Miscellaneous Letters

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Encyclical Letter of Pope Leo XIII

June 29, 1896

On the Unity of the Church

Souls may be profited if one subject this document to the test of God's word. It professes to come from an infallible man; and after full consultation with all who could render aid, rather than alone, we must presume. It is on a momentous article of faith, on which, if anywhere, infallibility should not falter. "If they speak not according to this word, surely there is no morning for them."

The Fold - The Pope's Encyclical §1.

Let us begin with an all-important question raised in the first sentence. Pope Leo XIII. speaks of "the fold." It is no slip of the pen. It reappears with similar emphasis near the middle of his letter. It is reiterated in the final "appeal to sheep not of the fold," p. lvii. But the Lord Jesus, whom the Pope acknowledges to be "the Chief Pastor of souls," has ruled otherwise in John 10. He led His own sheep out of "the fold," the only such enclosure set up by God; and He forms "one flock" in contradistinction, Himself the "one Shepherd," as indeed is owned. So it is said in Matt. 16:18, they are His church; as in the epistles, the church of God.

"The fold" applied to the Christian body is a vulgar mistake, or, if you wish it, as universally current a tradition as could be produced. What can one think of its adoption by the religious chief over 200 millions of baptised? by one who aspires to gather under his

authority a still greater number, who bear the name of the Lord but do not accept his title? Is it not strange to find an infallible claim, not only stumbling on the threshold, but persisting in so palpable an error throughout? For the Pope ignores “the flock,” which the Lord of all instituted, and recalls the sheep to “the fold,” out of which the Lord led them. It is no mere quibble of words, but distinctive truth. For “the fold” out of which the Saviour led His own sheep was governed by the law, and fenced by ordinances on pain of cutting off; it had a succession of priests; it provided continual repetition of sacrifices, and boasted of a gorgeous sanctuary, splendid vestments, and captivating music, to say nothing of saints such as were found nowhere else. Yet out of this fold the Lord leads His own sheep; and into such a fold, as far as man could imitate it, does the Pope seek to win the sheep now.

“The flock” which the Good Shepherd forms has quite another character. He had entered by the door into the fold of the sheep, as their Shepherd, the Messiah, with the utmost difference from those who claimed them as theirs. Prophecy and miracle, light and love, made Him plain save to those who, being enemies of God, received Him not. The porter opens the door; the sheep heat His voice, and He calls His own sheep by name, but leads them out. The confession of His person (John 8:58) provoked from the Jews not worship but an effort to stone Him; whilst His work of gracious and divine power (John 9) drew out their agreement that every confessor of Him should be put out of the synagogue The Jews thus condemned themselves. Jesus was come that those that see not (like the blind confessor) might see, and

those that see (like the unbelieving Jewish leaders) might be made blind.

The Lord further sets forth Himself as the new separating and gathering object; no longer as Messiah entering “the fold,” but as “the door of the sheep”:- not of the sheep-fold, as some misinterpret. “I am the door: by me if anyone enter, he shall be saved, and shall go in and go out, and shall find pasture” (ver. 9). In these divine words we learn who and what they are that compose “the flock.” They follow Jesus because they know His voice; and He came that they might have life, end have it more abundantly. He is the object of faith; not “the flock.” “He is the true God and eternal life.” “He that hath the Son hath life.” If any persons on earth could assuredly assert that they were God’s people, theirs the fathers, theirs the covenants, theirs the Messiah, it was the Jews. Yet when proved to reject the Lord, as once for serving idols, God gave them up; and Jesus was the warrant for His own sheep to follow Him outside, where they enjoy salvation, liberty, food, and shelter from the enemy, in Him Who laid down His life for the sheep. “And I have other sheep which are not of this fold [namely, Gentile believers]; those also I must bring, and they shall bear My voice [this is the main criterion]; and there shall be one flock, one shepherd” (ver. 16).

Such is “the flock,” not “the fold.” The flock consists alike of the sheep separated from Judaism, which was “this fold,” and of the sheep scattered among the Gentiles that had no fold: these are the “one flock.” He Who is indeed infallible speaks of no “fold” now for His sheep; the Pope does. Can any child of God hesitate which to believe? The sheep hear His voice; an alien will

they not follow, but will flee from him, for they know not the voice of aliens. The sheep follow Him, for they know His voice. “We walk by faith, not by sight.” Blandishment is as vain as threats. Ever before, while “the fold” was owned, Jews and Gentiles were rigidly kept apart; now if they hear His voice, they are “one flock.” It is anew thing, where grace reigns; and Christ is all, and in all. What a contrast with the fold of old or any new one! His person and work are the guarantee of every spiritual blessing to those that believe on Him.

Is it said in excuse that not only the loose speech prevalent in Christendom but the Vulgate of Jerome misled? Yet Pope Leo is a student of Scripture, they say, and probably familiar with the Greek original of the N.T. He ought herefore to have known and avoided so flagrant a mistake. In the same verse 16 of John 10 is the word (αὐλὴ) rightly translated “fold”, the Jewish enclosure. Here the Lord declares that the sheep He had which were not of this fold should, with those He was leading out of the fold, be “one flock” with one Shepherd. No such gathering into one had been hitherto. It was reserved for Christ when rejected by the Jews. As the law was given by Moses, grace and truth came by Jesus Christ, Who died to gather together in one the scattered children of God (John 11:52).

Oh! how the truth has been forgotten, and the fold” set up again into which the Pope devotes his “endeavour” to bring back “sheep that have strayed.” It is part of that fatal judaising against which the great apostle of the Gentiles strenuously laboured and fought throughout his blessed course. Therein the apostle Peter grievously failed: a feeble foundation for the church, and for the Roman claim of universal jurisdiction. Why should

anyone hide that Peter was untrue at Antioch to the divine vision of Acts 10? He had rightly used the keys of the kingdom to admit the Jews, and afterward Gentiles. He at first had eaten with Gentiles, the sign of fellowship; and then when certain came from James, he was drawing back and separating himself. not vacillation and inconsistency only, but schism and despite of the "one flock, one Shepherd." And it was the more deplorable cowardice now, because he had confronted the narrow Pharisaic brethren in Jerusalem once (Acts 11) and again (Acts 15); and all the worse, because he was so honoured and influential. But the apostle of the uncircumcision was faithful and resisted him to the face, because he was (not merely "reprehensibilis," as the Vulgate improperly tones it down, but) "condemned". Indeed the apostle writes thus severely, "And the rest of the Jews also were guilty of like dissimulation [or hypocrisy], so that even Barnabas was carried away by their dissimulation. But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, I said to Cephas before all," etc.

Has Pope Leo XIII. laid this solemn admonition to heart or those who helped Pope Pius IX. to proclaim papal infallibility? To the believer can there be a plainer instance of the care God has taken in scripture to anticipate and condemn human presumption? Holy Peter broke down where not only his faith as a saint should have kept him firm, but where his apostolic authority compromised the faith of the gospel and the unity of the church. It was a brief but sad slip into "the fold" again; but we read his censure for our warning in God's imperishable word. There is a painfully instructive tale of patristic dishonesty that hangs thereby; but to tell it

here would cause too great a divergence from the present question, and so it must now be left.

But there is another fact of immediate bearing, which, if not familiar to all, one might expect so experienced a theologian as the present Pope to know. The correct and only tenable rendering we now discuss is given in copies of the old Latin Gospels, both African (or unrevised) and of the Italic revision. Thus in the Cod. Vercell. we read "fiet una grex, et unus pastor"; in the Cod. Veron. (with which here agrees Cod. Corbei.), "fiet unus grex, et unus pastor"; and in the Cod. Brix., "fient unus grex et unus pastor": each independent and differing perceptibly, but all agreeing in the sure and weighty truth of "one flock." This the Hieronymian Version perverted, the Popes and Councils and clergy ever since sanctioning it, ignorantly or deliberately, for their return more and more to the Jewish fold; as in fact there is none but that one. The blessed difference of the "one flock, one shepherd" they do not appreciate. It is all one to them no doubt.

Let me add that even the Gothic V. of Ulphilas is correct: why Gabelentz and Loebe have given a misinterpretation in Latin is the more strange, because in their note they rightly convict Schultz of error on this point. It is well-known that the Peschito Syriac gives the just sense, as does the Syr. Hcl. or Philox.: so also the Aeth., the Anglo-Sax., the Arabic, the Arm., the Georgian, the Memph., the Sah., and the Sclavonic. Luther translated correctly, as did Tyndale; but Cranmer and the later English wrongly followed the Vulgate, which was natural in Wiclif and the Rhemish. Erasmus in his note cites Valla, who knew that ποίμνη is "grex" rather than "ovile"; but he left the error uncorrected in all his five editions. Beza corrects it in his fourth and fifth editions, though wrong

in the first three. But there can be no question, to those who adhere to the word, either of the truth, or of its importance. In Matt. 26:31, Luke 2:8, and twice in 1 Cor. 9:7, the Vulgate without hesitation gives “flock,” not “fold,” and thus condemns itself in John 10:16, where it is dogmatically of moment.

W.K.

Unity - The Pope’s Encyclical §2.

To attract the stray sheep Pope Leo has thought it most conducive.... to describe the exemplar and, as it were, the lineaments of the Church. Amongst these the most worthy of our chief consideration is Unity” (p. v). Now in scripture the church has unity, not bare, but of a most distinctive character. It is the unity of God’s presence in light and love, of which Christ is the head and centre, and the Spirit is the power, where therefore falsehood and evil are, as intolerable, judged by the written word. The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of truth. Where this is not realised, the unity becomes the enemy’s snare attaching the name of God and binding souls helplessly together to that which sanctions any iniquity and error. Unity, which exalts man and his will under. pretence of God’s authority, letting in error and allowing evil, is the hateful antithesis of the Spirit’s unity, the object of God’s wrath and sore judgment, as St. John predicts for the harlot city of Rev. 17, 18. No wonder then that all votaries of corrupt and spurious unity should both slight openly and secretly dread the last book of holy prophecy.

The truth is thus unworthily ignored, or strangely taken for granted. But even if this were a sound and spiritual judgment, how sad! For nothing is more certain than the fact that “unity” no longer exists among Christians.

There was a time when the apostolic exhortation in 1 Cor. 10:32 could apply absolutely and without explanation: “Give none offence [no occasion of stumbling] either to Jews or to Greeks or to the church of God.” There was no Latin church opposed to the Oriental, each claiming to be Catholic and Apostolic, to say nothing of the Russian patriarchate independent of Constantinople. There were no Jacobites, nor Nestorians; no distinct communities of Abyssinians, of Armenians, and of Copts. Again, how refuse the Christian name to the multifarious Protestant bodies who date from the Reformation, or to such as the Anglicans who boast of ecclesiastical continuity of a dubious sort for long ages before it? It must not be forgotten that more of the baptised are outside Rome than within it; and if one may at all speak not of mere profession but of real children of God, the preponderance is enormously against Rome. Yet godly and intelligent Protestants have immensely added to the disunion of Christendom. Who can deny it? or is it a light matter?

In apostolic days the church was one. How could it be otherwise if it were, as scripture declares it to be, the body and bride of Christ? It was not only that the individuals who composed it were sons of God with the Holy Spirit given to each, and crying, Abba Father. They were one with Christ corporately, His body; which relationship created the responsibility of walking as such together on the earth. They were heavenly in title already as belonging to the Heavenly One, before they bear His image at His coming again. “By one Spirit were we all baptised into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether bond or free; and were all given to drink of one

Spirit" (1 Cor. 12:13). It was not an invisible light here below; but out of the most discordant elements expressly one, that the world seeing it might believe that the Father sent the Son Who constituted it.

The church therefore was as distinctly separate from the world, as it was Christ's alone, bearing witness, wherever it existed on earth, to its Head in heaven. The Christians formed the "within," as all who were not, Jews or Gentiles, were the, "without." It was the only divine society here below. Israel of old had been Jehovah's chosen nation. But this place they for the time forfeited. Thereon God visited Gentiles to take out of them a people for His name, called by sovereign grace to incomparably higher privileges, and to heavenly glory as heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ. The same cross of Christ which ended Judaism founded God's reconciliation of both Jews and Gentiles that believe in one body, the enmity being slain thereby. Thus through Christ we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father. So real and efficacious the presence of the Spirit, that in each locality (as at Corinth) the gathered saints were addressed as "Christ's body" (1 Cor. 12:27); and so are they all together on earth "the church" (1 Cor. 12:28). The unity was universal as well as local. A member of Christ was so equally in Antioch and in Ephesus, in Jerusalem and in Rome, so were apostles and prophets, evangelists, also pastors and teachers. There was one body, and one Spirit.

It is beyond controversy that this visibly and practically maintained unity no longer subsists. The later Epistles are full of warning for Christendom, as the O.T. prophets for Israel. The apostle Paul too in an early one had predicted that "the apostasy" should come before the

day of the Lord. Nothing worse was ever said to the Jews. He declared that “the mystery of lawlessness” was already at work even in his active days. It may be held down for the time, but at last would issue in the revelation of the lawless one, the man of sin, whom the Lord Jesus will destroy when He appears. Was not this to write from God sentence of death on Christendom? 2 Thess. 2 intimates with divine certainty, that lawlessness was even then at work, breaking out in heterodoxy and unholiness, in schisms and heresies; that there is no uprooting of it, whatever the Spirit may do to suppress or cheek it; but that it will, when God’s restraint is removed, rise up at last into the most impious defiance of God and the most openly lawless arrogation of His glory, judicially closed by the Lord shining forth in His day.

That the church which Christ builds on the rock, on the confession of His own person and divine glory, will prevail over all the power of Hades, is certain (Matt. 16:18). But this in no way clashes with what scripture attests of ruin for the professing mass. What we now see around us, if we have the least spiritual eyesight, is thus clearly accounted for. God is no more pleased with the state of Christendom than of old with that of Israel (1 Cor. 10). Since the departure of the great apostle grievous wolves came in, not sparing the flock; and from among Christians themselves men rose up speaking perverse things to draw away the disciples after them. Hence the last apostle could only say, “even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last hour” (1 John 2:18): not the triumph of the church, but alas! the spread of anti-christianism. So far too is Rome from being set out in scripture as the indefeasible

guarantee of unity or of aught else, to the saints there above all others is addressed the solemn word for the professing Gentile, “Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but on thee goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off” (Rom. 11:22). If there is a spot on earth perpetually infamous for iniquity, moral, doctrinal, and ecclesiastical, it is Rome, in Popes, Cardinals, priests, people, monks, and nuns: such have been the confessions of many of its own most distinguished adherents. Must I cite Gerson, Baronius, or a crowd of witnesses before and since? “Thou also shalt be cut off.”

Is it meant, as too many think, Protestants as well as Papists, that all is hopeless, even for such as sigh and cry for all the abominations done in Christendom? Is there nothing but Christian work now? Is there no common walk and worship, no longer communion of saints reliable for the believer, or acceptable to God? God forbid that we should doubt Him, defraud our souls, or dishonour the Spirit given to abide with us for ever. There is a path and a centre for faith in a day of ruin. The name of Jesus is not the ground and pledge of salvation only, but of unfailing security for those who are gathered to it. And the Holy Spirit is here to make good His unity for all that use diligence to keep it according to the written word in the uniting bond of peace (Eph. 4:3). Those gathered to the Lord’s name, even “two or three,” wherever they be, have His promise and sanction as keeping the unity of the Spirit. Were 200 millions gathered otherwise (e.g. to the see of St. Peter), they have no such promise; if 400 millions were reunited otherwise, it would not mend matters, but only make

them worse. To be gathered to His name is His own resource for a day of evil, and stumbling-blocks, and scattering; and it is an unfailing resource to such as have faith in Him.

Diligently to “keep the unity of the Spirit” is as far as possible from the letter or spirit of a sect. For a sect falsifies things by being sometimes broader, more commonly narrower, than the church of God. Thus nationalism departs from it by embracing a whole people in principle by sacraments; as dissent forms mere voluntary societies by adhesion to particular views. In both ways God’s design is lost sight of and His children err.

But even in a day of confusion and ruin the path of His will is open to the single eye of faith. His word abides for ever. It is a solemn duty, not a sect, where Christians turn away from all that hold a form of godliness, but have denied its power (2 Tim. 3). It is a plain call of God not to forsake the assembling of themselves together as members of Christ — the only membership they recognise as of His grace. So it was originally according to His revealed will; and it remains ever true and obligatory. Yet to assume the title of the church of God, for the few who now act on it, would be pride and heartlessness, as virtually denying the many who are scattered here or there in the present state of ruin. But on no other ground should believers act; for only this is obedience, which remains always valid for action as for faith.

W.K.

Perpetuity - The Pope's Encyclical §3.

There is another truth which the Popes have misconstrued, no less ruinously than unity, to build up their tower of Babel. "This [unity] the divine author impressed on it as a lasting sign of truth and of unconquerable strength" (p. v). They have one and all assumed that the church is to abide on earth conquering and to conquer till time melts into eternity. Not a word in the N. T. warrants such an expectation. Matt. 16:18 speaks of the gates of Hades, which are not in this world. Unquestionably they will prevail against the wicked which Satan brought in, not against His church which Christ built: resurrection will vindicate it, as He was defined Son of God in power thereby. Yet earthly power or glory is assured neither here nor anywhere else; but as the Lord Jesus was once rejected and suffered, so each of His must now deny himself, take up his cross, and follow Him, as He,explains at the same time to Peter, sternly rebuked for minding the things of men, not of God. Hence they essay to found it on the promises, psalms and prophecies which speak of Jerusalem, Zion, and the like in the O.T. But this is wholly unsound and misleading.

Let us weigh the scriptures on which they rely. Here are Pope Leo's words (pp. 13, 14), "That the one Church should embrace all men everywhere and at all times was seen and foretold by Isaias, when looking into the future he saw the appearance of a mountain conspicuous by its all-surpassing altitude, which set forth the image of The house of the Lord - that is, of the Church. And in the last days the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be prepared on the top of the mountains (Isa. 2:2). But this mountain which towers over all other mountains is one;

and the house of the Lord to which all nations shall come to seek the rule of living is also one. And all nations shall flow into it. And many people shall go, and say: Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob, and He will teach us His ways, and we will walk in His paths (Ibid 2:2, 3)."

Now it is vain to quote Fathers in support of an interpretation which is inconsistent with the text, foreign to the prophets universally, and contradicted by all that the N. T. tells us of the church. Beyond doubt the rejected Messiah, the Son of man, was lifted up on the cross, and must be, that (not Jews only but) "whosoever believeth might in Him have life eternal." "For there is no other name under heaven given to men whereby we must be saved." But neither these scriptures nor any others teach that the church embraces the whole race. The very name essentially excludes and forbids such a perversion. "Church" means the "assembly," the calling out which leaves the rest where they were. The Lord therefore, who had before Him the end from the beginning, calls the "little flock" not to fear (Luke 12); and, when looking on to the day of displayed glory, He contrasts those that are then to be perfected in one with the world, which will thereby know that the Father sent the Son and loved the saints then glorified, even as He loved His Son. For are they not manifested in the same glory? The church is catholic, in contrast with God's previous dealing with one people, as comprehending not all mankind, but "out of" every land and nation. Hence in giving the sentence of the council in Jerusalem on the question of admitting the Gentiles, James refers to Symeon's explanation how God first visited to take "out of Gentiles" a people for His name. And this will be

complete “in the consummation of the age” (Matt. 13:40-43), in the time of the harvest, when those gathered out are brought to heaven, and shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father.

But Isaiah had before him the vision of the new age, when the veil is no longer on Israel’s heart, and they see eye to eye, for Jehovah has returned to Zion. Therefore is her light come, and the glory of Jehovah is risen upon her. In this mountain shall Jehovah make unto all peoples a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees. And he will destroy in this mountain the face of the veil that veileth all the peoples, and the covering that is spread over all the nations. Nor will this be without the solemn judgment of the living, which the living are so apt to forget, though He Himself revealed it, as the apostles repeated, and the O.T. prophets predicted of old: a judgment which will fall on the nations, but severely on the Jews, and yet more so on Christendom, more guilty still as knowing better and no less unbelieving and lawless.

Israel will then be under Messiah and the new covenant; and the inhabitants of the world, when His judgments are in the earth, learn righteousness. Such is the basis, such the circumstances, presupposed in the scene, to which the prophet prefixes a title which ought to preclude misapplication: “The word that Isaiah, son of Amoz, saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem.” The church at that time will have a still more glorious position. For she is the bride, the Lamb’s wife, and is symbolised, not by Zion, or Moriah, or Jerusalem, but by the new Jerusalem descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God. She had suffered with Christ during her earthly sojourn, instead of faithlessly, like

Babylon, seeking present ease and power and glory; therefore will she be glorified together with Him in that day. Jerusalem even then is reigned over. The first dominion comes to Zion; and all the nations shall truly bow to Jehovah's choice and Messiah's seat of earthly rule. But the heavenly Eve of the second Man, the last Adam, has a far higher place and glory, as united to the Head over all, the Heir of the universe. The glorified saints alone shall reign with Christ over the earth.

With this agrees every word of the text. The Lord has not yet taken His great power and reigned, as He will, at the seventh trumpet in the end of the age when the world-kingdom is become His de facto. Then will He reward His servants, and destroy the destroyers of the earth; and the present evil age will yield to the good age that follows when He is come and governs. Then as Zion is His earthly centre, so is the mountain of Jehovah's house exalted; and all the nations shall flow thither. The nations are no longer envious, nor is Israel jealous any more. Jehovah Messiah will have wrought in divine attractive mercy as well as in overawing power; and the peoples come up, assured that He (not the church) will teach them of His ways.

The prophet does not say that the gospel as now but that the law shall go forth out of Zion; it is not the Father's word which we know, but Jehovah's word from Jerusalem. No allegoriser is bold enough to deny the literality of Jerusalem here; but this they quit in a moment and interpolate the gospel and the church. But the prophet in ver. 6 goes on to say, "Thou hast cast off thy people, the house of Jacob," etc. How say this of the church? It is "the kingdom"; and the Great King will judge among the nations, and will reprove many

peoples: a wholly different state from the church, wherein is neither Jew nor Gentile, now in training, and sufferings too, in the fellowship of Christ's, for heaven. The time for earth's deliverance and joy and blessing is come. For Jehovah will reign in a way He has never done yet.

Accordingly we are assured that men "shall forge their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning-knives: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." So it will be in the age to come. But our Lord has expressly told us that till the end of this ace come, "nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom." Thus there is no excuse for the confusion of the theologians. This is not confined to Popery, though there it is extreme and systematised error. It is due to the evil heart of unbelief that loves the world and the things of the world. But the Lord has laid down for Christians that they "are not of the world" as He is not: a principle itself subversive of this evil scheme, which seeks earthly dominion more persistently and unscrupulously than any usurper that ever breathed. But strong is the Lord God that will judge Babylon, and this righteously.

It is not to the church in one single instance, but to Israel (when restored in sovereign mercy, yet also in accomplishment of the promises to the true fathers), that perpetuity is assigned throughout all the O.T. and sealed in the N.T. So Genesis 17 repeatedly assures to Abraham and his seed "an everlasting covenant," and the land (which decides its literal import) "an everlasting possession"; to Isaac and to Jacob the gift was successively confirmed. But Exodus shows that, while Jehovah remembered His covenant, Israel forgot

His free promise and their own weakness, undertaking to obey the law as the condition of their possession. Thus man being what he is, all was certain to be lost. Only through a typical, and therefore temporary, mediator did they pass through the wilderness or enter the land. There (after the fullest patience and the exhaustion of all possible remedial means) ruin came at last under the first, and more under the last, of the four "beasts" or imperial world-powers. But even Lev. 26 which declares the stern chastenings awaiting their sins, lets us know that when their heart is humbled as our Lord taught us to expect (Matt. 23:39), Jehovah will remember His covenant with their fathers, and remember their land. Jerusalem (said He, Luke 21:24) shall be trodden down by Gentiles — for ever? Not so; but only until times of Gentiles be fulfilled. What has all this to do with the church? It has much every way to say to Israel and the future kingdom. Compare Num. 24, 25, and Deut. 32 especially vers. 36-43.

But it is in the Psalms and Prophets that evidence is most abundant, so much so that one need not cite any in particular, unless it be Dan. 2:35, to which allusion is made in the extract from Augustine (p. xix). Now it is absurd to apply to the first advent that judicial act, which effaces not only the Roman empire, but all that remains of its predecessors on the earth. It is He at the second advent alone, who will execute sudden and complete judgment on all hostile powers. Only when utter destruction falls on them, does the stone that smote the image become a great mountain and fill the whole world. It will be the kingdom of God in Christ set up on Zion, when Jehovah makes Judah as His majestic horse in the battle. What can be more decidedly in

contrast with the suffering church, the witness of grace and heavenly glory? What more distinctly in keeping with the Lord coming in His kingdom and trampling all His enemies under foot?

Nevertheless theology has habitually confounded these two things; and none more grossly than the Popes, nor any with such evident and interested aim to profit by a deception, which probably deceived themselves. Yet what can be plainer than the wholly different facts when the church was brought in to view at Pentecost? Zion was for the present no better than Aceldama, and Jerusalem doomed to desolation. Instead of all the nations flowing to the mountain of Jehovah's house, the gospel was soon preached everywhere by the scattered Christians and later by the apostles. Instead of judging among the nations from His centre of Zion, He executed sentence on Jerusalem by heathen Rome (Matt. 22:7); and instead of nations ever since learning war no more, all history attests, as He predicted, incessant ravages of war. And the day in which we live beholds Christendom, more than ever since the world began, bristling with arms on sea and land, and learning war with a zeal and mutual suspicion beyond all previous zeal. What more infatuated then than the traditional misuse of this vision and of others generally?

W.K.

The Faith - The Pope's Encyclical §4.

The flock and its unity we affirm. Human co-operation in all that is a duty on our part by God's will, none but a fanatic can dispute. That the church was originally visible is as certain as that it always ought to have been so; but it is not since early days, being broken up into

parties ancient and modern. Self-will has made Christ's body the church invisible. This the faithful are bound to feel and confess as sin, while repudiating all corporate existence or action save on the principle of its divine unity. From its nature and character no section has departed so flagrantly as Romanism, none in such deliberate and active resistance against its Head as the Popes.

Let us now briefly test this self-vaunting system by "the faith." If we cleave to the teaching of the apostles, Popery is a manifest revolt from it. If it allows that the passages cited for unity from the Epistles to the Ephesians and the Corinthians, as well as the Gospel of John, "need no interpreter," is it conceivable that what is more vital still, what concerns the basis of man's individual salvation or his perdition, does not "speak clearly? "

First, does Romanism proclaim, as the apostle Peter did, the remission of sins through Christ's name to every one that believes in Him (Acts 10:43)? Does the Pope, or any of his venerable brethren, make known, as the great apostle of the Gentiles did, that through Christ is preached forgiveness of sins — that by Him all that believe are justified from all things (Acts 13:38, 39)? To the cry "What must I do to be saved?" do they answer with Paul and Silas, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house" (Acts 16:30, 31)? The Council of Trent (Sess. vi. cap. 9) nullifies this, the simple and certain word of truth, the gospel of our salvation; and in Can. ix. it anathematises any one who says that the ungodly man is justified by faith alone. They are, therefore, false witnesses and adversaries of the faith. They confound justification with practical

sanctification, which destroys it. “Non est sola peccatorum remissio sed et sanctificatio” are their words (cap. 7), which betray ignorance of the first message in God’s gospel.

Secondly, they have invented an unscriptural, fabulous, purgatory, owing to the same blindness as to the efficacy of Christ’s sacrifice. For though they allow that His blood meritoriously avails for the justification of the faithful, they hold, save for exceptional men like martyrs, that all others must go into that future prison till they have paid the last farthing. Not only is this flat contradiction of God’s testimony to the Saviour’s work declared not only to sanctify the believer (Heb. 10:14), but to have perfected him in perpetuity (εἰς τὸ διηνεκὲς); it is distressing defamation of our God and Father, both in character and in conduct toward us. For He is said, even now, to have qualified the faithful for the participation of the inheritance of the saints in light (Col. 1:12); and therefore are they called not only to pray but to give Him thanks. For His love is shed abroad in their hearts through the Holy Spirit who is given to us; and perfect love casts out fear. This the Tridentine fathers blacken as the vain confidence of heretics, being themselves as far from crying Abba, Father, as they are from enjoying redemption, in truth.

Thirdly, even at the start, their doctrine is (Sess. xiv. c. 2) that by baptism putting on Christ we are made wholly a new creature in Him, obtaining full and entire remission of all sins. Now this is to confound baptism with water and baptism with the Spirit. It is no wonder that, when they had lost the truth of the gospel, they exaggerated an institution like baptism. Even so it is evident that they have no confidence in anything really

secured and abiding by Christ and His work. Of standing in grace they are in blank ignorance.

Hence, fourthly, they resort to a sacrament of penance to meet sins after baptism, and they urge “contrition” as its condition, that is, not only hatred of the sins but desire to make reparation or atonement for them, proportionate to the crimes it effaces. Now as few could hope to attain such an end, they pretend that God eases the difficulty by giving the keys of the kingdom to the church, and thus opening the gate of heaven to those who, not truly contrite, have only reached “attrition.” Penance, therefore, is a deliberate device of Romanism to give absolution where there is confession without due repentance or contrition. Nor was auricular confession established till the fourth Lateran Council (1215), when Innocent III. had it imposed as an article of faith. For previously, though confession of sins was held to be a duty, it was left open to do so to God alone or to a priest also. The new development was by the usual fiction declared to be the church’s faith from the beginning. So they say of all their peculiar dogmas, no matter how recent they be as articles of faith, nor how loudly their highest authorities are known to have once rejected them. More barefaced deceit than in Romanism it were hard to imagine.

Fifthly, may be noticed the strange doctrine of Rome as to the extreme unction. The Greeks are depraved and superstitious enough; but their practice approaches far nearer to that of early days among Jewish believers. For if they anoint the sick with oil, it is that the prayer of faith may heal him and the Lord may raise him up. Not so the unhallowed Romish system. In open departure from James 5 the aim is some faint hope of solace for the

dying. Remission of sins in baptism suffices not; and no wonder, whatever the strong language employed. Penance again with its satisfaction and absolution has failed, no matter how often repeated. Of another resource we may speak presently, still more.their boast during life; but now that death approaches, it too has proved a broken reed. Then the priest is anew called in to administer the viaticum and extreme unction. The Council of Trent (Sess. xiv. c. 2) perverts the scriptural text, though not without prevarication, to the saving of the soul as the Jesuit commentator, Cornelius van der Steen, boldly, Delicta, si quae sint adhuc expianda, ac peccati reliquias abstergit. Yet after all this round of appliances, however diligently used throughout life and in the hour of death, the soul at last goes to purgatory and must endure exquisite torments from God. What a contrast with the saving grace of God revealed in His word! How deplorable the ignorance, among Westerns or Orientals, of the unction from the Holy One, whereby even the babes of God’s family know and enjoy the grace wherein they stand! For want of it in vain do they wrest the scriptures to inaugurate means of quieting consciences, which need to be and can only be purged by the blood of Christ.

This, sixthly, leads us to another of these unavailing expedients, which is, if possible, even more characteristic of incredulity — masses for the dead as well as the living. Here too is the same fatality of powerlessness to keep from the generally inevitable horrors of purgatory. But the serious feature common to them all is that these lying vanities undermine God’s word and supplant the one sacrifice for sins, the offering of Christ’s body once for all; which was God’s will, that

we might be not only sanctified but perfected uninterruptedly. Now no article of Popery is more sacred than that which is professed in the Creed of Pope Pius IV. that in the mass is offered to God a true, proper, and propitiatory sacrifice for the living and the dead. Necessarily then the simple and complete efficacy of Christ's sacrifice is disbelieved. For if His blood really cleanses from all sin, it is dishonoured and in effect denied by supplementary sacrifices. Like the Jews of old, the Ronianist now trusts in the repetition of sacrifices; but in this the latter is immeasurably more guilty. For the New Testament is explicit that sacrifice was repeated because of inefficacy, and that Christ's is but one because it makes the conscience perfect. The doctrine and the practice of Rome are in this not erroneous only but infidel and apostate.

There is further evidence of the same fundamental antagonism against the revealed truth. For God's word declares that since Christ's death there is no more offering for sin; whereas the Council of Trent curses all who deny its constant repetition in the Mass. There not only is Christ's one oblation on the cross brought to nought, but a rival is set up pretending to be its continuation. The excuse is made that the Mass is a pure unbloody offering. But this only renders the case worse and more glaring. For if Christ be offered often, the Holy Spirit has ruled that He must suffer often, which is impossible and false; and again, that an unbloody sacrifice cannot avail for remission of sins, because scripture decides that without shedding of blood there is no remission, Heb. 9, 10.

But the fact is, seventhly, that the Romish creed consecrates natural feeling without the least warrant

and in the grossest way, against the faith of God's elect in the mediation of the Virgin, of angels, and of saints. Scripture is not plainer in the O.T. for the unity of God than in the N.T. for "one mediator between God and man" — Christ Jesus, not only man but Son of the Father Who is God over all blessed for ever.

The Epistle to the Hebrews elaborately draws out His perfection, both in sacrificial work and in priestly office, from the glory of His person as Son of God, and Son of man, exalted above all men and angels, and seated on the right hand of the Majesty on high. Highly favoured as Mary was in that the Son deigned to be born of her, so that all generations call her blessed, it is merely natural religion, as it is the deepest offence against Him and the word and the glory of God, to claim for her more accessible grace, or a more compassionate heart. He only is the merciful and faithful High Priest. What would it have been to have sought Miriam to interpose with weak and failing Aaron? How much more intolerable to have recourse to Mary with Him that has passed through the heavens, the Son of God! Herein we have known and do know love, because He laid down His life for us — for us, when we were enemies and ungodly. This, neither Mary, nor any saint, ever did for us; nor if they had, would it have availed in the least for us or even for themselves. His death alone was or could be efficacious for our sins. His love is the same now that He is risen, and appears in heaven, interceding, for us, before the God of all grace, Whose love to us is as perfect as His own. The Romanist dream may not openly oppose this, which is the certain truth of God, but saps it all effectually. So that Mariolatry and guardian angels and patron saints really displace the worship of the

Father and the Son to the infinite grief of the Holy Spirit.

But lastly, their hostility to scripture, in order to claim authority for the church both to authenticate and to interpret it, is the plainest defection from the faith. For the church is in no way the truth, but responsible to be its pillar and base. If the Queen sent a letter by the post, just think of the empty conceit of the postmaster or the postman pretending to accredit what solely depends on her majesty's sign-manual, or her command through this or that minister! How incomparably worse for the church, or its rulers, to arrogate the title to pronounce on God's word! Every scripture has in itself divine authority, because it is inspired of God; and the church, like every member of it, is bound to receive and obey it accordingly. To set up the church's title to accredit it is blasphemous pride, which is none the better because they profess themselves to believe. Satan deceives them to make that presumptuous claim, in order to exalt the church and enhance its authority over all mankind, alas! to their own sin and ruin, to God's unfailing and predicted vengeance.

W. K.

Headship - The Pope's Encyclical §5.

In scripture the truth is plain. The church of God knows but one Head, even Christ in heaven (Eph. 1:22; Col. 1:18). Earthly head there is none if we hear God's word. Not only is there no such anomaly as two heads of the one body of Christ; but the invariable teaching of divine revelation is incompatible with such an earthly incumbrance. The principle is as certain as the doctrine. The evident aim is to make the church of God even while

on earth a heavenly institution by giving the glorified Christ to her as Head. This accordingly excludes any other. The church, if faithful, accepts on earth shame, rejection, and persecution, as the Lord Jesus did in the days of his flesh. “In the world (said He) ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer: I have overcome the world” (John 16:33). When the church even seeks, still more when she receives, earthly glory, the world overcomes her, instead of her by faith overcoming the world. She is false to her Head. Latin, Greek, Protestant, makes no difference as to this. As we died with Christ to sin and law, so is it for the Christian to say in truth, Be it not for me to boast save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by Whom the world is crucified to me, and I to the world. Thus is this great severance laid down by the Holy Spirit. Souls may be and are delivered by grace from this present age; thenceforward they are not of the world as Christ is not.

Hence meddling with the world, or judging its questions, was refused by the Lord peremptorily (Luke 12; 13-15). So He departed from those who would make Him a king (John 6:15). He is gone to receive for Himself a kingdom and to return (Luke 19:12); He will receive it from God the Father and return to His earthly people, when they, no longer impenitent but believing, will say, Blessed is He that cometh in the name of Jehovah (Matt. 23:39). Yet is He a king, but His kingdom is not of this world. if it were, as He testified to Pilate (John 18:36), His servants would fight, that He should not be delivered to the Jews. It was not from hence, but from heaven. His present work here below is quite another thing - bearing witness to the truth, not governing the world as He will in the day of His appearing (Rev. 11:15). “And every one

that is of the truth heareth His voice," not loving his life but hating it in this world, that he may keep it unto life eternal. For the true christian path is plain to him whose eye is single. "If one serve Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there also shall My servant be; if one serve Me, him will my Father honour." "To him that overcometh will I give to sit with Me in My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father in His throne." Therefore are we called by God to suffer now while He is on the Father's throne; and we shall reign with Him when He receives His own throne.

The carnal and mercurial Corinthians seem to have been the first to err from the way. "Already are ye filled, already ye are become rich, ye reigned as kings without us, and I would at least ye did reign, that we also might reign with you." When reigning really comes, all enter on it together with Christ. How touchingly the apostle corrects this worldly-minded desire, when he adds, "For I think God set forth us the apostles last of all, as it were doomed to death; for we are made a spectacle unto the world, both to men and angels" (1 Cor. 4). Those whom He put first in the church (1 Cor. 12:28) He displayed last (like prophets before them), as patterns of suffering outwardly. What can be more evident than the place of unworldly affliction God indicates for the Christian here below? In nothing is Christendom more at issue with Christ and His word to us. Paul did not write to shame them (as he well might), but to admonish his beloved children. "I beseech you then," he says, "be imitators of me." Only faith does or can follow him in simplicity.

In all Christendom the Popes and their party have been the most grievous offenders, enemies above all of the Christ in minding earthly things, 'but not even there so

audaciously as in claiming dominion over the Christian faith. All are bound to obey Christ the Lord.

On what then is supposed to be founded this fable, so obviously not only a stranger to, but utterly inconsistent with, scripture? They cite, as their proof-texts, Matt. 16:15-19; Luke 22:31, 32; and John 21:15-17. Can anything more decisively prove themselves ignorant of the scriptures, and of God's grace as well as His power?

1. Peter, in the face of Jewish unbelief, confessed Jesus to be not alone the Christ or Messiah, but the Son of the living God. The Lord owned it to be not of human nature, but a revelation of His Father to him. And He also said to him (for He was co-equal), "Thou art Peter (stone) and upon this (not stone but) rock I will build my church; and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it." On that believed and confessed truth He would build His church. Peter did not dare to exalt himself thus, but was inspired to preach Him Who is life and fulness. They were stones, Christ the chief corner-stone; and all believers were living stones, like himself deriving life from Him Who is life, though an offence to the unbeliever. The inspired word distinguishes in the strongest way between him who was but a stone, and the rock on which Christ builds His assembly. Romanism confounds it all in order to exalt, not Christ, but Peter. But the context resists this folly. For immediately after, when Peter betrayed his error in setting his will against the Lord's sufferings, he is denounced as a stumbling-block, as well as pronounced Satan, an adversary of God and man. What sort of rock is this for the church?

And you that appeal to Fathers, why do you not hear Athanasius, Augustine, and Jerome who understood the

rock to be Christ Himself? Granted that Cyprian and Origen and Tertullian thought it was Peter; but what does this prove but Fathers against Fathers? Sometimes the same one, as Chrysostom or Augustine, gives both. What is the worth of all, save to show that the saying of Vincent of Lerins fails in practice? Universality, antiquity, and consent do not exist among the Fathers, whatever special pleaders pretend. The dictum was set up only when faith in the word and Spirit of God had long gone down.

2. Peter's restoration in wondrous grace from the awful sin of repeatedly denying his Master is a monstrous basis for the claim of supremacy. What a manifest witness it affords that they have no real grounds! Peter's faithfulness wholly failed; but the gracious Saviour besought for him that his faith should not fail — yea that, when turned back again, he should confirm his brethren. So the Lord is pleased to do continually when a fallen disciple is made to stand. Who but the blind could strain such mercy into a papal throne?

3. So it is with the Lord's reinstatement of Peter after the resurrection, lest the disciples should have been too shocked to own God's grace toward him. Peter certainly felt keenly the threefold allusion to his sin, where these vain men dream only of ecclesiastical power and exalted position. Undoubtedly it was the richest grace on our Lord's part, which would be found sufficient for the self-confident saint who, in the face of solemn warning, fell so soon and so low. And this is made a lever for the grossest ambition!

Now we have the inspired writings of N.T. prophets and apostles. How comes it that, in providing bountifully and

unerringly for the church and the Christian, nothing can be produced but such ghosts of so-called tradition, of really patristic confusion? Imagine if you can that Peter was invested with a power which solely belongs to the glorified Head; imagine Christ to vacate His functions, instead of ever living to make them good; imagine the Holy Ghost to have gone back into the heavens whence He came to abide with us and in us for ever. How comes it that there is not one sure testimony to it in a single Gospel or Epistle? Yet we have the apostle writing to the saints in Rome, unfolding fundamental truths, and regulating differences which menaced the peace of the church; but not a whisper about Peter, who is said, by one of the most respectable of early fathers, to have with Paul founded the church there! This we know to have been not only absolutely baseless but contrary to scripture. For how could this be, when Paul wrote as one who had never visited Rome, and altogether ignored Peter there, though he salutes more saints there at that time than in any other epistle? It is certain in fact that Paul was there a prisoner, and a martyr; it is probable that Peter may have been carried there to die; but that both founded the church in Rome, or that either was a bishop there, is a fabrication, in the teeth of powerful evidence in scripture against any such ideas of the Fathers.

So again it is fiction (and professing Christians very early began to invent spurious Gospels, Acts, and Revelations, some of which are extant with their detestable heterodoxy) that Peter ever held “the See” of Antioch, which East and West greedily received for their respective aggrandisement. He and Barnabas and Paul were there together. And the occasion was memorable.

For the old question was renewed whether God under the gospel does or does not put a difference between Jews and Gentiles that believe. There Peter and Barnabas as sadly failed, as they stood firm in Jerusalem; and Paul declares for permanent and universal warning in his Epistle to the Galatians, that he resisted Peter, and “before all” to the face, because he was condemned. Can anything more completely refute the papal authority, to say nothing of the infallibility they absurdly assume to have been conferred on Peter? His fault was flagrantly inconsistent with God’s revelation to him. they would minimise it as a small matter; but the Holy Spirit condemns it solemnly as “walking not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel” - a heinous sin, especially in an apostle so honoured.

But there is another fact of the utmost importance as to Peter and his sphere, which the Holy Spirit records in the same fruitful chapter, Gal. 2. The reputed pillars, James, Cephas, and John, gave to Paul and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, that these should go to the Gentiles, themselves to the circumcision. They saw that Paul had been entrusted with the gospel of the uncircumcision, even as Peter with that of the circumcision. So God had wrought; and they bowed. And the Epistles of Peter, written not long before his death as the second expressly intimates, fall in with this divinely ordered arrangement. For they are both addressed to the circumcision that believed. Peter left the work among the Gentiles to the far mightier hand of Paul. And God, knowing the pride of man and the corrupting, design of Satan, took care that the church in Rome should not be, as in Corinth or Ephesus, founded by any apostle. Men might deceive or be deceived; but

scripture has foreclosed any such pretension. Both apostles may have suffered there unto death; but neither one nor other presided there, as neither had to do with founding the assembly there. The traditions about it are as false, as a more ancient one that “the beloved disciple” was not to die (John 21).

The apostles, whatever their spiritual energy, were all of them, and not least Peter and Paul, as far from affecting earthly pomp and power like the Popes, as light and love are from the selfish darkness of the earth. Before the baptism of the Spirit they did indeed often strive which should be accounted greatest: a contention inconceivable, (yet up to the last, Luke 22:24), if the Lord had been understood so to invest Peter. But He reproved vanity so opposed to all grace and truth, and contrasted their intended position with kings or even those that exercise authority called benefactors. They were not to be so; but the greater among them was to be as the younger, and the leader as he that serves. The Lord Himself set the same example here below. He could as easily have made them earthly princes, as He left them able to say truthfully, as Peter did, “Silver and gold have I none.” They had incomparably better. They had persevered with Him in His temptations, as He did with them in theirs when He sat at God’s right hand, yet working with them (Mark 16:19, 20). And He appointed to them a kingdom (as His Father to Him), that they might sit at His table in His kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel: certainly not now, when called to the fellowship of His sufferings, but in the regeneration when all things shall be restored by His grace to divine order and glory. It is the wickedness of man by the prince of the power of the air to do his

utmost to antedate that future kingdom. The papacy thus sets at nought the truth and will of God now, and turns the church into a scheme of vainglorious pride and present exaltation, by deceit and intrigue and cruelty that would disgrace the pagan or infidel world.

W.K.

Does The Church Teach? - The Pope's Encyclical §6.

There is no assumption more widely accepted, not only by Rome but throughout Christendom, than the teaching-authority or magisterium of the church. Nor is it easy to conceive a claim more opposed to every fact and principle of revelation, or more derogatory to the rights of God. Yet it prevails wherever the Catholic idea governs the imagination. That the church teaches this, and denies that, sounds grand and imposing; but all is vague, where we need certainty; and if sifted, it ends in the authority of clergy or the infallibility of the Pope.

God has revealed His mind conclusively on this in 1 Cor. 3. "What then is Paul, and what Apollos? Ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to each; I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase. So then neither is he that planteth anything, nor he that watereth, but God that giveth the increase. Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one thing; and each shall receive reward according to his own labour. For we are God's fellow-labourers: God's husbandry, God's building ye are" (vers. 5-9). What can be clearer? God employs gifted men as joint-servants, His journeymen; but the church is the object of their labours. They teach from Him; the church is taught. The apostle not only contrasts the church with the fellow-workmen, but he

claims the magisterium for God, Who employed the apostles and all others of His servants for the church's good.

It is nothing at all to the purpose, to cite John 10:37, 38, John 15:24, or Matt. 28:18-20, Mark 16:16 any more than John 14:16-17, John 15:26, 27, John 16:7-13, or Luke 10:16 and John 20:21. No Christian doubts that Christ's words carry divine authority, or that what the apostles taught and wrote is no less authoritative (Mark 16:20, Rom. 1:5). But how is it that darkness so veiled the Encyclical that not one scripture referred to means that the church teaches? that every one means that the church is taught by Him or His servants? The Pope deceived himself. He undertook to prove that the church teaches, which is not even touched by one of his quotations of scripture; all of which at most show that Christ teaches the church, either by His Spirit or through servants sent and qualified of Him to that end. Timothy's committing what he had heard from Paul to faithful men (2 Tim. 2:1, 2) was ministry to teach the church, the reverse of the church teaching.

Thus then the true magisterium is of the Lord Jesus, Who is not dead but risen and ascended. Only thus and then indeed was He given as Head over all things to the church; and from the right hand of God He continues such gifts as are for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a full-grown man, to stature-measure of the fulness of the Christ. The Head continues His functions without fail, and cares not only for duly giving "joints and bands" (Col. 2), but that ''all the body," ministered to and united by their means, shall

increase with the increase of God. His love can no more cease than His power: one moment's breach would be as fatal to the church, as the severance of the head from the natural body.

Unbelief as to the Lord's present and continual guardianship of the flock of God as the Great and Chief Shepherd is the root of this presumptuous usurpation. If it be replied that such a heavenly Head can only be apprehended by faith, and that the church, while on earth, needs an earthly supreme ruler, we answer that the reply betrays the enemy's deceit. For we are expressly called to walk by faith, not by sight; and as the heavenly Head makes the church a divine institution, so an earthly head makes the body as earthly as itself. To say that we have two heads, one heavenly and another earthly, is not only a baseless fable added to the truth of scripture, but an elevation of a mortal to share His glory Who is Lord of lords and King of kings, and an impiety on which God will not fail to take vengeance when His day comes.

Is it not strange to hear the champion of church tradition saying, that "every revealed truth without exception must be accepted?" (p. 24) Had he forgotten the Judge of quick and dead ruling that the Jews who set up their authoritative magisterium in His day (and it still abides, much older than Rome's) "made void the word of God on account of their tradition" (Matt. 15:6)? They charged His disciples with transgressing the tradition of the elders; whereas He acquitted His followers of all sin in the matter, and convicted the Jewish leaders of transgressing the commandment of God because of their tradition. Such is the inevitable hypocrisy of those Jews or Christians, who teach as doctrines men's precepts.

Assuming God's place, they really fall into the devil's snare.

It is in vain then, as we agree, to speak of zeal to keep the unity of the Spirit, unless we hold "one faith." How far Romanism is true to "the faith" has been shown in §4. Nor is their flagrant departure surprising; for they have overlaid the holy deposit by their superstitions and profanely fabulous supplements. The true rule of faith is thus hidden from them. God has not left the faithful without the certainty of His mind. As the Lord laid down so solemnly (in the Rich man and Lazarus), "They have Moses and the prophets: let them hear them;" so we can say, We have Christ and the apostles. There is the Christian magisterium. It is not gifts or ministry, however real and precious in their place, but the teaching of the Lord Jesus and of those He inspired to give by the Holy Spirit what they could not bear before redemption.

Hence says an inspired man behind none, If any one think himself to be a prophet or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write to you are the Lord's commandment (1 Cor. 14:37); and another later says for all, We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby we know the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error (1 John 4:6). None but the inspired are entitled so to speak. They therefore to us speak permanently in what the Holy Spirit empowered them to write. If we hear them, we are blessed. Woe to all that hear not them! Such are of the world and not of God.

What says Popery here? That Christ and the apostles could not safely give God's mind and will, without a

living judge of controversy now to make their sense clear! Did God and His servants need the Pope and his vassals to do what they failed to do? Such is the arrogance of Romanist unbelief that confronts us habitually. Therefore do they enlarge like Donatists and other heretics of old, on the obscurity of scripture. Do they not show their hostility to it by forbidding a Romanist to read even their own version without a permission in writing from his parish priest or his confessor on pain of being refused absolution? So any one can see in the last Session of the Council of Trent (rule 4).

But their irreverent enmity to scripture goes farther still. For to embarrass the Protestant and to exalt what they call the church (in reality their own Romish sect), they take infidel ground and deny the authority of the scriptures without the sanction of the church. You cannot, say they, know them to be God's word unless the church declares them so. But this, far from being true, is blasphemous. The O.T. derived no authority from Israel, but gave divine authority to all their institutions, rites, and statutes; while it convicted them of continual transgression in violating the law. Just so it is the N.T. which reveals the Lord's building His church, His order, gifts of ministry, worship, and will generally. In both Testaments it is God's word which will judge man, instead of sanctioning Christendom's sin in pretending to judge what is of God. Israel transmitted the O.T., as Christendom the New as well as Old. And the Jew, of the two, was more faithful than Romanism and other sects; for these dared to add books, which their own favourite father, St. Jerome, confessed to be uncanonical, the Apocrypha, which books are not in Hebrew.

On their own showing Romanists are thereby seduced from God's authority to man's. They believe not God but the church; their principle makes the church's word surer than God's. Now our Lord and Saviour took all pains to teach that faith is in God's word because He communicates it; those only believing in His name when they saw signs, He did not trust (John 2). To receive His testimony is to set to one's seal that God is true. This alone is divine faith, and has His authority commanding the soul. To believe His word because of the church is to believe the church, not God. So the Lord said, Verily, verily, he that heareth My word and believeth Him that sent Me hath life eternal (John 5). Thus it is the saints agree in the faith. They each and all believe God's word. Nowhere does scripture sanction such a human faith as believing what the church believes.

On the face of the N.T. neither Jews nor Gentiles believed in the authority of the church. The Jews of Berea were even commended for searching the O.T. scriptures when the apostle Paul preached the gospel. The heathen heard what was no less inspired in the gospel; so that Dr. Milner in his End of Controversy had to own exceptional grace on their part who could know nothing of the church. But this lets out the real ignorance of the Romanists generally: they rest on saving ordinances administered by their priests, and not on that grace which alone saves any soul through the faith of Christ.

Further, it is plain to all that the great bulk of the N.T. Epistles is expressly addressed to all the faithful (in one case, with the bishops and deacons). The Holy Spirit therefore confided in the spiritual capacity of every believer, in open contrast with Romanism. In his first

Epistle Paul adjured them that this letter of his be read to all the holy brethren. In his last he, in view of the perilous times of the last days, directed to scripture as the main safeguard, and to every scripture as God-inspired and profitable. Doubtless we need the Holy Spirit's grace against our own thoughts; but this gift every true Christian has. Error too has come far more from the clever and learned than from the simple believer. Rome's antagonism to God at all points is too evident.

"Hear the church" in Matt. 18:17 is a favourite appeal for such as seek scriptural support for ecclesiastical pride, or, as they would say, its magisterium. But the context is perfectly plain that there it is simply and solely a question, not of teaching-authority, but of local discipline in a case of personal trespass.

Before the church began, the Lord in John 5 laid down in order the various testimonies which made the Jews inexcusable: (1) John the Baptist's witness, (2) the Son's works, (3) the Father's voice, and (4) the scriptures. Beyond dispute the Lord attaches the utmost weight to what was written. "For if ye believed Moses, ye would believe me; for he wrote of me. But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?" Scripture has the character of a standard beyond all that was unwritten. It is only in the Second Epistle to the Thessalonians that we hear of doctrines that were taught, not written. No such thought appears in the later Epistles. God took care to give His mind in a sure and permanent form. To impress into service such a text as this shows the lack even of appearances. The church does not teach, but is taught. The Lord's servants teach. Theirs is the ministerium, His the Magisterium.

W.K.

The Church Or Assembly, Christ's Body - The Pope's Encyclical §7.

Talk as men may of "possessing the supreme authority," "the primacy," it is a fleshly ambition, uniformly reproved by our Lord Himself even in the apostles. What is it in their pretended succession, of men that call themselves apostles and are not so, but lie? He, Who on the holy mount was displayed for a moment in the glory of His coming kingdom as Son of man, and owned by the Father as His beloved Son, laid before the disciples the then strange words, The Son of man is about to be delivered into men's hands. Even then arose the unworthy dispute who should be greatest, which the Lord met by setting a child by Him, and saying, Whosoever shall receive this little child in My name receiveth Me, and whosoever receiveth Me receiveth Him that sent Me. For he that is least among you all, he is great.

How evident that the Lord expressly puts down by anticipation all such self-seeking as the Pope claims in virtue of Peter! The Lord looks for self-renunciation. So, when James and John, like Elijah, asked for fire from heaven to consume the Samaritans who did not receive the Master, He turned and rebuked them. Even the Seventy He corrects in their joy over the demons subjected through His name: their becoming joy should be that their names were written in heaven, in divine grace, not in miraculous power. Their place was to watch for His coming, and meanwhile to work as His bondmen in His love. Let them beware of the servant that said in his heart, My lord delays to come, and began

to beat the men-servants and the maid-servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken. He utterly reversed for His followers the world's order, and taught the guest to put himself in the last place; that, when the host comes, he may say, Friend, go up higher. Hence Peter, when Cornelius fell at his feet in homage, raised him up, saying, Stand up; I myself also am a man. What a contrast with those who falsely arrogate the fisherman's chair, and require their venerable brethren, cardinals and all, to kiss their toe as they sit on the high altar of St. Peter's! who instead of being subject to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake as Peter commands, instead of honouring the king in his place, abuse the alleged see of Peter to kick the royal crown in the plenitude of presumption, or to humble an erring and haughty emperor to the dust with a haughtiness more aspiring than his own! Such is not the mind of heaven but from beneath, not of Christ but of Satan, and all the worse because veiled under the hollow hypocrisy of calling oneself "servant of the servants of God." Has the Pope, or the papal system, ever accepted these revealed truths? If so, their practice wholly contradicts them. What is this morally?

But let us briefly turn from the unworldly lowliness which the Lord enjoined for "the fitting and devout worship of God," which it is said "must be also" (p. xxxi.), "as well as salutary laws and discipline." Let us try Romanist worship by the written standard of God's assembly in public edification, the Lord's supper, and discipline. The inspired directions are laid down in 1 Cor. 5, 11, 12, 14. Not one of these is found according to revealed truth, though the Encyclical says, "All these must be found in the Church." Undoubtedly they ought

to be, yet who can deny the total departure of Popery from every one of them?

1. We have the constitution of the church clearly shown us in 1 Cor. 12. The irregularities at Corinth drew out the apostle's instructions so much the more fully. Its unity depends on the presence of the Holy Spirit sent forth at Pentecost. He acts in it through its members to the glory of the Lord Jesus. God set the members each one in the body, as it pleased Him; if they were all one member, where were the body? But now are they many members, yet but one body. This is so true that the apostle tells the assembly in Corinth, Ye are Christ's body and members in particular. And God set some in the church, first apostles, secondly prophets, thirdly teachers, etc. It is true that "faith alone cannot compass so great, excellent, and important an end" as is proposed in that divine society the church.

But the Encyclical Letter of the Pope overlooks the power and presence of the Holy Spirit sent from heaven. He it is Who baptised all into one body, however dissimilar the constituents. Jews or Greeks that believed, they are now one body, of which Christ in heaven is the Head, the sole head known to scripture. As there is one Head living and glorified, so are they now in the Spirit's power but one body. Faith and life had been before; but not unity till the Holy Spirit personally came so to constitute. This is Christ's body. It was true in principle locally, for it is Christ's body as far as it was then manifested in Corinth, but the very next verse looks at it in fact as a whole on earth. For apostles, prophets, teachers, etc., were not of course in the Corinthian assembly, but in the assembly of God in its entirety here below. This Protestantism ignores or denies; while

Popery perverts it into a corporation of men, not even born of God but nominally formed by ordinances, in order to constitute a quasi-spiritual kingdom as worldly as ever was set up by human will, and more wicked than any because of covering their ambitious corruption with the Lord's name.

2. This then makes evident the divine character of the one body, God's assembly or church. In 1 Cor. 14 (after the beautiful episode on charity or love, the great desideratum to the right working of every member of the body) we have the divinely intended action in the assembly, and the guard against its dangers. It may be said that miraculous powers, tongues, healings, etc. are now no longer manifested. Granted, and for wise reason. But is the Holy Spirit gone? If so, there is no more one body. If however He be still here, and abide for ever in and with Christians (John 14), does He not work by the manifestations of His gracious power? Are there not divinely given and qualified teachers? Are there not pastors and teachers as well as evangelists (Eph. 4) till the last member is formed and the body absolutely complete? Surely it would be base unbelief to doubt the love and care of the ascended Head. It is His grace, and He cannot fail in all that is needed for the perfecting of the saints, unto ministerial work, unto building up His own body. Shame on the Christians who do not believe this!

Instead of these gifts of His grace, the Pope looks to the aspiring chiefs of man's invention, Patriarchs, Archbishops, Bishops in a sense altogether foreign to the revealed word, and other "ordinaries" as extraordinary to the apostles Paul and Peter and all the rest, as the one who glories in his shame of pretending

to be the Vicar of Christ, jure divino. Not one of them acts, or even professes to act, on the principle of 1 Cor. 12 or according to the regulated practice of 1 Cor. 14. They have every one and everywhere departed from these revealed truths; as if the Holy Spirit had gone back, and Christ's one body, the assembly, had ceased its functions on earth. Is any Christian bold enough to deny the fact or its guilt? Granted that Protestantism never knew these truths, and is also guilty in this. Not only Romanism, but what called itself the Catholic system had slipped away from the revealed truth of the church, long before papal pretensions began. Yet 1 Cor. 14 shows us the true and sanctioned action of the assembly by its members in speaking to edification and exhortation and consolation. It forbids men speaking in a tongue not understood or interpreted, and commands women to keep silence in the assemblies. It comprehends also prayers and singing and praise and thanksgiving.

3. The discipline of scripture in its most solemn form is on the self-same principle. Our Lord anticipated it in Matt. 18. A trespass was to call out grace bent on delivering one's brother from wrong. The one wronged was to go after the man who had wronged him! if he heard, he was gained! This was not law or power or authority, but love. If he did not bear, one or two more were to be taken: surely he would not resist such earnest love! But if he would not listen, could he hold out against the assembly in the place? Alas! this was possible. But if so, "let him be unto thee as the Gentile and the tax-gatherer." The Lord solemnly declared that whatsoever they should bind on earth should be bound in heaven, and whatsoever they loosed on earth should

be loosed in heaven. Heaven would validate what His disciples decided, even if ever so few gathered to His name. If Peter personally had this solemn privilege, but is no longer here to exercise it, the Lord charges it on those gathered to His name, were they but two or three in the darkest day. This is the true succession.

4. In 1 Cor. 5 the apostle reproves the Corinthians for their lack of spiritual feeling about deplorable evil in their midst. If they were not yet instructed how to act, where was their sensibility as saints? where their grief that such wickedness should be where the Lord was confessed? Why did they not humble themselves and pray for the offender's removal? In the name of the Lord Jesus the apostle not only calls on the entire assembly to put out from them the wicked person, but joins himself in spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, to deliver him such as he was to Satan for destruction of the flesh that the spirit might be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. For, as Christ our passover was sacrificed, we have to celebrate the feast with unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. It is a manifest instruction drawn from the Jewish feast of unleavened bread for seven days after the Paschal lamb was eaten. So is the christian assembly, under the efficacy of Christ's blood, bound to purge away corruption; as they were an unleavened lump, they must not tolerate leaven. And as this applies to practice, Gal. 5:9 applies the same principle to fundamental doctrine.

Will anyone be hardy enough to say that there is the least resemblance between Roman discipline and what the Lord enjoined or the apostle Paul? Think of the anathemas of the Papal Bulls! Never have human ears heard such bitter or varied curses. Can anything be

more in contrast with scripture? Even in delivering the grievously wicked person to Satan, the declared aim of the apostle was that the spirit might be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. In no case is it the assembly acting responsibly in the Lord's name, without which the discipline is invalid. It is the same with restoration. When the offender was overwhelmed with sorrow, the apostle would only forgive when the assembly had forgiven. But as the evil-doer had fully judged himself, and the assembly had proved itself clear in the matter, he urges them to confirm love to the repentant, as he had before pressed them to clear the Lord's name of such sin unjudged. The revealed will of the Lord for the church is as plain as that Popery of all sects in Christendom is the farthest from Him. Confessing the doctrine of the Trinity and Christ's person, it corrupts almost all else, and not least the church, its worship, action, and discipline. This is the society which denounces others to damnation and cries up itself to heaven so loudly!

5. "The Lord's Supper" as laid down in 1 Cor. "has hardly a trait in common with the Mass; but it is not needful to enter into details now, as it may be examined later.

W. K.

Was Peter Christ's Vice-Gerent? - The Pope's Encyclical. §8.

It remains to notice the main pretexts, foundation it is too much to say, for the airy palace of the Roman Pontiff, his claim of universal monarchy in spiritual things continually encroaching on the sovereignties of the earth, and striving directly or indirectly to dictate to all.

It is as unsubstantial as his own sedia gestatoria, with its flabelli of peacock's feathers, sustained on nothing but an arm of flesh, with an ambition as vaulting as that of the prince of darkness.

The alleged evidence of scripture is mere perversion, even as to Peter to say nothing of the Popes, who assume but cannot prove the smallest connection with that apostle. "The supreme authority," so far from being vested in Peter, the risen Lord declares was given to Himself, all authority in heaven and on earth. Confiding in Him therefore, Who is no longer dead but alive again for evermore, His servants were to go and make disciples of all the nations, baptising them unto the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever He enjoined them, "And lo! I am with you all the days until the consummation of the age." He never "appointed Peter to be the head of the Church" (p. xxxvi.). Where? one text would suffice; not one even approaches it.

As unfounded is the statement which follows that He also determined the authority should be inherited by his successors. What has Matt. 16:18 to do with this? "Thou art Peter (a stone); and upon this rock I will build My church." It was a new and wondrous privilege to be claimed for Himself with a name derived from Him; but the apostle Peter takes care to predict the same yet more strongly ("living stone") of all the believers in Christ addressed in his First Epistle (1 Peter 2:5). It was a high personal honour that Simon was so named by the Lord on the first day Andrew brought his brother to Him; and it was again more emphatically confirmed on his confession of the Messiah's personal and eternal

glory. But the blessed apostle, far from seeking self-aggrandisement and exclusive title, rejoiced to own those who are Christ's as "living stones" no less than himself. And the fiery ecclesiastic, Cyril of Alexandria, whom the Pope cites in the same page, is no more reliable in his exegesis than is the piety that inflamed the fierce populace to tear in pieces Theon's daughter, Hypatia, τὴν φιλόσοφον, pace Cave. It is false that upon him our Lord was about to found His Church. A stone is far from being the rock, which rock was Christ, and Christ confessed in the divine glory of His person, It is true that the Lord on the same occasion gave to Peter the keys of the kingdom of the heavens; the kingdom now in mystery of the earth-rejected King on high before He returns in power and glory as the Son of man. And Peter used them to throw its gates open to Jewish believers in Acts 2, and to Gentile in Acts 10. The work was then and thus done. It was a personal privilege, which admits of neither repetition nor still less of continuous descent. It remains accomplished, and the Popes could not undo it if they would. Peter was given to fill this charge.

There was another solemn charge conferred. Whatsoever thou shalt bind on the earth shall be bound in the heavens; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on the earth shall be loosed in the heavens." Undoubtedly Peter had used this authority, as we read in Acts 5 and Acts 8, but it was administrative in the Spirit, and as far as possible from Kingly or Imperial, the earthly-minded vain dream of sacerdotal ambition, and expressly tied to the apostle by the Father's sovereign choice and also by the Son's authority. Chrysostom was guilty of inexcusable exaggeration and error in saying that the

Lord gave to a mortal man all power in heaven, because what is done here in His name and service is ratified there. This is made so much the more manifest in Matt. 18:18-20, where the self-same ratification on high is assured to the local assembly on earth, were there but two or three to pray or decide as gathered to the Lord's name.

Luke 22:31, 32, and John 21:15-17 are misapplied in puerile levity to eke out of them a monarchy over the church. The one was to assure the self-confident disciple of His Master's grace in restoring him, even to his service in strengthening others so much the more afterwards; the other was His loving goodness in going to the root of Peter's fall, and as He knew his love in the face of his deep and public failure, which all others might have doubted, committing to his shepherd care His sheep and lambs, the dearest objects of His own love for whom He died. The sheep were the Jewish believers, not those outside the old fold, which we know did not fall within the official care of Peter but of Paul (Gal. 2); and so Peter wrote both his Epistles to the saints of the circumcision. But in no case was there exclusive prerogative, still less did it approach the royal type on earth. There was no Prince of apostles, let the Fathers speak as they may. The risen Christ alone has the keys of death and hades; He only has the key of David (Rev. 1, Rev. 3). Neither Peter nor Paul ever claimed such a place, which belongs solely to the Conqueror of death and Satan, to Him Who is the Holy, the True. But whatever of spiritual power and authority either of those most honoured apostles received from the Lord, not a word of God teaches or implies its devolution on a successor. Both wrote in view of their death and of

growing evil in the christian profession, and both direct to God and the word of His grace as the provision and security for perilous times (Acts 20:29-32, 2 Tim. 3, 2 Peter 1:12-15, 2 Peter 2 and 2 Peter 3). Not a whisper about the Roman Pontiffs, about which men began to boast as Christendom fell from the wisdom that is from above into earthly and natural policy where is envying and strife, and consequently confusion and every vile deed.

The Pope quotes (41) from Basil's Hom. de Poenitentia, "He (Christ) is a priest, and makes priests. He is a rock, and constitutes a rock."

The latter statement is baseless and at issue with all revealed truth. As Christ alone is the Head of the church, so He only is the rock. Controversialists may prattle about the Syriac or Aramaic they imagine our Lord to have used. Of this neither we nor they have a right to speak; but none can deny that the sole revelation given expressly distinguishes a stone from the rock. And it is inconceivable that any language beneath the sky should be unable to mark the difference of ideas so distinct, as it is corrupting the faith to level down the Lord in order to raise Peter to the same height.

The former statement is true. The true great High-priest is Christ, and He makes priests. But the apostles Paul, Peter, and John, uniformly teach the truth which Romanism (and not Romanism only) denies and seeks to destroy, that He constitutes every believer now a priest with greater privilege, not merely than Aaron's sons but than Aaron himself. For as Heb. 10 insists on the one completed offering of Christ, whereby He has perfected us uninterruptedly, the same chapter from ver. 19 is as

definite that we have title and boldness to enter into the holies in virtue of the blood of Jesus through the rent veil, and are exhorted to approach. with a true heart in full assurance of faith, instead of the anxiety which could not but fill Aaron when he approached once a year. And if it be said that now there is a royal as well as holy priesthood, we agree cordially that so St. Peter calls not presbyters or bishops, but the Christian brotherhood in 1 Peter 2:5, 9; the sole priesthood, besides Christ's, which the N.T. sanctions. Ministry in the word and rule are given to a few for the good of the many; but all saints are by the gospel declared to be brought to God, nigh by the blood of Jesus; and therein lies the chief privilege of a priest. So St. John represents the believers breaking forth at the name of Jesus in Rev. 1:5, 6, owning not His love only, nor His having washed us from our sins in His blood, but also His having made us a kingdom, priests to His God and Father. If it be replied that this is solely by faith, the answer is that so is every Christian blessing but this too as really as any other.

And here is just Rome's unbelief to its ruin. As the Jewish branches were broken off through unbelief, so the apostle solemnly cautioned the saints in Rome, that Christendom stands in the olive-tree by faith. This is its responsibility, as it was Israel's of old; and therefore the call not to be high-minded but to fear. Who but themselves can deny the high-mindedness of the Papacy and of Romanism in general? No doubt there is infatuated pride in the Greek church and in other remains of the old ecclesiastical bodies; but Babylon's sins have exceeded all others, heaped or glued together up to heaven, as Rev. 18:5 so graphically puts it for God to remember her unrighteousnesses.

W. K.

A Letter on Romans 6 and 1 John 1. 7

(B.T. Vol. 8, p. 175-176.)

Dear Sir, — I am indebted to you, my unknown donor, for a tract by "Adelphos." Like many others, it calls for no notice in itself. There are attacks whose only importance is that they serve to show the state of those who make them; and this is one of that class. The morbid, disappointed, and unruly may sympathize with the writers; but every generous soul rejects their insinuations without an answer to expose them.

It has nevertheless appeared to me that, without interposing in others' battles, it might serve the Lord and the truth to give a specimen of "Adelphos's" charity and competency. I will therefore transcribe, from the note to page 17, enough to put in evidence the tone of the writer, who is plainly one of a small knot of malcontents, whose mission seems to be Ishmaelitish indeed — the effort to fasten revolting charges of false doctrine on their brethren. "One of the most offensive instances of this wrong division of the word of truth that I have lately seen occurs at page 7 [it should be 11] of a tract entitled, 'The Salvation of God,' where we may read that 'the blood of Christ effaces the sins, but it does not meet the question of sin that is working in the believer after he is brought to God. What does? Do you not know that you are dead to sin?' Is then, it must be asked, the blood of the Son of man to be no longer 'drink indeed' to believers after they are brought to God? The exact contradiction of this rash assertion by the Spirit in 1 John 1:7 will suggest itself to every thoughtful and unfettered mind. To expose fully the objectionable

nature of such teaching would require much more than a note. I can here only warn the reader of its direct tendency to foster carnal security in Christians and to obscure and depreciate the true doctrine of the cross."

Now here I join issue distinctly with these men, and I affirm that it is they, not we, who are despising the full work of Christ and flatly opposing the word of God. For not even "Adelphos" can deny that the incriminated tract places the sinner within the doors sprinkled with the Lamb's blood as the only possible refuge for him in his guilt. The question discussed is the distinctive force of the Red Sea and of Israel's passage across it. To this the answer is brought from Romans 6. The believer is there taught that he died with Christ, and consequently had to count himself dead to sin and alive in Jesus Christ to God. Is not this the truth? Is it not the special object of the chapter to show that grace does not foster carnal security or cloak a bad walk? It is "Adelphos" who flings away the divine safeguard. Who does not know that this is the crying vice of evangelicalism? Their tradition, even where it does not tack on the law as a rule of life, directly tends to make the blood of Christ the exclusive provision for the soul; especially when it goes the length of repeated sprinklings and reiterated recourse for restoration, as a guilty Jew again and again brought his sacrifice with a fresh confession of his sin.

The question discussed there is what gives power against the dominion of sin in practice. The answer, as repeated in the tract but denied by " Adelphos," is, not that we are come to the blood of sprinkling (true and precious and indispensable as this is); not that we must not be led into other and further truth in Christ (which is what his argument here assuredly sets aside), but just

the contrary — that we need and have more in our blessed Lord and His infinite work; that, besides His blood, "so many of us as were baptized into him, baptized into his death," and thus, like as He was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. He that died (this is the point) is justified from sin. The question of the remission of our sins we have had already fully settled in Romans 3 - 5:11.

I grant indeed that death with Christ "Adelphos" and his companions never seem to comprehend. This lies at the root of much of their bitter hostility. They set themselves to decry a revealed truth, which they themselves do not appreciate. This, in the words of "Adelphos," I should call truly "rash," and "most offensive;" and I have good reason to know that the same spirit and similar opposition, even to a principle so elementary and of the deepest moment for practical walk, pervade the party and their doctrine. Is it sound? Does it promote holiness? Is such a course really of God? Are they too stiff to learn?

Again, he asks, "Is the blood of the Son of man to be no longer 'drink indeed' to believers after they are brought to God ?" I answer, most assuredly; it is the sweetest food of faith. Eating His flesh and drinking His blood, we dwell in Him and He in us. If "Adelphos" is an older man than the young brother he rebukes, he is so much the less excusable for putting such a question, which is equally misleading in what it suppresses and in what it suggests. For he might, not to say must, know that those he assails love to show forth and dwell on the death of the Lord. For my own part, much as I delight in the power of His resurrection, and in His heavenly glory, my

heart ever turns, not to our union with Him, but to His death, in which all the moral being of God was glorified, even in respect and in spite of sin, as it was and could be nowhere else, through the grace of the Lord Jesus. This joy of entrance into His dying abides ever here, as I believe it will be not less but perfectly known in heaven.

Hence we see that, as the passover is really deeper morally than the Red Sea as a type, so Romans 5:1-11 goes beyond Romans 8 in this that the former is more simple and absolute in its presentations of sovereign grace and God Himself, while the latter is no doubt richer in its display of what we are in Christ, and of what Christ is in us by the Spirit of God, closing triumphantly with God for us, rather than setting Him as the object before us in whom we exult. The note ignores the beautiful consistency of scripture, arrays one truth in which we all agree against another, which is all-important in its own divinely ordered place. This the tract sought to state simply, and thus supply a most evident lack, which the resistance and the party spirit of its censor unwittingly confess and only confirm. But where is Christ's glory, where the guidance of the Spirit, in such tactics?

But "Adelphos" is as mistaken in his use of scripture as we have seen him unconscionably censorious. For I must ask in my turn, Is drinking the Son of man's blood laid down in scripture as the principle of a believer's walk and watch against the sin that is in him breaking out in his ways? Or is it not, as I have shown, "How shall we that are dead to sin live any longer therein?" Under the pretence of guarding the value of Christ's blood, it is really an effort to undermine another truth of God,

bound up with Christ dead and risen, of which he has yet to learn the power.

Finally, 1 John 1:7 is not "the exact contradiction" of the statement as to Romans 6, nor does it touch the question. "Adelphos" reasons from the Authorized Version, which may be correct enough for ordinary use. But it is as bad scholarship as it is bad doctrine to apply it to ridding the believer from indwelling sin, or giving him practical power against it. The true force is, "the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from every1 sin" (ἀπὸ πάσης ἁμαρτίας).2 No unbiassed scholar who weighs the passage will deny this; as no person open to the bearing of truth will deny that the truth here laid down connects itself with Romans 5 and the passover, rather than with Romans 6 and the Red Sea.

There is this brand on the assailing brethren that they have all condemned in strong terms, and separated themselves for years, from that laxity in ecclesiastical walk, which they would now excuse if not commend; and that they in general yielded to the pressure of old friends what they once (as we thought with godly sincerity) believed to be a question of Christ. Can any dispassionate doubt what was the true source and nature of the change? Perhaps "Adelphos" too has not forgotten one in particular whose lack of singleness of purpose exposed him to go out and come in over and over again? I have no wish to wound needlessly; but was it too much to hope that one so infirm of purpose might learn both to distrust himself and to watch against that censoriousness which is ever suspecting evil in what is not understood? Take for instance, the repetition in this tract of the outcry about "smiting," the Lord's death, atonement and life in resurrection. Do not think that I

am going to refute what always seemed to me to carry along with it its own refutation. It is a melancholy witness how far the heated feelings of retrograde hearts can fling out charges which their authors possibly believe themselves, and a very few followers who believe what they believe. I could wish them all a happier lot than the detective line of things to which they have addicted themselves. The Lord alone can give that subjection to His word in a sense of His grace which can so far keep us right.

Your servant in the Lord, W. K.

_____ (B.T. Vol. 8, p. 130.)

If I trust to my own strength in the hour of temptation, I break down: but if I have learnt, through grace, to cast myself on Christ, I find all in Him to help me, and to go through the temptation unscathed. I must learn the lesson. If I learn it with the Lord, I am spared the sifting but if not, I must be sifted. If not in intercourse with the Lord, it must be with Satan. “Nevertheless,” saith the Lord, “I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not.” It is blessed to believe that God loves us, notwithstanding all our failure. It is worth (not any sin but) any sorrow to learn this.

1 So I believe it is rendered in the recent and exact version of Mr. T. Sheldon Green, who will scarcely be charged with “Exclusive” proclivities. The only wonder is that any scholar should have taken the passage otherwise.

2 If I understand the use made of Acts 20:7 in pp. 23, 24, “Adelphos” seems rather short in textual criticism; for no one acquainted with the comparative value of the witnesses ventures to prefer τῶν μαθητῶν το ἡμῶν.

The Archdeacon of Durham on certain religious errors

(B.T. Vol. 9, p. 96.)

To A. M. P.

Dear Brother, - It is a pity, that Archdeacon Prest should have entered the field with (to say no more) so little information on the points in question. Those who have provoked him, however zealous, seem to me rather ill-taught souls who, having but a small spice of truth commonly seen among “Brethren,” are using it in ways which “Brethren” would deplore as decidedly as the Rector of Gateshead. The “Tyne Evangelist” you have sent me is a sorry sample of christian teaching.

But the Archdeacon, if he deemed it wise and right to censure these people at Gateshead, should not have ventured to speak of Christians elsewhere of whom he knows so little. He quotes extracts from the British and Foreign Evangelical Review, as unfounded in statement as can be, written (I presume) by an Irish Presbyterian Minister called Croskery. When a dozen or so of his charges were cited by Mr. Isaac Ashe in the Record some time ago, I gave them a distinct contradiction. Not a word more was heard of them then; one is sorry to see a respectable Christian repeating such things now. It is false that “Brethren” hide from the converted their convictions on ministry, the law, baptism, or any other truth. It is true that with the unconverted they adhere as exclusively as possible to the gospel of God’s grace or His warnings for despisers. What but malice or

ignorance could put an ill-construction on that which is so plainly according to God?

As to the detailed charges Mr. P. makes, let me say in few words, that no brother known to me (and I know them well for nearly thirty years) holds sanctification in the sense which excludes personal and progressive holiness. We all insist on practical growth in this respect, but we also hold, what most now deny, absolute sanctification from the beginning of God's vital work in the believer. (1 Peter 1:2; 2 Thess. 2:13.) Probably the best refutation ever written of Wesley's "Christian Perfection" came from the pen of a brother. I do not believe one person in communion with us holds the perfectionism in flesh which is here imputed to us as a whole. Next, we should put away (as we have put away) anyone for denying the duty of confessing our sins to God. Again, I have myself written an exposition of the Lord's Prayer, in which it is. expressly laid down that "forgive us our sins" belongs only to those who can truly say "Father;" as it is a question of His daily government with His children, not of the unrenewed who have never found remission of their sins by faith in Jesus. The prayer was for the disciples' use, before the Holy, Ghost given; afterwards they were to ask the Father in Christ's name, as we do now. As to the law, I am not surprised at the want of knowledge displayed about both the scriptures and our views. Suffice it to say here that we abhor Antinomian license as heinous iniquity, and acknowledge our unqualified obligation to obey every word of God, more especially or distinctively to have our mind, walk, and worship, framed and governed by the New Testament or apostolic scriptures. But this does not warrant the assertion of the law as the christian rule of

life. On the contrary, scripture is explicit that by them who are under the law" the Spirit intends the Jews (Rom. 3); as we are distinctly said to be "not under the law but under grace," where the apostle is discussing christian walk, and net justification. (Rom. 6.) But we should denounce him who would disparage the law, which is good if a man use it lawfully: whether the Archdeacon does so may be doubted by those who will gravely compare 1 Timothy 1:9 with his use of it. Further, when he says that we exclude children, servants, and other unconverted persons from family prayer, he is confounding us with the Separatists or Walkerites, the very antipodes of "Brethren," and is grossly deceived. So he is as to ministry: for we hold it to be a permanent and divine institution, though we deny the corruptions of it among Romanists and Anglicans as well as Dissenters. He combats a phantom; for nobody among us holds that all are teachers or preachers, or any save those whom the Lord gives and sends. At the same time Mr. P. is wrong to put ministry on the ground of common sense; for it really is a matter of faith, and, like every other christian privilege, depends on the Holy Spirit who glorifies Christ. Again, as to baptism, it is enough to say that Mr. Prest is wholly in error in supposing that it is ever done among us as a sign of leaving, a denomination for "Brethren." We should all repudiate such an enormity with one heart and mind. Many among us baptize the children of believers; many not satisfied that christening of infants is scriptural have been baptized as an individual question (and this I have known in the English Establishment and elsewhere too). But all repudiate re-baptism. The pamphlet of which Mr. P. speaks emanates from a party opposed to us, unless I am greatly

mistaken: certainly “Brethren” are in no way, responsible for it. I purposely abstain from commenting on irrelevant matter; but the Archdeacon will own that I have joined issue fairly on the charges made. Ample disproof of them he will have already received in the form of tracts, etc. sent by book-post. There is but one course under such circumstances open to conscience and candour, not to speak of love.

Ever yours in Christ, W. K.

The Achill Herald Recollections

Nos. I. to VIII.

(B.T. Vol. 6, p. 254.)

My attention having been drawn to these remarks, I will content myself with a very few words of comment. Can these good men, whether of the English Magazine or of the Irish Journal, be aware, first, that the writer of the tracts on “Darbyism” is thoroughly unsound, in one or more of these very tracts launching out against Brethren so-called because they refuse in fellowship with his denial of eternal punishment? He holds the notion of the annihilation of the wicked. Is it a dishonour to be the object of such men’s attacks? Secondly, it is utterly false that Mr. Darby has fallen into Mr. Newton’s heresy. In the January Number of the Bible Treasury for this year, page 205, a very recent document of Mr. N. was cited, which attacks those he too styles the Darbyites,” instead of welcoming them as converts, and (what is more serious perhaps) coincides in doctrine with the late assaults on Mr. D. Like them, Mr. N. denies any sufferings of Christ besides atoning ones. Thirdly, the Collected Writings of Mr. D., now in course of publication, utterly disprove the statements of the Achill Herald as well as of the Rainbow; for they show that from the earliest days of the movement till now the same principles were asserted, the same object was avowed. Take the very first part as a witness, and the second article, “Considerations on the Nature and Unity of the Church of Christ.” (Dublin, 1828.) This is as fresh and distinct as possible, and in a practical point of view. It would be impossible for any godly soul who accepted

that paper as a just application of divine truth to the actual state of Christendom, to continue a churchman or a dissenter. And in fact neither the writer nor those who felt with him is to this remained at that date in the denominations of which they had previously been members or ministers. Fourthly, the statement that one of the “Brethren’s” leading characteristics from the commencement was to reject an ordained ministry hardly agrees with the preceding allegation. This must of itself separate them from all the denominations. But the most singular appendix to this is that these men seem to blame Brethren because, as a consequence of rejecting what they regard as an unscriptural innovation, it becomes a question of the best qualified men taking the lead in their assemblies. Is not this God’s will? Would they think it wiser or more scriptural to own as guides the worst qualified? “Hoc Ithacus velit, et magno mercentur Atridae.” But we have learnt that the Lord gives gifts to His servants, to every man according to his several ability.

I must add, however, that no brother of intelligence demurs to ordination by those who are really called to ordain. We own it as of God when a Paul or a Titus appointed elders; but not having the title of either, we refuse to go beyond our measure and only do what our power from God enables us to do according to His word, pretty much as the assemblies did in early days when they had not the advantage of being visited by an apostle or an apostolic man. Is not this a humbler and truer position than national or dissenting makeshifts for proper apostolic or equivalent appointment? Our friends have neither apostles nor their delegates one whit more than we; yet they assume to ordain without that due

ordaining power. Who then are most right? Who are guilty of insubordination?

The great mistake made by our friends is their oversight of the fact that in the primitive state, according scripture, there was an open door for the exercise of every gift from the Lord, both within and without the christian assembly, whether or not there happened to be elders in this or that particular assembly. Modern practice, Established or Dissenting, forbids this free action of God's Spirit, which was certainly and confessedly the order even when apostolic order reigned.

"Brethren" believe that God has revealed this for action at all times; for this, unlike ordination, does not demand the presence or mission of an apostle. That is, we in this simply act as members of Christ's body; our friends (who are equally members with us) neglect this which is open to them and their duty, while they set up to ordain, which none can do legitimately but an apostle or his deputy. Which of the two courses then is most lowly and obedient?

As to the sorrowful divisions of "Brethren," we grieve deeply over them and still more over the want of faith and spirituality which was, of course, their cause. But our brethren will agree with us, surely, that no failure on the part of individuals can justify our abandoning the will of God, supposing now that it is His will that we should meet according to His word and looking to His ever present Spirit to guide. They may be assured also that if they knew better the facts, they would judge more kindly. Is it righteous to credit every evil tale which disaffected or excommunicated individuals say of us?

The three questions at the end of No. I. seem to us questions of unbelief. The only question is, What is God's will for His children? Does He not set out in His word one body as well as one Spirit? Does He not condemn schism and denominations in principle? Is His will or word changed now? Is it a hopeless thing to obey it? None will condemn separation to follow individual teachers more strongly than "Brethren." The only right course for teachers or taught is to follow the Lord. Will our friends help us to do this more fully? Are they willing to follow Him more fully themselves? Let us pray for each other, as well as set forth the truth without fear.

No. II. need not detain us. If the writer does not think that subordination is sought, found, and valued among "Brethren," he is in error. That we fail in this as in all other excellent things is our sorrow. But is this peculiar to us?

The writer, however, is still more wrong in implying that we deny appointment of elders as well as of deacons. He has mistaken "Fundamental Principles;" but in fact (through inadvertence, I am sure) he has not borne a true witness to it. 1 Tim. 3, 4:14,1 and Titus 1:5, 9, 10 do not speak of ministry as such, but of elders or bishops. These last required and received due external appointment. Such is the uniform teaching of the book censured. Let a single passage be produced to the contrary. But in the early Church Scripture shows a number of gifted men exercising their ministry in the word, besides elders whose business was local rule, though, of course they might labour in the word and doctrine if they had suited gift. It is therefore our friend (the Editor, probably, of the Achill Herald) who mistakes both our principles and the light of scripture. Rejection

of invalid and unauthorized appointment is a consequence of our adhering to the word of God; but we are not so childish as to refuse the principle of outward appointment, nor the fact where it is duly carried out. Do they not know that “Brethren” have had hands laid on them according to Acts 13, which does not involve the claim of apostolic authority? The basis of what they call our system is nothing of this sort, but the recognition of the continued presence of the Holy Ghost in God’s assembly on earth to give power, as working in it and the members in their several places in it, to do God’s will according to His word.

The case of R. I. cannot judge of, save that, though an eloquent and pious man, according to the writer, he was certainly impulsive and unwise. This may account for his return to Anglicanism, as well as for his temporary appearance among “Brethren.” Whatever may be the estimate of the good man with others, be must have been little known among us; else some tradition must have been left behind.

Will the writer in the Achill Herald permit me to assure him that the experience. of many among us is that there is too great backwardness to speak even among very competent men, rather than the forwardness which so offended him when he attended? If it was because they were poor and uneducated men, I do not sympathize with the feeling. such were some of the chief apostles. Nor did the power of the Spirit set aside the evidence of their lack of human polish, as we gather from Acts 4:13. It is in vain to allege that they were inspired; for I am speaking, not of writing scriptures, but of God’s sovereignty in calling whom He will to serve in His Church. It may be pleasanter for refined and even for

vulgar people to hear men of education; but it is impossible to defend from scripture the plan of confining to such the ministry of the word either in or out of the congregation. Nor is any amount of knowledge in a real Christian what scripture calls gift, which may be now, as of old, given of our Lord to a poor man as well as a rich. If not, why not? Without gift the ministry of any man is a sham; while the exercise of gift by the humblest Christian is real ministry. Compare Rom. 12; 1 Cor. 12, 14, 16; 2 Cor. 4, 5; Eph. 4; Col. 2; Phil. 1; 1 Peter 4.

No. III. calls for even less notice. The story of R. fills the imagination of the writer, with the added tale of some lady who, by his account, acquired a most unseemly influence in his congregation. The Achill Herald way be more or less exact in his statements, which are much too vague for any careful mind to conclude from. All I can say is, that though I know for a good many years those called “Brethren,” abroad as well as in Great Britain and Ireland, I never heard of such persons or such doings, save as coming under discipline when the least approach to them was attempted.

Our reason for separation from the Establishment and Dissent is, not merely because of practical evils existing in these bodies, but mainly because they are not and never were (what alone we see in scripture) assemblies of those received as accredited believers, gathered unto the name of Jesus (not peculiar views, or nationalism), and looking to Him as Lord to act by His Spirit according to His word in their midst. It is a very rare thing for “unruly and vain talkers” to rise in the midst of the assemblies; but if they should there is ample provision to deal with such scripturally: their “mouths must be stopped;” and so they are. Our faith in the

presence of the Holy Ghost does not weaken our hands, but the contrary; and God is faithful both in hearing prayer and in giving power to convince (in private, and, if necessary in the last resort, also in public) the gainsayers. We believe that ministry is both a divine and a permanent institution, is certainly as the Church or assembly is. We believe that a few are gifted to minister in the word to the many; we believe that some are gifted to rule or exercise oversight, who may or may not be called of God to preach or teach. But there is not the smallest abandonment of our faith either in owning that individuals may sometimes speak in the flesh, not in the Spirit, in the assembly, or in using such means of repressing this as scripture provides. Cannot the writer see that the case of the assembly as having the Holy Spirit to direct it stands on ground precisely analogous to the individual Christian? The one, like the other, is God's temple; neither is infallible, both are bound to act in the Spirit by the word. Just as the Christian may fail (as we all do individually, the Editor of the Achill Herald, no doubt, like ourselves) so the assembly is liable to the failure of individuals in it as well as corporately, but it is none the less under the responsibility of the Holy Ghost's presence and guidance, which in both cases is the most powerful means both of judging the wrong and of supplying power to walk aright.

The writer is totally misinformed as to the real facts both of "Brethren" and of the seceders who have recently attacked them. But I have said enough to convince fair minds, even among those opposed to us, that our censor is in collision with scripture, no less than with those who are today acting on it at all cost.

No. IV. consists chiefly of a notice which seems intended to decry “Brethren” through exposing the alleged infirmities and faults of a valued and now departed servant of Christ, who “was intimately known to the writer, and greatly esteemed and beloved as a brother in Christ, for his many excellent and amiable qualities.”

It seems that when some Roman Catholic boatmen were rowing them in Dublin bay, J-’s countenance once betrayed grief when the writer himself spoke strongly to some Roman Catholic boatmen about errors of Popery! J- may have been right or wrong; but what has this to do with “Brethren?” Are they morbidly shy of error in Popery or Protestantism? Again, J- refused fellowship at the Lord’s table to a Christian whom he believed to be compromised by communion where Christ was deeply dishonoured, though not himself charged with holding false doctrine. Is neutrality right in such cases? Lastly, when the Achill Herald writer once complained of his trials in the Achill work, J- said he counted his own among “Brethren” far greater. The rest of the paper attacks “Brethren” for their want of missionary zeal, especially in the Achill mission, and somebody who censured the writer for seeking a magistrate’s protection from Popish violence. What is the weight of all this? The delicacy too of the allusions to the deceased may be questioned, and the writer’s measure of himself as compared with his friend. I confess I should be disposed to draw an inference unfavourable to the living rather than to the dead, and to impute part of the misleading influence to the party-spirit and self-importance so hard for a clergyman to escape.

No. V. tries to contrast apostolic labours with “Brethren’s.” Let me say a few words. First, the apostles

in going forth to preach the gospel far and wide had not to do with such a system of corrupted Christianity as we see around us now-a-days. Secondly, if work among heathen is the one right labour, why does the Achill Herald press it among Roman Catholics? If right among misguided Papists, its it wrong or uncalled-for among misguided Protestants? Thirdly, it is a mistake that "Brethren" do not labour, nor contribute to the support of labourers, among both heathen and Roman Catholics. But we hold that the preacher lowers the dignity of the Lord's call by being the employee of a society or even a so-called church — that he is and should be simply the Lord's servant. In scripture "service of the Church" is quite distinct from ministry in the word. We hold too that the yoking of believers and unbelievers in the professed work of the Lord is forbidden by God's word (2 Cor. 6), contrary to the practice of the existing religious societies, which take and seek from the Gentiles all they can get. At the same time while I have no sympathy with the false expectations and the vainglorious reports of most of these societies, I am free to confess how short we ourselves come in living only to serve the Lord and spending all we have in helping on His work. I would that "Brethren" and all other saints were incomparably more devoted and self-denying in the fellowship of' the gospel and the Lord's objects generally than they are. With those Christians who live at their case, I have no sympathy, least of all where they ought to know and do best.

Nos. VI. and VII. betray the total incompetency of the Achill Herald for the task it assumes. The writer talks of Mr. Newman as a "rival leader of the Brethren!" This will be as new to our readers, as that Mr. Darby was

separated from “for denying the imputation of Christ’s righteousness to his believing people!” People so ignorant ought to learn or be silent.

I must add that the writer’s knowledge of our views is as glaringly at fault as of facts and persons: is his knowledge of scripture more accurate? Where does God’s word make ordaining elders to be a standing institution? Where does it guarantee the permanence of the requisite authority? That “gifts” are secured as long as Christ’s body needs them is allowed; for gifts never required ordination by man, but come direct from Christ. On these gifts depends ministry, which we fully allow to be continued by the Lord now as of old. But scripture never speaks of elders appointed without apostles or apostolic delegates. You cannot, therefore, have the one without the other: if you have no apostles, how scripturally can you have elders in due form? It is ridiculous to suppose that, because a society or even the law of a country calls a man a bishop, he can ordain like Titus or Paul.2 But there is such a thing as spiritual power. An evangelist proves his gift by the conversion of souls so does a teacher by edifying exposition of scripture as an exhorter does by urging truth home. A pastor toils in love to the sheep and lambs of Christ, repressing the unruly, and encouraging the timid, and helping souls in general. There is no real difficulty, as a general rule, in discerning these gifts where they exist, any more than in forming a conviction as to converted and unconverted. Of course there may be mistakes in both respects; but God is faithful and knows how to correct where He is leaned on.

Hence “Brethren” eschew the religious radicalism of dissent, and fully own gifts differing among the

members of Christ's body. They hold that some are called to rule and that no one is free to be unruly. Nothing is simpler, therefore, on their principles than the dealing with "unruly and vain talkers," should such arise among them, which is comparatively rare. Of this class, I fear, a considerable part of the clergy, national and dissenting, against whom their congregations have no godly resource. Their "orders" maintain them, spite of ignorance and worse. Scripture, as ever, shows the more excellent way. And so it is found in fact among us, unless with a morbid soul here or there who suffers "agony," instead of acting in faith and using the power the Lord has given him for common profit and blessing.

The account of D., a zealous baptist, does not call for notice. We can reprove eccentricities in good men, but must bear the reproach of the Achill Herald if we do not exclude them from christian fellowship. Would he really have us do so? These are a part of our trials, but we share them with our blessed Master.

It is difficult to suppose a man serious who contends that the English Establishment ever admitted the sovereign action of the Spirit in the Christian assembly. Nor can I acquit the writer of trifling when he argues that faith in Christ can consist with denying the divinity and personality of the Holy Ghost. We hold that the right line is to do as the early Church did-to receive all who make a credible confession of living faith in Christ; and then to maintain among those received godly discipline in doctrine and conversation. I think the allusion to "the cave of Adullam" as against us is the less happy, when one remembers that, though the outward pomp and power might be found in Saul's court, God's king, God's

prophet, and God's priest were with the poor despised company in that cave.

Was it better with the Church in the days when they walked as we seek to do now, holding to all the word of God in the power of the Spirit; or when the Church began to protect herself by human creeds and confessions?

As for the account of "Brethren" the writer gives, he must forgive my saying it is wholly erroneous. It is untrue that there is any "section" which denies eternal punishment; nor is Mr. Newman at the head of any. So the other "section" is equally misunderstood. And why the rash speeches of zealous but unformed young evangelists (many of whom are not and never were in fellowship with us) should be thrown in, it would be bird to understand, if the writer were not often careless of his facts and statements in his zeal as accuser of the "Brethren."

It is false that "Brethren" now or at any time claimed to be "the very body of Christ." What really distinguishes them is practically and in principle contemplating all the members of that one body, and receiving them frankly, while they appear to us to walk after a godly sort, to the Lord's table; in separation from the world, in a scriptural way. This is obviously impossible in the English Establishment or in dissenting societies. We do desire purity of life for ourselves and all saints, and we exercise discipline according to scripture, as far as we have light and power from God., and we believe that, our position being scriptural, this is practicable amongst us, not where the ground taken is unscriptural and human rules are the guide. But as to denying that there

have been painful falls among those received, this be far from us. These have always been true of christian assemblies, whether rightly gathered or wrongly, and we never expected to escape them. Do we deal with them scripturally when they occur in our midst? This is the only just question, which does not occur to the Achill Herald. But it seems to me that they greatly dishonour Christ who retail such cases against us, instead of according to us their help and sympathy. Are they so blind as not to see that the early assemblies at Rome, Corinth, Colosse, etc., had just the same sources of shame and sorrow as we have now? What must we think of him who would rake such things together in order to condemn what God owned as His assemblies? It is not the entrance of evil which is incompatible with the character of a true assembly of God, but the inability or refusal to exercise discipline according to His word. Where any assembly amongst us so refuses, we disown that assembly. But it is not uncommon, first, to collect and print scandal against “Brethren,” and, next, to sympathize with those who do not exercise discipline rather than with those who do. How does all this appear in the sight of God? To call “fruits of separatism” the cases of moral evil which we have judged solemnly by God’s word, I believe to be iniquity which God will judge. It is also wrong to say that we think there is no danger either of sin or of self-deception.

No. VIII. objects to sect-making. So do we most earnestly; and of course to old sects, as well as new. The question is, What is a sect? Is not the English Establishment one? Must a Christian belong to a sect?

“The main body of the baptized” is, I suppose, Popery. Idolatry is not the only evil that justifies separation. No

Christian is free to sanction any evil or error in what claims to be God's Church. But the grand point is that neither the Establishment nor Dissent ever took or even contemplated the original ground of God's assembly. As to the railing tracts by angry men cited in the Achill Herald, they are best left in silence. If such tracts as these can overthrow us, we deserve to fall; but my opinion is that the condescension to use such weapons shows the moral state of our adversaries, and can only injure themselves. Those, within or without, who can be influenced by such reasoning, we can well spare.

Appendix To The Notice Of The Achill Herald Recollections

(B.T. Vol. 7, p. 14-15.)

The author's charges differ from the Bishop of Kilmore's. There is no reason for evading either — least of all for not meeting the more violent of the two. I have replied to Dr. Verschoyle elsewhere, and now proceed to refute the rector of Skreen.

(l.) Mr. Nangle's statement is, that those he calls Darbyites "reject a ministry set apart by the laying on of hands to rule and teach the Church, as laid down in St. Paul's epistles to Timothy and Titus, and various other parts of the New Testament. That they do reject such a ministry is notorious, and the apologist of the sect does not dare to deny it." It is evident that he does not understand the matter; nor should one be surprised at this.

All is confusion in Christendom on the point. The Roman Catholic does not allow the validity of Anglican orders, though the Anglicans own those of Rome, for a recanting

Romish priest never undergoes presbyterial ordination within the English Establishment. The Presbyterian reckons episcopacy a fiction. The Independent rests the essence of his call on the choice of the congregation, as the Presbyterian does in a measure. Thus for the most part the theories and practice of Christendom, if applied and held fast, are mutually destructive; one only could be true.

“Brethren” believe that not one of these conflicting schemes is according to God’s word; because even those who have a measure of right, in upholding the truth of apostolic authority as the sole adequate ordaining power, falsely pretend that the modern bishop succeeds to this authority. If “Brethren” arrogated such a claim to themselves, they would be as wrong as their neighbours; but as long as they bold to the truth in this respect, they will avoid this error of’ Christendom. They leave it to others, who have as little real ground as themselves, to imitate an apostle or an apostolic delegate. Instead of aspiring to an authority which “Brethren” frankly own they do not possess, and which they firmly believe neither Roman Catholics nor other Episcopalians possess one jot more than themselves, they thank God for the gifts which remain, being amongst themselves more or less as also among the members of Christ’s body everywhere.

I flatly deny, then, that they reject a ministry set apart by the laying on of hands, as laid down in 1 and 2 Timothy, Titus, and elsewhere. It is notorious that they on the contrary hold so tenaciously to the due scriptural order as to reject the poor and baseless imitations of this current among modern Episcopalians, and still more the substitution of the popular voice for it, which passes

among Dissenters. But they hold that the Lord (as from the first, even whilst apostles and their delegates appointed elders) gives such gifts (evangelists, pastors, teachers, etc.) is are needed for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ. From the beginning, there was the free exercise of gift within and without the Church, beside the local charges of elders, etc., which needed orderly appointment. Have gifts ceased, because apostolic authority no longer exists?

(2.) I am grieved to say that the charge of evasion under the head of confessing sins is inexcusable, not to say worse. The Bishop of Kilmore was misinformed if he thought “Brethren” held that the confession of sins is to be laid aside by those who have already received forgiveness; for they would support himself in resisting that grave error. Mr. N.’s hostility forthwith suspects evil couched underneath a straightforward denial: any candid gracious soul would be gratified by it, because he loves to bear good of his brethren and rejoices to have a prejudice removed. What does Mr. N. say and feel? “We have here another evasion put forth as a reply to my charge. I never denied that the Darbyites, as a body, insist on the duty of a believer to confess his sins; but I did and do charge them with the grievous error that a believer needs not daily to pray for the forgiveness of his sins.” How comes this shifting of the point before us? Why does he charge the reply to Dr. Verschoyle with “evasion” because his own different statement was not answered? Did he forget that the reply was to Dr. V. not to himself? Again, why did he “adopt” the Bishop of Kilmore’s words on this head if he never believed of “Brethren” what the Bishop imputes? Was this upright?

Is it lawful to use another's words against the "Brethren," which, when exposed, you deny that you ever held, and then to substitute quite a different statement, with a confident accusation that your charge (which was not in question) is evaded? This is what Mr. N. has done. I do not think any worthy members of his own party will approve of it.

No intelligent Christian objects to the Common Prayer Book on the ground here alleged, but to the merging saints and sinners in a common petition and confession of sins, to the exceeding detriment of the converted, to the imminent peril of the unconverted, and above all to the trampling under foot of the primary idea, the express design, and revealed character of God's Church.

To be precise, let me add, first, that "Brethren" do ask forgiveness of their sins; secondly, that confession goes beyond this. Who does not know, save the thoughtless, that it is far easier to ask forgiveness than to confess honestly and thoroughly? Have you never felt it? Have you not seen it in your child? For what are sins confessed, if not to seek forgiveness from our Father?

(3.) Neither is there any evasion as to the Lord's prayer. I have never hinted that it was used at meetings of "Brethren," though there is no rule expressed or understood against such a thing. It is evident that the Lord gave it for the closet use (Matt. 6:6) of His disciples, who were regenerate at that very time and had not yet received the gift of the Holy Ghost, the Paraclete. I believe that it abides for such use on the part of disciples in a similar condition; but that it never was intended for souls after they were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise and possessed (not merely the

title, but) the Spirit of sonship. This vast change is, I am convinced, the teaching of our Lord Himself in John 16:24-26. The disciples had been no doubt for a long time using the Lord's prayer; yet the Lord tells them "Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name." "At that day ye shall ask in my Name." "That day" is now come: are we as the disciples were? or, having received the Comforter, are we asking the Father in Christ's name? To my mind this distinction is clear and certain; but Mr. N. counts it "shuffling by which your correspondent endeavours to exonerate the sect from this sanctimonious blasphemy," and then talks about the distinction already pointed out in such a style as to show himself wholly in the dark on this subject. "If any man be ignorant let him be ignorant."

From these bold and bitter, but powerless words, in the face of our Lord's declaration and the evident facts of scripture, it is refreshing to turn to the excellent and learned Dr. John Owen. None can say that Cromwell's Vice-Chancellor of Oxford Plymouthized; none can deny that for spiritual judgment he is incomparably beyond any of the adversaries of the "Brethren." His orthodoxy and his piety are unimpeachable; yet his doctrine (as far as it goes), and no doubt his practice, as to the Lord's prayer, accords with ours. "Let it therefore be taken for granted that our Saviour did command that form to be repeated by His disciples, and let us then consider what will regularly ensue thereupon. Our Saviour at that time was minister of the circumcision, and taught the doctrine of the gospel under and with the observation of all the worship of the Judaical church. He was not yet glorified, and so the Spirit was not as yet given; I mean that Spirit which He promised unto His disciples to

enable them to perform all the worship of God by Him required at their hands, whereof we have before spoken. That, then, which the Lord Jesus prescribed unto His disciples for their present practice in the worship of God, seems to have belonged unto the economy of the Old Testament. Now, to argue from the prescription of, and outward helps for, the performance of the worship of God under the Old Testament, unto a necessity of the like or the same under the New, is upon the matter to deny that Christ is ascended on high, and to have given spiritual gifts unto men eminently distinct from and above those given out by Him under the Judaical pedagogy." (Works, Vol. xv., p. 14, Goold's ed.) Of course, I attach not the smallest authority to Dr. O.; but it suffices to evince the abuse and lack of knowledge on our accuser's part.

(4.) It is in vain to appeal to 1 John 2:3, 1 John 3:18, 19 to prove that scripture makes the full assurance of our acceptance to depend on our works or our experiences. The apostle treats of a wholly different question and assumes, in this very epistle, that the former was already settled even for the babes of the family of God. See 1 John 2:12; 1 John 5:13. There were those who sought even in that early day to set up Gnostic conceits, to despise love and holiness, and to assert the necessity of their teaching for the children of God. Hence, not to raise internal questions, but to comfort the true saints, and to expose these aspiring false teachers, the apostle says, "Hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments." There is no thought of insinuating an inquiry whether their own faith was real. So in chapter 3 it is expressly a question of "assurance of heart;" not of ascertaining one's individual interest in

Christ, but of keeping our confidence toward God unbroken. But I quite agree that without holiness (practically) no man shall see the Lord; and that carelessness of ways even in a real saint is always destructive of spiritual enjoyment.

(5.) So far is it from being true that individuals among "Brethren" are insensible to discipline, that one of the greatest hindrances we know is from the spirit of insubjection which prevails generally over Christendom. When the high-minded among us receive censure beyond their grace to endure, sometimes they resent it by going back to the country whence they came out, or by making a party of their own. It is commonly alleged against "Brethren" that they take "the best" from the various religious societies. Others are perhaps better judges of this. We can thankfully say that none but our worst or weakest leave us to join any denomination. The singular fact is, that our adversaries do not seem to perceive how serious for themselves are both these allegations if true. And who can deny them?

(6.) I am sorry that the most prejudiced Christian should judge it wrong, when souls established in Christ are taught any truth they need, particularly what is so near to Christ and so practically necessary to our walk and worship as the nature of God's Church. But 1 can well understand why some are sensitive on this head.

I had almost omitted to add that our reason for not putting forth creeds, or articles of faith, is not in the smallest degree because of diversity of opinion. Tracts and books, however, by men respected among us are abundant and accessible. Why not quote fairly from them, instead of imputing to "Brethren" sentiments

which they abhor? First, it is evident to us, that symbols of faith do not secure unanimity in Mr. N.'s system, which affords to all men the spectacle of compelling men to sign what they openly deny, without an approach to the right use of ecclesiastical discipline (though the second part of the Homily for Whitsunday declares this to be one of the three notes or marks whereby the true church is known). Secondly, it is equally clear that the Church of God walked without these Egyptian reeds during its best days here below, as we are seeking to do now by the grave of the Saviour.

As to the reproach of being a conglomerate of the errors of the Quakers, the Anabaptists, and the Antinomians, with supplemental errors increasing and special, it is not worth more answer than that of our scandalous immoralities. I retort nothing; I appeal to those who have knowledge and conscience.

1 2 Timothy 2:2 speaks of communicating doctrine, not authority. That has nothing to do with imposition of hands, which accordingly is not hinted at there, it is in fact a principle "Brethren" carry out continually in one form or another.

2 The Anglican service for "the ordering of priests" furnishes ample evidence how ill-instructed in scripture were its framers, and what a mass of confusion (to say the least) is bound on those who are thus ordained. They read as the epistle Eph, 4:7-13 and Matthew 9:36-38 as the gospel, with John 10:1-16, none of which applies to the charge of a presbyter; then, after exhortation, questions and answers, prayers, etc., the Bishop and the priests present lay their hands on each candidate, and the former says, "Receive the Holy Ghost for the office

and work of a Priest in the Church of God, now committed unto thee by the imposition of our hands. Whose sins thou dost forgive, they are forgiven; and whose sins thou dost retain, they are retained," etc. One might denounce the profanity of a Bishop appropriating the words of our divine Saviour in John 20:22, 23; no apostle is ever represented as thus taking up His language. But I confine myself now to the egregious blunder of confounding the Lord's words on His resurrection-day with what they call "the office and work of a Priest." Do they not know that the act and words of Christ on that occasion have nothing to do with any such office? This misapplication involves singular ignorance and serious error, as every intelligent believer cannot but discern and own, if he be honest. Yet every Anglican presbyter enters on his functions by sanctioning this grievous ceremony, and subscribes an article which denies that this and the other kindred services have anything that of itself is superstitious or ungodly? Certainly the world's bondage is hard and bitter, and the Christians who submit to it are to be pitied as well as blamed. Would that they might all go forth unto Jesus without the camp, bearing His reproach!

Blackheath re Ramsgate, A Letter

9, Bennett Park, Blackheath, S.E., 28th November, 1881.

For the Assembly.

Dear Brethren,

We have been slow to speak of Guildford Hall, Ramsgate, and its allied meetings in Broadstairs and Canterbury, which have been pressed of late on the acceptance of assemblies often distracted by the question. This was from no lack of interest for Christ's and the church's sake. We had no urgent duty till recent steps in the neighbouring assembly of Lee practically drove out a large proportion of the saints there, who could not, as before God, accept Guildford Hall as it is. These saints, of whose faith and godliness there is no question, we were not disposed to reject. We do reject, as decidedly as they, the compulsory test of communion, which made their separation from the others at Lee inevitable, unless they could go on with a bad conscience.

Being asked to explain, we own our obligation at once and openly to avow our assurance that a fatal error has been made in not localising the matter, as in similar ruptures heretofore. The Lord might have been trusted to work in the adjacent meetings, when Ramsgate failed to solve the difficulty. But a distant meeting — instead of seeking to mediate in grace, having assumed to decide for itself on both Abbott's Hill and Guildford Hall in a way which many brethren believe to be foreign to Scripture — has increased the complication, by imposing the need of either refusing its decision as being out of

divine order, or bowing to it as if it were in the usual course of the Spirit's unity: especially as there is ground to believe that the final position, or what is commonly called the third table, of Guildford Hall, — which that meeting professed to judge, and in fact sanctioned, — was not taken without the private encouragement of influence paramount in bringing about the public decision. It seems scarce possible to conceive a measure, — particularly in the present state of feeling among Brethren, — more calculated to rally partisans on opposite sides, and to force on a division, than the isolated action of meetings in London, openly violating that unity which has hitherto ruled even in ordinary things.

As to the merits of the Ramsgate case, we believe that Mr. Jull and the brethren with him were not justified in calling the assembly there and in the neighbourhood to judge forthwith the case of discipline pending before Kennington. London — directly concerned — was waiting, and the country meetings were patient, though equally concerned as these few Kentish meetings. The seceders were as wrong in going out as those who staid were right in refusing (not a godly judgment in the sphere of their duty, but) a groundless and therefore sinful division. The seceders on the 22nd August, 1879, deliberately left divine ground, if the mass of Brethren remained on it. This evil they greatly aggravated by setting up a new meeting outside, on principles opposed to those we have learnt from God's Word. For a few individuals rejected, among the souls up to that day in fellowship and seceding with them, such as they deemed unfit for communion in their new thing. In all this we fail to see a just (however feeble) expression of the "one

body and one Spirit," — words too often cited to consecrate a perversion of their meaning. After careful inquiry we have proof that Mr. Jull, — who was allowed to speak for the brethren of Guildford Hall, far from confessing these sins of independency and party (which Scripture calls "heresy"), — claims that they acted for God and according to His principles at that critical time. Whatever else he owns, he carefully and strongly denies any sin of principle; and apart from him Guildford Hall has made no public confession of their common evil.

As Guildford Hall, then, has not at all cleared itself by known self-judgment from offences which we regard as fundamental against the only revealed ground of gathering for the saints, we are compelled, in fidelity to the Lord's name, to decline recognition of it; though we should indeed rejoice if unfeigned repentance opened the way for the godly reunion of the saints in Ramsgate. We are thankful, too, that there is, as yet, no question of heterodox evil against Christ, as in a former serious question. Hence the effort to confound the present controversy with that past one shows an unspiritual judgment as to both. To raise a personal and party strife, — though it did end for some in "heresy," — to the level of a stand for the doctrine of Christ, is to sink into a confederacy.

On the other hand, that the brethren now of Abbott's Hill failed painfully in not providing with care for the Lord's Table on the 24th August, 1879, as also in the haste and absence of warning with which they on the 31st declared outside the six leading seceders, we feel to be very grave. It is not just to accept extreme charges without proof: still the fact remains that many godly brethren have received strong impressions of evil

against Abbott's Hill, and condemn alike its position and acts before-named and since. Under these circumstances we shall not accredit Abbott's Hill till godly confidence is truly and generally restored.1 Gathered to the Lord's name, we gratefully own His presence in the midst, and our own responsibility to walk and act in the Spirit by the written word. But for this very reason we refuse the pressure of man, which disowns the most devoted and godly who cannot bow to it, as it flatters the least spiritual who do bow; demoralising the many who submit from a variety of motives, without faith or even heart, and against conscience.

Signed, after two meetings on the 24th and 28th Nov., 1881, on behalf of the assembly, WM. KELLY, THOMAS STONE, E. S. EARL, WM. COULTAS, R. A. SAYER.

Dr. Kidd's judgment is carefully given by his desire in his own words as follows:

"Dr. Kidd could not agree to the letter; and was of opinion that Abbott's Hill should be rejected as not an assembly of God, and that Mr. Jull and those with him (who broke bread at Almorah, 24th August, 1879) committed the same sin as Dr. Cronin did it Ryde; in their zeal to condemn him, they, in fact, repeated his act. This sin against God and His Church has not been adequately confessed. Therefore as yet he could not accept Guildford Hall. He considered the common failure of those who broke bread at Abbott's Hill and at Almorah should be fully confessed before God, and that then they should all re-unite at the Lord's table at Guildford Hall. The gathering at Lee, in making this a

test of communion, departed from the true ground of the assembly of God."

1 Dr. Woodman agreed to all the letter, save this sentence, as he believes that Abbott's Hill never forfeited its position as an assembly of God.

W.H.D.'s "Appeal"

(B.T. Vol. 6, p. 252-254.)

Dear brother,

This “Appeal,” which I had not seen when your letter reached me, was brought me by a brother to whom it was sent unsought. Brethren must change woefully from what I have known them, if its perusal affect them otherwise than with real grief for the writer, his companions, and any Christians who may be credulous enough to receive statements which I refrain from characterizing as they deserve.

Nothing can be simpler than the doctrine for which I am responsible, which seems to me unquestionable. No doubt W. H. Dorman holds the same at bottom, though he may prefer his own way of putting it and I beg leave to cleave to my own. But I have no wish to impute to him what he hates. I have never taught or implied that Christ’s death was unatoning; I have nowhere explained away or denied the intrinsic character of anything previously stated. I assert openly and decidedly that the blood or death of Christ is viewed in some scriptures as through man’s sinful deed, and consequently as bringing judgment on him, in others as the fruit of God’s grace in judgment of sin, and so the basis of all blessing to the believer. “His blood be on us and on our children,” and “a propitiation through faith in His blood” may illustrate both points, for which many proofs might be produced from Scripture. I believe too that God’s smiting, &-c., in every scripture in which it is used of Christ (Psalm 69:26; Daniel 9:26,and Zech. 13:7), can be demonstrated to be on the side of judgment rather than of grace, the

contextual connection proving it to he no question of atonement. But while unwavering in this conviction, I treat no man as unsound who does not see it. Is it a new thing for such as are wrong in their views to be violent in their denunciation of those who are more right than themselves? Is nobody else to see more than they see? They are not asked to see or to say they see, if they cannot; but do they want to hinder others? This is what it comes to.

This “Appeal” will not convince any fair-minded Christian that the dignity of Christ’s person is lost sight of by those it attacks; nor do I think that Crantz’s Greenland or Brainerd’s Journal will help the writer much to understand the point in dispute. No one doubts that it is not a matter for preaching to the unconverted: are we as Christians never to go beyond the good news? The editor of Present Testimony needs no defence of mine. But for myself, I do hold to the proposition that God’s word connects having nothing with the Messiah cut off in Daniel 9. Is this the effect of atonement? It is of His cutting off.1 Does any one then cavil at the antithesis, that cutting off is the loss, as atonement is the gain, of all? W. H. D. is silent on Psalm 69:26: had he been equally reserved on Zechariah 13:7,2 it would have been no’ damage to his new tract or his old one. He may think it only proper spirit to allow himself the license he takes in page 19 and elsewhere; but to me it is as clear as light whose intelligence is at fault. Compare John 11:52. Does not this verse speak of Christ’s death, His atoning death, that He should gather to-ether in one the children of God that were scattered abroad? Compare also John 10:15, 16 with the passage in Zechariah 13:7. On the other hand, who can see people gathered to

eternal life in John 5:24? This is to interpolate, not to interpret. It is scripture which makes scattering the effect of smiting, and treats death in atonement as the forerunner of gathering. Israel too will be gathered when the Lord applies that atoning death to them. The scattering of the disciples when Jesus was smitten was a sample, the beginning of that which befell the Jews at large not long after. The gathering of the Church was based on the same death viewed in grace, as that of Israel will follow by and by. The argument which essays to weaken this is mere wrangling and beneath notice; but it is instructive as indicating the writer's state and tone, as well as his feeling toward those he does not (perhaps, cannot now) comprehend.

But there is another statement of mine which has been attacked with sufficient heat and din of words to stun those who can be alarmed by sound. Now I believe that atonement demanded that Christ should suffer the judgment of our sins, and that God should forsake Him when thus made sin on the cross. Where all was marvellous, this is the great marvel which bows our hearts before that suffering One, the mighty God, yet crucified in weakness. Do they want scripture for it? This infinite fact is what I sought to convey in the incriminated sentence: "That which was properly expiation or atonement was not the pure, however precious, act of Christ's death." I used, as I was entitled to use, the word "pure," in its idiomatic sense of mere, nothing but; and I meant then, as I am bold to repeat now, that even the precious blood of Christ, the Word made flesh, is atoning because He bore our sins and their judgment on the cross. The whole force of my remark was levelled against severing His death from

that stupendous expression of sin-bearing and infinite suffering at God's hand. Alas! it seems that these men would like to think us guilty of treason against Christ and His cross.

Here I go farther than as to "the smiting." Many servants of God, probably Brainerd and the Moravians, have interpreted smiting of the atonement. I may think them mistaken as an exact exposition of scripture; but as they are substantially right, I should not in such a case notice a flaw of phrase. For in the smiting of Christ atonement was wrought. But the man who denies the judgment of our sins and God's consequent abandonment of Christ on the cross, separating these from the act of death and His blood that was shed (the good Lord pardon any sounds of discussion on so holy a theme!), seems to me most seriously wrong, and evidences how meagre is his own perception of the hatefulness of sin before God, because be thereby slights the true revealed character and consequence of Christ's suffering for us.

"The pure.... act of Christ's death," in my sentence, does not mean His death (p. 11). When scripture speaks of His death as reconciling us to God, or of His blood cleansing us from all sin (to refer to the various scriptures this tract cites), it never means what I called the pure act of His death (i.e., His death apart from the judgment of our sins by God); but, on the contrary, His death efficacious according to the perfection of God's moral dealing with our evil on the cross. This, therefore, gives in one sentence the simple and conclusive answer to all the noisy declamation, and, I must add, the groundless slander, of W. H. D.'s new tract. I hurl back the shameless taunt of holding or teaching the

unatoning death of Christ. What I declared and do affirm, is that His atoning death is not merely because He died, but because God made Him to be sin, and that so He died and shed His blood for us. He who hesitates about this truth appears to me a man to hesitate about. Does not W. H. D. believe it? I trust and believe he does; yet his rash and alienated spirit dared to say over and over that “atonement is the bare (pure) act of Christ’s death.” Now either he used my words in my sense, or he did not. If he did not, it was a fraud; if he did, he said over and over what he does not believe (namely, that atonement consists in Christ’s death without our sins being judged by God’s forsaking Him on the cross). This indeed would be to mutilate His cross and to divorce atonement from His death. But no! I will vindicate W. H. D. from this at least, against his own “too strong” feelings, and against his own unguarded and unwarrantable words. He did not mean, any more than I meant, what he says. But oh! is this a brother’s love? Is this jealousy for the truth, or for what?

As to the statement that to interpret the Psalms of the Jewish remnant and of Christ’s special connection with them is a fifth gospel and a development, the writer had better have let it sleep. The apostles had the Psalms as we, and they had the Holy Ghost too. There was no need of a fresh interpretation; but that they knew nothing of their bearing on the Jewish remnant is what no man is warranted to say. All the talk about authoritative, or the New Testament only, is nothing to the purpose, or a mistake. Who makes J. N. D.’s exposition of authority? All this is the language of ill-will, no less than confusion.

I have not thought it worth while to speak of the uncommon preoccupation of the writer, who seems to

deem his own opinions indisputable, and the worst possible construction of those he reviews (save B. W. N.) absolutely settled. Is this righteous or decent? I am content to have shown briefly that the gist of the pamphlet is a mere blunder, which is in no way relieved by entitling it “A solemn appeal,” or by calling on his brethren to judge as heretical that which it is all but a heresy to deny.

But I must point out ere I conclude, that even plain matters of alleged fact cannot here be safely taken on trust. Thus the writer says (p. 11) that Christ’s smiting from God “is now allowed by Mr. Darby to have been only on the cross, though formerly contended against.” Is this the truth? When and where was it contended against? I have always heard the same statement and never understood what is insinuated here. In the “Sufferings of Christ,” which raised the question, Mr. D. stated exactly what he states now-that the act of smiting took place only on the cross, though the spirit of it was realised before, especially from the last Passover. The same mis-statement occurs again in page 21. It is untrue, therefore, that it is a concession now, for it was always so explained.

Let me add that the writer goes much too far in his notion of “an impossible mental conception.” Had he said impossible to himself, it might be true. Is his mind the measure of the possible? I am satisfied that there are many Christian men and women who find the conception in question perfectly intelligible to them.

Possibly the writer never had faith in God as to the path he followed his leader in for eighteen years: such at least is the melancholy portrait he presents of himself,

though I see no sign of humiliation and self-distrust, but, on the contrary, morbid suspiciousness of others and no small acrimony now. Is this the temper to enter on the consideration of stale calumnies against his brethren, which in a happier mood he used to despise? He ought to know what “second-hand” means; and the new regime some will think a change for the worse. As he reminds us, “Ye shall know them by their fruits.” What a painful comment on the text is his own tract! Happier they, in my opinion, who by grace have known how to walk across difficulties and in face of dangers, with loving respect for the worthy but with none the less independence of judgment before God.

The moral I gather from this fresh sorrow is, that the spirit of unbelief works, first, in giving up all uncompromising judgment of all allowance of heresy; secondly, in calumniating Is heresy that which is real and important truth. It was reserved for the present “Appeal” to fall into the absurdity of trying to fasten the semblance of heresy on a truth which, I cannot doubt, its writer himself holds. The issue for the assailed I for one can happily leave in the Lord’s hands; and I can ask my brethren to join me in beseeching His pitiful mercy on the assailants.

I am, dear Brother, yours faithfully,

THE WRITER OF “REMARKS ON THE GOSPEL OF MARK”

1 “And after the threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off and shall have nothing” (as in margin). Such seems unequivocally the true rendering: literally, “and there shall not be to him.” The common version (i.e., the text of the English Bible) “but not for himself” is an

error from a violent effort to make it speak about the atonement.

2 The learned reader may see, if he pleases, that the able Venema (Comment. ad. lib. proph. Zach. in loc. cit.) treats the smiting of the Messiah as the broad fact of His being given up to the power of man, substantially as I have done, and not according to the narrow modern view to which some would shut us up. C. B. C. may see more to the same effect in the “Critici Sacri.”

A Letter to Mr. Geo. B. Gilpin

In Reply To His “Warning,” etc.

Guernsey, Sept. 27, 1866.

My dear brother,

Your “Warning” fell into my hands last night. Bear with me if I express my sorrow at the rashness which so quickly receives and circulates an evil accusation against an honoured servant of Christ.

After the fullest consideration I could bestow on the charges, both when first uttered by unscrupulous enemies, and when lately taken up by men from whom more candour might have been expected, my judgment, as in God’s sight, is that you have utterly misconstrued J.N.D.

Thus your title is “A Warning, with regard to the doctrine of Christ being smitten previous to the Cross.” Can you have read and remembered the note at the bottom of pp. 67, 68 in the “Sufferings of Christ?” Here are the words: “The persecuting ‘Him whom thou hast smitten’ is literally applicable in the 69th Psalm only to what was done to Him on the cross. (See verses 20, 21.) Still surely in spirit all that passed from Gethsemane, or when He had given Himself up to the suffering of death and rejection, have this same character.” So farther on in the same note it is said of the cross, “There we know was the true smiting. It was written, ‘Smite the Shepherd and the sheep shall be scattered but the moment after, in Gethsemane, He had given Himself up to this, all partook of this character, morally, though the fact of smiting had not actually taken place.” How then

could you in the fore-part of your tract accuse Mr. Darby of the doctrine that Christ was smitten previous to the cross? Not that you meant to accuse him falsely; but in fact so it is. Your “Warning” is founded solely on a misrepresentation; the ground of it he even pointedly disclaims. Mr. Darby affirms (and never, as far as I can speak, affirmed anything but) that the fact of smiting had not actually taken place before the cross.

You next quote the words of the “Synopsis” on Psalm 102, where it is said of the rejected Messiah, “He looks to Jehovah, who cast down Him whom He had called to the place of Messiah, but who now meets INDIGNATION and WRATH”

[as you singularly print these words]. “We are far, here, beyond looking at sufferings as coming from man. They did and were felt, but men are not before Him in judgment; nor is it His expiatory work, though that which wrought it is here — the indignation and wrath.” Now I declare to you, as I may to my brethren, that were I on a jury empanneled to pronounce whether, on the evidence of your “Warning,” you did or did not understand Mr. Darby on Psalm 102, I could not hesitate to join in the verdict that you did not. Mr. Darby says nothing which warrants your very odd and oddly expressed inference — “that word on his part lying against the Lord Jesus Christ in life, ‘INDIGNATION AND WRATH.’“ He holds — what I think every saint does or ought to hold — that the blessed Lord had the sense of His coming rejection and cutting off before it came; that, far from being insensible, He felt all in perfect sorrow; and that He stopped not at secondary instruments, as unbelief does, but accepted all at the hand of Jehovah, His God — not expiation only, but all

His sufferings, whatever their occasion, source, measure, or character. But it is wholly and groundlessly false that Mr. Darby has any such word to recall as you impute in p. 3 — “indignation and wrath lying against the Lord Jesus Christ in life;” or, as in p. 4, that the “indignation” belongs to Christ, as taught by him. I am, therefore, as certain as I can be of anything, that “you have laid yourself open” to the charge (not merely as you suspect (p. 4), of presumption but) of unwitting false witness. Forgive me if I add that you have spoken foolishly as to not meeting Mr. Darby at the Lord’s table till he recalls a word of which you are the author, not he foolishly also in challenging brethren whom you may deem implicated in a wicked absurdity, which nobody in communion would accept or allow for a moment.1 And you have rushed into print with nothing but misconception from beginning to end! If it be criminal hastily to misjudge any man in a serious business, what must it be in the present case? Most “Brethren,” I trust, will be helped by grace in the long run to distinguish between godly jealousy for Christ and the truth, and the unworthy jealousy which writhes under superior power; or the temerity which sincerely scatters, hotfoot, that which blind, if not insincere, ill-will originally forged. I am sure that the weightiest men among “Brethren” reject with disdain those charges or innuendos against Mr. Darby’s doctrine, which charges were long since raised, weighed, and found wanting. Their reproduction now, chiefly by men who are unquestionably alienated otherwise, may pain us all, but need surprise none. I am grieved that you, and not you only, should not have seen through the snare. For let me tell you, that, while one from amongst us, who formerly seemed to me only too servile to J.N.D., now indulges in high-minded

acrimonious impeachment of his doctrine, as well as of his ecclesiastical conduct; another (too upright, I hope, to remain much longer within neutral ranks) wrote to me (too long ago) his indignant refusal of these very imputations. Is it not ominous that W.H.D., in the pamphlet you commend and advertise, insinuates false doctrine against Mr. Darby in the ratio that he avows the principle (if principle it can be styled) of the so-called Bethesda party? When he hesitated (as at first) about the one, his mind was only moved (not made up) about the other. When finally he decided to secede because of Mr. Darby's alleged doctrine, he equally determined to renounce that witness against neutrality which he had pursued ever since the question arose. This seems to me the real "warning."

W.H.D. then wrote a pamphlet2 far stronger against Bethesdaising than he has just written in its favour. W. H. D. therein not only expressed his approval of Mr. Darby's circular in reference to Bethesda, but was the only man among "Brethren" known to me who printed it in extenso. — Then he wrote, "This letter, I believe to be no more than a just expression of what the occasion required;" and, again, "it places the question in a broad, and simple, and intelligible light; and many facts have since come out to make plain, to all, the grounds the writer had for his conclusions." (Review, p. 13.) Now, on the contrary, he says (Close of twenty-eight years, p. 29), it is the "fiat of authority," "and the dictum of a leader;" and, again, "it is a false principle for any man to issue a human decree as to how an evil is to be dealt with in the Church of God, instead of leaving it to the direction of the divine Word." (Close, p. 5 7.)-Now (ibid.) he says a principle "is falsely applied when directed against

Christians, not because they themselves hold or favour error, but simply use that liberty of association which they do not see to be interdicted of the Lord." But the fallacy is his own; for it is to favour error, even if not held, where liberty of association is claimed in presence of the allowance of a dishonoured and indeed a false Christ. Then, however, W.H.D. could see that personal separation was not enough; that the Church had to prove themselves clear; and that it is in vain to talk about a negation or that Scripture gives no warrant to punish for it. - Then he could declare, "I hold to the ground on which I first set out with brethren." (Review, p. 21.) Now he does not scruple to say that Mr. Darby's circular inaugurated "our present position and discipline" (Close, p. 17); and, again (Close, p. 37), eighteen or nineteen years ago their polity and position were entirely remodelled on the ground of separation from 'Bethesda' on account of alleged laxity in dealing with false doctrine." Then W.H.D. clearly saw the working of Satan's power in the heresy which, springing up in Plymouth, found a shelter in Bethesda and with its advocates; then he could see the deep personal enmity against Mr. Darby and Mr. Wigram, which usually characterizes the spirit of renegades against all who are prominent in holding fast to God's will and ways. Now! — but I need say no more than that I never remember reading a more "malignant thrust" than W.H.D.'s at the writer on Psalm 22 in Part lxv. of the "Present Testimony."

As to a general meeting, I doubt that it promises much for dealing with the question just now. Let brethren avoid haste of judgment and speech; let them give themselves to prayer with search in, and submission to,

the Scriptures. Mr. Darby is not the man to amuse any one by light promises, or to refuse help to saints who feel difficulties. But who can disabuse those who are wilful and themselves more or less in error? Do you mean, by “largeness of heart, not standing on a technicality” (p. 4), that the meeting you desire should embrace brethren while they abide in such an association as would hinder our receiving them at the Lord’s table? If so, I pray the Lord that every brother in fellowship may eschew so unholy an alliance, and that no saint may be misled by its issues.

Believe me to remain, dear brother,

Ever affectionately yours, W. Kelly.

1 I have just examined, and have now before me, a copy of what you call “a private thing” (which is really a letter from Mr. Darby in reply to an inquiring brother); and here again I am bound to say the same fatality of mistake follows you. Mr. Darby applies Zechariah 13 to Christ’s death, not “to Christ in life,” as you assert.

2 A REVIEW of certain evils and questions that have arisen amongst brethren, designed to help the simple-minded to a godly judgment about them. By W. H. Dorman. London: J. K. Campbell, etc. 1849.”

A Letter on Recent Heterodoxy

(B.T. Vol. N2, p.159.)

My dear Brother,

As warning has been already given (full enough) as to this system of strange doctrines, I have not thought it wise or good to be occupied with an unsavoury and dangerous theme. When we have arrived before God at the conviction, not only that such a truth for the saints as life eternal is darkened and rendered uncertain, but that Christ Himself is dishonoured and misrepresented, one may turn away from the darkness to enjoy Him Who is from the beginning, and the love that was manifested in Him and is perfected in us and with us.

But as you and others desire to know its late phases, I will cite a few passages from “Readings and Addresses at Weston-Super-Mare, Jan. 3rd. to 10th. 1897,” which suffice to prove how daringly unreliable and perilous it is.

“The mystery is the body simply” (p. 38). Now the apostle took pains to lay down emphatically and on the contrary, that it is concerning Christ and concerning the church. How sad to leave out Him on Whom all depends, of Whom the assembly is but the complement! Compare Col. 1:27. To ignore the Head as the chief and efficient glory of the mystery is a fatal blank.

“I do not think there will be any fellowship in heaven” (p. 81). Its perfection, outside the scene of contrariety, is a singularly perverse ground for denying it; its absence there, what a blank!

“We shall not know Him as Lord in heaven, we shall know Him as Head” (p. 82). We now know Christ as Head on high, while we are on earth; but where is it revealed; that we are to know Him so when we are there? Where, that we shall cease to know Him as Lord? The book of Revelation tells us most of such things; but it assuredly endorses neither of these random utterances. Shall we ever cease to say or sing “Lord Jesus?”

“I have thought [speaking of Rom. 8:30] that for the Holy Ghost to be given to a man is in a sense to glorify him; all is settled morally” (p. 111). What a monstrous comment on the apostle’s word, who in giving us the links of divine purpose speaks of glorification with striking anticipation!

But the worst and most shameless contradiction of fundamental truth is in p. 127: “Becoming a man, He becomes the Logos.” Need I say that John 1 teaches that He was the Logos, or Word, in the beginning or eternally? He became flesh in time. The other chief speaker evidently felt the error, and stated the truth subsequently, but did not dare to say more. Was this loyal to Christ?

Now these notes are “revised.” But where are they that care for Christ, wounded afresh in the house of His friends? Is there no fidelity left? no faith? no jealousy for the truth?

Of more than one I have heard, who owned such doctrines to be “diabolical.” This was the word. Why do you then go on in fellowship with such? For testimony was the answer. Testimony! certainly not to Christ, but rather to the enemy. Is it not infatuation?

Yours ever in Christ, W. K.

A Letter to an Inquiring Hindu

My dear Sir,

I too have to apologise for leaving your letter, though of the greatest interest to me, so long unanswered. Suffice it to say, that I had much to wind up before quitting home, and that much fresh occupation has hindered since I came to this busy city. You are right in not allowing your mind to get dragged into discussions, and I trust that I shall in no way tempt you to a path so unpromising especially in the things of God.

But you speak of the doctrine of the Trinity early in your letter. Now that entirely depends on the revelation of God, and indeed almost entirely on the Christian revelation or Greek Scriptures; for, though the Hebrew Scriptures fall in with it when revealed, they can of themselves be scarcely said to reveal it. So, too, the points of salvation and faith turn on the same larger and prior question of their Divine revelation, as distinct from the external testimony of creation or the internal testimony of the human conscience.

But, surely, my dear sir, if you have seriously read the books commonly called the Old and New Testaments, you can hardly have failed to see their essential difference, not in measure only but in kind, from the sacred books of India, China, Arabia, and any other people or age. They differ quite as much from the Talmud of the Jews and from the commentaries of the early Christian writers, which bear the unmistakable signs of being merely human and consequently fallible and in fact erroneous.

The Old and New Testaments, besides their superior moral character, differ in two respects. They have an historical substratum, peculiar each to each, supported if their testimony be true by miraculous vouchers; and they are prophetic. Now none but God could clothe men with miraculous power for some worthy moral end, and this too where the ways of the men so invested preclude suspicion of trickery and collusion. Still less, if possible, could any but God give distinct prophecies of the most unlikely events hundreds of years before the fact. These qualities are found only in the Bible, the wonder of which is increased by the circumstance that its writers extend over a space of about 1500 years from Moses till the Apostle John.

These things are only explicable by the truth of the claim of Scripture to be God's word. If the Bible then be His word, faith comes by hearing that word. Reasoning is good in its own sphere and for its own proper ends; but faith is subjection to and reception of God's word because it is His. If God has made such a revelation, it binds the conscience of all who hear it. But in such a world as this one need not wonder that men disbelieve it. For on the face of it men generally are far from God and opposed to His will. That God should leave man, so dark and wretched as he is, without a revelation, would be strange indeed: not so, spite of such a revelation, that many should reject it, and many should be unfaithful to it. Least of all is this a difficulty to one who believes the Bible; for the Old Testament predicted the sin and unbelief of the Jews, as the New Testament predicts the sin and unbelief of the Christian professing body. As the revelation comes from God to man and acts as a moral test, so does Christ. If I love what is good and holy and

true, I shall love the Bible, and the Lord Jesus; if I like my own will and way, and the world, I shall despise both the Bible and the Lord Jesus Christ. If I begin to learn my unfitness for God's presence, I shall begin to abhor myself and to look to God, who will surely lead me on to welcome the good news of redemption through Jesus Christ.

Either Jesus was a Divine person or He was the worst of deceivers. This last you do not think: how then can you fairly escape from owning the glory of His person? Seven hundred and fifty years before His birth, Isaiah (Isa. 7) declared to King Ahaz that the Virgin should conceive and bear a son to be called Immanuel, GOD WITH US, further calling Him the mighty God (Isa. 9), the Father of eternity (or the age to come), etc. In due time the Virgin Mary does bear such a son, even Jesus, who raises the dead, rises Himself from the dead, and goes up to heaven in the face of His disciples.

Again, even the greatest difficulties which unbelief finds are all necessarily elements of the history and of the doctrine. Thus, if Jesus had not been a man, man had derived no such benefit as the gospel proclaims. If He had not been God, the benefit could only have been human, earthly, and temporal. To give such a boon as Christianity offers, He must be both God and man in the same person. Again, if He had not died as man, there could have been no Christian redemption by blood. If He who died had not been Divine, the value of blood-shedding had been only that of a creature, and limited. To be infinite, not in person only, but in His sacrifice for us, He must be, as Scripture declares He was, both God and man.

Take a proof of this from the Hebrew Scriptures. It was written by Zechariah 500 years before the crucifixion. “They shall look upon me whom they have pierced.” This is still as a whole to be fulfilled for the Jews is a nation. It has only been verified by individuals as yet. The prophet speaks of a future time of trouble, when the Gentiles will gather round Jerusalem and God will appear on their behalf when at the last extremity and they will then recognise in their deliverer God the One whom they pierced. The “I” of the passage (Zech. 12:10) is certainly God, Jehovah of Israel; yet He must have taken a body and come in humiliation, if He had been once “pierced” by them. In whom can all this meet but in Jesus of Nazareth, the Lord God of Israel?

The very notion of Christianity is above human thought till God revealed it. Others have concerned God’s appearing in human form to steal, to kill, to indulge lust or other evil. Such were the ideas of Greeks and Romans. Scripture alone reveals God assuming human nature without sin to be a sacrifice for sinners, to make them saints, to glorify Himself in and by them. With this, too, the Trinity harmonises perfectly: for, instead of its being mere ideas or various functions and displays, the Father in His love gives the Son, who in equal love comes to die, in order righteously to put away sin and to rise in witness of the victory for the believer, and the Holy Spirit deigns to work in the conscience and heart of him who believes, both to convince him of his need and then to fill him with Divine streams of enjoyment and power to magnify Him who died and rose for him.

You will see from what is already said that I in no wise despise the value of reason. Thus it is irrational and immoral to suppose that a Being good and holy,

omniscient and omnipotent, made this world and man as they are now. But reason, unaided, cannot account for it. Revelation declares that God made all good, but suspended its continuance on the obedience of its head — that the head failed, and that the race and the world fell thereby. My reason bows to this as the only true and righteous and sufficient explanation.

But how can I rise out of this state of ruin? My reason fails to find a remedy. Divine revelation shows me God undertaking, God giving, God fulfilling the mighty task; and this in the nature which failed, yet to the glory of Himself. This my soul accepts as the only solution of all my difficulties. It is worthy of God to save the lost, but it is only worthy of Him to save holily and righteously at all cost to Himself, at infinite cost, yet to save freely of grace, and therefore by faith of His testimony that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life. In every other scheme love is lost, or righteousness is compromised, or guilty man is flattered. The cross of Christ alone satisfies and harmonises all truth, meeting every want of man and every attribute of God.

Before the Scriptures were written at all, as in the days of Moses, and before they were finished, as in the days of Jesus and the apostles, miracles were vouchsafed by God to arrest attention to the Divine power put forth in a less or a greater degree, as seemed fit to Him.

But, when all was written, miracles were not continued; for then the truth revealed was complete, and the testimony such as only inattention or self-will can dispute, the fulfilment of prophecy being the most

powerful continuous testimony after miracles were no longer wrought.

Accepting then these revelations as proved truly Divine, I hear Jesus saying (John 8), “Before Abraham was, I am.” Did He speak the truth? If not, the morality of the gospel in its Chief is detestable, not Divine. Lofty precepts condemn, if there be not holy practice. If Jesus was holy and true, He was God, according to the import of His own words. None but a Divine person could say, “Before Abraham was, I am,” πρὶν Ἀβραὰμ γενέσθαι, ἐγώ εἰμι. If you know Greek tolerably, you will see, when it is pointed out, the amazing force of this statement. In speaking of Abraham, a mere creature, the Lord uses the verb γίνομαι, which means to become, or come into being. In speaking of Himself, He employs the substantive verb, which alone is proper to express, where required, absolute uncaused being. He, does not merely say, “Before Abraham was, I was,” no matter how: high you carry the point and term of His existence, even if it were the first of created beings, as the Arians say. If so, Jesus would have said, ἐγενόμην. But no! He, the lowliest of men, could not deny His deity. He is God, the “I am,” and so He declared Himself, which provoked the unbelieving Jews to take up stones. But the time to suffer was not yet come; and so He passed through and went on His way. Again in John 10 Jesus declares that He has ἐξουσίαν, right and title as well as power, to lay down His life as well as to take it again: who could have such authority but a Divine person?

This then was no mere Athanasian dogma. It is the distinct teaching of John 1, Philippians 2, Hebrews 1, and very many other passages in the, apostolic writings. It is the keystone of Christianity. Without it not only is its

salvation a myth but its morality is a cheat. For all is built on the capital truth that God in Divine love humbled Himself to become man and die for sinners, that He might save and bless the believer to the uttermost, not by Christ only, but with Him.

But be assured, my dear sir, as great as is the free and boundless blessing of the gospel, so equally the sin and danger of neglecting it — mark, not of opposing only but of neglecting it. For, if it be true that God really give His Son thus to live and die, the guilt of neglecting so great salvation, once it is brought before us, is proportionate to the dignity of His person and the efficacy of the work wrought at an incalculable cost. May the gracious God and Father of the Lord Jesus bless you, giving you to read honestly the Scriptures, with prayer for Divine light and guidance! — Believe me ever faithfully yours, W. K.

On Alleged Neutrality and Real Sectarianism

May 15, 1882.

Dear Brother in Christ,

I presume the difficulty our sister felt is that the form in which you meet the call of Ventnor, or of others who subscribe the Park Street decision, is said to be neutrality. But Phil. 3:15, 16, or Rom. 14 would be open to the same sort of charge from the violent brothers in the apostle's day. Neutrality where Christ's person is concerned, as in the Bethesda question, is great sin. The sin of Park St. and its followers is in making such a question as that of Ramsgate — an ecclesiastical difference — to be a test for assemblies, and even individuals, as I know is being done. Godly men might honestly stand in doubt of either A. H. or G. H. or both. To make a test of Ramsgate, therefore, is to split up assemblies, or to demoralise, them by inducing many to accept for fellowship what they doubt about really. Quite apart from the merits of the question at Ramsgate, I believe it to be a departure from our fundamental principles, for Park Street, or any other meeting, to take up such a dispute as this, and make it a question to divide the saints. The sin of division rests on those who seek so. to force consciences. All but partisans would have agreed to leave G. H. and A. H. in the Lord's hands, and those of the assemblies where no vital question was it stake. I understand you to judge as such do, and as all brethren of weight and spiritual intelligence did, till this agitation made manifest a party bent on division, who were long felt to be desiring it secretly. For the person of

Christ, or any like foundation truth, one would feel bound to reject, as we are commanded, those who bring not His doctrine. But to treat an assembly rupture as equivalent is to quit Scripture for tradition, which ever tends to put the church in Christ's place to God's dishonour. Those who do so are, in my judgment, a sect, and not to be owned as on God's ground — though one might receive saints from them for Christ's sake. Such is the way in which I regard all assemblies which accept the new test. Are you aware, is our sister aware, that we separated from Ebrington Street (Plymouth), chiefly on ecclesiastical grounds, in 1845, two years before the heterodoxy of B. W. N. as to Christ became known and judged? During those two years saints going on with Mr. N. were allowed to break bread, if they wished it, at the Lord's table with us; but after the proof of that terrible heterodoxy it was no longer allowed — they were utterly refused if they did not break with Mr. N. And this was what gave occasion to the guilty neutrality of Bethesda; which received those who did not bring the doctrine of Christ, and so became a partaker of their evil deeds. To call our position and yours Bethesdaism is, therefore, lack of knowledge and righteousness, of truth and charity. We abhor all neutrality where Christ is concerned, and own our own responsibility to judge every evil thing, as I trust you do at Newport.- Believe me, dear brother, to be yours faithfully in the Lord, W. K.

{N and B.W.N. refer to B W Newton, A.H. is Abbott's Hill, Ramsgate, G.H. is Guildford Hall, Ramsgate.}

Why many saints were outside the Park Street of 1881

29th March, 1905

[New Edition.]

While Dr. C.’s matter was before Kennington, Park Street sent out (in 1879) an independent and sectarian Declaration, on which Mr. H. J. JULL and others left the Ramsgate meeting. The rest there waited for London’s decision, declining as in duty bound to prejudge a case still pending. The JULL party went out, several brothers “one by one declaring that they withdrew from the assembly as then constituted.” It was they who sought to reconstruct or revolutionise. The rest were content to act like all others, save a very few small meetings full of the same fanaticism which actuated the seceders. This was ecclesiastical independency, a breach of unity subversive of the church.

Not content with groundless secession, of itself demanding repentance and of course condemned by all the meetings that did not so act, the seceders after one day’s interval set up a counter-meeting outside recognised fellowship, and gave plain proof of “new-lumpism “ by rejecting summarily and clerically some of their own following. This was what scripture calls “heresy” or “sect” (1 Cor. 11:19, Gal. 5:20). He who was thus active is (in Titus 3:10, 11) branded as “heretical” and “self-condemned.”

Claiming that they broke bread together on the alone divine ground of one body, one Spirit,” they quickly ceased nevertheless. Too self-confident to see or judge

the real evil of their proceedings, yet finding out their mistaken policy, they seized on flaws in their brethren who remained, both to deny their standing and to redintegrate their own pretensions. Hence (in 1880) they repeated their party effort, with the bold assumption that “the Lord would own and protect” their second table. This the Lord did not; nor was it long before they themselves dropt it.

Then came their third and too successful renewal (in 1881) after private encouragement. It was brethren now who sunk low enough to ask if they were never to break bread. Was this a right or godly question then? Had they truly condemned their party work throughout, all would have rejoiced; but justifying themselves as they did in the main, how in this state could it be allowed without compromising the Lord’s honour and word?

The Park Street meetings followed. It is idle to say that no other course was open. Who can gainsay that scripture teaches us to localise mischief by dealing with evil on the spot of its outbreak? It was the enemy’s snare to precipitate division, long sought by fiery zealots everywhere, of whom H. J. JULL was one. Park Street then intervened, where was a known predisposition, not to say determination, to at length endorse the seceding party, still impenitent as to their gravest offences, though ready to own other failures — a blind for themselves and their supporters. It is false that they there cleared away, as was pretended, their open wrongs against the Lord’s name in the assembly. “Haste and errors of judgment” were confessed, but neither the independency nor heresy (or, sect, its true sense), of which thousands of saints knew them to be guilty; nor were they asked to confess either, as far as was shown.

But chief men among brethren, who of late lent them secret countenance, led Park Street into public sanction of their third start; and other subordinate men were glad to push it on. Yet all these knew that J. adhered to the Park Street Declaration which led him into the ditch, though J.N.D. had got it withdrawn. For he thought it independency, as he told J.H.B. who at once reported this to J.

This was the evil deliberately committed by Park Street in the Lord's name, and sought accordingly to be imposed upon all. Its acceptance was not left as usual for the Lord to vindicate if sound, or disannul if wrong. It was speedily required on pain or forfeiture of fellowship in the face of the known, wide, and deep disapproval of it. This meant nothing short of separation forced through on a question of discipline. What could those do who were sure that the entire procedure was unscriptural, and a party snatching a triumph for party? They could not agree to what they judged unrighteous and untrue, cleaving the more in their weakness to His name and word, as all once used to do together. They neither went nor sent to Park Street or its allies, but were in sorrow, humiliation, and prayer, if peradventure the Lord might purge through sense of a false position, and of the previous evil that brought it about. We at Blackheath acted as was done at Plymouth in 1845-6, when a small minority left Ebrington Street, after it got wrong ecclesiastically as well as morally, before the heterodoxy of B.W.N when known gave it a far darker character; we did not reject souls from Park Street, though not going there. Crying to the Lord for His gracious interference, we had suspicion and insult for our forbearance. We wrote plainly when challenged for

receiving several of Lee, our neighbours, who could not more than ourselves subscribe a decree which we believed to be sinful.

Some blame us, notwithstanding our common and solemn convictions, for not refusing those despised little ones. We think it would have been despicable as well as error, if we had not received saints suffering for a godly protest, in order to retain a fellowship no longer true to the Lord's name. By letting them break bread with us, we well knew that our adversaries rejoiced to have the occasion they desired. Surely our Lord has said, when the preliminaries are done in obedience, "Hear the church"; but is this His voice when they were not? Has He not also called him that has an ear "to hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches?" To idolise assembly-judgments as necessarily right is condemned by His word. Nota bene.

But we may come still closer. The more that episode of sin, shame, and sorrow is weighed, the clearer it will be that ecclesiastical independency had unconsciously and extensively infected those who talked loudly of "one body and one Spirit." This was evident in the discredited Park Street Declaration. This carried away, not only H. J. J. and his companions in their secession and even worse, but the numerous party that might blame but aided and abetted them, at last bent at all cost on having them back without confession of their evil acts which betrayed false principles. Had they honestly been ashamed of their heretical or party ways the third time more than the first or the second? They themselves strenuously denied their guilt in this kind; yet no intelligent believer acquainted with the facts, and without strong personal predilection, can doubt it. Therefore, till repentance for

those public wrongs was known, to give them the right hand of fellowship was both to become partakers in their sins, and to part from all unprepared to join in that universally imposed unrighteousness. Far from penitence on that score, they indignantly and uniformly repudiated every charge of independency, or even schism, to say nothing of heresy. Yet, it is as certain as can be that they were thus guilty, and that those who knew it as surely as ourselves joined at Park Street to condone it in their reception.

Therein ensued the strange and grievous fact of Park Street judging for itself, and leading each company in London to judge for itself, independently of others. Thus through influence were enticed many with a conscience defiled; as also the fear of being “cut off” alarmed no fewer into acquiescence. For the advocates of division, without check somehow from those that knew better, applied to an ecclesiastical question the extreme measure, which we in obedience to scripture had hitherto confined to antichrists and blasphemies. Who could anticipate a great and good man1 drawn by unworthy inferiors into that very stream? We know how strongly he resisted it for years, alas! beguiled at length into what he had ever hated when left to himself with the Lord. Witness only a little before his letter to JULL, which it was sought to hide; as they did shamefully a postscript of his on a critical occasion previously.

It would have been evil if (not Park Street and other self-isolating fragments, but) the assembly in London had acted independently of a known widespread conviction elsewhere, that its proposal was utterly wrong, and must if confirmed demoralise, or repel, saints all over the world. How much worse when the independency of Park

Street gave the signal to every other part of the same city, and then to the country meetings, as well as everywhere, to follow that fatal course! In the new departure truth was forgotten, and grace prevailed quite as little. Nor (apart from the wrong change of venue to London, perhaps above all to Park Street for a reason already given) was there the least excuse for failing to act in the unity of the Spirit and obedience of the word.

A proposal might have been submitted to all the gathered saints, and action taken or refused, as judged due to the Lord. It was the more to be heeded when passion was letting in disorder. But dissolving for the time, and for this matter only, into independent assemblies, each judging itself, was to adopt the human device of a voluntary society, and to ignore the ground of God's church, abandoning for the nonce our divine relationship and its duty. God thus allowed an evil movement of party to fall into a flagrant contradiction alike of His principles, and of our own cherished practice in faith. Could it be for anything else but the worldly and rather vulgar end of catching votes? A sad fall for saints who for many a year walked together in faith, if but "two or three" here and there, and rejoicing to suffer for the Name, whatever the show or scorn of enemies! It caused heart-breaking to not a few that were hustled out, and that for the Lord's sake rather than their own: has it ever been matter of grave self-judgment to many prominent in those days, when good men were too often swayed by the more unworthy?

Nor can plea be more hollow than claiming heaven's sanction of a measure so begun, carried on, and completed. A commendatory letter to one meeting or another was no valid reason for shifting the place

scripture indicates for a decision without prejudice or favour, even if all had to wait in our weakness ever so long. How shocking to take it up hotly where partiality was rife, notorious, and violent — where the desire was expressed for a division to get rid of all but “the spiritual” i.e. their own sort! Acts of the assembly done in obedience, without bias or connivance, all are bound to accept, even if individually one regretted over-leniency or over-severity, as may be sometimes.

Just before indeed was a case in London, closely related to the Ramsgate rupture, by which the party of division hoped (through unprecedented rigour toward one in error but justly beloved) to drive out largely of their brethren. But grace prevailed. Almost all bowed, though in grief. The ill-wishers were sorely disappointed, and grew more relentless and overbearing. So Park Street took up the Ramsgate question; with what character and result we too well know. Since then God has permitted many an object-lesson, last and worst of all in the heterodoxy as to Christ and eternal life, before which even party is comparatively a small thing. Some there are who, if they had been entangled more or less by the divisionist party in the past, have by grace cleared themselves from that worst evil. But if they can neither deny nor justify the facts here stated (and I believe truly), are they not in an unsound ecclesiastical position? May faith and love work deliverance to the praise of the Lord’s name. W.K.

P.S. Mr. C. D.Maynard refers to the first edition of this paper, but does not face, as far as I see, the facts and principles laid down. He assumes the rectitude of the Park Street action which was impugned, as both unscriptural and inconsistent with our avowed principles

and regular practice. And because I durst not he has the hardihood to call it “unprincipled conduct.” Such impropriety comes ill from a man who left his own party since he wrote his paper, and somehow got back again before he printed it.

Nor should I notice his childish and crooked thoughts now, had he not published downright falsehood, which it seems a duty to contradict. Think of one so blinded by party as to apply “leaven” to the case! Does he not know that scripture uses it (as far as Christians are concerned) only for corrupt morals as in 1 Cor. 5, or for corrupt doctrine fundamentally as in Gal. 5? Is such ignorant acerbity an endeavour to keep the unity of the Spirit? Is it not the rancorous spirit that scatters the saints?

It is false to speak of my “commending A. H.”. Blackheath, while utterly condemning the whitewashing of G. H., did not accept A. H. till after careful investigation and due clearance of what was to be blamed, long after the Park Street proceedings.

Further, Blackheath never owned the Ryde meeting with which Dr. C. mixed himself. It is again false that “I owned the two opposed meetings at Ryde.” No doubt Mr. M. was misinformed.

I did strongly deprecate the violence against Dr. C., though I blamed him from the first more than Mr. Darby did, till he was carried away by the malicious fables of others against him and more. Dr. C. never so much as thought of leaving fellowship. Yet when they could not put him out, they invented the fiction that his mistake at Ryde meant that he went out! and on this the Park Street party insisted till Kennington yielded to his being

(not “put,” but) “declared out.” Now I affirm that this was an idea never to my knowledge broached before, being quite opposed to every genuine case of declaring out. For this goes on the ground of wilfully leaving communion, and after adequate remonstrance; neither of which was true of Dr. C. It was an invention of ecclesiastical inflammation to hustle out somehow a much better brother than those who conspired to that end. He was of course inside till that unworthy deed, though he had owned his error and declared he would not repeat it.

What pettifoggery and wrong then to make this my owning “two opposed meetings”! Let me say to C. D. M. that one of the most active and valued leaders of his own party told me a few years ago, that he (and he was not alone among their wiser men) thought worse than I did of the Park Street proceedings, the real cause of our anomalous state since 1881. Did not this involve a duty?

This is M.’s First point. His Second in p. 7 refers to a similar owning of “two opposed Tables” at Ramsgate: a similarly puerile and baseless misconstruction of his and of persons like him.

The Third in p. 8 is “the present desire for amalgamation.” Of this I am wholly innocent. It may be true among his own party. It may comfort M. to know that I should never break bread save with such of his associates as feel the sin and shame of what he defends and excuses; in which humiliation I should feel bound humbly and heartily to join. We owe it before the God of all grace thus to vindicate the long injured Name of the Lord Jesus, and save the truth from disrepute and mockery.

1 A line is left out here, as some have objected, and it seems doubtful.

Openness in Receiving and Freedom in Serving

Blackheath, August 31, 1875.

My Dear Brother,... Individuals among brethren may urge their private views on evangelists or others; but all such narrowness is censured by every wise man in our midst; and, what is more important, it is dead against that return to keeping Christ's word and not denying His name which characterises the work. The question has often arisen as to fellowship as well as service; and as often those who are entitled to speak have resisted the tendency to a restrictive school. If some have sought to require intelligence in those received, my own answer has been that it is vain and unscriptural; that they themselves when received were the very reverse of intelligent; that if intelligence is to be anywhere, it should be in those who receive; and that those who require it in the received fail in the intelligence they demand from others; else they would not expect it where it could not be. For how could men in sects really understand the church of God? They might see just enough to disturb them from the wrong and attract them to the right; but all true intelligence is acquired in obedience. What is the worth of that which we learn in disobedience? and what the character of the principle which would keep in disobedience, in order to be intelligent, those who can get it only aright in obedience? Hence Scripture knows nothing of keeping outside a godly-walking member of Christ.

As little does it countenance the church's interference with the Lord's work, and especially in the gospel. To set

the servant in the simplest dependence on the Lord, to foster his immediate responsibility to the Lord, without the intervention of the church, is what every brother holds as a sacred duty and principle. One must not plead, however, one's liberty in order to gain license. We may not grant a license, but we dare not exact a pledge.

We would rather trust in the Lord and His grace, while we would warn against all laxity as a scandal to the saint, and the enemy's snare for discrediting grace. When positive sin in word or deed appears, the church is bound to judge; and individuals may warn in love and holy care if they believe there is danger. More than this I should refuse; but this maintains the evangelist intact in his liberty and his responsibility to his Master.

Ever yours,

W.K.

God's Principle of Unity

[A New Edition being called for, the only change worth mentioning is in the induction to absurdity, given in pages 34 and 37 of the First Edition, which is now simplified. Reconsideration adds strength to my sense of the deep evil, however cloaked, of professing truth which there is no serious thought of acting upon or of suffering for. Better never to have known the divine will than (having learnt) to live in disobedience, and to attempt justifying the sin by a corrupt use of God's Word. "If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!"]

Part 1 - The Establishment.

Dear brother,

You have kindly sent me your letter, and I have read it carefully, and believe it to be not mistaken only, but a grave, though of course unwitting, dishonour to Christ. You cannot wonder, therefore, that I feel bound to answer it in christian candour and affection. For inexperience one may make allowance; but when crude thoughts are put forth confidently, and their direct tendency is to undermine the truth of God and the holiness of His Church, it is an evident duty to expose them. And certainly an assailant has no reason to complain, if the truth be spoken in love and for the Lord's glory.

The title: "Separation from evil: not God's principle of unity" shocked me and many others. Nor was I relieved by that which you acknowledge in the opening pages. For it is worse than useless to own truth which vanishes

— nay, is contradicted — in practice. Separation from the world, and union among the saints, you say, are to be maintained and manifested as God's will, not only in individual walk, but in the assemblies of the saints. (pp. 4, 5.) So far, in words at least, we are agreed. I accept both principles as divine landmarks never to be forsaken; but how are you paying them homage? Doubtless they are the necessary result of the indwelling Spirit of God; but are they the principles of the Establishment, of which you are a minister? You well know they are not; and, mark, I speak of its principles now, not of its practice merely.

For (1.) the Rubric for the Communion prescribes that "every parishioner shall communicate." This is not an abuse but the system, and the obvious, undeniable intent of those who formed it; but if so, it is a systematic departure from God's intention as to His Church; for, on your own showing, He desires His saints to be united, and in real manifest separation from the world. Granted that the curate may repel an open evil-liver or a public wrong-doer if impenitent; but what of the numerous parishioners everywhere, who are neither scandalous persons on the one hand nor saints on the other, as both you and they would allow? Scripture, as you admit, contemplates the saints; but the law of the land contemplates the parishioners, the Rubric enjoins these to communicate, and you, as curate, must receive them, contrary to your own express conviction of God's will. The same men, the same day, both before and after the sacrament, you might address as unconverted, imploring them to repent and believe the gospel. That is, the position of a clergyman compels you to contradict what you feel and say as a Christian: for in the former

capacity you are bound to welcome every well-conducted unconverted man — in the latter you are bound to warn him of so great and presumptuous a sin. Were you nothing but Christ's servant, you would faithfully do His will, whatever it might cost; and if God calls His saints to be separate from the world in their assemblies, you would not blow hot and cold in the same pamphlet, but rather seek to obey Him, especially in the most solemn act of christian worship, the Lord's Supper. In all circumstances, your language would, be consistent and your conduct in accordance with your sentiments. You would entreat or warn the unregenerate; you would teach or exhort the believers. Now, on the contrary, you may theorize as you will, you may hold ever so high the plain principles God gives for the guidance of His own redeemed; but you have not, and, as a clergyman, you cannot have, "gatherings of the saints separate from those who know not Jesus." (Page 4.) It is, you confess, the will of God that it should be so; but the rules of the Establishment require that it should not be so, unless we conceive every parish without a single worldly man. It is idle to suppose that you can in this thing comply with God's Word and man's Rubric; and it is painfully clear that, for the present, you have chosen to obey man rather than God.

(2.) Plain as Scripture is that the saints are one and bound to manifest their unity, in private and in public, it is just as certain that this is ignored and impossible in the Anglican system. Forms, services, doctrines too, are insisted on, which many intelligent believers reject as foreign and opposed to the Word of God. Hence separation becomes imperative, unless they are prepared to give up a good conscience and to join in

what they regard as sin. I am aware that the Evangelicals, who groan under some of the offices, are apt to boast of the Thirty-nine Articles. But I, for one, dare not sign Art. 2, because its doctrine is to my mind, confused and erroneous in the extreme. God needed the atoning sacrifice, we (not He) needed reconciliation. So uniformly say the Scriptures, but not the Article. It treats our blessed Lord's suffering and death as the means of reconciling His Father to us; whereas the truth is, that God was in Christ reconciling (not Himself to the world, but) the world to Himself. (2 Cor. 5, and such is the teaching of Rom. 5 and Col. 1) This is serious; because it misrepresents, not some curious point of prophecy, but the gospel, making the Son's death the procuring cause of the Father's love, instead of viewing the cross as its blessed fruit and brightest demonstration. Thousands of devoted saints, who rest on the atonement as their sole trust in the matter of their sins, utterly disclaim this doctrine: indeed, many of the more enlightened clergy, as you may know, denounce it urgently, when they are not on their mettle in vain defence of the Article. And what is their position, consequently, in the eye of Anglicanism? The fifth canon leaves no doubt: " Whosoever shall hereafter affirm that any of the Nine and Thirty Articles are in any part superstitious or erroneous, or such as he may not with a good conscience subscribe unto, LET HIM BE EXCOMMUNICATED IPSO FACTO, " etc. Which, then, is guilty, which is the schismatic, the Christian who adheres to the truth of God, or the body which presumes to excommunicate every one who impugns its own blundering perversion of the truth? Integrity of heart will not take advantage of the laxity of the day. The authorities may be indisposed to enforce the doctrine

and discipline of the Anglican body; but as long as the Articles and Canons are the standard, (and you refer to them both as such,) is it honest to treat them as a dead letter when they prove inconvenient or unsound?

Evidently, then, the two truths, which you press as very plain in God's Word and given for the guidance of His people, are directly and completely set aside by the formularies of your own system. What is to be done? It were bad to confess the truth and do it not; it is worse still to confess, and then to weave reasons or excuses, yea, even from God's Word, for not doing His will. No doubt, one might remain a clergyman, disputing every Article, and defying every Canon; but, assuredly, as a straightforward (not to say a christian) man, the Prayer-Book ought to bind the conscience, while one continues to be even a Churchman. However, acting honestly or dishonestly in that position, it is as clear as light, that you cannot there carry out the principles of separation from the world and union among the saints. The so-called "Brethren" may be right, or they may be wrong; but your position is not enviable. It follows from your own admissions, that you certainly are not obeying what you know to be the will of God, and that you cannot do so, while you are a minister or member of the Establishment.

I bless the Lord that He does not thus perplex the soul, nor sanction the barriers which hinder our obeying Himself. There were no uninspired Articles, Canons, or Rubrics to trouble the conscience or interfere with holy liberty in apostolic days. And why have them now? The Word of God being a sufficient and a perfect rule, they are an incumbrance if they agree with it, and they are a nuisance and a sin if they do not. Why not gather as

saints, separate from the world, unto the name of Jesus, the sole adequate centre for the redeemed? This embraces both your principles, as it was beyond controversy the original ground on which the saints assembled, worshipped God, and edified one another. Has it lost its virtue? or have saints of God lost their faith in it? Be assured, if it be His will, it abides the only divine gathering-place, for such as desire, no matter what the circumstances, no matter how great the difficulty, to please Him. Has God revoked His will because of the darkness of Popery or the divisions of Protestantism? Were any, in our day, to reform the old Constitutions and Canons ecclesiastical, or to invent a new code, they might (not to say must) fail as egregiously as their predecessors. Our wisdom is to commit ourselves to no standard but God's Word, and to trust His Spirit for light and strength to act upon it. There is not a true doctrine which is not revealed there perfectly. There is not a case of discipline for which it does not provide in principle. Are we wrong in cleaving to it, and to it alone, for our Articles, Canons, Rubrics, and every rule conceivable in things christian and ecclesiastical? If you own this is right, our basis is admitted; and the difference between us is, that we, surrendering all we know to be incompatible, take our stand upon it in simple faith, while you are in quest of reasons for adhering to a system where, confessedly, you cannot be subject to God's will as to the assembly.

You speak of the Lord's owning and abiding with any as "our warrant for owning and meeting with them." (p. 5.) This, forgive my saying it, is absurd. It would follow that we are to own and meet with every sect in Protestant Christendom, and with the " Brethren" too, I presume!

That the Lord is indeed gracious, spite of sin, is most certain; but does He own false principles in opposition to His own revealed will? And if He does not, ought we? There are true saints in the most faulty sects of Christendom, and the Lord does not fail to cherish them, and we surely ought to do the same; but does He therefore approve, or call us to approve, of that denominational idea to which the sects owe their existence, and which is irreconcileably at variance with the manifestation of the one body of Christ? You say, “We must deal with facts.” (p. 6.) My answer is, the Word of God must deal with us, and all facts must be judged by that Word. What abuse can be more miserable than to turn the Lord’s blessing His saints, spite of their connection with sects, into a pretence that He owns the sects themselves, i.e., owns human institutions, which, as far as they can, nullify the testimony He wishes us to bear to the saints’ unity! If you merely mean that He blesses and uses the saints in the various sections, it is true; but there the argument ends, and it is worthless. The sole criterion here is the Word of God; and it, we have seen decides for holy unity, in contrast with a system which deliberately embraces the world and scatters the saints.

Even you, an official, cannot but confess “how much there is that is sad and burdensome to the spirit” in your own body; but you add, “not in doctrine, however, but in practice.” (pp. 6, 7.) I demur to this reservation. It has been already remarked that, even as to the simple fundamental doctrine of grace, the second Article is not only defective, but false. Nor is this all. Without dwelling on debateable ground in the intermediate statements, I must express my judgment that Article 23. is clean

contrary to the truth on the momentous subject of ministry. For lawful call is there restricted to those who are chosen and called to this work by men who have public authority given unto them [by whom given?] to call and send ministers into the Lord's vineyard. But Scripture is express that it is the Lord, not man, who calls; that even apostles had to pray Him to send forth labourers; that it is the lord who, on his departure, gave his goods to his servants, to every man according to his several ability; that it is the ascended Christ who gave some apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers; that the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal; that as every man has received the gift, they are to minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God; and this, as 1 Cor. 14 fully and precisely proves, within the assembly, as well as without. Not a word demands, warrants, or even permits, appointment by "men." It is an arbitrary usurpation of Christ's function. For, so far is it from being true that a call by men is necessary to validate ministry, that not a single precept, principle, or example can be adduced from Scripture to show that a man ought to have it before preaching to the world or teaching in the assembly. Not only is such a form needless. but it is wrong and disorderly, if indeed we bow to holy writ. That there were certain local charges, such as elders and deacons, where appointment was requisite, I fully believe; but these must not be confounded with ministering in the "congregation;" for the elders were not necessarily teachers, (as 1 Tim. 4 distinctly shows,) and still less the deacons. The appointment of these local charges depended, according to Scripture, on apostles, or on apostolic delegates, such as Titus. Of course, therefore, I

consider Article 23 erroneous, and seriously so; for it goes openly to deny lawful ministry without this human call. And its natural complement, Article 26, maintains the authority of these man-made ministers when set up. If the only legitimate ministry be that which is chosen and called by man, no wonder that unworthy functionaries are expected; no wonder that the vicious step of such an appointment entails the equal evil of authenticating them, in the profaned name of the Lord, when they are so chosen and called. The double sin is thus wrought of denying the Lord's ministers who do not accept this call, and of conferring that title on ministers of Satan who may easily submit to it. And yet, whoever affirms that he cannot with a good conscience subscribe to these mischievous dogmas, is ipso facto excommunicated! Does the Lord own such a system, such principles, and such practices as these?

Article 35 seems to me a strange aspirant for so solemn a ceremony as subscription; for I am sure there are many eccentric and superstitious things in the Homilies; though I dare say they are as good as the Apocryphal books read for example of life and instruction of manners, according to Article 6. Again, Articles 36 and 37 (the latter as regards the ecclesiastical supremacy of the sovereign) hardly deserve discussion, as being mere figments, the offspring of superstition on the one hand and of worldliness on the other. What can justify a man's subscribing that which he believes to be false? Surely that body is not Christ's epistle, which first creates needless stumbling-blocks, by making questions such as these "Articles of religion" (!) and then excommunicates the conscientious Christian who affirms them to be erroneous. You cannot say that he is no true saint who

thinks and says they are wrong; and yet your system excommunicates all such therein. If it were only for this, the Establishment could not be the Church of God in England, nor a Church of God anywhere, but a human body or sect. Its constitution, its law, necessarily separates from itself all believers who refuse to put the doctrine of the Trinity on the same level, as to required subscription, with the Protestant device of making the Queen's Majesty chief governor in states ecclesiastical, in order to get rid of Papal pretensions. Very many saints in your system believe the Queen's ecclesiastical supremacy is a mistake. Is it fair to appeal to the Canons and to deny that they are excommunicated?

Besides, the Articles are eminently deficient in another way. They do not even allude to some of the weightiest of revealed truths. Thus, though the deity and personality of the Spirit are upheld, a dead and ominous silence reigns as to His regeneration, indwelling (individual and corporate) and other operations. As far as this Confession of Faith is concerned, we could not know that there was such a thing as the baptism of the Holy Ghost, or His presence and distribution of gifts in the Church. Again, where is the testimony to Christ's Headship of the Church? where to His priesthood or His advocacy? where to the promised kingdom, to the restoration of Israel, to the blessing of the earth under His reign, and, above all, to the Church's hope in His coming? For these truths, all of them important in respect both of man and of God's glory, there is no room, no, not for a word; but, somehow, perhaps a dozen articles wrangle with the vanities of Rome, and even the dreams of the Anabaptists are not without a formal notice. And this meagre, negative, controversial,

incorrect string of things, eternal and temporal, catholic and sectarian, good, bad, and indifferent, the clergy generally must subscribe! Nay, in the royal declaration which precedes, it is laid down that these articles “do contain the true doctrine of the Church of England agreeable to God’s Word: which we do therefore ratify and confirm, requiring all our loving subjects [observe, not saints of God, but “subjects” of the English crown] to continue in the uniform profession thereof, and prohibiting the least difference from the said articles.” Certainly, “the Defender of the Faith and Supreme Governor of the Church” ought to have been inspired, if not infallible, to justify such a mandate!

It is an utter mistake, therefore, that in the Establishment “the authority of the Word is maintained: the individual conscience is to bow to it alone,” if it be meant that “the least difference” from its own accredited formularies is sanctioned within its pale. The sixth Article simply asserts, in opposition to Rome, the sufficiency of the Scriptures, i.e., of the canonical books of the Old and New Testament, for salvation; but it is wrongly inferred from this that any member, above all a clergyman, may legitimately dissent from any part of the Prayer-book, no matter how loudly he may plead God’s Word for a contrary view. It is taken for granted in the Article that the doctrine and regimen of the Establishment agree with, and may be proved by, Scripture, as is plain from Articles 20 and 21. But then this is the question. And what avails the Christian’s assertion of the Word as the only authority, if he comes to the conclusion that much in the Articles and Services is without and against Scripture? Such an one, if he would walk uprightly before God and man must walk

outside the Establishment. The Lord may convert sinners and comfort saints there, and everywhere; but to conclude thence that He ever was in, and abides now with, unscriptural Articles and Canons, or that He guides men in profiting by the status which the Establishment gives them, spite of their underlying its excommunication, is virtually to impute their own lack of holiness (awful to think!) to the Lord. And this, allow me to say, my dear brother, is just the logical result of your latitudinarianism, far as you may be from intending it.

But I have not done with the question of doctrines yet, and am sorry to say that, if we found a singular absence of some in the Articles, their presence is still more suspicious elsewhere. Thus, take the Baptismal service, which you have yourself sought to defend in Appendix B. (Pp. 44, 45.) You assert that "they (it, and the Burial service) are true of believers," and that, if only the children of communicants were baptized, and if only communicants were buried with the prescribed service, "much of the present difficulty would be done away: difficulty which exists not from anything untrue in the services and requirements of the Church, [i.e., the English Establishment,] but from that state of things which allows those who do not conform to the requirements of the Church to come within the operation of its services."

Now I am compelled to deny the accuracy of your allegations and of your reasonings. The Baptismal service is said to be for believers; but how, when infants are the subjects? Is it pretended that infants are believers? Or do you believe that the Establishment "exalts the Word of God alone" in the scheme of sponsors, that is, other people vowing repentance and

faith for the unconscious babe? Besides, the service itself contradicts your assumption. If the child has not been already baptized, the priest proceeds to say that all men are conceived and born in sin, not that the children of believers are born in faith and a new life. He thereon calls on those present to pray that God would grant to the child that thing which by nature he cannot have: that he may be baptized with water and the Holy Ghost, and received into Christ's holy Church. Evidently, therefore, the service is not made for a believing child; for he that believeth hath eternal life, and we are children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. So the prayer: "Wash him and sanctify him with the Holy Ghost; that he, being delivered from thy wrath, may be received into the ark of Christ's Church:" a very bad misapplication of the type, for it puts the Church in the place of Christ. But, letting this pass, the sense is plain that the subject for baptism is yet to be washed, sanctified, delivered from wrath, and received into Christ's Church. So, in the next petition, "We call upon thee for this infant, that he, coming to thy holy Baptism, may receive remission of sins by spiritual regeneration." Clearly, the child is supposed not yet to have received remission of sins, which every Christian possesses. On the other hand, after the ceremony, the priest says, "We receive this child into the congregation of Christ's flock," etc., and "seeing now, dearly beloved brethren, that this child is regenerate and grafted into the body of Christ's Church, let us give thanks," etc. "We yield thee hearty thanks, most merciful Father, that it hath pleased thee to regenerate this infant with thy Holy Spirit, to receive him for thine own child by adoption, and to incorporate him into thy holy Church." I must say, then, that you have not correctly represented the service. Its own

unambiguous language is entirely inconsistent with the trite and unworthy sophism that this office, at least, is framed for, and true of, believers; for it supposes the child to be in a state of nature and sin before the ceremony, and actually regenerate immediately after. I ask you, as in the sight of God, do you receive this as the truth? Or is it not rather the remains of Popish darkness from which the English Reformers had not wholly emerged any more than the Lutherans? God forbid that I should speak slightingly of those blessed men of God. Yet that is no reason why one should continue to subscribe to what he believes is an error, and be an active or passive party to the delusion of Baptismal regeneration. You may hide yourself behind the decision of the Gorham case. If so, it is, in my judgment, beneath a godly man who desires, at any cost, to glorify Christ; for that decision did not deny Baptismal regeneration to be the doctrine of the service, but simply barred a bishop from refusing to institute a clergyman who did not hold it. That is, men were suffered, even if they were Evangelicals, to take a benefice in the Establishment. The Privy Council refused to go farther. The doctrine of the service remains, of course, exactly where it was. Do you hold it? If you do not, what are we to think of your administering a rite in terms which you believe to be unsound on a vital doctrine, and which you would strongly condemn in the pulpit?

But it will make the false doctrine still more felt, if we examine the ministration to such as are of riper years. The grand difference there is that sponsors disappear, the persons to be baptized answering for themselves. “Doubt ye not therefore,” it is said in the exhortation, “but earnestly believe that He will favourably receive

these present persons, truly repenting and coming unto Him by faith; that He will grant them remission of their sins, and bestow upon them the Holy Ghost: that He will give them the blessing of eternal life," etc. Again, the prayer runs, "Give thy Holy Spirit to them that they may be born again," etc. Then after the rite, follow substantially the same thanksgivings and prayers as in the case of infants. That is, the doctrine of this service is, that adults, who are supposed to have true repentance and faith, are viewed as not born again till they are baptized: they are regenerate only thereon or rather therein. This form of the service is avowedly for believers; but alas! the provision for adults only increases the evil, and demonstrates incontestably that the services attribute the new birth to the sacrament. For these persons, confessedly believers, are yet treated as wanting the blessing of eternal life till the application of the water, whereupon they are at once regarded as made members of Christ. Do I, or did you, bear false witness to the Baptismal service and its doctrine?

What gives unspeakable importance to all this, is that on these anti-scriptural services the system rests; for only by their means, i.e. by sacramental efficacy in lieu of saving faith, could the rubric enjoin every parishioner to communicate, the line being drawn (not between believers and unbelievers, as you confess it should be, but) between the moral and the scandalously immoral, which exactly suits the world but is not the footing of the Church of God.

The Establishment is a grand, national institution. It has strong charms for my natural heart, many a fond association, countless links with the past and the present. But how efface from my eyes the view grace

has given me in the ever-living Word, of God's Church? How forget that the Holy Ghost is sent down from heaven to gather the members of the one body, apart from the world, into present manifest subjection to their Lord? I dare not be disobedient to the heavenly vision, but seek, wherever I know saints of God gathered to the name of Jesus, there to confess my allegiance with unsullied conscience, there to bewail the present ruin of what was once so united and fair, there to cherish so much the more jealously all that remains through grace, there to be edified and, in my little measure, to edify others, through the sure Word and blessed Spirit of God.

For the pious and generous efforts of many saints, for the devotedness and zealous service of many a minister of Christ therein, I can heartily bless God, and desire to follow them wherever they follow their Master and mine. But I maintain as a duty to Him, and in the fullest love to them, that the Establishment never even professed nor sought to be a gathering of none but saints to the name of Jesus, owning the Holy Ghost alone as their faithful, present guide, and having the Word of God, the whole Word, and nothing but the Word, as their rule. In short, admirable as the Establishment is in many respects, it is not, it never was, a Church of God, according to the scriptural notion and working of that Church.

But this, if true, (and I challenge grave and godly enquiry,) clears the way at once. For if you and I are children of God, do we not owe it to Him to eschew every association of man which hinders our acting humbly and obediently as members of His Church? As a mere man, I might conceive myself bound to the Church of my country and sovereign; if radically inclined, I might claim the right to choose or make a church of my

own; but as a Christian, my duty is to do the will of my God and Father; and if He has laid down in His Word the nature, character, principles, and limits of His Church, God forbid that I should not be found cleaving to His Word, and renouncing, as far as I know, all that it condemns. Is it really come to this, that the public walk and the worship of the Church are the only field where self-will is no sin, and Scripture ceases to have authority over the conscience? If satisfied that the foundations and distinctive lineaments of that which we have traditionally accepted as the Church, are unscriptural — if convinced that its headship, its ministry, and its membership, are alike the voice of strangers, are the sheep not to hear the Shepherd's voice? Are we not to go forth unto Him without the camp bearing His reproach?

You say that "services can only be framed for believers." (p. 44.) Excuse me if I show that those who made or compiled the liturgy have wonderfully succeeded in framing an order for prayer day by day, which aims at meeting the wants of both sinners and saints, but in truth is appropriate, as is the fact in most compromises, for neither. For whose use are the Scripture Sentences at the beginning of Morning and Evening Prayer? Take, for example, the first: "When the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness that he hath committed, and doeth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive." Can you pretend that these words, the first words habitually used in the Daily Service, are for believers? So too the texts from Matthew 3 and Luke 15. The question is not their inspiration, but their right application. Can you pretend that God meant them to open the worship of His

assembly? Does He sanction therein the presence of wicked men who have to turn from their wickedness? of unconverted sinners who have to repent? of prodigals who have to arise and go to their father, who are not yet clothed with the best robe, who are lost and not found, dead and not alive?

That passages of another tenor, and only true of those actually saints, could be culled, is not denied; but what I have commented on evinces that conscience was too strong for the compilers. The theory, the unquestionable purpose, was to receive to all acts of worship every decently behaved parishioner, already made a member of Christ by baptism; but they could not enter on the ordinary daily service without an implied acknowledgement of their error in Christianizing the world. For the sentences selected (Wheatly says, with justice) are “such as are the most plain and the most likely to bring all sorts of sinners to repentance.” It is not true, then, that saints only are contemplated here, as the best-known illustrator of the Prayer Book allows. It is an appeal to the wicked and impenitent, moving them to repent and be converted.

The real drift is unequivocally and distressingly confirmed by that which follows the general confession — “the Absolution, or Remission of Sins, to be pronounced by the Priest alone standing; the people still kneeling.” How an intelligent believer, be he layman or clerk, can reconcile his conscience to this form, is an enigma to me, save as a striking instance of the darkening power of religious habits. For if we regard it as not going beyond a declaration of the gospel, the supposition is destroyed that only believers are in view. If we understand it as addressed to saints, what an

extravagant denial of the privileges of the Church? I can comprehend, when the special occasion demands it, one or more open offenders under discipline and needing restoration publicly. I cordially allow the value to God's children of confessing their sins of omission and commission individually, and of confessing their faults to one another where requisite; but that the entire assembly, as such, should thus be addressed as penitently awaiting pardon through believing the gospel, is a contrast with all that Scripture intimates about the Church and its worship.

Curiously enough, to kneel on the Lord's Day was thought shocking in Christendom generally for many centuries after Christ, gross as the declension was in other respects. We know from almost every ecclesiastical writer of note that on this day there was no kneeling any more than fasting, "as symbolic of the resurrection (says the very ancient author of Quaest. et Resp. ad Orthodox. 115.) by which, through the grace of Christ, we were delivered from our sins and from death, which is mortified thereby." Indeed, in consequence of little discrepancies of practice, the Council of Nice went so far as to make a canon that on such occasions prayers should be made standing. (Labbé, Coll. Concil. vol. ii. p. 246.) I doubt that an allowed exception to this practice can be shown for 700 years; so that I have often marvelled how the sticklers for the Catholic usages of those early days could quietly resign themselves to a practice which was so universally and authoritatively discountenanced. Mistake me not: I do not contend for a superstitious revival of this or any other tradition. I am sure it is quite christian to praise standing and to pray on one's knees every day of the week. But I do not

hesitate to record my opinion that the form grew out of (possibly the “Let us stand upright” was no better than a petrifaction grown out of) the blessed standing in conscious liberty and holy joy in which the Church should worship on the Lord’s Day above all days. In the so-called Church of England it is not only that they are all, saints and sinners, by an alteration for the worse suggested by Bucer and Martyr, reduced on that day as much as another to an attitude which, for so many ages, was reserved on Sundays for a state of penance, but the substance of the error is betrayed by the demand and supply of a constantly recurring public absolution. Is it not the very spirit of the Jews, who must first clear themselves by a fresh sin-offering, before they dared to pass on to the sacrifices of sweet savour?

Besides, there is another serious fault, which proves that the Absolution is not merely declarative. The Priest pronounces it, not a deacon, who nevertheless takes authority, when ordained, to read the gospel, and preach the same if licensed thereto by the Bishop. Clearly, therefore, it is not such an announcement of forgiveness as the gospel contains; for in that case a licensed deacon might act as well as a Priest. And the people would sit to hear, instead of kneeling, “the Priest alone standing.” A most unwarrantable liberty was here taken, derogatory to any Christians who might be in the congregation, deluding to the mass of unbelievers there, presumptuous on the minister’s part, and in no ordinary degree obliterating the efficacy of Christ’s work. To show that I am not exaggerating, let me transcribe Wheatly’s conclusion. “From all which it is plain that this Absolution is more than declarative, that it is truly effective, insuring and conveying to the proper subjects

thereof the very Absolution or Remission itself. It is as much a bringing of God's pardon to the penitent member of Christ's Church, and as effectual to his present benefit, as an authorized messenger, bringing pardon from his sovereign to a condemned penitent criminal, is effectual to his present pardon and release from the before-appointed punishment." Pardon to a condemned penitent criminal! What a testimony to this part of the Anglican Service! Could it suit the saints in Scripture, "who are the circumcision, which worship God in the Spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh?"

I have no desire to write of prayers in a critical view, but I must show cause why one who cleaves to the whole counsel of God as now fully revealed, is excluded from joining in the language of the Prayer-Book, if he would keep a conscience void of offence. How, then, could such an one adopt the Litany as an unobjectionable expression of his breathings to God? Where is the spirit of adoption there? Where the peaceful dependence of a child resting in his Father's love? Where a soul strong in the grace that is in Christ? There is the cry of "miserable sinners." When one thinks of "every parishioner," it is hardly to be regretted that the service is very far from uttering the pleas of a faith which does not exist. But if it be thus more suitable for unbelievers, may we not grieve over "saints in the Church of England" who are here made to forget the peace which they have with God, the grace wherein they stand, and the glory in the hope of which they are entitled to rejoice? "Remember not, Lord, our offences, nor the offences of our forefathers; neither take thou vengeance of our sins: spare us, good Lord, spare thy people, whom thou hast

redeemed with thy most precious blood, and be not angry with us for ever." Strange infatuation, that true saints of God, "whom the Lord makes happy in his love," should habitually unite in petitions which might have served more or less before the cross, but are quite inconsistent with peace and joy in believing, such as a feeble Christian may now possess! I can understand an earthly people, like Israel, redeemed by power and not yet by the blood of Christ, deprecating divine anger; I admit fully that even the saints in their midst might do the same — indeed, could do no other, till the great sacrifice was offered and sin was put away. But the New Testament never supposes such a character of relationship or supplication since the day of Pentecost. The sentiment is not applicable to the Christian: to adopt it is so far to Judaize, which is a grave and dangerous error, as St. Paul's warnings show. Let me ask you, my brother, to explain how it can be said of real Christians, "though we be tied and bound with the chain of our sins, yet let the pitifulness of thy great mercy loose us?" If the gospel be true, those who believe are already forgiven for Christ's sake; and this, not some favoured members of the family, but all the little children; (1 John 2:12) and we are called, all of us, to give thanks unto the Father, who hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light; who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son, in whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins. (Col. 1) "The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." In short, on this all-important truth, the effect of Christ's death and resurrection for the believer, the Bible and the Prayer-Book teach, the former that the

saint has been made free from the law of sin and death, the latter that the Anglican worshippers, “tied and bound with the chain of their sins,” must pray to be loosed. If the New Testament language is founded on faith in the deliverance brought in by Christ’s work, the prayer just cited cannot be acquitted of ignorance and belief.

Enough, however, of this distasteful task which your tract has imposed on me. Enough, and perhaps to spare, has been produced to satisfy an unbiassed spiritual man, that the services partake of the incoherent character, attaching to the whole structure. The daily service, I have said, is not adapted for believers, though I am far from admitting that it is a scriptural provision for unbelievers. The framers tried to meet both, but have succeeded in neither case. And why dissect the order for the Communion, the Visitation of the Sick, the Burial Service, the Commination, (is this for believers too?) and the Consecration of Bishops, Priests, and Deacons? To expose them would doubtless swell the account, some of bold contrariety to Scripture, others of palpable Judaizing. But I desire to say no more at this time than what may be required to convince a fair mind, that the English Establishment, spite of excellent things and people within it, is really, to all intents and purposes, the world treated as the Church, and this on the footing of religious ordinances, instead of living faith. There is not the slightest need that the priest or a single parishioner should be converted: the ritual would still proceed decorously, and there would be, according to canon-law, the sole authorized minister and church in the parish. Were the Holy Ghost to work in converting and gathering together souls to the name of Jesus, in

dependence on His own presence and power, their assembly, however pleasing to God, would be denounced as a schism, not by you, perhaps, nor by a Tractarian merely, but by that which you are both, as clergymen, bound to obey — by the plain, unrepealed canons of your body. It is fully granted that there may be a godly minister, and a few or many saints in a particular district. But this is a mere accident and in no way essential to the system, the principle of which is to comprehend in a common religious profession all the subjects of the Crown, and to open to that which should be, a holy table for a peculiar people, redeemed and purified, to every parishioner who is not a scandal to his neighbour. “The Church of England,” say you, “rightly requires that all its members should be communicants.” (p. 44.) But all its members, where there are no separate meetings, are all the christened inhabitants — that is, in fact, all the world who are there. And the ground on which this identification of the world with the Church goes on, is that they have all been made members of Christ in baptism and recognized as already regenerate and forgiven all their sins when they were confirmed. This is unquestionably the regular doctrine and system of the Establishment. If it be not yours, as I believe it is not, it is because you really are not a Churchman, save nominally. But if it is the plain, positive intention of the system, whether people carry it out or not, your own loudly-proclaimed principles, union among the saints and separation from the world, are wholly inconsistent with it; the laws and fundamental constitution of the Establishment render them impossible to be adopted in the public services; and thus you are obliged, so long as you remain within your present borders, to be glaringly, hopelessly, false to

the very truths which you have publicly confessed to be your own principles, and the will of the Lord. If you believe that God begets by the word of truth — by the gospel which is preached to souls, (James 1; 1 Peter 1,) and not that infants are regenerate by baptism, the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council may protect you, if you should be hard pressed by episcopal rigour for your inconsistency; but ordinary conscience must condemn the official employment of language which altogether differs from your real thoughts on the momentous point of the new birth: language which makes (not a service for Christians, but) quasi-Christians for all the services which follow from Confirmation to Burial. Ought a Christian to say anywhere, above all in the professed worship and service of God, that which he believes to be untrue?

Part 2 — The “Brethren.”

WE are now come to the second part of my task; a reply, not to your apology for the Establishment, but to your strictures on the “Brethren” so called. Whether you have adhered to Scripture in attacking us, any more than to the Prayer-Book in defending your own position, remains to be shown.

Some six and thirty or more years ago, a few Christians were led to feel much the worldly, and abnormal state of Christendom. One of them was of Romanist parentage, the others were Anglicans. They prayed, they mourned over the low condition of themselves and their brethren at large, they searched the Word of God. They knew it was evil to worship God unscripturally; they saw it was right to meet and break bread, as disciples of the Lord and in dependence on the Holy Ghost. Pretending to

nothing of their own, in conscious feebleness, but most happy in the discovery of their liberty in Christ to remember Him and build up each other, they welcomed in His name every saint, joining with them in any service where it could be with a good conscience, but refusing to own whatever they believed to be contrary to Scripture. On one ex-clergyman (who above the rest realized the present ruin of the christian profession, and was led out into much prayer, fasting, and humiliation about it before God,) special honour was put of the Lord; for He was pleased through him to revive, from the Scriptures, the mystery of Christ and the Church, the true character of our hope in the Lord's coming, the personal presence and operations of the Holy Ghost in the Church and the Christian, with a vast body of corollaries dependent on those grand truths, which re-acted on the gospel itself and set the salvation of God in a far clearer light.

Thus much I may say the more freely, inasmuch as I had not the honour of being a pioneer in the holy testimony of that early hour. But I do not feel at liberty to speak of the practical effects of what, I am assured, was the Holy Ghost's action on their souls and of many more who were attracted by degrees in England and abroad, as well as in Ireland.

Their position was this:-instead of making a Church, they owned the members of the Church of God, wherever they might be. They did not essay to form a perfect Church of their own; but they sought into that which God's Word reveals about His Church, and to this perfect revelation, this only, they clave. They found it spoke of a body on earth, Christ's body, its members one with Christ and with one another by virtue of the Holy

Ghost's presence in them. They believe that, scattered as the members are, and grieved as the Spirit is, He is still here to guide the assembly; and that this assembly of God, the Church, is still here to be guided, and that, according to the Saviour's promise, two or three gathered to His name might count on His presence in their midst. Why not act upon it? They believed that nationalism and dissent are unknown to Scripture and contrary to its plain principles and injunctions. Why act with either? The one makes its basis broader, the other narrower than Scripture warrants. The "Brethren" saw clearly that the Scriptural ground is that of Christ's body-in its separation from the world, essentially different from a national system; and in its unity, just as essentially opposed to dissenting sects, formed on points of difference, which sever, instead of uniting, the saints of God. They did not organize a new system with its peculiar laws and regulations; they commended to each other the Word of God alone. What Christian could question that rule of faith and standard of practice? They did not call or choose their own ministers, but trusted the Holy Ghost to raise up and send whom He would. Who can gainsay the ministers whom the Lord sends?

Can you tell me of any saints of God, since the Church departed from its scriptural ground, who ever before saw, or assembled on, this basis? Do you know of any save "Brethren" who are simply, thoroughly acting on it now? Is it not large enough to admit every saint who walks as such, without imposing a single condition which he does not own? Is it not exclusive enough to keep off all who are believed on adequate evidence to be yet in the flesh? Does it not leave room for the Holy

Ghost to exercise all His rights in the Church of God? Does it not maintain, in deed and in truth, the authority of the entire Word of God, without one human tradition to burden or stumble the conscience? And is not this, then, the only ground entitled to claim the ear of every saint of God? I read of that basis, and no other, for the Church of God in Scripture; I see that basis, and no other, taken among “Brethren,” and among “Brethren” only. Try, if you please, and face the truth of Scripture and of the facts. You have only as yet assailed a shadow of your own making; and even in this you have fallen into palpable, surprising errors, as I am forced to prove.

You allude, first of all, to a tract written by Mr. Darby in view of the Evangelical Alliance. The title (“Separation from Evil, God’s Principle of Unity”) you have impeached — I hope, because you did not understand it. “First,” you say, “separation from anything never can be a principle of unity; a common rejection of any error or errors does not afford a centre of union to those who mutually reject these errors.” (p. 8.) Hence it is transparent that you confound the principle of unity with its centre. Had you read the tract with average care, the oversight could hardly have been made; for the writer has distinguished each element of unity with his usual precision. If “separation from evil is of God,” as you do and must allow in the same page, if holiness be inseparable from His nature and all His other dealings, does a Christian want proof that God does not abandon His own moral character in the unity He forms and recognizes among His saints? On what possible principle save that of holiness (which is but another way of expressing separation from evil, where evil exists) could God carry out unity here below? You are surely not prepared to

assert that He sanctions a unity which must exclude Himself, unless iniquity can have fellowship with Him.

The truth is, that you, probably misled by Groves' Memoir, have fallen into the blunder of understanding "centre of union," where Mr. D. meant and wrote accurately, "principle of unity." But even here you are wrong again; for the true centre of union is neither "love," as you say, nor "life," as Groves says, but Christ Himself-Christ dead, risen, and glorified at the right hand of God, the chief corner-stone of God's house, the head of the Church which is His body. I should be ashamed to cite texts of Scripture in proof of the truth that Christ is the centre of God's unity, any more than for the other truth that holiness is its necessary principle.

But if separation from evil be the only principle on which the unity of a holy God can be conceived to be carried out in an evil world, and if He has sent down the Holy Ghost to be the efficient agent of it, uniting us to Christ on high, I need not occupy myself with your next error, the imputing of "sad consequences" to a holy principle. It is false that the maintenance of unity according to holiness "leads to separation between true brethren." It does suppose the judgment, in the power of the Spirit and by the Word, of those who sin; but this is a blessed, not a sad, consequence, and the direct command of God. "Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened." Separation from evil is here most unquestionably laid down as God's principle of unity: and in holiness is that unity to be guarded practically at any cost. Otherwise all degenerates into the mystery of iniquity, and a form of

godliness denying the power. “From such,” says the Spirit of God, “turn away.”

Much which you urge in pages 8-14 is not to me the evidence of a peaceful heart. The tone in which you resent anyone’s thinking your course not quite consistent, somewhat betrays that spirit of judgment of which you accuse others, to say the least, much too broadly. He that is conscious of doing the will of God, can afford to go calmly forward in the path of Christ, undisturbed by the censoriousness of men. But I have generally found that “he who did his neighbour wrong” is the first to complain, “who made thee a ruler and a judge over us?”

If I do not mistake your allusions, you blame the discipline we have pursued as to Bethesda. Now I freely acknowledge the shortcoming of the “Brethren” and my own. But I am thoroughly satisfied it is of God that we should not have communion with a congregation which deliberately received the intelligent partisans of a blasphemer against Christ.1 If you suppose that a believer, or a company of believers, can receive, or bid God speed to, such as bring not the doctrine of Christ but of a false Christ; that they can justify that reception when they know the depth of the evil involved, without becoming partakers of their evil deeds, I wholly dissent from you, and believe that the course adopted from 2 John is one of real love and holiness, and that neutrality in such a case would be the gravest sin and the foulest wrong to the Son of God. Have you not ventured to give an opinion on a matter of the most serious import, which you are not in a position to judge?

You refer to such passages as Isaiah 1:16, 17; 2 Tim. 2:19; and 2 Cor. 6:16-18, “and others, which teach, it is said, that the saints of God should separate themselves from the professing Church, because of the evil and ruin which indeed we all sorrowfully feel to be there.” (p. 10.)

But who has said that saints “should separate themselves from the professing Church?” We have not left the professing Church at all. We found some things we used to do were evil, and we ceased to do them; we learnt there were other things it was well to do, and these we are now learning to do. Are we mistaken in either? Is it possible you are under the impression that to separate from the Establishment, or from Dissent, is to separate from the professing Church? To meet as “Brethren” do, in the Lord’s name, is not in the least degree to separate from that Church, but to do what every disciple ought to do in it. Nobody does or can separate from the professing Church, except an open apostate.

I am sorry you find no guidance in this matter from the first two passages, for they are both full of light: that from the Old Testament, as a general principle of conduct for the individual; that from the New Testament, as expressly directing the Christian in a day of disorder such as ours. It is ridiculous to say that if a man really acts as Isaiah 1:16, 17 directs, he can fall from one evil into a greater. For the word is, “cease to do evil” — not some one, but all evil. As long as that divine oracle is heard, evil, greater or less, is avoided. And what is this “greater evil?” “Refusing communion with those whom Jesus loves,” &c. But there, again, are you not at fault? We receive every Christian walking as such, without

reference to their connection with Nationalism or Dissent; we rejoice to have communion with them, whether privately or publicly. They may join us in the worship and the supper of the Lord; they are as free as any of us to help in thanksgiving, prayer, or a word of edification, if so led of God; and this, without stipulation either to leave their old associations or to meet only with us. Where is this done save only among “Brethren?” Were any of us, no matter how gifted of the Lord, to give out a hymn, to pray, or minister at St. John’s Church, when you take the sacrament, the Canons (not Scripture) would treat it as indecent and disorderly; and so would it be, as far as I am aware, in any of the Dissenting sects, except by special courtesy. With us, on the contrary, if any godly Churchman or Dissenter thought fit to come when we remember the Lord together, he would be quite in order, if he did any or all of these things spiritually; and this, not from any mere permission on our part, but as a matter of responsibility to God and His Word. Which, then, is guilty of “the evil of refusing communion with those whom Jesus loves?” Certainly not we. If you mean that I, for one, would refuse, (not to have communion with God’s children anywhere in a holy scriptural way, but) to join in the services of the Establishment, that is a very different question, and not a sin, in my judgment, but a duty to God, as I have already proved even on your own principles.

Next, 2 Tim. 2:19-22 instructs, not so much, like 1 Tim., how to maintain order in the house of God, as how to walk when disorder reigns there. The primary comfort is the immutably sure foundation of God, its seal presenting, on the divine side, the sovereignty of the

Lord who knows them that are His, and, on the human obverse, the responsibility of every one who names Christ's name, to depart from iniquity. Here, then, is the absolute obligation of the Christian to separate from evil in every shape. But we have that which is still more precise. The Christian profession was now like "a great house," having in it vessels, some to honour and some to dishonour. The jealousy of a saint to preserve unity might become a snare for his soul and a compromise of Christ's moral glory. Hence the Holy Ghost gives no uncertain sound, and leaves us not to speculation or self-will, but proclaims that holiness is still the only principle on which God maintains His unity. "If a man, therefore, purge himself from these, (i.e., from the vessels to dishonour,) he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the Master's use, and prepared unto every good work." You have neglected this scripture. You have allowed Satan to take advantage of your own glaring misconstruction of the parable of the tares, (of which more anon,) so as to fall into the fatal mistake that God would have us abide in fellowship with evil, practically, and in principle too, rather than break a unity which is no longer holy but an outrage on His character, as falsely pretending to be His. Important as it is to flee also youthful lusts, worldliness, and every other personal evil, it is not enough. We are bound not to join as Christians with those who profess the name of Christ but dishonour Him; we are bound by the Word not to have vessels to dishonour "in the same communion with us," (p. 35,) but to purge ourselves from them, and to follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, not with the world calling itself Christian, but "with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart." To walk and worship with those who are evidently of the world, and have not a

pure heart wherewith to call on the Lord, is a sin, it may be of ignorance, but without doubt a sin, which places us at variance with His Word, and proves we are so far indifferent to His glory — a sin so much the darker in proportion to our fancied light.

In vain you plead such texts as “Judge not, and ye shall not be judged;” “Speak not evil one of another, brethren,” and the like. It is not we that judge, but the Word of the Lord, if it be rightly divided and applied. If you are at ease in your conscience, you have as little reason to feel sore, as I feel because of anything in your tract. Fully do I allow that we ought never to suspect evil nor to impute motives that are not apparent; and if any of the “Brethren” err in this way, they are as guilty as their neighbours, and indeed, more so. But all this, as far as it is true, is mere individual failure, and, alas! too abundant everywhere. To point a controversy by means of it, evinces, I think, not a little poverty in the way of substantial scriptural argument.

2 Cor. 6:16-18, you say, (p. 11,) “teaches that the Church should come out and be separate from the world;” but this is the very thing we are doing, and the very thing the Establishment forbids your doing, since it commands “every parishioner” to communicate, and yourself to receive them at the communion. “It has nothing to do with the saints of God coming out and being separate from the professing Church, because of evil that may have come in there. God has shown His mind and will on this latter point.” (ib.) He has indeed shown it, and it is “Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.” And is it not “iniquity” for one who doubts, dislikes, and disbelieves much in the Prayer-Book, to declare his unfeigned assent and consent to all

and everything prescribed, sacraments, rites, ceremonies, consecrations, etc.? Do I hear some excusing themselves that they are the laity and can be silent? Hear Lord Shaftesbury at the last meeting of the Pastoral Aid Society: “I, too, have signed the Articles; I, too, am a subscriber to what is contained in the Prayer Book, just as much as the clergy are subscribers to it; I do, as a layman, everything that the clergy do, with the exception of the administration of the sacraments, and I take my full share of responsibility along with them.” This is honest and plain-spoken: if it were felt in general by Anglican Christians, how many everywhere would cease to trifle with their consciences and depart from that which they know to be “iniquity!” As to your notion that we apply 2 Cor. 6 to saints quitting the professing Church, it is, I repeat, all a mistake. We are quite as much in it as ever we were: only we no longer do what we have discovered to be opposed to the Word, and we are endeavouring to walk in all respects in conformity with it as a whole. Again, we must not limit the passage in 2 Cor. 6 to saints “separating from the world;” for it not only forbids peremptorily every measure of association individually and corporately, in divine things, between Christians and the worldly, (which “Brethren” hold but the Establishment denies,) but it insists, for all who are separate and in the relation of God’s sons and daughters, that they should cleanse themselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

But I must also make a remark, noticing in the next page (12) the constantly recurring illusion that it is a question of “separation from the professing Church.” You evidently mean by that phrase the Establishment and

the Protestant bodies in this and other countries; though your reasoning in general assumes the narrow bounds of your own system. But what of the Greeks, Nestorians, Copts, Abyssinians, &c.? Are they separate from the professing Church? The English Dissenters ought to be, one would think, by your logic, above all others; for they certainly separated themselves from the Establishment, and are running a race of rivalry with it. They were utterly wrong, on your showing; but as far as I can make out your singularly incoherent theory, these opposing systems are not excluded from "the professing Church" any more than your own. For the Roman Catholics, however, it is plain, you have as little mercy as they have for you. Theirs are damnable heresies, say you in language as unmeasured as the decrees of Trent. (p. 12.) "Roman Catholics, &c., do not receive the Word of God ! ! so they are not in the kingdom of God ! ! !" (p. 25.) Had you qualified your sweeping charge somewhat, had you accused them of overlaying, and to an immense extent evacuating, the Word of God by their traditions, I could have gone thus far with you. But it is false ground to deny absolutely that they receive the Word of God, and, if possible, worse to affirm that they are not in the kingdom, either as wheat or as tares.

My dear brother, bear with me if I tell you, in the plainest terms, you have thoroughly misunderstood the parable; and this misunderstanding forms the staple of your pamphlet, and has misled you to fight against as weighty a duty as any can be for a Christian.

I do not believe that you abhor the evils and errors of Romanism more than I do; but it is a calumny to say that Roman Catholics do not receive the atonement and priesthood of Christ — "not even professedly!" It is

contrary to the plainest and surest facts; nay, even to your own Article 19, which owns its profession, calling it “the Church of Rome,” though of course erring both in living and ceremonies, and also in matters of faith: an article which you have solemnly pledged yourself to take literally and grammatically. Hence your own Hooker, whom you cite approvingly, writes, in this far more correctly than you, “If by external profession they be Christians, then are they of the visible Church of Christ, and Christians by external profession they are all, whose mark of recognizance hath in it those things which we have mentioned, yea, although they be impious heretics, persons excommunicable, yea, and cast out for notorious improbity.” This he says with express reference to Matt. xiii. (Eccles. Pol. b. iii., § 1.) What is of more consequence, the parable is itself against you; for the tares were the produce, not of the good seed corrupted merely, but of the evil sowing of the devil. Your denial that unconverted Roman Catholics, or heretics, are tares in the kingdom of heaven is, therefore, against the scripture commented on, not to speak of your own best divines. For there were two sorts of seeds; and not the good seed of the word only, as your reasoning supposes. Those divinely quickened in Romanism, as in Protestantism, are the fruit of the good seed; and wicked professors there, as everywhere, are set forth by the tares, the result of the enemy’s seed. Your premises and deductions are equally baseless.

In short, the explanation is as narrow and unsound as possible: on this point no Papist ever put forth worse. And why, readers may inquire, why such a departure from the sense ordinarily and rightly given to the tares? Why deny that they include “the children of the wicked

one," without restriction, within the entire range of Christendom-that is, all the wicked who are baptized and outside the heathen, Jews and Mahometans? Why are Romanists, for instance, refused a place, even as tares, in the kingdom?

The reason is obvious. You allow distinctly that "the only true way of witnessing against Roman Catholicism, &c., is by immediate and entire separation." But, then, if separation from Romanists is right, and yet they are outwardly in Christendom or the scene of the kingdom of heaven, your interpretation is ruined, and the pillar of your reasoning against the "Brethren" crumbles into dust. For if godly and ungodly Romanists are in the field of christian profession, (no less than godly and ungodly Protestants, so-called "Plymouth Brethren" and all,) it follows that we may all grow together in the field, and yet some of us may lawfully be in "separation immediate and entire" from others. If it be consistent with the Lord's word that Protestants should have a different ecclesiastical communion from Romanists, it may be, as far as this injunction goes, equally consistent for Dissenters to be apart from the Establishment, and I add, for "Brethren" to stand aloof from all, if all have more or less deserted the scriptural ground of christian fellowship. Thus the argument, drawn from secession from Rome to seceding from every other form of iniquity, remains wholly unimpaired. Nothing can justify a Christian's owning that to be a Church of God which is not: and that the Establishment is not God's Church, but fundamentally different from it, flows even from what you concede to be God's essential abiding principles for His Church — unity with all saints, and separation from

the world. These are our principles, not those of the Establishment, nor of Dissent.

This, then, demonstrates how far you are entitled to speak disparagingly of the view given of the parable of the tares in the Bible Treasury for March, 1862. It is you who have wholly missed its meaning, not that paper. For what the Lord therein forbade was not the effort of His servants to make a collective testimony (p. 15) of God's children, apart from the children of the wicked one, (which is the unity of the saints, separate from the world-the very thing you have yourself over and over confessed to be the will of God, and ever to be held fast.) He interdicted their gathering up the tares, i.e., their forcible removal from the field, or, as I have explained it, their extermination. All hold that the enemy sowed tares among the wheat; (I never doubted nor concealed it for a moment;) nor does the reiteration of a fact which lies on the surface of the words modify my view in the slightest degree. All hold that the reason alleged by our Lord, for refusing to sanction the servants' gathering up the tares, was lest they should root up the wheat also with them. This, too, I should have thought was too obvious to require special mention in a paper which gave only select notes of a lecture. Add these points to what was there said, expand them as you may, so that it be done truthfully, and the interpretation I have given is altogether untouched.

But your view is due to a total neglect of the Lord's explanation, and leads you to contradict the plainest Scriptures elsewhere, as well as the principles yon lay down and urge so often in your tract. I will not spend time in taking up strange statements, such as your seeming doubt whether the tares were sown in the field.

“From whence then hath it tares?” I should treat with the utmost indulgence mere incidental flaws where the main thought was of God. But I am forced to express my decided judgment that you have preferred darkness to light, in this instance at least: why, the Lord will judge.

Omitting detail, then, I ask where is the evidence that the parable applies to ecclesiastical fellowship? You have taken this for granted without attempting a proof; and I altogether deny it. In fact, the beginning and middle of your tract are at open war; and one, if true, destroys the other. For, in p. 22, without the least reason given for applying the wheat-and-tare-field to the subject of church fellowship, you actually thence infer, that it would injure the saints of God, “if they attempted to separate from the children of the, devil!” In pp. 4-6, the saints were to be separated from the children of this world; it was “very plain in the Word,” “the will of God” and “to be held fast.” But, in pp. 21-27, “His saints are not now to attempt it.” “The Saviour forbids any separation to be made.” Is it not rather too bad, within the same sheet, to declare, with equal strength, that the same thing is, and is not, the will of the Lord? When you begin, the separation of the saints from the world is a “plain truth” of God; as you advance, the very same thing is a mere delusion of the “Brethren!” “No separation..... is the way of obedience!” (p. 27.)

The answer to all this is very simple, and the Lord has given it: “the field is THE WORLD.” Hooker says (in the same book and section which I have already quoted) “His Church he compareth unto a field;” but he is wrong. The field is not the Church but the world. You have avoided the open statement of that error, but you have fallen into it only so much the more deeply,

because unconsciously. The parable implies, that the tares were clearly seen to be tares, when fruit was brought forth, though not before. Here, then, are the tares, not merely left quietly in the world, but, on your view, known as tares in the assemblies or in the Church. In the parable, there is, of course, no question of gathering up the wheat, but only the tares, i.e., children of the wicked one, no longer hidden, but now apparent to the servants. Notwithstanding, there is no permission to deal even with the most evident or aggravated cases of evil; but, contrariwise, a decisive veto put by our Lord on every attempt to root them out. Apply this, as you do, to their growing together in the Church, and discipline is necessarily at an end; for, as you triumphantly answer, "it is written again, let them both grow TOGETHER until the harvest?" Of all imaginable schemes of Church fellowship, this is, I venture to say, the most preposterous. It is contrary to Scripture; for St. Paul insists that we are to judge them that are within, and that the wicked person is to be put away. It is contrary to the Rubric, which warrants the rejection of a notorious evil-doer, or scandalous person. It is contrary to your own admission that discipline should take cognizance of the ways of professors. The unvarnished, inevitable result of your interpretation of the parable is, to set aside all discipline, whether scriptural or Anglican. For who, under any circumstances, can be put out of the Church, if both good and bad are to grow together in it till the harvest or the end of the world?

But where were both sown? Even if we were not expressly informed what "the field" is, it would be a question requiring proof, and you could not be permitted to assume that the Church was meant; for the tares

would have grown together with the wheat in the world, if there had been no such thing as the gathering together of the saints at all. But the Lord's explanation leaves your gloss without excuse: for your reasoning is really directed against His interpretation, without your knowing it, because you understand that to be the Church which He declares is "the world." In fact, not a word is said about the Church, as such, in the parable. For the wheat are simply the genuine Christians, individually considered; and this would have been true, had there never been such a corporate institution as God's assembly. The real question is about the field, i.e. the world, as the scene where the Lord had been sowing, and the enemy too. Hence those who apply it either to the sanctioned mixture of saints and sinners in church communion or to the prohibition of church-discipline, have wholly and most mischievously lost their way and are really setting their own perversion of the parable against the plainest evidence of other scriptures. My interpretation harmonizes what you dislocate, and falls in with the Word in general; for, I have taught and still teach, that, comparing 1 Cor. 5 with Matt. 13, the true and twofold meaning is, (not that wicked persons are not to be put out, and that they are to be put out, which is mere nonsense, and setting Scripture against Scripture, but) that wicked persons are not to be put out of the world, while they are to be put out of the Church. If this seems unintelligible to you, it is because you have mystified yourself through confounding the two spheres. To gather up the tares means extermination, or at least violence as to the world, not excommunication from the Church. The dilemma (p. 28) is therefore imaginary. For wicked professors may doubtless exist in Christendom (i.e., the

field of the kingdom) without being accredited in the assembly (i.e., the Church.)

You wonder (p. 29) at the view that rooting up the tares means killing or injuring the pseudo-Christians. Are you aware that the famous Archbishop John Chrysostom, the greatest light of the Greek Church, gives just the same in his forty-seventh Homily on St. Matthew? Moreover, the ablest of Protestant controversialists answers your argument, drawn from the parable by his Popish adversary, precisely as I am replying to you: “Our blessed Saviour foretold, you say, that there should be in the Church tares with choice corn. Look again, I pray, and you shall see that the field He speaks of is not the Church, but the world: and therefore neither do you obey our Saviour’s command, ‘Let both grow up till the harvest,’ who teach it to be lawful to root these tares (such are heretics) out of the world: neither do Protestants disobey it, if they eject manifest heresies and notorious sinners out of the Church.” (Religion of Protestants, ch. v., part 1, § 57.) I had read neither the ancient nor the modern author, when I wrote the tract you refer to (p. 31) as containing substantially the same explanation which satisfies me still. If you were not convinced before, I am not without hope that enough is said now to satisfy you that, in uniting as saints, separate from the world, (of which you certainly should not complain,) we in no way transgress our Lord’s injunction in Matt. 13; for what He forbids is not such a separation, but the attempt to root or expel false professors out of Christendom, which is very far from our wish or thought. Leaving them to abide therein undisturbed, we nevertheless purge ourselves from the vessels to dishonour, and follow the will of the Lord with

them that call on Him out of a pure heart. Are you doing the same? To us both duties seem clear and consistent.

In truth, Protestants, as well as Romanists and early Catholics, widely departed from His mind as laid down in the parable. When such as professed to be Christ's servants handed over reputed heretics or other spiritual offenders to be punished externally, they did precisely what is for the present forbidden. Augustine made this mistake in a measure, when he urged the authorities to chastise the factious Donatists; and Gratian carried it out still more thoroughly. Well meant as this was, it was ignorance of the character which the kingdom assumes through Christ's rejection, and during His session at God's right hand; it was a slip into earthly righteousness out of the patience of heavenly grace. The value of our Lord's warning became apparent when the Waldenses, &c., were persecuted to death; for here was the extirpation of at least some wheat in the blind zeal which strove to get rid of the tares. It is not for the servants, but for the angels of the Son of man, to execute destructive judgment on mere nominal Christians. This is the point in hand: not keeping the unconverted, or purging the wicked, out of the Church, which is quite right; but the application of power to remove those accounted spurious professors of Christ from the world, which is quite wrong. In the end of the age the tares are burgled and the wheat shines forth in glory. It is an outward, judicial dealing with the tares, (which the Lord forbids to us,) not the putting away of evil-doers from the assembly of the faithful (which the Holy Ghost enjoins.)

Again, it was from not seizing the truth conveyed here and elsewhere that some of the Reformers erred greatly

in essaying to enforce the kingdom of God on Jewish principles. Thus, in the sixteenth century, not only were many burnt and imprisoned in England for alleged dogmatic evil, but also some flagrant cases occurred at Geneva under Calvin's dictation. It is needless to enlarge on the Puritans, long after, and their excesses; or on the Scottish Presbyterians, whose desires, and deeds, with a similar end in view, are notorious. The penal statutes, till lately in force in our own country, bear witness to the same general tendency. In fact, it is the danger, not of Christians who seek by the grace of God to keep themselves separate from the world and pure, but of all who adopt the world as the ground of their ecclesiastical system, which they must next render compulsory by law: sorrowful contrast to the Spirit's action in the Church of God!

You admit that "the parable has nothing whatever to do with Church discipline." (p. 23.) But your application deprives discipline of its legitimate exercise, unless you can prove that neither wheat nor tares fall into sins which require exclusion. For, on the one hand, if the tares so sin and are to be put away, what becomes of your famous argument in pp. 20-26? "Is a separation to be attempted? 'Nay,' saith the Master." If, on the other hand, you confess that the exclusion of the wicked from the assembly perfectly consists with the growing together of the wheat and tares in the same field, your reasoning utterly breaks down: in this case you are forced to own the truth I am contending for.2 Whereas, if tares and wheat grow together in the Church, the rule would be absolute and final, that discipline can exclude neither; for both are to grow together till the harvest.

Your use of Rev. 2 and 3, (pp. 15-18, 32) is the common resource of men in your circumstances, but it is as clearly wrong as your uncommon view of the tares with its portentous consequences. And for this plain reason, The seven assemblies in Asia, spite of the evil found in nearly all, were really churches. They were gatherings of saints or of those believed to be such, separate from the world, into some of which Satan had succeeded in introducing more or less grave evils. Now, in such a state of things, we entirely agree that separation would be schism and grievously sinful: for the entrance of evil, let it be ever so flagrant, into a scripturally-constituted assembly of saints, does not at all furnish a just cause for separating, but rather for patient prayerful looking to God for grace, wisdom, and power of the Spirit for oneself, and one's brethren, that the unclean thing, doctrinal or practical, should be dealt with, and, if need be, the evil-doer put away according to the Word of God. The Lord did not, could not, blame His saints for continuing in these churches. On the contrary, He warned them of the evils that were there and of His judgment if they repented not. No amount of evil that may come in calls for separation, until the assembly refuses to hear the Word of the Lord and to judge that which is offensive to Him. While the door is open for holy Scriptural discipline, a saint is bound to stay. Your fallacy, then, is in arguing from real assemblies of God to such a body as the Establishment; which, I have sufficiently shown, never was a church of God according to the sole Scriptural principle, practice, and history. What were we to do when convinced that the association, calling itself the Church of England, is not, and had never been, a gathering of saints in the unity of the body, separate from the world, and subject only to

the Lord by the Word and Spirit of God? How could we, how can you, plead for continuance in that which never was on the same basis as the Asiatic Churches?

In few words, nationalism has no more claim than a dissenting society (less in outward form perhaps) to assume to be a Church of God as Scripture presents it. Schism is separation from the Church, not from nationalism or dissent. If they are both alien from Scripture, they have no claim upon my allegiance or yours. As Christians, we owe it to our Lord to meet according to His will, withdrawing from all that hinders it. Of the Evangelical Alliance, I need say no more than that it is a mere expedient, and does not even profess to take the ground of God's Church, though it is an amiable institute in its way.

From Mr. Darby's lectures on the Seven Churches you have gathered the thought, adopted by many Christians at various times, that, besides the primary application to the literal Asiatic Churches, a complete picture is furnished of the responsible professing body from St. John's day till the close. Hereupon you raise the old cry that there is no direction to come out of the professing Church, but blessing promised to individuals in it. We have no thought, in fact, of separating from Christendom, in which we all are equally; and we hold strenuously, that, wherever there is an assembly of God, (i.e., formed from its origin according to His Word, and still cleaving to that ground,) its miserably low condition would not call for separation, but persevering, devoted service, and waiting on God for a remedy. But you cannot hence make out a duty of remaining in an association which, never having been a gathering of

saints according to Scripture, has no just claim to a single Christian.

Moreover, the argument is singularly unhappy, if judged by that view which, to you, “appears the correct one.” For, on the protracted scheme of the Apocalyptic churches, Thyatira gives us Popery under the symbol of Jezebel; and you have yourself strongly and repeatedly insisted on the Christian’s separation from that unclean thing. If, therefore, the epistle to Thyatira forbids not to come out from this evil, the other epistle cannot be said to bind us up with evils elsewhere, when remedy is refused and the godly, if they abide, must do or sanction that which is, in their eyes, false and iniquitous. I entirely, coincide with you that to stay in communion with Romish error is to lose all power for witnessing. Why should it be a virtue to stay in communion with that which we account Protestant error? In either case, it would be heartless indifference to truth and holiness. On the scheme you accept, Popery has a place in these churches, prophetically viewed quite as much as a national Establishment; and if it be right, as you own, to separate from Popery, spite of no command from the Lord to Thyatira, it cannot be wrong to separate from nationalism because of no such command to Sardis or Laodicea. That which decides its right or wrong is the answer to the question: Is nationalism according or opposed to God’s Word about His Church? If the answer be clearly against it, would it not be well to bear in mind the maxim, “Non est faciendum malum vel minimum, ut eveniat bonum vel maximum?” But when conscience does not keep pace with knowledge, let it be ever so scanty, and when faith does not work by love to silence

alike fears and cavils, farewell to a happy, thorough testimony for Christ.

As to page 32, I need hardly add that there is no analogy between the ecclesiastical evil of which you make so light and the state of things contemplated in the epistle of Jude. Nobody contends that the faithful should leave a true gathering or church of God, even if hypocrites have contrived to enter privily; on the contrary, those are bound, spite of these, to remain and build up themselves on their most holy faith. But it is never a duty to countenance the world with Christians intermixed, as God's church, nor to maintain, under any circumstances, a known error as His truth. If you say (p. 33,) "there is no message to or promised blessing from the Lord for a separate gathering of saints who have come out from the professing Church," I reply, first, that we do not come out from the professing Church, but from certain evils in it, which is a plain and necessary duty; and that, secondly, in the Scriptures referred to, there is no message nor blessing from the Lord EXCEPT for a separate gathering of saints who have come out from the world. To recognize and act on this, is, I affirm, the path of obedience, and obligatory on all Christians. For saints involved in evil principles and practices to say either "There is no hope" or "I have not sinned," (Jer. 2) betrays in both cases the evil heart of unbelief, and is condemned, not justified, in the Word of God. It is to be Antinomians corporately if not individually also. "Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin." "He that doeth the will of God abideth for ever,"

Yours faithfully in Christ, W. K.

1 The late Mr. Groves went along with Bethesda warmly. This was to be expected from one whose principle it was, if principle it can be called, to bear with all the evils of Christians rather than separate from their good. (p. 38.) Neither of these things, it is evident, ought to be done by the believer, nor ever was accepted by "Brethren." — It should be known also, that Mr. G., though often breaking bread with "Brethren," because of their receiving all Christians, notoriously never agreed with their principles; as I am informed by those who took that position from the very first and adhere to it unswervingly still. The effect of his own peculiar theory of universal association was practically to leave him universally "unattached." And it is this absence of a fixed, holy, divine principle in matters ecclesiastical, which is the chief point of sympathy between him and you.

2 What can one think of the argument (p. 22) that as the saint must carry the body of death with him whereby he is burdened, "so, it maybe the saints of God must (!) have the presence of those who are not of God in their assemblies?" "Know ye not that your bodies are members of Christ?" Are "those who are not of God" members of Christ likewise? The Catechism says so, but what says the Scripture? "Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost?" Are the tares the same? A tare is Satan's child; is your body his child? So the Gnostics used to hold; but your heart, I trust, will repudiate the error, at the expense of the reasoning.

On Isolation, or Independency

My Dear Sir,

As far as I understand your position, it is one of “holding yourself aloof,” or nothingarianism as to church relations. Without doubt a dry morsel and quietness therewith is better than a house full of the sacrifices of strife; as it is better to dwell in the corner of a house-top than with a contentious woman in a house of society.

But I read unmistakably in the last Epistle of the great apostle who alone communicated the truth of the church, that grace gives a wholly different resource in view of the disorder and dangers of the last days. Circumstances may indeed here or there leave one isolated; but isolation is neither the revealed provision nor the legitimate aim. The firm foundation of God standeth, having this seal, The Lord knew those that are His, And, Let every one that nameth the Lord’s name depart from unrighteousness. This is individual and of deep moment as things are. But all does not end there. “Now in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some unto honour, and some unto dishonour. If then one purge himself out from these (i.e. the vessels unto dishonour), he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, serviceable to the Master, prepared unto every good work.” And this you own and have acted on. We are not tied to ecclesiastical corruptions where they are sanctioned constitutionally and admit of no removal. One must purge oneself out, if one cannot purge the evils out. But is this all? While the apostle bids his beloved child flee the lusts of youth, wide as they are and some of them

subtle, he adds, “and pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those that call on the Lord out of a pure heart” (2 Tim. 2:19-22). Thus one may and ought to look for companions and fellow-witnesses called to like fidelity. Never should one contemplate isolation. The Holy Spirit bids one by grace to desire and expect communion of saints, however great and general may be the ruin of Christendom.

You refer to disorder and party and scattering among those once united. It is sorrowfully true; but are there not some who refused these unworthy ways, and made themselves obnoxious to such as yielded to them? Some at least despised fads and cliques, resolved by grace to keep Christ’s word and not deny His name, and rejecting any new departure. But a new lump was in the wind, and it was openly avowed that they did not fear division, though the apostle hated and warned against it. When a pretext is sought, it is readily found: the difficulty was to justify what saints shrank from as uncalled for and evil. Then was first heard among us the ominous cry that no scripture was needed: a strange thine for those whose watchword had hitherto been, “It is written.” Truly it was a new and sad departure. Take the great council at Jerusalem, when the growth of party spirit wrought by the old difficulty that severed Jew from Gentile after the flesh to make void the unity of the Spirit. The apostles were all there, save the martyred James, Zebedee’s son. So was Paul, an apostle by a higher calling than any, though all were the gifts of the ascended Christ. But even so there was much discussion. Peter spoke powerfully, and Barnabas and Paul related what signs and wonders God wrought among the nations by them. Then another James drew attention to the written word

as the end of controversy. For “the words of the prophets” were decisive, Amos being cited, when they speak of “all the Gentiles, or nations, upon whom my name is called.” The apostles and the elders with the whole assembly decided accordingly. Nor is theirs a question of doctrine, discipline, or practice, for which Scripture does not provide, that every thing, collective or individual, may be a matter of obeying God.

Rev. 2, 3 may be pleaded for individualism. Now the call here to “him that hath an ear” is imperative in not allowing assemblies absolutely to govern faith or practice. I am bound, whatever the pretension to authority in defence of wrong or error, to hear not them but what the Spirit saith to them. Their voice is prima facie entitled (like that of my parents) to high respect and obedience, but certainly not if there be wrong or error known and even acknowledged: else that holy, responsibly holy, enclosure becomes a screen for evil, and may end in a hold of any unclean and hated bird. As a prophetic book the Apocalypse does warn and call for obedience to the word; but that word was to leave no faithful soul settled down in isolation. On the contrary it encourages him, who separates from the evils men impose under the abused name of the Lord, to cherish a fellowship as much according to God as the separation. For Christ died to gather in one the children of God that were scattered abroad; and the Holy Ghost came to baptise them Jew or Gentile into one body. Never should God’s will as to this inalienable privilege and duty become secondary. It is of all obligation; and the Holy Spirit abides to give both permanence and power, as we too are called to be subject to the Lord. Hence the blessedness of His own promise to be in the midst (not

certainly of all Christians in their wanderings, but) of all that are gathered unto His name, were they but two or three. Let these be diligent to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace; and may they do it with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love.

Yours faithfully in Christ, W. K.

Who Made Purification of Sins?

Gospel Gleanings' Booklets. No. 100

Dear reader, let me call your attention to what God has told us of His Son. It concerns you more deeply than aught else. It enables you to judge yourself, and confess your sins. God has spoken in the plainest and fullest terms, that you might hear and live and have yourself cleansed for ever in His sight, that you might know it now, and enjoy assuredly His favour resting on you. If you could be exalted to an empire, what were this transient honour in comparison?

It is not only sinners unawakened who do not believe in that perfect cleansing as open to their need. But few here and there among true saints of God believe it for their own souls as their real living privilege. They are become dull of hearing in Christendom, as the believing Jews were to receive the truth in its fulness. They ought to have an appetite for solid food, whereas their infantine state superinduced the need of milk. None can rise to the place of full-grown men (or what is here called perfection) without resting on the work of Christ as God presents it. And His blood cleanses us from all sin. How could it avail to God and for us, if it did not? If all iniquities be not blotted out, we are inadmissible to God's presence.

The Jews were used to a constant round of offerings for their recurring sins. It could not be otherwise, if they had only blood of bulls and goats incapable of taking away sins. But now Jesus the Son of God has come and offered His body once for all. The Levitical sacrifices kept up the remembrance of sins: and this was good as

far as it went; for the sinner is apt to forget his guilty state. But now that Christ has done God's will in offering up Himself as the one sacrifice which more than fulfils all sacrifices, He takes away the shadow to establish the everlasting substance: "by which will we [who believe] have been (and are) sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all."

For a work so amazing a divine Person is essential. Therefore it is that we are shown on the very threshold of this epistle, Who and what He is in Whom God speaks now since the Messiah came. It is no longer partial, as before His advent, but perfect and complete. Many measures and many modes are eclipsed in its fulness. Nor is it from God dwelling in the thick darkness, but in His Son, a Man full of grace and truth, the one True Light wherein there is no darkness at all, shining in love to win and save us by bearing our sins in His body on the tree.

"Son" is His relation to God, not by adoption but by personal right, and hence established "Heir of all things;" truly man, yet as truly Heir of the universe, as none other is or could be. Think how the glory of every other vanishes before it, yea, of all creatures that ever were or could be if put together! Nor need you be surprised, seeing that by Him also God made the worlds. The Creator of all is entitled to be Heir of all. Of whom else could the least part of this work be said but of God? Had He not been God, it could not be attributed to Him; and to Him it is attributed more than to any other person in the Godhead, as appears from John 1:3, and Colossians 1:16, to cite no more.

Nor is this by any means all that is here said to exalt His Person. He is effulgence of God's glory, and express image of His substance, as He upholds all things by the word of His power, all which only a divine Person could do. His shining forth makes known the divine glory as no angel could, nor yet the archangel. They are but servants. He subsisting in the form of God counted it no object of rapine to be on equality of God, but first emptied Himself, taking a servant's place and in likeness of men; and then humbled Himself, becoming obedient to death, yea, death of the cross. None but God could either empty Himself or humble Himself. A creature could not leave his first estate without sin against the God Who had put him in it. The highest angel is a servant and could not, save by sin (like Satan), quit his own place as a creature of God. The Son could and did leave His in abeyance, to glorify God, become man, and in due time a sacrifice to God for sinners.

And what was the fruit of such grace by One so glorious? "When he made by himself purification of sins, he sat down on the right hand of the majesty on high."

He sits there, and is so pointed out by God's word to you, that you may be assured that His work of purifying sins is finished and accepted by God for all that believe on Him. O then, sin no more by unbelief of what God has thus wrought in His Son, and proclaims to you in the gospel! Surely you must own that only God can forgive sins against Himself, as all your sins have been. Man may forgive what is done against him; but consider the blasphemy of any that pretend to forgive sins against God! Wondrous grace! it is God Himself Who sends you, if you repent and believe on Christ, the glad tidings of entire remission of your sins; because Christ made their

purification, and sits on His throne as the witness that the atoning work is done, not a doing or to be done but done, before He took His seat there.

Believe on Jesus, and the blessing is yours. So God has spoken now in His word. Humble yourself as a poor guilty lost sinner, that you may be saved by grace. W.K.

The Free Service of Christians

1 Cor. 15:15, 16; 2 Cor. 4:13; Phil. 1:14-17; Col. 2:19.

A Letter to the Irish. Or the so-called “Lay Preachers.”

Dear brethren,

My attention has been directed to the leading article in the Achill Missionary Herald, No. 332, January 10,1865. This paper deals with three classes of correspondents: first, “those who consider lay preaching as altogether unlawful;” secondly, “those who disapprove of it as a system, but who think that circumstances may warrant the occasional use of it;” and thirdly, “those who regard it with unconditional approval, and who do not entertain a suspicion that it can be productive of anything but the happiest results.”

First. The author of the article refers to a tract on “Lay Preachers” for proofs of the untenableness of the first position. He justly argues (from Acts 8:4; Acts 11:21; Revelation 22:17) that all believers may, and should make known the gospel to others, privately or in public, when they have the opportunity. Besides the necessity there may be for such preaching, he remarks “that there is not a single instance in the Old or New Testament of any one having been prohibited from preaching.” This witness is true — mark it well.

Secondly. Singular to say, after such an admission, after dwelling on the Scriptural principle and corroborative facts, the author professes to agree to some great extent with persons of the second class, i.e., those who disapprove of free evangelism! How comes this? Is it not the proved system of Scripture? The sore point soon

appears: “If lay preaching is designed to supersede the ministry of an ordained clergy, we must lift our voice against it.” Then comes a bitter explosion of feeling, not only from an anonymous clergyman, but on the part of the author, against those Christians popularly designated “Darbyites,” or “Plymouth Brethren.” The epistles to Timothy, Titus, etc., are supposed to convict them of disrespect for a considerable part of God’s revelation. What has this to do with your “lay preaching?”

But you have taken the Lord’s Supper without an official administrator! This is intolerable. Lay preaching may send souls, previously indifferent, to attend the public prayers — may be used to convert unregenerate parishioners. But the administration of the Lord’s Supper by the “lay preachers” draws down the author’s “unqualified disapprobation,” “as an unwarranted intrusion into the proper work of the ordained minister. We have no doubt that the divine ordinances of Baptism and the Lord’s Supper are included in the ‘mysteries’ of which the duly ordained minister is ‘the steward’ (see 1 Cor. 4:1*); and it seems to us that the assumption of a right to administer it, by one who has no warrant for a call to the ministry, but his own persuasion, involves a denial of the authority of the ordained ministry altogether.” Yet with that singular absence of fixed principle which is so often found in his party, the author immediately after allows that he “can imagine a case where an ordained minister could not be had, when two or three assembled in the name of Christ, might commemorate His dying love in ‘breaking of bread,’ but this is an exceptional case which does not apply in the town of -, where the Lord’s Supper is administered not

only by a duly ordained minister, but by one whose whole life and conversation prove that he has been called by the Holy Ghost to the office and ministry which he adorns." In the next paragraph the writer looks more kindly on "our lay brethren." "It must, however, be stated that the act to which our correspondent has called our attention is not a public one [as if a fundamental question like this were one of mere degree! as if more or less publicity could affect the character of what he takes for granted is assumption and a denial of proper ministry!]. Our lay brethren have their own conscientious convictions, and they must adopt the line of conduct which they suggest as pleasing to the Lord. We think they are mistaken; they think otherwise; but so long as they abstain from urging their own views in this matter upon others [just as if they were not at least as free of man as the author, and equally bound to their Lord to urge on others what they believe to be God's truth on this point!] we cannot see why ministers of the Church of England should not avail themselves of their valuable services in calling sinners to Christ."

*"An old man" should have known the gross perversion of Scripture involved in this misapplication. I will not quote Dean Alford nor even Dr. H. Hammond to correct the error, but two worthies of the olden time, when there were no Darbyites to regard with "abhorrence." "The word in the Greek [Eph. 5:32] is μυστήριον, which is never in Scripture used to denote what we properly call a sacrament." (Dr. Whitaker's Disp. on Scripture, Parker Soc. p.197.) Still more express, if possible, is Abp. Whitgift (Works, vol. ii., p. 519) on this very text, 1 Cor. 4. "Here is not one word for your purpose, except you take mysteries for sacraments, which, if you do, you

are much deceived; for by the word ‘mysteries’ here he [Paul] understandeth the word of God, and gospel of Christ; as all learned writers do interpret it.” Even Cardinal Cajetan (on Eph. 5) distinguishes a sacrament from a mystery. Thus the Achill Herald’s zeal betrays it into a mistake repudiated by a papist. No Scripture restricts baptizing or breaking the bread to ordained men.

The author then gives his testimony, clearing them from the wish to establish a separate sect, and assuring his readers of the extraordinary blessing which has attended their preaching, and this in his own parish. “We say to all opponents of this blessed work, ‘Refrain from these men, and let them alone; for if this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to nought; but if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it, lest haply ye be found even to fight against God.’“

Thirdly. To the last class the author now turns, thinking that his advanced age enables him to view things with more sobriety than those who unqualifiedly approve of lay preaching. One might have hoped that a hearty acknowledgment, under the first head, of the clear, express teaching of the Bible, would have silenced unbelieving fears. Ah! beloved brethren, never expect the simplicity of faith where a given course is judged, not by the sole standard of God’s word, but by its effect on one’s own associations. Where is the sobriety or the conscience that so much dreads lay preaching superseding ordained ministers, and so soon forgets ordained episcopal sceptics and Romanizers, nay, even professorial chairs indoctrinating the nascent clergy with their own neology or sacramentalism? It is certain that these boasted paper bulwarks have not hindered

the rise and progress of deadly error within the Anglican body. It is certain that there was incomparably more purity of faith before they were invented. Ecclesiastical history demonstrates that they are vain: so does the actual state of Anglicanism. Human documents are faulty and even presumptuous as articles of faith; they stumble many good, they check few bad men. Such are the notorious facts. No wonder that the author here quotes not the Acts of the Apostles, but Bishop Burnet, whose sentiment, he thinks, "must commend itself to the common sense of every intelligent reader." Brethren, is "common sense" your arbiter? It is excellent in human things, but in divine what a miserable exchange for the Holy Ghost's guidance by the written word of God! "We have the mind of Christ," says the apostle; and, thank God, there are those still who refuse to descend to a lower ground. Neither Bishop Burnet nor any one else can prove that it is wise spiritually to trust a traditional human arrangement in ministry; for surely if there be, as all admit, danger "from hot-headed men of warm fancies and voluble tongues" among lay preachers, there is far more when those men, or even worse, "thrust themselves on the teaching and governing others" with all the authority of official status. If unofficial men preach nonsense or bad doctrine, what is the mischief, compared with that which flows from the same stuff preached by men who boast of the highest ecclesiastical sanction? It is the standing of the Oxford essayists which chiefly makes their freethinking dangerous; and it is the impotence of the Anglican body to put down the like official heresy and infidelity, not free preaching of the gospel, which brings that religious system "into disorder and under contempt." Besides, it is passing strange that a worldly-minded, unsound person like Burnet should be

quoted as an authority by a man who values the gospel and loves souls for Christ's sake. Does he not know that Burnet (Exposition, Article xi.) makes the faith that saves to be, not believing on Him who justifies the ungodly, but "the complex of Christianity in opposition to the law?" The low churchman of the days of King William III. agrees in this with the highest churchman of our day, ("our faith which includes our hope, our love, our repentance, and our obedience!") and treats the essentially different doctrine of justification as held by the Reformers, and as defined at the Council of Trent, as, "after all, but a question about words!" Burnet's "common sense" did not even secure the truth of the gospel.

Doubtless, dear brethren, you feel that nothing but grace can raise up fit labourers for the Lord's work, and the grace only can continue them as long as it pleases Him. I am sure you pretend to nothing more than using what He has given you for perishing sinners or famished children of God. Beware of sects, old as well as new. As you are assured the Lord has "sent" you at His charge, fear not the frown of some, beware of the flattery of others. Serve the Lord on your own responsibility to Himself. You are naturally dreaded and suspected by those who are under bondage to a merely human system which usurps the functions of the Head. You have a Master over you, not a mistress; your allegiance is due to Him. The Church cannot teach, cannot give mission, cannot call servants save to service of tables or distribution of her bounty. Christ only gives ministerial gifts. To Christ alone is His servant responsible in the exercise of his gift. Hold fast your liberty, but hold it in direct subjection to Christ and His word.

Suffer me to make a few remarks on the references to Scripture which fill the “postscript.”

No doubt you agree with the author, as I do, that God has appointed a ministry to rule and teach the Church, and that its members are responsible to the Lord for the performance of their duty. But the choice of proof-texts evinces that the author confounds the local charge of elder, or bishop, with ministry of the word. What would be thought of his acquaintance with Ireland who limited the magistracy to stipendiaries? All exercise of a ministerial gift is ministry. Not to speak of apostles and prophets, pastors, teachers, evangelists, exhorters, were all of them ministers; whereas none of these per se was a presbyter. A teacher might be invested with that local office, of course; but he needed due ordination before he could be properly styled an elder. Whereas the possession of the gift from the Lord of itself made him a teacher. On the other hand, so far were elders from being the only proper ministers, that local rule and not public teaching was their proper business. Hence says the apostle, “Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, specially they who labour in the word and doctrine.” Ruling was their necessary duty: if they ruled well, proportionate was their honour. Labouring in the word and doctrine was specially to be valued, but it was a blessed accessory rather than an indispensable function. Hence it will be noticed that, in Romans 12, 1 Corinthians 12, Ephesians 4, 1 Peter 4 (which furnish the fullest teaching of the New Testament on ministry,) there is not a word on the local office of elders. For the exercise of these gifts, as far as they are continued of the Lord to the building up of the Church, the author’s system leaves no room, and if it were only

for this, it would be convicted of being false and unscriptural. Does Christ give evangelists, pastors, and teachers to preach, and teach, and rule now as at the beginning? and is not the Church now, as then, bound to receive them and profit by their ministry? The Anglican system does not even pretend to receive all such, nor to allow to any that free exercise of gift which Scripture demonstrates was the practice of apostolic times; for its parochial plan is inconsistent with anything of the kind. Does not the author abandon this large part of Scripture? It is certain that his system excludes action on it; and he is bound to his system as long as he abides there.

Acts 14:23; Acts 20:17-28; 1 Timothy 2:5, etc.; 1 Timothy 5:17, 19; Titus 1:5, 7, 9; 1 Peter 5:1-4, speak not of ministry in general, but solely of elders or bishops. Even here Anglicanism differs essentially from these principles: for, first, it sets bishops into a superior class, contrary to the express force of Scripture; and secondly, it asserts and furnishes a single bishop over many churches, whereas Scripture makes it certain that, where bishops and elders existed at all, the practice was to have several in each church or assembly. Of 1 Corinthians 4:1, 2, I have already spoken in the note to p. 2. As for 1 Timothy 3:8, 13, is it not absurd to found that unmeaning novice, the Anglican deacon (aged, perhaps, three or four and twenty), upon the Scriptural diaconate, which was a distinct office and not a mere formal stepping-stone to eldership? Where is the respect for Scripture in such a citation? Again, what is the meaning of the reference to 1 Timothy 1:3, 4; 1 Timothy 5:22; 2 Timothy 4:1-5? Timothy had a special work, as had Titus; and neither ought to be confounded with an

ordinary bishop or elder. Alas! the pride of human system leads men to imagine they are “rich and increased with goods, and have need of nothing,” when, in truth, they are in Laodicean misery and blindness. It is mere delusion to fancy that any on earth are entitled to act like those apostolical men, who had a defined letter of instructions from an inspired apostle for their individual action within a certain given sphere. Who are most modest and obedient to Scripture — the men who imitate apostles and their envoys without warrant, or those who keep within the exercise of that measure of gift which the Lord still graciously gives? Happy they who faithfully preach the gospel, teach the believers, or rule the flock of God, if they are so sent of the Lord! Woe to those who pretend to give the Holy Ghost, or to appoint elders, by imposition of hands, without being apostles or their delegates! Hebrews 13:7, 17, and 1 Thessalonians 5:12, prove that there may be rulers, guides, or chief men, whom the brethren are bound to obey, yet without the smallest intimation that they were ordained.

To lay down that “ministers should be ordained to office by laying on of hands” is to set aside a vast body of Scripture on ministry (i.e., the exercise of spiritual gifts), through a mistaken use of the very peculiar place of Timothy, or of his subsequent duty. For what else can one think of referring us to 1 Tim. 4:14; 5:22; 2 Tim. 1:6? The author evidently treats the case of Timothy, not as exceptional, but as the rule, in the face of a double array of facts. For, on the one hand, Timothy received a gift or χάρισμα through the apostle’s hands, the elders joining, after prophecy had designated him to his peculiar task: which circumstances are not true either of

ordinary ministers in general, or of elders or bishops in particular. On the other hand, according to Scripture, whoever had a gift of ministry in the word was not merely free, but responsible at once to exercise it, (i.e., to minister, Rom. 12, 1 Peter 4:10, 11,) not only outside, but within the congregation (1 Cor. 14), quite independently of the functions of elder or deacon, which did require apostolic appointment or what was equivalent.

Cordially and decidedly do I hold that ministry is a divine and permanent institution. This is not the question; but whether human systems (and the author's among the rest) do not exclude the due exercise of the various ministerial gifts in the public congregation and elsewhere by an unscriptural monopoly assigned to local office.

But it is a total mistake that "bishops ordained by the apostles were to ordain others." You will find this in the fathers, never once in Scripture. 2 Timothy 2:2 says not a word of ordaining, but of communicating truth to others, as Aquila and even Priscilla did to Apollos. Did that worthy couple pretend to ordain him? Titus 1:5 shows that an apostle had authority to delegate another like Titus to ordain or constitute. elders; but nowhere in God's word is Titus called a bishop; and the bishops there are invariably the ordained, never the ordainers, in evident opposition to the author's statement as well as to the Anglican system. Is it not humbler, then, in present circumstances to bow to God and confess our lack, rather than assume to have apostles or their delegates, or to do their work without being either?

That a maintenance is due to those who minister, if they need it, is indisputable: 1 Cor. 9:13, 18; 1 Tim. 5:17, 18. Gal. 6:6 would be my third text, rather than 1 Peter 5:1-4, which does not treat of this subject.

It is agreed, too, that “separation from the Church is not warranted by corrupt living of ministers,” though Matthew 23:2, 3 seems rather wide of the mark as a prohibition of it. Again, that “unworthiness of ministers does not nullify their office” may be more or less true, while John 11:49-52 is a strange foundation for it. It is quite certain, however, that the Church is bound to put away corrupt livers (1 Cor. 5), whether ministers or not; and that Scripture (2 John) is explicit that all — even a lady and her children — are not only at liberty, but bound to refuse him who does not bring the doctrine of Christ, were he a deacon or a bishop. The author’s system, on the contrary, is at issue with the Bible and sustains an ordained man, even if he denied inspiration or atonement, as many of the clergy do.

No intelligent Christian holds, as the author insinuates, that “divine life” is “the bond of visible union;” nor is Colossians 3:4 needed to refute such an absurdity. But it is clear that, if we hold to Scripture, Nationalism and Dissent and Popery are novelties contrary to its teaching, which shows that to all Christians on earth, if walking according to truth, there is but one body as well as one Spirit. The principle of sects or different denominations is wholly condemned by God’s word. (1 Cor. 3, 11; Gal. 5) Membership not of a but of the Church is the true doctrine. (Acts 2:47) And so with ministry: a gift was a joint of the body of Christ. “God (not man) hath set some in the (not in a) church: first, apostles; secondarily, prophets; thirdly, teachers.” (1

Cor. 12) Is this all gone, and another principle to be on foot, because there are no miracles, or healings, or tongues? God forbid!

Again, there is not the smallest force in appealing to the Seven Churches to justify Nationalism or Dissent; because the bodies in the Apocalypse, with abundance of evil which the Lord was judging, were really churches, whereas these systems are not and never were churches. The assembly in Ephesus, for instance (and so of the rest) had been gathered and ordered according to the word of the Lord, and the presence and sovereign action of the Holy Ghost had been fully owned in its midst; while nothing of the sort is or ever was true of the religious associations before us. Till the Lord gave up an assembly, it would have been premature to leave; but what became the duty of one who had ears to hear, if the assembly rebelled against His final message? Surely to purge himself from the vessels to dishonour (2 Timothy 2), when evil became a sanctioned institution without remedy. But the national bodies and dissenting societies, excellent as many of their elements are as institutions of men, and precious members and ministers of Christ as there are in both, never having stood on the basis of the Church of God according to Scripture, possess no divine claim on the faith and affections of God’s children. Who ever cited the parable of the tares (Matt. 13:24-30) for “visible separation from the corrupt portion of the churches?” Often indeed this Scripture is employed to show that you must endure evil men in, not put them away from, the Church. But this is a stale sophism, which ought to he left to Papists or to its originators among the fathers. Hooker misuses it thus (Eccles. Pol. b. iii. § 1); but even Chillingworth exploded

it when urged by his adversary long ago: “Our blessed Saviour foretold, you say, that there should be in the Church tares with choice corn. Look again, I pray, and you shall see that the field he speaks of is not the Church, but the world; and, therefore, neither do you obey our Saviour’s command, ‘let both grow together until the harvest,’ who teach it to be lawful to root these tares, such are heretics, out of the world; neither do Protestants disobey it, if they eject manifest heresies and notorious sinners out of the Church.” (Religion of Prot. chap. v. 57.)

It is fully admitted that a church must be apostate to warrant separation from it (which the author founds on Rev. 18:2-4); but what claim on a Christian has a body which never was a church of God at all?

Trusting that this brief review may be graciously used of the Lord to help such as desire to do His will, I subscribe myself, dear brethren, though a stranger in the flesh, Your brother, and A FELLOW-LABOURER.

A Draft Appeal

August, 1898

For Private Circulation only.

“For circulation among brethren still cleaving to the ‘Christ of God’.”

Beloved Brethren,

We write to you about the anomalous state of divisions feeling that it is not more to our Lord’s dishonour than to our common shame and loss. Do you not feel it too?

We are apart from no question of the faith, from no difference as to due order. We acknowledge for practice the same divine principles. It is well known that we have sought to remove whatever barriers may hinder, as far as we can with a good conscience in subjection to the word. That the enemy should seek to frustrate our being gathered together in one (John 11:52) one understands, but why should you or we acquiesce in his scattering those who should be united? We do not doubt that 1 Cor. 1:10-12, Eph. 4:2-6, Phil. 2:1-4, are still weighty in your eyes as in ours.

With you we cherish the place divinely given, to faith and love, of gathering to the Lord’s name and would each judge himself for all that has been done inconsistently with it. Neither you nor we would individually nor together consent to weaken the responsibility of maintaining at all cost the person and work of Christ, the present action of the Holy Spirit or the authority of God’s word.

Holding the head we welcome the members walking in truth and in love as at the first, not without profit from all that has been since. Alas! it cannot be for such as compromise Him who is the true God and life eternal. Ought it not to be for all who confess Him truly? Who or what forbids?

We avoid disputations and address all who with ourselves value no unity save of the Spirit. We believe that to get rid of obstacles to its better enjoyment and manifestation is for the Lord's glory and for the blessing of the saints. It would also disarm the enemy of a permanent occasion for stumbling the weak and for reproach to the truth.

Free to confess failures on our part we appeal to all others involved in the divisive action of 1881, and ask, Does Scripture sanction settling down contentedly with things as they are? Do we not alike own one body and one Spirit, even as called in one hope of our calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all? Can any rest indifferent to a scattering without parallel and without an effort? Have you, however, no faith in or desire for the healing Grace of our God?

A notion prevails that reunion must be individual. It is a modern thought at issue with our past convictions and action. Where does Scripture lay down anything of the sort? It does show us the principle of collective sins met collectively, individual individually. We have dealt individually and rightly with an individual seceder or with a person emerging from a sect. But grace handled the truth in another spirit when a rupture came in, however sadly, among those gathered. Take as a comparatively recent instance, what some have not

forgotten, the episode of Mr. A. Stewart, who broke up the assembly in Jersey by forcing a discipline which, spiritual souls could not acknowledge to be of God. Mr. Darby in concurrence with brethren of London of that day drew up a letter in which the saints of both meetings, then divided and breaking bread separately, were exhorted to receive one another and meet together as before. But Mr. S. insisted on his discipline and refused, thereby losing recognition and afterwards going from bad to worse, while those willing to act in grace had the confidence of their brethren. No man of weight then doubted that the re-union of divided meetings was right and comely before the Lord. To insist on individual reception in such circumstances would only be self-righteous and an effectual bar to His will of gathering His own in one. Surely as compared with the painful case of Jersey there is even less ground for hesitation now.

All who concur will feel the call to approach the Lord in confession as to the past and prayer for the present. Meetings could follow for united supplication and conference. Private questions could be fittingly enquired into in private.

“Grace be with all who love our Lord Jesus Christ in uncorruptness.”

Innovation

Dear Brother,

Isolation is not the only snare for the Christian in the present anomalous condition of Christendom. Innovation is another resource of unbelief, suited to a different order of mind, but no less a dishonour to God and a danger for man.

Tradition, even in the baseless sense which Romanism conceives, is less offensive to a pious mind. For it assumes to have ever ruled, though unwritten, from the beginning of the church; it claims till our day the maintenance of God's authority intact. The authentic and authoritative doctrine of the Council of Trent is, that in their communion, and in theirs only, is preserved the precise and full truth and discipline from Christ's lips received through the Holy Spirit from the apostles. Council. Trident. Sess. iv. They add, what is a foolish impossibility, that no one may dare to interpret scripture itself contrary to the unanimous consent of the Fathers. For, though this may sound fair to such as know little beyond a compendium of controversial theology, those at all familiar with the Fathers must be aware of their differences as to almost every truth of scripture they discuss. Nor this only; for they ignore not only the most fundamental blessings of the gospel for the Christian, but the highest and most characteristic privileges of the church. The theory however is that theirs is the truth held uninterruptedly from the first.

Now it is true that in receiving Christ the Christian has the truth. He, not the church, is the way, the truth, and the life (John 14). The Father of His own will begot

believers by the word of truth (James 1:18). The truth, the Son, makes the disciple free (John 8:32-36). But, if the babes are declared to have unction from the Holy One and to know all things (1 John 2:20), scripture, every scripture, not only the O.T. but still more the N.T., is the special safeguard as well as means, divinely inspired, and profitable, for teaching, for conviction, for correction, for instruction. Thus only can the man of God be complete, fully fitted to every good work; as the church, having God's final as well as first word, is in both privilege and responsibility the truth's pillar and basement. In no other body here below, Jewish or Gentile, is this found. If Christ is the truth, God's assembly or church is bound to hold it forth legibly and unshaken.

So we know that Christ walked, our only perfect example. Never did any so honour God's word, as the Eternal Word here when He became flesh. See Him, even as a child of twelve, sitting in the midst of the teachers, hearing them, and asking them questions; and all who heard Him were astonished at His understanding and answers. He was Lord of all, but came to obey, and learnt obedience (being used to command) from the things which He suffered. When tempted by the devil, it was not otherwise: even when hungry after forty days' abstinence in the wilderness, He would not convert a stone into a loaf without a word from God. Still less would He do homage save to Jehovah, Israel's God, for all the kingdoms of the habitable earth; Him only did Christ serve. Nor would He put God or His promises to the test, as if He were not sure of His fidelity, but here as always stood on "It is written"; and if Satan misused it, He corrected and

defeated him by “It is written again.” He was always dependent and obedient. So He ever met the weakness, the prejudices, or the self-will of friends, the opposition, hypocrisy, and hatred of enemies: every class, Pharisees, Sadducees, Herodians; priests, rulers, scribes, lawyers, He met with the word of God. If the officials owned, as all but the most wanton and wicked must, that no man spoke as this Man, He Himself set as the highest testimony God’s written word, even Moses’ writings, beyond His spoken words (John 5:45-47).

As in life, so in death He inflexibly obeyed and put honour on scripture. In His deepest suffering He expressed His sense of abandonment in the words written by His Spirit in David a thousand years before, as He commended His spirit to the Father in the language of another Psalm. Just before departing, and knowing that all things were now finished that the scripture might be fulfilled, He said, I thirst. Then a sponge full of vinegar and with hyssop round it was put to His mouth; whereon He said, It is finished, and bowing His head He delivered up His spirit: words never used of another, only proper to Him Who, though true man, was very God. Even so what care to prove the divine value of the written word! Not a bone of Him should be broken, proclaimed one scripture, as another predicted, They shall look on Him Whom they pierced.

Now we who believe are sanctified by the Spirit to the obedience, no less than to the blood-sprinkling, of Jesus (1 Peter 1:2). We are not under law like Jews; we are called to obey like Himself, in the conscious relationship of sons of God. His word is a law of liberty to us, as partakers of a divine nature; for Christ is our life. Hence God’s word is our directory and chart; as Christ is the

true object, and the Holy Spirit is the power. Thus has God provided for His children, for His servants, for His church, in all possible wants, difficulties, and dangers. He reveals every truth; He prescribes every service that is good. Not an evil doctrine, not a devious way, is overlooked. There is a “commandment” for the beginner; there is the “word” for the more mature. Examples and warnings abound. The walk and the worship that please Him, being alone due to Him, are clearly set before us. For as our life in love upwards or downwards is also one of obedience in the Spirit, so it necessarily requires His word, that all may be the doing of His will.

So the Lord told Saul of Tarsus (who asks on his conversion what His will was), Rise up and go to Damascus; and there it shall be told thee of all things which it is appointed thee to do. Whatever his place and power might be, Paul gives a blessed pattern of obedience to the Christian, and charged the saints to imitate him, as he also did Christ (1 Cor. 11:1). Again, John urges the same principle in 1 John 2. Obedience is the first and most peremptory exercise of life, as we read in vers. 3-6. Love is essential, but justly follows in vers. 7-11; for the first-fruits are ever due to God. And if this be not so, we cannot love aright, and it might even become a peril and delusion.

This we had learnt to be the saving principle in the present ruin of Christendom. This was sought and taught in being gathered to the name of the Lord Jesus. Others, whether avowing it or not, had departed from God’s word and believed not in the presence of His Spirit, for subjection to Him. There is always danger of swerving for personal or party objects; which, when

yielded to, adds another sect. Let us consider the apostles when they met to decide the great question of imposing the law on the Gentiles who believed (Acts 15). Not Peter nor Paul, but James pointed to “the words of the prophets,” as agreeing with what God had now wrought in taking out of the nations a people for His name. Inspired men though they were, they thus rested on God’s written word. As we have the final mind of God in the N.T., what infatuation it would be to turn to any device of men from His will now given in full for our guidance! It is not only that scripture is sufficient, but that thereby the man of God may be complete: the chief safeguard in these last and perilous days.

Where Christ is not thus the centre, nor God’s word the absolute authority by the Spirit, it is not surprising that saints should legislate, either to evade a danger or to enlarge their borders. But “scripture cannot be broken.” It really is to give up the divine for the human, to turn from faith to sight. Innovation is a departure fatal to any such stand as God insists on for the church or for the Lord’s service.

For the first time had the retort come from within that those gathered to the Lord’s name should be the last to complain of innovation, since they are the greatest of all innovators. A more perverse and unworthy utterance never was made. For our entire position is a return to the Lord’s will individually and collectively. Every change that now prevails in great or little societies of Christendom we have renounced, in order to obey the word, relying on the Spirit’s presence and action to glorify the Lord. That the adversaries of Christian obedience should try to defame recurrence to God’s word is intelligible. They naturally assume that things as

they are in their own company is the right thing; and they claim power to make as many new plans as they consider expedient. Next they venture to stigmatize those who go back to the beginning, in order to do God's will as He revealed it to His apostles, not because the charge is just, but because they regard it as most offensive to those who desire to be faithful, and as likely to please the multitude who judge by appearance and prefer present ease.

But is it not a humbling and afflicting fact, yet significant, that any one who ever took the place of being gathered to the Lord's name should have so completely forgotten the truth as to adopt the language of enemies? For the retort is not only to the last degree unintelligent land false; but it abandons God's word and substitutes the actual state of Christendom as the standard to judge by. For this poor gibe means, that it is innovation to leave Romanists and Anglicans, Presbyterians and Congregationalists, and that such ought not to complain of fresh innovation. Where is faith, where the obedience we owe our God, in such vain efforts to mislead? To follow the Lord and His apostles is the very reverse of innovation; and the adoption of such a reproach betrays an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God.

In a similar spirit is the application one has lately heard of Gamaliel's advice to the high priest and the council who sought to kill the apostles. "Refrain from these men and let them alone: because if this counsel or this work be of men, it will be overthrown; but if it be of God, ye will not be able to overthrow them, lest haply ye be found even fighting against God" (Acts 5:38, 39). It was the common sense, and perhaps the conscience, of an

unbelieving Rabbi warning his fellows blinded by fury; but he and they in the dark as to God's mind. For we know too well how the grossest departures from the truth, like Romanism and many other evil systems, may last for ages and outwardly flourish, instead of being soon overthrown. Think of Christians fallen so low as to cite what scripture tells us of God's providential care in thus working among those without to restrain the residue of man's fury, even if it be not yet made to praise Him, as it shall be! Think of perverting it to hinder the inalienable and imperative obligation of God's children, in refusing any service which lacks His authority in precept, example, or principle! What He wills is revealed; what is not revealed, as being outside faith, has no claim on obedience. It is human and lawless; and lawlessness is sin.

Yours ever in Christ, W.K.

Christ: not Christendom, nor Judaism

A reply to the author of a recent letter to the Bishop of Manchester.

(Wertheimer, Lea, and Co.)

Third Edition

Sir,

Though I have not read the Bishop’s sermon to the Jews, I have a few words to say in acknowledgment of your letter, sent me by yourself or some other unknown donor.

You appear throughout to forget two things, which the scriptures you own do not fail to urge: the predicted and now fulfilled ruin of the Jews as a people before their final restoration and glory; and the sovereign grace of God equally assured to the Gentiles meanwhile.

1. The law, the Psalms, and the prophets, are unmistakable that Israel were to break down as God’s witness so completely that He would disown them for a season. (See Deut. 28:47, 48; 63, 64; Deut. 29:26, 27; Deut. 31:16-18; 29; Deut. 32:5, 6, 15-20; Ps. 43:1; Ps. 53; Ps. 68:18 (19 Heb.); Ps. 106; Ps. 118; Isaiah 1:9; 14, 15; Isa. 6:9-13; Isa. 8:14; Isa. 10:22; Isa. 65:2; Hosea 1:6-9; Hosea 3:4.) So Ezekiel shows us at the beginning the cherubim of glory gradually departing when the: first Gentile power executed judgment on Israel, and at the end the return of the glory when the last Gentile empire is judged and Israel are once more and for ever blessed.

2. The same living oracles are no less explicit that divine mercy should visit and bless the Gentiles during His

disowning of Israel. (See Deut. 32:21; Ps. 18: 43 (44), 49 (50); Isa. 8:16, 17; Isa. 9:1; Isa. 49:6; Isa. 53:14, 15; Isa. 65:1; Hosea 1:10 (2:1 Heb.)

These scriptures (save where the entire chapter is referred to) I cite from the version of Mr. Isaac Leeser, who is regarded by his brethren as a learned and conscientious Hebraist.

Deuteronomy 28:47, 48; 63, 64, “For the reason that thou didst not serve the LORD thy God with joyfulness and with gladness of heart while there was abundance of all things; therefore shalt thou serve thy enemies whom the LORD will send out against thee, in hunger, and in thirst, and in nakedness, and in want of everything; and they will put a yoke of iron upon thy neck, until they have destroyed thee.... And it shall come to pass, that, as the LORD rejoiced over you to do you good and to multiply you, so will the LORD rejoice over you to bring you to nought, and to destroy you; and ye shall be plucked from off the land whither thou goest to possess it. And the LORD will scatter thee among all the nations, from one end of the earth even unto the other end of the earth; and there wilt thou serve strange gods which neither thou nor thy fathers have known, even wood and stone.”

Deuteronomy 29:26, 27, “And the anger of the, LORD was kindled against this land, to bring upon it the entire curse that is written in this book; and the LORD plucked them out of their land in anger, and in wrath, and in great indignation, and he cast them into another land, as it is this day.”

Deuteronomy 31:16-18, “And the LORD said unto Moses, Behold, thou shalt sleep with thy fathers; and then will

this people rise up, and go astray after the gods of the strangers of the land, whither they go to be in the midst of them, and they will forsake me, and break my covenant which I have made with them. And my anger shall he kindled against them on that day, and I will forsake them, and I will hide my face from them, and they shall be given to be devoured, and many evils and troubles shall overtake them, and they will say on that day, Is it not because my God is not in the midst of me that these evils have overtaken me? But I will assuredly hide my face on that day on account of all the evils which they have wrought, because they have turned unto other gods."

Ibid. 29, "For I know that after my death ye will to a surety become corrupt, and turn aside from the way which I have commanded you, and that the evil will befall you in the latter days when ye do the evil in the eyes of the LORD, to incense him through the work of your hands."

Deuteronomy 32:5, 6; 15-20, "The corruption is not his, it is the defect of his children, of the perverse and crooked generation. Will ye thus requite the LORD, O people, worthless and unwise? is he not thy father who hath bought thee? is it not he who hath made thee, and established thee?... Thus did Yeshurun grow fat, and he kicked; (thou art grown fat, thick, fleshy;) and then he forsook the God who made him, and lightly esteemed the God of his salvation. They incensed him with strange gods, with abominations they provoked him to anger. They sacrificed unto evil spirits, things that are not god, gods that they knew not, new ones lately come up, which your fathers dreaded not. Of the Rock that begat thee thou wast unmindful, and forgottest the God that

had brought thee forth. And the LORD saw this, and he was angry; because of the provoking of his sons and of his daughters. And he said, I will hide my face from them, I will see what their end will be; for a perverse generation are they, children in whom there is no faith."

Psalm 43:1, "Judge me, O God! and plead my cause against an ungodly nation: from the deceitful and unjust man do thou deliver me." The godly ones confess here that not the Gentiles but the Jews are an, "ungodly nation."

Psalm 53: would have to be quoted as a whole. It speaks of the lawless enemy of God and his adherents, but this among the Jews: for what the law says, it speaks to them that are under the law, not to Gentiles.

Psalm 68:18 (19 Heb.), "Thou didst ascend on high, lead away captives, receive gifts among men, yea, even the rebellious, to dwell among them, O LORD God!'' It is beyond doubt Israel, who are here owned as "the rebellious" before the Eternal dwells among them; and this consequent on the ascension of the Lord on high to receive gifts as man and for men.

Psalm 106 is throughout a plain statement of the ruin and dispersion of Israel, though it calls for the mercy of God to save and gather them from among the nations.

Psalm 118 shows Israel not only compassed by the nations but severely chastised by Jehovah, and no deliverance or joy till the rejected Stone, the Messiah, is become the chief cornerstone.

Isaiah 1:9, 14, 15, "Unless the LORD of hosts had left unto us a remnant ever so small, like Sodom should we have been, unto Gomorrah should we have been

compared.... Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth; they are become a burden unto me: I am weary to bear them. And when ye spread forth your hands, I will withdraw myself from you; yea, when ye make ever so many prayers, I will not hear: your hands are full of blood."

Isaiah 6:9-13, "And he said, Go and say unto this people, Hear indeed but understand not; and see indeed, but know not. Obdurate will remain the heart of this people, and their eyes will be heavy, and their eyes will be shut: so that they will not see with their eyes, nor hear with their ears, nor their hearts be understanding, so that they be converted, and healing be granted them. And I said, How long, O Lord? And he said, Until that cities be left waste without an inhabitant, and houses without man, and the soil be made desolate as a wilderness, and the LORD will have removed far away the men, and the depopulation be great in the midst of the land. And should a tenth part thereof yet remain, it will again be swept away; (yet) like the terebinth and the oak, which, when they cast their leaves, retain their stems, so remaineth the holy seed, its stem."

Isaiah 8:14, "And he will be for a sanctuary; but also for a stone of stumbling, and for a rock to fall over unto both the houses of Israel, for a gin and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem."

Isaiah 10:22, "For though thy people Israel should be as the sand of the sea, (yet) a remnant (only) of them shall return."

Isaiah 65:2, "I spread out my hands all the time unto a rebellious people, that walk in the way which is not good, after their own thoughts."

Hosea 1:6-9, " And he said unto him, Call her name Lo-ruchamah [Not finding mercy]; for I will not farther have any more mercy upon the house of Israel; but I will give them their full recompense. But upon the house of Judah will I have mercy, and I will save them through the LORD their God, and I will not save them by the bow, or by the sword, or by battle, by horses, or by horsemen. Now when she had weaned Lo-ruchamah, she conceived and bore a son. Then said he, Call his name Lo-'ammi [Not my people]; for ye are not my people, and I will indeed not be unto you (a God)."

Hosea 3:4, "For many days shall the children of Israel abide without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without a standing image, and without an ephod and theraphim."1 These passages are ample proofs that God was to cut off Israel as a whole from their place of privilege as His people because of their sins; what follows will show His purpose of mercy towards the Gentiles while Israel are thus disowned for a while.

2. Deuteronomy 32:21, "They have moved me to wrath with things that are not god; they have provoked me to anger with their vanities; and I too will move them to jealousy with those which are not a people; I will provoke them to anger with a worthless nation."

Psalm 18:43 (44), 49 (50), "Thou deliverest me from the contests of the people; thou appointest me to be the head of nations; a people that I know not shall serve me.... Therefore will I give thanks unto thee among the nations, O LORD!"

Isaiah 8:16, 17, "Bind up the testimony, seal up the law among my disciples. And I will wait for the LORD, that

hideth his face from the house of Jacob, and I will hope for him."

Isaiah 9:1, "The people that walk in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death — a light shineth brightly over them.''

Isaiah 49:6, "And he said, It is too light a thing that thou shouldest be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to bring back the preserved of Israel; but I will (also) appoint thee for a light to the nations, that my salvation may reach as far as the end of the earth."

Isaiah 52:14, 15, "Just as many were astonished at thee, so greatly was his countenance marred more than any (other) man's, and his form more than (that of) the sons of men, — thus will he cause many nations to jump up [in astonishment]: at him will kings shut their mouth for what had not been told unto them shall they see, and what they had never heard shall they understand."

Isaiah 65:1, "I allowed myself to be sought by those that asked not; I let myself be found by those that sought me not: I said, 'Here am I, here am I,' unto a nation that called itself not by my name."

Hosea 1:10 (2:1 Heb.), "And it shall come to pass that instead that people say of them, Ye are not my people [Lo-ammi], shall they call them, The sons of the living God."

Such scriptures as speak of the nations blessed when Israel is blessed, of their trusting in the Messiah when He reigns in peace and glory over the earth, of their rejoicing with His people Israel, are not cited now, but those that reveal the call of the Gentiles when Israel are Lo-ammi and under judicial blindness for a season.

These truths shine with light brighter than the sun in God's oracles; and the plainest facts answer to them. For on the one hand you, the chosen people, are expelled by God (none else could have done it) from your land, capital, and sanctuary, the only spot where you can sacrifice acceptably; and without sacrifice you surely know that your worship is at an end, as is your polity also while your land is ruled by the stranger. On the other hand those who were the vilest slaves of idolatry and moral corruption, who knew not the true God and only dreaded demons, now rejoice in your scriptures, not to speak of those which might be viewed as their own; and, while you groan, they worship and praise God as their very God and Father, having renounced the abominations of the heathen.

How comes this marvellous change? When your nation fell into revolting and persistent idolatry, not only in the people and in the priests but in the king of David's line, God justly indignant as He was swept you away into idol-loving Babylon for no more than seventy years. What sin is so much worse as to account for your actual dispersion during the last 1800 years? Do you not even suspect? What but rejection of your own Messiah, Emmanuel? The greatest of your prophets lays precisely these two counts of indictment against you: first, idolatry (Isa. 40 — Isa. 48); secondly, rejection of the Messiah. (Isa. 49 — Isa. 57) All is not exhausted yet; but it is obduracy itself to evade such a conviction of your sins. Yea, blinded by proud unbelief, you smote the Judge of Israel with a rod upon the cheek — Him that was to be born in Bethlehem, yet to be ruler in Israel; and no wonder, for His goings forth were from of old, from everlasting (Micah 5:1-3); and therefore has He

given you up till the birth of God's final purpose of mercy and blessing for Israel. For the day comes, when they will repent and bow before the true Joseph who will then make Himself known to His brethren — that same Joseph, who even now sustains His guilty brethren, the sons of Israel, ignorant of Him yet famishing without Him who is exalted among the Gentiles, and there has a bride, His church. I am as sure as you that this Man, whom Jehovah owns as His Fellow (Zech. 13:7) and whom you are yet to own as the Jehovah that you pierced (Zech. 12:10),2 will be the peace, and will fight against your foes as in the day of battle, King over all the earth. In that day shall Israel be blessed and exalted, and the Gentiles bow, and their kings minister to Zion, and your sun no more go down nor your moon withdraw itself.

You cannot suppose then that I deny, enfeeble, or envy Israel's future glory on the earth under Messiah and the new covenant. How can one who looks, as every Christian ought, to be glorified in heaven with Christ? I have no sympathy with the conceit of Christendom which arrogates your blessings, as if you had lost your place and the Gentiles had gained it for ever. The Bishop of Manchester might be as slow to believe that Christendom is speedily to be judged for its apostasy, as you are that Israel suffer for theirs. The mass in Christendom now are no better than the mass of the Jews when Nebuchadnezzar or even Titus destroyed Jerusalem. But I see, in the scriptures we both acknowledge as divine, that your most fiery trial immediately precedes the deliverance of such Jews as are written in the book. (Dan. 12:1) You are destined to receive as "the king" in Palestine the basest of impostors

(Dan. 11:36-39); and the last empire of the Gentiles, the fourth Roman beast of Daniel 7, will play its most guilty part in it, when it revives (as it will soon) for God's final judgment. You both refused the true Christ; you are both to receive the Antichrist, when the Lord of glory will appear to the perdition of the beast and the false prophet and all their adherents, but to the deliverance of such Jews and Gentiles as will have been kept from this audacious blasphemy and lawlessness.

It is a ruinous oversight of your own scriptures and of your history to say that God's anger "is appeased." Heavier punishment is yet in store for the Jew for his unbelief. And what evidence can be imagined lower than yours for pretending to God's favour as a people? "The gift of genius," talents, learning, distinction, and," last not least! the abundance of their wealth and prosperity!!!" And the Jew flatters himself that "these are stubborn facts that outweigh a thousand quotations!" So naturally does slight of their own scriptures follow slight of their own Messiah, with the loss of their place and nation, yea also of eternal blessedness: for if He sits at Jehovah's right hand, the true Melchizedek, what will it be for His enemies when He strikes in the day of His wrath? (Compare Psalms 45:3-6, Ps. 110) His glory measures His judgments, and they are guiltiest who having the word of God fail to read and understand it aright.

Have you not forgotten the words of Moses in whom you trust? He does declare in Deuteronomy 28 the principles of the divine government of Israel; but the sum of all is the blessing of Jehovah in the land which He gives them, according to His oath to the fathers. But in this same chapter He warns Israel with yet greater detail and

solemnity, that, if they should not hearken to His voice, Jehovah should send on them curses to consume Israel from off the land and to pursue them elsewhere, so that they should become an astonishment, a proverb, and a byword among all nations. In Deuteronomy 29 He presents all nations asking why Jehovah had so desolated the holy land, and wherefore the heat of so great anger; and the answer is, Because Israel forsook the covenant of Jehovah for false gods, and so the curse fell, and they were rooted out of their land in great indignation. Further in Deuteronomy 30 Moses declares that, when Israel come to repentance among the nations whither they are driven, and return to Jehovah their God, and obey His voice, then will He return their captivity and in His compassion gather them back and bring them into the land, and not only bless and multiply them there but put all the curses on their enemies and persecutors.

It appears to me clear that you have read your law to but little purpose. Weigh Leviticus 26, its warnings, threats, and assurance of mercy when your uncircumcised hearts are humbled. Does God fail to keep His word? or is it not rather you who have not yet truly confessed your iniquity and accepted its punishment? When Israel's hearts are humbled, God declares He will remember His covenant and the land. Has He done so yet? If not, why not? Do you not see, then, in all this and much more, the plainest proof that you are still altogether impenitent, and with this brand of unblessed outcasts on your brow? Are you not glorying in your shame just like the Gentiles which knew not God, who like you boasted (and some of them with no less reason than you for more than two thousand

years) of their arts in peace and war, their prowess, skill, learning, and letters?

Are you not, on the contrary, the merest moneychangers of the Gentiles, a people without a country, without a king or even a prince; and, what is the most awful of all, though no longer zealots of a false religion, without the true, and this the unquestionable sentence of your own holy prophet? O that you might ponder the words with which Hosea concludes his prediction of your present misery, “after that will the children of Israel return and seek for the LORD their God and David their king, and fearing will they hasten to the LORD and to His goodness in the latter days?” Alas! you are as yet far from seeking Jehovah, or the king Messiah: else would you be blessed and a blessing under His reign in your own land. Does He not say? “I am as a lion unto Ephraim, and as a young lion to the house of Judah; I, even I, myself will tear in pieces and go away; I will bear away, and none shall deliver him. I will go (from here and) return to my place, till they acknowledge their guilt, and seek my presence; in their affliction will they seek for me.” (Hosea 5:14, 15)

How can you then venture to affirm that you have a single mark of divine favour according to the law and the prophets? Is it not because you are not only guilty exiles by the fiat of Jehovah, but dead even to your wretchedness and degradation? So, under the symbol of the valley of dry bones, another of your holy men of old declared Israel were to be, as they beyond a doubt are, and have long been, dead and buried, till they hear the word of Jehovah, and live by His gracious power. Then shall they be saved out of all their dwelling-places wherein they have sinned, and brought into the land of

Israel, where Judah and Joseph shall once mote be one in Jehovah's hand, and one king reign over them all, and they cleansed from all their idols and detestable things and transgressions, shall be Jehovah's people, and He their God. If you dare not say that Israel are thus dwelling in their land under the everlasting covenant of peace, at least have done with the vainglory you have learnt from the heathen, and confess that you are still suffering the just punishment of your obdurate heart. You own your sins in general doubtless, but not the great transgression, your past idolatries, but not the blood-guiltiness which rests on you till it be confessed in His presence: else surely He who is good, and ready to forgive, and plenteous in mercy to all that call on Him, were even now opening your graves, and bringing you into the land of Israel to plant and bless you there for ever. Ezekiel 37.

The Holy One of Israel, whom your fathers (by the hand of lawless men) nailed to a cross and slew, Himself prayed, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do. And therein is accomplished the type of the fourth book of the law; where the unwitting manslayer finds refuge with such servants of God as have no inheritance they call their own on earth (earthly-minded Christendom being the persecutor of the Jews), but abides outside the land of his possession until the death of the high priest who has been anointed with the holy oil. So with the Jews, who in their ignorance killed the Messiah, and remain kept from the avenger of blood but outside the land of promise, till Christ closes the priesthood He is now carrying on in the heavens for those who believe during the exile and Lo-ammi state of the Jew. See Numbers 35.

Of course the controversialists of Judaism seek to evade such a scripture as Isaiah 53. Instead of reading in it the future confession by Israel of their past sin in rejecting their Messiah, they try to apply it either to Jeremiah, or to the prophets as a body, or to king Josiah, or to Israel as a people. But even the rationalistic Gesenius and De Wette could not deny that expiation runs through the chapter, as it does through the Jewish system in scripture from beginning to end. Again, though the sorrows of Jeremiah may to some extent agree with the Holy Victim that Isaiah portrays, not so will either their vicarious character, or still less the glorious consummation which will be their result when kings shut their mouths before His exaltation. Applied to Messiah, humbled and suffering, but returning to reign in glory, all is plain. Certainly those who would drag Jeremiah or the prophets into the chapter are not entitled to rebuke others for neglect of the context: not a clause consists with either idea. Abarbanel's thought of Josiah is no less unfounded than that of Saadiah Gaon, who would have Jeremiah. But what shall we say of R. Isaac's, in the Chizzuk Amunah? He, with Rashi, Aben Ezra, and D. Kimchi, conceives Israel to be here. Nor do I deny that Jews do appear, but wholly distinct from the One who suffers for their sins.

It is not the Gentiles3 but the Jews who say, "Who would have believed our report?.... Our pains he carried while we indeed esteemed him stricken, smitten of God and afflicted. Yet he was wounded for our transgressions. He was bruised for our iniquities. The chastisement of our peace was upon him, and through his bruises was healing granted to us." It is Israel who thus speak, when repentant confessing their past unbelief. They had

regarded Him as an utter aversion to God, when in truth He was making atonement for their transgressions. It is not only the language and the context, but the whole scope of the prophecy, that fix its real point to be Messiah, first bearing the sin of many, then dividing the spoil with the strong, when He is exalted and extolled and placed very high. And so Jonathan ben Uzziel interpreted in the Targum, and "the wise men of blessed memory," as Abarbanel tells us, in many of their Medrashes; so the book of Zohar (comment on Exod. fol. 95, col. 3), and even the Talmud Babyl. (in Sanhed. Perek Chelek, fol. 98, col. 2), and the Yalkat Shimoni on the passage. But the most remarkable of all perhaps is the fact that in the public prayers of the synagogue, both at the Passover and on the day of atonement, even the Jews of our day "allude to Isaiah 52 and Isaiah 53 as applying to Messiah, though the translator has tried to weaken the last of them by trying to bring in Josiah in defiance of the context.

It is vain for you or any other to retreat from the testimony of God's word (and I have cited only what you must and do own) into questions of translation or interpretation — the constant resource of unbelief, of Rabbis on the one hand, and of papists as well as rationalists on the other. Any respectable version of your own is quite enough to convict you of defying God's warnings, as you now despise the lesson of your own disconsolate condition — not only without a king and a prince, but without a sacrifice, without an image or statue, and without an ephod and teraphim. The prophet supposes, that you are no longer worshipping a false God; but he unquestionably predicts Israel's abiding many days in this strangely abnormal state without the

true God or His ordinances. Has it no adequate moral cause? Did God so cast off and punish His people (now Lo-ammi) without some sin far more flagrant than their far less punished idolatry of old? What was the sin? What does Daniel intimate in Dan. 9:26, 27? You may speak of “solace and rules of conduct for this life as well as assurance and hope for the life hereafter.” But if you have not hearkened to the Prophet from among the Jews like unto Moses, who was to speak all that Jehovah should command Him, Jehovah declares that He will require it of you. Your own Pentateuch thus demands that you should hearken under the penalty of divine judgment; and now that the judgment is on you, we entreat you to pause and consider. Even before God gave you up, when you were in the land under your own anointed king you were ever disposed to be refractory, disobedient, and idolatrous. What have you done worse? Will boasting of your “ancient and glorious religion” mend matters? So did they who perished under the avenging Roman.

Pardon me if I think that you talk with levity of the Messiah even in your sense, when you argue that, whether He has come or is yet to come, “it does not, in the slightest degree, affect the eternal truths of our religion.’’ It would have been truer to have said that the eternal truth of God was independent of that law of Moses which was unknown even to your fathers who received the promises — promises only to be fulfilled when you repent, among your other sins, of that for which God drove out Ephraim from the land and some time after also drove out Judah, and worst of all of that for which He dispersed the remnant that returned from Babylon.

I grieve for you who can thus speak of such deadly unbelief. This did not Abraham. Before the writings of Moses or the law, he waited for Messiah. So did Abel, and Enoch, and Noah. All their hopes turned, on the Seed of the woman who should bruise the serpent's head, though the serpent should wound His heel. The common object of faith for all the godly before the law was not Judaism, but the coming Messiah. He was the centre of the promises and, I admit, of blessings for the elect people, Abram's seed, and in their land; but deeper than and above all He is the Seed in whom all the nations of the earth shall be blessed. Did you ever notice Jehovah swearing thus, after Abraham's only son had been under the sentence of death as a burnt-offering till the third day when he was raised up as it were from the dead by God's intervention? After the figure of death and resurrection the blessing to all the nations was then solemnly proclaimed. (Gen. 22)

That the Messiah is Son of God (Ps. 2) and Son of man exalted over all things (Ps. 8), that He is a divine person yet born of the virgin, God with us (Isa. 7, 8, 9), is certain. Hence it can be nothing secondary but vital to own Him thus come, as every Christian believes, including multitudes of your brethren since in every age. Further, a Messiah, suffering for sin and bringing in righteousness, gives the only worthy sense to sacrifice and offering, to brazen and golden altar, to Levite and priest. Not a rite but proclaims the sinner's need or the provision of grace in the Saviour. Not a glory but is a reflection of the Anointed who is dead, risen, and ascended to heaven. God come down to man, and man gone up to God, both united in His person, who is owned in His humiliation as the equal of Jehovah (Zech. 13),

and who, when reigning as God on His throne, owns man as His companion. (Ps. 45) Do you not understand here that, if it be wicked to go after a strange god, it is yet worse to insult the true God when He deigned in love to become man and to die in order to save righteously and for ever those who believe? Do you doubt the justice of this? I reply that it is a question not of man's righteousness but of God's. Now if one man by sin ruined mankind, as the first book of Moses shows, is it not worthy of God that another man, His Son, should save all that believe in Him? His suffering for sins had made it a righteous thing for God thus to justify, to be a just God and a Saviour.

I bless God for every word of His that is revealed, from Genesis to Malachi, to speak now of nothing more; but I affirm that not one distinctive good in Christianity is derived from or is to be found in Judaism. Not the holy and the inspired writers you own, but the tradition of Judaism rejects a suffering Saviour, God and man in one person? Not faith but unbelief denies that the infinite sacrifice of the true atonement-day is already offered and accepted of God and efficacious for ever for those who believe on Him and rest on it. We have a great high-priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God: is this no good, or is it found in Judaism? We have an altar, which is so far from being derived from Judaism that contrariwise they have no right to eat of it who serve the tabernacle. So too by the Holy Spirit we were sealed after we believed the gospel, and in no way did Judaism give it us. Our relationships, with God as our Father, with Christ as our Head, what have they to do with Judaism? They are founded entirely on the Messiah, whom Judaism refused and crucified, as now

raised up by God and glorified in heaven, which is our characteristic place of blessing as truly as Canaan was and will be for Israel.

If indeed you were sinless, one could understand the vaunt, “Judaism is all sufficient for us.” But a Jew shows less conscience than the heathen if he conceives that he can have remission of sins without blood of a sacrifice acceptable to God. You know that you have no such sacrifice; you ought to know then that dying in your sins without blood upon the altar, you are lost. The third book of Moses declares that it is the blood that makes an atonement for the soul. (Lev. 17:11) Is not this a truth of your religion? Is it eternal or temporary? If temporary, why do you boast of that which is so transient? If eternal, where and how do you stand before God and His word which you own to your own condemnation? If you disown this cardinal truth of the law, what can save you? Without atoning blood, you are more miserable and more guilty than the most benighted of the Gentiles. Alas! rationalism possesses the Jew even more than Christendom.

It is a mistake however that the failure of Christendom arises from forsaking Judaism for distinctive principles of its own. As the apostasy of the Jews was by their abandoning Jehovah and His law for Gentilism and, its idols, so of Christendom by judaising. Christianity stands by faith of Christ dead, risen, and glorified in heaven, and the possession of the Holy Ghost now on earth thereby. But Christians soon grew weary of the cross here and glory in heaven with Christ. They preferred that place of earthly glory and power with the law as their rule which God had given to Israel; and so seeking they were ruined. It was salt that had lost its savour. I go

farther than you, believing that, when Jehovah my God comes and all the saints with Him (Zech. 14), He will judge guilty Christendom no less than Judaism. This is more serious than perishing by its own dissensions or any other human cause.

Judaism then is insufficient to supply even the first need of a soul awakened to feel the burden of its sins. The Jew must either stifle his conscience by denying:that he has sins, or abandon the law of Jehovah by pretending to an atonement for his soul without blood. Thus the modern Jew really gives up the hopes and promises of his forefathers. He looks for no daysman, he trusts in no kinsman-redeemer, he requires no intercession, but, like any other unbeliever, he pretends to have direct access to God Himself. And no wonder; for they have refused in unbelief their own Messiah, who, though God over all blessed for ever, came in flesh to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. How then can you any longer say that yours was the religion of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; Moses, Elijah, and Daniel? (p. 8) You say, “Regard with religious awe our preservation and the preservation of our religion! Seek not to disturb it! Honour the religion of the Jew, if only because it was the religion of Jesus, whom you claim as the Founder of your religion.” But as well might one be told to regard with religious awe Lot’s wife when she became a pillar of salt. Doubtless the Messiah was born of the virgin, and of David’s house; but how can one honour the religion of those who all cried, “Not this man, but Barabbas.”.... “We have no king but Caesar”? The truth is that the law for sinful man is but a cavern, however magnificent, of darkness and death till Messiah (in hope or actual

accomplishment) bring in light and life: then only is all lit up with a brightness which bespeaks itself divine.

You do not well to be angry if those who enjoy eternal life and peace in believing desire the same for others who are either insensible to their misery, or intensely sad, as I trust some of Israel are in their present desolation under the evident judgment of God. I admit that Jews might try to spread their Judaism or Gentiles their heathenism, and that Christians ought to compassionate efforts so futile for those who have faith. It is however no question of any right of ours, but of His authority who commanded His servants to preach the good news to every creature. It is one of the many points of contrast between the law and the gospel.

Nor are you justified in drawing from God's unchanging character that the Jew must remain what He was. Notwithstanding I myself believe there never has been a moment since God's call of Abraham that He had not in that line one or more faithful to His name. When the Messiah came and went out of the Jewish fold, the Jewish sheep followed; and so there has been an elect remnant of Jews outside Judaism ever since, without speaking of the Gentiles. I believe too that the day is coming fast when all of that people who refuse the true Christ will fall under Antichrist or otherwise perish for rebellion against Jehovah, and that then the nation all righteous, owning the despised Nazarene as their Messiah, yea their Lord and their God, shall be a blessing to all the families in the earth. But that day is not yet come; and whoever lives and dies hearing of the Lord Jesus Christ now but rejecting Him perishes for ever. What could the most decided Jew think of the Christian's charity who yet forbears to speak of the only

One who, as he believes, can save Jew or Gentile? It would be far more reasonable to doubt the charity and indeed the faith of him who could be silent when man's salvation and God's glory are at stake. It is all well to instruct. and exhort and correct fellow-Christians, but this does not absolve from the duty of proclaiming the Lord and Saviour. Neither the law nor the constancy of the Jew can save his soul, nor that "boundless charity" which he proposes to the Christian's emulation — a charity which, I must say, is clean opposed to the principles and precepts of the Talmud, and which you must know, if you fairly traced it, to be directly and emphatically the spirit of the Gospel, though the synagogue tried to get the credit of it. But, leaving this, what is the Christian to do who is sure that the Jew is perishing for ever for the want of that Saviour whom God has given in their rejected Messiah? It is evidently a question of faith and love; and he who has them not can be necessarily no judge of the matter.

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1 Mr. Leeser admits "that the prophet describes here exactly our present state, as it has also been for many centuries — neither altar of God nor idolatry, no consulting by the true priests nor by idols;" but he adds, "while we still adhere to the LORD, notwithstanding our sins." In this last the annotator departs from his text, which distinctly supposes a departure meanwhile from the LORD, and a return of Israel in the latter days, when He will betroth the long faithless wife to Himself for ever. Is not this the truth, rather than the flattering illusion of the modern Israelite? Their return and

blessing are subsequent to their present anomalous state, and in no way begun yet.

2 I am aware that certain Jews argue that “whom they have pierced” cannot be in apposition with “to me,” because the next clause is, “they will lament for him,” not me. But such a change of persons is not uncommon in scripture. See the very next chapter of Zechariah (Zech. 14:5): “And then will come the LORD my God, and all the saints with thee,” not with Him. Here indeed nearly 40 MSS and the versions generally read “with him,” some even changing the text further into)” His holy ones,” while certain of the Rabbis, etc., have tried to escape the truth by referring [this?] to Jerusalem. But in such cases, if anywhere, the critical maxim holds true: proclivi lectioni praestat ardua. There was obvious motive to tamper with the difficulty, none to favour it. In Zechariah 12:10 there can be no antecedent according to Hebrew idiom, but yachid. To escape this Kimchi interprets the connected words “because they pierced,” leaving it open who was; but this is as opposed to legitimate grammar as Mr. Leeser’s, interpolation of “every one.” Its object is everywhere else expressed. It is well known that the Jews, who could not accept Kimchi’s solution, changed the reading [...], first giving it as the Kerl, afterwards introducing it into the text! But even the keenest of their controversialists (Abarbanel, Lipmann, etc.) either omit the fact or disown the daring innovation.

3 Dr. Phillipson strives hard to get rid of the truth here; as if Isaiah were declaring the present degradation of Israel to be necessary for the accomplishment of their mission, and their sufferings as borne by Israel to be the means of happiness for the nations! Is it possible that

men who fear God, and tremble at His word, can fail to see that this would neutralize His solemn condemnation of Israel as guilty without excuse, and the moral glory of the Messiah as their only Saviour? Alas! those whom the prophet is here convicting of being doubly “wicked” wish to deprive of His praise Him who had done no violence, and in whose mouth was no deceit, the spotless, suffering, uncomplaining Lamb, on whom, Jehovah declares, the plague was laid “for the transgressions of my people.” Who is He then? and who are “My people?” Surely not the same, but in the most marked contrast — Israel once unbelieving, now confessing; and one who was bearing their guilt, but is afterwards their highest glory and that of all the earth. Can any interpretation be more certain than this? Can perversion be more evident than that which is current among the Jews of our day? Let them weigh the section before God for their own souls. It is the old snare of every heart, Jewish or Gentile alike, the pretension to stand for oneself, instead of finding one’s only safety in Messiah and His atonement of sins.