace that will be glorified, and I shall be satisfied with it… God knows by what road He is leading His own; one thing is certain, it is that Jesus will rejoice in the travail of His soul, and will be fully satisfied with it; and He will

not be satisfied, His love will not, without seeing His own in the most perfect blessedness near Him. If His love is satisfied, we may well be. We shall enter into the rest of God, where His love, His fixed purpose, His character, will be fully glorified in all that surrounds Him, and “He shall rest in his love,” as He works now according to that love. For the rest, I believe that we shall rejoice more in the fact, that Christ is fully glorified, than in our own glory.

Zurich, June 7th.

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[From the French.

Dear——,—I had already heard of your fall, but I did not know the details, nor did I know that you had been restored… Having been restored by the assembly, I receive you as pardoned by God, and as His child, recognised by Him as belonging to the assembly just as any other brother—as myself —for we are all pardoned sinners. But, as a personal matter, I may tell you what I think. You never knew your, heart to the bottom, you never were really delivered. When this is the case, there is always too much confidence in oneself. Then your activity, and the acceptance of your labours by others, have hidden from you the inward state of your soul; and this very activity has had the effect of making your conscience ever less sensitive to the evil which was in the heart. God, in His sovereign and faithful grace and in His mercy, did not allow this to go further. I do not at all think that you were wanting in sincerity; but activity, when one is not in the presence of God, when the heart does not judge itself, has always a tendency to harden. You will be much happier now that all is known; and God

has permitted that all should be known by men also, because there was in your case a tendency to have a good opinion of yourself. For He is faithful in all His ways, and we are, save as in grace, only miserable creatures who are worth nothing.

Your place at present, dear ——, is to be quiet; not to be so would even rather be a proof that you were not thoroughly humbled. Submission to your position and to this painful change in your relations with others will be, on the contrary (supposing of course the sincerity of this state of mind), a proof that you realise your position with God. This does not mean that God may not give you, later on, to be occupied in His service, either where you are now or elsewhere, when time has made all feel that you are a changed man, and confidence has been restored. For the moment, your own heart is what must concern you. Just read in Numbers 19—those who had touched sin, even in the Lord's service, were unclean until the evening; and, what is so striking, if any one died suddenly in the tent, everything was made unclean. This is not to shew that sin is unavoidable, but that, whatever might be its source, it is intolerable to God; although this was accompanied by a revelation as to the means of purification from it. Keep quiet, then, and thus all will be made more clear; and by not being in too great a hurry the path will be ever clearer to yourself, your soul being ever nearer God.

Zurich, June 7th.

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To the same.]

[From the French.

* * * It often happens, when God is exercising a soul, that He revives it a little; then it falls back again into a dejected state: just as a man who is in danger of drowning rises to the surface and takes breath, without which he would perish, and then sinks again, for he is not yet on firm ground where he can breathe naturally. So God gives the soul what revives it and it falls back again, until the work is thoroughly done. When the soul is really delivered, it does not think of its condition, save to judge itself when that is necessary—a very important thing in its place. When the prodigal son found his father, he had not to think whether he would be received or not, nor about his condition, nor whether he was deceiving himself in thinking that he was on the right road. On the way, such questions might well arise; but, once with the father, he had only to think of what the father really was for him, and the way of the father's acting shewed this: so we hear no more of the prodigal son, but of the father, and of what he did.

Those who speak of the sixth and tenth chapters of the Epistle to the Hebrews certainly are not delivered; only in these cases they have, in general, exposed themselves to Satan in a positive way. I do not believe that when people have really got out of Romans 7 they get back into it. One may have truly received forgiveness of sins and had joy; but self is not known, and it is necessary to know oneself to be delivered. People are often deceived on this point. The joy was well-founded, but it was not deliverance: this joy flows from the forgiveness of sins and not from deliverance from sin. The Epistle to the Romans up to the eleventh verse of chapter 5 speaks of the former; from the twelfth verse of chapter 5 to the end of chapter 8, of the latter.

Having spoken of the joy of forgiveness which you experienced, after having acknowledged everything, God permitted the depression that you might know that there was another work to be done. You are easily elated, and you have lived rather too much on feeling. Now, you must experience what the presence of God means. It is not that your joy was not real and true, but there is another work to be done. Even if some are hard towards you, God uses it for your good. I do not question your sincerity nor your salvation; but God would have us not only say, “We must all be manifested before the judgment seat of Christ,” but add, “I am manifested to God.” Be much before Him.

I repeat that I do not believe that a person gets back again into the experience of Romans 7 when he has got out of it; but you are only getting into it. I do not at all desire that you should doubt your salvation. It may be that the shield of faith falls after one has got out of Romans 7; it is not then a question to be resolved—it is almost despair. But the difference between the condition of Romans 7 and christian liberty is, that in the former case the person has drawn the conclusion from what he is to what God will be, in the latter, having a real experimental knowledge of himself, and having learned, consciously, that in us good does not exist, we understand—first, that we depend upon what God is; and then that, being dead to sin, fully condemned in the death of Christ, we are in Him before God; then, Christ being in us, we hold ourselves for dead, and the power of the Spirit of life enables us to realise this. (Cf. Col. 3:3; Rom. 6:6-11, and 2 Cor. 4:10.) You are not yet there, but God is working in you to bring you there. The outward humiliation was needful for you, and you must

remember that. But in every case, the inward work must be done. The conflict will go on to the end, though there may be much more rest towards the end: but, until we are delivered, sin has dominion over us; when we are, Christ is our strength. Constant dependence and watchfulness are necessary; we must watch and pray lest we enter into temptation; but then, instead of sin having dominion over us, the strength of the Lord is there.

May God keep you close to Himself! Do not shrink from it, if He probes your heart; He does it to do you good at the end. It is His infinite grace when, in spite of everything, He continues to occupy Himself constantly about us.

Yours affectionately in Christ.

Zurich, June 11th, 1878.

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Dear ——,—I have heard of dear——'s death, but no particulars. The brethren at——will feel it much, and that out of love to him, for for some time he had little part in the work, but the Lord will help them on. What is of Him lasts, and they begin to find the fruit of this. He does not at once light up the candle He has put out or removed, but He works always faithfully. —— says that he had conflict towards the end. No doubt there was a Why, but it may be there was honey in the sacrifice, he was so kind and loving a man; but God has always His own ways and always in love and right. If all is judged according to His mind—but that is saying much, and He alone knows when it is—then all is peace. But His nature is eternal and does not change, and we must be so dealt with that that nature is satisfied and enjoyed, but always

in perfect love. And our path here so little realises His presence, when we take in the holiness of His nature, that though full of tenderness—and it is not surprising, if there be the least self-satisfaction or carelessness, that —His hand takes the matter up. This is what we learn in Job. One thing is a rest and comfort, that your dear brother is in rest where nothing is wanting and nothing to grieve, though he must wait for a glorified body: yet that is the world of God's purpose, this, of experience and exercise.

I am here for a short time, or in the neighbourhood; have been at Elberfeld, Barmen, Frankfort, Stuttgart, and had, I trust, a profitable time in all. My German, though of course incorrect when it was hurried conversation and questions, stood me in good stead for all practical purposes, and in lectures, etc., I had little difficulty. Here, as a good many Methodists have lately come in, we are on somewhat more elementary ground. The presence of the Holy Ghost come down from heaven has been everywhere before us, for which I am thankful, and in more than one place, the Lord's coming. Though there is a great deal to do there is much to thank God for, and I am thankful to have been able to come, and I trust there has been profit to the brethren, and the truth helped on. I hope to go (D.V.) to Lausanne in about ten days, where they have a conference. I have had meetings every day (when not two or three) except when on the rail.

Zurich, June, 1878.

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My dear Brother,—I desire with all my heart that the Lord may accompany with His full blessing your being

all together. You know I never was happy about L.'s step, and I am sure whoever undoes what is wrong will find the blessing of it. I pray the Lord that the blessing may be complete, and all old questions and feelings be forgotten in the sense of the Lord's presence and grace.

You will still find, I doubt not, the difficulties of the way — indeed, we are left here for that, though they are often our own fault. The salvation is complete; the thief could go straight to Paradise, as Christ's companion; but in general we have to go through the wilderness: the wilderness is no part of the purpose of God, but of His ways it is. His purpose is redemption and glory, but we have to learn ourselves (Deut. viii.) in the wilderness, and it is a great though a humbling gain. But He has made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light; our conversation is in heaven, whence we look for Him who shall change our vile bodies. We grow by what we have been brought into in Christ, not by the mere sense of deliverance…

The Lord is extending the work much in the States, and that down South too: I am very thankful for it. I know not, at my age, that I shall be able to return, as I gladly should, but He can ever, and will, work. Infidelity holds its head high, but the Spirit of God is working sensibly, too, in many places…

Yverdon [1878].

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* * * The brethren will give you an account of our meetings here; I suppose they met a want, as the brethren came in large numbers. Many important subjects were scripturally searched into; the presence and sealing of the Holy Ghost, the church, the coming of

the Lord in its connection with the whole christian position. Romans, Colossians, and Ephesians had all their place in our research into scripture—the last we went through rapidly at the end.... How good to be nothing before God! In the first place it is true, and then God is all, and what a God we have! Remember that in the path of His will there is deliverance and communion with Him.

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Dear Mrs. ——, —— has kindly written to me to let me know that your dear husband is gone. I could not be surprised seeing how ill he was, and the blow is mixed with many mercies; yet one whom one has long known and loved cannot but leave a felt blank when taken away, and if it is so for me, how much more for you. It was through him that I first found my way to the eastern States, and his long devotedness in the work leaves a light on his path which the breaking down of his mind at the end does not dim. It was the mercy of the Lord, too, to give him the bright Saturday morning before he went — mercy for those around, for his happiness was not in doubt. The same gracious Lord will sustain and keep you who has sustained you through the long and trying illness of him who is gone.

Geneva, July 8th.

To the same.]

* * * Thank you very much for the notes as to dear Mr. ——. I was very glad to get the more detailed account of his later hours: first, because it clearly shews where his heart was; and, secondly, because it is in itself very instructive. It must be a comfort to you to have so clear a testimony as to Christ being all to him, though of that I

never doubted; still there is instruction and warning for all to keep close by the Lord while all seems straight. His state of mind brought it all out with more excitement, but the same thing would have been there substantially, if he had been ever so quiet. And now the mental feebleness is all past for ever: our minds, though in many things the expression of the inner man, yet after all are only the shell, not the kernel, and pass with this poor body as such; and Christ is all in the simplicity of eternal blessing. And there our dear brother is now till he has a glorious body to suit what he has to enjoy: then all will be perfect, like Him, seeing Him as He is.

The Lord, dear Mrs.——, will, I doubt not, order your steps, and prepare your way before you.

Yours sincerely in the Lord.

Andelfingen, Canton Zürich, 1878.

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Dear Brethren,—I see nothing at all to hinder brethren, who find themselves together for bathing, breaking bread together, provided it be done in a spirit of unity with the meetings they belong to. In the case of a resident Christian walking uprightly in the truth, calling "on the name of the Lord out of a pure heart," he has the same title as if he desired to walk permanently with brethren. There is nothing to hinder; but it would be happy (specially if those at the bathing-place were young brethren) that the matter be communicated to the meeting they belong to, that the thing may be done seriously and with christian care. In the former case it is to preserve confidence and unity, in the latter for right christian care. The true character of the gathering is preserved, that is, two or three gathered together in

Christ's name; but it is important that it should be done in unity with those already gathered. Full liberty, but liberty in hearty unity, is what we have to seek, and subjection of individual will to the action of the Holy Ghost in the whole.

As to your second question,43 it is practically answered. Provided it be done in a spirit of unity, I see nothing to hinder. It might be on purpose to act against the assembly when the single absent brother did not walk well: this would be clearly wrong; and what I say always supposes that all are walking godlily and in grace.

As to the third question,44 it is always desirable that they should do it in unity with those united in the place nearest, or whence they come. No one can hinder their doing it, but it is not done happily or godlily when it is not done in communion with those with whom they are already in communion.

As to the last,45 the grace of God and the application of the word to the conscience can alone hinder the exercise of self-will.

Berne, July 30th.

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My dear Brother,—Exaggerations are always dangerous and, where imagination is at work, deceive to people's cost; but the subject is a serious one. 'Dead to nature' is not a scriptural expression; so we must see what people mean and what scripture says. But deadness to the world and all the flesh is after, is what is wanting among Christians.

As regards natural relationships, they are very carefully maintained in scripture. The matter stands thus: God

established certain relationships, “from the beginning it was not so” (divorce)—“he which made them at the beginning made them male and female.” Sin has come in and spoiled all. A new power has come in which, while fully recognising them as of God, and using them as images of the highest spiritual relationships with Christ and the Father, has nothing to do with them —is above and out of them. In general those who say much about them and being dead to nature, do so because they are not. Paul lives alone, and as a rule says, “let every man have his own wife.” The speaking against it is of Satan. The Lord had considered the lilies and how God had clothed them: seeking these things as an object is another matter. Adam was to dress and keep the garden when he had no sin; but we need to have our affections on things above by a new power, and need a single eye to it to keep us above the power of what is corrupted; “all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any.” They even who had wives must “be as though they had none,” for “the time is a constrained one.” Nature is of God, but its corruption is not; and it is corrupted, under the bondage of corruption —and that is the difficulty. But ‘dead to nature’ is legality: to seek it as it is, is not of the Spirit, though He has given us all things richly to enjoy. My body is of the old creation; my life, as born of God, of the new; and we are left for spiritual exercises in this very way. Nor is the matter therefore so simply spoken of, as some would humanly: it is meant to be a holy exercise, and those who do not spare the body may be satisfying the flesh. The apostle speaks for spiritual power and for order, every man has his own gift; but it is a gift. He wills that men marry as a rule, but tells them the married man

cares for the things of the world, that they will have trouble in the flesh, but he spares them.

We have died with Christ; our life is hid with Him in God: He is our life. We have been crucified with Christ, yet live, but not we, but Christ lives in us; and this life fives by the faith of the Son of God. But you will find that when applied, it is always in view of certain objects which turn the heart from Christ. “All that is in the world, the lust of the flesh,” etc., “is not of the Father.” We are dead “to sin,” “to the rudiments of the world.” You will further find that these are distinguished, and that the highest christian state does not contemplate this at all. In the Epistle to the Romans the Christian is looked at as a man alive in this world, as we are, but justified, and Christ our life. Here we get “dead to sin,” Christ having died to it, and “our old man is crucified with Christ that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin, for he that is dead is justified from sin” (not sins)—you cannot accuse a man of sin in the flesh if he is dead. Colossians goes further: “ye have died”; and here they are risen also, and so are looked at as risen men on the earth: they are dead to the rudiments of the world, are not alive in the world subject to ordinances. So we are dead “to the law by the body of Christ,” in Romans: it is also said, “if Christ be in you the body is dead because of sin.” But dead to nature is, in all that we are said to be dead to, quite unknown to scripture in word or thought. It falsifies the idea of the bearing of death there.

But none of these is the highest measure taken in scripture. These think of sin, though of death to it, but never of our living in it. Colossians goes a step further, and on to ground which is fully developed in Ephesians.

When man's highest condition in this respect is spoken of, he has not died to anything: he is viewed as dead in trespasses and sins, and then as a new creation—a creation after God. It is just mentioned Colossians 2:13. This is fully developed in Ephesians 2; and here note, Christ is not viewed as life-giving, but as raised when a dead man, He having descended in grace to where we were, and in an effectual work for us, so that we rise with Him and into the same place. This is referred to in 2 Corinthians 5:14, 17, and in the remarkable summary in John 5:24. All this stands on a different ground from being quickened and having died: we have changed our place and position, are created anew. But if dying is to be brought in and dwelt on, people are really in general under law, and do not count themselves dead; and if they talk of dying to nature, which scripture does not, they will soon find to their cost that nature is not dead.

I should earnestly press being dead, crucified with Christ; Christ and nothing else our life—not of the world as Christ is not of the world—that the Spirit of God be the source of all our thoughts and desires, to live Christ. Death to sin we have, to the world, our old man crucified with Christ; and if Christ be in us, the body dead because of sin. So all that is in the world, the lusts and pride, is not of the Father. But neglecting of the body may be being "vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind"; and dead to nature does not enter into the sphere of scriptural thought. Who is dead to it? And what is he dead to? Is the new man dead? The question would be, Is nature dead? and that they will soon find out it is not. They should not eat nor drink: now, they should not do this save to the glory of God, and with prayer and

thanksgiving—have no motive but Christ in anything, the body of sin being destroyed.

What is specially wanted now is undivided devotedness. I dread anything that would weaken that. But dead to nature, in word or thought, scripture does not know; and in the highest character of Christianity, dead to anything does not come in at all, but a new nature in relationship with the Father and with Christ, and in Him, sitting in heavenly places. If I talk much of being dead to nature, I am occupied with it. I write briefly and in a hurry, but you will find, I believe, the principles of scripture here.

Yours affectionately in the Lord.

August, 16th.

My dear Brother,—I regret much that this article46 has been put in, but I do not believe any attack was intended against the atonement. He speaks of scripture giving no uncertain sound as to that. It would indeed destroy all the foundation we have to rest in. ——some time ago now, brought this idea out, but with no thought of enfeebling the atonement, but merely the use of the word “wrath.” In my last edition of the Sufferings, I have referred to this, saying I did not change the word lest it should weaken the sense of the thing, but that scripture was wiser than we were. And I was content then to accept it as a fact, and in one publication [Bible Witness and Review, vol. ii. 389] avoided, I think, the use of it without making any remark: as if it was not in scripture, I was sure it was wiser than we—but I have used it in preaching—and felt that if so it was to avoid the application of it to His Person: never as to what He did or suffered in atonement. In these days above all it is necessary to hold this fast. But I have some thought that

Psalm 88 warrants the word itself. It is not found in the New Testament. —— had no such thought, I am assured, as that wrath was not due to us, but only objected to the use of the word as applied to Christ—not to the substitution of Christ in atonement for us as bearing our sins and drinking the cup and being made a curse: but though, if not in scripture, we do well to speak with scripture, yet I fear in these cases with many they dislike the word because they dislike the thing. I do not believe it is the case here; but there is danger for others. Psalm 102 hardly reaches the case, but it seems to me Psalm 88 does.

I first heard it used really to deny the truth of propitiation. ——quoted then Psalm 102, but dropped the word to shew he denied the thing. This was long ago in Canada, and made me on the watch as to giving up the word. We cannot be too jealous as to true propitiation and atonement now. I have had one side of this point with Waldenstrom.

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To the same.]

* * * I agree with you that people are quite free to use human words to express their apprehension of what is in scripture, as Trinity, etc., and feel that, in general, rejecting the word is rejecting the thing:47 ‘the judgment of sin’ is quite as objectionable, and if I have used it it has generally been with qualifying words… I do not propose at present taking any step: when a word comes into controversy it is then well to use what scripture uses, and ascertain what the person really means. The addition of the word ‘or atonement’48 is what would trouble me most in it; for if scripture avoids

the word, it would be that it might not be supposed that He was personally so. But I do not think that the author's intention was to deny what we mean by atonement. It is regrettable that the word propitiation, at least, was not used. But I regret the article greatly. The Lord is above it all, but I am conscious Satan is making a great set at brethren just now. But it is a mercy it is all out.

Affectionately yours in the Lord.

September 11th.

My dear Brother,— I regret much the article in question… There never was a time when the true real, atoning sufferings, the reality of His bearing our sins, making propitiation, drinking the cup, being made a curse for us, and all that wrath lying upon us involved, was more necessary to insist on than now. It is loosened in England and is upsetting the work in Sweden. I should take care to give no handle, by any word I used, to cavillers, but should insist on maintaining the blessed Lord's drinking that dreadful cup when forsaken of God. Indeed it is for this I have been attacked, as distinguishing that as something more than the act of dying—though that were true, too, and till He had taken its sting out by drinking the cup, involved it all. In the plain sense of simple Christians convinced of sin, they know that He took on Him what lay on them; and Psalm 88 authorises the word wrath itself.

Scripture is wiser even in its expressions than we are; but to hold fast the real truth of atoning sufferings and bearing sins is vital. But I do not think they meant to weaken this. Only there remains the question how far a

deep conviction of sin has made the need felt, for that is often at the bottom of these things.

September 16th.

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My dear Brother,—The complete putting away of sin will not be complete till the new heavens and the new earth, but the work is finished absolutely in virtue of which that result is produced. It is in John 1:29 the sin of the world, not of believers; but these know that the work is done. You must not confound this with the bearing of our sins, so that believers know they are all put away and themselves perfected for ever as to their conscience. You will find these things distinguished in Hebrews 9.

John 15 is clearly not union with Christ, as understood of Christians united by the Holy Ghost to a glorified Christ. For Christ was not glorified, was not the Head of the body, and the Holy Ghost had not yet come, nor could till He was glorified. “Now ye are clean” should be “ye are already clean,” and the unfruitful branches were to be broken off. Our church union with Christ is in heavenly places, and could not exist till Christ was there; the teaching of Ephesians 1 makes this definitely certain, and “he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit.” So that true union with Christ could not be before Christ was glorified: redemption was not yet accomplished. The disciples were united to Christ as a teacher and as disciples (Judas was), and those who in John 6 left Him. But this has nothing to do with real union. He who thinks it has, does not yet know what true christian union is. We cannot be members of His body till He has the place of Head. Furthermore, His express testimony is, “Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die,

it abides alone." John 15 refers to the vine brought out of Egypt, which was not the true one— Christ on earth was, but branches fruit-bearing. Pruning has nothing to do with membership of His body in heavenly places. If they mean such a union—more than connection in disciple-ship which might go further, as in the eleven in whom Christ knew life was (not the Holy Ghost)—I repeat, they do not know what christian union is.

London, September 26th.

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My dear Brother,—I was very glad to hear from you, and thankful that you and our old brother were mercifully preserved. The Lord is evidently carrying on the work in ——. May His name be praised! I trust He is gathering His people for the last days, indeed all seems hastening. May the Lord keep our hearts fixed on Him, and may our thought of circumstances and of all circumstances centre in Himself: He lasts through the scene, and beyond it.

I have read——'s letter … he is a little on the independent path as to his work, but so are many, and rightly, so as they walk in fellowship of heart: I mean as serving the Lord directly. But we have to go through all these things with the Lord, and He is sufficient, only patience must have its perfect work. What I dread for brethren is the world; it is for me a serious question in England now. As numbers multiply, the tendency is always that way: but we are told to "be careful for nothing," and to "rejoice in the Lord alway"; and if we are near Him, we can, "Nothing separates us from His love. I am, I need not say, most thankful that the Lord is working… In many cases patience, specially with the

imperfect working and wisdom and power in work, is the true remedy. God makes all things work together for good to those that love Him, and it is often wonderful how, when those who are forward in activity are jostling each other, God builds up and strengthens the simple-hearted by His own grace, that nothing hinders. The Lord be with you, dear brother, and keep you happy in Him, lowly, and looking to Him who is our joy and peace, and that for ever…

November, 1878.

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To the same.]

* * * I do not expect a very speedy healing of this matter, but God can do it and when He pleases. Too often a healing of a humbling state of things is sought more than the state of soul which has given occasion to it. Now this affair at —— found souls needing renewal, and if we do not wait God's doing (though obeying every positive direction of the word), we have to await the effect of not doing it. There is but One that can bring the light that judges conscience into the soul: on Him we can count. I do not think there is one that has a more profound sense of the ruin of everything than myself, but there is One that is never ruined, and as able to be what is needed for the church now as at the beginning, and as faithful. "Bring thy son hither" is in the same sentence with, "How long shall I be with you? How long shall I suffer you?" We cannot hasten God; He, when He is working, will have things real. The Lord graciously be with you, and keep us all.

Affectionately yours in Him.

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My dear Brother,—First as to your scriptures—Hebrews 1:2 and Genesis 1:26 have quite a different force. Hebrews 1:2 signifies that He was the express image, as the wax from a seal, of the spiritual being of God; something like (with the difference of speaking of the Father, which implies, when revealed, actual grace in exercise) “He that hath seen me hath seen the Father.”

I should not, perhaps, have thought of taking Genesis 1:26 as a direct proof of immortality; but it seems to me to involve it pretty conclusively. You never could think of a poor dying annual as made in the likeness and image of God. The truth itself is as plain as possible. A threat of death to one who would die at any rate would be an unintelligible thing. “In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die,” could not be said to a creature that would die at any rate. And so the apostle understood it, that is the Spirit of God. “By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin”: “as by man came death.”

I have always found it difficult to be precise as to Genesis 1:26. Man was made to be the centre of a vast system placed under him, of its affections and reverence as one having dominion. There was the absence of evil. No angel was a centre and a head. Then there was a reflective [counterpart] of being and headship which no animal has. Everything down here was in relationship with him, and referred to him. No angel has this at all. It is fully developed in the second Man, of whom Adam was consequently the image. (Rom. 5:14.) This was of course only in subjection to God, and so in His image. Likeness goes something further. It is put first with

Seth; and image is left out by James. Image also represents, but is not necessarily like: the image of a god is not necessarily like him,, though it must in some way represent Mm; though perfect likeness makes it an image—as we say, he is the very image of his father. I think there is, or rather was, as according to his created condition, a certain moral and mental likeness to God. He not only represents Him on earth, but thinks for others, refers to and delights in what God is—not the knowledge of good and evil in himself, but delight in what is good—has his moral place amongst those who do. This is likeness, not image; there is reflection, delight, love of goodness, beauty. I remember, when I was unconverted, the sense of beauty in creation made me feel I must have to say to God. Eating and drinking was, no doubt, as really a created state, but it was a brute's state, and had not in mind to do with God. Hence we say, when the reflective sense of good is lost, a man is brutalised—which is not a question of conversion: then God is known in holiness.

Have you seen the account in The Christian of the missionaries refusing to allow the converted Japanese to meet as one body, with threats of various kinds?—a frightful testimony to what the clergy are… The Lord be with you in your soul and in your work. We have to labour from and by Christ whatever elements we meet with, and become all things to all men if by any means we can save some.

[Date uncertain.]

* * * * *

Dear——,—God is working in a special manner in connection with these last days, and I have net a doubt

that the truth brethren have is what, as in the word of God, He has brought out for them—a return in whatever feebleness to the original calling. Only may they be faithful and detached from the world! That they have truth is felt everywhere, perhaps opposed, but felt. Only may we be kept humble and faithful and devoted, not of the world!

But the conflicts of the last days are here developing themselves with a rapidity which is pressing on the spirits of most, and even turning the thoughts of many towards us. The Germans have it that we are the only orthodox left in England. There it is pretty nearly true, at any rate; but apostasy is rampant here, and Christians in the different systems do not know which way to turn. Our path is simple, but one has to see how God will graciously let a full testimony reach those who are beset by bold-faced infidelity. But Christ is faithful, and sets an open door to those who have little strength. I felt all this pressing on me when leaving America. I feel it difficult to see how to carry on direct work, and yet be free from it to bear needed testimony. We can only do what God gives us to do. It is a solemn feelings that we are actually in the last days. But Christ's and the Father's love are the same in all days, and He keeps us secretly in His presence from the provoking of all men.

1878.

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* * * Infidelity is increasing. What was infidelity of heart is now open, but it presages the Lord's coming—the falling away first. I think that coming is far more before souls, even where you would not expect it. It seems to have diffused itself, wherever the word has reached. The

shape it has taken in my mind is, how it connects itself with every thought and relationship of the Christian in scripture. I never treat it now as a point of knowledge but as a part of Christianity. That, and the presence of the Holy Ghost who dwells in us, form the actual state and standing of the Christian, as redemption is the basis and foundation.

Have you remarked how, in Acts 2, the Lord received the Holy Ghost anew for others when exalted? This is the starting-point of Christianity—was historically and is actually: Man in a wholly new position, consequent on redemption perfectly accomplished, and thence the Holy Ghost come down to connect us with it. This gives the full character of Christianity— a glorified Man in heaven, and the Holy Ghost come down to earth (that is to believers, for the world cannot receive Him) while we wait for Him from heaven to take us actually there. We belong to a new creation, but have the treasure of it in a body that belongs to the old. But the basis of all this is the Man in glory, Son of God, and the sending down of the Holy Ghost received by Him in that position. As to the earthly part of it, see 1 Peter 1:10-13. The Holy Ghost had wrought in creation, in the fathers, in judges, in the prophets; but His coming was consequent on Man being in glory, Son of God, past sin (as borne), death, Satan's power, judgment—having in that glorified God in a way which brought Him as a Man into glory by God's righteousness; and He is therefore ours. It is of deep interest in connection with this—what is said in John 1:33.

The Lord keep you, dear——, keep us both lowly, serving, and single-eyed till He come to take us where God Himself will rest, because all will be fully according

to His own heart —the fruit of His purpose and will, and where Christ will be fully glorified.

Yours affectionately in Him.

November, 1878.

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My dear Brother,—First your questions. Ezekiel's temple is not the temple built by the Jews in unbelief. It is all by divine measurement, directions given how the prince is to come in when all is in order, connected with the permanent division of the land in its proper place in connection with the city, and from that day the city is to be called, "The Lord is there." It is possible that they try and imitate it in unbelief; but their temple will be destroyed, their service there is rejected. (Isa. 66) Still, even so, there will be a temple then. (Ver. 6.) And here I would remark, that the house under all circumstances is accounted one and the same house. In Haggai it should be "the latter glory of this house," not "latter house"; literally, "the glory of this house shall be greater, the latter than the former." See Psalm I24 for the ruin of theirs. I know of no prophetic scriptures referring to Herod's temple. It is said he built it over the then temple, leaving the Ezra one and its service going on till all was finished, but it was always the Bame house. Neither Ezra's nor Herod's were subjects of prophecy that I know of. Daniel 9:24 takes in the whole period, but does not take in the temple. Zechariah 4 identifies Ezra's temple with the end.

There were clearly two cleansings of the temple: the one in John 2 was before the Lord entered on His public ministry, for John was not yet cast into prison. (John 3:24. Compare Mark 1:14, 15.) The second was when He

went up the last time to Jerusalem to be crucified, and had ridden into Jerusalem as Messiah.

We were all thankful to hear of you, and I bless the Lord with all my heart that He has led you by a right way. “If one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with” him; besides it is pleasant in these last days to see the gracious Lord working in the grace that none can hinder. He is doing so everywhere: in Germany and Russia, in Sweden and Norway; in the States, too, His work is spreading. There is considerable blessing, and to see this in the midst of corruption and infidelity is a great relief of heart, and subject of praise to Him. It seems to point out the speedy coming of the Lord. It is not that I look for any signs; I await His coming with desire; but He says, “How is it that ye do not discern this time?” At any rate, our hearts ought to be waiting for Him with longing desire, though with patience—for we have need of it that after we have done the will of God we should inherit the promises— and meanwhile never be weary in well-doing.

I feel it of all importance that we should evangelise. I quite recognise the difference of gifts, and we cannot appropriate what is not given; still there is a love to souls, the love of Christ constraining us, which is an important element in our own state. I feel it as to myself. I do not doubt I fail in everything, but in a certain sense my heart is filled with the desire of the blessing of the church, of Christ’s glory in it, for that I could spend myself with His grace; but love to sinners’ souls — I could not say I have none, and I anxiously evangelise when I can; but it does not press on my spirit like the other; yet I constantly see that a meeting goes on well when the love of souls is there. The same Christ does

both. The Lord be abundantly with you, and give you grace, and courage, and wisdom, for it is all His. The great point is to be nearer Him in heart than even the work, and then we do the work from Him, and in some measure as He would.

London, November 4th, 1878.

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My dear Brother,—There is no doubt but Edom is the special object of judgment in the last days; but the passages you quote refer to the time when Israel will be in their land, and the Lord has come down to judgment. Though Ezekiel 35 refers directly to the time of the Babylonish captivity, when Edom who was rival of Jacob rejoiced cruelly in the desolation of Jerusalem. Though it go on to the final desolation of Mount Seir, Isaiah 63 is clearly Christ's personal coming. Isaiah 34 is equally entirely at the end. You can look at Psalm 83 for the conspiracy that leads to this final judgment. Genesis 36 is merely the original historical condition of Esau. That Russia's possession of Togarmah, or north-eastern Asia Minor, will help her on to Palestine I do not doubt, and I suppose that is doing now, though I do not see the newspapers, and do not know how they have settled it…

I have no doubt the Lord is leading you in the right way; He always does, He may stop us if we go our own, but He makes all things work together for good to them that love Him. I have no doubt your lying aside a while for your family will be a blessing, and mature you in your own soul for work. Do not lose sight of work, however. Wait patiently till God opens the way, but keep it in view. It is all right you should support your family. It is God's way, too, to set people aside after their first start, that

self-confidence may die down. Thus Moses was forty years. On his first start he had to run away. Paul was three years also, after his first testimony, before he entered on his work as sent. Not that God did not approve the first earnest testimony, In both cases He did, but we see how Moses, at any rate, carried much of the flesh with him into it, and then afterwards was afraid to go on; but, after all, when he was before Pharaoh there was neither: he stood in God's name and power. We must get to know ourselves and that we have no strength; for in the end of Romans 7 is learning that we have no strength. So in 2 Corinthians 12, Paul has to learn his own weakness that the power of Christ may rest upon him: and this conscious weakness only casts itself on the Lord. When Paul went to Corinth it was thus it began, "I was with you in weakness and fear and in much trembling"; but the Lord had a great people there. Thus we must learn, and then leaning on the Lord we can with more maturity, and more experimentally, deal with souls…

The Lord be with you and keep you near Himself! Diligence in your business is all right, but do not let it get between your soul and God. If you are not as bright with Him, and more and more so, search out why, and look to Him, for He giveth more grace.

Kind love to the brethren. I was very glad to hear of them.

[1878]

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Dear——,—Though my days go so quietly by that I have little to tell, and my work is one which gives little room for anything in the shape of news, I write a line to give

some account of myself and keep up my intercourse with brethren. I am hard at work with the translation. I feel I have the Lord with me, and that I had His will in coming here, and that is always a great comfort—comfort in present service, and comfort as to that which elsewhere you have to leave to God. I know well we have all to leave to Him always and everywhere, and that He alone does all that is good; but the heart can do so when we are in the path of His will.

The question raised as to ——, is the pressing one as to brethren now—Christ being all, and the spirit of the world getting in amongst brethren. I believe God is working; for particular difficulties, such as this, though they may be humbling, have ever been in the church. In speaking of —— also, I speak only of the principle that has come up in connection with him, not at all personally. I dread the world for us all, and everything that would grieve the Spirit of God. God can continue to bless, though in others there may be what undermines: and I trust Him—whom else should we? And His love and grace never fail. Were we alone in the world, His grace would be sufficient, and blessed be His name, perpetual company. I know all is of His grace, but I feel the things that are not seen daily nearer, and confidence in Christ suffices for the things through which we pass. I was noticing awhile back how perfect the words, “Rejoice in the Lord always”—there is the positive portion. “Be careful for nothing” then, as to all that is down here; and in laying our burdens on His throne and heart, it is peace—for He is not troubled and knows the end from the beginning—the peace of God keeps our hearts. What a sanctuary to have in going through! …

The Lord be with you and all His beloved people. I often think what joy to see them all exactly what Christ would have them, so that He too should be satisfied!

Pau, 1879.

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* * * These things we must leave to God, not in the sense of because we cannot help it, but as bowing to His sovereign will and wisdom, and trusting to His sure and constant love, and looking to Him with subduedness and confidence.

There are in Philippians two passages close together which have often been a great comfort to me. “Rejoice in the Lord always” and “Be careful for nothing.” What sweeping words, leaving us without excuse for not being happy! For “nothing” takes in everything, and “always” leaves no time out, only it must be “in the Lord.” Christ suffices for all, “to be full and to be hungry.” And it is not to blame for care, but to make “our requests” known, and God’s peace (for He is not shaken by or uncertain as to what comes) will keep our hearts.

1879.

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Dear ——,—Some one has sent me ——’s tracts from the Voice. There is a great deal of truth as to the new position and new creation, which I fully accept and insist on where it can be. But it is fresh truth poured in and poured out, not matured in the soul. I know what it is, and we have all to learn it. It is delighting in the wondrous fresh truth, but it is not Christ. In this respect I do not think he knows himself. It is a more subtle self, delighting in having done with self, not Christ taking the

place of self. All through, it is Christ “in all,” but not “Christ all.” It is striking how this runs through every page. This easily accounts for the effect in others. Now realising the life of Christ as dead to the world is of all possible moment, but this is by Christ being all, not by the life of Christ in us being all. He looks for the ‘sense of power,’ but it is when we are weak we are strong. I think his view of the way Christ is presented in Luke very defective. I do not mean anything unorthodox. When self has become practically nothing and Christ experimentally all, the truth he has learned may become a most useful weapon of ministry. When we are young in the truth, it fills the mind always more surfeitingly; and to a mind like his where there is considerable treasury of thought, the danger is greater. It is not knowing we are nothing, but being it, which is the point. More of the power of life in Christ we do need and need greatly, at least as far as I am concerned. Truth he has seized very considerably, but I do not find Christ everywhere and what He is—we dead and Christ our life there, and the new sphere we belong to. These are details which have struck me, but they are of no importance now: they run in general into the great point I have noticed. I do not think he understands the wilderness or that he has gone through it; perhaps there is more. Nor do I think he is clear on the connection of Colossians and Ephesians; but all this is by the bye. They were brought to God Himself at Sinai.

January, 1879.

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Beloved Brother,— … I have no wish to enter into any controversy with you on baptism. What I dread in it is a

sectarian tendency. Another truth that it always hinders or wholly blots, out is the house of God; that is, a place where God's blessings and presence are found—for Israel, Jehovah and the oracles of God, without the question whether all profited by them—for us, the Spirit and the word. "What advantage then hath the Jew? … much every way." Till God judges it, it retains its character, as the temple was the Father's house though a den of thieves. I only notice, on your remark, that Leviticus 12 was the purifying of the woman, not of the child; the child, at least if a male, was purified by circumcision before the woman, and that was the sign that she had a husband of blood. The children, being clean, have a title to be presented; but the assembly cannot receive flesh but through the sign of the death and so the resurrection of Christ. So that, glad as I am that Baptists present their children to God with a true heart, I could not assist at it, as ignoring the necessity of Christ's death—the only way, now man's sin and God's glory are known, of presenting man to God. Faith, you well know, goes that way, but faith has no other way of presenting the children to be received; flesh cannot go. The law is the same, but till Christ was rejected, man did not stand on the ground of being lost; he was tested, and then it was "Having yet therefore one son," and "now they have both seen and hated." The corn of wheat we know must fall into the ground and die, or it abides alone. Always true, it became the basis of divine dealings in revelation, when Christ the Son of God was rejected. But I have no wish even to persuade any one on these points. The church is in ruins; and while this is a striking proof of the state of things, yet it is to life, to Christ, and departing from iniquity, that those who are in the truth have to direct their labours. Nobody will find

me contending for it. I should have been a Baptist if scripture had not been there, but probably a close one, and then utterly dissatisfied. I see the twelve sent to baptise, but not Paul. It is an external but beautiful ceremony which all received evidently underwent, though there was no commandment to baptise Jews. But enough of this. If the King's peace be not broken I leave all liberty as to views as to it.

I am not much troubled at——'s losing her pupils, though it is very well she should be occupied and occupy others; but she will rest, and God give her pupils if it be good. He makes all things work together for those who love Him. I read "Rejoice in the Lord alway." "Be careful for nothing:" "in everything give thanks." That brings us to heaven where He is, and keeps our hearts on earth where He is not—but cares in [everything] for, and enters into in condescending grace, making everything work together for good to those who love Him. She must use her leisure to be more with Him, learn herself better, besides all the positive good He will graciously do her. A little leisure enables us often to see all things quietly with Christ's eye. I can sympathise with her, but I had rather have Christ's care than my own wishes a thousand times, though of course we may be tried by it. Dear Wigram is not at present getting on, save towards the end and the rest. It is a solemn time and has been to me lately especially so, but Christ is the same and never loses a bit of His power, nor of His care for us. I have enjoyed nearness of communion with Him, poor thing that I am, far more than ever, with a deep sense of His immutable faithfulness, and that we can count upon Him. Soon we shall have rest. The Lord is working wonderfully everywhere in converting grace, but He

allows the power of the enemy to come out. Peace be with you. We shall see each other elsewhere.

Ever affectionately yours in the blessed One.

Pau, January 19th.

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Beloved Brother,—I was very glad to hear from you, and always am, from the beloved brethren who are at the work, though in my constant but so similar work one day with another, I may have nothing very interesting to answer. At this moment I am occupied in a special way, translating the Old Testament into French. I feel I am at the Lord's work, so that I am through grace very happy. I preach and lecture naturally too, but have less active service. But I can tell you something of the brethren. And, in general, thank God, the account is happy. I think the brethren were in a critical state, but I believe the Lord has been working in grace. In several places where there was trial, blessing seems to be springing up. I do not think we have all arrived, even at what our poor hearts could desire; but if He is at work the heart can rejoice, and look for more blessing. I feared the world for them; and, on the one side, incapacity to meet cases of discipline, which left all in disorder; and, on another, loss of spiritual power so that the testimony was weakened, and therewith some setting up a claim of high attainment without knowing themselves. But God is ever faithful, and when He works none can hinder: some were inclined to settle things, and things are never settled till souls are. I have not interfered, for what was wanting was the Lord's working, and as to ministry—what would raise the whole tone was, as far as God enabled me, what was really the profitable thing. Where

I chiefly was we were, thank God, getting on very happily and unitedly, and there was a good deal of attendance of persons seeking the grace and truth that is in Christ. It is a great thing to trust God and look to Him; it carries you through everything. But the brethren still want stirring up to more spiritual life, which One only can give. God's truth for these last days they have, though of course there is always need of fresh apprehensions of scripture to feed and lead on the soul. But what I look for for all of them is a heart devoted to God, to Christ who suffered for us here below—the blessed One we wait to see.

I have been struck lately with the difference of Paul's writings and John's, or rather with how little Paul speaks of the Father. The way in which John presents God to us, and Paul us to God, had been before our minds, but I had not applied it particularly to this point; and I had been occupied with the Father's revelation of Himself lately, and how far hymns could be addressed to Him, and then I found that Paul puts us clearly in liberty before Him—the Lord be praised for it!—giving the Spirit of adoption whereby we cry Abba, Father, but never Him distinctly before us. John does both in the gospel and epistle: it is Himself—known through Christ and by the Spirit; but it is "the Father himself loveth you." This is another thought and relationship; and the difference is very practical for our state and affections.

As you have been long away, I add what we have had before us: how the apostle, in Romans, gives us man, still a living man on earth, but Christ his life and justified, having the Holy Ghost so as to know his position. Then the exhortation is to give ourselves up a living sacrifice to God as transformed. Colossians—we

are risen with Christ, not only a new life but a new state, “meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light,” but not there—life (not the Holy Ghost) but it is a hope in heaven, and the exhortation is that we may seek the things which are above where Christ sits—say, like Christ the forty days before the ascension. In Ephesians we are sitting in heavenly places in Him, and the Holy Ghost in us. Hence the exhortation is to come out and shew the character of God as revealed in Christ. (Eph. 4, 5) Then there is another difference: Christ is only seen as raised from the dead, and we not as dead in Him, and having had to die and rise again, but as wholly dead in sins, and then a new creation: hence God’s counsels. The Colossians only just touches this, and does not of course take us to heaven. The wilderness makes no part of the counsels of God, but of His ways with us. We are completely brought to God by redemption—so after the Bed Sea at Sinai. Then come exercises of every kind, whether in or out of Canaan, in the World or in heavenly places. The true knowledge of the Father is in the affections, in relationship. It is goodness, love—not in the kind of sympathetic exercises and experiences into which Christ is entered for us; we may be in them, and the Father’s love known—but it is in another—love of experience and more absolute. Hymns, you will find, do not run on this theme.

I write all this as you are comparatively alone. The Lord be with you and your work. Greet the dear brethren, though I do not know them.

Pau, January 22nd.

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Dearest-----,— … My trust has been in the Lord, and I think, though it be but the dawn, He has come in in mercy. It seems to me the brethren did not see what was really in question, not at Hyde only, but in the whole question of their testimony. I should not even say this, but that I believe, as I said, God has stepped in. I see His hand, and all I have done has been to leave it to Him, only looking where there has been much too much human activity.

Our work, thank God, goes on well. I feel anxious as to the details of perfectness, at least they require much attention. But I feel the Lord with me, and am well (a couple of days quite otherwise). My difficulty is, being here, the brethren desire to see me, as I should them, and how to do both is not so easy. “Rejoice in the Lord always,” and “Be careful for nothing”; that is our path.

January 23rd.

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[* * * I am surprised at the clearness in my own mind of the question of responsibility, which lies at the root of Calvinism and Arminianism. Responsibility there must and ought always to be; but in respect of acceptance, the first man was the responsible man, and his story ended at the cross, though each has to learn it personally. Our standing is in the Second, who charged Himself indeed with our failures in responsibility (Himself perfect in every trial in it), but laid the ground of perfect acceptance before God: lost on the ground of the first, we are before God on the ground of the finished work of the second Adam—not a child of Adam, as to our place, but a child of God, “the righteousness of God in him.” Before the cross, and up to it, responsibility

developed; after it, righteousness revealed, and the original purpose of God, which was in the second Adam, could then be brought out. This opens out what was purely of God, which we have mainly in Ephesians, though elsewhere; and conduct is the display of the divine nature as in Christ. This last is a blessed part of it. The study of what He is is surely the food of the soul. His Person, His work, may carry us deeper in the apprehension of what God is, for it was met and glorified there, and we worship and praise; but with Him we can walk, and know, and learn that none so gracious as He. What will it not be to see Him as He is! I find imperfection in a language a help to seeing how far all is real and realised in the heart. It cannot flow through in accustomed words. I must close…]

Elberfeld, 1869.

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[From the Italian.

Dear Brethren,—The question treated of in your letter is not a new one; it is too of great importance. But there is a fundamental error in your reasoning, as if faith in a human testimony, with respect to temporal things, was the same thing as faith that receives the word of God in the heart. There is no enmity in the heart against temporal things, but “the mind of the flesh is enmity against God.” You say that man if he wished could believe; but he never wishes, because the object of faith is hateful to him; and, further, if he believed with this natural faith only, it would be worth nothing. Many believed in Jesus (John 2:23, 24), but Jesus had no confidence in this faith. You forget that the one who believes with a true faith has everlasting life. (John

3:36.) See 1 John 5:15. Likewise, they are not born of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but they are born of God. And therefore it is said (Gal. 3:26), “Ye are children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.” Now this true faith, the fruit of the operation of the Holy Ghost, has not been found in any man. It is said (Isa. 1:2), “Wherefore when I came was there no man?” John the Baptist says (John 3:32), “And what he hath seen and heard, that he testifieth: and no man receiveth his testimony;” also the Lord Himself says (chap. 3:11), “We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen, and ye receive not our witness.” That it is the work of God is clear according to the word (James 1:18), “Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth.” In Galatians we read (1:15), “When it pleased God … to reveal his Son in me.” God gives us eternal life. “He that hath the Son hath life,” says the apostle John. “That which is born of the Spirit is spirit”—an entirely new thing in man. Christ Himself is our life, and we have not this life before receiving Christ. The testimony, then, is clear and certain that we are children of God through faith, and born, not of the will of man, but of God.

You say that he has faith—‘may it not be that he opens his hand to receive?’ But hearts are not so disposed; they will not open the hand. Everything is done, as far as the heart is concerned, when it is disposed to receive Christ. He complains that when He came there was no man. You acknowledge that he has salvation, but, if a man is disposed to open his hand, conversion comes from the will of man. You say that as soon as a man believes we find that God renews his mind. But, if he believes, it is already renewed, since Christ is precious to him, while before he saw no beauty in Him that he

should desire Him; already he knows that he is a sinner, and needs a Saviour, and he has found Him if he believes. Observe that Jesus says, “You will not come.” I believe fully that they are responsible for it; but where do you find, You will? The word of God expressly says, No. “There is none that seeketh after God.” He came to seek them, thank God, but when He came He was rejected; He was not received save by those who are born of God. This is said by the Spirit in Isaiah 1., by John the Baptist, by the Lord, and by the apostle John. Now certainly God does not hinder any one from coming, but such is the disposition of the heart of man that he will not. This is why the work of God is necessary, and why it is said, “No man can come unto me except the Father which hath sent me draw him.” Perhaps you will say, Every one is drawn. No, because the one who is drawn comes, and Jesus will raise him up at the last day: he is saved, see John 6:39. Therefore it is said (ver. 37), “All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.” The Lord then expressly says what you say He does not say, “No man can come to me except the Father which hath sent me draw him,” and He repeats (ver. 65), “Therefore said I unto you that no man can come unto me except it were given unto him of my Father.” Also it is written, “But ye do not believe, because ye are not of my sheep. My sheep hear my voice… and I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish.”

Now as to the passage in Ephesians 2, it is very simple. What is said of the neuter is this: the adversaries of this truth say that tou'to (“that”) cannot agree with “faith,” because the latter is feminine; but in the same way it cannot agree with “grace” (cavri") because it is

feminine. Then they say, It is true, but it agrees with the whole thing, salvation; but this has no sense. “By grace ye are saved through faith, and that (this salvation) not of yourselves, it is the gift of God.” Certainly salvation by grace is not of ourselves, otherwise it would not be grace—impossible to suppose that grace is of myself, so that in this case “and that” has no meaning. But it may well be supposed that faith is of ourselves, as you say; therefore when he has said that it is by faith he adds, “and that, not of yourselves, it is the gift of God.” In short, by true faith we have life; we are children of God; but this is so because we are born of the Spirit, who works in us, and produces faith when we are begotten of God by His own will. To be begotten of God is by His operation, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit; but seeing that it is by the word, and by means of faith (the Spirit gives to the word the divine power which produces life, as the incorruptible seed of the living God enduring for ever), the word of God becomes the revelation of His Son in us, and Christ thus received is our life.

I do not believe, dear brethren, what you say of Adam in innocence, but I do not seek controversy. I have sought to lay bare the truth, as I find it in the scriptures. I would desire to draw your attention to one single thing: you say that Adam was able to discern good and evil, but the word says expressly that this came in by his fall. May God our Father in Christ instruct us in all the truth.

Your affectionate brother in Christ.

February, 1879.

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Dear ——,— … On the whole one can trust in the goodness of God, but the matter will call for long patience, and the leaders of brethren seem above all, to go astray. Still I think God is working… Waiting on Him, courage, and patience are what are called for. There is a loss of moral sense among brethren, which tends to destroy confidence, and then an action which refers to the whole body, by an individual of his own authority. I love independence, but then an individual should not act in what affects all, unless they can pretend to a commission from Christ, that is, apostolic authority: and it does not succeed, but raises distrust, and what is called radicalism…

Humiliation is the place of all, for dishonour has been done to Christ. But there is a moral loosening which is the alarming part of the case. Still trusting the Lord and seeking the blessing of all is our path.

Pau, February 26.

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My dear Brother,—I do not occupy myself with putting in articles into the different journals: I fear there are too many, and though, I doubt not, often useful, I doubt a little if they have the freshness of the first, when truth was first blooming out, or the maturity which a good many years might seem calculated to produce. But on the point you write about [2 Cor. 6:14] I cannot hesitate a moment in stating what I feel.

Neither the warnings nor the motives confine themselves to worship, nor even have they any particular application that I can see. Chapter 6:1 is as large as can be. The principles of verses 14-17 are as general and absolute as possible. Christ has no accord

with Belial anywhere, nor the temple of God with idols. God does not walk in our midst only in worship. I am not to touch unclean things everywhere, not in worship merely: I am not to touch it anywhere, because we form the temple of the living God. Being yoked is not worship: it is everything that brings us to community of thought and moral judgment. It is a question of receiving—being owned as—sons and daughters, not of worship. I do not see a trace of any application to worship in the passage, but of everything which puts two to pull together where moral principles are concerned. “Perfecting holiness in the fear of God” is the conclusion.

What is above all to be dreaded as to the saints now, is relaxation of their principles in a worldly way. Evident immorality would be at once judged, as anything gross perhaps in worldliness, but it is this tendency to loosen the absoluteness and universality of Christ as a motive which tends to eat out the spiritual life. You are quite at liberty to use this as a testimony which I would make as strong as I possibly could against any such unholy and condemned yoke. The passage applies to marriage, to partnerships, because it applies to everything where people have to walk together on some common principle, and the Christian is to bring in Christ as his one and only motive for everything. An unbeliever cannot do this, for he has not the motive, and it is impossible they can act together. The Old Testament[49] applies so far as that general principles of what God delights in, what pleases Him, are brought to light in it.

1879.

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My dear Brother,— I must tell you that I have never adequately read the articles in the Voice, to give you an exact answer, and in what I have there is such thorough obscurity in the important passages that it is not easy to lay fast hold of their import; they are the statements of one who has never thoroughly digested and realised his own thoughts. It is only last week that I read the larger number of them. These I had at least a month ago; they had been sent to me anonymously. But I would not delay answering a letter so kindly written, and give you what is now with some distinctness on my mind. Further inquiry may enable me to speak with more detail. But there is another point I must refer to. If the effect in all those under the teaching is substantially the same, though it would be unjust to charge all the particular statements on the teacher, we are as much concerned before God with the result in souls, even the weakest dear to Him, as in the particular ideas of the teacher. It is something which produces that effect. Now I always found the effect produced by this teaching to be, not Christ before the soul, but itself. They had got something wonderfully new and beautiful, what was not heavenly (that was common) but divine; and where Christ was spoken of, it was not Christ Himself, but Christ in them, conscious power of His life in them. This was chiefly with women: men were more usually unhappy because they had not this gold tried in the fire. The effect on others, ‘convicted Laodiceans’—for all were in Laodicea (a name nearer the truth than they thought), was that they were rich and increased in goods; others were to go down to Bethany too; they supped with Christ. I cannot say this seemed to me of God. It was themselves and Stradbally, not Christ.

It was only here that I read the first three of the articles, the Pauline Epistles; and I shall now tell you what I find answering to the effect in souls, and often expressed by them, though sometimes obscurely, in them and the articles, Colossians being the principal alleged basis. Christ being our life (which no Christian, of course, objects to), we are livingly in Him, but He as man is in God, so we are in God. Our life is in God— not hid in Christ there, but we alive in God—so as all the fulness of the Godhead is in Him, and we are complete in Him, we are entered into this place, into this fulness which is in Him: connected with this is that we are not merely justified, but actually and livingly God's righteousness, we are it, we livingly. Now I have heard of this being stated much more crudely, and some of the statements in the articles are very obscure, but if they mean anything they mean that all is in the condition and state in which Christ is Himself; as He is, so are we. There is no mediatorial Christ. Now scripture never speaks of Christ in God. When Christ speaks distinctly as man, He says, "my God"; and so the Holy Ghost; "The God of our Lord Jesus Christ," etc. And I have always remarked that when we are placed in the same glory and acceptance—as we are, or shall be—what belongs to His Person is always carefully secured. Here we are put together. You would never find Christ saying to His disciples, "Our Father"—a rightly formed christian mind would be deeply shocked at it—though He says, "My Father and your Father." As an inference man would say, we can thus say "our"—not one taught of God. And this is what those who have received this teaching are come to, not these words, but this evil thing. It is such a connection with Christ in life, who is a man in God, that we are there too, only in heaven, dead not merely to sin but to

nature; and, as far as I have found, it is always justified by such inference. A mediatorial Christ is lost by union. There is another point which I have not mastered, though it is in what I read connected with this—righteousness in incorruptibility; of this, therefore, I cannot speak. But what I have stated is the real substance and root of the doctrine, and is wholly false—not of God, though it may seem elevating and high. The very barrier that scripture has carefully put when speaking of our privileges, you have overstepped; and hence souls have got, not Christ all, but an exalted self.

Since this question has come before me, I will look through such of the articles as I can command. I never saw them until I came here. I have spoken plainly, because Christ and souls are in question, but I have not a trace of ungracious feeling. What would rouse souls to more devotedness would always be welcome to me, but we are sanctified by the truth. I write at once that I may meet the letter graciously sent me, but I will (D.V.) look further into the articles, though I have very little time; and if called for, as far as I judge, write again.

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To the same.]

* * * That there is a wholly new creation of which the blessed Lord is Head; that there all is new; that in the moral sense the cross closed the history of the first man, and that all is new, the Second Man not mingled with the first; that we now reckon ourselves dead, and alive to God in Him, not in Adam; that forgiveness is not all; that justification in this character is not all, it applies to our responsibilities as belonging to the former estate, while there is a wholly new position of acceptance ending in

glory, in our present estate in Christ—is not what is in question. How far it is realised is a question with individual souls. That everything may be turned into mere doctrine, is alas! true; and I may add, that the cross and the glory answer to one another.

But there is more than this in your teaching: not mere careless expressions, or mistaken ones, to which we are all liable, but a formal systematic doctrine, not so clearly brought out in your printed papers, but which has taken possession of those taught by you, and is insisted on as something new and transcendently precious and beautiful—and is something new, and wholly and mischievously false—and runs through all your papers, though not so broadly stated as by those who are adepts in it, still quite clearly to one who can judge in such a case; not union with Christ, not being in Him, and He in us, but, He being in God, such an identification with Christ as makes us to be actual divine righteousness, as so identified with Him; He in God in the glory, but we partakers actually ourselves of divine righteousness and incorruptibility, which sustains us wholly above nature.

'He is in the region of life hid with Christ in God; he enjoys the state and breathes the breath of the new creation.' (Voice, vol. 11, p. 218.) 'We behold the righteousness of God subsist in a living Person for our hearts; He is there—He in whom we have become God's righteousness… Righteousness is dwelling in life of new creation.' (P. 221.) See also pages 224, 163. 'Not only life, which might be said of the Old Testament saints, but incorruptibility—the power of divine righteousness which sustains in the new creation place.' (P. 73.) 'We, having become God's righteousness in Christ, can bring forth fruit unto God, fruit unto holiness.' (P. 74.) 'As truly

and really as we were constituted sinners, so are we truly and really constituted righteous as in Him who has become, in resurrection, the power of God to us. Christ Himself, risen in victor-strength, is to be known in the saint as really as he felt the terrible power of evil in his Adam-state. There is actual positive righteousness, not only justification by faith. It is established in the cross, and in virtue of the work done there it flows down with glory in its train, and lifts Man out of death, and sets Him to be its own channel from and in glory. That Man, crucified in weakness, is exhibited as God's Son in power, according to the Spirit of holiness.' (P. 313.) Then in page 314: Having received 'the gift of righteousness,' … the believer 'enjoys life in righteousness.' All this is error. Resurrection is not looked at in scripture as victor-strength in man, but as a divine act towards man; though Christ, as being God, could do it. You make it a new kind of power in man: that we are partakers of this power, the source being in Christ on high, and that this being in us in life is righteousness. This is the system which, starting from the truth that Christ is our life, has falsified the whole position of the Christian and of Christ.

But I continue (p. 361), 'The new man is in Him (Jesus) created after God in righteousness and true holiness, righteousness as in power and place in God, to sustain us in light and glory where He is.' 'Thus we see our side of the new man as a throne of grace; and God's side the fountain of life and righteousness.' What follows I do not receive. How is the new man a "throne of grace"? That —"throne of grace"— is Hebrews' doctrine, but I do not enter on it here. But by this system what Christ is is falsified: He is a man in God. Righteousness, divine

righteousness, is falsified: it is an actual thing in us, not Christ made it to us, or we in Him, but we made it through His being livingly in us: our place is falsified too; as He is, so are we, in present moral elevation: resurrection is falsified, as an intrinsic power in Christ as Man—life out of death consequent on death to sin, and so reproduced in us in conscious power through Him—not the act of God; and made life out of death to sin and self, not out of death in sins, or with Him as risen consequent on His death, as scripture does; so that the new creation is falsified too. All this exalts man in himself, while professing to do the contrary; but I continue (p. 332): 'We are seen in Him in heaven … consequently we are in conflict with the devil and his host there.' This is all a mistake: He, Christ, at the right hand of God, is not the place of conflict. 'Co-quickened with Him in the same righteousness (2 Cor. 5:21).' (P. 333.) There is no such statement or thought in scripture; it is the system of divine righteousness in actuality in us. 2 Corinthians 5:21 says nothing about quickening or co-quickening with Him. So in page 332, 'justified by faith' is accompanied by no hint of Christ's work. Scripture says, "delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification; therefore being justified by faith we have peace with God." This you leave out and add, 'enjoying the justification of life—the power of righteousness actually known in the vessel on earth.' Nor is 'the power of righteousness,' that I can think of, a scriptural expression or thought, and at any rate not as the ground of peace before God. It makes our state the ground, not the work of Christ, nor His acceptance before God. Press our realising life and divine things in power—excellent—but this alters the basis of our relationship with God. The expression even of

“justification of life” is quite in connection with another thought, and spoken of where all is made carefully to depend on one Man’s obedience; so that the apostle has to guard against misuse of it in what follows by unfolding the new life; and in the passage itself the present effect of life is left out. In page 335 there is the same neglect of attention to scripture through following our own ideas: we get ‘the living power of Him who subsists in divine righteousness.’ ‘To find Him, know Him,’ etc. Now it is the power of God, and Christ is looked at exclusively as a raised man by God, and we with Him, and set in Him in heavenly places. There is no power spoken of in Christ, or in us. The whole of what is said on Ephesians 1:13 is a falsification of the sense of the passage; as on chapter 2 (p. 337): of all you find in it, there is not a trace, not even as an object sought; it is by grace we have been saved, for God’s glory in the ages to come: nor is even the second prayer truly stated. (P. 338.)

In page 361 the connection of the thought is false. In Colossians we have not the new creation (though one verse runs close to it), but that which you always confound with it, that is, death and resurrection: death, on which you make the new creation depend, referring wholly to the old (the new creation being, as said, on the ground of death in sins, not to sin). Hence in Colossians we have only “renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him.” But again we have definitely as to us, not merely Christ even, this falsifying the whole state and condition: ‘The new man is in Him created after God in righteousness and true holiness, righteousness as in power and place in God to sustain us in fight and glory where He is.’ Is the new man created in Christ in God to

sustain us in light and glory where He is? Such a wilderness of error (forgive me what may seem a hard word, but such is the effect of leaving scripture, and following one's thoughts) it would be hard to find, but it is the very essence and summing up of all your system. Thus (p. 362) 'we come like the day spring from on high … and hear the message to us, Give, etc.'

I reject entirely your interpretation of Laodicea, but do not enter but on the main point. The truth is, I find passage after passage applied by mere imagination, which, when scripture is compared, is a rope of sand. But it is no object with me to criticise the articles but the system, which puts conscious power in me as divine righteousness, in the place of Christ sitting at the right hand of God and God's own act in putting Him there.

A few more quotations to shew that it is a settled system. (P. 162) 'I find the Living One there in all the intrinsic power of divine righteousness,' etc., and the grace and blessing is made to depend on the soul's having found nature's wine exhausted: that is, we must be perfectly emptied of self before we receive the life and grace. How? This is constantly and systematically found. It is 'life out of death,' but how first dead? So (p. 166) in John 6 'it is through death this life is reached.' Whose? It is said there, "ye have no life in you": it is said then again of the burnt-offering that no part was eaten; it was all burnt to God: this was characteristic of it. Christ's death is confounded with ours under the plea of Leviticus 1:5, 7, 8. All through I find the efficacy of Christ's death lost in our dying. In Romans (p. 312) 'the opening verses of chapter 1 give us the key to the character of the epistle': there is not a word in them of Christ's work or sacrifice, with which the whole

doctrinal part of the epistle is occupied: page 313 I have already quoted.

What follows (p. 167-8) there is no sort of ground for, but I leave it; nor for all this comment on Lazarus. It is again life out of death. But Christ Himself was not yet that, nor had Lazarus anything to do with incorruptibility. It is again attributing to a moral process in man what was personal power in Christ, before or after His death, and here only marked by its not being to incorruptibility, as Lazarus brought back to this mortal sphere. It is (p. 170) 'life in power (Col. 3:1) as knowing our place in Christ in God;' again connecting Christ and ourselves, not in place by grace, but in life in power. It is (p. 171) 'in the power of resurrection and incorruptibility … Lazarus must be sitting at table with the life.' (P. 173.) I only ask whose death—what is the 'life out of death' they receive? In page 177 'God's righteousness revealed in heaven for us, and in us below.' How is righteousness 'established in the cross'? In John 16 it is by His going to His Father, and the world seeing Him no more.

I know not that I need add any more. I have gone through a year's articles which were under my hand out here. I add one or two from Colossians. (Vol. 12:9.) 'The new man put on as the life in actual fact, we are co-quickened with Him now… The whole energy of hidden life in God is now acting in the power of righteousness in glory. And because it is the condition of soul,' etc. (P. 10.) 'That is, all is put off that hinders us from rising up in the firmament of His power.' (P. 11.) 'He who is the channel of love is God, and Man in God. This is the first-born out of death;' and what follows. (P. 12.) 'Hidden life —the risen and exalted One who breathed a new

atmosphere in John 20:22 sustains the inner man in incorruption.' 'Life hid in God' (p. 14), 'a sphere of profession where we receive the power of glory' (p. 15); so page 16. I have quoted so many passages to shew that it is not rash expressions but a regular system, in which the man in God as risen, life out of death, is divine righteousness according to glory and incorruptibility. All gives way to this; redemption and Christ's work are really lost in the work in us. Now it will be said, One ought not to oppose the power of a new life in us. I quite agree. It is greatly needed. But it is just what I feel sorrowful in these papers that a handle is given to refuse deeply needed truths, because they are identified with fatal errors and notions which scripture does not support, and which totally displace grave and important truths, a teaching which, as I said to ——, puts Christ in Himself out, that we may have a fancied power of Christ in us. I recognise fully man's history is morally ended on the cross, that Christ risen from the dead is the beginning and head of a new position of man in which Adam innocent was not; but I cannot substitute this for redemption, nor give up Christ my righteousness before God for a fancied divine righteousness in me. I have lost Christ in Himself in your teaching. Your remarks, I think, are constantly fancies; what you say of the end of Romans 5 seems to me all wrong; what you say of priesthood is quite out of the way; but all this I leave save as bearing on the principle that runs through all. I admit forgiveness is not all; we are also in a new position, Christ being our life, and we, for faith, dead and risen. I see some allusions to wild German theories, perhaps English ones, but that I leave too. The quotations which I have made characterise the principle I object to; but it runs all through the articles, and, I

judge, takes a ground scripture carefully guards against. Christ in His own perfectness objectively is gone, and thereby what judges self. I may add, I have a, whole collection of poems and I know not what, but I have preferred using what is printed and published, which may deceive a young mind but not, I think, one experimentally versed in the word, and his own heart, and to whom Christ is all. I recognise fully the necessity of pressing life and the new creation; but it is looking at Christ Himself objectively, which subjectively changes us into His image. We, beholding the glory of the Lord with unveiled face, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord.

It seems to me, dear brother, that for the moment it would be happier for you not to teach at all. You will forgive me for saying that your own case is a proof how little this extraordinary elevation gives real knowledge of self. The effect of your teaching, as I have seen it, is three-fold. Where a person did not know what freedom (Rom. 8) was, nor belonging to the new creation, it has been used to set them free, only imbibing mischief with it: with wild, specially female imaginations, it has puffed them up with mystic imaginations: with sober, God-fearing consciences it threw them back under law, because they had not ‘the gold,’ and would labour to buy it. I have seen all such, but all with self instead of Christ in some shape: in some, Colossians 2:9, 10 used to prove that as the fulness of God was in Christ, and we complete in Him, we were livingly in that fulness; and this confirmed, by Ephesians 3:19, corrected from the Greek, and by 1 John 4:17—all as the present fact of our state. All this shewed that your articles shewed the root, not the fruit of the system. I have only sought to shew

what that root is, and sufficiently to shew it is a regular system which dims an objective Christ, and, as I said, a mediatorial one—not merely careless expressions. I have only to beg you to believe that all I have written is in sincere christian affection, not weakened but strengthened by having to look into it. May I add, that you have to learn to have less confidence in yourself, and to be less occupied with yourself, and what passes in your own mind; more with Christ Himself in Himself. He reads scripture, it has been said, well, qui non affert sed refert sensum. Our part now is to separate the precious from the vile. I have no doubt that your sincere desire is that you and others should walk in that 'higher life' which knows Christ only as its object: but, not knowing yourself, it became what you warn others against—a doctrine; and, not being dead, Satan found opportunity to mix your own imaginations with it, and introduce what tended to sap the reality of truth.

Ever your affectionate brother in Christ.

Pau, 1879.

Dear ——,— … I think our part is patience. It can never affect our conduct. I am as free as ever I was to do God's will. And God has always the last word; the exercise may be good for brethren. I am satisfied their testimony is God's, and I can count on Him for it. I went in substance through the sorrow of it before I left London. Much as I love the brethren, my happiness has always been from God, not from them. I have been a lonely bird, though constantly with many. I am quite quiet and happy; we are to be careful for nothing. I said nothing; it would have only troubled others…

The Lord is infallible in His faithfulness, and on that we can surely count. We must remember, too, that we have committed to Him our happiness for that day: here, it is our cross. Not that I am unhappy: I do not wish to be insensible to all this, but I am happier every way than I was—to His glory. I cannot do the work I did, but I have His work to do as long as He gives it to me. I trust our conference was really useful, and certainly greatly enjoyed… Courage and perseverance—the Lord is there, and neither wearies nor fails in faithfulness. It is a state of things to look in the face, and look to Him about, and do one's duty in details as they arise, and fearlessly. The Lord fails not, nor is discouraged; "there is no searching of his understanding." I dare say it may turn out to more blessing of brethren than ever. I believe they wanted shaking…

March 6th.

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Dearest Brother,—I do not expect any large impression to be made on Kome or Roman Catholicism. God has given her time to repent, and she has not repented; but there are precious souls to be gathered out. The agent against popery at present is infidelity, but God is working to gather His own; and how plain it is, that when He opens, none shuts: look at all Europe and everywhere. Here at Pau, a considerable number of Roman Catholics have been converted, and there is a considerable tendency in France towards Protestantism, mixed with liberalism. All this we must leave, and hold fast by Christ. There is a difficulty which I have felt in Ireland: Roman Catholics receiving the truth, and anxious to break with Romanism, but one could not say

they were Christians, yet they needed some recognition, some religious place. At —— they have formed what they call a parish, a kind of Catechumenal, and thus take them in hand. It is a great thing, in the weak state all is in, to have them out of the hands and power of the priests, and open to receive instruction from the word. If one can bring to the Lord some of those dear to Him—it is already a great thing.

I feel daily more that what we have in grace is a wholly new thing from beginning to end, a new creation, the second Man, a new life, divine righteousness; yet we must deal with souls according to their responsibility on the old ground. The cross meets both the old responsibility, and is an absolute close to the old thing, and the basis of all into which Christ enters as the second Man, the last Adam. We have only to follow and serve, forgetting the things which are behind, and reaching forward to the things which are before. In a little we shall reap if we faint not… I close. Let us remember Him who suffered for us.

Pau, March 8th.

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My dear Brother,—As to the main point on which you wrote to me, I have not an instant’s doubt, nor any desire to hold back my judgment—on the contrary. I recognise, as every consistent Christian does, that the Christian is to be subject to the powers that be. But to make the law of any land the rule or ground of spiritual judgment, is to deny the authority of the word and Spirit. “We ought to obey God rather than men.” Supposing I was bound by law to send my children to a school where infidelity was taught, do you think I am to

do it? Suppose all meetings to break bread are forbidden, am I to give them up? You will say, But there it is confessing Christ; but he who confesses Christ must obey His word, and if that word tells people not to separate, I am setting aside Christ's authority in doing it.

Supposing two persons were perfectly married according to English law, living in England, Protestants from childhood, are bonâ fide married in church by banns, or elsewhere, but by legal connection belonging to a Roman Catholic country, and are within prohibited degrees which go to being godfather and godmother to the same child: if they go to their own country (legally in this country, too) their marriage is not accounted such; it is concubinage: are they to separate because of popish law? They cannot be married then at all: they have been married in England, and it goes for nothing, and the same as to every country. Again, put the case in this country. A person marries, and his marriage fully recognised for years: he commits some crime which involves infamy; his marriage is dissolved and annulled. Is he to hold his wife as not his wife, and the woman be free to marry some one else?

But in principle, to make human laws the measure of christian right and wrong is in my judgment a total subversion of Christ's and the word's authority. There may be extreme cases, but if the principle be true it is true everywhere… You cannot make a bonâ fide marriage before God vary with the law of the land. A Swiss is married with his wife a sister: it is legal. In this country it is null (if they belong to this country): is the marriage different in itself as entered into before God? There were three kinds of marriages in pagan Rome.

Suppose Christians married before the church of God: is it not clear that the church would recognise them as married before God, and, if unfaithful, treat it as adultery? The marriage of parties before God does not depend on the State recognising it. The truth is, that while I should look for a Christian bowing to the powers that be more than most, I do not understand a Christian taking civil law as a rule or standard for christian obligation in any way or in any respect. I obey. Why? Because the word of Christ tells me to do so; but I know of no other rule, no other ultimate authority for one born again. I know no rule but God's will expressed by Himself. Any other principle seems to me to be a fatal one. The question, and the sole question, is, Does the word of God pronounce it valid? I should hold a marriage before the church of God, if according to God's word in itself, valid before the church of God… I think it a very alarming principle to make human law in any way the source and measure of Christian obligation.

Unless naturalised abroad, so that England is formally given up as their domicile, no Swiss marriage could annul an English law, and, at best, it is conniving at low subterfuge, such as would make me distrust a Christian who had recourse to it.

Pau, 1879.

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To the same.]

* * * The recklessness with which these cases have been dealt with is frightful, and their bearing on other brethren. The basing the decision on the law of the land is alike folly, and the relinquishment of their position as Christians. The practical question of continuing

fellowship with England has already been raised abroad as to this question.

March 10th.

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* * * I think the passage should be borne in mind, “What God hath joined together let not man put asunder.” A suggestion was made to me which I think well- worthy of consideration, that where there exists on the consciences of brethren a doubt as to the present fact of their being man and wife before God, but have been married and such in their own thought, they should come before the assembly and declare that they hold themselves such before God, and have ever done so, and beg the assembly to take knowledge of and recognise their declaration. They would thereafter be married before God at any rate; supposing, of course, that there is nothing wrong in it before Him—that it is not a divinely forbidden case. This would make the consciences of all clear. The law, of course, leaves them necessarily where they were.

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My dear Brother,—In many countries these marriages are legal. In others (such nonsense is the idea of law!) the pope’s dispensation, easily obtained for a little money, makes it legal; otherwise, if the two parties have been godfather and godmother to the same child the marriage is absolutely illegal. In France the emperor’s permission was necessary. In these countries (it was only in one I was spoken to about it when it happened to come up) they would receive persons as married where English brethren would not (English law is no business of theirs) and the mutual recognition of discipline, and

the unity involved in it, is gone. I go to Switzerland or Holland or other places (I have not inquired into what other countries—save that in Prussia, as in most States of America, they can dissolve a marriage when they like, let them be ever so legally married, it is the law of the land) and break bread with a person; I come to England and there he is excommunicated. That is what I meant—if they were rejected they might not know how to get on.

The Swiss marriage is this. A man goes to Geneva, buys a house (kept for the purpose) and is domiciliated in the Canton consequently, married the next day, sells it back the day after to go through the same farce with another. And this makes his marriage valid in the sight of God! In Neuchatel the house is rented for a year, and the local taxes paid, and this to elude the law of England; and then his marriage is holy, which is unholy by that law! God has joined them together, but not without buying the house! If a married couple in Prussia (in communion) separated because they could not agree (this is the law) and married other parties, the law recognises thereafter the last marriage only. Is the church to be governed by it?

But all I meant was that the question has been raised in a country where such marriages [with a deceased wife's sister] are recognised—if England rejected them and they received them, what would have to be done? Brethren must do what is right, and leave the consequences to God. I am wholly disposed to give to Caesar what is Caesar's, but in the things of God—what God's will is. The Lord keep you all in peace. Your affectionate brother in Christ.

They cannot be re-married—it is confessing they were never married at all. Nor would anything now make it a bit more legal if they do not quite give up England absolutely. But, in any case, I resist as wickedness making the law of the land the rule of christian judgment.

Pau, March 17th.

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Dear——,— … They tell me you have been quite ill with people's going on, and I had seen that you were discouraged. This is all wrong; the blessed Lord is just as full of love and as faithful as ever. This was my confidence before leaving London, for there mainly it was that my spirit passed through all the evil that has been going on, though partly here too; then I trusted in the dark, and simply on Him, and that stayed my soul. Now light seems to rise up in the darkness; the actings of God are manifest, have been, I think, for some time, though a deep-rooted evil is not cleared away all at once. But the Lord is, I think, evidently at work. His means are not His result, and we sometimes stop at them, but I believe He is working and will bring all out according to what is needed. His ways are "in the sea," but always "in the sanctuary." I believe and know that the testimony given to what are called brethren, is God's testimony, and He will not give it up. They might be deprived of it, but I do not think He will even do that: He is full of goodness. I have long felt that their existence was in question, and all the talk about Philadelphia and the rest, as if they were it, a proof that they were getting Laodicean. Well, they are getting sifted—sorrowful, no doubt, but a great mercy, and it will be great good to

them; they will be more serious, more humble. Even their actual state is, of the two, more hopeful than I had been as to it; but God's testimony I leave, as I always left it, with Him. But I believe He is working for good; and if the evil has to be manifested before it is healed, it is so better, though of course sorrow in passing, and God is every way merciful and we are all poor things.

But I must go to my work… We have got on pretty well with our work, though the French is a strait waistcoat. We have done through to the end of Samuel, the Psalms, and are at Jeremiah. I have besides done alone, Isaiah, Job, Daniel, Ezra, Esther, and all the minor prophets except Malachi, and two or three verses of Zechariah, so that two-thirds are done— of course, it will be looked over, and is being done so, copied etc., by the keen eye, for detail, of W. J. L., now in Spain or Minorca for a fortnight, as he had caught us up.

April, 1879.

My dear Brother,— … I have now to say how unfeignedly I sympathise with you in the sore trial which has fallen upon you, for it is a sore one; but the hand of God never deals but in concert with His heart of infinite love towards us. It must be a subject of prayer to Him who lends a ready ear to our sorrows. And even if He sees good to allow sorrow to arise— yea, to send it—it is from a hand which never mistakes, nor fails in answering to a heart whose love is perfect. No doubt it is a testing, but a blessed word, "I will bless the Lord at all times." And Christ has gone through every sorrow, that we may know that He enters into it, and with such tender grace. How blessed it will be to see Him as He is! If this were our rest it would be sad; but it is not, and sometimes we

may have need that He should make us feel it. But there remains a rest for the people of God. We belong to that—to the new creation; but He has come down into the old, that we may know that He does not leave us alone in it, and He is our portion in both. But I must close. My kind remembrance to Mrs. —— and all your family, and assure her of how true a part I take in this affliction. I trust she bows to God's ever gracious hand in it.

Your affectionate brother in Christ.

Pan, April 24th.

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Dearest Brother,—I was, as ever, glad to hear of you and your work. Our work goes on, thank God, steadily, and over four-fifths is done. I have felt the pressure of what is going on in England, while at this work, but have been able to look up: what a blessing! God is working there, but I fear a good many will fall in the sifting, and the thoughts and state of heart be revealed. However, there is always a divine way for him who waits on God—cannot but be—and a wilderness where there is no way, gives in grace His way, and nothing else, and that is a great mercy; but it is very painful when many you have walked with turn out unfaithful. It is a sad world! It makes heaven sweeter because there is not, and cannot be, any evil in that which will be around one. But Christ, as manifested here, was good in the midst of evil: that we shall have only in memory in heaven; only He who is it, the Manna of the desert, will be kept up for Canaan's knowledge and joy. He is it now in spirit. Faithfulness is known where faithfulness is needed. It is in darkness down here that light rises up for the righteous. What so dark as Christ's death? Yet all depends on it even for

Him as Man. I see frequently in the New Testament it is when He sees the power of evil, and bows, that all the prospects of His glory open upon Him.

I have some hope of getting, in about a month or so, to Ardeche and up the mountains, but as all is in God's hands and will, so it depends on the progress we make in translating, partly on their haymaking being over (here all is unusually late), and partly on an old man's strength…

Pau, April.

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* * * I was very glad to hear of and from you and of your work, the rather as it is not very likely that I shall get to America again, though in fine weather it is rather a rest; but I am now in my seventy-ninth year. You will be interested to hear, as you find the opposition of the clergy, and especially to the Lord's coming, that in Constantinople they have preached against that and breaking of bread, and that this has set the Armenians much on the inquiry as to both. I have no enmity, thank God, against any; but this character of opposition we must expect to meet. But there is One who "openeth, and no man shutteth," and sets before the saints in the last days an open door, even if we have but little strength… I do not speak of it now, when I do, as a point to be proved, but as a part of christian truth, as much as the atonement, though not like it the foundation of grace: but they were converted to wait for His Son from heaven. In that congress (at New York) as far as I know of it, the presence of the Holy Ghost was, says ——, wholly left out. But these are the two truths brought out in these days, throwing much light on the truth of the

first coming. They have been consciously my theme these fifty years and more. They started me in my path of service; the assurance of salvation came with them, and the christian character, as of the new creation, “like unto men that wait for their Lord.” When man entered into the glory of God consequent on accomplished redemption, the Holy Ghost came down, till He comes to take us up. This connects the hope and the power of life and heavenly calling with accomplished redemption: Christ, Man at the right hand of God, is the central point. What set me free in 1827 is still the theme on which my soul dwells, with, I trust, much deeper sense of its importance— something much nearer to me, but the same truths. And blessed truths they are; and the hope, what a hope!

We have to seek, amidst all that is passing around us, to minister positive truth and blessing, Christ and what is eternal; and for that we must live of Him, and with Him too, and not much mind what passes around us, save as God brings it before our eyes. It is Christ—the positive good—the world wants, and saints too. Thus in the congress at New York there was the positive good of bringing the coming of the Lord publicly forward; but there were all sorts of heretics there, and persons deliberately hindering the truth in seeking to connect it with the world and the camp—avowing it, if the account is to be believed—leaving out the essential point of the presence of the Holy Ghost. Let us be content to be little and despised, but give out the full truth. The present great truth, redemption being known, is the presence of the Holy Ghost, what made it expedient Christ should leave the disciples; the future truth— in present hope— the coming of the Lord for the saints, and then in His

own rights over the world; to sinners—as plain and complete a gospel as possible, and the time is short. Meanwhile we have to watch, to walk in love and self-judgment in patience, to be enough with Christ to bring a love which is above the evil into the midst of the evil in holiness. That is what Christ was, and that we have to seek to be. I do not doubt, dear brother, God enables you to do it better than me, but I dwell on it as that which passes through my mind as that which we need.

England has tried me more than any one will ever know but One; but it has been good for me, and I have felt that we are to rejoice in the Lord alway, and to be careful for nothing, and to count on Him who never fails, and He has not failed. How could He? I have unclouded confidence in His faithfulness to the end. With all this the Lord is working everywhere; and we have to think of what is of praise and is lovely and of good report, and find the God of peace with us.

In general, the work has made considerable progress in the United States. But all over the World the Spirit of God is working, and it awakes the bright hope that the blessed Lord is soon coming. The Lord be with you, dear brother, and with yours, and sustain you by His own presence in your work!

Ever affectionately yours in the Lord.

Pau, 1879.

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Dearest Brother,—This is all part of the Lord’s will and ways with us. I have long felt the state of things and, I think, seen—not to the bottom of them, but at least—what was at work; and God is working I have no doubt. I

did nothing till something positive was done, and as —— wrote to me, went fully into it with him. I wrote little, because I object on principle to much meddling of those not directly engaged by being present, and because things are in such a state (though it is ever true) that we have to take heed that every word and every act be of God, and we must be near Him, and lowly to know it.

What makes me write now is to recall to you, though you know it, that you must be careful to keep in charity. The heart may revolt at what is dishonest, but “the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God”; but those who are God’s children we ought to think of as such, and we shall yearn over them for their good. This does not give indecision, but makes us see more clearly what we have to deal with as from God. I feel I have to watch myself in these conflicts. I have more than once asked myself—not in this case—how should I feel in meeting such or such an one at the door of heaven. All I know will be perfect then, but it tests us now. We ought to be able to pray for each one, though in view of the whole state of things—not falsifying the state of things; but what characterises good in God as towards us, is that His good is above evil. We have to keep near Him that it may be so, but then it (His presence) sustains us through all… Walk in patience, doing only what God gives you to do. He is, I doubt not, working, and He does things much better than we can. But in patience, and letting God act, be as decided in conscience as possible, for I doubt not Satan is doing his best—nor can I say any one has deceived me in the part they have taken (many I did not know)—to destroy, by morally undermining, the testimony of God. Walk in peace; but one must be before God to do it.

I am somewhat overcharged with work—not of the Lord, what He gives we can do—but well again, for I have been very unwell. But it is an additional reason for not much communication. But I believe quietness is a great point now.

Pau. 1879.

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[From the Italian.

Dear Brother,—I am much pleased with the article on free will; I do not find that there is much to add to it. All depends on the depth of the conviction that we have of our sinful condition; and security and joy depend on it likewise. Lost and saved answer the one to the other: our condition in the old man, and our condition in Christ. But in the reasoning of Arminians there is a totally false principle, namely, that our responsibility depends on our power. If I have lent £100,000 to any one, and he has squandered it all, certainly he is not able to pay, but has his responsibility come to an end with his ability? Certainly not. Responsibility depends on the right of the person who has lent it to him, not on the ability of the one who has wrongfully wasted the money. If man can make use of his free will, it must be either to keep the law, or to receive Christ. Salvation is not by the law: if righteousness had come, or could come by the law, Christ has died in vain. But it is said expressly that the flesh “is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.” The conscience indeed owns that the law is righteous and good: to be subject to it, and to keep it, is quite another thing. Even if “to will is present” the man is a slave, and the doing does not follow. But the will is not there: the approval of the

conscience, as has been already said, but not the will; the latter desires to be independent of God. Does the law accept such a disposition? Free—yes, from God's side; but man desires to be free, that is to be able to do his own will. But this is not obedience. The law requires obedience; "The mind of the flesh is enmity against God." A heathen could say, Video meliora proboque; deteriora sequor ('I see and approve the good; I follow the evil'). All men have a conscience, the knowledge of good and evil, since the fall; they know how to distinguish, but that says nothing as to the will; so that since the law demands obedience, and the flesh cannot be subject, to receive the law is in fact an impossibility—not that God hinders him, as I have already said, but because man does not wish it. Further, the law forbids lust, but fallen man has lust in his flesh; and it is in this way that the apostle knew sin. Man must lose his nature before being disposed to obey the law: it is therefore necessary to be born again. Now man cannot give himself divine and eternal life. Why then the law? In order that the offence might abound; by the law sin becomes "exceeding sinful"; "the law worketh" the righteous "wrath" of God against us—not the fear of God in us; it does not give a new life, and that which we have is enmity against God. Man in the flesh cannot receive the law into his heart.

Is it true, then, that he can receive Christ? Here all is grace. We have already quoted the passages. Those have received Him who were "born, not … of the will of man, but of God." If the mind of the flesh is enmity against God, then the more God is manifested the greater the enmity will be. Likewise the presence of God in Christ shewed this; "They have both seen and hated both me

and my Father." He came, and there was none to receive Him; He testified, and there was none to receive His testimony. Man in the flesh cannot see beauty in Christ, any more than keep the law. Can the flesh receive Christ—find its pleasure in the Son of God? Then it is no longer the flesh; it has the mind of the Father Himself. If there is anything there but the flesh, then the man is already born of God, since that which is born of the flesh is flesh. If the flesh can find its pleasure in Christ, the flesh possesses the most excellent thing that is to be found, not only upon earth, but in heaven itself; it finds its pleasure where the Father finds His: it would not be necessary to be born of God; the most excellent thing that he possesses now, through grace, as a Christian, he possessed already before receiving life, in receiving Christ. The certainty of salvation is gone at the same time: if salvation is the fruit of my own will, it depends upon it; if it can be thus easily produced, it cannot be said, "Because I live, ye shall live also."

I do not send this as an article. If there are thoughts of which you can make use, do so, but I think your article is sufficient… It is said that faith is but the hand that receives salvation, but what disposes us to offer the hand? It is the grace that works in us. I rejoice greatly at the good news of Italy.

Pau, May 9th.

* * * * *

My dear Brother,—The doctrine you refer to50 is widely spread enough. Zwingle held it: all the Wesleyans hold it, and most of the national professors of Christianity. But it is founded on a want of depth and truth in the foundations, denying that we are all lost. The best

answer is the very plain statements in the Epistle to the Romans, though these are confirmed by many others. But there is always a want of conviction of sin in these cases: man is not lost, not dead in trespasses and sins, and that is, I am not; for if I have deserved condemnation, it is no difficulty to think we all have. Hence grace, sin, the Lord's death, all lose their import and value; and the real way of meeting it morally is to deal with the conscience of the individual. 'So to live that he might be saved' at once shews ignorance of the ways of God in grace— in fact of the gospel, as regards Christ's work. 'Right convictions and good practice' is not gospel. Is he born again? Acts 17:27 does not say a word of the Spirit's acting, and chapter 10:35 says simply that he who is such and such is accepted; it was merely that blessing was not confined to the Jews, as is evident if the passage be read. Romans 2:7, etc., which is the strongest passage, supposes the truth of glory and resurrection known. If I found a Gentile so walking, he is as much saved as a Jew. But it is declared that every mouth is stopped, and all the world guilty before God, that "there is none righteous, no, not one." The condemnation of the heathen is (Rom. 1:18-3:19) put upon a ground which negatives the idea of such an universal operation of the Spirit. They are, says the apostle, without excuse, on the double ground of having given up glorifying God when they knew Him, and the testimony of creation, adding conscience: a reasoning perfectly futile, and without sense, if there was the other ground of condemnation, namely, that they have resisted the Holy Ghost. They that "have sinned without law shall also perish without law." "The carnal mind is enmity against God," in me, as well as in any other one of the nations. People confound the ground of responsibility

with sovereign grace in saving. Genesis6:3 refers merely to the patience of God in Noah's time.

Men are not saved by grace, if they are as thus stated; because, as the Spirit works alike on all (or the argument is nothing worth), the whole of salvation depends on man's acceptance of and acting on it. As I said at the beginning, our whole state, as scripture puts it, is denied. (See 2 Cor. 5:14, where the apostle draws the conclusion from grace. Compare Eph. 2:5.) I do not believe the Gentiles more lost than I was myself. But "there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved" but the name of Jesus Christ. Romans 10:13, 15 is positive as to the means. Judgment and condemnation is according to the means we have. What brings, by sovereign goodness, salvation to the lost is another thing. But, as I said, does he think himself lost? That is the real question. The source of thousands of opinions is the want of this, of conscience being before God; where it is not, the mind can have a thousand thoughts, all alike to no purpose. But I must close.

[1879.]

* * * * *

My dear Brother,—I do not know that there need be much difference of thought in the statements51 you make. The argument is the à fortiori argumentwhich the Holy Ghost always uses—rather, the way He always reasons downward from what God is and has done. Besides, there is the contrast here of our state: when we were enemies He reconciled us, being reconciled He is not going to reject us then. His life does save us then along the pathway, but to the full result of salvation. His

death, a thing outside us in grace, reconciled us to God; then in living actual power He secures our salvation. We have to be kept by God's power along the desert road and against the snares of the enemy. He ever lives for us as He once died for us, but then it results in the final salvation. To have us saved to the end in glory, He must keep us along the way, hence I say I do not know that the difference is very great.

* * * * *

My dear Brother,—I have received your letter. The desire of your heart, to walk with the risen Christ, I have not doubted…

I do not know that I shall serve the Lord by saying a great deal. We are poor creatures, and if there be anything right and good, it is through Him, though, thank God, connected with life in us. The word is everything to us as means; Christ lived by it;, gave up His spirit as soon as all was finished— that the things concerning Him had an end. "How, then, shall the scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?" "They knew not the scriptures, that he must rise again from the dead." They are the mind of God Himself, expressed in a way suited to men. Christ was what He said, and what He said was what He was. Men will be judged by His words. Quite true, we need a new nature (itself by the word) and divine teaching to understand it; but what we understand is divine too. All the Holy Ghost reveals to us is ours. But all that is ours, as of God, must be revealed. I say this, that we may feel that all that is really of God in our minds is of the word; the rest nothing, or worse.

I think you will yet see more as to the righteousness of God, when what it is to De in Christ is more unfolded to

your soul. The righteousness of God is simply God's righteousness, a quality or attribute of His. We are made the righteousness of God in Him, because Christ would not see of the fruit of the travail of His soul, if He had us not thus with Him. But the display of God's righteousness is in His going to the Father, with the judicial part, that the world having rejected Him will see Him no more—that is, come as Saviour.

Where I see the soul delivered is when, having adequately learned, for it is experimental, that it has no strength at all, and there is no good in it, it is wholly off the ground of its Adam responsibility before God, and any responsibility connected with its acceptance; and has passed by personal, divine teaching, wholly off that ground, while fully recognising that responsibility, but finding itself lost on that ground, and passes by redemption into a wholly new place, that of the Second man, now risen from the dead, and that livingly, with the Holy Ghost to give it its power. This is the basis, for He is now glorified also. This involves our being dead with Him, but it is not in its highest form connected with that or resurrection with that blessed One. In Ephesians it has no place: we are dead in sins there, and sovereign grace has taken and put us into Christ in heavenly places, as it took Him from death and set Him there. Preliminary experience of death and resurrection with Christ is not directly connected with this; to occupy it, I do not doubt, we must go through it, but this is the discovery of no strength; the manner of it is made perfect in weakness. And everything, on to the new heavens and new earth, is based on that, and the blessed putting away of sin out of God's sight, when He shall have His rest.

I have no wish, dear brother, to weaken your testimony to our being in a risen and glorified Christ; I believe it every way needed. But the first testimony of all is to live there. Though all Christ said was Himself, yet His life was the faithful and true witness. I am quite ready to believe you do so more than myself. But still His words must be the spring of our thoughts; we must live by them. Our responsibility now is to shew out Christ, who is in us, though His presence is associated with love in us according to the love wherewith He, the blessed One, was loved. God will teach you, only we must receive, and what we get from the word must still be given us… The Lord be with you… Here, with a weary head, I have written a long letter, when, in starting, I scarcely thought to say a word. I have no doubt the gracious Lord will lead you into all the truth.

Your affectionate brother in Christ.

Pau, June.

[End Of Vol. 2.]

26 The following letter.

27 ‘What is the difference between advocacy and intercession? What is intercession or priesthood for? has it anything to do with our sin? Is priesthood to keep us from falling into sin? if so, why do we fall? Is washing our feet as in John 13 an act of priesthood or advocacy? When it says in Hebrews 7:25 “he is able to save them to the uttermost,” what is the sense in which the word save is used there? Does it mean he is able to save us from falls during our wilderness path? Also in chapter 2:18, How does the Lord succour us?’

28 [The following letters on this subject, the dates of which are unknown, are inserted here, with the above intimation of the writer's judgment as to the use of them.]

29 'Is it well or scriptural to say that we put away from the Lord's table? For example, "So-and-so has joined the Baptists, and is put away from the Lord's table." Does such a mode of expression give sufficient place to the worship of other Christians in this day of brokenness, or would it be time-serving to avoid saying, the Table around which we meet is the only Lord's table?

'Is the name of "Lord" that of authority only, or can it be used in reference to communion? And does the Lord's table imply communion, or does it mean the Table over which the Lord's authority is set?

'Could it be said that other christian tables are the tables of devils, or has the passage in 1 Corinthians 10 no reference to Christendom as it now is?

'Is it right to say that all professing Christians are of the church of God (not the body)?

'Could a Christian holding that he stands for acceptance before God in Christ's imputed righteousness, be orthodox as to the nature of Christ's Person, or must he necessarily hold the consequences of such doctrine, so far as they relate to Christ being under divine wrath throughout His lifetime on earth?

'When it says "communion of the body of Christ," is the body of the Lord spoken of, or is the corporate body of believers intended?'

30 'What was it you meant by the sentence (see page 315), God will not be a mere director?'

31 “Might we not purpose as Paul, in Acts 19:21, in the spirit (after prayer) to go here or there, and do this or that?”

32 ‘I supposed I was led after prayer to purpose visiting a certain person, or persons, and on the way came across an anxious soul, and was much perplexed whether to stay with that one, or go on with my purposed visit to the other: again, that if I go, and find the person away, am I to think I was not guided?’

33 For reply see page 431.

34 [“Collected Writings,” vol. xxxii., p. 80, etc.]

35 ‘As to the application of the truth of “no more conscience of sins”—would it be right to apply it in the case supposed in 1 John 2:1, that is, of the believer’s sinning, when Hebrews does not suppose such a case, but assumes a walk if in weakness or need, yet consistent with our christian deliverance, and treats sin after Christ is known as hopeless apostasy? Is it then still true to say that, if a believer sins, there is no more conscience of sins?’

36 Romans 7, 8—Does every one that receives life, or is born again, receive resurrection-life? I mean is there such a thing in this dispensation as being born again without having resurrection-life communicated by the Holy Ghost? When we say, That soul has life, do we mean resurrection-life, as in John 20:22? If so, then every one who has life is “in Christ” according to Romans 8:2, and John 17:21, “that they may be one in us “(Father and Son). Then would the reception of the Spirit, consequent upon believing, and the knowledge of forgiveness, unite us to the glorified Man at God’s right hand: the first, in John 20, receiving life from Christ as a

divine power, and the second the Holy Spirit uniting us to Christ as man?

'Would it be right to say that an individual was baptised into the body? Is 1 Corinthians 12:13 true only of Pentecost?

'In John 14:17, "He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you." Is "he dwelleth" future? or does it mean that the Spirit dwelt with them in the Person of Christ, but that at Pentecost He should be in them? As it reads in our English version, one would understand, 'He dwelleth with you now, but by-and-by He shall be in you, at some future time.'

37 So Christ, after His resurrection, breathed on them, as God breathed into Adam's nostrils the breath of life; but this is not the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven.

38 'Why cannot you say the Lord's table is to be found in denominations? … The Lord's table seems to me to be an external privilege; and as such connected with the profession of Christianity.'

39 'When does sealing take place in the soul's history, and in what relation does it stand, if any, to experience (Rom. 7) and deliverance (Rom. 8)?

'Where, as to time, in the history of the soul, does Romans 7 come in? For if antecedent to sealing, peace, and hope of glory, it makes experience a condition precedent to being sealed. If, on the other hand, the experience of Romans 7 follows Romans 5:1, 2, and Ephesians 1:13, you have a soul who is sealed with the Holy Ghost (and this I thought was power) finding out that he has no power at all, and longing for deliverance.

‘“Having believed ye were sealed” (Eph. 1:13); is it necessary for anything to come in between these two, or does not sealing rather follow immediately the reception of God’s testimony as to Christ’s work?’

40 [Entitle “Ephesians 5:30.”]

41 To one of the Editors of the “Francais” a Catholic newspaper. In a letter J. N. D. says, “I have given him in all simplicity what he asked for. He avowed himself a Catholic and devoted to Catholicism. His letter was simple and honest: I replied to him as a Christian.”

42 ‘The sons of God, Genesis 6:2, are, I presume, fallen angels; but how is it that wicked spirits are spoken of as in the heavenlies, also on earth, the Lord frequently casting out demons, while Jude and Peter speak of them as in chains.; were there two falls of angelic beings at two different times?’

43 ‘If there be a resident brother or sister in fellowship at the place, but no breaking of bread, can the Table be spread at any time that another brother in fellowship may happen to be there for a limited time, and then discontinued until another similar occasion?’

44 ‘In the case of several in fellowship removing to another town where there is no gathering; or where several may be converted and brought out of the denominations; should they begin breaking bread at once, and of their own accord, or announce their intention and seek the fellowship of the surrounding gatherings before doing so?’

45 ‘If the practice of beginning to break bread in their case is right according to your judgment, in what way

would scripture enable us to guard against the danger of its being accompanied with self-will, etc.?'

46 [On the non-use in the New Testament of the word "wrath," as applied to the Lord Jesus.]

47 "Why object to speak of 'wrath' and yet feel no hesitation in speaking of Christ's 'bearing the judgment of sin'—the one as accurate or unscriptural as the other?"

48 "Either personally or in atonement."

49 'Has the word in Deuteronomy 7:2, 3; Leviticus 19:19; Deuteronomy 29:11; Ezra 10 any bearing on the subject?'

50 "It has been said that 'God is love: He does not leave the poor heathen without divine aid in their darkness. Though the Holy Ghost may not be in them as an indwelling Spirit, yet as external, He deals with the conscience of every human being; in the case of a heathen, aiding him towards right convictions and good practice, and helping him so to live that he may be saved, and this, though he may never have heard the name of Christ, and knows not the true God in Christ. Such texts as Acts 17:27; 10:35; Romans 2:7; Genesis 6:3, corroborate this view.' How does scripture meet this serious question?"

51 'Whether does Romans 5:10, "We shall be saved by his life," refer to our pathway down here, namely, our being preserved and sustained in our life in the body in this world; or, go much beyond this in its extent as the proof and basis of our salvation.'