

UNITARIANISM DEFENDED

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LECTURES

AT

PARADISE ST CHAPEL

LIVERPOOL

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1839.

UNITARIANISM DEFENDED:  
A SERIES OF LECTURES

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THREE PROTESTANT DISSENTING MINISTERS  
OF LIVERPOOL.

IN 1827-28.

A COURSE OF LECTURES, ENTITLED "UNITARIANISM  
CONSIDERED," BY THIRTEEN MEMBERS OF  
THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

World is beneath feet of Jesus but still can't find it with his words. I know  
It is there with his feet. I know with his feet the unbroken of the earth as the  
center of the world. I know with his feet, says St. Paul, the standing, the end of all  
creation. They would not allow a new man, consisting of abstract theories, to  
impose their words as a truth which depends on the will of the State, or more  
than the old father, which says the Law is the Law. *—Works and Sermons, by Rev.  
J. James White, p. 22, and sequel.*



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LIVERPOOL  
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LONDON  
JOHN GREEN, 121, NEWGATE STREET

1426.

## GENERAL PREFACE.

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IN this Preface, and in all the other contents of this volume, we have occupied the position of an assailed party, lending our best consideration to whatever a lagued body of resolute and unsparring adversaries could say against us. We have stood upon the defensive, not lamenting that such an occasion had occurred of exposing our views of Christianity to so severe a scrutiny, and of displaying to the world whether our position was tenable. We did not provoke this Controversy. It was of our opponents' choosing. They entered into combination, and arranged their method of attack, and invited the public attentively to look on while they performed upon us the work of destruction. With respectful attention, as men whose system of Christianity was about to be subjected to a powerful analysis by those who believed the main ingredients to be poisonous,—but with quiet hearts, as men who had no interest in this world but to discover Truth,—we have interfered no further than was necessary to make this examination, by carefulness, impar-

tiality, and accuracy, productive of a true result. We have struck out whatever was untrue, and we have supplied whatever was wanting, to exhibit a full statement of the respective Evidences of Unitarianism and of Trinitarianism. Lecture qualifies lecture, and Preface corrects Preface. We are satisfied to have thus placed, side by side, the contrasted views of Man and God, and to await the issues.

To return upon the "thirteen Clergymen of the Church of England" the words of their General Preface, (p. xi) "*it is no uncommon practice in modern criticism to neglect the statements*" of an opponent's case, as if they never had been made, and the corrections passed upon one's own as if they never had been experienced. It is the policy of the "thirteen Clergymen" to *reiterate*, nothing daunted, arguments, our careful replies to which are not even noticed, and misrepresentations whose injustice had solemnly been protested against. By these resolute repetitions some are seduced to believe, and attention is withdrawn from the overthrow of an error or a calumny by the hardihood with which it rises from its fall, and reasserts itself. Strike them down;—they get up, and coolly offer themselves to be struck down again. Great ought to be the power of Truth; for great is the vitality and the power of effrontery in a popular error. It is only in the long combat of years and generations that the *Real* manifests at last its imperishable quality. The "General Preface" quietly gathers up all the "*disjecta membra*"

of error and misstatement, and without a word of answer to our analysis of their character, presents them again to have sentence and execution passed upon them. It is a careful reintegration of the broken particles, which in our simplicity we had hoped would not so readily reunite. We are obliged, therefore, by way at once of Preface and of Protest, to repeat our solemn contradiction of some most strenuous misrepresentations, and to attempt again the exposure of some fallacies most tenacious of life.

1. It was distinctly stated by us in the course of this Controversy, that not upon any grounds of *literary evidence* did we discredit those prefaces which relate to the miraculous (or as, in insult to the purest and holiest human feelings, our opponents are not ashamed to call it, the *immaculate*) conception; and that our estimate of them was formed solely upon grounds of inherent incredibility, and of proved inconsistencies both with themselves and with the general statements of the New Testament. Yet in total disregard of this our denial, the Preface (p. xiii.) reasserts the charge, as if it never had been contradicted. We also distinctly stated that the miraculous conception *in no way interfered with Unitarianism*,—that many Humanitarians believed in it; yet it is *the policy* of Trinitarianism to repeat, that we pervert these portions of Scripture, for the sake of erasing a fact fatal to our system. Unitarianism is so little concerned to evade the fact of a miraculous conception, that many Unitarians them-

selves adopt it. It is the "tactics" of the "thirteen Clergymen," their system "of holy war," (*see Preface to Mr. Quid's Lecture*) to ignore whatever we may say on our own behalf, either in way of correcting or of defence, and to reassert the false statement.

II. The "Unitarian Creed" is described by our reverend opponents as "*a mere code of unbelief,*" (p. xiv.) it being the policy of the "thirteen Clergymen," not only to pay no regard to our most solemn assertion of our faith in Christianity, as God's full and perfect revelation to man, but also to assume to themselves the functions of infallible judges of what is Christianity, and what is not, and so, again to return upon them their own language, to "deify their own fallible" (p. vii.) interpretations and inferences. Yet they can impose upon the simplicity of the world, by charging others with the "pride of reason." Infallible themselves, to differ from their infallibility can of course be nothing else than the *pride of reason*.

III. It is stated (p. xv.) that we "utterly deny" "the eternity of punishments," without adding *what we have wished*, that the moral consequences of actions are eternal, and that in its influence on character and progress, the retribution of every evil thought or deed is everlasting. What we do deny, as the blackest misrepresentation that can be conceived of the God of Providence, whose glory it is to lead his children to Himself, is the horribly distinct statement of their own "General Preface"—"*that the sufferings of the lost*

*are not intended for their amendment, but as a satisfaction to divine justice, when the hour of pardon shall have passed away.*" (p. xv.) Is this the Religion, and this the God, of Love? These are the men who make the Unbeliever of which they afterwards so blindly and bitterly complain. If such was Christianity, unbelief would be a virtue, a prompting of devotion, a protest on behalf of God.

IV. Our doubt as to the existence of, or necessity for, an eternal Devil, permitted by God to ruin the souls of men, has been converted to two uses in this Preface,—first, as manifesting that we are ourselves under the power of the subtlest device of Satan, who has contested from us his existence, that he might lead us captive at his will; and, secondly, that though denying the existence of Satan, we are yet ourselves the emissaries of Satan; for that as the Devil tempted Eve, and our Lord himself, by perversions of the Word of God, so Unitarianism, by its interpretations, is his present instrument,—in fact, Satan himself tempting the world by the word of God, as of old he tempted Eve and Christ. (pp. xv. xvi.) We leave this matter to the judgment of men whose sense of propriety and decency has not been borrowed exclusively from the influences of a dogmatic Theology.

V. It is said of us (p. xvi.), contrary to our own most distinct avowment in this very Controversy, that "according to the theologians of this unhappy school, it seems to be almost a fundamental rule, that no

doctrine ought to be acknowledged as true in its nature, or divine in its origin, of which all the parts are not level to human understanding: and that whatever the Scriptures teach concerning the counsels of Jehovah, and the plan of his salvation, must be modified, curtailed, and attenuated, in such a manner, by the transforming power of art and argument, as to correspond with the poor and narrow capacities of our intelligence."

Where are the simplicity, the sincerity, the love of Truth, which alone can make Controversy fruitful of good results, when such a representation of the spirit of our Theology can be given by "thirteen Clergymen" after we had published the following words in our fifth Lecture (p. 9), for their special instruction:—"Let me guard myself from the imputation of rejecting this doctrine because it is mysterious, or of supporting a system which insists on banishing all mysteries from religion. On any such system I should look with unqualified aversion, as excluding from faith one of its primary elements, as obliterating the distinction between logic and devotion, and tending only to produce an irreverent and narrow-minded dogmatism. 'Religion without mystery' is a combination of terms, than which the Athanasian Creed contains nothing more contradictory; and the sentiment of which it is the motto, I take to be a fatal caricature of rationalism, tending to bring all piety into contempt. Until we touch upon the mysterious, we are

not in contact with religion, nor are any objects reverently regarded by us, except such as, from their nature or their vastness, are felt to transcend our comprehension." Nay, it is not a little remarkable, that the very illustration employed by the "thirteen Clergymen" to exhibit our absurdity in rejecting the incomprehensible, had been previously employed by ourselves to exhibit the necessity of admitting the incomprehensible —

*Imitation Preface, p. xviii.*

"Much of the great mystery of godliness, God manifest in the flesh, with all the furniture of saving truths and laws, whereof it is the radiant centre, must remain inevitable to our present capacities. But to argue from thence, that this mystery is a cunningly-devised fable, is as illogical as it would be to maintain that there is no bottom to the sea, because we have no plumb-line with which it may be fathomed."

*Continuum Lecture, No. V. p. 9.*

"The sense of what we do not know is as essential to our religion, as the suppression of what we do know; the thought of the boundless, the incomprehensible, must blend in our mind with the perception of the clear and true; the little knowledge we have must be clung to, as the margin of an uncertain uncertainty, and all our positive ideas be regarded as the mere float to show the surface of the infinite deep."

This is bold misrepresentation, a consistent hardness in the "tactics of holy war." To persevere, against all remonstrance, in the repetition of a misstatement injurious to an opponent, and to do this so coolly as to use almost his own words in imputing to him the very opposite of what he has said, is at least a convenient, if not an honourable nor yet a formidable policy.

In the same spirit of neither honourable nor yet formidable policy, is the attempt (p. xvii.) to identify Mahometanism and Unitarianism, by the help of a literary forgery, which even if it was authentic, would prove nothing except that the early Unitarians of England, in the reign of Charles the Second, amid the corruptions of Christianity, rejoiced in the testimony borne by Mahometanism to the great doctrine of revealed religion, the Unity of God. It is said that there is, among the MSS. in the Lambeth Library, a "Socinian Epistle (to this effect) to Ameth Ben Ameth, Ambassador from the Emperor of Morocco to Charles II." Leslie, in the Preface to his "Socinian Controversy Discussed," was the first who made use of this supposed letter, and not without the suspicion, that he had first forged it himself.\* "I will here," says Leslie, "present the reader with a rarity, which I take to be so, because of the difficulty I had to obtain it." "It is in my mind," says Mr. Aspland, "decisive of the question, that immediately after Leslie had published the Epistle, Emlyn, who answered the tract to which it was prefixed, stated it as his belief, upon inquiry, that no such epistle had ever been presented by any one 'deputed' from the Unitarians, and insinuated

\* See "A Plea for Unitarian Dissent," pp. 25-6, published in 1818, by the Rev. Robert Aspland, from whom we take the exposure of this forgery now brought forth again for the Trinitarian Controversy (although some dissent), and there is no work, for our minds, advocating, except to "slay the slain."

that no credit was to be given to a document published by Leslie, unless vouched by some other authority than his own; and that Leslie, in replying to this answer, though he dwells, for pages, upon the passages before and after this, relating to the epistle, says not a syllable about his 'rarity' or in defence of his veracity." "Leslie," continues Mr. Aspland, "is convicted (by Emlyn) of quoting passages from Archbishop Tillotson's Sermons, which had been published in the name of their eminent author, as if they were the work of an avowed 'Socinian.' And if you will consult his reply, you will find this theological braggart completely humbled, and reduced to the necessity of using the wretched plea, that he had omitted the name of the 'great Prelate,' out of *tenderness*—Is it uncharitable to suspect, under all these circumstances, that he who was proved to have resorted to one trick, might have had recourse to another?"

"As to your 'rarity,'" says Emlyn in his reply to Leslie, "of the address to the Morocco ambassador, I see not what it amounts to, more than a complaint of the corruption of the Christian faith, in the article of one God, which the *Muhammadans* have kept, by consent of all sides. Yet, forasmuch as I can learn nothing from any *Unitarians* of any such address from them, nor do you produce any subscribers' names," I conclude no

\* "There is internal evidence of its being written in the way of baiting. No subscription appears to it, and no price or reward is expressed in it. Hence Monsieur Verze, a Frenchman, who might be employed as an agent, and yet not be a 'Socinian' agent"—Aspland.

such address was ever made, by any *deputed* from them, whatever any single person might do. I suppose you conclude from the matter of it, that it must be from some *Unitarian*, and perhaps so; yet you may remember that so you concluded from the matter of Dr. *Tillotson's* Sermons, that they were a *Socinian's*.\*

For our own part, when we read this amusing attempt to identify us with Mahometans, by the help of an unknown letter, bearing no subscription, and addressed, by nobody knows whom, to the *Ambassador of Morocco*, in the reign of Charles II., we were forcibly reminded of two passages in Ecclesiastical History, in whose pages all tricks and absurdities can be paralleled, and whose exhibition of gratuitous follies and distortions has left the possibility of "nothing new under the sun," of this description, for our modern days. Hildebrand himself, yes, GREGORY THE SEVENTH, like our poor selves, was suspected of a leaning to "*Islamism*," (*General Preface*, p. xvii.) because he wrote a letter, not to the Ambassador, as in our case but, as became his greater dignity, to the *Emperor of Morocco*, thanking him for the liberation of some Christian cap-

\* *Flux for Unitarian Presenters*, p. 147.

\* My Lords, if your Lordships attended to the manner in which that quotation is introduced into Leslie, you might see that it bears internal evidence of being a nothing of the nature of a *jeu d'esprit*. . . . My Lords, this Leslie was a general malfeasant. . . . I really think, that this is taking into a dangerous to produce this address to the Ambassador of the Emperor of Morocco.—*The Attorney-General before the House of Lords in the Lady Hurdley Appeal*, June 24th, 1839.

tives, and expressing his conviction, so much was there of the spirit of God and goodness in this act, "that they both worshipped the same spirit, though the modes of their adoration and faith were different." It also appears that the Emperor Manuel Comnenus exposed himself to the same imputation of "*Islamism*," because he wished to correct an error in the ritual of the Greek Church, which by a laughable misunderstanding of an Arabic word, signifying *eternal*, "contained a standing anathema against the God of Mahomet," as being "*solid and spherical*."

"*Solentur sine labelis, et minus abitur.*"

We confess our unmixed astonishment at finding the "thirteen Clergymen" avowing the most undisguised Tritheism. We do not recollect in modern times so bold and unwary an admission of Polytheism as the following: "Our inability, therefore, to explain the Trinity of his Essence, can be no reason for rejecting the revelation of it contained in his Word; even if we were deprived of those shadows and resemblances of this divine truth, which may be seen in the one nature of man, communicating itself to many individuals of the species. *There is one human nature, but many human persons.*" (p. six.) Is this then the *Unity of God* which the "thirteen" maintain, viz., such a unity as subsists between three individual men? Is it their meaning that the Divine Nature is a Species containing under it three Individuals, as human nature



is a species containing under it as many individuals as there are men? Do they mean to contend, with some of the Fathers, that these men are only "abusively" called *three*, being in reality only *one*? What energy would Dr. Whately have for such unskillful controversialists? Is this however the deliberate view of the whole thirteen, or is it only the rashness of one of them?—for it is very important to have so definite a statement of what is meant by the Trinity in Unity.

VI. It is most incorrectly stated (*Preface*, p. xx.) that "Dr. Priestley, Mr. Lindsey, Mr. Belsham, not to mention earlier writers, have laboured hard to show that the Fathers of the first three centuries were Unitarians, and believers in the simple humanity of Jesus Christ." Such a labour was never undertaken by these writers, nor by any one else. It is capable of proof that the Fathers of the three first centuries were *not* Trinitarian in the Athanasian sense; but that they were believers in the simple *humanity* of the Christ, no one maintains, from the time that Platonism first began to transform Christianity into harmony with its own peculiar ideas. That Unitarians have supported this view by "hardy misquotations," is, to say the least of it, an unwise provocation from men who have in the course of this Controversy been convicted of the most careless misquotations both in their own case (*see especially preface to the Seventh Unitarian Lecture*), and in that of their favourite Champion (*see the Appendix to the Sixth Unitarian Lecture*). That the substantial

statements of Unitarians as to the Unitarianism of the primitive Church have been overturned by Bull, &c., (*Trinitarian preface*, p. xxi.) is a hardy assertion in the face of the following quotations from Bull himself:—"In the first and best ages, the Churches of Christ directed all their prayers according to THE SCRIPTURES, TO GOD UNITE, through the alone mediation of Jesus Christ."—*Answer to a Query of the Bishop of Meaux*, p. 295

"The Father is rightly styled THE WHOLE, as he is the fountain of divinity: For the divinity which is in the Son and in the Holy Ghost, is the Father's, because it is DERIVED FROM THE FATHER."—*Defence*, sect. ii. S.

For another quotation from Bishop Bull, see also preface, p. vi., to the Seventh Unitarian Lecture.

VII. The "thirteen Clergymen," finding that Mr. Belsham's "Improved Version" was not a STANNARD with us, and knowing perhaps that in our rejection of it as such we have been borne out by the Unitarian Association at its recent general meeting in London, yet determined to find a standard for us somewhere, have (p. xxvi.) put into our mouths, with marvellous impudè, an appeal to Mr. Belsham's Translation of St. Paul's Epistles. We have already given up the Mr. Belsham of the Improved Version, and they, for their own easy purposes, represent us as making an appeal to the Mr. Belsham of "the Epistles." We will yield to our reverend opponents whatever consolation they may be able to derive from their *vainglory* triumph, in case

we made this *imaginary* appeal. The Trinitarians cannot divest their minds of the idea that we must have an Authority *somewhere*. They cannot understand what is meant by deferring to principles alone; by having no external judge of Controversies, no shorter road to conclusions, than to submit every question to the fullest light that Knowledge and Inquiry have provided, or may yet provide. The Cassa! to whom we appeal from Mr. Belsham is not some other Mr. Belsham, or the same man in a different book, but the great principles of Criticism and of Interpretation, as recognized by competent judges of all parties.

VIII. For the faith of the Church of England, the "thirteen Clergymen" declare, that "it is alike their privilege and obligation to contend in that spirit of charity which becomes a believer in Jesus." (*Preface*, p. xviii.) We shall not open former wounds, but look simply to some of their last manifestations of "Charity" in their General Preface.

1. They say of us (p. xxiii.), that "Unitarians have borne some such proportion to the Christian Church, as monsters bear to the species of which they are unhappy distortions."

2. They "decline to receive us as brethren, and to give us the right hand of fellowship," partly because our doctrinal views of Christianity are different from their own, and partly because, as they aver, we maintain our views in *dishonesty*, using language *hypocritically*. We "cannot be Christian brethren," say they,

"for we cannot tread the same road, even for an instant. They use the *language* of Christianity, without believing its *mysteries*. How, then, can we bid them *God speed*, while they are influenced by this spirit of unfairness? 'The words of their mouth are smoother than butter, but war is in their heart. Their words are softer than oil, yet are they drawn swords.'" (pp. xxiv, xxv.)

3. We are charged with deliberately opposing our own minds to the mind of God. "That such unwearied hostility," say they, "is waged by Unitarians against the *mind of God*, as expressed in his word, all their publications unequivocally and mournfully attest." (p. xxv.)

4. They describe us as "blasphemers against the Son of Man," and they close this peculiar exhibition of "Charity" by offering up for us the following prayer:—

"O merciful God, who hast made all men, and hastest nothing that thou hast made, nor withholdst the death of a sinner, but rather that he should be converted, and live, have mercy upon all Jews, Turks, Infidels, and Heretics, and take from them all ignorance, hardness of heart, and contempt of thy word." &c. (p. xxix.)

If such is their "Charity," may we be permitted to ask, what form would their *uncharitableness* take?

Such is the "General Preface," which the "thirteen Clergymen" are deliberately of opinion that the issues of this Controversy, and our mutual relations to each

other, justified them in writing. We confess that we had prepared ourselves for a careful attempt, on their part, at repairing whatever further inquiry, and, we may say without presumption, the close scrutiny of an opponent, had shown to be weak or imperfect in their previous labours,—a last effort to present again the edifice of *their faith* in what they deemed its most favourable lights, accompanied by a corresponding attempt to shake the foundations of Unitarian Christianity. They have thought themselves, however, sufficiently strong already to be able to throw away this last opportunity. They deem the work already done, and that they have earned the right, without further addition or defence, to entitle their Lectures "*Unitarianism Confuted.*"

By their own act they entered with us into this Controversy; they repeatedly recognized us during its continuance as the persons whom they were opposing, and whose Theology they had undertaken to refute;—yet our careful and respectful examination of *their* views, and statement of our own, have not been able to win from them one word either of notice or reply. However low their opinion may be of us, as of antagonists beneath their consideration, yet surely in an attack on Unitarianism in Liverpool, we are the persons whose views and influence they had most occasion to correct; and if no more respectful feeling, mere expediency, a regard for their own designs against Unitarianism, would seem to require some examination of

the arguments and doctrines of those who are its Ministers and interpreters in the place where this attempt at its overthrow has been made.

In abandoning this last occasion of a careful and elaborately strengthened restatement of their case, we confess they have disappointed us. Nor do we believe that even that part of the public which has most sympathies with them, and would most rejoice in their success, will contemplate the omission without surprise.

The origin and history of this Controversy is sufficiently detailed in the annexed Correspondence. It will there be seen how our desire for a really close and decisive examination of the several points at issue between us has been evaded: our reverend opponents would not admit of any controversy of which denunciation was not to be the instrument.

We have already stated at the opening of this Controversy, that we did not enter into this discussion for the sake of a Sectarian triumph, but in the more Christian hope of exposing and checking the Sectarian Spirit. To exalt the *spiritual* character of Faith above the verbal and metaphysical,—to unite mankind through their common love and acceptance of Christ's goodness and of Christ's God,—to make his Church one by their participation of one spirit, even the spirit of the life of Jesus,—has been our highest aim, not only on this particular occasion, but throughout all our Ministry. We acknowledge it to be an aim that, indirectly at least, is destructive of "Orthodoxy," that

is, of "the supposed attainableness of Salvation only by one particular set of Opinions," for if the love of Christ's God, and the prayerful seeking after Christ's goodness are sufficient to place us on the way of everlasting Safety, then the question is virtually decided, for no man will follow Orthodoxy *gratuitously*. It is necessary to set it forth as the *only* escape from Hell,—else no man would burden himself with it. And thus Orthodoxy is condemned to be damnatory. Intolerance is the very condition of its existence. Cursing is its breath of life. Let it acknowledge that the pure heart, and the pure life, and the spirit of faith in God, may save a soul from death, *and Orthodoxy will have involved itself, for nothing but the last necessity, the attainableness of safety by no other means, could justify its existence.* A damnatory creed must be an *essential* of Salvation;—else it is the greatest impiety possible to conceive. Was it, then, the intention of Jesus to establish a certain *Creed* breathing curses against all who do not *think* \* alike,—however they may love and live? Alas! why, then, was not that merciful being as distinct as the Athanasian Creed? If Jesus had been charged with the delivery of an exclusive Creed, as the *only* instrument of Salvation, would he have veiled it from the eyes of those he came to save? Need we pursue the argument farther? Orthodoxy is *not* Christianity.

\* "He therefore that will be saved, must first think of the Trinity."  
—*Athanasian Creed.*

—yet that in Orthodox bosoms the Spirit of Christ may dwell, we are not the persons to deny.

What interest or value can these disputations have for beings whose main business in this world is, in the prospect of a coming world, to conform their souls to the image of the heavenly model, to Jesus the pattern of citizenship in the new Heavens and the new Earth wherein dwelleth righteousness? "Whilst we are wrangling here in the dark," says Baxter, "*we are dying,* and passing to the world that will decide all our Controversies, and the safest passage thither is by peaceable holiness." Whilst we are struggling for points, of which we know little or nothing, hearts are dead or perishing. Whilst we are battling for our conceits, we are all of us unseem within, not right with God, and falling away from the true service of our great master. Whilst proclaiming in Sectarian eagerness, "Lo, Christ is here," and "Lo, Christ is *not* there,"—none of us are sitting at his feet, and submitting our souls and passions to his yoke. Whilst we are falling out by the way, in vain his heavenly invitation is addressed to our unquiet hearts—"Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

# CONTENTS.

## GENERAL PREFACE.

## PUBLIC CORRESPONDENCE.

### LECTURE I.

#### THE PRACTICAL IMPORTANCE OF THE UNITARIAN CONTROVERSY.

BY REV. JOHN HAMILTON THOM.

- "Christ in you, the hope of glory—whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom: that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus"—Colossians 3, 27, 28.
- "And that because of these brethren we are to stand in, who come in privilege to try out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might know us into bondage: in whom we have place by subjects or, no, not for an hour: that the truth of the gospel might increase with you."—*Standard* 3, 4, 5.

### LECTURE II.

#### THE URSE: WHAT IT IS, AND WHAT IT IS NOT

BY REV. JAMES MARTINEAU.

- "And the word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth"—John 1, 14.

### LECTURE III.

#### CHRISTIANITY NOT THE PROPERTY OF CRITICS AND SCHOLARS; BUT THE GIFT OF GOD TO ALL MEN

BY REV. JOHN HAMILTON THOM.

- "But God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ"—2 Cor., iv. 6.

## LECTURE IV.

"THERE IS ONE GOD, AND ONE MEDIATOR BETWEEN GOD AND MEN, THE MAN CHRIST JESUS."

BY REV. HENRY GILES.

"There is one God, and one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus."—1 Tim. ii. 5.

## LECTURE V.

THE PROPOSITION "THAT CHRIST IS GOD," PROVED TO BE FALSE FROM THE JEWISH AND THE CHRISTIAN SCRIPTURES.

BY REV. JAMES MARTINEAU.

"For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, as there be gods many, and lords many, yet to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom all are things, and we are born; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him."—1 Cor. viii. 6.

## LECTURE VI.

THE SCHEME OF VICARIOUS REDEMPTION INCONSISTENT WITH ITSELF, AND THE CHRISTIAN IDEA OF SALVATION.

BY REV. JAMES MARTINEAU.

"Neither is there salvation in any other, for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."—Acts iv. 12.

## LECTURE VII.

THE UNSCRIPTURAL ORIGIN AND ECCLESIASTICAL HINDRY OF THE DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY.

BY REV. JOHN HAMILTON THOM.

"The Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works."—John xiv. 10.

## LECTURE VIII.

MAN, THE IMAGE OF GOD.

BY REV. HENRY GILES.

"For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God."—1 Cor. xi. 7.

"And when he came to himself, he said, How many times would I wish that my father's name were as great as mine, and I perish with hunger! I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him,—Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son; make me as one of thy hired servants."—Luke xv. 17-19.

## LECTURE IX.

THE COMFORTER, EVEN THE SPIRIT OF TRUTH, WHO DWELLETH IN US, AND TEACHETH ALL THINGS.

BY REV. JOHN HAMILTON THOM.

"To go love me, keep my commandments, and I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless, I will come to you."—John xiv. 15-24.

## LECTURE X.

CREEDS THE Foes OF HEAVENLY FAITH; THE ALLIES OF NOBILITY INFLUENCE.

BY REV. HENRY GILES.

"Let every man be fully grounded in his own mind."—Rom. xiv. 5.

## LECTURE XI.

THE CHRISTIAN VIEW OF MORAL EVILS.

BY REV. JAMES MARTINEAU.

"We will then that thy . . . let the counsel of the Holy One of Israel draw nigh and come, that we may know it; we will make thee seat and gold, and good and evil, that we may discern thy light, and right for darkness; that we may better for justice, and counsel for justice."—Isaiah vi. 10-12.

## LECTURE XII.

## THE CHRISTIAN VIEW OF RESTRICTION HEREAFTER.

BY REV. HENRY CROSS.

"And God said to Jacob, Dost thou well to be angry for the ground? And he said, I do well to be angry, even unto death. Then said the Lord, Thou hast given on the ground for which thou hast not laboured, neither hast thou given, which cometh up in a night and is carried away in a night. And should not I spare Sodom, that thou sayest, whereas six men have come thither and promise that cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand?"—*Genesis* 19, 10, 11.

## LECTURE XIII.

## CHRISTIANITY WITHOUT PRIEST, AND WITHOUT RITUAL.

BY REV. JAMES MARTINEAU.

"To whom cometh, to make a living stone, disallowed in fact of men, but chosen of God, and precious, ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ."—*I Pet.* ii. 4, 5.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

BY REV.

## TRINITARIAN AND UNITARIAN CONTROVERSY.

LIVERPOOL.

To all who call themselves Unitarians in the town and neighbourhood of Liverpool.

"And when they had appointed him a day, there came many to him unto his lodging to whom he expounded and testified the Kingdom of God, persuading them exceedingly to have faith, but out of the law of Moses and out of the prophets, from morning till evening."—*Acts* xviii. 23.

Men and Brethren,—I am aware that the term "Religious Controversy," is a phrase peculiarly revolting to many minds, that it presents to their mind in its aspect not that which has been sarcastically called the "*Arcton Theologicum*," a something bitter and distasteful, of more than common offensiveness and asperity. It is for this reason that, in proposing a course of lectures on the subjects in controversy between the Church of England and those who call themselves, Unitarians, and who, by that very term, seem to impute to the great majority of professing Christians, of almost all denominations, a polytheistic creed, and in requesting your attendance on these lectures, and inviting your most serious attention to these subjects, I wish, unobtrusively, to remove from myself every suspicion of unkindness towards you, and to take away any supposition of uncharitable asperity in my feelings, or of a desire to inflict upon the troubled individual amongst you unnecessary pain. That no mere political difference of opinion, much less that any apprehension of

danger to the Established Church, have originated this movement, will be sufficiently evident from the fact, that while we are surrounded by many other classes of dissenters, equally opposed to the principle of our establishment, and much more likely to draw away the members of our Church to their communion, I and my reverend brethren, who were associated with me on the present occasion, have limited ourselves exclusively to an inquiry into, and an endeavour to expose, the false philosophy and dangerous unscripturality of the Unitarian System.

Now, what is the cause of this distraction? It is simply this, that while we believe the other dissident bodies to have arranged an ecclesiastical system, in our judgment not clearly Scriptural, and differ in those particulars which constitute the *perfection*, though they may not affect the *essence* of a Church, we do at the same time acknowledge that they generally hold, as articles of faith, these *great foundations and eternal truths* which are the substance of the safety of souls; truths which, while we hold, give them a part in that precious covenant in Christ which *eterna* God has revealed a way of salvation for all and out of which he has not revealed a way of mercy to any. These fundamental truths are the very doctrines which are controverted between us and those whom we call in courtesy, but not in of right, Unitarians: viz. the Trinity, the deity of Christ, the coming of the Holy Spirit, the deity and personality of the Holy Spirit, the fall of our nature, and the precious redemption of the human soul, through his supernatural operation. Assured as I am that these truths (which, without a desperate mutilation, or an awful tampering with the plain language of the Word of God, it seems impossible to exclude from that divine record are of the essence of our Lord's society, I ask you, men and brethren, I put it to your consciences, is it not of the nature of the tenderest charity, of the purest love, of the most affectionate sympathy with those in the extreme of peril, and that an *eternal* peril, to supplicate to these dissenters the attention of such as have not yet received them, to pray them to come and search with us the Scriptures, whether these things be so?—Acts viii. 11. Shall we who, unwittingly, suffer blindfold on the edge of a precipice, deem it a rash or an unbecomable violence which would snatch him with a strong and a venomous hand, or even it may be with a painful grasp, from the fearful precipice over which he impends? Is it not to our own judgment a strong and a presumptuous ground of presumption, that you are altogether and peculiarly mistaken in this matter, when you see such numbers of highly-piety and intellectual men, men of study, of general reformation and of prayer.—holy men, men who "count not their lives dear unto them," so that they may honour God and preach the gospel, and that not in one particular place, but over the whole surface of the church: who yet recount these truths, which you reject, as the essential truths of salvation, truths held, you will remember, in their minds, and on the traditions or authority of men, but on the lively oracles of God?

Serving them, men and brethren,

1. That the points of difference between us are of the very highest possible importance, and not matters of mere theoretical speculation, as some

of your writers have striven vainly to make appear, that, in short, if Unitarians be sound interpreters of Holy Scripture, we Trinitarians are guilty of the most heinous of all sins—*idolatry*; and if, on the other hand, can be the creed of the apostles, saints, and martyrs, Unitarians are *in like manner* *blasphemous and deadly* *evils*, and are wholly unworthy of being considered *Christians*, in any proper sense of the word. And so on.

2. That considerable numbers of us apprehended, especially among the middle and lower classes, who outwardly profess Unitarian principles, are in total ignorance of the unscriptural nature and dangerous character of those principles. And so on.

3. That the controversial discussion of disputed points was unquestionably the practice of the apostles and primitive, and is calculated as a means, under the good blessing of Almighty God, to "open men's eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light."—We invite and beseech you, by the mercies of God in Christ, to come and give us at least a patient hearing while we endeavour to "persuade you concerning Jesus;" and "by all means to win some of you." It is impossible that we can have any base or worldly motive in thus addressing you—any other motive, indeed, besides that which is here touched, viz. *our solemn impression of the value of souls, and of the peril to which the false philosophy of Unitarianism exposes them.*

Surely it is a sweet and a pleasant thing,—a thing not to divide and sever, but to unite and to gather into the bonds of dearest affection—those to tell and to hear together of the great things which our God has done for our souls, of His love to us, when He, "Who thought it not robbery to be equal with God, did take upon him the form of a servant, and being found in fashion as a man, did humble himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of a cross."—Phil. ii. 6-8.

It is the intention of my reverend brethren and myself to meet together on the morning of Tuesday, the 21st of February, the day immediately preceding the commencement of the contest; for the purpose of solemn humiliation before God, and earnest prayer for the blessing of our Heavenly Father, upon the work in which we are about to engage, that we may be enabled to exhibit and preserve "the spirit of Christ," while employed in "contending for the faith," and that we may have great success in our endeavours to be instrumental in enlightening the eyes which we believe to have been blinded by "the god of this world," and causing "the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, to shine into them."—Cor. iv. 1.

And now, men and brethren, humbly and affectionately praying your serious attention to these things, I commend you to the protection and blessing of the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. I remain your friend and servant in the gospel, for the Lord's sake,

THOMAS OULT,

Minister of Christ Church.

Christ Church, Jan. 21, 1830.



To the Rev. Fielding Ould, and the other Clergymen about to lecture on the Unitarian Controversy in Christ Church.

Reverend Sir—a paper has been put into our hands, and an advertisement has appeared in the public journals, containing a "Syllabus of a Course of Lectures on the Controversy between the Protestant Churches and the so-called Unitarians" &c. As individual inquirers after truth, and disciples of Jesus, we deliberately hold the characteristic doctrines of Christian Christianity: and, as ministers among a class of Protestants who, binding themselves and their pastors by no human creed or interpretation, encourage us to seek for ourselves and expound for them the unadorned Gospel, we publicly profess the faith which we justly hold. We feel, therefore, a natural interest in the determination of yourself and brother clergymen to call attention to the Unitarian Controversy, and a desire that the occasion may be made conducive to the promotion of candid research, the diminution of sectarian prejudice, and the diffusion of the true faith, and the spirit of our great Master.

We are not of opinion that a rational and an audience, assembled in a place of worship, constituted the best tribunal to which to submit theological questions, respecting the canon, the text, the translation of Scripture—questions which cannot be answered by any "definitive scholarship." You however, who hold that ministers upon these points may confer salvation, have consistently appealed to such tribunal, and nothing is left us or left to hope that its decision may be formed after just attention to the evidence. That end can be attained only by popular advocacy on neither side, or popular advocacy on both: and, as you have preferred the latter, we shall esteem it a duty to co-operate with you, and contribute one portion of truth and argument towards the correction of public sentiment on the great questions at issue between us. Deeply aware of our human liability to form and to convey false impressions of men and systems from which we dissent, we shall be anxious to pay a calm and respectful attention to your defence of the doctrines of your Church. We will give notice of your lectures, as they succeed each other, to our congregations, and exhort them to hear you in the spirit of Christian justice and affection, presuming that, in a like spirit, you will recommend your hearers to listen to such reply as we may think it right to offer. We are not conscious of any fear, any interest, any attachment to system, which should interfere with the sincere fulfilment of our part in such an understanding, and, for the performance of yours, we rely on your proved zeal for that Protestantism which boldly combats the interpretation of Scripture to individual judgment, and to that sense of justice which, in Christian minds, is the fruit of cultivation and sound knowledge. As you think it the duty of Unitarians to judge of your doctrines, not from our objections, but from your publications, you cannot question the duty of Unitarians to take their impressions of our faith from us, rather than from you.

We rejoice to hear that the Christ Church lectures will be published.

Should they issue from the press within a week after delivery, we should desire to postpone our reply till we had enjoyed the opportunity of reading them, persuaded that thus we shall best preserve that calmness and precision of statement, without which, controversial discussions tend rather to the increase of prejudice than the advancement of truth. Should the publication be deferred for a longer time, the necessity of treating each subject, while its interest is fresh, will oblige us to forgo this advantage, and we shall, in such case, deliver, each week, an evening lecture in answer to that preached in Christ Church on the preceding Wednesday. Permit us to ask, how early an appearance of your printed lectures may be expected, and whether you will recommend your congregations to attend with candour to our replies.

We fear, however, that neither from the pulpit nor the press will your statements and ours obtain access extensively to the same persons; your discourses will, perhaps, attract readers, not exclusively, among Trinitarians; ours, certainly, among Unitarians. In order to place your views and ours fairly side by side, allow us to propose the following arrangements: that an epitome of each lecture, and another of the reply, furnished by the respective authors shall appear weekly in the columns of one and the same newspaper, the newspaper being selected, and the length of the communications prescribed, by previous agreement. Or should you be willing, we should prefer making some public journal the vehicle of a discussion altogether independent of the lectures, conducted in the form of a weekly correspondence, and having for its matter such topics as the first letter of the series may open for consideration. In this case you will perceive the propriety of conceding to us the commencement of the correspondence, as you have pre-occupied the pulpit controversy; have selected the points of comparison between your idea of Christianity and ours, and introduced among them some subjects to which we do not attach the greatest interest and importance. On the priority, however, we do not insist. You will oblige us by stating whether you assent to this proposal.

While we are willing to hope for a prevailing spirit of equity in this controversy, we are grieved to have to complain of injustice, and of a disregard to the true meaning of words, at its very opening. We must protest against the exclusive usurpation of the title "Protestant Churches," by a class of religionists who practically disown the principle of Protestantism: who duly make the Church for themselves, instead of the Pope, the arbiter of truth; who hold error (that is, an opinion different from their own) to be fatal to salvation; and who allow the rights of individual judgment only with the penalty of everlasting condemnation upon all whose individual judgment is not the judgment of their Church. We take objection also to the spirit that creeps out in the expression, "*so-called Unitarians*," intimating that the word does not "import to others a polytheistic creed;" but that in "Trinitarian" denotes one who worships the Godhead as three "persons." Coleridge fully describes one who worships the Godhead in one person.

And, above all, we protest against the resolution of our case into "disbonest or uncanonit criticism;" that is the wilful maintenance of error, knowing it to be such, the Charybdis which one of your lecturers proposes for us, if we should be fortunate enough to escape the Scylla of "defective scholarship." We are deeply concerned that so much of the "sectant theologium" has mixed thus early in an invitation, characterized by the chief inviter as "a sweet and pleasant thing;" and this, too, after a public announcement of having purged the mind of every feeling but the pure love of the pure truth.

And to you, reverend sir, in whose letter to the Unitarians of this town and neighbourhood the announcement in question occurs, it is incumbent on us to address a few remarks, with a special view to acquaint you with the feelings awakened by your earnest invitation.

The anxiety which that letter manifests to convince us that, in seeking our conversion, you are actuated by no "base and worldly motive," is, we can assure you, altogether superfluous. Of the purity and disinterestedness of your intention we entertain no doubt; and we regard it with such unaffected respect, as may be due to every suggestion of conscience, however unwise and fanatical. If, with the ecclesiastics and philosophers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, you esteemed the denial of witchcraft as perilous a heresy as Atheism itself, we should feel neither wonder nor anger at the zeal with which you might become apostles of the doctrine of sorcery. Any one who can convince himself that his faith, his hope, his idea of the meaning of Scripture, afford the only cure for the sins and sorrows and dangers of the world, is certainly right in spending his resources and himself in diffusing his own private views. But we are astonished that he can feel himself so lifted up in superiority above other men, as to imagine that Heaven depends on their assimilation to himself,—that, in self-multiplication, is the universal reproduction of his own state of mind, lies the solitary hope of human salvation. We think that, if we were possessed by such a belief, our affections towards men would lose all Christian meekness, our sympathies cease to be those of equal with equal, the respectful mercy of a kindred sufferer; and that, however much we might indulge a Pharisaic compassion for the heretic, we should feel no room for the Christian "honour" unto "all men."

You ask us, reverend sir, whether it is not "a sweet and pleasant thing," "to tell and hear together of the great things which God has done for our souls." Doubtless, there are conditions under which such communings may be most "sweet and pleasant." When they who hold it agree in mind on the high subjects of their conference, it is "sweet and pleasant" to speak mutually of "joys with which no stranger intermeddled," and to knit together the human affections, with the bands of that heavenly "charity," which, springing from one faith and one hope, is yet greater than them both. Nay, when good men differ from each other, it is still "sweet and pleasant" to reason together, and prove all things, and whatsoever things are pure, and true, and lovely, to think on these things, provided that both parties are conscious of their liability to error, and are anxious to learn as well as to teach: that each confides in the integrity,

ingenueness, and ability of the other; that each applies himself with reasons to the understanding, not with terrors to the will. But such conference is not "sweet and pleasant" where, fallibility being confessed on one side, infallibility is assumed on the other; where one has nothing to learn and everything to teach; where the arguments of an equal are propounded as a message of inspiration; where presumed error is treated as unpardonable guilt, and on the fruits of laborious and truth-loving inquiry, terms of reprobation and menaces of everlasting perdition are unmercifully poured.

You announce your intention to set apart, on our behalf, a day of humiliation and prayer. To supplicate the Eternal Father, as you propose, to turn the heart and faith of others into the likeness of your own may appear to you fitting as an act of prayer; it seems to us extraordinary as an act of humiliation. Permit us to say, that we could join you in that day's prayer, if, instead of assuming before God what doctrines his Spirit should enforce, you would, with us, explore him to have pity on the ignorance of us all: to take us all by the hand and lead us into the truth and love, though it should be by ways most heretical and strange; to wrest us from the dearest reliances and most assured convictions of our hearts, if they hinder our approach to his great realities. A blessed day would that be for the peace, brotherhood, and piety of this Christian community, if the "humiliation" would lead to a recognition of Christian equality, and the "prayer," to a recognition of that spiritual God whose love is moral in its character, spiritual, not doctrinal in its conditions, and who accepts from all his children the spirit and the truth of worship.

We fear that you will consider it as a mark of great obduracy, that we are not more affected by that "purest love" for "those in the extremity of peril," which your letter expresses. Let us again assure you that we by no means doubt the sincerity of that affection. However pure in its source, it is ineffectual in its result, simply because no man can feel his heart softened by a commiseration which he is wholly unconscious of requiring. The pity that feels with me is, of all things, the most delicious to the heart; the pity that only feels for me, is, perhaps, of all things, the most insulting.

And, if the tenderness of your message does not subdue us, we trust its terrors will prevail still less. We are not ignorant, indeed, that, in dealing with weak minds whose solicitude for their personal security is greater than their generous faith in truth and God, you enjoy an advantage over us. We avow that we have no alarms wherewith to urge men into our Church; that we know of no "terrors of the Lord" by which to "persecute men," except against sin; nor do we esteem ourselves exclusive administrators of any salvation, except that best salvation, which consists in a free mind and emancipated heart; reverencing Christ as the perfect image of the Father, listening to the accents of reason and conscience, as to the breathings of God's spirit, loving all men as his children, and having hope in death, of a transference from this outer court into the interior mansions of His house. For this reason, imbecile souls, without

Christian trust and courage, may think it safer, at all events, to seek a place within your Church; but we wonder that you can feel satisfied, retaining your Protestantism, to appeal thus to fear and distrust, rather than to conviction; and that you should discern the mockery of first placing us on the basis of hell and living up the wall and then building against them, with evil and unchristianised judgment to require. Over converts, won by such means, you would surely have no little reason to rejoice as had the priests of Rome to exult on the reconversion of Galicia. Our fellow worshippers have learned, we trust, a better faith, and will listen to your arguments with more open and free mind than your invitation had it attained its end of fear, would have allowed. They will hold fast, till they see reason to abandon it, their filial faith in a Divine Father, of whom Jesus, the merciful and just, is indeed the image; and who, therefore, can have neither cure nor condemnation for "unwilling" error, no delight in a boastful pretension, no wrath and scorn for any "business and gain here," which "brings forth its fruit with patience."

To this God of truth and love, commending our high controversy, and all whom welfare it concerns, we remain your fellow-labourers in the Gospel.

JAMES MANTON,

Minister of Paradise-street Chapel.

JOHN HAMILTON THOM,

Minister of Kenilworth-street Chapel.

HENRY GALT,

Minister of the Ancient Chapel, Toxteth Park.

Liverpool, Jan. 20, 1830.

To the Reverend James Manton, J. H. Thom, and Henry Galt.

Gentlemen.—As Christian courtesy seems to require a reply to your address, published in the *Standard* of this day, I hasten to furnish it, though unwilling, for many reasons, to enter into a newspaper discussion with you on the important subjects which just now engage our attention. I shall, therefore, without intending any disrespect, pass by unnoticed your critical remarks on certain portions of my recently published avocations to the members of your body to attend and give a patient hearing to the lectures about to be delivered at Christ Church, and converse myself altogether to those points of inquiry to which it is but reasonable that you should be allowed an answer. And,

1. You ask, whether I will recommend my congregation to attend (I presume, in your respective churches) to hear the replies which you intend making to our proposed lectures. To this I am compelled to reply in the negative. Were I to consent to this proposal, I should thereby admit that we stand on the terms of a *religio æquæ*, which is, in human, denied. As men, citizens, and subjects, we are doubtless equal, and will also stand on a footing of equality before the bar of final judgment. I therefore use the term "*religious equality*," in order to convey to you the distinction between our relative position as members of the community and as reli-

gionists. Being unable you will excuse my necessary plainness of speech in recognizing you as Christians, I cannot consent to meet you in a way which might imply that we occupy the same *religio æquæ* level. To you there will be no question of principle or compromise of feeling in entering our churches, to us there would be such a surrender of both in entering yours, as would personally prohibit any such engagement.

2. You next inquire how early an appearance of our printed lectures may be expected. In answer to this I have only to say, that arrangements have been made for publishing each lecture as soon after its delivery as may be practicable. Within what time this practicality may be found to coincide, it is of course impossible precisely to determine. It will be obvious, that I cannot answer for my brethren upon this point; but shall only observe for myself, that I should hope a week or ten days will be sufficient for the necessary revival of proofs, arrangement of authorities, and other business connected with a careful and correct publication.

3. Your third inquiry respects a proposal to have an opinion of each lecture, and its reply, published weekly in the columns of some previously selected newspaper. Not having as yet had the opportunity of collecting the sentiments of my intended audience, I can only, as before, give the view which suggests itself to my own mind. I am inclined to think it would be unfair to the respectable bookseller, who has undertaken to publish the *canon* as his own risk, to expect him to consent to a proposal which would not materially injure his sale. As it is our intention to publish each lecture separately, as well as the whole collectively, at the close of our delivery, and that in due, abstract, portable form, with a view to the most extensive circulation, I cannot but hope and believe that our united object will be equally, if not better, answered, than by resorting to a process which should necessarily introduce and curtail the matter as to present a very meagre and unmethodical exhibition of the arguments, reasonings, references, and authorities, on which so much of the value of the lectures will depend.

4. And, finally, as to your proposal of making some public journal the vehicle of a discussion independent of the lectures, I regret that I feel again obliged to decline pledging myself to concur in it. While I reserve to myself the right of making and replying to any communication which may appear, on a duly official journal, in any of the public journals, I must at the same time express my conviction, that a newspaper is not the most desirable medium for discussion on the deep and awful subjects which must pass under review in a controversy like that in which we are about to engage. The ordinary class of newspaper readers, including too frequently the ignorant reader, the sceptical and the partisan, is not precisely that whose attention we desire to solicit to our high inquiry into the laws of Scriptural Exegesis, and our explication of these laws by the elucidation of the profound mysteries of the Book of Revelation. I feel no doubt that all who feel interested on the subject will continue to hear or read what we shall preach and publish, and will strive to furnish with more solid and suitable materials for forming a correct

judgment, than could be afforded by the casual study of the ephemeral pages of the public press.

Having thus discreetly replied to the several points of your letter on which you may have reasonably expected to hear from me, and trusting that you will not attribute to any want of respect to you the omission of all notice of the polemical, and congratulating you with all sincerity on your avowed intention of proceeding, with your respective congregations, to hear the discussion which we are about to give of what we believe to be *totally false* in your system, as contrasted with what we think *wholly true* in our own, and praying with all fervency, by the great Head of the Church, to bless and prosper the effort about to be made for the promotion of his glory, through the instruction of those who are ignorant and out of the way.

I remain, Gentlemen,

Yours for the Lord's sake,

January 25, 1836.

THOMAS DOUGLASS.

To the Rev. James McTearrow, J. H. Thoms, and Henry Giles

Gentlemen,—I owe it to you and to myself to state, that no offence was intended, either by me, or, as I conscientiously believe, by my clerical brethren, in the title of the subject to which my name stands affixed in the *Notices* of the Lectures on the Christian Controversy. I am also bound to acknowledge, that your letter, on the subject of the lecture, is written in a style of sobriety and courtesy, at which I trust, you will have no reason to complain of the absence in the sentences which I shall wish to submit to your attention. Of course, this is not the time for the vindication of the view which I adopt on the great question. I content myself, therefore, with this public disclaimer of any desire to substitute free-trading language for sound argument.

I remain, Gentlemen,

Yours, with all due respect,

THOMAS DOUGLASS.

To the Reverend Publishing Club

REV. SIR,—We beg to offer you our thanks for your prompt and discreet reply in the *Evening Courier* of yesterday to the proposal submitted to you in our letter of Monday. We are as little anxious as yourself for the prosecution of this preliminary newspaper controversy, and however much we may regret the negative character of your answers to our questions, we shall have no word of complaint upon them for notice elsewhere, if you did not appear to us to have left it all open to consideration, the proposed discussion independent of the lectures, through the press. That the public controversy should be an *unpartisan* one, is, we perceive, a matter of conscience with you; but your objections to a newspaper controversy seem to arise, not from any desire to withhold

your readers from our writings, as you would your hearers from our preaching; but from the unfairness of a political journal to be the vehicle of religious argument. Permit me, then, to say, that we have no preference for this particular *medium* of discussion; that we are actually satisfied as to its form, provided the substantial end be gained of *bringing your names* to its aid, *prevalent the substantial end be gained of bringing your names* *measured* *was before the revision of the same paper*, and that any plan which you may suggest, according promise of the attainment of this end, whether it be the joint publication of the lectures in your church and those in our church, or the appearance on the pages of a religious journal, *future already established*, or called into existence for the occasion, and limited to this single object, will receive our welcome acceptance.

Had we any desire to see a theological argument in the wrong, we should leave the case between us in its present position, and should not persevere thus in opening the way towards a less adjudication of it; but our remission for the religion of which you are a representative and symbol is for the world, transcends all party controversial feelings, and we should see, with grave sorrow, the honour of Christianity compromised by the rejection, on the part of its authorized ministers, of the arkwright's good principles of representational justice. You talk not, we trust, in the reproach of reviving a discussion *well as our own* changing it into an indictment against us. You have originated the appeal to the great tribunal of public opinion in this Christian community; you are *planned* in this controversy; you will not, we feel assured, so trade as things most sacred, with the rules of evidence, as to insist that your case shall be heard in one court, and before one jury, while your opponent's case is hurried to another, and the verdict pronounced without balancing the accusation and comparing the pleadings. Should you, moreover, succeed in convincing your readers, that this is a discussion not as we submit between church and church, but as you contend, between Christianity and No Christianity, the effort will be yet more to be deplored, for, in such cases, Christianity will appear to claim from its votaries the advantage of an exclusive hearing for itself, and, while challenging, by the very act of controversy, the appeal to argument, to leave for those who are stigmatized as unbelievers, the honour of demanding that open field which, usually, truth is found to seek, and falsehood to avoid. We trust that you will not thus inflict a wound on a religion which, in all its forms, so deeply venerates.

You deny our *religious equality* with you. Is it as a matter of opinion, or as a matter of *certainty*, that such equality is denied? If it is only as an opinion, then God will not absolve you from fair and equal discussion on the grounds of such opinion. If it is with you not an *opinion*, but a *certainty*, then, Sir, this is Popery. Popery we can well regard, — we know, at least, what it is, — but Protestantism erecting itself into Romish infallibility yet still claiming to be Protestantism, is to us a sad and trifling spectacle, showing what deep roots Roman Catholicism has in the weaker parts of our common nature.

We confess ourselves at a loss to comprehend your distinction between

and equality and religious equality. We claim equality as followers, as partakers of a common source, of that refuge the religious elements are to us inexpressibly dearer and more precious than the elements that render us merely creatures. And the equality that is conceded us in regard to our lower attributes, but denied in regard to those that are spiritual and immortal, is such an equality as you might concede to the heathen, on the ground of their animal nature, without injury to the maintenance of your religious supremacy. What is meant by our equality at the bar of final judgement, or heaven, but not as theologians, we do not know; or, if we can depict a measure in it, it is one which we should have supposed belonged to our faith rather than to ours.

In reference to your proposition to enter our chapels we say no more, reserving our right of future appeal in this matter to those members of your church who may be unable to see the force of your distinction between religious and civil equality. But we are surprised that you should conceive so easy a thing for us to enter your churches; and should suppose it more a matter of principle and consequence of feeling, as we to make such worship which you are sure we must constitute in our eyes "the most heinous of all sins—idolatry." *After* you must have known that we did not consider your worship to be idolatry, we have resorted to our resort to it as a most guilty "compromise of feeling;" to which, nevertheless, you give us a solemn invitation, adding now, on our compliance, a congratulation no less singular.

We thought you had been aware, that, while our services must be, in a religious view, *positively* *deplorable* to you, those of your church are *positively* *absolutely* ours. Still in our presence, on such passing occasions as the present does not, in our opinion, involve any "sacrifice of principle," we shall set the example to our friends of attending, and making our desire that they should be just dependent on the willingness of others to be so too. And we shall have this subject, that, whether you "win" them, or whether we retain them, the result will be a faith bold, not on the precarious tenure of ignorance or submission, but in the security of intelligent conviction, and the peace of a just and enlightened conscience.

We remain, reverend Sir,

Yours, with Christian regard,

JAMES MANTON

JOHN HAZLITTS TREN

HENRY GALT.

Liverpool, January 31st. 1839

*To the Trustees of this Town and Neighbourhood who may feel interested in the approaching Unitarian Conference.*

Christian Brethren, A letter of public invitation has been addressed to the Unitarians of this town and neighbourhood, by the Rev. Friedrich Oetli on behalf of himself and twelve other gentlemen associated with him, urging us, with the earnestness of Christian anxiety, to hold our

places to their expositions of our errors and our dangers. We naturally interpreted this to be an invitation to discuss the most important questions as equal with equal. We thought, indeed, that we saw an opportunity of superiority, if not of infallibility, perhaps inflexible *from* inflexibility so framed, still we supposed, that this superiority was to be maintained by argument and free discussion—and this was all that we desired. It never occurred to us, that the reserved gentlemen might possibly expect us to accept him as a divinely appointed judge of facts, whose teachings were to be received in rubric and not release, or that he could suppose that a strict—like pure, conviction that have removed from us the character and exceptions of men like him—and held in simple subjection to truth and God, could be so lightly shaken—that nothing more was required to do so than to say that a course of expositions without answer or discussion is the subject had been to confirm Trinitarians in their views. This kind of proceeding we should have understood, but, surely something more was required when Unitarians were publicly invited to the controversy. Much less could we anticipate that the reserved gentlemen, adding himself to be among "religious level" as above us, to belong to a different order or sphere, could yet be so far removed from the Christian and Apostolical spirit as to refuse us to bring his "light" into darker conduct with our "darkness." With these expectations of a conference, and having our hearts with anything but truth, we can hardly regret it now for the last time in the controversy, both sides of the great question were about to appear together before the solemn tribunal of public attention.

In all these things we have been quickly misapprehended. In our simplicity, we believed that discussion was really invited and desired. We mentioned that we were invited to hear, but not to argue—that to lecture us is of the nature of "dear, at elections," but that to hear what we may have to urge in reply would be to "recognize us" as "Christians," to admit that we stood on the basis of a religious equality, which we, if before denied. We now find that all reciprocity is refused to us, that it never was intended to treat us as equals; that the method of discussing the Unitarian controversy, about to be adopted is to have only the Trinitarian advocates—to call us around the Unitarian Church paper to be taught to hear and believe. Compulsion may be applied by ecclesiastical feelings, as not to preserve the extreme objectiveness of all that we assumed in this mode of treating their delinquency. But we trust to you, the free body of the Church, in generous confidence, that such conduct would not be found to accord with your spirit of justice, with our noble ideas which you have gathered, from the intercourse of life, of equitable, disinterested men and men.

We proposed to the clergymen about to lecture at this Church, that since they had appealed to public opinion, through a popular assembly, the pleadings should be on both sides and, as far as possible, in face the same parties. This is refused to us, because we are not Christians. Is not in the spirit of the Saviour? It is also refused to us, because it is asserted, that Trinitarians cannot enter any place of worship without a sacrifice of

principle, whilst we may enter them without pain or comparison. Nay the very opposite of this, though not the truth, would have been meant in it. In our worship there would be the indelible witness of some man's dear to God; in your worship there would be the actual presence of some man's most painful to us. In our worship, you would have addressed that Great Spirit whom you, a Unitarian, and seek in your worship, we should hear addressed as God, but whom we never will follow, on the image of God, the man Christ Jesus. In our worship you would and do, as yet only, in your, we should find what, to us, is positively objectionable, namely, idolatry and the Divine distributed into persons. The Rev. F. Langford, in one of his letters, represents us as looking upon you to be Unitarians, which we do not; and, in another of his letters, tells us, that we respect our people without pain or compromise of feeling. It will be evident to you, Unitarian brethren, that the Unitarians at Christ Church cannot retire, upon such reasoning as this, from the full, public, and impartial discussion which we propose to them, without making it manifest to the public, that they are determined upon doing so.

We proposed to them discussion through the press, as well as from the pulpit; and this also is denied to us, on the ground, that newspapers are read by the sceptical, the scoffing, and the profane. Now, not in newspapers alone, but in any journal whatever, was the controversy offered by us, yet we could not have anticipated the objection, which we recollect the use made of the newspaper by the religious party to which the year and gentleman belong. Again have we tendered discussion, through the press, in any form whatever, with the single condition, that the views of both parties shall be presented to the same readers; in this hope, not in our growth, of an answer in a juster spirit.

Nothing now remains for us but to appeal from ecclesiastics to minds more generally influenced, to those first, taught in the great schools of human nature, have learned mutual respect, and that have sought, in the free and noble intercourse of man with man, the matchless and divinely sanctioned, of equal and of equal superiority. To you, then, the Unitarian lay, we make our appeal, from the evidence, and assumed regularity of arguments, to men who, from familiarity with wider influences, have formed different conceptions of Christian brotherhood and of Christian justice. We should not have held ourselves authorized in thus addressing you had we supposed, that your cause or yourselves, your ideas of justice, had been worthily supported by your ecclesiastical representatives, who, we firmly believe you will agree with us in feeling, have openly betrayed both you and us.

We appeal to you, not without confidence, to give us that equal witness which your clergymen have refused; that those of you who, through interest in the great question, are led to hear the Unitarian statements, will, in the love of the truth, and in the spirit of equitable inquiry, hear also the Unitarian reply. We ask not to raise you Unitarians; but, at least, to let our rival divide and share. But would to God that we could do something to spread that true Christianity which had its one only of the apart in the Lord of peace, and does charity dearer and more heavenly than doc-

trine itself. Would to God that this controversy might have some effect, in holding up our one creed, or swelling any one's self, but in drawing up the defenses and separating ideas that lie at the roots of error and are the consistencies of bigotry, uncharitableness, and license! We should desire with all this great controversy, if we could remove from it the taint of ill-will and bitterness. If we could exhibit the God of Jesus requiring from us, not speculative opinions, but the heart, the temper, and the life of Christ; if we could expose the unchristian idea of men preparing themselves for a eternal heaven by a metaphysical creed, and men who, who now consume their energies, their temper, and their time, in contending for phylisms and unchristian dogmas in the deeds of mercy and of brotherhood which flow out of our common Christianity, and which, in the wide wastes of sin, of ignorance, and of misery, thus surround us, are the moral debts of man to man, and constitute the religion which, before God, even our Father, is pure and undefiled.

Respectfully directing your attention to our advertisement of a syllabus of Lectures on the Unitarian Controversy, presenting both sides of the question — our portion of which will be delivered in Paradise Street Chapel, on successive evenings.

We are, Christian Brethren,

Yours, in the spirit of Christian brotherhood,

JOHN HENRY THOMAS,

HENRY GILES,

JAMES MARTINEAU.

Liverpool, Feb. 2, 1842.

TRINITARIAN LECTURE,  
ON THE NATURE OF CHRISTIANITY IN GENERAL  
AND ITS  
APPLICATION TO THE UNITARIAN

Feb. 4.—February 4.  
1. Introductory. The practical  
importance of the Controversy  
with Unitarians. See P. 6 & 7.

February 11.  
2. The Integrity of the Canon  
of Holy Scripture maintained  
against Unitarian Objections.  
See P. 7 & 8.

February 18.  
3. The Unitarian Theory of the  
New Testament based upon  
a false and unchristian  
Theory of revealed Christianity.  
See P. 8 & 9.

February 25.  
4. The Unity of Humanity of our  
Lord Jesus Christ. See P. 9 & 10.

March 4.  
5. The proper basis of our Lord  
Jesus Christ proved false. The  
ground, P. 10, and doctrine of  
Christians. See P. 10 & 11.

March 11.  
6. The proper basis of our Lord  
Jesus Christ proved false. The  
ground, P. 11, and doctrine of  
Christians. See P. 11 & 12.

UNITARIAN LECTURE,  
ON THE NATURE OF CHRISTIANITY IN GENERAL  
AND ITS  
APPLICATION TO THE TRINITARIAN

Feb. 12.—February 12.  
1. The practical importance of the  
Unitarian Controversy. See P. 1 & 2.

February 19.  
2. The Rights, which are admitted  
to Unitarians. See P. 2 & 3.

February 26.  
3. The propriety of the property  
of Unitarians. See P. 3 & 4.  
4. The propriety of the property  
of Unitarians. See P. 4 & 5.

March 5.  
4. "There is one God, and one  
Lord, because God and man,  
and the Holy Spirit, are one."  
See P. 5 & 6.

March 12.  
5. The proposition "That Christ  
is God," proved to be false. The  
ground, P. 6, and doctrine of  
Christians. See P. 6 & 7.

March 19.  
6. The doctrine of Unitarians  
concerning the property of Unitarians  
proved to be false. The  
ground, P. 7, and doctrine of  
Christians. See P. 7 & 8.

March 22	1. The Doctrine of the Trinity presented as a consequence of the Christianity of the Lord Jesus Christ. Rev. J. Smith.	March 21	1. The "Unscriptural" Origin of the Doctrine of Trinity. Rev. J. H. Davis.
March 27	2. The Atonement, Infallibility, and the Association of Jesus Christ with the Father and the Holy Spirit. Rev. A. C. Matthews.	April 2	2. Man, the Image of God. Rev. W. Green.
April 1	3. The Unity, Homogeneity, and Imperishability of the Holy Spirit. Rev. J. H. Davis.	April 3	3. The Christian's View of the Spirit of Truth, who is the Comforter, and the Holy Spirit. Rev. J. H. Davis.
April 14	10. The Resurrection of the Body as taught by Luther, Calvin, and the Reformers. Rev. W. Green.	April 10	10. Christianity without Christ, and without the Holy Spirit. Rev. J. H. Davis.
April 17	11. The Nature and Attributes of the Holy Spirit. Rev. W. Green.	April 17	11. Christ, the Son of Man, and the Holy Spirit. Rev. W. Green.
April 24	12. The Personality and Agency of the Holy Spirit. Rev. W. Green.	April 24	12. The Christian's View of the Holy Spirit. Rev. J. H. Davis.
May 1	13. The Freedom of the Will, Rewards, and Punishments. Rev. W. Green.	May 1	13. The Christian's View of the Holy Spirit. Rev. W. Green.

### To the so-called Unitarians of Liverpool

Men and Brethren.—Before the commencement of the lectures, of which I have taken the liberty of inviting your attendance, I was anxious respectfully to address to you a few observations in reference to the letters which have appeared in the public journals under the signature of your ministers.

It would appear that these gentlemen have been desirous to produce upon the public mind an unfavourable impression, *à priori*, of my intended lectures, and of myself in particular, because of one having declined, on their proposal, to enter upon a course different from that which we had originally contemplated. "You will not, we trust," say Messrs. Hartman, Thom, and Giles, "incur the reproach of inviting a discussion *à priori*, and then changing it into an indictment against us." Now, we never invited any discussion with these gentlemen; if we had, we should have addressed ourselves to them personally. But while we would not, and do not shrink from any discussion with them into which we can conscientiously enter, we cannot allow ourselves to be diverted from the pursuit of our original purpose, *viz.* to deliver a course of lectures upon the various points of Unitarian doctrine, which we believe, and think we can prove, to be not only unscriptural, but fatal to the souls of those who embrace them, and which cannot be maintained as appears from the published works of the most learned Unitarians without a virtual surrender of the inspiration of the Bible. Having, as I do, that your best interests for time and for eternity are involved in the momentous questions at issue—questions affecting the very vitals of true religion—I inserted a letter in the daily press, expressed, as I had hoped, in terms of courtesy and affection, inviting your presence and soliciting your attention. I also caused a notice to be pub-

lished of our intention to print the lectures, separately and in a collective form for extensive and moderate circulation, so that the simplest opportunity might be afforded for replying to our arguments on the part of any who might feel disposed to the task. That is, we proposed to employ the instrumentality of the paper and the press, so instrumentally, to it is correct, *especially in the service of those who differed from us*, in order to promote the best interests of a portion of our countrymen, whom we believe to be "perishing for the lack of knowledge."

Where is there to be found here words of *arrogance*, or *uncharitableness*, or "outrageful infidelity"? What is there ought of *unfairness*, or *any rejection on our parts of the acknowledged principles of argumentative justice*? It is true we refuse to advise our respective congregations to attend as Unitarian of apostles, to hear such answers as your ministers may think it right to offer in refutation of our reasonings. Our principles and our consciences will not permit our concurrence in such a proposal. We cannot go ourselves, nor recommend one people to go and have their ears wounded by the utterance of words, in our view, blasphemous statements, as we had spread in painful profusion over the pages of Unitarian theology. And why, then, it is asked, do we invite to expose your attention upon what are called "the painfully revolting" services of our church? For this reason, that, as appears from the works of all their principal writers, Unitarians do not attach the same importance to religious doctrines and opinions that we do. It seems to be with them a matter of comparative indifference what doctrine a man holds, provided he be sincere in his profession; while with us sincerity is no criterion of truth, being persuaded that as a man's religious opinions are, so will his conduct be on earth, and his destiny through eternity. Being of opinion, then, that any people would suffer by being brought into contact with error, in the same way that the human body would be endangered by accepting an invitation to feed at a table where poison was mingled with bread, we feel obliged to decline recommending the proposed arrangements to their adoption. But, feeling that there would be neither danger nor risk to those who are represented as having a total apathy for poison as well as bread, and as looking upon all theological opinions if not as equally harmless in their bearing on their eternal interests, we ventured to invite you to come, that we might "persuade you concerning Jesus." If there be any of you whose conscience revolts against a participation in Unitarian worship, we invite not his attendance; we would be not intentionally accessory to the wounding of the weakest conscience among you.

You will thus, men and brethren, perceive what was intended by the aversion that our "religious level" was different. We meant not to arrogate to ourselves any opinion superiority, but simply to state a fact. And while we think it both unreasonable and unjust that we should be expected to become the authors of what we deem blasphemous error, or pledge ourselves to the joint circulation of what we call truth and falsehood, and thus be a partaker of other men's sins,—we cannot but be of opinion that there is some ground for these charges in reference to the conduct of

those who, on this ground, attempt to prejudice the public mind against us, as if we were declining a battle which we had sought and provoked.

We are convinced that the attempt will not succeed. The public will have eyes to see with sufficient clearness the real merits of the case, and will condemn the efforts made to blind its vision, or at least induce it to take a distorted view of our relative position.

Again repeating my invitation to all who can conscientiously accept it, to attend our lectures, and leaving cheerfully to others the free use of the only weapons we employ—the Bible, the Psalm—and the Psalm—and praying the Lord to guide all his inquiring people, by the teaching of His Holy Spirit to all truth, even the "truth as it is in Jesus." I remain, brethren and sisters, yours in the bonds of love,

CHRIST CHURCH, FEB. 5, 1840.

FREDERICK OGDEN.

To the Rev. J. Martineau, J. H. Thom, and Henry Giles

Gentlemen.—Having hitherto corresponded with you on my own individual responsibility, I have to request that you will consider me as *alone* answerable for what has hitherto appeared under my signature. I had this morning, for the first time, the opportunity of personal conference with my revered brethren collectively at the expected meeting which took place at my house. I have now to address you upon the result.

All that we had originally contemplated was the delivery of a course of lectures upon the principal doctrines in controversy between Unitarians and ourselves. It now appears that my invitation to the Unitarian lay to come and hear us, while we brought our own principles to the test of the Word of God, has been taken advantage of by you, and led to a series of proposals on your part, which I took upon myself to decline. I have this day addressed a letter to the members of your body generally, which I trust will have the effect of setting that part of the subject on its proper point of view.

It is, however, indispensable to distinguish carefully between our particular committee of yours, and discussion generally. Your letter to the Trinitarian lately resists discussion in any shape which shall effectually bring the statements of both parties before the same individuals. We are now prepared to gratify your desire, and we accept your invitation. Our lectures, however, shall be first delivered, on this we are determined. (First, in the name of all, and in dependence upon our blessed Lord and Master, three of our body will be ready to meet you three before a public audience in this town: all preliminaries to be, of course, arranged by mutual conference.) We propose, if you please, to take the three great subjects into which the controversy obviously divides itself, viz.,

1. Evidence of the genuineness, authenticity, and inspiration of those parts of the authorized version of the Holy Scriptures which you deny.

2. Translations of those parts which you alter, and to our judgment unimpaired.

3. Trinitarian, involving those principles of vicarious sacrifice which we deem good, and which you discuss.

Our proposal, then, is to meet you either on *day* on each subject, as you please, or *on one* of our subjects, as you please; the discussion to be conducted in species of *an hour or half an hour* each, as you please.

And now, trusting that this proposed arrangement may prove satisfactory to you, and to all who take an interest in this controversy, and thereby paying the great Head of the Church to convert our purposes to the advancement of His Kingdom and the promotion of His glory,

I remain, Gentlemen,

Yours for the Lord's sake,

FEBRUARY 5, 1840.

FREDERICK OGDEN.

To the Reverend FREDERICK OGDEN.

REVEREND SIR,—It would have been gratifying to us to receive from you an answer to our offer of a discussion, through the press, before being called upon to consider a proposal, altogether new, for a platform controversy.

You give us an invitation to talk, and call this an acceptance of our offer to write. The two proposals are so distinct, that it is not easy to see how the one could be transformed into the other, nor is the mistake explained on turning to the words of our invitation, applied to by you, and contained in our letter to the Trinitarian body. They are these:—"We have intended discussion through *the press*, in any form whatever, with the single condition that the statements of both parties shall be presented to the same readers." You leave the impression, that an oral debate is comprised within the terms of this offer; but in doing so you widen its scope, by putting out the phrase which reads *as printing and publication*, and describe it thus:—"You refer to the Trinitarian body invites discussion on any shape which shall effectually bring the statements of both parties before the same individuals." You well at once perceive the misrepresentation; well acknowledge that the idea of settling historical and philosophical controversies, by popular debate, has neither origin nor sanction from us—and we prompt us to need you to our first proposal of discussion through the press, a proposal to which, though now made for the third time, we have yet received no answer.

Meanwhile, we will not delay the reply which is due to this new suggestion of a platform controversy. We decline it altogether; and for this answer you must have been prepared, by the sentiment we expressed on an early stage of this correspondence:—"We are not of opinion that a miscellaneous audience, assembled in a place of worship, constitutes the best tribunal to which to submit abstract theological questions respecting the canon, the text, the translation of Scripture; questions which cannot be answered by any defective scholarship." To assemble a similar audience in an amphitheatre, where the sanctities of worship are not present to calm



and enlighten the mind, is evidently not to improve the national. The scholar knows that such exhibitions are a mockery of critical theology; the devout, that they are an injury to personal religion. We are surprised that any serious and cultivated man can think so lightly of the vast contents of the questionary which we offer, or to be able to dispense with calm reflection on the evidence adduced, and to answer off-hand all possible arguments against him, within the range of biblical and ecclesiastical literature. We are not accustomed to treat with scolding such a contempt, however trivial an achievement it may seem to you to subject ours. In reverence for truth, in a spirit of candour inseparable from our desire to discharge our trust with circumspcct fidelity, and from a belief that, to think deeply, is the essential prerequisite to speaking boldly, we offered you the most responsible method of discussion, in which we might present to each other, and to our country before the world, the fruits of thought and study. To this offer we adhered, but cannot join you, on an occasion thus solemn, in an appeal to the heat temperate of all tribunals. We realize that one of the *congruities* associated with you refused an oral discussion of the Roman Catholic controversy. We approved of his decision, and, in like circumstances, adopt it.

Will you allow us to correct a mistake which appears in your enumeration of the three topics most fit for discussion? We do not, as Unitarians, deny the genuineness, or alter the translation of any part of the authorized version of the holy Scriptures. The Unitarians have neither canon nor version of their own, different from those recognized by other churches. As biblical critics, we do hold, I neither more nor less than others, extending the best judgment we can on texts of doubtful authenticity, as did Bishop Marsh, in rejecting the "brazen images" (1 John v. 2), and on the accuracy of translations (as did Archbishop Newcome, when he published his version of the New Testament). But no opinions on these matters belong to us as a class, or are essential to the defence of our theology. If you allude to the Emperor's Version, we would state, that it contains the private criticism of our two individuals, and it has never been used in our churches, nor even much referred to in our studies, and it is utterly devoid of all authority with us, and that, for ourselves, we greatly prefer, for general fidelity as well as beauty, the authorized translation, which we always employ.

In your letter to the Unitarians, published in the *Concise* of Wednesday, you state that you never wanted discussion with us (the Unitarians) personally. We never imagined or affirmed that you did. But surely you invited discussion with the class of persons called Unitarians; and as a class has no voice except through its representatives, and no discussion can take place without two parties, you cannot think that we are departing from our proper sphere in answering to your call. Did you not invite us, the Unitarians to you, "to tell and hear together the great things which God has done for our souls?" And did this mean that all the "telling" was to be on our side, and all the "hearing" on the other? Did you not press upon our admiration the primitive practice of "controversial discussion of dogmatic points?" And did this mean that there was to be neither "controversy,"

"discussion," nor "dispute," but a *calumnious* *teaching* on one side, and *obedient* *listening* on the other? In one of two relations you must conceive yourself to stand to us,—first, of a superior, who attracts with superhuman authority, or that of an equal, who "discusses" with honest and fallible reasonings. Between these two positions, there is no third: nor can we, with justice, take sometimes the one and sometimes the other, according as the occasion may require the language of dignity or that of modesty. We certainly addressed you as an equal, and did not pay you the disrespect of imagining that your invitation to "discussion" meant nothing at all.

We are sorry that you ascribe to us any intention to divert you from your contemplated course of lectures. Be assured nothing could be further from our design. We simply desired that, having invited us, you should have recognized us when we presented ourselves, as invited in the "discussion."

We remain, Dear Sir,  
Yours, with Christian regard,  
HARRY GILG.  
JOHN BISHOP'S TOWN.  
JAMES MARTINEAU.

Liverpool, February 27th

To the Rev. J. Martineau, J. H. Thom, and H. Cole

Gentlemen,—I think it due to the cause of truth, as well as to the interest awakened in the public mind by this controversy, to address to you a few observations on your last letter, as published in the *Messenger* of Friday. Though still strongly of opinion that the columns of a newspaper present a most unsuitable medium of communication upon subjects such as these we are now engaged in discussing, I am unwilling in the absence of any other available instrumentality, to lose the opportunity it affords of impressing upon the attention of all concerned men the actual position which we relatively occupy.

I.—Bring aware of the sincere anxiety which you have already manifested for "discussion in any shape which should bring the statements on both sides before the same parties," it is not without considerable surprise that I perceive that you "decline altogether" my proposal of a "platform controversy." Now, while you say I invited you to "talk," and I answer I invited you to *argue*, I cannot but think it will appear evident to most, that by the subsequent publication, in an authentic form, of one equal debate, you would have gained all that you could have desired in the retirement of the press, while a select auditory, equally composed of the respective friends of both parties, would have been able to judge of your ability, and intellectually, if not morally, to meet the case we could have made out against your system. I cannot but hope that a secret consciousness of the weak-

cess of your cause has prompted your discrimination, and sup of opinion that while a discerning public will approve the insertion of your review, they will not be slow to appreciate its motive, or the precise measure of your zeal for a candid impartial hearing.

But the meeting of historical and philological controversies by paper debate has neither been a new invention from you. Perhaps not, but it cannot say that such a course is altogether without precedent. You have doubtless heard of the protracted debate upon these same controversies which were held in the north of Ireland a few years ago between Mr. Usher and Mr. Porter. May I ask whether it was the result of that discussion that induced you to withhold your sanction from all future controversies so conducted? Mr. Porter did not renounce or recede from the principles of Unitarianism as debated by creed before the national audience. Are you wiser than he in your generation? Again: the proposed trial is not the best to which to submit a dispute of disputed questions respecting the origin, the real, the translation of Scripture? But do you not approve as a rule lower down, that you, as Unitarians, do not deny the genuineness or all the foundation of any part of the authorized version of the holy scriptures? Well, then, there is no ground for the slow apprehension. As these are not points which the editorial will have to try, why question its competence on their account? You are surprised that I would disagree with calm reflection on the evidence adduced? I am, if a year ago, surprised that you should suppose I have any such objection. When the "evidence adduced" has been taken down and published, what is there to prevent its being "manly" weighed and estimated at its proper value? And how is it hard to answer what hard to possible arguments advanced. So it is; but not harder to you than for me. Here at least we should stand on a footing of perfect equality. It was hardly to be expected that you should object to this.

2. I had come to the same old idea which you say I have fallen, and which you state, diligently, to correct. "We do not, as Unitarians, deny the genuineness or all the foundation of any part of the authorized version of the holy scriptures." The Unitarians have neither canon nor version of their own derived from their recognized by other churches. It has been true I certainly have been mistaken, but have the satisfaction of knowing that this assertion has been shared by a host of able writers and well-learned ministers than I can pretend to be. I had a long thought that I read of the changes taken with the received text by the Philologists and Birkbecks—the Welshells and Channing, when they were of opinion that these gave too strongly the language of Trinitarianism. I had also understood that the Unitarians, the Deists, and the Arians, who of old had performed services in the same line, at which many now a little were tired. I had felt it important that the press should—because manuscriptal volumes of Archbishop Magee preserved a chance on this behalf, with which few were unacquainted. Now, if you mean to say that you, the ministers and representatives of Liverpool Unitarianism have never questioned the genuineness, nor all the translation of any part of the authorized version, I can understand the assertion, and willingly

take your own word for its truth. But if you mean to affirm that this has not been done, and to a very prodigious extent, by Unitarians, both domestic and foreign, you will excuse me if I positively deny the allegation, as being wholly without foundation, and I shall be glad to see notorious manifestations of the abominable doctrine of Unitarian doctrine, as well as to the severe exposures of their semi-sinister tampering with the Bible which they have called forth.

But while you do not deny the genuineness or all the translation of any part, perhaps you question the inspiration of certain portions of the sacred volume. You will remember that this was one of the branches of evidence that we proposed to discuss with you, and that not the least in its importance. Why are you silent on this head? Is it not of very moment to think you, to admit the genuineness and confess the authenticity of a book or a chapter or a verse of scripture, if you withhold your conviction of its inspiration? Is it not a fact that you might hold the genuineness of the two first chapters of St. Matthew and St. Luke, and feel no disposition to alter the translation of a word, and, at the same time, boldly deny that they were "given by inspiration of God"? If I am mistaken here to, I may be so set right. If not, then the public will decide upon the candour and fairness of your profession, to remove the necessity of any controversy with you on the score of genuineness, because of your admission of the genuineness and your satisfaction with the accuracy of the authorized version, while by an extensive but momentous silence, you acknowledge that the genuineness of certain still questioned is by you denied, and yet at the same time refuse to come forward boldly, and debate it fairly before the church.

Again—Unitarians have neither canon nor version of their own derived from those recognized by us. You anticipate here a reference to the *five revised versions*, and tell us that "it contains only the private and partial of one or two individuals—these have never been used in your churches, and as a matter of all authority with you." Will you excuse me for expressing my doubts of the accuracy of this statement, on these reasons—1. That one of our best productions of some of the wisest and most learned of the Unitarian sect has ever been able to establish and that the studies of Hildner, Lindsey, John, Briggs, and Walsford, might well be mentioned to bear their testimony against our unimpaired opinion of by those who were disciples of their school. 2. That in the year 1840, the date of the edition which I possess, the improved versions had gone through no fewer than six editions—a tolerable evidence of the extent of its circulation in this world than twenty years. How many a way have passed through since, I have been exact enough to ascertain. 3. That as far from being "devoid of all authority," it proceeds, in the title page, to have been "published by the Unitarian Society for promoting Christian Knowledge and the practice of virtue by the distribution of Bibles." This society "never have been used in your churches." I cannot believe, as it is probable that the feelings of your people would have resulted from any agency its introduction, to make the exact and admit this. On the whole, it furnishes may have proved too costly even for the Unitarian organs of

popular Unitarianism itself. It is also possible that the modern professors of your theology may be somewhat ashamed of this awful specimen of "rational and liberal criticism," and may secretly wish that it had never seen the light. But the *existence* of it, at least, cannot be denied; and there it stands, a painful memorial and a living witness, of what is "in the heart" of a system that exiles reason into a domain *over* *religion*, and that, murmured by the solemn admissions contained in the book itself against the preposterous additions or deductions of human pride or folly, has dared to dare only to lay its unallowed hands on the sacred ark and to attempt the mutilation and misrepresentation of the great magna charta of the spiritual liberties of man.

3. "At the close of your letter, you say, 'Surely you invited discussion, with the class of persons called Unitarians.' I again repeat I did not. I determined to have a course of lectures delivered in my church on the points at issue between us as Unitarian professors of what we call your 'heresy.' And I invited the persons whom I was and am sincerely anxious to benefit, to come and bear our well-considered convictions of their errors and their consequent danger, as well as our faithful exhibitions of what we think 'a more excellent way.' It will not be denied that a clergyman of any denomination, in a free country, and more especially a clergyman of the national church, has a right to preach, or authorize others to preach, on his pulpit, according to his own discretion, and invite whom he pleases to come and hear, without its being understood that he challenges either the parties so invited, or their representatives, to enter with him the lists of controversial discussion. I absolutely protest against any such understanding. I did not wish to compel the attendance at any of your lectures, nor yet to deny to you or them, in reply, the use of the same weapons that I had employed in the attack. I did not see that those who pleased should come and hear us "off" from a gospel which they were not told by those upon whom we looked as "blind leaders of the blind," and that they should be prepared to "learn" whatever should commend itself to their consciences, under our teaching, as the truth of God. We did not, and do not, expect to be able to bring demonstration home to the hearts of any by the strength of our arguments, or by the force of our appeals; but we anticipated that, in answer to our earnest prayers, the power of the Holy Ghost would accompany our teaching of His truth, and make it effectual to the conversion of souls "from darkness to light." We propose to stand before the congregation that might assemble, neither as "superiors to instruct with superhuman authority, nor as "equals to discuss (if you mean by that *dispute*) with human and fallible reasonings," but simply as "ambassadors for Christ, as though God did breathe thro' us, that we might pray them in Christ's stead—be ye reconciled to God." This is the pacific position in which we stand, the issue between your two extremes, and by God's blessing, we will continue to occupy it, until we shall have delivered our consciences, and discharged our duty to a numerous, respectable, but, in our judgment, blinded and deluded class of our fellow-countrymen.

And now, gentlemen, having taken such notice of certain allegations in your letter as it seemed impossible to pass by, and with the full purpose of continuing in the course on which I have entered, should, through the blessing of God, the grand object which I have proposed to myself shall have been accomplished,

I remain, yours, for the truth's sake,

FIRMINO GIBB

February 11, 1832.

To the Revs. J. Martineau, J. H. Thom. and H. Giles.

Gentlemen,—You state, in your letter of the 10th ult., that "your proposal of discussion through the press, though made for the third time, has as yet received no answer." It was thought by ourselves and our clerical brethren, that as our lectures were to be printed and published, every facility was afforded you of replying to them through the same channel, and that thus the whole subject would be fairly brought before the public.

In addition to this, we have offered to meet you in oral discussion: you decline the proposal.

Amazingly desirous to bring the whole matter before this great community, so as to prove that we not only entertain no apprehensions as to the result, but are convinced that, by such an exposition, great good will be effected, we, the undersigned, on our own responsibility, accept your request of discussing the controversial question between us, in the form of a correspondence in some public journal or periodical, altogether independent of the lecture.

We remain, Gentlemen,

Yours, for the sake of the Gospel,

THOMAS BURNET.

FIRMINO GIBB.

HELM M'NEILL.

February 11, 1832.

To the Rev. Fighting Gull.

Rev. Sir,—The tone of your last letter makes us regret that, by the acceptance on your part of discussion through the press, this controversy may now be brought to a close.

Let us, Rev. Sir, place before you your own language, and ask, in solemn solemnity, are the feelings it betrays worthy of the occasion, or deserved by us, or obnoxious to the public mind? These are your words— "I cannot but hope that a secret consciousness of the weakness of your cause has prompted your determination, and aim of opinion, that while a dissenting pulpit will approve the discretion of your resolve, they will not be slow to approve its motive, or the precise measure of your zeal for a neutral and impartial hearing. Sir, it is not a little remarkable to find a Christian Minister expressing his hope that other men are hypocrites,—

that they are secretly cognitions of the weakness of the cause which they publicly defend. To say, that we secretly know our errors, whilst publicly preaching them as truth, is, indeed, strange profaneness of faith before works. Let us assure you, Sir, that if we could thank of you as this language shows you think of us, we should decline all discussion with you. We should regard you as an opponent too dishonourable to be identified with a great question, or to be considered as an honourable representative of your own party.

We apprehend, Rev. Sir, that nobody but yourself would think of attributing to our cause weakness our preference of the most perfect and searching method of discussion, to the most direct, sufficient, and unobscured that could by possibility be selected. Had we wished to catch the ear of a popular assembly, or to turn away attention from weak points by oratorical artifices, we should have pursued this platform contravenely, instead of, as we did, carefully and purposely working our invitation and our enumeration of the topics in which the controversy might be conducted, so as to exclude the idea of oral discussion.

We derive with reason, and with diminished hope of benefit from controversy, that you are so void of the patience of truth or personal championship as to neglect our solemn unwillingness to contest the gravest questions to extraneous details and accidental objections, with the reply that in this respect we should be at least equally obtuse. Doubtless, Sir, if a display of personal prowess was our object, this would be conclusive; but truth is our object, and we dare not offer it such worthless advocacy.

With respect to the instance alluded to by us, of a denial similar to our own, our impression had been that reasons also similar to our own were given at the time, and we can only repeat, since this impression seems to be false, that we quoted the case.

With regard to the 'Improved Version,' we shall only say here, that it has been noted to us, in importance in this discussion which is entirely false. The difference between us must be settled upon principles of interpretation and criticism recognized by all scholars, and if those principles can be shown, in any respects, to condemn the 'Improved Version,' in those respects we shall be the first to abandon it, feeling ourselves to be in nothing bound by it. When we said that, as Unitarians, we had no reason or version of our own, we meant that we are quite willing to accept the &c. as used by scholars, most of them Unitarians, on critical principles. We most cheerfully recognize the fundamental principles of Scriptural enquiry, so clearly and soundly stated yesterday evening by Dr. Tuckwell; and although agreeing with many of your able scholars in thinking the received translation to require corrections, and not approving of the immensity of taking up a position as defence of truth intrinsically unfavourable, yet were our only object to display the ample and superior Scriptural evidence for Unitarianism then for Trinitarianism, the received translation would be quite sufficient for our purpose.

Again reminding you that the word "distortion" was introduced into

your original invitation, which contained also reference to the controversy and discussion of particular topics, and set forth the advantages of "hearing" and "telling" together.

We remain,

Your fellow-labourers and fellow-Christians,

JOHN KRISTOFFERSEN,

JOHN HENNING THOM,

HENRY GILES.

Feb. 14, 1859

To the Revs. Thomas Ryck, Fiddling Chalk, and Hugh McNeil

Gentlemen, — Your willingness to discuss the Unitarian and Trinitarian controversy in the most satisfactory mode, has given us much pleasure, and if we have seemed to press this matter upon your acceptance, we assure you it was with the single desire that the statements of both views, in their most accurate and perfect forms, might be presented to the same minds through an unobscuring medium: an object which could be obtained neither by the unequal distribution of separate lectures, nor by means so necessarily imperfect as oral discussion.

We shall be happy to arrange with you, at the earliest possible period, the manner and conditions of our proposed discussion.

We shall be ready to confer ourselves to your method upon the subject; but we would suggest the desirableness of the discussion being entered on at once, partly because attention to it might now be secured, and partly because in the seriousness and number of our mutual engagements, this controversy should not be allowed to interfere with our other duties and responsibilities longer than is necessary.

We are, Gentlemen,

Yours, with respect,

JOHN HENNING THOM,

JOHN KRISTOFFERSEN,

HENRY GILES.

Feb. 14, 1859

To the Revs. J. Matthews, J. H. Thom, and H. Giles

Gentlemen, — I cannot permit our correspondence to terminate without a few remarks on your letter, as published in the *Monitor* of Friday last.

I regret that the "name" of my last address should have given you any offence, while I am wholly unconscious of any intention or necessity to wound the feelings of those who, I am free to admit, have hitherto written at least conscientiously, if not very cordially, upon the subjects which have been recently submitted to the attention of the public. Allow me distinctly to disclaim any attempt to charge you with *hypocrisy*, or make it appear that you "secretly know an error which you publicly preach as truth." I took occasion merely to express my surprise that persons who avowed so anxious for an impartial hearing of their defence, should "altogether

declined "a proposal by which, as it appeared, and still appears to me, that object might have been so satisfactorily attained, and in the exercise of a liberty that "hopeth all things," I sought to attribute your refusal to a latent and half-formed conviction within you, that your principles, in whatever sincerity entertained and professed, might not bear the sight of such an investigation as that in which they would have been subjected in a public and open discussion. Where is there any charge of hypocrisy here? May not a man be perfectly sincere in the maintenance of an opinion, which he would nevertheless be very unwilling to defend in oral debate, from a proper apprehension of the force of argument with which it might be encountered, and a secret consciousness of his own slender materials for its support? Be assured it is not necessary for us to brand you with *hypocrisy*, in order to convict you of *liberty*. We are willing to give you every trial the honesty of intention and integrity of purpose, while we cannot but suspect that you are fully aware of the difficulty of sustaining the principles of Unitarianism on the ground of an unauthenticated and "unimproved" Bible.

Were I equally disposed with you to take offence, I too might inquire, "in solemn sadness, whether it be desired by us, or obnoxious to the public mind," that you should more than indicate, though of course in very polite phrases, that "we have proposed a platform controversy, in order to catch the ear of a popular assembly, and to turn away attention from work prints by ornamental artifices." Is this your opinion of us? If we thought so, "we should decline all discussion with you as opponents too discreditable to be identified with a great question, or to be considered as honourable representatives of your own party." But we are not offended. We look upon your language as simply intended to convey an admission that your system is unpopular: and that, from its cold, and cheerless, and unimpassioned character, would seek in vain to enlist on its behalf any measure of popular sympathy, or contribute any favour unless from those whom it had imbued with its own proud spirit, and accustomed to the low temperature of its own frosty frown.

O. But, gentlemen, while I cheerfully receive the imputation on the "tone" of my address which your letter *does* contain, I have to complain respecting the answer to a very simple question I had proposed, which your letter *does not* contain. As I am unwilling to incur the hazard of again offending, I will forbear from more loudly hinting at the semblance of reticent delicacy that appears in your perhaps unthoughtful turning away of attention from the prominent point which I had submitted for your consideration, in order to foster upon me a groundless charge, and so challenge public sympathy in your favour, as men branded with the character of hyp-crites, and secretly arguement of errors which were openly preached as truths. We proposed to discuss with you "the evidence of the genuineness, authenticity, and inspiration of the holy scriptures." You replied that you do not "deny the genuineness," and seek not "to alter the translation of any part of the authorized version," which you prefer to the unadvised version of Mr. Hulseam and his associates. You were silent, however, about the inspiration. I ventured to inquire whether I was mistaken in supposing you denied the *plenary* inspiration of the authorized version? My words

were, "If I am mistaken here too, I pray to be set right." In your letter now before me there is not a word upon the subject: no answer to my all-important inquiry. There is a little farther disparagement of the "improved version," which, we are told, has been raised into a "locustous importance in this controversy;" you will be the first to "abandon it, if it should be condemned by the ordinary principles of critical interpretation — so far so good. But what of the variations? Are you either afraid or ashamed to speak out what you think on this subject? I would not that you should be offended at the "tone" of my interrogations; but again I must ask, what are your opinions upon the *quality* and *extent* of scriptural inspiration? The public are anxiously awaiting an answer to this solemn query, and our present correspondence cannot close until it is answered. The way will then be clear for our approaching discussion through the press; we shall then understand each other, and shall have re-estimated and appreciated the character of the field upon which we are to take up our respective positions. You say that "*truth* is your object," and not "personal championship." Well, then, let us have the truth upon Unitarian views of *scriptural* inspiration. All other arguments can be only to unmeaning play of words until that point is settled.

We are rejoiced to learn that you are satisfied with "the authorized version," and "the received translation," for the purposes of our present inquiry; and when you shall satisfy us that you admit the full inspiration of *all and every part* of that volume, we shall be in a condition to inquire whether it presents "ampler and superior Scriptural evidence for Unitarianism than for Trinitarianism." We remember that Mr. Hulseam, in his Review of Mr. Wetherhead's *Treatise*, has said, speaking of the texts usually quoted by Trinitarians in proof of the proper deity of Christ, that Unitarians pledge themselves to show that they are *all either interpolated, corrupted, or erroneously translated*.—Review, pp. 270, 271. They engage to get clearly rid of them altogether. For, it would appear, have given up the *interpolations* and *corruptions*, the *misunderstandings*, we presume, shall remain chargeable against us; but whether on the ground of ignorance, or of mistaken confidence in the inspiration of the texts in question, we have yet to be informed.

You will pardon my anxiety for an answer upon this head, bearing in mind that we regard it as opening wide a door for the introduction of *regularity*, as to give up *any portion* of the sacred volume as being not of inspired authority, as to render it doubtful whether *any portion* does possess that authority, and thus entirely neutralize the effect of God's message of mercy to the souls and hearts of men.

I remain, Gentlemen,

Yours, for the sake of the Gospel,

FREDERICK GOUX.

February 18, 1839.

To the Rev. William Guild

Reverend Sir.—You proposed (in your letter of the 5th February) a certain series of subjects as proper topics for the discussion between us, and

submitted the list to our notice for acceptance or rejection. From this enumeration we struck out two particulars, viz., the *indefiniteness* of certain parts of the New Testament writings, on the ground that we did not deny even possibilities under that head; and the *transmission* of certain other parts of the Scriptures, on the grounds that with ourselves we prefer, on the whole, the authorised text, to all others; but we would not be responsible for any new rendering of itself in the Improved Version; and that, as we have nothing so absurd as a *system of translation* capable of general treatment, any special instances, in which we may think the common translation inaccurate, had better be discussed in connection with the *theological* defects attended by the texts in question.

These subjects being excluded from the list, the next comprising the question of *inspiration*, or the *doctrine of verbal plenary inspiration*, of course stand over for discussion. We said nothing of these, because we had no objection to take against them. As our notice of the others was to deal with editorial, our "balance" about them was to leave their substance.

The plenary inspiration of the Scriptures, or, if you really prefer it, as your phraseology seems to imply, "the plenary inspiration of the *authoritative canon*," remains then an essential part of our approaching controversy. Why you should complain that we do not step aside with you individually, to render you an account of our *views* in this matter, we cannot divine, unless you think that, by tempting us into your confessional by appeals to our conscience, you could suppose upon the "heretics' gear" justice or discretion. If it should be that this subject is likely to be extended to your hands in this controversy, and you are merely anxious to know before what precisely are the positions which you may be called upon to meet, a private communication of your views would be sufficient. The whole lecture of our series will be speedily published, and will furnish the information which you desire.

We are sorry that you shoulder any want of "courtesy" in our last issue, and surprised that, this being the case, you can esteem it "courteous." We regard a violation of "courtesy" as the greatest outrage upon "decorum," and despise, worse all things, the hollow and superficial manners, which are empty of all genuine affections and Christian sentiments. In saying that you charged us with impudence, we committed no breach of courtesy, but only the mistake, which we are now happy to correct, of supposing that your language faithfully represented your meaning. That you did not think of the *word* "impudence" when you wrote to us, we cheerfully believe; but that you thought of us as doing that which makes a hypocrite, your own explanation (and no more evasive than it was before) you attribute to us, as a latinate and half-formed convention; that "our principles might not bear the light of investigation," and "the consciousness" of "the difficulty of maintaining them." Now there can be no "delicacy," where the tribunal is widely opened, in maintaining any set of opinions, except from the superior force of the substantial considerations; there can be no "delicacy" of such "difficulty," exempt from consciousness of the opposing superiority, to be conversant of a preponderant evidence, in favour of any system, as it were to believe it; and he who

believes one system, and publicly upholds another, is, as we interpret the words, a hypocrite. We proceed, however, that you made this charge, without precisely meaning it; and we think no more of it.

We disclaim any intention of "tiring" that you "proposed a plenary controversy, in order to catch the ear of a popular assembly, and to turn away attention from weak points by ostentatious artifices." We simply affirmed, that such discussion would have afforded a better refuge for our unpoplar "weakness" than the press. But surely it does not follow that, because the conversely weak might prefer such a method, therefore all who prefer it must be conversely weak. It would, indeed, be a strange mistake of all the systems by which the characters of men can be known, if we attributed to you any surprise that you could be mistaken. You are quite aware that your *conscience* appears to us perfectly sincere, and even to transgress the bounds of a modest confidence.

We remain, Reverend Sir

Yours, with Christian regard,

HENRY GILES.

JOHN HAWTHORNE TITON.

JAMES MANTON.

February 21, 1830

To the Hon. J. Manton, J. H. Titon, and J. Giles.

Gentlemen:—Before we proceed with our proposed discussion, it is necessary to determine, with a little more of accuracy than has been hitherto attained, what our controversy is to be about.

We thought that you, in common with Unitarians generally, acknowledged the Scriptures of the New Testament, as contained in what is commonly called "The Version or Improved Version," to be inspired of God, and consequently of infallible truth.

They however you, as individuals, have determined, and therefore, we are compelled to ask what you do acknowledge *INSPIRED REVELATION?*

Is our discussion to be,

1. Upon the meaning of a mutually-acknowledged standard of truth? Or
2. Upon the question, Is there any such standard? And if so, what is it?

We submit the inspiration by God of the Holy Scriptures, as contained in our authorised canon, and are willing to refer every question for decision to their accustomed meaning.

Do you agree in this?

Our standard being known, it is a matter of obvious fairness that we should not to have yours denied.

Either you admit the divine inspiration, and consequent infallible truth, of the Bible, or you do not.

Or, you do admit a part and reject a part. You will be so good as to state clearly how this matter stands.

Are you believers in a WRITTEN and INTELLIGIBLE-ACCURATE REVELATION from God to man?

If so, what is that Revelation?

If you admit only parts of our Bible as inspired, you will oblige us by stating what parts.

The character of the discussion must obviously depend upon this: is it to be a discussion upon *TEXTS* or upon *PRINCIPLES*? It would be manifestly a waste of time in us to enter upon the interpretation of what you might afterwards get rid of (so far, at least, as you are concerned,) by declaring it only the opinion of a *fallible* man.

We remain, Gentlemen,

Yours, for the sake of Truth,

HENRY McNEELY,

PARSONS OFFICE,

TRINITY SQUARE.

March 11th, 1839.

To the Revs. H. McNeely, F. Child, and T. Byth.

Gentlemen, You ask us, in our discussion to be,

1. "Upon the meaning of a generally-acknowledged standard of truth?" Or,

2. "Upon the question, Is there any such standard? And if so, what is it?"

We answer, definitely, that our controversy is upon the meaning, ascertained by interpretation, of the *Hebrew* and *Greek* Scriptures. Should any questions of criticism arise respecting what is the text to be interpreted, these must, of course, be argued separately, upon purely critical grounds.

We conceive that the real controversy between us respects the nature of Christianity itself:—you holding the Revelation to consist in doctrines deducible from the written words, we holding the Revelation to be expressed in the character and person of Jesus Christ, and to be conveyed to us through a faithful and authentic record. Which of these two ideas is Scriptural?—that is our controversy.

Of course, "the standard" by which we must test "the truth" of these ideas is the New Testament, and the Hebrew Scriptures, so far as they throw light on the contents. Whichever view of Christianity is supported by the meaning of this standard, is the true one. The method of ascertaining the meaning of any writings is the same, whether those writings are of natural or supernatural origin; so that the process of interpretation may go on, undisturbed by any reference to the theory of verbal inspiration. The admission of an "infallible truth" as the Bible (which, however, is known with certainty only to God, for you, after admitting it, are disputing with heretics of your own denomination what it is), cannot alter, in any respect, the true grounds of our controversy. It is a controversy of interpretation, and no theory of verbal inspiration can make it anything else.

This theory, however, we conceive to be altogether fallacious, both in its principles and its results: and if you wish to make it the subject of our controversy, we have no objection. We leave it to your choice, whether we are to discuss the theory of verbal inspiration, or whether we are to discuss the meaning of the original Scriptures, as ascertained by the acknowledged principles of interpretation.

We confess to not a little surprise that three clergymen, coming forward to discuss Unitarianism, should be found to express themselves so inaccurately, or from such defective information, as to speak of "the Unitarian or Improved Version," and to represent the work, thus falsely described, as acknowledged by Unitarians generally to contain the New Testament as inspired by God. The theory of verbal inspiration, which we deny altogether, we are not likely to claim in favour of a Unitarian translation. We have repeatedly stated, that the "Improved Version" is not the "Unitarian Version," nor is it "commonly" so "called." And now we say, once more, that our controversy is not about the Improved Version, but about the Greek Testament.

When you accepted our invitation, with its letter it was understood that all the preliminaries of our controversy were to be arranged by mutual agreement. You were aware, and we have in our letters distinctly stated, that the theory of verbal inspiration stood as a part of that controversy, you knew, also, that in a few days a distinct statement of our opinions upon the nature of the Bible, in the form of a printed lecture, would be before the public. We therefore rely upon your letter, in the evening of Wednesday last, as altogether unnecessary; and we answer, that publicly, what ought to have been matter of private communication, only because we are resolved not to allow any informality, on your parts, to prevent our coming to a public discussion of our respective views of Christianity.

We are, Gentlemen,

Yours respectfully,

JAMES MARTINEAU.

JOSEPH H. THOM

HENRY CHILD.

March 11, 1839.

To the Revs. J. Martineau, J. H. Thom, and H. Child.

Gentlemen, In our last letter we gave up the "Improved Version," so far as you, as *individuals*, are concerned: because, as *individuals*, you disclaimed it. We are surprised, therefore, that you should revert to it, and do more so, because you have now ventured to say, not only that you disclaim it, but also, in the face of known facts, that it is not "the Unitarian version," nor is it "commonly" so "called." When you disclaimed it for yourself, we did not dissent. But when you go on to disclaim it for the Unitarian body, (for which, by the way, you have no authority,) we strenuously deny your assumption, and call in evidence the language of all the best writers upon the controversy.

You have misstated our question. We did not ask, "Is our discussion to

be upon the meaning of a mutually-acknowledged standard of *Scripture*! We did ask, "Is it to be upon the meaning of a mutually-acknowledged standard of *truth*?" We receive the *Scripture* as a standard of *truth*. The substitution of the one word for the other, in this question, has unjustified your whole letter.

We collect, however, from your letter, and from Mr. Martineau's assertion, to which you refer us, (and which we consequently conclude contains the sentiments of you all,)

1. That you do not believe in a *written and infallibly-accurate Revelation from God to man.*

2. That Paul the apostle may have "reasoned inaccurately," and "speculated falsely."\*

3. And that, consequently, you feel yourselves at liberty to judge his statements (and all the statements of *Scripture*) as you do those of any other book.

You seem to think that this is of little consequence, and say that "the process of interpretation may go on, undisturbed by any reference to the theory of verbal inspiration."

We reply that such a process can lead to nothing but waste of time. For when we shall have proved some great truth, or condemned some fatal error upon the authority of Paul, or some other inspired writer, you have kept an open door for yourselves to escape from the whole force of our demonstration, by saying that, in the words in which we cite the sacred writers, "reasoned inaccurately," or "speculated falsely"—which, if any passages in those writers seem to favour your view, you have already retained the privilege of ascribing to them a sort of inspiration †.

No, gentlemen, we are not to be deceived so, into an attempt to fix the chameleon's colour. If the apostles may "reason inaccurately," and "speculate falsely;" if the inspiration under which they wrote did not infallibly preserve them from error, then there is no standard of truth upon earth. Of what avail is it, then, to refer to the *Word Testament*, or the *Hebrew Scriptures*? The *Scripture*, instead of being (what David called it, speaking as he was moved by the Holy Ghost) "a lamp unto our feet, and a light unto our path," degenerates into a mixture of light and darkness, which we dare not rashly follow, but of which we must judge by our own eyes or light in ourselves.

We observe, further, that, according to the light that is in you, historical proof of miracles having been wrought in attestation of what the writers

\* It might be said that Paul reasons, and he is right, at the same time he may reason inaccurately, or speak, that is, speculate, and yet be chartered by inspiration that he may speculate falsely;—to prove his skill in illustration, yet shew he knows when something false or spurious is pointed out,—from whence comes this? The human understanding cannot perform its duty, even without taking its share of the darkness of error, and even a writer of the prophets has some perception of his own weakness, without catching the epidemic of fallacy and falsity. We must give up our admiration of the apostle's wisdom, if we are to allow to them always a chartered infallibility.—*Martineau's Sermon*, pp. 44, 25.

† I believe St. Matthew to have been inspired; but I do not believe him to have been infallible.—*Sermon*, p. 27.

of *Scripture* say, would not be proof against uncertainty in their reasonings, or fallacious in their speculations.

This notable contrast in you comes to, by elevating nature into the miraculous, and thus depressing the miraculous into the natural: since you say that the whole force of the impression made by proofs from miracles arises from a "supposed contrast" between miracle and nature.\*

You have thus advanced a step beyond common Deism, and rendered yourselves inaccessible even by miracles. This is conclusive, and demands the serious attention of all who have hitherto been disposed to receive instruction from you. We entreat that we may go no further! For, if there be only a supposed contrast between miracle and nature, we cannot prove the strongest interposition of God on behalf of the statements of *Scripture*, and what else is so worthless the appeal which Jesus makes to his miracles, in answer to the inquiry of John's disciples, "Who saidst thou, and whom dost thou signify those whom thou dost see and hear, the blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dumb are raised up, and the poor have the Gospel preached to them?"—*John* vi. 42. Upon your principles, gentlemen, this appeal is worthless; for even if the wonderful things here stated be established as historical facts, still they contain no proof, because between these wonders and the course of nature there is only "a supposed contrast."

Therefore, by your avowal that even miracles cannot prove inspiration, you are led in undisputed possession of the field of infidelity. We have no common property of reason with you, and without determining whether man who rejects the evidence of miracles are of an order of beings above or below ourselves, we feel that discussion with them is impracticable.

While, therefore, we shall continue to use all lawful methods of argument and persuasion in the hope of being useful to those who, though called Unitarians, are not so entirely separated from our common humanity as you seem to be, we have no hesitation in saying that, with regard to yourselves as individuals, there appears to be a more insurmountable obstacle in the way of discussion than would be offered by ignorance of our author's language; because the want of a common medium of language could be supplied by an interpreter, but the want of a common medium of reason cannot be supplied at all.

We remain, Gentlemen, yours respectfully,

HUGH McNEIL,  
FRANCIS OGLE,  
THOMAS BYRON.

March 18th, 1839.

To the Revs. H. McNeil, F. Ogle, and T. Byron.

Gentlemen,—We regret the inadvertent of your question, which appeared at the commencement of our letter of the 12th instant. We regret still more that it did not occur to you to attribute it to its real

\* All peculiar conceptions of miracle is obtained by a primary proposition, *the contrast of miracle*, is a result of a supposed contrast between the two, that are whole force of the impression arises.—*Sermon*, p. 24.



close—the carelessness of a printer or transcriber. In the antislavery manuscript which remains in our hands, your question is correctly stated thus—“Is our business to be upon a mutually-acknowledged standard of truth?” Now the word “truth” became changed into “scripture,” we cannot tell; and not having read our letter after it was in print, we were unaware of the mistake until you pointed it out. Whatever “misinformation” is introduced, you will consider as now removed.

Your letter announces your retirement from the proposed controversy. Knowing that in taking this step you could not put yourselves in the right, it is only natural perhaps that you should resolve to set your opponents in the wrong, and to cover your own retreat by throwing scorn on their religious characters. Theology appears in this instance to have borrowed a hint from the “laws of honour;” and as in the world a “passage of arms” is sometimes evaded, under the pretence that the antagonist is too little of a gentleman, so in the church a polemical collision may be declined, because the opponent is too little of a believer.

You refuse to fulfil your pledge to the public and ourselves on two grounds:—

I. Because we do not acknowledge the plenary inspiration of the Scriptures.

II. Because we think it impossible to infer from miracles the mental infallibility of the performer. It is of no use, you say, to argue about divine truth with those who do not believe in “a written and infallibly accurate revelation from God to man.”

We will concede, for the moment, and under protest, your narrow meaning of the words “inspiration” and “revelation,” and without disturbing your usage of them, we submit that the reasons advanced by you afford not even a plausible pretext for having violated your pledge. First, as to the plea that we are put out of the controversy by our unexpressed denial of the intellectual infallibility of the sacred writers, and that to argue about the meaning of the Bible is a waste of time, till its verbal inspiration is established. We reply,—

I. That it was you yourselves who started this very question of inspiration for argument between us. In his letter of February 13th, Mr. Ould gives this account of our projected controversy: “We proposed to discuss with you the existence of the genuineness, authenticity, and inspiration of the Holy Scriptures;” he turns to with solicitude to take up this “greatest of theological questions,” with “refusing to come forward boldly, and debate it fairly before the church.” \* We have come forward boldly, and this is now the alleged reason why there is to be no debate at all before the church. Moreover, at the time when you said “we accept your terms,” you regarded us as holding the very opinions which are now made the basis for a retreat, in your first paper they are made a chief ground of indictment against us, and pages are crowded with citations from Unitarian writers, expressing those same sentiments, which, when avowed by your own opponents, are to make them unfit to be addressed, and to exempt you

\* See F. Ould's Letter of February 21

from the duty of reply. Of the spirit of this proceeding, observers of honourable mind must judge, they, as well as you, are well aware, that to pronounce men unworthy of attack, is itself an attack of the last degree of bitterness.

II. Your refusal to settle with us the meaning of Scripture till the plenary inspiration is acknowledged, is in plain contradiction to your own principles. You fix the interpretation of *decreta* on an *one* statement that “the process of interpretation may go on undisturbed by any reference to the theory of verbal inspiration.” Yet is this only a repetition of what Mr. Byrd himself says, “In whatever light the Christian Scriptures are regarded, whether as the result of plenary inspiration, as we Trinitarians believe, or as the uninspired productions of the first teachers of Christianity, or even as the forgeries of imposture, the meaning of their contents is a question apart from all others.” †

Dr. Tateshall, in common with all sound divines, makes it the first step of scriptural inquiry to “examine the contents” of the books under the guidance of the following principle: that “any message coming from God must be consistent with the character of the same holy being, as exhibited in his works,” and must have “consistency with itself:” ‡ and he, early states, that whether we ought to take the *last* step, of admitting the divine authority of the doctrines, must still be contingent on these doctrines, “being themselves true and holy;”—“lessons worthy of God.” These principles are violated, unless our investigation into your doctrines is taken in the following order:—

I. Are your doctrines true to the *spirit* of Scripture? If not, the controversy ends here, if they are, then.

II. Are they *self-consistent*; consistent with the teaching of God's works, pure and holy? If not, the controversy ends here, if they are, then.

III. Do they come to us clothed with divine authority, and conveyed us the language of plenary inspiration?

Your system, then, must establish its *existence* in the Bible (which is a matter of interpretation), and its *credibility* in itself (which we presume there must be some criteria to determine), before the question of inspiration is capable of being discussed. We deny both these preliminaries: possessing that we cannot find your system in the Scriptures, and that if we could, it appears to us as far from “self-consistent,” “wise and holy,” and “worthy of God,” as exceedingly to enhance the claims to divine authority, of any writings which contain it. It was then an implicit obedience to your own rules that we proposed to let the question of interpretation take the lead, and no less so, that we presume to form a

\* See T. Byrd's Lecture, Part I. p. 114.

† See Dr. Tateshall's Lecture on the Language of the Canon, p. 69.

‡ “Whatever lessons of instruction or admonition they teach us, these lessons being themselves pure and holy, must have been delivered under a divine sanction, and therefore possess divine authority.”

“If we [that is, the person who professes miracles] also teaches lessons,—lessons worthy of God,—then he must be suitably equal to us clothed with divine authority.”—Dr. Tateshall's Lecture, pp. 76, 77.



With respect to the Appeal which in the presence of the Bishop's disciples our Lord makes to his miraculously-acted, you are quite aware that we do not regard it as "worthless," though you say we "were" (do so). These acts (the *deeds*) of which, however, was an miracle of all. "The poor have the Gospel preached to them;" fully answered *the purpose for which they were revealed* is, you do determine whether Jesus was "He that should come," or whether John was "so high for another;" for an Bishop Starbuck remarks though miracles may not "be sure" (cannot) prove the truth of any claims, "they" prove *the consistency* of the persons who does them to proceed from God.\* We repeat, then, that we have started no topic which you did not invite; we have taken up no method of discussion which you seem to have not permitted; we have advanced no ideas for which your own Church should be unprepared. You have quitted this controversy without any justification from the unexpected nature of our assertions, and we are persuaded that you can find no advantage in our proposals respecting the *mechanical arrangements*. On this point we will not pretend to state this publicly the instances which we refer to you, through the excellent clergyman who communicated with us in your presence. An objection having been urged by Mr. Goad to Dissension through the newspapers, on the ground that they are read by "the ignorant vulgar, the unlearned, the profane," we proposed the following plan: That for twelve or any limited number of weeks, a sheet weekly published of thirty-two pages should be published, each party for either system page; and the first number of the sheet should contain a positive statement from each party of its fundamental principles or dogmas, of what which it embraces in itself, and that which it must think itself, and that within the limits of this programme, the subjects in the subsequent numbers should confer on themselves. Thus each party would have chosen its own ground, at first, and both would have disappeared from the public view together, at last. This proposal was rejected without any reason being assigned, except that "there were" (was) very difficulties in the way;" and though all points must have to be settled "by previous agreement" we were told that in the following manner we should find a better solution of our, which we might prove in whatever way we thought proper. The public who have watched the proceedings in this matter will bear witness, with our own consciences, that we were not the first to start this controversy; that we have not been the first to have it, and that, in its progress we have departed from no pledge, and bear no guilt of its existence.

And now, Gentlemen, at part from us in conclusion, our solemn protest against the language of unmeasured insult, in which, under the cover of sanctity, the associated clergymen whom you represent, have thought proper to speak of our religion, against the occasions personally addressed to us, in the presence of 3,000 people, by the Leaders in Christ Church: of "mean calumnies," of "scurrilous," "savage," of "damnable blasphemy," of "the grossest imaginable guilt," of "doing despite to the Spirit of Grace," of "the most odious of crimes against the Majesty of

Heaven," and is common with all Unitarians of former age, belief, from "the kindness of your clear hearts," too kind "to have been concluded by any sign of God" and against the visible *glor.* Force us Tertullian's, with which "the faithful" are persuaded that are long we must *as I shall* how we pursued knees, whether we like it or not, to the object of their previous worship—so that they are sure of their triumph in heaven, however questionable it may be on earth. You began the controversy by ascribing to us one shade of "infidelity;" you end it by ascribing to us a blotter "To death" the lowest deep, "there is at bottom" a lower still." We have sat quietly under all this, bearing the rude friction upon everything that is most dear to us, assured that if anything is heaven or earth to certain, it is this: that no spirit of God ever spoke them, or laws administered the poison of human passions, false, in's led as the medicine of a divine love. What is the difference between your religion and ours, that this high tone (that which, in a pure moral taste, nothing surely can be lower) should be assumed against us? We believe, no less than you, in an infallible Revelation (though had we the misfortune to doubt it, we might be, in the sight of God, neither worse nor better than your school); you in a Revelation of an unalterable Creed to the understanding; we in a Revelation of moral perfection, and the spirit of duty to the heart; you in a Revelation of the metaphysics of things; we in a Revelation of the character and providence of the Infinite Father; you in a Redemption which saves the law, and leaves with it, the triumph over all; we in a Redemption which shall restore to all at length the image and the agreeability of God; we do receive, as you suggest, "a sort of inspiration" for the *complex* of Christianity, "a sort" as much higher than your cold, dogmatical, scientific inspiration, as the intuitions of conscience are higher than the predictions of logic, and the free spirit of God, than the petty precision of men. We believe in a spiritual and moral Revelation, most awfully, most solemnly, most holy; which, as it, being the signs of hand and definite class, could never express, and which is therefore guaranteed in a mind directly fixed for the purpose, being written on Earth and publicly transferred to Heaven. All men may see that such a Revelation corresponds well with the medium which conveys it, but a set of scholastic propositions like Articles and Creeds, sought as well have been written on the sky, and every a bitter do not and last in a controversy might have been spared.

We believe, Gentlemen, that the minds of serious and considerate persons are weary of the aggressions of Churches upon the private and conscientious of the individual at least; that they will not long be forced to live on the dry bushes of Creeds which have, lost the kernel of true life, and accept that parallel to divine mysticism. It is at the peril of all religion that its inalienable truths are enshrouded in definite formulas, and the object of God is vainly measured by thrusting out the feet-ends of orthodoxy. The things most holy cannot without injury be thus turned from the contemplation of the affections, to the casual criticism of the intellect, and the acute and painful dividing-knife of dialectics, when applied to that theology into propositions, is apt to have scarce a direct effect.

\* *Discourse*, by N. H. Hall, 1810, vol. 1, p. 117.

That all professing ministers of the Gospel may speedily turn from their divisions of belief to a hearty union of spirit, is the desire and prayer of

His, who in this temper, and in better times, might have been  
owned as

Your fellow-labourer,

JAMES MARSHALL,  
JOHN HAMILTON TILGH,  
HENRY GILKS.

March 25th, 1850.

An attempt has been made, in a preface to the Lectures in which the following pages are a reply, to break the force, by anticipation, of the statements they contain. The Answerer, however, evidently did not here the statements, and the preface proceeds upon some summary of what was said. If Gregoryan are conscientiously prevented from going on here Unitarians, they ought also to be conscientiously prevented from answering what they did not here. I am represented as saying that Trinitarians do not gather, but *scatter*: I said Trinitarianism does not gather, but *scatters*. I am represented as arguing the tendency of Trinitarianism to Popery from the recent movement of the Oxford Tract dissent in that direction: I argued the tendency of Trinitarianism to Popery from its *fundamental principles*, and I referred to the Oxford movement as one of the visible manifestations of the demonstrated tendency.

I shall notice the instances in which the Preface proceeds upon anything like a true apprehension of what was said.

1. Page vii, viii.—“When ever tell us that Jesus did not keep over *errors of opinion*, we maintain that it was the ‘*error of opinion*’ which led them to reject him as the Messiah over which he lamented.” Now, 1. Is the unbelief of the Jews in the Christ, which he was exhibiting his divine credentials in his Character and in his Miracles before their eyes and in their hearts, in any respect similar to our unbelief in the doctrine of the Trinity which we, accepting both the Scriptures and Christ, declare we cannot find to be supported by either? And 2. Is it not evident that Jesus punished the unbelief of the Jews in *Moral Causes*, and that therefore, and only therefore, he condemned it? “This is the Condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.” John iii. 19.

2. Page viii.—“But these principles involve a violation of unity.” And what if they do? Did not our Saviour on this earth, declare, “Think not that I am come to send peace on earth, I came not to send peace but a sword.” 2. Christ is here not describing the final purpose of his Mission nor the natural operation of his Spirit but the immediate opposition and contention which his Religion would excite both in Jew and Gentile before it rooted out the old Faiths. And 3. The Christ is not here alluding to differences between Christians themselves, between those who did accept him; but to the necessary conflict of the Spirit of Jesus with the Antagonist spirits of Judaism and of Heathenism. This also is the great subject of the Book of Revelations.

3. Page xi.—“But it is a priestly spirit which says, ‘you must believe.’” This ought to be reckoned with the instances in which the answer proceeds

upon an incorrect estimate of what was said; which was to this effect,—  
"that it is the purely spirit, whose constant cry is, unless you believe ten  
doctrines, and unless you believe *these* doctrines, you cannot be saved." Be-  
lief in Jesus, entire spiritual Trust in him, as, for all providential purposes,  
our with God, we have explicitly stated as our view of the essentials of  
Christianity.

Page xxi.—We do not know how far the Author extends his approval  
of "the tactics of holy war." For ourselves we disapprove of all such tac-  
tics, especially the tactics of substituting a mere illustration or practical ver-  
ification of an argument, for the argument itself, and then dealing with the  
illustration as if there was no general principle behind it, as if the illus-  
tration was represented as *the* grounds of the principle, when it was only  
represented as one of its outward operations. And yet this "argument on  
a particular ad conversale," is one which the Author employs in his de-  
scription of Unitarianism on almost every page of his *Lectures*.

J. H. T.

THE  
PRACTICAL IMPORTANCE

OF THE

UNITARIAN CONTROVERSY.

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**COLOSSIANS I. 27, 28.**—*Christ in you, the hope of glory: whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus.*

**GALATIANS II. 4, 5.**—*And that because of false brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage. To whom we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour; that the truth of the gospel might continue with you.*

WERE some stranger to our religion inquiring what it is to be a Christian, there are two quarters from which he might derive his ideas of that character. He might draw near to him who is the only perfect expression of Christianity, and when he had sat at the feet of Jesus, listening with hushed heart, and then arisen and joined himself to the meek Prophet of Mercy on his way of Love, he might receive from Christ his impressions of Christianity and catch from the living Master the type of a disciple: or he might turn for information to the Christians of the day, selecting for examination the largest and most prominent classes, and so gather from the common specimen his impressions of their temper, their spirit, and their faith. Each of these

modes of inquiry would produce a result of Truth; but the one would be a Truth of reality, and the other only a Truth of description; the one would present to us what we were seeking, the true idea of a Christian; the other would show with what degree of faithfulness Christians had preserved the spirit of the original, or whether in the copy, in the distant reflection, the features had been faded, marred, distorted; the one would furnish us with the great Master's idea of a Disciple, the other would exhibit the Disciple as a representative of the Master, and assuming to be his Image to the world; in a word the one would be Christ's idea of a Christian; the other would be only a Christian's idea of Christ. Oh, thanks be to God for the written Gospel, for the Epistles written on men's hearts, the living transcripts, give us no worthy ideas of Christ; and were it not for those silent witnesses which speak from a passionless page, and cannot be made to wear the garb of party, which reflect Christ's realities, and not man's ideas, the Image of Jesus had long since been irrecoverably lost!

Let us then for a moment place ourselves beside Jesus, and learn from the Christ what it is to be a Christian. I hear him inviting the weary and the heavy laden to come and find rest unto their souls. I listen for that doctrine of rest, the faith that gives the sin-bound peace. I hear him speak of God, and they are indeed healing words of peace, intended to quell a superstition and a controversy: "God is a spirit: the hour cometh and now is when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth, for the Father seeketh such to worship Him."\* I hear him speak of Duty: "The Lord our God is one Lord, and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: This is the first Commandment. And the second is like unto it: Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. This do and thou shalt

\* John iv. 21, 24.

live." I hear him speak of Heaven: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of Heaven. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. Blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called the children of God. Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of Heaven." "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation, neither shall they say to here, or to there, for behold the kingdom of God is within you."\* I hear him speak to Sin, melted, and transformed into penitence: "To whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little. Thy faith hath saved thee. Go in peace. Sin no more, lest a worse thing come upon thee." I hear him speak of Discontent: "He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me; and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him."† "Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples. If ye keep my commandments ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in His love. Ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you. Henceforth I call you not servants, for the servant knoweth not what his Lord doeth: but I have called you friends: for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you."‡ "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples if ye have love one to another."§

We turn now from the words to the life of the great Teacher, in the endeavour to get a more definite idea of Duty, Discipleship, and Faith. The character of Jesus is the best, fullest, and truest interpretation of the words of Jesus. His life is his own translation of his own precepts into the language of action. We surely cannot be far from the true sources of Christianity when we first drink his words into our hearts, and then follow him with reverent steps and with gazing eyes, to watch his own illustrations of those words, to behold

\* Luke xiv. 17, 21. † John xiv. 21, xv. 9, 10.

‡ John xiv. 23.

the spirit breathing in the life, and from the fulness of his character to learn the fulness of his precepts. Surely Christ embodied and impregnated his own teachings. Surely the life of Christ is undoubted Christianity. Surely his character is Christian Duty; and his destiny Christian Faith. Surely he knew and exhibited the practical tendencies of his own doctrines; and surely to set him up at the fountain-head of our moral being, as God's image to the conscience, and to strive in all things to be like unto him, "whom we preach, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus,"—cannot be to preach "another gospel," or to mistake fatally the essentials of Discipleship. "If a man love me, he will keep my words, and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him."\* The definition of a Christian, when deduced from the words and the life of the Christ himself, thus comes out to be—one who trusts himself in all things to that God of whom Jesus was the image; and who conforms himself in all things to that will of God of which Jesus was the perfect expression. "This is life eternal that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent."†

Turn we now to a different quarter for an answer to our inquiry what it is to be a Christian; from the one Master to the multitude of professors; from the original image, distinct and bright, to the transmitted reflections, all claiming to be genuine copies; from the single voice, sweet and clear, to the confusion of jarring tongues; from the pure fountain to the impure streams; from Christ to Christians. I am entirely guiltless of the intention of satire, but it is quite impossible to avoid the appearance of it in any attempt to give the features of Christianity as they appear in the Christians of the day, in those, that is, who claim to be Christians exclusively; for the truest truth of description excites ideas

\* John xiv. 23.

† John xv. 3.

of the true Christ, so contrasted, that it has, without intention, all the effect of sarcasm. Surely a stranger to the only true source of our religion, examining its actual forms as they exist in the world, and selecting its characteristics from that which is largest and most prominent, would not be guilty of misrepresentation, if he described a Christian as one who was shut up within the narrowest circle of religious ideas; who identified himself and his opinions with absolute Truth; who idolized himself and his sect as the only friends of God; who was so unconscious of a liability to err, that he breathed, unknowingly, an atmosphere of infallibility, and insulted the Rights of other men, not more fallible than himself, without perceiving the invasion,—one so used to arrogate to himself and to his own party, all excellence and all truth, that he starts in surprise, innocent of what can be meant, when he is told that he is pressing on the liberties of other minds, wim, with as deep an interest as he can have in their own salvation, have searched into these things and read differently the mind of God;—as one who regards a few metaphysical propositions, confessedly unintelligible as the only hope of human salvation, and who, in the confidence of this faith, speaks to his fellow men as if he had secret council with God; assumes to be on "a religious level" nearer to the spirit of the most High, who, on that more elevated standing, drops more readily into his heart communications from Heaven;—and who, when he pays any regard to other men at all, looks down upon them from an eminence; assumes as proved their ignorance, their errors, and their sins; insults their opinions; treats with no brotherly respect the convictions of Truth and the dictates of Conscience which to them are Voices from the living God; denies that they have equal zeal for truth, or equal ability to discover it; scoffs at the idea of religious equality, and looks amazed when others tell him, though it be in apostolic words, that they will not "give place by subjection, no, not for an hour,"

and finally adds mockery to insult and wrong, by telling the men whom he so treats, that all this is Christian affection, and an interest in their souls.

It is painful to put last in order, not the true, but the untrue idea of a Christian, and therefore to set us right, I will present the original picture again in apostolic words. "Hereby we do know that we know him if we keep his commandments." "Whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him." "If ye know that he is righteous, ye know that every one that doeth righteousness is born of him." "Let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous."<sup>4</sup>

There is still another way of bringing into comparison the spirit of Christ and the character of that Christianity which assumes to itself to be the only fruit of his spirit. We can compare the existing state of the Christian world with the expectations of Jesus, with that state of things to which he looked forward as the Reign of his spirit, the Kingdom of the true Gospel upon earth. If the Christianity that prevails has not realized the expectations of Christ, then its practical tendency is evidently not in the direction of the true Gospel; it is, to the extent of the failure, a departure from the power and character of the original spirit. Christ could not be mistaken about the proper operations of his own spirit; and the systems whose operations do not fulfil his promises cannot contain a full and perfect ministration of his spirit. And this argument will amount to something like a demonstration, if we can show, first, that this system which has failed to realize the expectations of Jesus as to the condition of his Church, has, for large tracts both of time and space, been the prevailing influence of the Christian world, with nothing to obstruct it, so that it has had full and free scope to work its own works, and to manifest its own spirit; and

<sup>4</sup> 1 JOHN II. 3, 5, 29; III. 7.

secondly, if we can point to *the something* in that system, which manifestly has caused it to be destructive of those hopes, and to work counter to this expectation of Christ.

There is no sublimer idea of Christianity than its delightful vision of a UNIVERSAL CHURCH; the kingdom of the Gospel becoming a kingdom of Heaven on earth; uniting the nations by a spiritual bond; in every heart among the families of men kindling the same solemn ideas, and opening the same living springs; annulling the differences of class and country by the affinities of worship, by kindred images of Hope, of Duty, and of God becoming a meeting place for the thoughts of men; including every form and variety of mind within that spiritual faith which leads onwards to the infinite, yet presents distinct ideas to the heart of childhood, and feeds the sources of an infant's prayer; assembling in their countless homes the Brotherhood of man around the spiritual altar of one Father and one God, whose presence is a Temple wherein all are gathered, and whose Spirit, dwelling in each heart, meets and returns the seekings of all his children.

Such was the Christian vision of the CHURCH UNIVERSAL, of the union of all good men in the worship of one God under the leadership of his Image, growing up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ.

Such was the sublime idea that filled the mind of Jesus when he looked forward in heavenly faith, to the reign of his spirit, the kingdom of his Gospel in the world. "Other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold and one shepherd."<sup>5</sup> "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee; that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me." Such also was the magnificent and healing

<sup>5</sup> JOHN X. 16. AND 20. 21.



view that filled the hearts of the Apostles when they protested against burdens being laid upon Christ's freedom; rebuked the first manifestations of a sectarian Christianity; and would acknowledge no distinctions between those who were walking in the steps of the same master, and moulding their souls into the same similitude of Christ. "There is one body, and one spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God, and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. But unto every one is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ. From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body, unto the edifying of itself in love."\* "Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same spirit. And there are differences of administration, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all." "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ. For by one spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one spirit." "That there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another. And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it. Now ye are the body of Christ and members in particular.†

Such is the Christian and Apostolic view of the Church of Christ on earth. Turn we now to the actual Church. Is it a realization of this divine image of the mind of Jesus? Is

\* Ephes. iv.

† 1 Cor. xii.

there in it a unity of spirit in the bond of peace? Do the branches abide in the Vine? Do the scattered and warring members make one spirit in one body? Alas! could there be a sadder mockery, than to pretend to seek in our prevalent Christianity any features corresponding to this divine conception?

Trinitarian Christianity is founded upon a principle directly opposed to the realization of this prospect and vision of Jesus. It declares that there shall be no unity but a doctrinal unity. It rejects that moral and spiritual union which is the bond of peace, and which, as subsisting among his followers, Christ looked forward to as the great proof to the world that God had sent him;—and it declares that there shall be no bonds but the bonds of Creeds. It breaks up the Christian world into distinct and mutually repulsive parties; each claiming—not to be disciples of the life of Christ—not to be one with him as he was one with God, in will, aspiration, and purpose of soul, but—to be in possession of the exact doctrinal ideas which constitute a saving faith, of a certain intellectual process of belief, through which alone God conducts the sinner into Heaven, and without which no soul, whatever may be its spiritual oneness with Jesus and his Father, can be saved. Now it is clear that a system such as this, requiring not a unity of spirit, but a unity of opinion, cannot be that primitive Gospel, which, according to the expectation of the Saviour, was to gather all the believers under Heaven into a universal Church. Trinitarianism, as a system, does not, and cannot, work out these fruits of the spirit of Christ. It does not gather, but scatters; it does not collect into one; but disunites, severs, and casts out. It shows all harmony but the harmony of metaphysical conceptions. It has no wider way of salvation, no broader bond of peace, no more open road to Heaven, than a coincidence of ideas, on the essence of the Deity, the mysterious modes of the divine existence; a person in whom there are two natures; and

then, again, a nature in which there are three persons; and this as preparatory to a moral process, in which a penalty is paid by substitution for a guilt incurred by substitution. I ask not now whether these ideas are true; whether they are realities of God's mind; but I ask, Have they ever been, or can they ever be, bonds of union for a Church Universal? Are these the grand affinities towards which all hearts shall be drawn; and which, breaking down our minor distinctions into less than nothing, shall bind together the families of man in the fellowship of one spirit? You all know, every man knows, that a uniformity of opinion is an impossibility; that God has nowhere provided the means for producing it; that nowhere does it exist; no—not in that closely-fenced and strictly-articled Church, whose bosom at this very hour is rent by heresies, even as, throughout all her history, they shattered the unity and split the bosom even of inflexible Rome; and seeing, therefore, that there is no such doctrinal unity on earth, if Jesus understood his own gospel, this cannot be the oneness with his Father and himself, to which he looked forward as the Reign of his Spirit in the world. And yet the Trinitarian Church of England, one of whose Ministers when, on a late occasion, denouncing Unitarian heresies, took the opportunity to give the relief of expression to his horror of other heresies in the bosom of his own communion, and openly denounced as heretics ordained clergymen and dignitaries of his own Church,—this Church of England, notwithstanding all this, still claims to be the great bulwark, among Protestants, of the unity of the Faith, the dignified rebuker of schisms and sects; and still offers to the harassed and distracted, to the rent and divided body of Christ, a creed—and what a creed!—as the only bond of agreement and of peace.

Either, then, Christ miscalculated the workings of his own spirit, when he contemplated a Universal Church as its natural fruit; or Trinitarianism, when it destroys the spiritual

union of the Church, a moral oneness with Jesus and with his Father, by its demand for a doctrinal conformity, is, to the extent of this operation, an Antichrist, a departure from the healing and uniting spirit of the true Gospel. Let me, for the sake of distinctness, put you in possession of the exact difference between the fundamental principles of Unitarian and Trinitarian Christianity. To a Unitarian the essentials of Christianity are;—that a man takes into his heart the moral image of Jesus, and loves it supremely, and trusts it absolutely as his example of perfection, and his leader up to God. If I was asked to define a Christian, I would say that he was one who took Jesus Christ as he is presented in the gospels, as his best idea of Duty, and his best programme of Heaven; the very ideal of the religious spirit and life; the perfect image of God; and the perfect model for man. These are a Unitarian's essentials of Christianity. To a Trinitarian the essentials of a Christian are these: not that he receive Jesus as his image of God, his model of Duty, and his type of Heaven,—but that he receive a certain metaphysical Creed, certain doctrinal ideas, which "except he keep whole and undefiled, without doubt he shall perish everlastingly." Now, a union of all *hearts*, under the leadership of one Christ, and in the love and reverence of one moral Spirit, is a possible thing; but a union of all *minds* in the reception of certain metaphysical ideas which the minds of Milton, of Newton, and of Locke, could not find, either in Reason or in Scripture, is not a possible thing; and therefore my first assertion of the "practical importance" of the Unitarian Controversy is to this effect:—that Trinitarianism, by its fundamental principle of a doctrinal conformity, a principle not known to the true gospel, is the originating cause of all religious disunion and strife; the creator of all schisms, sects, and heresies; the great and effectual antagonist of any realization of that sublimest and most heavenly conception of the Saviour—a Universal Church, cherishing the same Hopes,

studying the same Models, trusting to the same Image of God to guide us to His presence,—a union of all hearts, seeking to be one, even as God and Christ were one, in the fellowship of the same spirit. This is my heaviest indictment against the practice of Trinitarianism, that it destroys Christ's delightful image of his Spirit's Reign on earth, and creates in its place—what shall I say?—the strife and disunion, the fears of the weak and the arrogance of the coarse; the wranglings of creeds and the absence of love; the heat of controversy and the chill of religion, through the midst of which we are now passing.\*

Trinitarianism has long been the prevailing influence of the Christian world; it holds all the religious power of these countries in its own hands; there is nothing external to prevent its carrying into existence its own ideas; and if in the day of its power it has not wrought the works and realized the hopes of Christ, it must be because it has worked in another spirit, and preached another gospel: adding to the primitive "glad tidings" of "repentance and remission of sins," other conditions which are not glad tidings, and which are not Christ's. Now not only can we point to the actual failure in proof of the absence of the true spirit, *but we can lay our finger upon the element of mischief*; and demonstrate it to be the parent of the evils we deplore, the frustrator of the hope of Christ. Trinitarianism, by demanding a doctrinal assimilation, an intellectual instead of a spiritual union, and wielding, as it does, the prevailing influence of religion, has, in the day of its power, forever prevented the formation of that universal Church which Christ contemplated. And until it drops from its essentials the doctrinal oneness, and substitutes in its place a spiritual oneness derived from obedience to God as he is manifested in Jesus, it cannot gather into one fold, and constitute the Kingdom of Heaven on Earth.

\* Note

Now let us suppose, for a moment, that this doctrinal conformity is required by Christianity, and that not TRUST in Christ, but belief of Creeds, constitutes acceptance of the gospel. Then comes the question, and a most perplexing one it would be, how can any one be sure that the creed he trusts to contains exactly the ideas to which God has annexed safety? Supposing creeds to be the essentials of Christianity, then how can any Christian be sure that he has got the true creed? I can easily conceive with what fear, with what apprehensions of mind, with what a paralyzed intellect, and unconfiding heart, sinking the love of truth in selfish terrors, a man trembling under the conviction that his everlasting safety depended upon his reception of a doctrine, would come to the examination of the Scriptures; I can well conceive how his judgment would be gradually bereft of all calm and trustful independence; how his fears and passions would slavishly draw him over to whatever party predominated in intolerance, and in the confidence of their assumptions, frightening him into the belief that safety was with *them*, for that if creeds were the essentials of salvation, the more of creed the more of certainty;—but after all this sacrifice has been submitted to, after terror has wrought its work, and the intellect has surrendered to the passions—after the man in the pursuit of selfish safety has given up his Reason and his free will, and stooped his neck to the yoke,—I cannot see how in any way he has altered or bettered his position; I cannot see how he has attained the end for which he has paid such degrading wages, how he can be certain that he has got the creed which ensures salvation;—and after having sold his birth-right, parted with his free soul for the sake of a safety built upon doctrines, he discovers at last, *unless he is a Roman Catholic*, that he has no absolute certainty of these doctrines being the true ones; he is still left in doubt whether after all he is in possession of the particular creed that works salvation—whether, after all, he has not bowed down his soul

for nothing. If God requires from men certain doctrinal convictions as necessary to salvation, then how can any man be sure that he has got the true convictions? Even the verbal and plenary inspiration of the Bible, if we believed in it, which we do not, would not relieve a Protestant Trinitarian of this difficulty: for those who agree in believing the Bible in every word inspired, can draw from it very different meanings, as none have reason to know better than the divines of the English Church.

I am tempted to give a few specimens of the differences between existing divines of the Church of England on the very points of accusation against Unitarianism. You are aware of the place that the Atonement holds in Evangelical preaching. Listen then to the new party in the Church, the leaders of which are, one of them, the Oxford Professor of Hebrew and a Canon of Christ Church, and the others distinguished both in the Church and in the University. These are their words:—"We now proceed to the consideration of a subject most important in this point of view,—the prevailing notion of bringing forward the Atonement explicitly and prominently on all occasions. It is evidently quite opposed to what we consider the teaching of Scripture, nor do we find any sanction for it in the gospels. If the Epistles of St. Paul appear to favour it, it is only at first sight."<sup>\*</sup> Again, you are aware of the importance attached to the doctrine of Justification by Faith, that text, as it is described, of a rising or a falling Church. Listen then once more to one of the heads of the Oxford party:—"The instrument of our righteousness, I would maintain, is *holy baptism*. Our Church considers it to be the *Sacrament of Baptism*; they (the Reformers) consider it to be *Faith*. \*\*\* Christians are justified by the communication of an inward, most sacred, and most mysterious gift. From the very time of baptism they are temples of the Holy

\* The Gospel Truth, No. 30, as quoted in Dr. Hook's Colloquies, p. 424.

Ghost.\*\*\* Faith, then, being the appointed representative of baptism, derives its authority and virtue from that which it represents. It is justifying *because of baptism*, it is the faith of the baptized, of the regenerate, of the justified. Faith does not precede justification; but justification precedes faith, and makes it justifying."<sup>†</sup> I must quote one other sentiment of this Oxford section of the English Protestant Church, respecting the Mass: "At the time of the Reformation, we, in common with all the West, possessed the rite of the Roman Church, or St. Peter's Liturgy. This sacred, and most precious monument, then of the Apostles, our reformers received whole and entire from their predecessors, and they mutilated the tradition of 1500 years."<sup>‡</sup> Now it only bears out my argument that this movement of Trinitarianism is in the direction of Popery.

Such being the doctrinal uniformity of the Church of England, where then is the infallible authority that is to put me in possession of those doctrinal ideas, that absolute truth, without which I cannot be saved? Having got an inspired Bible, I still want an inspired Interpreter, who, out of all the possible meanings that the words will bear, will set aside all the wrong ones, and select that one interpretation which, in the shape of doctrine, God has made the source of safety. Where is this Interpreter to be found? Where am I to look for this infallible authority, which is to explain to me the exact sense of the Bible, without which I cannot be saved, and to acquaint me with the very ideas of God? Is it the Church of England that is to do for me this important service; to be my infallible guide through the possible meanings of words; and to present me with the one creed that will operate as a charm for my salvation? Oh no! for the Church is Protestant, and recognizes the sufficiency of Scripture, and the right of free enquiry, and rails at the Pope because he denies these things. But still I ask, if I cannot be saved without this doc-

\* See also an Introduction.

† See also

trinal truth, where am I to find it, and how can I feel certain that I have it? A Roman Catholic would relieve me of my difficulties. He would treat me more kindly, and with an simpler provision for my security, than do the divines of the English Church. They tell me that my salvation depends upon my having the true creed, and then they leave me in the dark, without any means of ascertaining what the true creed is, and whether I have it or not. The Roman Catholics, on the other hand, seeing that exact truth is necessary, take care to provide for me an infallible Judge of truth. They are merciful in the accuracy of their provisions for relieving my fears, when compared with the worse than Egyptian inconsistency, the contradictory tyranny of my Protestant task-masters. The Egyptians asked for bricks, and provided no straw. The Church of England asks for absolute Truth, and provides no judge of Truth. And this it does in the face of the fact that, not even to its own clergymen is the inspired Bible a source of restraint; that three distinctly marked divisions now constitute the Unity of the Church, and dwell, not peacefully, together.

To any man, then, who believes that doctrinal convictions are the essentials of Christianity, there is no escape from Popery. Out of Popery, there is no Church that professes to have interpreted Scripture with infallible certainty. If I am to be saved by a true creed, show me the divinely appointed tribunal, and let me bow down before it. But do not tell me, unless you are a Roman Catholic, that I must be saved by Truth, and that your Truth is the one to which I must bow down my soul, or perish everlastingly. One man's Truth is as good as another man's Truth, unless there is a divinely appointed tribunal to judge between them.\* Where is this tribunal? I know it is supposed to be in the Roman Catholic Church; and I know that the English Church, if it possessed such a tribunal,

\* See

could not speak with a whif more confidence than it does. I enter it then as my second inducement against the practice of Tritarianism, that by building the Church of Christ upon the foundation of a doctrinal uniformity, it is an ally of Popery; that if it was consistent with itself, it would be Popish altogether; and that this is not a mere tendency but actually taking effect, is manifested in that Church which is most open to the temptations of spiritual ambition, by its gradual and lately accelerating movements in the direction of Roman Catholicism. I know that the Evangelicals denounce the Oxford modification of Popery; but they are both of one spirit, and neither will find their natural issues until they fall into the arms of the infallible Church, and leave whatever Protestantism still remains in the land, unencumbered by their presence.

Listen to some of the Clergymen of the Church of England, and tell me, can you distinguish their tones from the tones of Popery? I have lately done so. I heard this language, I mean language to this effect: "Unitarians think our pity insulting, because they are not conscious of requiring of it: but when Jesus wept over Jerusalem, was his pity an insult to those who had no sympathy with the sources of his tears?" So that we are left to infer, first, that he who uses this language knows our need as fully as Jesus did, when amid the brief acclaim of his followers, he forgot the momentary triumph, and his sympathy gushed out in tears wept over the doomed city—and, secondly, that the speculative errors of Unitarians, supposing them to be such, require tears of the same description as did the crimes of Jerusalem. Did Jesus ever weep for errors of opinion; over Samaritan heresies for instance? "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. The Son of Man is not come to destroy men's lives; but to save them."

Again I heard, in substance, this language, and could not distinguish it from Popery. "Christianity must have its essen-

ends; these to us are the Deity of Christ; the corruption of human nature; and the necessity of a vicarious sacrifice. The Unitarians who deny these points we therefore do not hold to be Christians, and not believing them to be so, we plainly tell them so." And accordingly they treat us as if we were not. Now I acknowledge that this is entirely consistent upon their part. They make the essentials of Christianity to consist in doctrinal ideas, and consequently, whether they choose it or not, and almost without knowing it, they are forced to assume the tones of Popish Infallibility, and to decide authoritatively, by their metaphysical standard, who are Christians and who are not. I am quite aware that this is not intentional arrogance on their part, but a necessity in which their first principles involve them. They cannot begin with a Salvation through creeds, without ending in Popery; and of all the forms of Popery, that which professes Protestantism, is the most offensive.

It was a fresh proof to me of the authoritative character which Trinitarianism by necessity assumes, when I heard naturally and unconsciously the same kind of doctrinal comparison ascribed to ourselves, as if a church could not exist without a fixed creed; and quotations from all sorts of minds brought forward, without a suspicion, but they were all received among us as recognized standards of opinion. There were Arians and Humanitarians, Necessarians and Libertarians, and one foreign writer, who, as I am informed, was no Christian at all—and all these were appealed to as standards of Unitarianism. Now we certainly glory in it that our religion does not destroy our individuality; that in consistency with the great principle of Christ being our Leader, we tolerate freely intellectual differences, and encourage the virtues of free thought and speech; but it is a little unfortunate, and a little unfair, if the fundamental principles of Unitarian Theology and Religion are to be answerable, with their life, for all the sayings of all the

Unitarians from Marcion and the Ebionites down to the present day. Take one form of Unitarianism as it is represented by Priestley; or take another and better form of it as it is represented by Channing; but do not confuse in one two minds so radically different, and call a combination which never had existence, the Unitarian Faith. It was owing to this Popish idea that all Religions must have a doctrinal compactness, that I heard a sentiment of Priestley's, which I entirely disown, imputing idolatry to Trinitarians, ascribed to all Unitarians. If Unitarians worshipped Christ not believing him to be God they would be idolaters: but Trinitarians worshipping one God in three persons, and still believing him to be one, are as certainly not Polytheists. Again I heard the Improved Version stated to be the Unitarian Bible: and that the Unitarians not finding their favourite doctrines in the actual Bible made a Bible for themselves. Now let it be known that this new Bible is simply an English Version of the New Testament having for its basis or model a translation made by an Archbishop of the United Church of England and Ireland, a circumstance which we were not told; that it is founded upon the translation of Archbishop Newcome; that it is not used in Unitarian worship and possesses no authority amongst us except such as it may derive from its just merits, which are not generally rated by us as very high; and lastly that no one is answerable for it except its editors,\* and not even they any longer than they choose. And yet, one would suppose, that the Church of England divines might be sufficiently conversant with varieties of opinion, even in a church more strictly bound than ours, and ought not to fall into the error of taking any book whatever, or any man whatever, as the standards of a faith. With all our dif-

\* It is absurd to say that a work becomes a standard authority, because a Book Society admits it into its Catalogue, or thinks it objects of sufficient importance to add to its publications. Doubtless the Unitarian Society thought the "Improved Version" almost as a Scriptural and

ferences I am not aware that our bond of union covers wider varieties of opinion on the great questions of Theology and Criticism, than those which separate Bishop Marsh, Bishop Butler of Durham, Archdeacon Paley, to say nothing of the older and nobler school of Sherlock and Barrow,\* Tillotson and Taylor, from the modern Evangelical Divines; and both from the Oxford approach to Popery, a late movement in the direction which we have now endeavoured to show is the destined path of Creeds.

But I shall be asked, has Christianity no essentials, and may a man believe anything he likes, and yet be a Christian? I answer that the essential belief of a Christian is the belief that Jesus Christ is the moral image of God; that to be one with him is to be one with his Father and become fitted for that Heaven in harmony with which his mind was made; and that any doctrinal ideas which a man can hold in consistency with this act of spiritual allegiance, he may hold, and yet be a Christian.

And yet we do not hold that all doctrines are indifferent, for we think that some are nearer than others to the great realities of God; that some, more than others, are in harmony with the mind of Christ; that some more than others give us solemn and inspiring views of the infinite Spirit; worthy conceptions of the mission and offices of Jesus, and elevating sympathies with his character; sublime and true ideas of Duty; peaceful yet awful convictions of the retributions of God; and therefore are more effectual to build us up in the oneness with his Father and with himself, which is the sublimer aim of Christ. Other views may operate powerfully on those who hold them; but as long as they do not accord with our best ideas of perfection, with our noblest views of the character of Jesus and of God, they cannot confer upon us that salvation which we take to be the essence of the Gospel, assimilation to the infinite Spirit as we know him through his

\* See.

Image, perfect Trust in our heavenly Father, as he is manifested in Christ.

I warn you against an imposture that is practised upon you, not knowingly but ignorantly, in the use that is made of such expressions as, 'salvation by faith and not by works,' and St. Paul's anathemas on those who preached another Gospel, which he declared was not another gospel, that is, that it did not contain "*glad tidings*," and was therefore no gospel at all. Now salvation by 'faith' does not mean salvation by doctrines, but by Trust in Jesus Christ as our spiritual Master, God's representative to man; and exemption from 'works' does not mean exemption from moral excellence, but exemption from all the works and conditions of the Jewish Law, from which, with all the bondage of its sacrifices, services and exactions, the Gospel, as offered by Christ, was the glad tidings of deliverance. It is on this account that St. Paul denounces any man who preaches another gospel, that is who adds to it unspiritual conditions which would bring men again under the yoke of the Law, and change the glad tidings of Liberty into the burdens of a woful superstition. "Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing." To go back to the bondage of the law, is to make the spiritual liberty of Christ's freedom of no avail. Now the scriptural knowledge that is necessary for these explanations is of the scantiest measure; that Faith means moral Trust, spiritual acceptance and confidence; that works frequently mean, when used by Paul, not Christian holiness but Jewish Ceremonies; and that the Gospel means not a scheme of doctrines but the glad Message of deliverance from every yoke of bondage: and yet the false meanings that lurk under these words, are again and again thrust forward as Scripture evidence for doctrines entirely alien to their spirit. Elsewhere, would the anathemas of the noble-minded Apostle be ready to descend; upon all other additions as well as Jewish ones, to Christ's gospel of spiritual liberty.\*

\* See.

I have contrasted the fundamental principles of Trinitarian and Unitarian Christianity, and, without entering into their peculiar tenets, I have shown that the practical tendency of Trinitarianism is to disunite the Church of Christ; to lead to Popery as the only known provision for doctrinal certainty; and to preach "another gospel," which, to us at least, is no gospel at all, and has defaced the grace and glory of the original message. I have now to proceed to the particular views in which these principles respectively issue when applied to the examination of the Scriptures, and to contrast the practical tendencies of the distinguishing doctrines of Unitarian and Trinitarian Christianity. The Unitarians think that Trinitarianism, with all its dependent ideas, is not a system which the Scriptures would of their own accord naturally suggest to a free mind, examining them without prejudice or fear, in a spirit of candourness in God and in truth; and that its peculiar set of notions are chiefly arrived at by inferences drawn from the Scriptures in the spirit of preconceived theories, and under the intimidation of priest-taught fears. We recognize nothing but the priestly spirit in all those systems whose cry is, "unless you believe this and unless you believe that, you cannot be saved;" and acknowledging no salvation but that of a spirit morally one with God and with his Christ, salvation from superstition, and salvation from sin, and salvation from unconfiding fears; and believing that all truth is one and from God, we confidently appeal, in confirmation of our scriptural soundness, to that great and independent text of Truth which is furnished by the moral tendencies of doctrines. I shall aim to show that Unitarianism has more power both with the understanding and the heart; that the intellect which Trinitarianism has no resource but to disparage, and the Reason at which I lately heard, doubtless not without good reasons, such melancholy scoffs, (for what can be more melancholy than to hear a man scoffing at Reason, and attempting to reason men into a contempt for Reason?). That this Reason, our ray of the divine mind, we exhibit on the side of our reli-

gion and of our souls; that the spiritual nature which Trinitarianism insults and scorns, we contemplate with trembling reverence as made for holiness and for God,—and that the personal holiness and love, the Christ-like spirit and the Christ-like life to which Trinitarianism assigns a secondary place, and in disparagement of which it can stumble, as happened on a late occasion, on a condemnation of the Scripture law, that every man shall be judged according to his works\*—this holy living and dying we set forth as the very salvation of the sons of God, the very way of spiritual safety trodden by the Fore-runner and the Saviour, even Christ the righteous.

I desire to be understood to affirm nothing about the actual characters of those who hold views which I think unfriendly to the soul. The tendencies of opinions may be counteracted: but still wherever there is error, that is, wherever there is any thing not conformed to the mind of God, there there is, to the extent of its agency, a principle of evil, or at least of misdirection, at the fountain of our life, though there may also be sweetening influences which are strong enough to neutralize its power. Trinitarianism does not produce all its natural fruits, though it produces some that are soberly deplorable, because it is kept in check by the better principles of our nature, with which it is not in alliance. It is vain to pretend that a man's belief has no influence upon his life and upon his soul. The belief of a man is that which animates his sentiments, and peoples his imagination, and provides objects for his heart;—and if he hears no impress of it upon his character, it is only because it forms no real part of his spiritual existence, it is not written upon the living tablets of the mind. Believing then that our views of Truth, when they become a part of our living thoughts, woven into the spiritual frame and the daily food of the mind, do exercise a controlling influence over the whole being, it is our ardent desire to discover

\* See Rev. F. Child's Lecture, page 23.



those views of the gospel which put forth most brightly this power over the heart, and we openly confess, that it is because we believe it possesses an unrivalled efficacy to save the soul, by bringing it into a holy and trustful union with God and Christ, that we value unspeakably, and adhere to through all temptation and scorn, the faith that is in us. To us it is the light, as it is the gift of God, and we will not abandon it, so long as it points Conscience to the things that are before; leads us up to God through the love and imitation of his Christ; speaks with heavenly serenity of grand and tranquillizing truths in moments of trial; and true to our spiritual connexions with Heaven, suffers our sins to have no peace, and our virtues no fears.

I shall endeavour, briefly but distinctly, to bring out the prominent points of difference between Unitarian and Trinitarian Christianity, in their moral aspects.

And, first, Unitarianism alone puts forth the great view that the moral and spiritual character of the mind itself is its own recompense, its own glory, its own heaven; and that this harmony with God and with his Christ is not the means of salvation only, but salvation itself. Unitarianism alone receives the spiritual view of Christ that the kingdom of Heaven is within us; and works not for outward wages, but to make the inward soul a holy temple for the Spirit of God; that through its purified affections Jesus, our best type of Heaven, may shed his own peace, and that he and his Father may be able to love us, and come unto us, and make their abode with us. Now you are aware that this qualifying of ourselves for Heaven through heavenly faculties of mind, is so prominent a part of our faith, that it is actually converted into a charge against us. I heard the Unitarians charged with a want of gospel humility for regarding holy affections and a Christ-like life as the substance of the hope of Heaven; and I thought on the words of the Apostle—"The kingdom of God is righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy

Spirit."<sup>\*</sup> This is not the salvation so loudly vaunted by Trinitarianism. It assigns another office to Christ than that of leading men to God through a resemblance to himself. Jesus stands to Trinitarians not principally as the inspirer of virtue, the quickener of holiest affections, the guide of the heaven-bred spirit; but as bearing on his own person the punishment due to their sins, and as performing in his own person the righteousness that is imputed to them, and being transferred, by an act of faith, makes good their claim to Heaven. Now these notions of Heaven regard it as so much property, which one person may purchase and transfer to another. Christ, by an act of self-sacrifice, becomes the purchaser of Heaven, and gives a right of settlement in the blessed land to every one who consents to regard his death as a substitution for his own punishment, and his righteousness as a substitution for his own virtues. There is no flattering unctious that could be laid to the soul, no drug to stupify its life, that could more thoroughly turn it away from the spiritual purposes of Jesus:† He lived that men might know their own nature, and work out its glory for themselves. He lived that he might rescue that nature from low views of its duties and its powers, by showing humanity in the image of God. He bore his cross that men might look to Calvary and behold the moral heroism of the meekest heart when it trusts in God; with what serenity a filial faith can pass through the vicissitudes of severest trial, and take the cup from the hand of a Father, though he presents it from out the darkest cloud of his providence. He died, because Death crossed his path of Duty, and not to turn aside was part of his loyalty to the Spirit of Truth, "for this cause was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth:"—he died that earth and heaven might unite their influences on the human soul tracing an uninterrupted path to God, that its light might come from beyond the

\* Rom. xiv. 17.

† See.

grave, and its hope from the peace of a world that is never troubled; and yet, alas! for the perversion—men are found to stand beneath the cross, and so far to mistake the spirit of the celestial sufferer, as to appropriate, to transfer to themselves, by an act of faith, its moral character, and to call themselves the redeemed of Christ. Surely there is a "practical importance" in the Unitarian controversy, if it warn men against these notions of substitution, these unspiritual views of Heaven and Christ. The worst of all delusions is that which turns us away from inward holiness, inward qualifications for Heaven, and holds out to one too-ready grasp some foreign, some adventitious, and extrinsic hope. It is right that we should rely on God, for his strength is our strength, and his mercy *our* supporting hope; it is right that we should love and look unto Jesus, for his influences are our spiritual wealth, and his path our bright and heavenly way:—but where in Heaven or earth are we to rest at last, but in what God and Christ do for us, in the formed character of our own souls?

And now shall I be told, that this is claiming Heaven on the ground of our own merits? And how often shall we have to repel that false accusation? If by this is meant, that we deem our virtues to be *deserving* of Heaven, the charge of insanity might as well be laid against us, as that infinite presumption; but if it is meant that, to a holy spirit, and to a holy life, to a supreme love for the Right, the True, the Good, and to these alone, God, with a love that is infinite, has attached something of the blessedness of his own nature;—then we do hold this as the first and brightest of Truths, the very substance of the Gospel, the sublimest lesson of the Saviour's life, shadowed by his death, only to be authenticated and glorified by his resurrection and ascension. I know of nothing so deeply sad as to witness the ministers of Christ appealing for support to the lowest parts of human nature—the fishers of men casting out their nets, that they may take into

the drag the most selfish passions and fears—bribing over to their side the terrors and the weaknesses, to which, except through penitence and restoration, Unitarian Christianity dare not offer peace. Trinitarianism will not deal so justly and so strictly with sin. We are speaking of its tendencies; out of the forms it sometimes, may we will say often, assumes in the higher and purer order of minds. It is true to the weaknesses of men; but false to their strength. It seems to many to save them *in* their low condition, not *from* it. It will not meet the soul, and tell it that there is no substitute for holiness, and that to move guilt from its punishment would be to move God from his throne. It takes that guilty soul, and instead of dealing with it truly, cleansing from sin, and pouring in the spirit of the life of Christ, leans it against the Atoning Sacrifice, and the Righteousness that cometh by imputation, an unhallowed and unnatural alliance, to make that glorious virtue an easy retreat for guilt, and the holy Jesus a 'Minister of Sin.'<sup>\*</sup> "They have healed the hurt of my people slightly, saying, Peace, peace, where there is no peace."<sup>†</sup>

And if we value Unitarianism for what we feel to be the *efficacy* of its views in regard to the affairs of Christ, we value it even more, for its views of God, and for the connections it gives us with his spirit. Piety is the noblest distinction, the richest happiness, the purest fountain of the soul, and we love, without measure, the faith that nurtures it most strongly. We feel our affections to be drawn towards one God and Father with a singleness and intensity, that we believe would be impossible, if the heart was to be distributed among three objects, or distracted by a confused conception of a tripersonal God. We boast an undivided worship, and an undivided Temple, where all the soul's devotion centres upon one Father. His spirit was with us when we knew not the power that was exciting our irrepressible joy; and

\* Gen. ii. 17.

† Nah.

though He has led us through his ways of discipline, we knew it was the same hand that had guided our early steps, He has met our souls when they were abroad through Nature, and touched them with his breathing Spirit, He has pursued us into our solitudes, and, in our more solemn moments of penitence and suffering, He has made us to see light in darkness, mercy in trial, and to drink of the deepest fountains of life; His compassion has mercifully cooled the burning shame of our guiltiest confessions, and saved us through fear and weakness by heavenly hope; His peace has descended upon all our aspirations, and shielded their feebleness from blight and death;—and, throughout this varied experience, there was but one voice speaking to the heart; the pressure of one hand on the pulses of life; one God revealing Himself to the spirits of his children. Whatever is delightful in the Universe, whatever is pure in earthly joy, whatever is touching in fraud, whatever is profoundly peaceful in a holy spirit, are to us the splendours of one God, the gifts of one Father; hands upon the heart, writing it to one spiritual and everlasting Friend. We do not profess that our Piety has glowed with the intensity of these mingling fires, but we feel that there is a power of motive drawing us to the love of one God, which no other Theology may lay claim to.

But the "practical importance" of our views of God consists not merely in that Unity of being, through which all the devotion of the soul is poured into one central affection; it affects also the unity of his Character, the moral perfections of the source of Piety. We reject that faith which represents the moral government of God as a system of favoritism. We meet with nothing in nature to impeach the Impartiality of our Heavenly Father. We believe that the same God who sends his sun and his rain upon the evil and upon the just, is willing to shed the dew of his blessing upon the hearts of all his children. We rejoice to overlook the vain and perishable distinctions of time; to believe that all the human family,

partakers of one spirit, meet in the love of the universal Father; that God in heaven is no respecter of persons; and that the humblest and most neglected of his children may rise into hallowed intercourse with the infinite spirit. We profess with a strong abhorrence against the dreadful views which are given of the God's inability to forgive, of the Justice of the Father horribly satisfied by the substitution of the innocent for the sins of the guilty. We profess to have no hope either in time or in eternity, but in the unclouded goodness of Him who sitteth on Heaven's throne and reigneth over all—and if these things may be, and yet God be good, it is a goodness we do not understand and cannot calculate upon, and the pillars of our faith are shaken in all the rebances of futurity. We do not enter now into the scriptural evidence for or against these doctrines— that will be done in other parts of this course; our present concern is with the question, which of these views is the most calculated to nourish piety, to kindle within us a warm, unselfish, and intelligible love of God. We meet in the world the children of one Parent, with the same souls, the same hopes, the same capacities for joy; with the same God to comfort their sorrows and to guard their happiness; breathing in them the same holy and inspiring influences; leading them to the same Saviour, and beckoning them to the same Heaven; and our love for God and our fellowship with man thus mingle intimately in the same heart and shed through it the serene and blissful light of a full, radiant, and unclouded Piety. The spiritual influences of Unitarianism thus lead to a supreme love and veneration for God by exhibiting the Holiness, the Forgiveness, and the all-embracing Impartiality of the Divine Character, without a stain upon their brightness and their purity.

We believe that there is in the spirit of these views a peculiar power to excite an interest in the souls of our brethren; to give an expansive spirit of humanity; to make us feel that we are bound by the holiest of ties; united in the

purposes of one Father; children of the same God, and educating for the same destinies. Wherever we cast our eyes they fall upon God's everlasting ones. In the humblest we see the future immortal, and in the proudest we can see no more. We believe that God made every living soul that it might become pure, virtuous and blessed; we believe that his eye of watchful care is never removed from it; we believe that He never abandons it, that He accompanies it in all its wanderings, and that He will ultimately lead it by his own awful yet merciful discipline, in this world or in the next, in safety to Himself—and we dare not to scorn the spirit which God is tending and which He purposes ultimately to save.

And with this belief at our hearts, we wonder that there is not more heroism in the cause of the human soul, we wonder that the noblest of all philanthropy, that which seeks the realization of Christian states of character, is so rare among men; that there is so little of a strong and yearning love drawing us towards sinning and suffering man; that souls are permitted to slumber and die without an awakening voice; that our hearts are not stirred within us when we look to the awful and neglected wastes of human ignorance and sin, and reflect that through each guilty bosom, and each polluted home there might breathe the purity and the peace of Christ. We despair of none. We believe that the guiltiest may be turned from their iniquities and saved. We believe that God works by human means and expects our aid. We believe that the fire of heaven is still smouldering, and that a spark might light it into undying flame; and we are sure that the end of this faith is love unfeigned, which ought to assume more earnest forms of interest for our nature, and to vent itself in purer efforts for its highest good. Others may defend themselves by casting the whole burden upon God; may point us despair to the hopeless condition of man's heart; wait for fire from heaven to come down and stir the sinner's

soul; and having thus "looked upon" the moral sufferer may pass by upon the other side; but *with us* there is but one duty; to go to him, to pour the spirit of Jesus into his wounded heart, to lay upon ourselves his burdens, and to toil for his restitution as a brother sinnered. The "practical importance," then, of Unitarianism as contrasted with Trinitarianism is in this—that it tends to penetrate our hearts with a deeper spirit of Christian love; to give us hope and interest in our nature; to call out the highest efforts of the spirit of humanity; and to supply us with lofty motive for emulating the self-sacrifice of Jesus.

We think, further, that in our views of God, of Christ, and of human nature, we have a peculiar encouragement for the personal virtues, a peculiar demand for individual holiness. We have already alluded to the force and distinctness with which we teach that the greatest work of Christ is in giving inward power, strength of purpose to the soul, and that there is no salvation except where the purity, the freedom, and the love of Heaven are growing in the heaven-bound heart; but we also recognize peculiar claims upon us in the conviction which we hold so sacred that our righteous Father has created us with a nature capable of knowing and of doing His Will. Others may cast the odium of human sins upon human inability, and thus at last throw down their burdens at the door of their God; but as for us, we can only bow our heads in sorrow and ask the forgiveness of Heaven. We believe that God has united us by no necessity with sin; we deny altogether the incapacity of man to do the will of God; we feel that there are energies within us which, if but called out into the living strife, would overcome all the resistance of temptation; we hear a deep voice issuing from the soul and witnessed to by Christ, calling us to holiness and promising us peace;—and with God's seal thus set upon our nature, and God's voice thus calling to the kindred spirit

within, why are we not found further upon the path of Christ, and brightening unto the perfect man?

For, alas! there is not only energy and holy motive in this lofty conviction, there are also the elements of a true and deep humility. If the glory of our souls is marred it is our own work. If the spirit of God is quenched within us, we have ourselves extinguished it. If we have gained but little advancement upon Heaven's way, we have wasted and mis-directed immortal powers. Elevation of purpose, and true humility of mind, the humility that looks upwards to Christ and God, and bows in shame, are thus brought together in the Unitarian's faith, as they are by no other form of Christianity. I know it is said, with a strange blindness, that this doctrine of the incapacity of man to know and do the will of God is rejected by Unitarianism because it rebukes our pride; but no—it suffers man to be a sinner without hurting his pride; it transfers the disgrace from the individual to the race; and that, on the other hand, is the humbling picture which represents our sins not of our inheritance but of our choice, the voluntary agent of evil degrading a spirit made in the image of God, pouring the burning waters of corruption into a frail though noble nature, until the crystal vessel is stained and shattered. "Preach unto me smooth things, and prophecy deceits," is the demand of the less spiritual parts of man, and Trinitarianism is certainly the Preacher whose views of sin fall softly on unweakened souls.

We cannot conclude without adding, however generally, to the practical importance of our views of the future life. We believe that the fitness of the soul for Heaven, its oneness with God and Christ, will form the measure of its joy; and that the thousand varieties of goodness will each be assigned to its appropriate place in the allotments of happiness. We believe that the glory of Heaven will brighten for ever as the character is perfected under the influences of Heaven,

and that to this growing excellence there is no limit or end. We believe that even in the future there is discipline for the soul; that even for the guiltiest there may be processes of redemption; and that the stained spirit may be cleansed as by fire. We believe that this view of a strict and graduated retribution exerts a more quickening, personal, realizing power than that of Eternal torments which no *heart* believes, which no *man* trembles to conceive; where the iniquity which is to be visited with such an awful punishment becomes a *slipping line* which every sinner moves beyond himself; until Heaven itself is profaned, and all its sacredness violated and encroached upon by those who feel that it would be infinite injustice to plunge *them* into an Eternity so unutterably dreadful, but who have been taught to believe that to escape this Hell is to be sure of Heaven.

Now our present objection to this doctrine of eternal punishment is the practical one that it has no moral power. It does not come close enough to truth and justice to take a hold upon the conscience, and so instead of binding and constraining, it is inoperative and lax. The fact is, it is not practically believed. It is too monstrous to be realized. Where, we ask, are the fruits of this appalling doctrine, which is everywhere preached? One would suppose that its dreadfulness would keep the tempted spirit in constant alarm. I know that it occasions misery to the timid, to the sensitive, to the feeble of nerve, that is just to those who require the pure and gender influences of religion to give them trust in God; but what sinner has it clanked? what guilty heart has it made curdle with terror? what seared conscience has been scared from evil by the shriek of woe coming up from the depths of the everlasting torture? No; these are not the influences that convert sin. They are not believed or realized, and yet they displace from the thoughts those definite views of the future which would have power to move and save the soul. The righteous allotments with which God will award the joys and sorrows of

the future; the character of the individual mind when it first appears for judgment; the value of every moment of present time in assigning us our first station in immortality; the exact righteousness in which every variety of character shall have its graduated place on the scale of recompense; the appalling thought of every separate spirit standing before God just as the last effort of convulsed nature dismissed it from the body;—the triller in his levity, the deep-kard with his dark look, the murderer with the blood-stains on his soul,—and the sanctified spirit passing on the breath of prayer from the outer to the inner Court of God's presence;—these, the solemn distinctions of that awful world, are all lost, because of that common Hell into whose abyss unavenged Conscience hurls her fears, and then forgets the infinite gradations of punishment that still remain to pour dread recompense on evil at the award of a retributive God.

There are some objections urged against these views of the practical importance of Unitarianism to which I must now give brief and emphatic answer.

1. It is said that Unitarianism generates no love to Christ: and the reason assigned is, that as we reject the primal curse of original sin, we have not so much to be forgiven, and consequently not equal obligation to love; for to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little. Now in our view forgiveness is of God, in whom Trinitarian God no forgiveness, and Christ is the image of our Father in Heaven, and we love *him* who leads us into that pure and blissful presence, and in whose face we have the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, full of grace and truth. We love Jesus for what he is to our souls, and not for the theological fiction, that he took off a disqualification which our God laid on. We love all holy and good beings for the same reasons, that they strengthen in our own nature the springs of goodness and unselfish love, and lift us into fellowship with themselves: and therefore we love God supremely, *and next to God, him* who through self-

devotion and perfect filial trust preserved the moral beauties of Heaven, of a mind harmonized with providence, against the weaknesses and through the temptations of this humanity, whose tremblings we know so well, and whose fallings away in ourselves from the higher impulses of God, have taught us the love of veneration for him who made it bear the likeness of Heaven, and, through its trials and its shrinkings, realized perfection. The most estimate that would proportion our love to Christ, not to his own fitness to inspire love, to the heavenly benevolence that breathed through his own life and death, but to the selfish measure of the outward benefits received, can be equalled in the confusion and impurity of its moral ideas only by another moral judgment pronounced upon the same occasion,—that the guilt of the Jews, when they crucified Jesus, must be estimated and measured in proportion as Jesus was man or God. This certainly is quite consistent with the Trinitarian scheme, that guilt can be contracted unknowingly; but who will set right this utter ignorance of the primitive ideas of morality? What spectres of the thirteenth century rise before us when we listen to these conceptions—of God dying under the hands of his creatures; and of their guilt, by some process, not moral, but metaphysical, becoming infinite because the sufferer was infinite, though they knew it not, and believed themselves to be crucifying the man Jesus! It is only further proof that the Atonement and its allied ideas tends to confuse in the minds that receive it the fundamental perceptions of Right and Wrong.

2. It is said that Unitarianism leads to infidelity: and the proof assigned is that those whom Trinitarianism makes sceptics, had with us ideas of Christ and Christianity with which they have sympathies. We intercept the minds whom they have drawn from Belief, we present our serene and perfect image of Duty and of God to minds wearied and perplexed

with views of Religion which are felt to be too coarse for their own nature and therefore infinitely unworthy of the spirit of God; but because they leave the Church, that Christian Jerusalem, and come to sit at the feet of Jesus in our humble Bethany, where at least he is loved purely and for himself;—then this is Infidelity, and we who stay the wanderer, and retain him within the fold, are called producers of unbelief. The spirit of Jesus said, "he that is not against us is for us." The spirit of Trinitarianism says, "he that is not for us is against us." It was said that the spirit of infidelity is the spirit of this age. I only ask, if this is so, could there be a more practical condemnation of that system, and of that Church, which sways all the religious influences of the country; and whose representations of Christ and of Christianity, the universally prevailing ones, have produced the religious character of these times? If there is Infidelity in the land, it is mainly the recoil from Orthodoxy.\*

3. It is said that Unitarianism encourages the pride of human Reason. Now I shall answer this very briefly, because any lengthened exposure would necessarily take the form of sarcasm. Whose Reason is it that we oppose when we reject Trinitarianism? Trinitarians say that it is the Reason of God. But how do they know this? Because they are sure that *they* know the Mind of God as it is revealed in the Scriptures; and they are sure that *we* are in error. Infallibility again! So that to oppose *their* interpretation of the Scriptures, is to set up our own Reason against the Reason of God. Now I ask, in all simplicity, Can they who say these things have taken the trouble to clear their own ideas? If there is any pride of Reason, on which side does it lie? They first identify their own sense of the Scriptures with God's sense, and then they charge other men with the pride of Reason, for not bowing down their minds to God, having first taken it for granted that *their* Reason and God's Reason are one and the same.

Look again to the uncertain doctrines which they deduce from the Scriptures by processes of inference, sometimes technical and sometimes mystical, and say, does the world afford a more marked exemplification of the pride of human Reason, than the absolute confidence with which these doubtful conclusions are received, and not only that, but pressed upon men, as the exact meaning of God, at the peril of their eternal Salvation! What do these divines rest upon when they deduce from the Scriptures the essentials of Christianity? Their own reasonings. And yet they will tell you, that to differ from *them*, is to oppose your own Reason to the mind of God. I ask, hereafter in this controversy, Should not this matter of the pride of human Reason be a weapon of attack in our hands, an accusation against Trinitarians, instead of a charge which Unitarians are to answer? We have too long, in this and many other matters, stood upon the defensive.\*

And now, in conclusion, let me say once more, that though we think Trinitarian views of man's connexions with God injurious to Christian perfection, inasmuch as they throw the minds which receive them out of harmony with the realities of God, and react therefore undergo future correction and re-adjustment, still our strongest objection to the Trinitarian scheme is the fundamental one that it is based upon principles of exclusiveness, upon the indispensable conditions of a narrow and technical creed, and that thus it is the parent and fomentor of all those dissensions and practical evils in religion which these times witness and deplore. How many has orthodoxy persecuted into a hatred for the very name of religion? In how many minds has it darkened, or mixed up with the most incongruous associations, the beautiful image of Christ, destroying its healing and persuasive power? O! why should it be, except for this Trinitarian scheme of an Exclusive Salvation, that Religion should be directing her whole energies to the support of creeds, instead of going

about doing good, and with her heavenly spirit entering into conflict with the moral evils that afflict society, and degrade man, and rebel against God? Why is it, that instead of this, we have a distinct class of sufferings, that go under the name of religious evils? Why is it that we are here holding controversy with our fellow Christians, instead of uniting our spirit and our strength to work the works of Christ? We wage not this controversy for the purpose of aiding a sect; but we wage it, to do what we can to expose and put down universally the sectarian spirit. The great evils of society, the crying wrongs of Man, are mainly owing to this diversion of Religion from spiritual and practical objects to the strife of tongues and Salvation by creeds. What is the Religion of this country doing? Contending for creeds. What ought it to be doing? Spreading the spirit of the life of Christ through the hearts of men and the institutions of society. How long are these things to be? How long are the spiritual influences of this country to be all consumed in striving with heresies instead of striving with sins; leaving untouched the bad heart of society, whilst wrangling for a metaphysical faith? Look to the religious apparatus of this country. Look to the number of pulpits that should send forth the spiritual influences of righteousness and peace; and the number of men that should move through society apostles of the beneficence of Christ.

Suppose all this strength directed to practical and spiritual objects, and could the things that are, remain as they are, if the religious forces of the country instead of being exclusive, doctrinal, controversial, were full of the love of Jesus, and sought simply to establish the kingdom of Heaven upon Earth? Could Religion excite the angry passions that she does, if her aims were spiritual and not doctrinal? Could Religion be divorced as she is from practical life, and confined to a class kept under powerful stimulants, and called the "religious public," if her aims were spiritual and not doctri-

nal? Could Religion leave the people neglected and without education, practical Heathens, while she is settling her creeds, if her aims were spiritual and not doctrinal? Could Religion have left unpurified the streams and sources of public morality, if her aims were spiritual and not doctrinal? Could she have suffered War still to disgrace the world, and not long since have extinguished the fratricidal passion by the Heavenly spirit and the moral instrument, if the direction of her energies had been spiritual and not controversial? Could she have shown so little interest in the great mass of the people? Could she have abandoned them to ignorance and grinding oppressions and not raised her omnipotent voice on their behalf? Could she have so separated herself from the real business of life and left the morbidities of intercourse sanctified whilst she remained unsympathizing and cloistered? Every friend to practical religion has an interest in destroying this exclusive Theology, which turns away from the works of love to the war of creeds.

If then we preach Unitarianism, it is that we may win men's hearts to the one Spirit who pervades all things, and harmonizes all things, and sends all blessings, and sanctifies all thoughts, all duties, and all times. If we preach the man Christ Jesus, the word made flesh, it is that we too may sanctify our nature, and make it a temple for the living God, and grow up into him in all things who is our head even Christ. If we preach Salvation, not by creeds, but by the spirit of Christ in us, the hope of glory, it is that our fitness for Heaven may commence on Earth; that we may live now as those who when they have slept the brief sleep of death shall awake in the presence of Christ and God, and find themselves in that Heaven wherein dwelleth righteousness. And if we preach not indiscriminate happiness and indiscriminate tortures in fornicity, but the just retributions of God, it is that we may redeem the time, remembering that each moment lost throws us back on the heavenly way, that there is an in-



finite perfection before us, providing work for our infinite capacities through an immortal life; that God is faithful and inexorable in his retributions; that no virtue shall be without its reward, no sin without its woe; that we shall be judged according to our works, and reap what we have sown.

To sum up, the two great principles of Unitarianism are these:—

I. Spiritual allegiance to Christ as the image of God. "Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus."

II. Spiritual liberty from ought besides; Creeds, Traditions, Rituals, or Priests. "False brethren, unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage: to whom we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour; that the truth of the gospel might continue with you."

## APPENDIX.

## NOTE I. page 14.

"The free and unprejudiced mind dwells with delight on the image of the universal church or convocation of Christ, as it would naturally have grown 'into the fulness of the body' of its glorious founder. \* \* \*"

"And what (let me earnestly and solemnly ask) has hitherto turned this view into a mocking dream,—a dream that deludes by images which are the very reverse of the sad realities which surround us? OXFORDSHIRE. —the notion that the eternal happiness or misery of individuals is intimately connected with the acceptance or rejection of a most obscure system of metaphysics, a system perplexing to the extreme to those who are best acquainted with its former technical, now obsolete language, and perfectly unintelligible to the rest of the Christian world; a system which, to say the least, seems to contradict the simplest and most primitive notions of the human mind concerning the unity, the justice, and the goodness of the Supreme Being: a system which, if it be contained in the Scriptures, has been laid under so thick and impenetrable a veil, that thousands who have sought to discover it, with the most eager desire of finding it, whose happiness in this world would have been greatly increased by that discovery, and who, at all events, would have escaped much misery had they been able to assert it, even on the grounds of probability sufficient to acquit themselves before their own conscience, have been compelled, by truth, to confess their want of success. Yet Orthodoxy declares this very system identical with Christianity—with that Gospel which was 'preached to the poor,' and 'revealed unto babes;' such a system, we are told, is that faith which, 'except every one keep whole and undefiled, without doubt he shall perish exceedingly.'"—*Heresy and Orthodoxy* by Rev. J. Blanco White.

## NOTE 2, page 18.

"What do divines understand by *Christian Truth*? The answer at first, appears obvious. 'Christian truth (it will be said) is what Christ and his apostles knew and taught concerning Salvation under the Gospel.' Thus far we find no difficulty, but (let me ask, again) where does this exist as an object *external* to our minds? The answer appears no less obvious than the former. 'In the Bible. Still I must ask, Is the MATERIAL Bible the Christian truth about which Christians dispute? No: it will be readily said, not the MATERIAL Bible, but the SENSE of the Bible. Now (I beg to know) is the SENSE of the Bible an object *external* to our minds? Does any *Sense* of the Bible accessible to man, exist anywhere but in the mind of each man who receives it from the words he reads? The Divine mind certainly knows in what *sense* those words were *used*; but as we cannot compare our mental impressions with that model and original of all truth, it is clear that by the *Sense* of the Bible we must mean our own sense of its meaning. When therefore any man declares his intention to defend *Christian truth*, he only expresses his determination to defend his *own notions*, as produced by the words of the Bible. No other *Christian truth* exists for us in our present state."—*Heresy and Orthodoxy*.

## NOTE 3, page 22.

"If different men in carefully and conscientiously examining the Scriptures, should arrive at different conclusions, even on points of the last importance, we trust that God, who alone knows what every man is capable of, will be merciful to him that is in error. We trust that He will pardon the Unitarian, if he be in error, because he has fallen into it from the dread of becoming an idolater—of giving that glory to another which he conceives to be due to God alone. If the worshipper of Jesus Christ be in error, we trust that God will pardon him in like manner, because he has fallen into it from the dread of disobeying what he conceives to be revealed concerning the nature of the Son, or commended concerning the honour to be given him. Both are motivated by the same principle—the fear of God; and though that principle impels them into different roads, it is our hope and belief, that if they add to their faith sincerity, they will meet in Heaven."—*Tillotson*.

"We should learn to be cautious, lest we charge God foolishly, by ascribing that to him, or the Nature he has given us, which is owing wholly to our own abuse of it. Men may speak of the degeneracy and corruption of the world, according to the experience they have had of it, but human nature, considered as the divine workmanship, should, methinks, be treated as sacred: for is the image of God made to man."—*Bishop Butler*.

## NOTE 4, page 23.

"BUT, if ORTHODOXY cannot be the principle of union among Christians, upon what are men to agree in order to belong to the Convocations, or people of Christ? I believe that the Apostle Paul has said enough to answer this question. When by using the word *anathema*, he rejects from his spiritual society even an angel from Heaven, were it possible that such a being should "preach another gospel," he lays down the only principle, without which there can be no communion among Christians. Unhappily the word *GOSPEL*, like the word *Faith*, is constantly understood, as expressing a certain number of dogmatical articles. Owing to this perversion of the original meaning, these very passages of Paul are conceived to support the long-established notion that Orthodoxy is the only condition of Christian communion; and want of it, a sufficient cause for *anathema*. I have, however, already proved, that Orthodoxy, without a supreme judge of religious opinions, is a phantom; and since it is demonstrable that no such judge has been appointed, it clearly follows that the Apostle Paul, by the name of *Gospel*, could not mean a string of dogmatic assertions. It is necessary, therefore, to ascend to the original signification of the word *Gospel*, if we are not to misunderstand the reason of the *anathema* pronounced by Paul. Let such as wish to rise above the clouds of theological prejudice, remember that the whole mystery of godliness is described by the expression 'glad tidings.' God, not glad things, indeed, would have been the Apostles' preaching, if they had announced a salvation depending on *Orthodoxy*. For (as I have said before) it would have been a salvation depending on chance. But salvation promised on condition of a change of mind from the love of sin to the love of God (which is *repentance*), on a surrender of the individual will to the will of God, according to the view of that divine will which is obtained by trust in Christ's example and teaching, which is *faith*; a pardon of sins independent of harassing religious practices,

sacrifices, and ascetic privations—these were 'glad tidings of great joy,' indeed, to all who, coming for their souls, felt bewildered between atheism and superstition."—*Henny and Orthodoxy*.

NOTE 5, page 27.

"Men want an object of worship like themselves, and the great secret of idolatry lies in this propensity. A God, clothed in our form, and feeling our wants and sorrows, speaks to our weak nature more strongly than a Father in Heaven, or pure spirit, invisible and unapproachable, save by the reflecting and purified mind. We think too, that the peculiar offices ascribed to Jesus by the popular theology, make him the most attractive person in the Godhead. The Father is the depository of the justice, the vindicator of the rights, the avenger of the laws of the Deity. On the other hand, the Son, the brightness of the divine mercy, stands between the incensed Deity and guilty humanity, exposes his meek head to the strokes, and his compassionate breast to the sword of the Divine justice, bears our whole load of punishment, and purchases with his blood every blessing which descends from Heaven. Need we state the effect of these representations, especially on common minds, for whom Christianity was chiefly designed, and whom it seeks to bring to the Father as the loveliest being? We do believe, that the worship of a bleeding, suffering God, tends strongly to absorb the mind, and to draw it from other objects, just as the human tenderness of the Virgin Mary has given her so conspicuous a place in the devotions of the Church of Rome. We believe too, that this worship through attractive, is not most fitted to spiritualize the mind, that it awakens human transports, rather than that deep veneration of the moral perfections of God, which is the essence of piety.

"We are told, also, that Christ is a more interesting object, that his love and mercy are more felt, when he is viewed as the Supreme God, who left his glory to take humanity and to suffer for men. That Trinitarians are strongly moved by this representation, we do not mean to deny, but we think their emotions altogether founded on a misapprehension of their own doctrine. They talk of the second person of the Trinity's leaving his glory and his Father's throne to visit and save the world. But this second person being the unchangeable and infinite God, was evidently incapable of parting with the least degree of his perfection and felicity. At the moment of his taking flesh, he was as intimately present with his Father as

before, and equally with his Father filled heaven, and earth, and immensity. This Trinitarians acknowledge; and all they profess to be touched and overwhelmed by the amazing humiliation of this invaluable being." But not only does their doctrine, when fully explained, reduce Christ's humiliation to a fiction, it almost wholly destroys the impressions with which his cross ought to be viewed. According to their doctrine, Christ was, comparatively, no sufferer at all. It is true his human mind suffered; but this, they tell us, was an infinitely small part of Jesus, bearing no more proportion to his whole nature, than a single hair of our heads to the whole body, or than a drop to the ocean. The divine mind of Christ, that which was most properly himself, was infinitely happy, at the very moment of the suffering of his humanity; while hanging on the cross, he was the happiest being in the universe, as happy as the infinite Father, so that his pains, compared with his felicity, were nothing. This Trinitarians do, and must acknowledge. It follows necessarily from the immutableness of the divine nature, which they ascribe to Christ; so that their system, justly viewed, robs his death of interest, weakens our sympathy with his sufferings, and is, of all others, most unfavourable to a love of Christ, founded on a sense of his sacrifices for mankind. We esteem our own views to be vastly more affecting. It is our belief, that Christ's humiliation was real and entire, that the whole Saviour and not a part of him suffered, that his crucifixion was a scene of deep and unmitigated agony. As we stand round his cross, our minds are not distracted, nor our sensibility weakened by contemplating him as composed of incongruous and infinitely differing minds, and as having a balance of infinite felicity. We recognise in the dying Jesus but one mind. This, we think, renders his sufferings, and his patience, and love, in bearing them, incomparably more impressive and affecting, than the system we oppose."—*Canning*.

NOTE 6, Page 29

"We believe too, that this system is unfavourable to the character. It naturally leads even to think, that Christ came to change God's mind, rather than their own; that the highest object of his mission, was to avert punishment rather than to communicate holiness, and that a large part of religion consists in disparaging good works and human virtue, for the purpose of magnifying the value of Christ's vicarious sufferings. In this way, a sense of the infinite importance and indispensable necessity of personal improvement is

wakened, and high sounding praises of Christ's cross seem often to be substituted for obedience to his precepts. For ourselves, we have not so learned Jesus. Whilst we gratefully acknowledge, that he came to rescue us from punishment, we believe, that he was sent on a still nobler errand, namely, to deliver us from sin itself, and to form us to a sublime and heavenly virtue. We regard him as a Saviour, chiefly as he is the light, physician, and guide of the dark, diseased, and wandering mind. No influence in the universe seems to us so glorious as that over the character, and no redemption so worthy of thankfulness as the restoration of the soul to purity. Without this, pardon, if it were possible, would be of little value. Why pluck the sinner from hell, if a hell he left to burn in his own breast? Why raise him to heaven, if he remain a stranger to its sanctity and love? With these impressions, we are accustomed to value the gospel chiefly, as it abounds in effectual aids, motives, excitements to a generous and divine virtue. In this virtue as to a common centre, we see all its doctrines, precepts, promises meet; and we believe, that faith in this religion is of no worth, and contributes nothing to salvation, any further than as it uses these doctrines, precepts, promises, and the whole life, character, sufferings and triumphs of Jesus, as the means of purifying the mind, of changing it into the likeness of his celestial excellence."—*Channing*.

NOTE 7. page 37

"I can direct you to nothing in Christ more important than his tried, and victorious, and perfect goodness. Others may love Christ for his mysterious attributes; I love him for the rectitude of his soul and life. I love him for that benevolence which went through Judæa, instructing the ignorant, healing the sick, giving sight to the blind. I love him for that universal charity, which comprehended the despised publican, the hated Samaritan, the benighted heathen, and sought to bring a world to God and to happiness. I love him for that gentle, mild, forgiving spirit, which no insult, outrage, injury could overpower, and which desired as earnestly the repentance and happiness of its foes as the happiness of its friends. I love him for the spirit of magnanimity, constancy, and fearless rectitude with which, amid peril and opposition, he devoted himself to the work which God gave him to do. I love him for the wise and enlightened zeal with which he espoused the true, the spiritual interests of mankind, and through which he lived and died to redeem them from

every sin, to frame them after his own God-like virtues. I love him, I have said, for his moral excellence; I know nothing else to love. I know nothing so glorious in the Creator or his creatures. This is the greatest gift which God bestows, the greatest to be derived from his Son. You see why I call you to cherish the love of Christ. This love I do not esteem as a luxury of feeling, as an exaltation bringing immediate and overflowing joy. I view it in a nobler light; I call you to love Jesus, that you may bring yourselves into contact and communion with perfect virtue, and may become what you love. I know no sinners, enduring good, but the moral excellence that shines forth in Jesus Christ. Your health, your ease and comforts and distinctions, are poor, mean, contemptible, compared with this, and to prefer them to this is self-abasement, self-destruction. May that great truth penetrate our souls; and may we bear witness in our common lives, and especially in trial, in sore temptation, that nothing is so dear to us as the virtue of Christ! \* \* \*

"Thus Jesus lived with men—with the consciousness of unalterable majesty he joined a lowliness, gentleness, humanity, and sympathy, which have no example in human history. I ask you to contemplate that wonderful union. In proportion to the superiority of Jesus to all mankind was the intimacy, the brotherly love, with which he heard himself to them. I maintain, that this is a character wholly remote from human conception. To imagine it to be the production of superture or enthusiasm, shows a strange unsoundness of mind. I contemplate it with a veneration second only to the profound awe with which I look up to God. It bears no mark of human invention. It was real. It belonged to, and it manifested, the beloved Son of God.

"But I have not done. May I ask your attention a few moments more? We have not yet touched the depth of Christ's character. We have not touched the great principle on which his wonderful sympathy was founded, and which endeared him to his office of universal Saviour. Do you ask what this deep principle was? I answer, it was his conviction of the greatness of the human soul. He saw at once the nobleness and majesty of the Divinity, and therefore cherished for his redemption; and took the readiest interest in him, whatever might be the rank, character, or condition in which he was found. This general view of man pervades and distinguishes the teaching of Christ. Jesus looked on man with an eye which pierced beneath the material form. The body seemed before him. The trappings of

the rich, the rage of the poor, were nothing to him. He looked through them, as though they did not exist, in the soul; and there, amidst clouds of ignorance and plague-spots of sin, he recognized a spiritual and immortal nature, and the germs of power and perfection which might be unfolded for ever. In the most wretched and degraded man, he saw a being who might become an angel of light. Still more, he felt that there was something in himself to which men might not need. His own lofty consciousness did not sever him from the multitude; for he saw, in his own greatness, the model of what man ought become. So deeply was he thus impressed, that again and again, in speaking of his future glories, he announced that in these his true followers were to share. They were to sit on his throne, and partake of his beneficent power. Here I pause; and I know not, indeed, what can be added to heighten the wonder, reverence, and love which are due to Jesus. When I consider him not only as possessed with the consciousness of an unexampled and unbounded majesty, but as recognizing a human nature in all human beings, and living and dying to raise them to an attainment of his divine glories, and when I see him, under these views, obliging himself to men by the kindest ties, embracing them with a spirit of humanity, which no envy, no pain could for a moment rebel or overpower, I am filled with wonder, as well as reverence and love. I feel that this character is not of human invention, that it was not assumed through fraud, or struck out by enthusiasm, for it is infinitely above their reach. When I add this character of Jesus to the other evidences of his religion, it gives to what before seemed so strong a new and vast accession of strength: I feel as if I could not be deceived. The Gospels must be true; they were drawn from a living original; they were founded on reality. The character of Christ is not fiction; he was what he claimed to be, and what his followers attested. Nor is this all. Jesus not only *was*, he is still, the Son of God,—the Saviour of the world. He exists now; he has entered that Heaven to which he always looked forward on earth. There he lives and reigns. With a clear, calm faith, I see him in that state of glory, and I confidently expect, at no distant period, to see him face to face. We have, indeed, no direct friend whom we shall so surely meet. Let us then, by imitations of his virtues, and obedience to his word, prepare ourselves to join him in those pure mansions where he is surrounding himself with the good and pure of our race, and will communicate to them for ever his own spirit, power, and joy."—*Concluding*

## NOTE S, page 48.

"At the present moment I would ask, whether it is a wise to doubt the truth of Christianity as it is manifested in Spain and Portugal. When a patriot in those benighted countries, who knows Christianity only as a bulwark of despotism, as a rearer of impiousness, as a stern justice among wretched women in the convent, as an executioner stoned and reeking with the blood of the friends of freedom.—I say, when the patriot, who sees in our religion the instruments of these crimes and woes, believes and affirms that it is not from God, and is authorized to charge his unbelief on dishonesty and corruption of mind, and to brand him as a culprit? May it not be that the spirit of Christianity in his heart emboldens him to protest with his lips against what bears the name? And if he thus protest, through a deep sympathy with the oppressed and sufferers in his race, is he not nearer the kingdom of God than the priest and the inquisitor who boastingly and exclusively assume the Christian name? Jesus Christ has told us that 'this is the condemnation' of the unbelieving, 'that they love darkness rather than light,' and who does not see that this ground of condemnation is removed, just in proportion as the light is quenched, as Christian truth is buried in darkness and deluging error?"—*Concluding*.

"I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ; for it is True. It is true, and its truth is to break forth more and more gloriously. Of this I have not a doubt. I know that our religion has been questioned even by intelligent and good men—but this does not shake my faith in its divine original or in its ultimate triumphs. Such men have questioned it, because they have known it chiefly by its corruptions. In proportion as its original simplicity shall be restored, the doubts of the well-disposed will yield. I have no fears from infidelity; especially from that form of it which rages at the moment labouring to spread through our country (America). I mean, that insane, desperate unbelief, which strives to quench the light of nature as well as of revelation, and to leave us, not only without Christ, but without God. This I dread no more than I should fear the efforts of men to pluck the sun from his sphere; or to strew the skies with the ambrosia of the earth. We were made for religion; and unless the enemies of our faith can change our nature, they will leave the foundation of religion unshaken. The human soul was created to look above and

terial nature. It wants a Deity for its love and trust, an immortality for its hope. It wants consolations not found in philosophy, wants strength in temptation, sorrow, and death, which human wisdom cannot minister; and knowing, as I do, that Christianity meets those deep wants of men, I have no fear or doubt as to its triumph. Men cannot long live without religion. In France there is a spreading dissatisfaction with the sceptical spirit of the past generation. A philosopher in that country would now blush to quote Voltaire as an authority in religion. Already atheism is dumb where once it seemed to bear sway. The greatest minds in France are working back their way to the light of truth. Many of them cannot indeed yet be called Christians; but their path, like that of the wise men of old, who came star-guided from the East, is towards Christ. I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ. It has an immortal life, and will gather strength from the violence of its foes. It is equal to all the wants of men. The greatest minds have found in it the light which they most anxiously desired. The most sorrowful and broken spirits have found in it a healing balm for their woes. It has stepped the sublimest virtues and the loftiest hopes. For the corruptions of such a religion I weep, and I should blush to be their advocate; but of the Gospel itself I can never be ashamed."—*Christianity*

NOTE 9, page 29

"Having found that *pride of reason is an aggression upon other men's reason*, arising from an over-estimate of the worth of the aggressor's own, we may now proceed to our inquiry, who are justly chargeable with *pride of reason*? Is it the *atheist*, who, having examined the Scriptures, propose their own collective sense of those books to the acceptance of others, but blame them not for rejecting it? or those who positively assert, that their own sense of the Scriptures is the only one which an honest man, not under diabolical delusion, can find there? The answer is so plain, that a child, who could understand the terms of the question, might give it. And yet experience has taught me that there is no chance of unravelling the confused ideas which prevent many a well-meaning Christian from perceiving that the charge of the *pride of reason* falls upon the Christian. Their own sense of the Scripture (with a *dizzy wheel* which their excited feelings produce) must be the word of God, because they cannot find another. My sense of the Scripture must, (for instance), on the contrary, be a damnable error, because it is the work of my *reason*,

which opposes the word of God, i. e. *works sense* of the Scriptures. Hence the conclusion that *Vanquishy of pride of reason*. "Remember that *pride*, (they say) and you will see in the Scriptures what we propose to you," which is to say, *survadee your reason to ours, and you will agree with us.* \* \* \*

"It is remarkable that Christians are accused of *Pride of reason* in proportion as their view of Christianity contains fewer *doctrines of inference* than that of the accusers. Compare the creed of the Trinitarians with that of the Unitarians. The former may be true, and the latter erroneous, though I adhere to the latter; but unquestionably the *Trinitarian Creed* is nearly made up of *inferences*, it is almost entirely a work of *reason*, though, in my eyes, badly supplied. Why, then, is the *Unitarian* accused of *pride of reason*, when he only employs it to show that the *Trinitarian* has not any *special grounds* to draw those *inferences*? which of the two is guilty of *encroaching upon another man's rights of reason*? Is it not he who claims for his *inferences*—the work of his own reason—an authority above human reason?"

"It is not, however, in *inferences* alone (the work of logical reason) that the *Trinitarian* creed owes its existence, and, more than its existence, its popularity. My observation has shown me, and that of every competent judge will show, that the strongest hold which *this* creed has on the minds of its supporters, consists in *pretences of theories* concerning the nature of God and of sin, and of some *necessity* which places the Divine Nature in a state of difficulty in regard to the pardon of sin. The work of saving the *man* at man from a most horrible fate depends (according to this theory) not only on a very mysterious method of overcoming the difficulty which prevents pardon by an act of mercy, or repentance, but also on the acknowledgment of the *mystery* by the sinner. The remedy proposed by the wisdom of God is (according to this theory) totally powerless, unless we believe a certain explanation of the manner in which it acts.

"Now people who cordially embrace this view very naturally work themselves into a state of the most agonizing excitement; for if the whole world is to perish because it does not know how the *saving* remedy acts, or because its activity is explained in a wrong way, benevolent men, who think themselves in possession of that important secret, must burn with zeal to spread it, and with indignation against those who propagate an explanation which deprives the remedy of all its power." "Believing," says an orthodox writer, through a dissentor

from the orthodoxy of the Church of England, 'the doctrine (of the divinity of Christ) to comprehend within itself the hopes of a guilty and perishing world, while I would contend *merely*, I must be pardoned if, at the same time, I contend earnestly.' It is this preconceived theory (one of the strangest that was ever founded on *reasoning à priori*) that guides most Christians in the exposition of the New Testament, and even in that of many passages of the Hebrew Scriptures. The notion that *no* could not be pardoned unless a *proson equal in God* suffered for it, is the deeply-coloured glass through which the orthodox read the Scriptures. I do not blame them for this extraordinary conception. What I earnestly wish is, that their religious fears may allow them to perceive that this theory of redemption is made up of *preconceived notions and inferences*. Even if that theory were true, it would unquestionably be a work of *reason* working by inference. Can, then, the attempt to make it the very soul of the Gospel be acquitted of the charge which is constantly in the mouth of the orthodox? Are they not guilty of the *pride of reason*?—*Heresy and Orthodoxy*

*Comments on Rev. F. Gulka's Lecture on the practical importance of the Controversy with Unitarians.*

Page 5.—It is here argued that the *error*, if an error, of denying Unitarians to be Christians is as *inexistent*, as the error, if one, of denying Jesus to be God. Certainly, if equally involuntary and the pure conclusion of a truthful mind. But, if an error, it involves two errors,—first, the mistake as to the nature and offices of Jesus, and second, the mistake of making essentials which Jesus did not make, and of passing judgments which Jesus did not pass. It is also essentially Anti-Protestant.

Page 6.—"But if it be a characteristic of true Christianity as to trust in Christ, as to commit the salvation of our souls into his hands, how can we conceive of those as true Christians who consider him only as a fellow creature, and consequently repose in him no such trust?" Trust is a moral act of the mind. We trust *Jesus* spiritually. Our souls feel him to be the Image of God; and we confide ourselves with a perfect trust to the God of Love whom Jesus imaged. "Let not your hearts be troubled: we believe in God, believe also in me." Our hearts are not troubled because our faith rests upon the God whom Jesus has made known to us. This is the only intelligible meaning of Trust as a spiritual act. We trust *him* whom we believe God to have trusted and sent.

Page 8.—"We maintain that the Bible is alone safely interpreted by its Author and Inspirer, the Holy Ghost." Do the Testimonials mean that *their* interpretations of the Bible are the interpretations of the Holy Spirit? If so, we can have no controversy with them. If they are inspired to interpret, what the Apostles were inspired to write, nothing is required but *that they should be proved*.

Page 11, 12.—"The New Testament writers also assert their own inspiration in language equally strong. 'All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable,' &c. St. Paul does not here assert *his own* inspiration, but the inspiration of the Jewish Prophets, the study of whom and in the Timothy were *unto salvation* through faith in Christ. The Christian Scriptures were not in existence when the words were written. It is also very doubtful whether the word

translated, 'given by inspiration of God,' signifies 'breathing of God,' or 'breathed from God.'

"No prophecy of the Scriptures is of any private interpretation," An. The inspiration of Prophecy is not denied. But can anything be more idle than to prove the inspiration of all the Books of the Old Testament by such a quotation as this: "Hear me, O Judah, and ye inhabitants of Jerusalem, believe as the Lord your God, so shall ye be established; believe his prophets, so shall ye prosper."

Page 16.—"So then, it appears, that if these 'rational and liberal' critics are not allowed to Unitarianize the Bible, they are prepared to deny its divine authority, and to give it up to its enemies!" Dr. Channing *does not say so*. What he says is, that he cannot defend the Scriptures unless he is allowed to interpret them by the same principles which are applied to all other works. And this principle of interpretation we understand Dr. Farrer-shall freely to admit. The use that is made of the extract from Dr. Channing, exhibits the temptations of controversy. There is nothing in the extract that Unitarians themselves would not say upon occasion. Why is it thought worthy of being marked in italics that the dispensation of Moses is imperfect when compared with that of Jesus? Is this denied? Why is the word *seem* italicized, when the connected word is not rejected, but only *distrusted*? Yet the author praises the candour of Dr. Channing.

Page 90, 24.—"The Improved Version." It is a curious fact that most of the Unitarian objections to the Improved Version have been provided for them by an Unitarian Critic and Reviewer. Dr. Carpenter in his reply to Archbishop Magee states, "I furnished to the opponents of the Improved Version some of the most powerful reasons against it." Again, "At my request a young friend undertook to draw up the table which. This led him to collate the two Versions, which he did with great patience and fidelity. He discovered some variations from the basis which were not noticed; and I thought it right to point them out. It is not too much to say that, but for this, neither Bishop Magee, nor any others, who have opposed the Improved Version, would have been aware of their existence." pp. 398, 399. Whatever becomes of the Improved Version, the Controversy between Unitarianism and Trinitarianism remains just where it was, to be settled upon independent principles, moral and

exegetical. So far, the whole indictment against the Improved Version relates to the introductory chapters of Matthew and Luke. Suppose those chapters authentic and genuine, and what follows flows from them? The doctrine of the Miraculous Conception, which most Unitarians believe. Professor Norton, the ablest, perhaps, of American Unitarian Critics, defends this doctrine. The introductory chapters of Matthew he rejects, chiefly on account of their inconsistencies with those of Luke, the authenticity of which he does not doubt. Dr. Carpenter also critically dissects from the Notes to the Improved Version on the introductions of Matthew and Luke. Reply to Dr. Magee, p. 299. It is not then such a new thing among Unitarians, to question the authority of the Improved Version. Will the Author inform us where he got his knowledge respecting Ethion, his existence and opinions?

Page 25.—In an introductory Lecture on the "practical" tendencies of vacuo, we labour under the disadvantage of being obliged to allow scriptural language to be quoted in a sense which we do not admit. It would be evidently quite out of place to enter here into the textual controversy. This will be done abundantly in the course of these Lectures.

Page 37.—Does the Author deny that Free Inquiry generates a degree of scepticism—that is, not of unbelief, but of the examining and questioning spirit? Or does he mean to object to all free inquiry on account of this tendency? It is extraordinary reasoning to take Dr. Channing's *caution against a sceptical spirit, proceeding from the very constitution of mind, as a proof of the tendency of Unitarianism to infidelity*. If Unitarianism leads to unbelief, it is strange that so many Unitarians should defend the Evidences of Christianity, and that one of them, Dr. Farrer, is the great authority from which Trinitarians themselves draw their knowledge of the external testimonies.

Page 49.—"Another leading principle, common to both systems, (Unitarianism and Infidelity,) is the *absolute importance of principle itself in the enjoyment of the Divine favour.*" Let it be known, that by *principle* here, the Author means *opinions*.

Page 11.—"Does the Deist reject the Bible because God is re-



presented as a being who takes vengeance? So does the Unitarian for the very same reason reject the Gospel? Does the Deist cry at the Bible because it contains the doctrine of atonement and of divine sovereignty? For the very same reason the Unitarian rejects the Gospel." It is melancholy to have to remark upon this passage. The Unitarian *does not reject the Gospel*, unless the Gospel means Trinitarianism, a use of words which, in controversy, cannot be just field. The Unitarian *does not deny* that God takes vengeance, if by vengeance is meant the infliction of retribution. The Unitarian accepts the Gospel, but *does not find in it the doctrine of Atonement*.


Page 46 — "How, on Unitarian principles, this reasoning can be answered, is more than I can tell." Jesus *did* refer to God both by words and his works. But Unitarians do not regard the mission of Jesus as similar to that of any of the Prophets. It was essentially different. He was himself the Revelation: a man in the image of God. By the Prophets, God taught the Jews certain lessons, and inspired certain expectations. By Jesus, so wholly was the spirit without measure, God exhibited a perfect revelation both of human weakness and of human desires. God's word was made flesh, and dwelt amongst us. The purposes of the Deity were impetrated. He was consequently the life and the way, as well as the truth.

Page 59 — Does the Author *ever* contend that Thomas was an *insensate* man when he refused to believe in the risen Jesus? We had thought the Trinitarian view was, since the day of Pentecost dated the inspiration of the apostles. But it supposes the Author believes Thomas to be *inspired* when refusing to believe in the resurrection of Christ.

Page 60 - Is not the Author aware of the doubtful authenticity of the second epistle of Peter, from which he quotes twice, contrary to the judgment of Lardner, who decides that the doubtful Epistles, so stated by Eusebius, should not be used as authority for doctrines?

There are other passages in this Lecture which we might comment. But we *refrain*. We wished to remark upon those passages which affect the cause, and not more than was unavoidable upon those which affect only the advocate.

## THE BIBLE: WHAT IT IS, AND WHAT IT IS NOT.



## LECTURE I.

### THE BIBLE: WHAT IT IS, AND WHY.

BY REV. JAMES MACKENZIE.

AND THE FORTH WILL MAKE THEM, AND BOWY AMONG US, AND THE  
HERED HAS GIVE, THE BOWY AS AT THE ONLY RECORD OF THE  
LEAVE, FOOT OF GAVE AND INTER. — *John 14*

THE Bible is the great autobiography of human nature, from its infancy to its perfection. Whatever man has seen and felt and done on the theatre of this earth, is expressed therein with the simplicity and vividness of personal consciousness. The first wondering impressions of the new-created being, just dropt upon a scene quite strange,—the hardened heart and daring crimes of the long-resident heath, forgetting that he dwells in a hospice of the Lord, and not a property of his own;—the troubled and penitent spirit, awakened by the voice of Christ, when, to a world grown old and dead in custom, he brought back the living presence of God, and to the first reverence added the warmest love,—all this is recorded there, written down in the happy moments of inspiration which have fallen upon our race during the lapse of sixteen centuries. The volcanic stations us on a spot, well selected as a watch-tower, from which we may well look the history of the world;—an angle of coast between the ancient continents of Africa and Asia, subtended by the newer line of European civilization. Thence have we a neighbouring view of every form of human life, and every variety of human character. The military shepherd on the slopes of Chaldeea, watching the changing heavens till he worships them; the patriarch potel-

ing has lent in the narrow plain of Mesopotamia; the Arab, half nomad, half raider, hurrying his fleet dromedaries across the sunny desert; the Phœnician commerce gliding along the Levant with its sails, or, on its way from India, spreading its wares in the streets of Jerusalem; the urban magnificence of Babylon, and the sacerdotal grandeur of Egypt, all are spread beneath our eye, in colours vivid, but with passage swift. Even the echo of Grecian revolutions, and the tramp of Roman armies, and the incipient rush of Eastern nations, that will overwhelm them both, may be distinctly heard; brief agents, every one, on this stage of Providence, hurried forward by the finger of Omnipotence, and washed off again by the signals of mercy ever new.

The interest of this wide and various scriptural scene, gradually gathers itself in towards a single point. There is One who stands at the place where its converging lines all meet; and we are led over the expanse of world-history, that we may rest at length beneath the eye of the Prophet of Nazareth. He is the central object, around which all the ages and events of the Bible are but an outlying circumference; and when they have brought us to this place of repose, to return up on them again, would be an idle wandering. They are all preliminaries, that accomplish their end in leading us hither.—“The law, the prophets too, we esteem” our schoolmasters to bring us to Christ;” and though, like grateful pupils, we may look back on them with true-hearted respect, and even think these labours not thrown away on such as may still be children in the Lord, we have no idea of acknowledging any more the authority of the task, the threat, the rod. To sit at the feet of Jesus we take to be the only proper position for the true disciple, to listen to his voice “the one thing needful;” and however much others, notwithstanding that he is come, may make themselves “anxious and troubled about many things” besides, and fret

\* *Galat. iii. 24.*

themselves still about the preparations for his entertainment, we choose to quit all else, and keep close to him, as that better part, which shall not be taken from us. Whatever holy influences of the Divine Word may be found in the old Scriptures, are all collected into one at length; “the Word hath been made flesh,” and in a living form hath “dwelt among us;” and from its fulness of “grace and truth” we will not be torn away.

If the ultimate ends of Scripture are attained in Christ, that portion of the Bible which makes us most intimate with him, must be of paramount interest. Compelled then as I am, by my limits, to narrow our inquiry into the proper treatment of Scripture, I take up the New Testament exclusively, and especially the Gospels, for examination and comment to-night.

Suppose then that these books are put into our hands for the first time;—disinterred, if you please, from a chamber in Pompeii;—without title, name, date, or other external description; and that with unimpaired mind and fresh heart, we go apart with these treasures to examine them.

It is not long before their extraordinary character becomes evident. All hands are known by their works,—the human quite as distinctly as the Divine; and if “the invisible things of God” are clearly seen “by the things that are made,” and on the material structures of the universe the moral attributes of his nature may be discerned,—with much greater certainty do the secret qualities of a man’s soul,—his honesty or cunning, his tenderness or fraud,—impress themselves on his speech and writings. To a clear eye his moral nature will unerringly betray itself, even in a fiction; more still, in a history; and best of all, in a biography of a personal companion and teacher, drawing forth in turns his friendship and grief, his pity and terror, his love and doubt and trust, his feelings to country, to duty, to God, to heaven. Accordingly in these Gospels—and in the Journal

of travels and Collection of letters, which carry out and illustrate the development of a new religion, I find myself in the presence of honest and earnest men, who are plainly strangers to fiction and philosophy, and lead me through realities fairer and diviner than either. They take me to actual places, and tell the events of a known and definite time. They conduct me through villages, and streets, and markets, to frequented resorts of worship, and hostile halls of justice, and the tribunals of Roman rulers, and the theatres of Asiatic cities, and the concourse of Mars' hill at Athens, so that there is no denying their appeal, these things were "not done in a corner." Yet their frank delineation of public life is less impressive, than their true and tender touches of private history. Following in the steps of the world's domestic prophet, they enter, evening and morning, the homes of men, especially of men in watching and in grief, the wasted or the sick in soul; and the unconsciousness with which the most genuine traits of nature gleam through the narrative, the infantile simplicity with which every one's emotions, of sorrow, of repentance, of affection, give themselves to utterance, indicate that, with One who bore the key of hearts, the writers had been into the deep places of our humanity. "The infants in his arms look up in the face of Jesus as we read; the Pharisee mutters in our ear his sceptic discontent at that loving" woman who was a sinner "kneeling at the Teacher's feet; and the voice of the bereaved sisters of Lazarus trembles upon the page.

But, above all, these writings introduce me to a Being so unimaginable, except by the great Inventor of beauty and Architect of nature himself, that I embrace him at once, as having all the reality of man and the divinest inspiration of God. Gentle and unconstrained as he is, ever standing, even on the brink of the most stupendous miracles, in the

earliest attitudes of our humanity, so that we are drawn to him as to one of like nature, we yet cannot enter his presence without *feeling* our souls transformed. Their greatness, first recognized by him, becomes manifest to ourselves: the death of conscience is broken by his tones; the sense of accountability takes life within the deep; new thoughts of duty, sired from his lips, shame us for the past, and kindle us for the future with hope and faith unknown before. His promise "fulfils itself, whilst he utters it; and whenever we truly love him, God comes, and "makes his abode with" us. He has this peculiarity: that he plunges us into the feeling, that God acts *not there, but here*, not *was once*, but *is now*; dwells, not *without us*, like a dreadful sentinel, but *within us* as a heavenly spirit, befriending us in weakness, and *braving us for conflict*. The inspiration of Christ is not any solitary, barren, incommunicable prodigy; but diffusive, creative, vivifying as the energy of God:—not gathered up and concentrated in himself, as an object of distant wonder; but *re-producing itself*, though in fainter forms, in the faithful hearts to which it spreads. While in him it had no human origin, but was spontaneous and primitive, Having directly from the perception and affinity of God, it enters our souls as a gift from his nearer spirit, making us one with him, as he is one with the Eternal Father. Children of God indeed we all are, nor is there any mind without his image: but in this Man of Sorrows the divine lineaments are so distinct, the filial resemblance to the Parent-spirit is so full of grace and truth, that in its presence all other similitude fades away, and we behold his "glory as of the only begotten of the Father." It is the very spirit of Deity visible on the scale of humanity. The colours of his mind, projected on the surface of Infinitude, form there the all-perfect God. The mere fact of his consciousness of the alliance with the Creator, and his tranquil announcement of it, without the

slightest influence, and amid the exercise of the meekest sympathies, appears to me all-persuasive. From whom else could we hear such claims without disgust? In a moment they would turn respect into aversion, and we should pity them as insanity, or resent them as impiety. But to him they seem only level and natural; we hear them with assent and awe, prepared by such a transcendent veneration as only a being truly God-like could excite. This is one of those statements which refute or prove itself. Whoever, calmly affirming himself the Son and express similitude of God, can thereby draw to him, instead of driving from him, the affections of the wise and good, proclaims a thing self-evident, requiring, however, to be stated, in order to be tested.

Of such *self-evidence* as this, the gospels appear to me to be full. Whenever men shall learn to prefer a religious to a theological appreciation of Christ, and esteem his mind greater than his rank, much more of this kind of internal proof will present itself. It has the advantage of requiring no impracticable learning, and being open, on internal study of the books, to all men of pure mind and genuine heart; it is moral, not literary; addressing itself to the intuitions of conscience, not to the critical faculties. It makes us disciples, on the same principles with the first followers of Christ, who troubled themselves about no books, and forged no chains of scholastic logic to tie them to the faith; but watched the Prophet, beheld his deeds of power, felt his heavenly spirit, heard his word, found it glad tidings, and believed. In short, it is ideal, and with the evidence to which our Lord was so fond of appealing when he said, "No man can come to me, except the Father, which hath sent me, draw him;" "every one that is of the truth heareth my voice;" "if I do not the works of my Father, believe me not," "my sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and

they follow me," "if any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself;" "The spiritual attraction to Christ, arising out of mere contemplation and study of the interior of his life, is enough to bring us reverently to his feet,—to accept him as the divinely-sent image of Deity, and the appointed representative of God. If this be not discipleship, allow me to ask, "What is it?"

I consider, then, this *internal or self-evidence* of the New Testament, as incomparably the most powerful that can be adduced; as securing for Christianity an eternal seat in human nature, so as to throw ridicule on the idea of its subversion; and as the only evidence suitable, from its universality, to a religion intended for the majority of men, rather than for an oligarchy of literati.

But though the divine perfection and authority of Christ may thus be made manifest to our moral and spiritual nature, what is called the plenary inspiration of the whole Bible is by no means a thing equally self-evident. By the term *plenary inspiration* is denoted the doctrine,—That every idea which a just interpretation may discover in the Scriptures, is infallibly true, and that even every word employed in its expression is dictated by the unerring spirit of God; so that every statement, from the beginning of Genesis to the end of Revelations, must be implicitly received, "as though from the lips of the Almighty himself." We are first assured that whoever denies this, shall have his name enrolled from the Book of life; and then we are called upon to come forward, and say plainly whether we believe it. The invitation sounds terrible enough. Nevertheless, having a faith in God, which takes the awe out of Church thunders, I say distinctly, this doctrine we do not believe; and ere I have done, I hope to show that no man who can weigh evidence, ought to believe it.

It is clear that, by no interior marks, can a book prove this sort of inspiration to belong to itself. Accordingly, the advocates for it are obliged to quit the intrinsic evidences of which I have hitherto spoken, and to seek external and foreign testimony on behalf of the Biblical writings, and of the New Testament in the first instance. The course of the reasoning is thus adverted to by Bishop Marsh. "The arguments which are used," he says, "for divine inspiration, are all founded on the previous supposition that the Bible is true; for we appeal to the contents of the Bible in proof of inspiration. Consequently, these arguments can have no force till the authenticity and credibility of the Bible have been already established."\* "Suppose," observes the same author, "that a professor of Divinity begins his course of lectures with the doctrine of divine inspiration, this doctrine, however true in itself, or however certain the arguments by which it may be established, cannot possibly, in that stage of his enquiry, be proved to the satisfaction of his audience, because he has not yet established other truths, from which this must be deduced. For whether he appeals to the promises of Christ to his Apostles, or to the declarations of the Apostles themselves, he must take for granted that these promises and declarations were really made; i. e., he must take for granted the authenticity of the writings in which these promises and declarations are recorded. But how is it possible that conviction should be the consequence of postulating, instead of proving, a fact of such importance?" "If (as is too often the case in theological works, we undertake to prove a proposition by the aid of another which is hereafter to be proved, the inevitable consequence is, that the proposition in question becomes a link in the chain by which we establish that very proposition, which at first was taken for granted. Thus we prove premises from inferences,

\* Discourse on the Evidence and Certainty of the Bible. Philadelphia, 1781, p. 45.

as well as inferences from premises, or, in other words, we prove—nothing!"

In perfect consistency with these remarks, was the lucid exposition of the true method of theological enquiry, which I had the privilege of hearing in Christ Church, on Wednesday last: to every word of which (limiting it, however, to the external evidences of Christianity) I entirely assent. It was then stated that we must

(1st.) Ascertain that the books under examination are self-consistent, and that they contain nothing at variance with the character of God impressed upon his works.

(2ndly.) Enquire whether the writings are really the productions of the authors whose names they bear; or, in other words, determine their *authenticity*.

(3rdly.) Whether the writers were in circumstances to know what they relate, and were persons of character and veracity.

(4thly.) Whether we have the works in an uncorrupted state, and as they came from the pens of the authors.

If all these researches should have an issue favourable to the writings, the Lecturer conceives, for reasons which I think very inconclusive, that the following inferences may be drawn:—

(1.) That the whole contents of the Bible have divine authority, because they truly report the fulfilment of prophecy, and the performance of miracles; and all the doctrines and lessons of a person who works miracles must have divine authority.

(2.) That the writers were so inspired, that their writings are, in all respects, infallibly correct: for, among the facts narrated (and which we admit to be true), is this one; that the Holy Ghost was promised to the Apostles, and actually descended on the disciples assembled on the day of Pentecost, and was so extensively communicated through them to

\* Preface, Book I. p. 1, 2.

the early church, that no New Testament writer could be without it. So that these books are as strictly *the Word of God*, as if all their statements proceeded at once and immediately from the lips of the Almighty himself.

As "the Word of God" is a beautiful Scriptural phrase, which I must refuse to give up to the most unscriptural idea, I shall replace it, when I wish to speak of verbal inspiration, by the more appropriate expression, the *Words of God*. I discern in the Bible *the Word of God*, but by no means the *Words of God*.

For the sake of brevity, I may be allowed to compress this elaborate system of external evidence into two successive divisions, and, taking up the first Gospel as an example, I should say, we have to enquire respecting it.

(1.) Whether we have the words of St. Matthew. And if this be determined in the affirmative,

(2.) Whether we have the words of God.

(1.) Our first attempt then must be, to establish the origin of these books from Apostles or Apostolic men,—which is the sole ground for attributing their infallibility. The method by which their origin must be ascertained is admitted to be similar to that which would be employed in the case of any work not sacred. It is an enquiry altogether historical or antiquarian;—a process of literary identification. We must collect, and dispose along an ascending chronological line, the various writers who have quoted and mentioned the New Testament writings; and each, in turn, into the court of evidence, to speak to the identity of the work he cites with that which we possess, and if the series of witnesses be complete,—if, in following into antiquity the steps of their attestation, we find ourselves in contact with the Apostolic age, and near the seats of Apostolic labours, we justly conclude that we have the genuine and original productions. By the help of this foreign testimony, almost all the books

of the New Testament may be traced perhaps to the middle of the second century, the remaining fifty or sixty years to the death of St. John, and eighty or ninety to that of the Apostle of the Gentiles, must be filled up by arguments showing, that this chain is too small for the possibilities of forgery and mistake to take effect. The results of this process are not fit matter for detailed criticism here; I will simply state, in general, that they yield a preponderating probability in favour of the general reception, in the second age of the church, of all the New Testament writings, under the names of their reputed authors; and that it would be unreasonable to expect more precise external evidence of authenticity than this. It is indeed much easier to prove in this way the origin, from the founders of our religion, of the books which we receive, than to disprove a like authority with respect to others which we disown, or whose memory (for many of them are lost) we dishonour. The great antiquity of some of these reputed works, it is scarcely possible to deny; their intrinsic authority we are obliged either to conclude from their intrinsic character, (a reason, often abundantly satisfactory,) or to assume on the word of a set of ecclesiastical writers, not generally distinguished for sound judgment or tranquil passions, nor always trustworthy, even in matters of fact; and who not only forced their estimate of Christian books, less from equity into their genuineness, than from the supposed orthodoxy of their contents. The Christian Fathers, on whose statement the whole case rests, were undoubtedly guilty of that which, at all events, with far less justice, is charged on Unitarian authors: they threw away many a writing as spurious, because they did not like its doctrines; testing the work by their own belief, instead of their own belief by the work. The zone of proof which encircles the books within the canon, and separates them from the apocryphal tribe without, appears to me less sacred, and more faint, than it is common for the logicians to allow. And

even when the selection has been made and we have agreed to accept the canon as it is, it is impossible, until it is shown that one uniform inspiration produced the whole, to acknowledge the equal value of every part. It is usual to urge the "authenticity" upon us as a kind of technical quantity which we must take or reject, an indivisible theological unit admitting of no variation, but that of positive or negative. But it would surely be extraordinary, if all the twenty-seven books of the New Testament should have precisely the same amount of historical attestation in their favour, and it is undeniable that they have not. The probabilities are much stronger in behalf of some books than in that of others, though preponderant in all. There is a gradation of evidence, arranging the writings along at least five separate steps in the descent of proof; so effecting this division, however, let it be harshly understood, that I refer solely to the literary question of personal authorship, not to that of religious worth and authority, and that, for the moment, I take into account the internal as well as external considerations bearing upon this single point.

1. The letters of St. Paul (excepting Hebrews) occupy the highest station of evidence.

2. The remaining letters, excepting 2d Peter and Hebrews again, I should place next.

3. The Gospel of St. John is more certainly authentic than the other three; which, however, would follow in the

4th place with the book of Acts. And the list will be closed by

5. The Apocalypse, 2 Peter, and the Epistle to the Hebrews.

This arrangement might be justified, if it were necessary, in detail. But my sole purpose in stating it now, is to convey a distinct idea of the kind of graduated scale of proof which, from the very nature of the enquiry, must be applied to the authenticity of the Christian records; and to give force to the protest, which truth compels me to enter

against the indiscriminate exercise of assent attempted by theologians in this argument. With this qualification then, we approve the general decision of the Protestant Churches, and adopt as authentic the canon as it stands. "Puritans," we repeat, "have neither care nor version of their own."

"What! not the Improved Version?" I shall be asked. — that favourite achievement of your most renowned Unitarian eddies; — published by a Unitarian society; — circulated among your laity in three simultaneous editions, when assailed successively by Dr. Nassi and Archbishop Magee, repeatedly defended by your ablest critics in your own *Journals*; containing moreover all the standard heresies of your sect; using all your received methods of getting rid of troublesome texts; and especially relieving you of the distaste of the numerous conception by the liberal application of Deistic's pen-knife to the initial chapters of Matthew and Luke! "The shades of Belsham, Lindsey, Jebb, Priestley, Wakefield, &c., might well be astonished to hear their learned labours so contemptuously spoken of by "the modern disciples of their school!"

Now it so happens, that, excepting two, all these good men were dead before the commencement of that work. Of the two survivors, Mr. Lindsey was disabled, by the infirmities of age, from any participation in it, and scarcely lived to see it published †. The remaining divine, Mr. Belsham, was the real editor of this translation; and alone, among Unitarians, must have the whole honour or dishonour of the work. The funds for the publication were doubtless furnished by a society, whose members hoped thus to present the theologian with a valuable contribution to Biblical lit-

† See *Annals*, 2d. Ser. Dr. Tappin's Notice of the Integrity of the Canon. Introduction.

‡ Rev. F. P. M.'s letter of February 11, 1836.

§ The Improved Version was published in August, 1805. Rev. T. Lindsey, who had long laboured under the effects of gout, never saw it, and succeeded not in recovering it.



ration; but had neither power nor wish to bind themselves or others to an approval of its criticisms, or a recognition of its interpretations. That "all the ministers belonging to this Society" were enrolled in the Committee for preparing the Work, is itself a proof of the small proportion which the Association bore to the whole body of Unitarians; and it is well known to have been an inoperative form, which had no practical effect in dividing the chief Editor's responsibility. The Version adopts, as a basis, the "Attempt towards revising our English Translation of the Greek Scriptures," by Archbishop Newcome, Primate of Ireland; from which, including the smallest verbal variations, there are not, on an average, more than two deviations in a page; and it is a principle with the Editors, that these departures shall be noticed in the margin; so that any one, having the Improved Version in his hand, has the Archbishop's Revision also before him. How far this translation has authority with Unitarians, may perhaps be judged of from one fact. The clergymen who are holding up this work to the promiscuous of their Learners are repeating charges against it, long ago preferred by Archbishop Magee; who, in his time, reproduced them from Dr. Nares, the Regius Professor of modern History in the University of Oxford; who, again, borrowed no small part of his materials from a Review of the Version, in the Monthly Repository for 1809, by Dr. Carpenter, a distinguished Unitarian Divine. I do not mean that there was nothing but reproduction of the original Reviewer's materials throughout all these steps; if it were so, I should be ashamed to call that venerable man my friend: fresh objections were added at every stage; and, by Archbishop Magee, a mass of abuse the most coarse, and his representation the most black; repeated still by unsuspecting and uncoloured admirers, who find it easier to acquire from him his aptitudes for calumny than his tenderness in censure. But the principal objections to the Improved Version were certainly anticipated by Dr.

Carpenter who furnished a list of unacknowledged deviations from Newcome's revision and from Griesbach's and the Received Texts; who censured the whole system of departure from that text, which seemed to be adopted as a standard; the licence allowed to conjectural emendation; the preference of Newcome's to the authorized version as a basis; the introduction of any doctrinal notes; and, what is especially to our present purpose, who criticized, from the surjection of spontaneity, the initial chapters of St. Luke's Gospel, and contended to part with those of St. Matthew's, only because at variance with the authority of the third Evangelist. From the armoury, therefore, of our own church, are stolen the very weapons, wherewith now, amidst tactics of sacerdotal derision, we are to be driven as intruders from the fair fields of learning. For myself, when the learned labours of Dissenters are ridiculed, and the "defective scholarship" of heretics affirmed, by the privileged clergy of the established church, I always think of the Universities,—these venerable seats of instruction, from which Nonconformers must be excluded. The precious fund of knowledge is first locked up; the key is long beyond our reach; and then the starvelings must be laughed at, when they sink and fall. But so is it always with unjust power; the habit of injury begets the propensity to scorn.\*

But we are called upon to say, whether we really mean to repudiate the Improved Version. If by "repudiate" we meant, confess the truth of all the accusations brought against it, or reject it from our libraries as unworthy of consultation, we do not repudiate it. But we do refuse to be held responsible, directly or indirectly, for any portion of its criticisms, with which we have no more concern, than have our Reverend assailants with the Translation of Luther or the Institutes of Calvin. If we are pressed with the personal inquiry, "but, what portion of its peculiarities,

especially in relation to the narrative of the miraculous conception, do you as a matter of fact, approve?" I can answer for no one but myself, for we have no theological standards, nor any restriction on the exercise of private judgment, on such subjects. But, individually, I have no objection to state, that I consider Mr. Belsam as having brought over the threshold of his conversion so much of his original orthodoxy, that, like all who insist upon finding a uniform doctrinal system pervading the various records of Christianity, he is justly open to the charge of having unaccommodated both his criticisms and his interpretations to his belief; that his objections to the authenticity of both accounts of the miraculous conception, appear to me altogether inconclusive; that I therefore leave these histories as integral parts of the gospels they introduce.\* Whether I receive all their statements as unerringly true, is a question altogether different; nor can the Lecturer who calls on us to satisfy him on this point, link together in one query our reception of these chapters as authentic and as true, without falling into Mr. Belsam's own error of mixing these two things so obviously distinct. It no more follows, because these chapters are Matthew's, that they must be reconcilable with Luke, and so, free from objection to their truth; than, because they are inconsistent with Luke, therefore they cannot be Matthew's. This part of the enquiry belongs to the second portion of our discussion respecting the New Testament; whether, granting that we have the veritable words of the reputed authors, we have, in consequence, the *ipsissima verba* of God. To this topic let us now proceed.

(2.) The advocate of plenary inspiration, having obtained our assent to the authenticity of the Christian Scriptures, proceeds to show their truth. He reminds us that the depositions are no longer anonymous, and that, the testimony having been duly signed, we may examine the char-

\* See Note B.

acter of the witness.\* We call them therefore before us. They are plain, plebeian, hard-jointed men of toil, who have laboured in the fields and olive-grounds of Judæa, or held an oar on the Galilean Lake; who nevertheless have been unweakened by the cottage and the home, the parent, wife and child; belonging, moreover, to a country having something to remember, and more to expect. Addressed by a solitary and homeless wanderer from Nazareth, won by some undefinable attraction that makes them think him a man of God, they follow him awhile, hoping for promotion, if he should prove, as they suspect, to be some great one. Daily this hope declines, but hourly the love increases. They hang upon his words; their passions sink abashed before his look; they blindly follow his steps, knowing nothing but that they will be the steps of mercy; they rebuke the blind beggar who cries, but he calls him grasping to him, and sends him dazzled away; they go to help the cripple, and ere they reach him, at a word he leaps up in strength; they fly at the shriek of the maniac from the banks, when lo! he lapses into silence, and sits at the feet of the Nazarene in the tears of a right and grateful mind. How can they leave him? yet why precisely do they stay? If they depart, it is but to return with joy; and so they linger still, for they learn to trust him better than themselves. They go with him sorrowing; with occasional flashes of brilliant ambition, but with longer darkness between; with lowering hopes, but deepening love; to the farewell meal; to the moon's garden, its anguished solitude, its tranquil surrender to the multitude, making the seeming captive the real conqueror; a few of them to the trial; one, to the cross; the women, even to the sepulchre; and all, agitated and unbelieving, were rescued in breathless haste from their despair by the third day's tidings, the Lord has risen indeed! Thenceforth, they too are risen from the dust; the bandages, as of the grave, drop from their souls; the spirit of God, which is the spirit of truth, comes to love

them and let go. Not higher did the Lord ascend to the heaven which holds him now, than did they rise above the level of their former life. They understand it all, and can produce it. The things that were to come,—that dreadful cross, that loud cry, so darkly laden from their eyes,—are shown them now; a thousand things which he had said unto them, rise, by the help of this new spirit, to their remembrance. And forth they go, to tell the things which they have seen and heard. They *most* of them perished, not without joy, in the attempt; but they *did* tell them, with a voice that could summon nations and ages to the audience; which things are this day sounded in our ears.

But I suppose we must endeavour to speak coolly of these venerable men, if we are to save them from being deprived of their manhood, and turned into the petrified images and empty vessels of a physical or intellectual inspiration. Why will the extravagance of Ginzler compel us to freeze down our religion into logic, to prevent it blazing into an unsocial fanaticism? If, however, we must weigh the Apostles' claims with nice precision, we must say (at this stage of our enquiry we can say only) that they were honest personal witnesses of visible and audible facts; deserving therefore of all the reliance to which veracity, severely tested, is entitled. To everything then which comes under the description of *personal testimony* their demand on our confidence extends; their own impressions we believe to have been as they record. But the inferences, their arguments, their interpretations of ancient writings, their speculations on future events, however just and perfect in themselves, are no part of the *report which they give in evidence*, and cannot be established by appeal to their integrity.

Not, in this limitation of testimony to its proper province, is there anything in the slightest degree dishonourable to these "chosen witnesses." "Is the judgment of the writers of the New Testament," says Archbishop Paley, "in inter-

preting passages of the Old, or, sometimes perhaps in receiving established interpretations, so connected either with their veracity, or with their means of information concerning what was passing in their own times, as that a critical mistake, even were it clearly made out, should overthrow their historical credit? Does it diminish it? Has it any thing to do with it?" "We do not usually question the credit of a writer, by reason of an opinion he may have delivered upon subjects unconnected with his evidence; and even upon subjects connected with his account, or mixed with it in the same discourse or writing, we naturally separate facts from opinions, testimony from observation, narrative from argument."\* Moreover, our dependence upon a faithful witness, besides being restricted to matters of fact, is measured by his opportunities of observation; and it would be absurd to insist on his being heard with precisely equal belief, whether he relates, to the best of his knowledge, that which happened before he was born, or tells us something that passed under his eyes. If this distinction be not well founded, then his personal contact with events no advantage, the stranger is on a footing with the observer; and all the defensive reasonings which theologians have thrown round Christianity, from the station which the Apostles occupied as eye-witnesses, are destitute of meaning; supported though they are by the sanction of the Apostles themselves, whose constant claim to belief, when they preached, was this only, "and we are witnesses of these things." And if this distinction be well founded, there is just ground for discriminating between the different parts of an historian's narrative, and giving the highest piece of credit to that which he had the best means of knowing; nor is it possible to admit the rule which I heard laid down on Wesley's lay evening, that if we discover in an Evangelist a single uncorrected statement, the whole Book must be repudiated,—selection being wholly out

\* *Principles of Christianity*, p. 21. 1792.

of the question. Of the birth of Christ, for example, St. Matthew was not a witness; of his ministry he was; and has the report of the latter no higher claim upon belief than the history of the former,—seen as it was only in retrospect, at the distance of from thirty to sixty years, and through the colours of a subsequent life so great, so marvellous, so solemn? Hence, with relation to the initial chapters of the first and third Evangelists, while I leave them on an equality with the rest of the Gospels, in respect of authenticity, I place them in an inferior rank of credibility; especially since I find it impossible to reconcile them with each other. To justify this opinion, I will point out two inconsistencies between them, one chronological, the other geographical. I heard it affirmed on Wednesday evening, that the former of these difficulties was only apparent, and arose from the mistaken calculation of our Christian era, the commencement of whose year, I, do not really strike, as it ought, the hour of the nativity. Well, then, we will throw this era aside for the moment, and employ another mode of reckoning, prevalent among the historians of those times, dating from the building of Rome. St. Luke tells us that in the fifteenth year of Tiberius, our Lord was about thirty years of age; this would assign the birth of Christ, at the earliest, to Jan. 1 of the year of Rome 751. According to St. Matthew, he was born full one year before the death of King Herod, whose massacre of the innocents included all under two years; the latest date that can be fixed for the death of Herod is Feb. or March 751, so that the nativity falls, according to one Evangelist not later than 750, according to the other not earlier than 751.\* The geographical discrepancy between the two Evangelists has reference to the habitual residence of the Virgin Mary; St. Matthew supposes Bethlehem to have been Joseph's usual dwelling place, and nothing can be more evident than that, according to

\* See Note C.

the account of St. Luke, Joseph was a total stranger at Bethlehem." I quote the opinion of the Rev. George Thirlwall, a divine whose distinguished philological attainments have given him a European reputation, without at present raising him to that station in his own church, which would best suit his merits and her dignity.\*

The variance between two narratives is no sufficient reason for rejecting both, though it compels the disabell of one. In the present instance, the probabilities appear to preponderate in favour of St. Luke's. And, returning from the particular case to the general rule, I conclude this topic by repeating, respecting the "credibility" of any set of historical works, the remark formerly made respecting their "authenticity." I protest against its being urged upon us as an indissoluble magnitude, without fractional parts, incapable of increment or decrement, analysis or composition, which must be taken whole, or rejected whole; and I claim the right, till it can be shown not to belong to me, of reducing the recorded events of Scripture into classes, according to their degree of probability and their force of testimony. With this qualification, we maintain, with all other Christians, the ample credibility and the actual truth of the Gospel records, making no divorce between the natural and the miraculous, but taking both as inseparably woven together into the texture of the same faithful narrative.

But this step in the argument, I am reminded, cannot be taken without another, which brings us directly to the intellectual infallibility of the Apostles. Among the primary and undisputed facts which they record from personal experience, are the miracles which they wrought; and miracles being no interposition of God, establish the divine authority of the performer; so that all the lessons and sentiments propounded by a person so endowed, must be received as immediate communications from the Quering Spirit.

\* See Note D.

To this argument, if somewhat limited in the extent of its conclusion, I believe that most Unitarians would yield their assent. Certain it is that their best writers constantly reason from the marvellous acts, to the doctrinal inspiration of the first preachers of Christianity; and Dr. Priestley calls it "egregious trifling" to question the soundness of the proof. Yet it is surely difficult to reconcile it with fact and Scripture; and not less so to state it logically in words. In whatever form it is expressed, it rests upon a postulate which I hold to be false and irreligious; viz. that the supernatural is Divine, the natural not Divine; that God did the miracles, and since the creation has done nothing else; that Heaven gave a mission to those whom it thus endowed, and has given no mission to those who are otherwise endowed. All pending conversion of miracle is obtained by a precisely proportioned *deception* of nature, it is out of a supposed contrast between the two, that the whole force of the impression arises. The imagination which overlooks and forgets all that is warring in the common earth and sky, that gives itself over to the dream, that all is dead mechanism,—downright clock-work, wound up perhaps at creation, but running down of itself till doom; the heart that feels nothing divine in life, and nothing holy in man; that has lost, from Epicurean sloth and sickness of soul, the healthy faculty of spontaneous wonder, and worship ever fresh,—are the pupils most ripe for this talisman. The Deity must be thrust from the universe, or else benumbed there, in order to concentrate his energies in the preternatural. The speculative convert to miracles, is the practical Atheist of nature.

I need not remind any reader of the Gospels, of the accordance of this view with the general temper of our Lord's mind. His miracles, surely, spring from compassionate, not proselytizing impulses; had a practical, not a doctrinal aim;

Trinit. of New York, and of the Rev. Mr. B. in p. 11.

were not formally wrought as preliminaries to a discourse but spontaneously issued from the quietude of pity; they were not syllogisms, but *miracles*. Nay, where conviction was most needed, what is said of him? "He did not many mighty works there, *because of their unbelief*,"\* unless he wished them to continue in unbelief, he must have regarded miracles as an improper instrument of overcoming it. And can we forget his language of rebuke, "except ye see signs and wonders ye will not believe,"† When he appeals to his "works," it is to his "*many good works*,"‡ to the benevolence of his acts, not their marvellousness chiefly, to their being "the works of his Father," § conceived in the spirit of God, and bearing the impress of his character.

This estimate of the logical force of miracles (the moral power of those which belong to Christianity is incredible) appears to be consonant with experience. I conceive that, in fact, unbelievers are very seldom convinced by the appeal to the supernatural; that the avenues of admission to Christianity lie usually in quite a different direction, and that the reason and affections surrender to Christ's spirit, and thus comprehend the thing signified, before they can receive and interpret "*the sign*." Nay, let me put the case home to your own experience. Would you, by this instrumentality, become convinced of that which you before held false? If, before your eyes, a person were to multiply five leaves into five hundred, and then say, "this is to prove the doctrine which I teach, that God is malignant, and that there is no heaven after death,"—should you be converted, and follow him as his disciple? Certainly not; the statement being incredible, the miracle would be powerless. And the inference I would draw is this: that the primitive force of persuasion lies in the moral doctrine as estimated by our reason and conscience, not in the preternatural act displayed before our senses, for, the moment you test their

\* Matt. xiii. 12. † John. vi. 30. ‡ John. vi. 29. § John. vi. 70.

forces, by bringing them into collision, the original convictions of the reason obtain the mastery. It is no answer to say, that such a case is of impossible occurrence. For the purpose to which I apply it, *viz.*, to try an experiment with our own minds, respecting the real argumentative capabilities of miracles, an imaginary case is not only as good as an actual one, but a great deal better: for so long as a good truth and a good miracle are linked together, and move in the same direction, we rest confidently in the joint support of physical and mental evidence, and are unable to determine which is the ascendant power.

The statements and examples of Scripture tend to the same conclusion. The personal disciples of our Lord returned from a mission on which he had sent them; exclaiming, "Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name." \* Yet, though they were possessed of these miraculous powers, their views of the very kingdom which they had gone forth to preach were at that time exceedingly narrow and erroneous,—leading them into acts and desires ambitious, passionate, and false.

Miracles, then, are simply awakening facts—demanding and exciting reverential and watchful regard to something, or to everything, in the persons performing them; but not specifically singling out any portion of their doctrinal ideas, and affording them infallible proof. Is it not competent to God thus to draw human attention to a *person*, as well as a *truth*;—to a *character*, as well as a *doctrine*? At all events, it is an unwarrantable presumption in us to select for the All-wise the particular motive with which exclusively he ought to create a miracle; instead of humbly noting the actual results, and judging thence of his divine purposes.

But, it will now be urged, whatever sentiments may be entertained respecting the proper inferences from miracles in general, there is one in particular which directly establishes

\* Luke x. 17.

the plenary inspiration of the apostles and first disciples. It is recorded in the book of Acts, that on the day of Pentecost, when they were with one accord in one place, the Holy Ghost descended upon all †. The two Evangelists, St. Matthew and St. John, were present; so were St. Peter and St. James, for all these were Apostles. And we know that, by the laying on of the hands of the Apostles, the same power passed into all disciples on whom they might choose to confer the privilege. We cannot suppose any of the New Testament authors to have been excluded from this class; and must therefore believe, that every word of the Christian canon was composed under the influence of the Uttering Spirit. This argument is proposed in the following words, by Dr. Tattershall, in his published sermon on the "Nature and Extent of the Right of Private Judgment."

"The Scriptures have been already proved . . ." to be a true and authentic history; one of the principal facts of which history is the outpouring of the gift of the Holy Spirit upon the disciples of Christ. I take, therefore, as an example, the Gospel of St. Matthew, and reason as follows:—I learn, from the history, that Christ's disciples were inspired by the Holy Ghost; among this number was St. Matthew; therefore St. Matthew was inspired; and, consequently, that which he wrote, under this influence of inspiration, is to be regarded as the Word of God. Whereas, on the other hand, if St. Matthew was not inspired, the history relates that which is not true, and the credibility of the whole sacred history is at once destroyed: and, with it, both the Church, and also Christianity itself, must fall to the ground ††.

Now to convey, at the outset, a distinct idea of the reason why this argument does not convince me, let me say, that I believe St. Matthew to have been inspired; but I do not believe him to have been infallible. I am sure that he nowhere

† Acts ii. 1-4.

†† 2 Cor. xiii. 10.

puts forth any such claim: and if he does not affirm it himself, I know not who can affirm it for him. Indeed, to the advocates of this doctrine it must seem strange, that even St. John the Divine, instead of bearing down all doubt by his overwhelming claims, should so modestly and carefully conciliate the belief of his readers, by appealing to his own human opportunities of information: "and he that saw it have record, and his record is true."\* "this is the disciple that testified of these things, and wrote these things:†" and that St. Luke should content himself with saying, at the commencement of his Gospel, that its materials were furnished by those who "from the beginning were eye-witnesses.‡"

Everything in this argument clearly depends on the meaning which we are to attach to the phrases "Holy Ghost,"—"Inspiration,"—"Spirit of God," and other forms of expression employed to denote this peculiar influence. What, according to the Scriptures, were the appropriate functions of this Divine Agent? and are we to include among them an exemption of those on whom its power fell from all possibility of error, in narration, in reasoning, in expectation, in speculative and practical doctrine? In short, do the sacred writers represent this Holy Spirit as conferring intellectual infallibility?

Now the original account of the descent of the Holy Spirit certainly implies nothing of the kind. § The gift of Tongues, which St. Paul, though possessed of it in the highest degree, places in the lowest rank of spiritual gifts,¶ and which he expressly discriminates from "the word of wisdom," and "the word of knowledge,"\*\* is the only preternatural effect there ascribed to this new influence. Other passages descriptive of this agency equally fall short of this claim of infallibility. We read, for example, †† that by the direction

of the Apostles, seven persons were to be selected from the general body of believers, who were to be men "full of the Holy Ghost, and wisdom,"—the two attributes being distinguished. It must be supposed, too, that the qualifications demanded of these officers had some proportionate reference to the duties assigned. These duties were simply the management of the society's financial accounts, and the distribution of its eleemosynary funds. When it is said that John the Baptist should "be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb,"\* are we to understand, that from earliest infancy he was infallible?—he who, in the very midst of his ministry, sent to Jesus for information on this question, "Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?†" —a question, be it observed, which implies doubt on the great subject-matter of the Baptist's whole mission. Perhaps, however, it will be admitted that there are inferior degrees of this inspiration; so that passages like this may be found, in which the phrases denoting it are used in a lower sense. But, it will be said, in its highest intensity it cannot be so restricted, and is even distinctly affirmed to involve infallibility. The operations of the spirit of God are distributed by theologians into two classes,—the extraordinary, experienced by the apostles, and exempting them from liability to error,—the ordinary, which are assured to all true disciples, and whose office implies no further illumination of the understanding, than is useful for the sanctification of the heart. Now if this statement and division be really true and scriptural, we shall doubtless find Christ and his Apostles separating these promises of divine influence into two corresponding sets, keeping things so different, clear of all confusion, and fully as exact in this "discerning of spirits," as their modern disciples. But so far is this from being the case, that between the greater spirit of the twelve apostles, and the less spirit of the general

\* John vii. 39.

† ver. 40.

‡ Luke 1.

§ Acts ii. 1-4.

¶ 1 Cor. xii. 30.

\* 1 Cor. xii. 9, 10.

\*\* 1 Cor. xii. 8, 9.

†† Acts i. 1-4.

‡ 1 Cor. xii. 13, 14, 17, 28.

\* Luke 15.

† Matt. ix. 13.

church, no distinction whatever is drawn, nor any between the *intellectual infallibility* which was to admit the apostles, and the *spiritual sanctification* promised to the faithful multitude of all ages. Nay, it so happens, that the most unlimited expressions relating to the subject occur in such connections, that they cannot be confined to the apostles, but obviously apply to all private Christians. For instance, shall we say that our Lord's promise of the "Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost," explained by the remarkable synonym which he appended, "*the spirit of truth*" which should "*teach them all things,*" and "*lead them into all truth*"—implies universal illumination of the understanding? Close at hand is a clause forbidding the interpretation, by spreading the promise over all ages of the church: "I will pray the Father, and he will give you another Comforter, *that he may abide with you for ever, even the spirit of truth;*"\* and the expression is accordingly quoted by Dr. Warlaw, as descriptive of the common operations of the spirit.† Again, St. John in his first *General Epistle* (addressed of course to the whole church) says, "Ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things;"‡ Take then the strongest and most unqualified expressions on this subject, and if they prove the infallibility of the apostles, they prove the same of all private Christians. Or, take those which show sanctification to be the characteristic office of the Holy Spirit with respect to the general church, and you show that this also was its agency on the Apostles.

One or two texts are occasionally adduced in defence of this doctrine; their paucity and inapplicability show how slight is the scripture foundation on which it rests. By far the most remarkable of these is found in 2 Tim. iii. 16. "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable

\* 2 Cor. xii. 13, 14.

† *Dissertation on the principal Points of the Socinian Controversy*, p. 241. B. vi. xi.  
: 1 John. i. 7.

for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." Now observe,

1. That the verb *is*, which constitutes the whole affirmation here, has nothing corresponding to it in the Greek, and is put in by the English translators. Of course the sentence requires a verb *somewhere*, but the place of its insertion depends on the discretion of the translator. Baxter, Grotius, and other critics, accordingly render the passage thus: "All scripture, given by inspiration of God, is also profitable," &c. The Apostle has already been reminding Timothy of the importance of those scriptures with which he had been acquainted from his youth, to his *personal faith*; and he now adds, that they are *also* useful for his *public teaching*. He therefore simply says that whatever scriptures are given by inspiration of God, are thus profitable.

2. Since Paul first speaks generally of those scriptures with which Timothy had been familiar from his youth, and then proceeds to select from these a certain class, as given by inspiration of God, his description extends to no portion of the New Testament, and only to some writings of the Old. The purpose for which he recommends them, indicates what books were in his thoughts. As they were to aid Timothy in his public duty of convincing his countrymen that Jesus was the Messiah, he refers to those books which had sustained the expectation of a Messiah,—the Jewish Prophets. "The whole extent of his doctrine, I conceive to have been expressed by the Apostle Peter thus: 'prophecy came not in old time by the will of men; but holy men of God spake, moved by the Holy Spirit;'\*—that those also who recorded these *speeches*, wrote by the Holy Spirit; that, in addition to the superhuman message, there was a superhuman report of it, is a notion which no trace can be found in the apostolic writings. The whole amount, therefore, of the Apostle's doctrine is this; that the prophets had a prefer-

\* 2 Pet. i. 21.



natural knowledge of future events; and that their communications were recorded in the prophetic books. By the admission of these points, the theory of *inspired composition* obviously gains nothing.\*

No appeal can be more unfortunate for the advocate of plenary inspiration, than to the writings of the great apostle of the Gentiles. Not a trace can be found in them of the cold, oracular dignity,—the bold, authoritative enunciation,—the transcendental expression, equally above argument and passion, in which conscious and confessed infidelity would deliver its decisions. All the natural faculties of the man are shed forth, with most vehement precipitation, on every page. He pleads with his disciples, as if kneeling at their feet. He withstands Peter to the face,—though no less inspired than himself,—because he was to be blamed for unsound sentiments and inconsistent conduct. He hurries so eagerly, and sinks so deep into an illustration, that scarcely can he make a timely retreat. He too quickly seizes an analogy to apply it with exactitude and precision. And above all, he is incessantly engaged in *reasoning*: and by that very act, he selects as his own the common human level of address,—generously submits his statements to the verdict of our judgment, and leaves that judgment free to accept or to reject them. Nor is it on mere subordinate points that he contents himself with this method, which, by challenging search, abandons infallibility. The great controversies of the infant church, which involved the whole future character of Christianity, which decided how far it should annihilate Polytheism, and how much preserve of Judaism, the apostle

\* Travelling to repeat what I have already said, in a former paper, viz. I have contrasted myself with a brief sketch of the nature of the revealed text. It is discussed in a final paper in your issue, under the first Lecture to the "Baptists of Religious Liberty." I would only add, that I do not even believe the *word* *revelation* as belonging, not to the production, but to the nature, of the revelation. See the Lecture in New Testament, "In N. Testament" Lecture 2. The Bible is *not* *revelation*, but a *revelation*. (Lecture in paper, vol. 1, p. 104 & 105.)

of the Gentiles boldly considers to reasoning; and his writings are composed chiefly of *arguments*, protective of the Gospel from compromise with Idolatry on the one hand, and slavery to the Law on the other.

Nor is this denied by any instructed Divine of any church. In insisting "upon the duty of professed Christians to abstain from all compliance with the idolatrous practices of the heathens around them," says Dr. Tatterson, "St. Paul, even though an inspired Apostle, does not proceed upon the mere dictum of authority, but appeals to the *reasons* of those to whom he writes; and calls upon them to reflect upon the inconsistency of such conduct, with the nature of their Christian profession. In fact, he produces *arguments*, and desires them to weigh the reasons which he assigns, and see whether they do not fully sustain the conclusion which he draws from them. 'I speak,' says he, 'as to *wise men*, *JUDGES* ye what I say.'"

If then the Apostle wrote his letters under inspiration, have we not here direct authority to sit in judgment on the productions of inspiration, or the contents of the word of God; not merely to learn what is said, but to consider its inherent reasonableness and truth? No one, indeed, can state more forcibly than Dr. Tatterson himself the principle, of which this conclusion is only a particular case. "When I reason with an opponent," says he, "I do not invade his acknowledged right of private judgment, nor do I require of him to surrender that judgment to me. I am, in fact, doing the precise *contrary* of this. I am, by the very act of *reasoning*, both *acknowledging* his right of judgment, and making an *appeal* to it." †

To acknowledge the right of judgment, is to forego the claim of infallibility, and to concede the privilege of dissent,

\* *Speech on the Nature and Extent of the Right of Private Judgment*, p. 285.

† P. 219.

and thus frankly does St. Paul deal with me. Vainly do his modern exponents attempt to make him the instrument of their own assumptions. To appeal to my reason, and then, if I cannot see the force of the proof, to hold me up as a blasphemer and a rebel against the word of God, is an inconsistency, of which only the degenerate followers of the great Apostle could be guilty. His writings disown, in every page, the injurious claims which would confer on them an artificial authority, to the ruin of their true power and beauty. In order to show the absolute divine truth of all that may be written by an inspired man, it is not enough to establish the *presence* of inspiration, you must prove also the *absence* of everything else. And this can never be done with any writings made up, like the Apostle's, of a scarce-broken tissue of argument and illustration. It is clear that he was not forbidden to reason and expound, to speculate and refute, to seek access, by every method of persuasion, to the minds he was sent to evangelize, to appeal, at one time to his interpretation of prophecy, at another to the visible glories of creation, and again to the analogies of history. Where could have been his zeal, his freshness, his versatility of address, his self-abandonment, his various success, if his natural faculties had not been left to unembarrassed action? And the moment you allow free action to his intelligence and conscience, you inevitably admit the possibilities of error, which are inseparable from the operations of the human mind. To grant that Paul reasons, and he staided at the idea that he may reason incorrectly,—to admit that he speculates, and yet be shocked at the surmise that he may speculate falsely,—to praise his skill in illustration, yet shrink in horror when something less apposite is pointed out, is an *obvious* inconsistency. The human understanding cannot perform its functions without taking its share of the chances of error; nor can a critic of its productions have any perception of their truth and exor-

lence, without conceding the possibility of fallacies and faults. We must give up our admiration of the Apostles as men, if we are to listen to them always as oracles of God.

But I must proceed to my last argument, which is a plain one, founded upon facts, open to every one who can read his Bible. I state it in the words of Mr. Thirlwall: "the discrepancies found in the Gospels compel us to admit that the superintending control of the Spirit was not exerted to exempt the sacred writings altogether from errors and inadvertencies;"\* may, he speaks of "the more rigid theory of inspiration" having been so long "abandoned by the learned on account of the insuperable difficulties opposed to it by the discrepancies found in the Gospels, that it would now be a waste of time to attack it."†

I heard it affirmed on Wednesday evening, that, in the sacred writings, no case can possibly occur of self-contradiction or erroneous statement, that the very idea of inspiration is utterly opposed to all supposition of the presence of error; that the occurrence of such a blemish would prove, that the writer was not, or under the immediate teaching and superintendence of Almighty God as to be preserved from error; or, in other words, that he was not inspired, that the erroneous passage must indeed be rejected, but, with it, the whole work in which it is found, as destitute of divine authority. I have brought Mr. Thirlwall to confront the question of fact, let me quote Dr. Paley in relation to this statement of principle. "I know not," he says, "a more rash or unphilosophical conduct of the understanding, than to reject the substance of a story by reason of some difficulties in the circumstances with which it is related. The usual character of *human testimony* (Dr. Paley is discussing the discrepancies between the several Gospels), is, substantial truth under circumstantial variety." "On the contrary, a

\* *S. M. Thirlwall's Critical Essay on the Gospels of St. Luke*. Introduction by the Rev. Mr. G. G. p. 20.  
† *Id.* p. 20 and 21.

close and minute agreement induces the suspicion of conspiracy and fraud.\* If both these statements be true, the phenomena of inspiration would be identical with those of confederacy and fraud. I estimate the Scriptures far too highly to hesitate, for a moment, alone pointing out to your notice certain small variations and inconsistencies, utterly destructive of the doctrine of plenary inspiration; but absolutely confirmatory, in some instances, of the veracity of the historians, and, in all, compatible with it. Our faith seems the insinuation, that these sacred writings require "any fartherance from the heasted understanding of man."

3. The different Evangelists are at variance with each other, with respect to the calling of the first Apostles. They differ with respect to the time, the place, the order, e.g.

First, as to time; Matthew† represents the imprisonment of John the Baptist as the occasion of our Lord's beginning to preach, and as preceding the call of any Apostles.

John‡ represents Andrew and Simon, Philip and Nathanael, as called,—the miracle at Cana as wrought, a Passover as attended at Jerusalem,—a residence of Jesus and his disciples in the rural district of Judaea, as going on, and then adds, "for John was not yet cast into prison."

Next, as to place; according to Matthew and Mark§ Andrew and Peter are called by the Lake of Galilee, according to John, in Judaea.

And as to order, Matthew and Mark represent the two pairs of brothers, as successively called—first, Andrew and Peter; then, after a short interval, James and John.

Luke, making no mention of Andrew, represents the others as simultaneously called.

John represents Andrew as called with himself, and Peter, as subsequently called, through the instrumentality of his brother Andrew. Of James (though affirmed by the other

Evangelists to have been his own companion in the call), he is silent.

The three first writers not being present, it is nothing wonderful that they are less accurate than the fourth, who was.

2. The three denials of Peter, as recorded by the first, third, and fourth Evangelists, will be found inconsistent in their minute circumstances. The denials are uttered,

according to Matthew,*	{	1. to a maid
	{	2. to another maid
	{	3. to those who stood by.
according to Luke,†	{	1. to a maid.
	{	2. to a man.
	{	3. to another man.
according to John,‡	{	4. to the maid who admitted him
	{	2. to the officers of the palace.
	{	3. to a man (a relation of Malchus).

3. Matthew§ and Luke, state, that one Simon bore our Lord's cross to Calvary, John¶, that Jesus bore it himself.

4. The inscription annexed by Pilate to the cross is given differently by every one of the Evangelists.

Matthew :\*\* "This is Jesus the king of the Jews."

Mark :†† "The king of the Jews."

Luke :‡‡ "This is the king of the Jews."

John :§§ "Jesus of Nazareth, the king of the Jews."

5. Matthew, and Mark¶¶, state that our Lord on the cross was reviled by both the malefactors, but Luke\*\*\* affirms that when one of them was guilty of this shocking

* Matt. xxv. 34-40	+ Luke. xiv. 55-62	‡ John. ev. 13-25
§ Mark. 16	¶ Luke. 24	** Matt. 27
†† Mark. 16	‡‡ Luke. 24	§§ John. 19
¶¶ Matt. 27	¶¶ Mark. 16	*** Luke. 23

\* By Kings of Jerusalem, part III. ch. 1.

† Matt. 16. 7-11. ‡ John. 6. 51. § Mark. 1. 16-20. ¶ Luke. 9. 10, 11.

mockery, he was rebuked by the other ; and that the latter received the well-known assurance, " this day shalt thou be with me in Paradise."

6. The last discrepancy which I shall mention, has reference to the final Passover, and its relation to the day of crucifixion. But in order to understand the case, and indeed to read with intelligence the whole series of events connected with the crucifixion and resurrection, it is necessary to bear in mind the following facts :—

(a.) That the Jewish day commenced in the evening, and was reckoned from sunset to sunset.

(b.) That the Jewish Sabbath was the seventh day of the week, and extended from six o'clock on Friday evening, to the same time on Saturday.

(c.) That at the Passover, the paschal lamb was slain at the end of one Jewish day, and eaten immediately, i. e., at the commencement of the next, or about six or seven in the evening. The three hours before sunset, during which it was prepared, were called *preparation of the Passover*, and belonged to the fourteenth of the month, while the hours after sunset, during which it was eaten, belonged to the fifteenth. The phrase, *preparation of the Sabbath*, was used in like manner, to denote the three hours before sunset every Friday.

(d.) The Passover being fixed to the fifteenth of the month, and that a lunar month, necessarily moved over all the days of the week, and might fall, of course, into coincidence with the weekly Sabbath.

(e.) The feast of unleavened bread was a festival of seven days' duration, the first day of which coincided with that on which the Passover was eaten, following of course that on which it was killed.

These things being premised, we are prepared to notice the points on which the Evangelists agree, and those in which they disagree, in their accounts of the crucifixion, and its

connected events. They all agree in assigning the same distinguishing incidents of our Lord's personal history to the *five great days of the week* most interesting to Christians, *viz.*, to the Thursday the last supper; to the Friday, the crucifixion; to the Saturday, the sleep in the sepulchre; to the Sunday, the resurrection. But about the position of the Jewish Passover upon these days, they singularly differ; St. John fixing it on the Friday evening, and making it therefore coincide with the weekly Sabbath, the other three fixing it on the Thursday evening, and so following it up by the Sabbath. The variance is the more interesting from its influence on our views of the last supper; which, according to the three first Evangelists *was the Passover*, according to the fourth, *was not the Passover*. The institution of the Communion, as a Christian transformation of the Jewish Festival rests entirely on the former of these narratives. St. John is altogether silent respecting it. Yet it was he who leaned on Jesus' bosom, and stood beneath his cross.

Now what is the just inference from such discrepancies? Is it that the writers were incompetent reporters of the main facts? Not so; for there are few biographers, however well-informed, whose testimony, produced in circumstances at all parallel, would not yield, on the application of as severe a test, inconsistencies more considerable. Is it that they are not veracious? Not so; for not a trace of self-interest is discernible in these cases. Is it that they were not inspired? Not so; for the transition they underwent from peasants to apostles, from dragging the lake to regenerating the world, is the sublimest case of inspiration (except one) with which God has refreshed the nations. But it is this; that they were not intellectually infallible.

I have now endeavoured to give some idea of two different ways of regarding the Christian records.

1. They possess an *internal and self-evidence*, in their own moral beauty and consistency, and the unmanageable

perfection of the great Son of God, whom they bring to life before us. With this evidence, which is open to every pure mind and true heart,—which speaks to the conscience like a voice of God without, conversing with the spirit of God within, all those may be content, who think that, to accept Christ as the image of Deity, and the authoritative model of *Truly*, is to be a Christian.

II. Those, however, who think that, in order to be Christians, we must hold one only doctrinal creed, containing many things hard to understand, and harder to believe, are aware that nothing short of a divine infallibility can prevail with us to receive a system so repugnant to our nature. And as this is incapable of self-proof, they appeal chiefly to the *external evidence and foreign attestation* which belong to the Christian records; beginning with the historical method, they endeavour to show,

(1.) That we have the original words of the Gospel witnesses (*authenticity*);

(2.) That, this being the case, we have the very Words of God (*plenary inspiration*).

Now let me detain you by one reflection on these two methods. Suppose each, in turn, to prove insufficient, as a basis of Christianity, the other remaining firm; and consider what consequences will result.

If the internal or self-evidence be inadequate, (which our objectors must suppose, for it cannot, they admit, prove their creeds,) then every one must seek a foundation for his faith in the other. He must satisfy himself, in *facture*, of the personal authority of the books in the Canon; a purely literary inquiry, and one of extraordinary labour, even to those who enjoy every advantage for its prosecution. In order to be saved, doctrines must be embraced, requiring for their proof an inspiration, which does not exist in the New Testament writings, except on the supposition of their *apostolic origin*. The maintenance, then, of this point, is

the necessary prelude to all saving faith, this duty lies on the uttermost threshold of our acceptance with the Giver of salvation. So that God hangs the eternal welfare of every man on an investigation so critical and elaborate, that a whole life of research is not too much to understand it, and the most familiar with its details are, by no means, the most unreservedly confident of its results; an investigation which assigns a certain date to each book, as the lowest limit of security, and says, if you dare to fix this letter or that Gospel upon a time later by half a century, you are lost for ever.

But may not the young and the ignorant trust in the guidance of a teacher? In his sermon on private judgment, Dr. Pattershall treats of this question, and lays down the following rule:—"In the case of adults, such reliance is justifiable *so far, and no further*, than it is unavoidable. So far as God has not given the ability, or the opportunity of investigation, so far he will not require it: but in whatever degree any person has the power and opportunity of examining the will of God for himself, in that degree,—whether he exercise his privilege or not,—God will hold him responsible. As to the liability to fall into error,—beyond all doubt, such liability exists, whether we submit to the guidance of any teacher, or exercise our own private judgment." \* How, let me ask, can we avoid drawing the following inferences?

(1.) That the greater part of mankind must be held to be in a condition rendering this reliance on a teacher "unavoidable."

(2.) For this reliance, then, such portion of mankind must be held justified in the sight of God.

(3.) But such dependence makes them liable to err; and must, in fact, have led countless multitudes into error.

(4.) If these errors are fatal to salvation, then God

\* p. 217, 218.

inflicts eternal torments for the inevitable results of a justifiable act.

(3.) If these errors are not fatal to salvation, then there is salvation out of the faith.

The result, then, of this external system is, that you may be saved on either of two conditions; that you belong to the orthodox literary sect, and hold the antiquarian opinions of the priests; or, that you belong to the ignorant, and can find out the right persons to whom to say, "I will believe, as you believe."

Reverse the supposition. Conceive that in the process, becoming ever more searching, of historical inquiry, the other and external method should be found to be inadequate to the maintenance of its superstructure; what would be the fate of Christianity, trusted solely to its self-evidence? I will imagine even the worst: and suppose that the first three Gospels are shown to be not personally authentic, not the independent productions of three apostolic men; but a compilation of very composite structure, consisting of (we will say) some thirty fragments, obviously from different hands, and all of anonymous origin. In such case, the individual testimony of eye-witnesses being gone, the whole edifice of external proof which supports a dogmatic Christianity, must fall. But the self-evidence of a moral and spiritual Christianity, of a Christianity that clings to the person and spirit of Christ, is not only unharmed, but even incalculably increased. For how often, and how truly, has it been argued, that the mere inspection of the four Gospels is enough to prove the reality of Christ; that the invention, and consistent maintenance of a character so unapproachable, so destitute of all archetype beneath the skin, so transcending the fictions of the noblest genius, and so unlike them, are things utterly incredible, were they supposed even of one writer: and that, for the same divine usage to gleam forth

with coincident perfection from four, belongs to the highest order of impossibilities. What then should we say, if these four were resolved into thirty? The coalescence of so many fragmentary records, could no more make a Christ, than the upsetting of an artist's colours could paint a Raphael. Whatever then becomes of Church Christianity, that which lives in Christ, and has the power of love in man, is everlasting as the soul.

We are warned that "the Bible is *not* a shifting, mutable, uncertain thing." We echo the warning, with this addition, that Christianity is a progressive thing, not a doctrine dead, and embalmed in creeds, but a spirit living and impregnated in Christ. Two things are necessary to a revelation: its record, which is permanent; its readers, who perpetually change. From the medium of the lesson and the mind on which it drops, starts up the living religion that saves the soul within, and acts on the theatre of the world without. Each eye sees what it can, and what it needs; each age develops a new and nobler idea from the immortal page. We are like children, who, in reading a book above their years, pass innocently and unconsciously over that which is not suited to their state. In this divine tale of Christ, every class and every period seizes, in succession, the views and emotions which most meet its wants. It is with Scripture as with nature. The everlasting heavens spread above the gaze of Herschel, as they did over that of Abraham; yet the latter saw but a spangled dome, the former a forest of innumerable worlds. To the mind of this profound observer, there was as much a *new creation*, as if those heavens had been, at the time, called up and spread before his sight. And thus it is with the Word of God. As its power and beauty develop themselves continually, it is as if Heaven were writing it now, and leaf after leaf dropped directly from the skies. Nor is there any heaven like that,

which denies this progressive unfolding of divine wisdom, shuts up the spirit of heaven in the verbal metaphysics and scholastic tricks of a half-barbarous period,—treats the inspiration of God as a dry piece of antiquity, and cannot see that it commences afresh with the soul of every age, and sheds, from the living fount of truth, a guidance ever new.

## NOTES.

### A.

#### *On the Improved Version*

Great allowance must perhaps be made for the clergymen who persist, after repeated expostulation, in their assumption that the Improved Version is an unambiguous exposition of Unitarian theology. The convenience of limiting their studies, for the most part, to a single work, and the inconvenience of dispersing with the profane labours of Dr. Nares, and Archbishop Magee, whose hostile criticisms furnish the orthodox divine with various pretexts to the book, might be deemed our surprise at the tenacious adherence to this ground of attack. The advantage too of giving fresh currency to the popular notion, that some dreadful production exists, concerning unmentionable impieties, and constituting the 'Unitarian Bible,' is undeniable. It is evident that the utility of fostering this impression is by no means overlooked: for after strong exertions and contemplations common to a very few passages of the Improved Version the appearance, to an unlearned audience, of falsifications of the word of God, I have heard it said, that these cases are but a *small sample of a system*, which might be illustrated to an indefinite extent from every page. As there are not, on an average, more than two variations in a page from Archbishop Newcome, the change must, in an incalculable majority of instances, fall on *his*.

I am at a loss, however, to perceive even any contraband advantage to be gained by the rash statement of Mr. Byrd; that every Unitarian minister is as much bound to uphold the criticism and interpretation of the Improved Version, as the Established Clergy to maintain the Thirty-nine Articles. A clergyman, it is known, signs the articles, and solemnly contracts to preach in conformity with them: a criticism among Unitarians may never see the Improved

Version, or bear its name. During a five years' course of study at the college where I received my education for the ministry, I do not remember any mention of it in the theological classes, and only two in the Greek classes: both of which were condemnatory; one, of the introduction of the English indefinite article to indicate, in certain cases, the absence of the definite article in the original; the other, of the rendering of the preposition *καὶ*, with the gerundive, by the word "for." The fact that most ministers of our persuasion subscribe to the British and Foreign Unitarian Association, which has succeeded to the property in the Improved Version, and continues to circulate it, no more makes them responsible for its deficiencies than a contribution to the Bible Society makes a clergyman accountable for the forgery of the "heavenly water-serpent." The one aids in distributing a possibly defective, the other a certainly interpolated, copy of the Christian records. Let us apply another test to this impudent parallel between the established clergy, and the Unitarian ministers. In the United States of America, no one, I presume, could take holy orders in the Episcopal church, without pledging his assent to the Thirty-nine Articles, and should he cease to approve of them, his ordination vow would require him to resign his preferment. But in that country are hundreds of Unitarian ministers, who know nothing of the Improved Version; and would be as much astonished to be told that they were bound by it, as would Dr. Tappan to hear that he must answer for the Oxford Tracts.

But the mere fact, that within a year after the publication of this work, a Unitarian divine, a subscriber to the Unitarian society, in a Unitarian periodical, submitted it to a criticism far more searching and elaborate than that which an opinion sharpened by theological hostility is now able to produce, is sufficient to set on its true light the statement which I have quoted. I beg to call the attention of our Reverend opponents to the following enumeration of the points, to which the censures of the Reviewer (Dr. Carpenter) are directed.

- (1.) The selection of Newman's Revision, instead of the authorized version, as the basis.
- (2.) The departure, and without any intelligible rule, from Griesbach's text, which, in the introduction, had been mentioned in a way to excite the expectation of its universal adoption. Of large departures, a complete table is given.
- (3.) The neglect of proper acknowledgment and defence of these departures.
- (4.) The professed employment of brackets for no purpose (to

indicate words which, according to Griesbach, were probably, though not certainly, to be expunged,) and the actual use of them for another; as, for example, in the introduction of St. Matthew's Gospel, which is thus enclosed.

(5.) The use of italics (intended to indicate doubtful authority) and not adequate evidence of doubtful authority, and in violation of the approved intention to repudiate critical conjecture. And in particular, the use of this type in the introduction to St. Luke's gospel: which "the evidence is far too little to justify;" and in the introduction to St. Matthew's gospel. Both these examples are considered by the reviewer as instances of *conjectural criticism*.

(6.) The unaccountable license allowed in general to conjectural emendation of the text; of which particular cases are adduced, as the transposition of verses, John i. 13, 18; and, in a lower sense of the word *conjecture*, the omission of *ἀπὸ τοῦ κειμένου*, Rom. vi. 25; and the error 2 Tim. iii. 16.

(7.) The departures from the received text without notice. Of these departures, a complete table is given.

(8.) The departures from Newman's Revision, without sufficient notice; of these, a list was given, and a synoptical table has since been published in the appendix to Dr. Carpenter's reply to the "unanswered" Archbishop Magee.

(9.) The use of the English indefinite article, in certain cases, where there is no Greek definite article. For example, the Centurion's exclamation at the crucifixion, Matt. xxvii. 54; in his remarks on which, Mr. Hlyth will perceive that he has been anticipated by the reviewer.

(10.) The introduction of doctrinal notes, which the reviewer thinks ought to have been entirely excluded.\*

The culpable omission of the epithet, "Unitarian," from the description of the "Society for promoting Christian Knowledge," in the title-page of the first edition, has since received the censure of the same friendly but just critic.†

If then, all that is original and "orthodox," in the recent accounts on the Improved Version, be the sarcasm and extravagance; and all that is "condid" and "scholar-like" was long ago anticipated by a Unitarian divine, (to whom Dr. Nares awards the praise of being "the very learned and dispassionate reviewer,") with what propriety

\* See Monthly Repository of Theology and General Literature, 1860, pp. 97, 109, 115, 109, 111, 109, 111, 109, 111.  
† Reply, p. 110.



can we be held responsible, as Unitarian ministers, for the peculiarities of the work, and called upon to defend it from structures, produced at second-hand in Christ Church, and originally published among ourselves. If Dr. Carpenter had been initiated in Liverpool, instead of Bristol, would he have been bound to come forward and answer himself?

I by no means intend to charge the clergyman engaged in this controversy with plagiarism. His great authority, Archbishop Magee, so completely withheld in the manuscript, all notice of his obligations to the Unitarian Reviewer, that a reader may well be excused for not knowing that there was such a person. Nor do I at all doubt the competency of any respected opponents to originate whatever they have advanced, without the aid of any one's previous researches. I simply affirm that they have been anticipated, in a quarter, and to an extent, which disprove their assertions respecting the acceptance and influence of the Improved Version among Unitarians.

For the very same reason, however, that we are not bound to praise the work when faults are fairly attributed to it, neither are we bound to be silent, when merits are unjustly denied it. With the corrections introduced in the fourth and fifth Editions, it has the exclusive honour of accomplishing the following important ends:

- (1.) It exhibits the text of the New Testament in the most perfect state, being conformed to Griesbach's second Edition.
- (2.) It enables the English reader to compare this critical with the Received text, and their variations being noticed.
- (3.) It places before its possessors Archbishop Newcome's Revision, which otherwise would have passed into numerical oblivion. Wherever it departs from its basis, and advances any new translation, the Printer's rendering is given also, so that the whole extent of the innovation is seen, and free choice afforded to the reader.

When the advocates of the common version shall exert themselves to bring it into accordance with the true text, they will attack the Improved Version, from a safer position. But so long as they labour with this heretical work the safe guide, among British translators, of showing what the Evangelists and Apostles really wrote, and content themselves with circulating a version containing words and passages, without mark or warning, which they know to be spurious, and in more than one case, to be ancient theological errors of their creed, they are too much open to the charge of wanting themselves of detected forgeries, to be entitled to read lectures to others, about

reference for the text. Dr. Tattershall enforces well "the duty of preserving the Canon of Scripture in its integrity." Will he permit me to remind him of the duty of preserving it in its simplicity—or is there, in the bare proposal of curtailment of the volume, a simplicity which does not exist in the practical and persevering maintenance of *basan interpretation*?

## B.

### *On the Nazarenes and their Gospel.*

The argument of Mr. Hulseham against the authenticity of Matthew's account of the miracle is convincing appears to me very sound: but Dr. Tattershall's criticism upon it, I do not think to be altogether unnecessary; if at least, and its intricate construction, I have really apprehended the points to which its force is applied. In rejecting the portion of Scripture, Mr. Hulseham relies on the authority of the Nazarenes and Ebionites, or early Hebrew Christians: who are referred by Epiphanius and Jerome, to have used copies of Matthew's Gospel, without the introductory passages it questions.

As the value of this argument depends altogether on the character of the attesting parties and documents, Dr. Tattershall calls in question the respectability of them all; and disparages, first, the ancient Nazarenes and Ebionites themselves, secondly, the testimony, in this matter, of Epiphanius and Jerome; thirdly, the Hebrew gospel or record, which they describe. The positions advanced under every one of these heads, appear to me to be erroneous.

1. Nothing, it is said, can be more incorrect than to admit the claim of the Nazarenes and Ebionites to be regarded as the original, or main body of Hebrew Christians. They were a sect, at first in fact, then divided into two, successors of the Judaizing Christians, and after Adrian's destruction of Jerusalem (A. D. 132), they separated from the general assembly of the Christian Church.

I formerly had conceived that this *question* *sermo* of ecclesiastical history, might be considered as set at rest, since the controversy respecting it between Bishop Horsley and Dr. Priestley, and still more since the production of many additional *bona probantia* from the Fathers, by Richman, Olshausen, Berthold, and others, who have engaged in the inquiry respecting the origin of the three first gospels. It, however, the subject is still open to agitation, the principle on which it must be discussed is evident. If, as Dr. Tattershall states, the Nazarenes and Ebionites did not embrace *in extent*, the main body, and *in time*, the original societies, of



That the Nazarenes and Ebionites were truly "the early Hebrew Christians," must be considered as a fact established by such evidence as the foregoing, if some testimony to the contrary can be produced. That they were the successors of the Judaizing Christians reprobated by St. Paul is an assertion destitute of support, for the opponents who troubled the *Apostle of the Gentiles* were distinguished by their pertinacious adherence, as Hebrews, to *force the Mosaic Law on Gentile converts*; whereas, respecting the Nazarenes, I neither observe, "Divers learned moderns are now convinced of this, and readily allow, that the Jewish believers, who were called Nazarenes, did not impose the burdens of the Law upon others, though they detested them on the descendants of Israel and Abimeon."\*

The application by Epiphanius of the words "*sect*" and "*heresies*" to these believers, does not prove that he was speaking of a *different class* from the early Hebrew Christians, but only that this same class began, in his time, to be spoken of in a different and more disparaging way. He is the first writer, so far as I can discover, who describes them in such reprobative language. On this point Dr. Wall observes: "He styles them heretics, for no other reason than I can see, but that they, together with their Christian faith, continued the use of circumcision and of the Jewish rites; which things St. Paul never blamed in a Jewish Christian, though, in the Gentile Christian, he did; and Epiphanius with the same propriety, as far as I can perceive, might have blamed St. James, bishop of Jerusalem, and those thousands of Jewish Christians with him, concerning whose James said to Paul, 'Thou teachest, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe, and they are all zealous for the law.'"

And as to the Nazarenes and Ebionites separating from the general community of the Christian church, after the second destruction of Jerusalem by Adrian, and thus bringing up on themselves the opprobriums of heresy, the fact, stated in this form, cannot be proved. From the fact, the Hebrew Christians had formed a separate body from the Gentile Christians. But their proportion to the whole body of believers seems to have been for some time too considerable to admit of their being spoken of in contemptuous language. When

Ἰακωβὸς ἄρχιεπίσκοπος καὶ ἀποστόλος πάντων τῶν ἀδελφῶν, ἡ δὲ παράκλησις ἡμετέρας γυναικίσσης. Epiphanius *adv. Hæreses*, lib. 17. c. 16. § 23. Op. Edit. Oxon. 1761, 8vo. p. 346, 347.

\* Jewish Testimonies, &c. Wall's. Edit. 2d. Ed. vol. i. p. 164.

† Actus 13. Wall's Preface to Critical Notes on the N. T. p. 17.

the Gentile portion of the Church became altogether predominant, and especially when it furnished us the *ecclesiastical writers*, (one of whose chief functions it has been, in every age, to call names,) the Jewish heretics, destitute of all pretensions to philosophy, and free from that ambitious speculative spirit out of which orthodox theology arose, were naturally treated with less respect, and regarded as exceptions to that general union which had consolidated itself independently of sects, and at last completely left them out. It does not appear that any further elonga was wrought by Adrian's destruction of Jerusalem, than necessarily followed from his resolution to exclude, from the new colony which he founded there, all who practised Jewish rites. This imperious determination compelled the withdrawal of the Hebrew Christians to the North of Palestine; and they were reprobated by a new church, whose Gentile origin and customs qualified its members (under the Emperor's decree) for settlement on the ancient site.

II. Dr. Tappin's disparages the testimony of the witnesses cited in this cause,—Epiphanius and Jerome, and not without good reason, if there should be sufficient proof, *when the whole case is before us*, of his two allegations, viz.:

First, That Epiphanius contradicts himself; affirming now the completeness, and then the mutilation, of the Gospel in question.

Secondly, That Epiphanius contradicts Jerome; in asserting, *what Jerome does not admit*, the identity of the Ebionite Gospel with that of St. Matthew.

Proving that one and the same work is to be understood as described, by the several titles, "Nazarene Gospel," "Ebionite Gospel," "Gospel according to the Hebrews," "Gospel according to the Twelve Apostles," I would submit that the first of these allegations is more plausible than true, and that the second is wholly untenable.

The contradictory statements of Epiphanius are the following:

(1) "They (i.e. the Nazarenes) have the Gospel of Matthew *not entire* in the Hebrew language among them; for this, truly, is still preserved among them, as it was at first, in Hebrew characters. But I know not whether they have taken away the genealogy from Abraham to Christ."

(2) "In that Gospel which they (i.e. the Ebionites) have called the Gospel according to St. Matthew, which is *not entire and perfect*,

\* Hæres. 31, § 5, as used by Euseb. Hist. lib. 5, c. 25, and by Dr. Tappin, p. 82.

but corrupted and curtailed, and which they call the Hebrew Gospel," &c.\*

The verbal contradiction between these two passages, is so doubtless manifest enough; and in a writer of more accuracy than Epiphanius, might have justified the proposal of Usarben (approved by Jones) to effect a violent reconciliation, by the conjunctive insertion of the negative adverb in the former sentence, which would then describe the document as not wholly perfect. But the looseness of this author's style appears to me sufficient to explain the opposition between the statements, which seem indeed, to look defiance at each other, when brought by force, face to face; but which at the intervals of separate composition, may lay, by no means, irreconcilable. That in the first, Epiphanius designed the phrase "most entire," to be understood with considerable latitude, is evident from the expression of suspicion which instantly follows, that the genuineness might probably be absent. And if the work in question contained a quantity of matter additional to Matthew's Gospel, which it also omitted some of its integral parts, it seems not improbable that the same writer, who with his thoughts running on its redundancy, had at one time called it a most full copy, should at another, when dwelling on its deficiencies, style it an incomplete edition of the first Evangelist. But it is more important to observe, that on the points for which the Editors of the Improved Version adduce the testimony of Epiphanius, viz. to identify the Gospel of Matthew with that of the Nazarenes and Ebionites, and to attest the absence from this book of the story of the miraculous conception, there is here no contradiction whatever. In both passages he states the work to be Matthew's, and in neither, according to Dr. Tattershall, does he say that the first two chapters were wanting. The harmony then, on these, the only points in dispute, is complete.

(2.) "Jerome," it is said, "does not admit the work in question to be the Gospel of St. Matthew," which puts him at variance with Epiphanius. Will Dr. Tattershall permit me to lay before him a passage of Jerome, which has been under his eye recently, for he has quoted a sentence from Jones which occurs on the adjacent page; it runs thus:—"Matthew, also called Levi, who became from a publican an Apostle, was the first who composed a gospel of Christ; and for the sake of those who believed in Christ among the Jews, wrote it in the Hebrew language and letters: but it is uncertain who it was that

\* *Works*, 8vo, t. 13, as cited by Jones, Part II. ch. 25, and by Dr. Tattershall, p. 65.

translated it into Greek. Moreover the Hebrew (copy) itself is to this time preserved in the library of Casanov, which Pagnin, the narrator, with much diligence collected. The Nazarenes, who live in Hama, a city of Syria, and make use of this volume, granted me the favour of writing it out, in which Gospel there is this observable, that whenever the Evangelist either himself cites, or introduces our Saviour as citing, any passage out of the Old Testament, he does not follow the translation of the Seventy, but the Hebrew copies; of which there are these two instances, viz. that "Out of Egypt I have called my son;" and that, "He shall be called a Nazarene." †

Here Jerome, I presume, does admit the Nazarene Gospel to be that of Matthew; and the harmony on this point, between him and Epiphanius is complete.

He who alleges the above contradiction, Dr. Tattershall raises a supposed distance (not amounting to inconsistency) between these two Fathers on another point. From a statement of Jerome, he thinks it may be fairly inferred, that he knew the first two chapters of Matthew's Gospel to be wanting in the Nazarene Gospel. But it is denied that Epiphanius gives any countenance to the notion of their absence. Now I conceive that if this statement be precisely reversed, we shall have the true state of the case before us. Epiphanius gives us testimony to the absence, Jerome to the presence, of these chapters in the Nazarene Gospel.

First, as to Epiphanius. He makes the following statements bearing on this point.

(1.) He says that "the beginning of the (the Ebionite) Gospel was this: 'It came to pass in the days of Herod, the king of Judaea, that John came baptizing with the baptism of repentance in the river Jordan.'" ‡ Is it not evident from this, that the initial event of the narrative was the advent of the Baptist, and that the previous account of the birth of Christ was absent? So, at least, it has been I thence supposed.

(2.) He says in positive terms, "They have taken away the beginning from Matthew, and accordingly began their Gospel, as I have above said, with these words; 'It came to pass, &c.'" It cannot be imagined that this will bear any but the common interpre-

\* *Matth.* iv. 15.

† *Matth.* iv. 15.

‡ *Codex Bezae Cantabrigie* on *Matth.* *Strapp Jones's* translation, I do not think it necessary to quote the words of *Evangelium*. See *Jones* on the *Gospel*, Part II. ch. 25.

§ *Matth.* 23, § 32, quoted by *Jones*, Part II. ch. 25.

¶ *Ibid.*

itions, that the Gospel began with the substance of our Fifth Chapter. The introduction of the miraculous conception after John's mission, would be an incredible derangement of arrangement.\*

(2.) He says, "That Constantine and Caraceras, using this same Gospel of theirs, would prove from the beginning of that Gospel according to Matthew, viz. by its genealogy, that Christ proceeded from the seed of Joseph and Mary." But to what purpose would these heretics have put this construction upon the genealogy, and argued from it the mere humanity of Christ's origin, if it was immediately followed by a section, flatly contradicting what they had been labouring to prove? It is impossible then to get rid of Epiphanius's testimony to the advantage of these chapters.

Secondly, let us turn to Jerome. Dr. Tattershall conceives that because this author speaks of certain men without the spirit and grace of God, as having had some concern in the composition of this gospel, we may conclude that the introductory chapters were wanting from the copy which he used. The inference is not very obvious; and is at once destroyed by the fact, that Jerome's quotations from the Nazarene Gospel, contain passages of Matthew's introductory chapters. In a passage, e.g. which I have noticed above, occur two instances; "Out of Egypt I have called my son," and, "He shall be called a Nazarene."

This discrepancy between these two fathers would have furnished Dr. Tattershall with a more powerful argument against the Editor's note, than any which he has adduced, and have enabled him to show that Jerome, being cited for one purpose, establishes precisely the reverse.

III. Dr. Tattershall adduces in evidence against the worth of the Nazarene Gospel, the absurd chronological mistake in its first sentence, which assigns the Baptist's appearance to the days of Herod, king of Judæa.

On this I have only to observe, that it might have been well to state, that the blunder is commonly attributed to Epiphanius himself, rather than to the Gospel which he cites. Whatever that work may have been, it was produced near the spot where the Herods lived, in times when the remembrance of them was fresh, for the people over whom they reigned, so that a mistake of that magnitude, in its first verse, must be regarded as of improbable occurrence. On the other hand, Epiphanius, it is admitted, had never seen this Gospel, and therefore cited it from hearsay; he wrote in the latter part of the

\* See Eckhelm's *Einleitung* in das N. T. l. § 8, 140, 141, 142, 143.

fourth century, and is remarkable for inaccuracy of every kind, and especially with regard to time. There is then no improbability in the supposition that Epiphanius confounded Herod the king, with Herod the tetrarch, and with the purpose of explanation, inserted a mistake, by adding the words, "King of Judæa." Eckhelm says, "Two different Herods are confounded together, the King Herod under whom John was born, and Herod Antipas, under whom the Baptist publicly appeared, an evident mark of a later annotation or correcting hand, unguided by a knowledge of the true chronology, as contained in Luke, and so substituting one Herod for another."\* For the foregoing reasons, it appears to me that Dr. Tattershall has not, by making his strictures sound, earned the right to retaliate them severe.

The evidence bearing upon the introduction of Luke's Gospel, is much simpler and less confused; and to Dr. Tattershall's estimate of it, no valid objection, I think, can be urged.

### G.

#### *On the Chronological Inaccuracy between the introductory chapters of Matthew, and those of Luke*

In his note on this subject, Dr. Tattershall points out, as an example of carelessness in the Editors of the Improved Version, the following discrepancy between two of their statements. In their note on Matthew i. 16, they say, "If it be true, as Luke relates, that Jesus was entering upon his thirtieth year, in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius;" and in their note on Luke i. 4, they say, "The Evangelist (Luke) expressly affirms that Jesus had completed his thirtieth year," &c. It would have been only just to add, that in the more recent editions of the Improved Version, this inconsistency does not exist. The fourth edition (1817) lies before me, and in it the latter note stands thus: "The Evangelist expressly affirms that Jesus had entered upon, or, as Grotius understands it, had completed his thirtieth year," &c.

To all the other strictures contained in Dr. Tattershall's note,\* the

\* *Einleitung* in das N. T. l. § 8, 31, Leipzig, 1823. See also *Evil* copy of the German version of the Gospels, by Apollonius Varon, Note A. and V. i. *Varon*, N. S. 1837.

Catholic Editors" seems to me to be justly liable. The inaccuracy of their chronology was long ago detected, by more friendly critics than the present assailants, and sound calculations of the dates of our Lord's birth, and ministry, were instituted and published by Dr. Carpenter, in the admirable dissertation prefixed to his "Apostolical Harmony of the Gospels." Not being aware of any method, at all satisfactory, by which the notes in the "Improved Version," referring to this point, can be defended, I do not profess to understand why they appear again and again without remark or correction, in the successive editions of that work.

Dr. Taiterfall, I perceive, adopts the usual mode of reckoning the chronology of Matthew and Luke, and supposes that the reign of Tiberius must be reckoned, not from his accession to the dignity of Emperor, on the death of Augustus, but from his previous association with Augustus, in the tribunitial authority. Wholly as this explanation has been adopted, it cannot be denied that it has been invented to suit the case, that such a mode of reckoning would never have been thought of, had it not been for this discrepancy between the two Evangelists; and that it is not easy to say out of the evidence which heings in all hypothesis, viz., that if true, it removes the difficulty which it was designed to explain. Even the industry of Lardner has failed to present us with any instance in which a Roman Historian has reckoned the reign of Tiberius, from this association with his predecessor, or with any distinct note that such a mode of computation was ever employed. And it is notorious that all the Christian Fathers calculated the fifthth year of Tiberius from the death of Augustus. Should Dr. Taiterfall be in possession of any evidence in support of this mode of reckoning more satisfactory than that which has hitherto been adduced, he would render an important service to biblical literature by producing it.

## D.

It is so universally understood that we are indebted to Mr. Taiterfall for the admirable translation of Schlegelmacher's Essay, that I conceive there can be no impropriety in speaking of the work as his; though his name does not appear in the title-page—a circum-

\* This was misquod in Dr. Taiterfall, p. 114. The words in the end of the third paragraph should be thus: "Hinc deest Evangelium, quod est in Evangelio, quod est in Evangelio, quod est in Evangelio, quod est in Evangelio."

stance of which I was not aware, till making this extract for the press. The whole note from which are taken the words in the Lecture, is as follows:—"The arguments by which Hug attempted to reconcile the two Evangelists on the residence of Joseph, are extremely slight and unsatisfactory. He admits that St. Matthew supposes Bethlehem to have been Joseph's usual dwelling-place. But he asks, was St. Matthew wrong? This, however, is not the question, but only whether he is consistent with St. Luke. Now, nothing can be more evident than that, according to the account of the latter, Joseph was a total stranger at Bethlehem. Bethlehem was indeed, as Hug remarks, in *one house* his own city, but clearly not in the sense that Matthew's account supposes. Here, too, therefore, Schlegelmacher's position seems to remain unshaken." (See note on p. 11, of Translation of Schlegelmacher's Critical Essay on St. Luke's Gospel.)

## LECTURE III.

### CHRISTIANITY NOT THE PROPERTY OF CRITICS AND SCHOLARS; BUT THE GIFT OF GOD TO ALL MEN

BY REV. JOHN HAMILTON D.D.

FOR GOD WHO COMMANDED THE LIGHT TO SHINE OUT OF DARKNESS,  
HATH SHINED IN OUR HEARTS: TO GIVE THE LIGHT OF HIS KNOW-  
LEDGE OF THE GOSPEL OF GOD IN THE FACE OF JESUS CHRIST.

1864. 11. 4

No fact can be more extraordinary than that a Revelation from God should give rise to endless disputes among men, that "light" should produce the effects of "darkness," causing confusion and doubt. A Revelation in which nothing is revealed! A Revelation that excites the most bitter controversies upon every question and interest it touches! A Revelation that perplexes mankind with the most uncertain speculations, and splits the body of believers into sects and divisions too numerous to be told! A Revelation in which nothing is fixed, in which every point is debated and disputed from the character of God to the character of sin! A Revelation which is so little of a Revelation, that after nearly two thousand years the world is wrangling about what it means: this surely is a fact that demands an explanation, which should make the Believer pause and ask whether he may not be guilty, by some dogmatism about what he calls essentials, of casting this discredit upon Revelation, making the very word a mockery to the Unbeliever, who inquires in simplicity

"what is *revealed*? I find you disputing about everything and arguing about nothing;" and to whom the Believer is certainly bound to render an account of this strange state of things, before he condemns his infidelity. Can any two ideas be more opposed, more directly inconsistent, than Christianity considered as a Revelation, a gift of a *revelation* from God, and Christianity as it exists in the world—the most dark and perplexed, the most vexed and agitated of all subjects, no two parties agreeing where the light is, or what the light is, or who has it? Surely if Christianity is a Revelation, the things it has *revealed* must constitute the *essence* of the Revelation, and not the things which it has left *unrevealed*. Surely the illumination from God must be in the clear Truths communicated, and not in the doubtful controversies excited. Surely it is a mockery of words to call that a Revelation upon which there is no agreement even among those who accept the Revelation. A Revelation is a certainty, and not an uncertainty; and therefore we must strike out of the class of revealed truths every doctrine that is disputed among Christians. Many of these doctrines, we may possess other and natural means of determining; but it is clear that that which is so far *unrevealed* as to be constantly debated among believers themselves, cannot yet be *revealed* by God. Now the Unity of God is not one of these debated points. All Christians regard it as revealed; and therefore it remains as a part of the Revelation. But the doctrine of the Trinity, an addition to the Unity, and as some think a mode of the divine Unity, is a disputed point, it does not manifest itself to all believers; it does not make a part of the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ; Christ's life would teach no man that there are three persons in the Godhead—neither would Christ's words: the doctrine is not anywhere stated in Scripture, it is deduced by a process of fallible reasonings from a number of unconnected texts, doubtful both in their

criticism and in their interpretation; it is not a declaration made by God, but an inference drawn by man, and, as many think, incorrectly drawn; the doctrine of the Trinity therefore, whether true or not, cannot be regarded as a *revealed* Truth; what is still a subject of controversy cannot be a portion of Revelation. If then, turning away from our disputes, we could ascertain the universal ideas which Christianity implants in *all* minds which receive it; the images of God, of Duty, and of Hope, which it deposits in *all* hearts; the impression of Christ taken off by every spirit of man from the Image and Son of God;—these would be the essentials of the Revelation, for since these are the only uniform impressions that Christianity has actually made upon those who believe it, we must suppose that these were the chief impressions which God intended it to make. This alone can be "the light which, coming into the world, lighteth every man."

But I may be answered here, that Christianity itself is a matter of debate, and that if doubtful things cannot be revealed, then Christianity itself is not a Revelation. To this I reply, that Christianity is a matter of debate chiefly because Christ himself is not offered to the hearts of men, because controversialists thrust forward their own doctrinal conceptions as the essentials of Christianity, presenting *themselves*, and not Jesus to make his own impression on the heart. If not creeds, but Jesus the Christ was offered *spiritually* to the souls of men, unbelief would be soon no more. No earnest and pure mind would reject from its love and faith the serene and perfect image of the living Jesus. Men can deny metaphysical doctrines; but they could not deny the spiritual Christ. The spirit of God in every man would bear witness to *you* who was the fulness of that spirit, and would recognize the heavenly leadership of the Son of God. If the essentials of Christianity had not been made by Divines and Theologians to consist in disputed doctrines, if it had been offered to faith on the ground of its inherent excellence, its ample attractions



for our spiritual nature, how readily, how universally would it have been received by all who felt that it had echoes within the soul, and that Jesus was indeed the brightest image of God, and the very ideal of humanity! Who would not be a Christian, if to be a Christian required faith only in such truths as these:—that the holy and affectionate Jesus was the human image of the word of God, and that the Universal Father is more perfect and more tender than his holy and gentle child, by as much as Deity transcends humanity; that the character of the Christ is God's aim and purpose for us all, the result at which He desires each of us to arrive through the discipline and sufferings of Earth;—that traces of Immortality were upon that heavenly mind; that his profound sympathy with the Spirit of God, the surrender of his own immediate interests for the sake of the purposes and drift of providence, the identification of himself with the will of God, the constant manifestation of a style of thought and action drawn on a wider scale than this present life, and that placed him in harmony with better worlds;—that these marked him out as a being whose nature was adjusted to more glorious spheres, whose soul was out of proportion to his utterly earthly and external lot, and whose appropriate home must be the pure Heaven of God? Would any one refuse admission to these spiritual views as they are given us to our souls from the pure life of Jesus, if he was permitted to receive them from Christ himself, and not obliged on his way to that Heavenly fringe of grace, liberty, and truth, to stoop his free neck to the yoke of Churches and of Creeds? But men preach themselves, not Christ. They embody their own conceptions of Christianity in formulas, and pronounce these to be essentials, instead of suffering Jesus to make his way to the heart, and stamp there his own impression. Hence the origin of unbelief. I quote the words of an eminent Unitarian, himself converted from orthodoxy chiefly by the force of the argument I am about to state: "Settle your

disputes (says the unbeliever), and then I will listen to your arguments in defence of Christianity. Both of you, Romanists and Protestants, offer me salvation on condition that I embrace the Christian faith. You offer me a sovereign remedy, which is to preserve me alive in happiness through all eternity; but I hear you recusing each other of recommending to the world, not a remedy but a *poison*; a *poison*, indeed, which, instead of securing eternal happiness, must add bitterness to eternal punishment. You both agree that it is of the essence of Christianity to accept certain doctrines concerning the manner in which the Divine Nature exists; the moral and intellectual condition in which man was created; our present degradation through the misdeed of our first parents; the nature of sin, and the impossibility of its being pardoned except by pain inflicted on an innocent person; the existence or non-existence of living representatives of Christ and his apostles; a church which enjoys, collectively, some extraordinary privileges in regard to the visible and invisible world; the presence of Christ among us by means of transubstantiation, or the denial of such presence; all this, and much more, some of you declare to be contained in, and others to be opposed to, the Scriptures; and even here there is a fierce contention as to whether those Scriptures embrace the whole of that Christianity which is necessary for salvation, or whether tradition is to fill up a certain gap. I am, therefore, at a loss how to account for the invitation you give me. To me (the unbeliever might continue) it is quite evident that the ablest opponents of Christianity never discovered a more convincing argument against Romanism in general, than that which inevitably arises from your own statements, and from the controversies of your churches. God (you both agree), pitying mankind, has disregarded the natural laws fixed by himself, and for a space of four thousand years, and more, has multiplied miracles for the purpose of acquainting men with the means of obtaining

salvation, and avoiding eternal death, *eternal death* signifying almost universally, among you, *unending torments*. But when I turn to examine the result of this (as you deem it) *marvellous and all-wise plan*, I find it absolutely incomplete; for the whole Christian world has been eighteen centuries in a perpetual warfare (not without great shedding of blood), because Christians cannot settle what is that faith which alone can save us. Have you not thus demonstrated that the revelation of which you boast cannot be from God? Do you believe, and do you wish me to believe, that when God had decreed to make a *single truth* known to the world, he failed of that object, or wished to make Revelation a *snare*?<sup>11</sup>

Now not believing that Revelation has failed of its object, or that it is a *snare*, and believing that under all the so-called Essentials, which we regard as mere human additions, there is yet a true and universal impression received from the spirit of Jesus, believing in fact that our Controversies are about accidentals, and that under all our differences there is, deeper down, the untroubled well of Christ springing up into everlasting life, I would proceed to expose those errors in the Trinitarian conception of Revelation which have laid it open to the charge of *not being a Revelation*, of dividing mankind by Controversies instead of uniting them by moral Certainty,—and to contrast this Trinitarian Conception of Revelation with what, for the following reasons, we hold to be the *true one*, because it represents God as accomplishing what, from the very nature of a Revelation, he must have intended to accomplish, namely, the communication of moral and spiritual knowledge; because it removes the materials for doctrinal strife and controversial incoherence which never could have been God's object in sending a Revelation, but which are inseparable from Trinitarian ideas of Revelation; and because it would realize that union for which Christ prayed and

<sup>11</sup> "Unity and the Snare," by E. J. H. White, pp. 6, 7.

Apostles intreated, a moral oneness with God as revealed in Jesus, a *unity of spirit* in the bond of peace.

Let us suppose, then, God having the design to send a Revelation to Mankind. There are two methods, either of which He might adopt in the execution of that intention. He might send them a written Revelation in the form of a Book: or He might send them a living Revelation in the form of a Man. He might announce to them His Will through *words*: or He might send to them *one of his nature with Himself*, who would actually work the Will of God before their eyes; one who, passing through their circumstances of life and death, would show them in his own person the character which God intended this present discipline to create, and who, appearing again after death, morally unchanged, and passing into the Heavens, would reveal to them, by these his own destinies, the unbroken spiritual connexion of the present with the future, and the immortal home which God lives with Himself for the spirits of those holy ones who are no more on Earth. In the first case, then, we suppose God to send a verbal Message to men, a communication by words teaching doctrines, spoken first, and afterwards committed to writing; in the second case we suppose that a pure and heavenly being manifesting the will and purposes of God through his own nature, which is also our nature, is *himself the divine Message* from our Father; one who walks this earth amidst our sorrows and our sins,—transfiguring the one and reclaiming the other—and gathering up into his own soul the strength that is to be derived from both,—who enters our dwellings, sheds through them the divine light of heavenly love, plants the hope of immortality in the midst of trembling, because living and dying, beings, and binds together the perishing children of Earth in the godlike Tract of imperishable affections which Death can glorify but cannot kill,—who places himself in our circumstances of severest trial, and shows us the energy of a filial heart, and the unquenchable brightness

of a spirit in prayerful communion with the God of Providence; who, that he might be a revelation of a heavenly mind amidst every variety of temptation, passed on his way to death, through sadest insults, and showed how awful a thing is moral greatness, how calm, how majestic, how inaccessible, how it shines out through aggressive conscience, a mental and ineffaceable serenity, a spirit that has its glory in itself, and cannot be touched,—who, having showed man how to live and to suffer, next showed him how to die,—who in the spirit and power of Duty subdued this garment of throbbing flesh to the will of God, and in the death agonies was self-forgotten enough to look down from the cross on the tenderest foresight for those he left behind, and to look up to Heaven, presenting for his murderers the only excuse that heavenly pity could suggest,—“Father forgive them! they know not what they do;”—and who having thus glorified God upon the earth, and finished the work given him to do, was himself glorified by God; taken to that Heaven which is the home of goodness;—thus showing the issues to which God conducts the tried and perfected spirit, that His Faithfulness is bound up with the destinies of those that trust Him, and that His providence is the recompense of the just, who live now by Faith.

Now the first thing that will strike you in comparing these two possible methods of a Revelation is, that the written communication containing doctrines is cold, formal, indistinct and distant, when contrasted with the living presence of a pure and heavenly being, who places himself at our side, enters into our joys and sorrows, shows us in action and in suffering the will of God reflected on every form of life, and works out before our eyes the vast idea of perfection. No message, no written document, no form of words, could leave such distinct impressions or quicken such sympathy and love, as the warm and breathing spirit who entered into communion with us, whose influences we felt upon our

trembling souls, whose eye penetrated and whose voice melted us, and who took us by the hand and showed us how children of God should prove their trial choir, and through the vicissitudes of a Father's providence pass meekly to their Home.

Such a living Revelation could of course be preserved for posterity only through the medium of written records, but then these records would be chiefly descriptive; and their grand purpose would be faithfully to convey to the men of other times the true image of that heavenly being; to recreate him, from age to age, in the heart of life; to introduce the Son of God with the power of reality into the business and the bosom of men; to impress upon the silent page such graphic characters that they give off to the mind animated scenes, and bring the living Christ before the gazing eye; and the written Revelation would perfectly fulfil its mission, when by vivid and faithful narrative, without comment or reflection of its own, it had placed us in the presence of Jesus, and left us, like the disciples of old, to collect our impressions of the Christ as we waited upon his steps, and watched the spirit working into life, and caught the tones of living emotion; when we walked with him through the villages of Galilee, and saw him arrest the mourners, and touch the bier, and restore the only son of the widowed mother; when we retired with him to the lone mountain, and witnessed how the spirit ascended to God before it entered into the conflicts of temptation; when we stood with him in the Temple Court, and beheld how much more noble than the Temple is the Spirit that sanctifies the Temple, and how the Priest in his own strong hold quailed and trembled under the thrilling tones and simple majesty of Truth; when we followed him to his home, not neglecting to observe how his eye, that was never cold to goodness, fell upon the widow and her wite as he left the Temple; when we leaned with the loved disciple on his bosom, and watched his last offerings, and listened, with hushed hearts, for his last words; when we

say him kneel at the disciples' feet, that the spirit of equality and brotherhood might enter into their hearts, and break the bread of remembrance and distribute the pardoning ray,—that bound up with such symbols of self-sacrifice, he, the living Christ, might come back in moments of severe Duty, and pour his own spirit of self-denial through deathless memories: when we listened to his last prayers and consolations, and observed that, in that awful pause between life and death, he was the comforter; when we watched with him in Gethsemane's garden, and beheld the tears of nature, the holy one and the just, beneath the awe of his mission, trembling and melted before God; when we stood by him in Pilate's hall, and saw the moral greatness of the unassailable spirit unobscured by littleness, humiliation; when we drew nigh to his cross, and witnessed the crown placed upon a glory that no mortal form could rise so higher — "It is finished." To place us by its vivid descriptions in such communication with Jesus himself, is the great purpose of the historical record of Christianity; and in proportion as it makes this intercourse real and intimate, does the New Testament become to us the instrument and vehicle of a Revelation. Without this reproduction in our hearts of Jesus, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever, the Scriptures are but a dead letter, barren symbols, perverted to mere verbal and logical uses, that make no life, and serve no spiritual purpose.

The next observation that could not fail to strike you in contrasting the two methods of Revelation which I have supposed, a written communication containing doctrines, and a living character representing the will of God, is the great uncertainty and liability to various interpretations of the written method of Revelation when compared with the acted Revelation, the will of God embodied in Christ Jesus. Nothing is so fixed as the meaning of words, nothing is so fixed as the meaning of actions. Nothing is so vague as language:

nothing is so definite as character. You may fail to collect the exact ideas of a written communication, but you *cannot fail to understand* a living, feeling, acting, suffering, and dying man, who, on his own person, works out the will of God before your eyes; and, instead of communicating with you through writing, communicates with you through a character that can have no two meanings, and that requires no doubtful application of scientific rules of interpretation to make it plain. Place me in the presence of Christ, and the Revelation is impressing itself on my answering heart, and exhibiting itself before my living eyes. Place me before some lengthened statement in words, and I may draw from them a variety of senses, and perhaps fix upon, as their true sense, one that their Author did not intend. Who will protect me from error in all my applications of the difficult science of interpreting words? How, for instance, shall I be certain that I do not impress my own limited conceptions upon the most solemn and inspired language? How shall I rise through words, which are mere symbols, to conceptions, which, not being in my own soul, mere words do not suggest? If I saw a living being embodying these sublime conceptions before me, or read a description of him that brought him vividly before the soul, then the words would be no longer clothed with my poor meanings, but would bring before me the living forms of goodness and of greatness into which they expanded when represented by that heavenly mind. To distillate my meaning, by a single instance: Jesus said, "Love your enemies." Now how poor would be my conception of that duty, if I had only these words, if I had not his own acted interpretations of their fulness, if I could not stand by his cross, and witness his own exhibition of this heavenly spirit. The precept would be narrowed to my own littleness, if I had not the distraction of the living Christ. It is possible to put a limitation upon the revelation of mercy as it is written in the dead words: it is not possible to put any limi-

tation on "the word made flesh," the Revelation of Mercy breathing from the dying Jesus. Such then is the greater clearness, and freedom from uncertainty, of the meaning of God, when that meaning is revealed on the person of a living being, than when it is a statement of Doctrines expressed through a medium so indefinite, so susceptible of a variety of interpretations, as written language.

That there is a distinct branch of study called the Art of Interpretation; that its principles are derived from the profoundest acquaintance with the Mind; that it is in fact a practical Metaphysics, which even, when most fully understood, requires, for its correct application to ancient writings, the most varied and extensive knowledge, and the utmost natural acuteness, disciplined by long practice,—these things, which every one knows, scholar or no scholar, are standing and undeniable proofs of the inherent ambiguity of language, of the variety of meanings, which no skill in the use of words can possibly prevent, and out of which we have to make a selection of some one, when we apply ourselves to interpret a document. Now were I to enter into a full enumeration of the considerations that should determine an interpreter of the New Testament, and out of all the possible meanings direct his selection of that one which he adopts, I should have to present you with a disquisition on perhaps the most profound and difficult department of literary inquiry. I should have to speak of Archaeology and original languages, themselves, even in their most general character, the study of a life: I should have to speak of one form of those original languages, peculiar and a study in itself, the Hellenistic Greek, in which the New Testament is written, and in the interpretation of which we are left without the aid that is derived from the usages of language by other authors: I should have to speak of the particular writer whose words we were examining, of the character of his mind, of the peculiarities of his style, whether he wrote oratorically or scientifically, whether

we were to take down his metaphors, or whether we were to regard them as literally descriptive; I should have to speak of the age and country in which he lived, of the state of opinion and philosophy in his times, of the valourings which his words or thoughts were likely to adopt from the then prevailing theories, of the particular purpose for which he was writing, and of the particular minds, their circumstances and states of knowledge to which the writing was addressed; and after all this I could not allow any man, however erudite, to be a competent Interpreter who was not nobly endowed with that noble but most rare Faculty which can re-create the past and place us in the heart of a by-gone world; that Historic Imagination which throws itself into the sympathies of Antiquity and re-produces the living forms of Society that kindled the very thoughts and modified the very language now submitted to our minds; and in addition to all this I should demand, also, as an essential requisite for an Interpreter, a mind exempt of all prejudice, a calm and sound judgment.

Now it is most evident that a result depending on so many qualifications will be necessarily uncertain; that in every separate man who comes to the study of the New Testament, according as these instruments of interpretation exist in different degrees of perfection will they derive various meanings from the written document; and that consequently, since nowhere do these requisites for a perfect interpretation exist in perfection, there is no one of the contested meanings that can be relied upon with an absolute confidence. It is also to be noticed, that this uncertainty attending the meaning of words does not attach to the *narrative* or *historical* portion of a document, but is very much confined to that portion of it which contains doctrinal ideas, philosophical theories, or metaphysical statements. The *descriptive* portion of an ancient writing, (and especially when, as in the case of Christ, the description is of a moral nature, and is addressed to the affections and the

soul, which are the same in all ages,) will convey a uniform and universal impression, whilst (an didactic portion of the very same writing will suggest as many meanings as there are varieties of intellectual texture and complexion in the minds that read it. The character of Jesus shines out from the Gospels to be seen of all men, full of grace and truth. No one mistakes that. It does not depend upon the skilful application of the science of Interpretation. The symbols of language that reveal the living Jesus are of universal significance, and finding their way at once to every heart, stamp upon it a faithful image of the Christ. But doctrinal conceptions cannot be conveyed in this way: there is no universal and unchanging language for metaphysical ideas—and consequently it is impossible that any written communication on such subjects should be free from a variety of interpretations. And especially must this be so, when, as is the case with the Trinity, the doctrine is nowhere expressly stated in the document, but is only inferred by connecting together into a system a number of ideas which it seems to contain. Let me give you an illustration that was lately brought before me of the impossibility of a Revelation of doctrines being made to man, by means of written language, upon such subjects as the Trinity, the medium in which the essence of the Deity enables him personally to subsist. I heard it stated on a late occasion by Dr. Tattershall, that the Trinity existed as one nature in three personalities; and that to ask how three could be one and one three, was to ask an unmeaning and irrelevant question, because that the Trinity was three and one in different senses, three in Person but one in Essence. I turn now to Dr. Sherlock, and I find these words: "To say," says Dr. William Sherlock, "that there are three divine persons, and not three distinct infinite minds, is both heresy and nonsense." "The distinction of persons cannot be more truly and aptly represented than by the distinction between three men; for Father, Son, and Holy

Ghost, are as really distinct persons as Peter, James, and John." Here then we have Dr. Tattershall charging Sherlock with polytheism; and we have Sherlock charging Dr. Tattershall with Heresy and nonsense. That is, neither of these Trinitarians regards the other as having the true faith. Is it not evident then, that the doctrine of the Trinity, seeing how Trinitarians themselves charge one another with heresy, cannot be a doctrine of *Revelation*, cannot be a part of that universal Gospel which was preached to the poor, and revealed unto babes?

It was stated in Christ Church, by the Rev. Mr. Byrth, that the controversy between us was solely a question of Interpretation. It is so, because, in the case cited, no dispute is about doctrines. The question of *Unitarianism* or *Trinitarianism* must be decided by Interpretation after Criticism has fixed the Text to be interpreted; but I deny, altogether, that the question of *Christianity* or *Non-Christianity* is to be decided by any such imperfect and doubtful instrument. Though no one honours Scholarship more, or has a profounder veneration for its noble functions, and altogether reprobating the vulgarity of depreciating its high offices, and maintaining, wherever I have influence, especially for our own Church and in our own day, the necessity for a learned Ministry, sole to refresh their souls at the original wells and unfrighted by confident dogmatism to give a reason for the faith that is in them, I yet declare, that Christianity is a Religion for the people; that the Gospel was originally preached to the poor; that Christ is manifested to the heart and soul of every man whom he attracts by heavenly sympathy, that when not many wise, not many learned were called, the lowly but humble in heart, recognised the divine brightness, and sat at the feet of Jesus doctile and rejoicing; and I protest altogether against any learned Aristocracy, any literary Hierarchy, any priestly Mediators, having more of

the true light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world than the humblest of their brethren, who has taken to his heart the free gift of God, and loves the Lord Jesus with sincerity.

Now, strange to say, this principle was broadly admitted. It was broadly admitted that Christianity is not the property of scholars or critics, but the gift of God to all men; and yet, with a remarkable inconsistency, it was added, that "the all men" to whom Christianity is the gift of God, must find in it the doctrine of the Trinity, else they are no Christians at all. That is, Christianity is the gift of God to those who, by the aids of interpretation and criticism, become Trinitarians, and to all those who, following their leaders, accept this doctrine; but is not the gift of God to Unitarians, who, through loving Jesus as their Light on Earth and their Forerunner amid the skies, cannot so read either the written Gospel or the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ, as to collect from them the doctrine of a Trinity. If Trinitarianism is Christianity exclusively, then Christianity is not the gift of God to all men; for many, in all ages of the Church, and in the first century, perhaps, without exception, have accepted Christ, but knew no Trinity. If Trinitarianism is Christianity exclusively, then Christianity is the property of critics and scholars, for that doctrine is not a self-evidencing Truth; it does not shine out from the Gospels so that no honest mind and pure heart can fail to receive it, and, if capable of being proved at all, it can only be proved by a most technical and subtle logic, by far-fetched inferences from disconnected texts, every one of which is open to a hostile criticism, and by a most scholastic and indirect system of interpretation, which is a task, and that a most painful one, for plain men to comprehend. My audience will be enabled to judge of this matter for themselves when I tell them that one of the strongest reliances of popular Trinitarians, until proved to be completely fallacious,

was the power of the Greek article; and that one of the texts long used in this controversy, and still used,<sup>3</sup> owes its whole importance to an accident so minute as this, whether the letter O was printed with a central dot, or without the dot; so that the chance touch of a typesetter might put in or put out one of the principle proofs of the doctrine of the Trinity. Now I further declare, that all the strongest evidence for the doctrine of the Trinity is exactly of the same critical nature—that the only text of the slightest difficulty, cited in Christ Church on Wednesday evening, owes its whole force to a question of punctuation; and that the best critics and scholars, and they Trinitarians, for true scholars never degrade their high calling, nor enter the solemn sanctuary open to them alone, to falsify the oracle, give many authorities against the Trinitarian, and in favour of the Unitarian, interpretation.† Now will any man tell me that the doctrine of the Trinity, which, if true, is the most useful Truth that ever bowed down the heart, that the God of Heaven walked this earth, a partaker of our sufferings and our sorrows, and lived our life, and died our death, would be left to be proved by evidence of this nature, by a controversy nearly two thousand years after the Revelation, about the force of the Greek article and the punctuation of a Greek manuscript? Is this the light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world? There could have been no difficulty in revealing this doctrine, in words at least, if it was intended to be revealed. The Athanasian Creed is at least explicit enough, and leaves us in no doubt

<sup>3</sup> Scholæ grammaticæ.

† See Gieseler's *Chrestomathia* "unde in God over all." Clement, in a passage evidently imitated from this, on the *vise doctore*, which he is not likely to have done. (He understood it as referring to Christ.) In addition to other authorities used for pointing the passage in conformity with the Unitarian interpretation, Gieseler quotes "Many Fathers who confess that Christ could be said of the God over all." *Quis enim, qui Christum vis del unitate Patri appellat posse regere.*" In an edition of Gieseler's printed by Taylor and Walton in 1832, this punctuation is given, and is stated also to be the pointing of Scholæ.

of the purpose of its Author. Now I conclude that if Trinitarianism alone is Christianity, and if such are the processes of criticism and interpretation by which alone that doctrine can be proved, then Trinitarianism is *the property of Critics and Scholars, and those who implicitly trust them*; and Christianity requiring us either to be Critics or to prostrate ourselves before Critics, not agreed among themselves, is *not* the free gift of God to all men." The rightful privileges of critics and scholars are large enough, and let no man disown them; but I do disown this literary Hierarchy arrogating to themselves sole access to the oracles of God, and limiting Christ's free approach to the souls of the people to long processes of inferential reasoning and the winding ways of a syllogism. I entreat them to stand aside, and let the living Jesus come into communication with the living heart, and not place themselves, like the multitude who threatened the blind beside the way, between the ready mercy of the Heavenly Teacher and the humblest follower who seeks his face, that a ray of the light that shineth there may fall upon eager and wistful, though dimmed and earth-stained, eyes. "And it came to pass, that as he was come nigh unto Jericho, a certain blind man sat by the way-side begging. And hearing the multitude pass by, he asked what it meant. And they told him, that Jesus of Nazareth passeth by. And he cried, saying, Jesus thou son of David, have mercy on me. And they which went before rebuked him, that he should hold his peace: but he cried so much the more, Thou son of David, have mercy on me. And Jesus stood and commanded him to be brought unto him: and when he was come near he asked him, saying, What wilt thou that I shall do unto thee? And he said, Lord, that I may receive my sight. And Jesus said unto him, Receive thy sight: thy faith hath saved thee."

I trust that you will perceive now the essential distinction between a Revelation by words, of doctrines, and a Revelation by a living being; between the uncertain meaning that

is arrived at by the interpretation of language, and the light of the knowledge of the glory of God shining on the face of Jesus Christ. In the one case we have a statement of doubtful doctrines in written words; in the other we have a living Character. In the one case we have the dead letter; in the other we have the "word made flesh." In the one case we have the Mind of God stated in propositions; in the other we have the Image of God set up in our hearts, and the purposes of God for man, both while on earth and beyond the grave, realized before us, to be seen of all men. If Christianity is a scheme of doctrines in a written communication from God, then of course it is subject to all the necessary ambiguities of language; and expositors will be busy upon it, to draw out of it all the meanings it can possibly contain; and every fresh interpretation will be regarded by some as part of the Revelation from Heaven, and never will men rest lest there should be some lurking sense in it that they have not reached, and every interpreter will thrust in the face of the world, *as the essential and saving meaning*, his own reading of the document. And as language is a thing that is never fixed, but is always gathering fresh imports from the developments of Time, this is a process that must go on for ever, and the document will speak a new Message to the men of every age, and the Doctrines that constitute Salvation will be always the subject matter of a controversy. But if Christianity, instead of a form of written words, is a character sent to us by God, to manifest his will in the flesh, and to reveal living Truth in a living Being; if Jesus himself is the record we are to study; if it is not an inspired Book but an inspired Life that is the gift of God; if his works of Power and Love, his actions and his sufferings, his holy living and dying, are the full and spiritual Scriptures imprinted on humanity by God's own hand, then the whole work of a Christian is to understand and love that Character,—then is the Revelation like a light shining in a dark place, "a salvation pre-



pared before the face of all people," "a light to lighten the Gentiles, and to be the glory of his people Israel," a ray of God's light shining into the heart of man, touching the mountain tops of humanity and piercing the deep valleys, that all flesh may see it together.

It is in remarkable consistency with these views that very little is said in the popular systems of Christ's character. The doctrinal ideas respecting Jesus are all in all: the moral and spiritual ideas are looked upon as not peculiarly Christian. A vast deal is said about his Rank, his Merits, his Mediatorial Distinction: very little is said about his Life, his Example, his Revelations of Duty and of Destiny. The Trinitarians taunt us with having no use for Christ in our system. Certainly we believe in a God who does not require their Christ. We do not speak of Atonement therefore. But we might retort, that if we neglect their metaphysical Christ, they neglect our moral and spiritual Christ. They speak little of his character, his life, his example, as a model for humanity: nor could they in consistency with their system. Jesus, as God and man, is powerless as an exhibition of what man may be. He is no revelation of Humanity to Humanity. Humanity with Deity attached to it, or indwelling, is Humanity no more.

If Christianity is a system of doctrines to be deduced from words, and if our salvation depends upon the certainty of our deductions, then is it not clear that God would be requiring an absolute Truth of Interpretation which he has not given us the means of attaining, and that the Revelation, even to "Critics and Scholars," would be an *uncertain property*? But if Christianity is an inspired Life, the Duties and the Destinies of Man shown forth on the Son of God, the word made flesh, the glory of God shining in the face of Jesus Christ, a character perfectly reflecting the purposes of Providence, and preserved for us, in faithful narratives that still enable us to have the image of Jesus formed within us, then

is it not clear that the Revelation is perpetuated in our hearts, and that the Christ with us still, the same yesterday and to-day, and for ever, is the gift of God to all men. "Lo, I am with you always, to the end of the world." Now this is Christ's own account of himself as a Revelation. "I am the light of the world." "I am the Resurrection and the Life." "I am the way, and the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father but by me. If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him and have seen him."\* "The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever He doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise."† "Whoso hath seen me hath seen the Father also." And to crown all this scriptural evidence, this is God's own account of his Christ as a Revelation, nothent coming him at the opening of his Mission, and repeated again as His seal upon its close, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."‡

I have shown that there is no doctrinal certainty in Christianity considered as a *written* Revelation: but neither is there *any moral certainty* as to the Will of God and his practical requirements conveyed by mere words. When God tells me in words to love Him and to love my neighbour, I do not know what practical forms these feelings are to assume, neither do I know how all the influences of my present life are to control me in the exercise of these affections. But I understand what God means when I see Jesus interpreting for me this will of God by his own character, and continuing in his own life, through all circumstances, the perfect love of God and Man. Now I maintain, that no system of Doctrine could be a Revelation to me of the purposes and ends of life. It is a practical question, and practically must it be solved. He who will work out for me on this scene of things the great designs of my being, and show to me, in

\* John. vi. 35.

† John. vi. 57.

arian and in suffering, in sympathy and in struggle, in the shreibings of life and in the lushed sublimities of death, the right attitudes of my nature, the fitting dignities of enlightened and heaven-born man,—he who is not the Prophet merely of divine Truth but the Impresorator of his own views, who stands successively in each practical position and robes himself in the living glories of duty,—he alone can pretend to be a Revelation of character, as God wills it, having stamped upon his views illustrations of Reality. And he alone can pretend to have unravelled the mystery of our Discipline, who himself passes through our trials, and transmutes them into the nurseries of Power, the pregnant schools of Character—who shows us the outward circumstance, as a torch to the Spirit, lighting up the energies of Duty's inviolable will,—who moves amid the evil that is in the world, and is not overcome by it, but overcomes it with good,—who encounters sin and sinners, and treats them with the pity of a brother, yet with the hithness of one whose Father is the spiritual God,—who stands amid baffled purposes of good, the broken projects of benevolence in the unquelled trusts of Faith, seeing, though afar off, the Harvest of this unpromising Spring,—in whom the worst aspects of Humanity only draw out the usefulness of Charity; and the clouded countenance of God, veiled to sight though not to Faith, the perfect peace of a filial Spirit. He who passes for us through all this variety of mortal circumstance, and exhibits each, even the most dark and unpromising, as full of the materials of our Education, contributing to the formation of that perfect mind which is the end and heaven of our being, is indeed a perfect Revelation, "unimproved and unimprovable," though improving us to the end of Time, an embodied Scripture, the word made flesh and dwelling amongst us.

Christianity will be a matter of controversy so long as men look to it for what they *see to think*, and not for what they *are to trust in and be*. Creeds will divide the world, so long

as Christianity is regarded as a Revelation of Doctrines, and not as a Revelation of Character, of Practical Interests, of Duties and of Duties. In the one case it will be the "property of Critics and Scholars," held by an uncertain tenure; in the other case, it will be "the gift of God to all men." Strange that all Protestants do not feel the force of this argument! And as for Roman Catholics, if we had any controversy with them, the argument has only to take another step to hold them too in its grasp.

And now I shall be obliged to speak of Critics and Scholars in a way that Critics and Scholars should never expose themselves to be spoken of. I have a most painful duty before me, very different from the one I had been led to expect, which I had hoped would have been to answer calm, learned, judicious reasonings, instead of simply to resist pretensions, a task, which if much easier, is yet one that neither elevates nor instructs. Nothing could justify me in using in this place the language of grave remonstrance, but the consciousness that thereby instead of indulging I am wounding my own feelings, and the conviction that, in this case, Duty to Truth and to the Public requires it from me. Every one must have felt that the declaration before the world, of "the Unitarian Interpretation of the New Testament, based upon defective Scholarship, or an dishonest or unscrupulous criticism," ought to have been amply supported, or never made. To fail in the grand way to pass not only intellectual but the severest moral condemnation on such a statement. I know of no abuse of Power and Place more immoral, than when a Scholar uses his Scholarship to lead others before the unlearned, than when a Preacher uses his sacred and elevated standing to make assertions that are taken upon his word, but which are not correct, and of which nothing but the *certainty* that they were correct could justify the utterance. If I cannot take example from what I witnessed in Christ Church on Wednesday evening, let me at least take

warning. I will not pray to be preserved meek and truthful, and then regard my prayer as an indemnity for unbridled speech. I will not commit here the disrespectful impropriety of quoting Greek. Neither will I pay this audience the false compliment of pretending to make such subjects intelligible and interesting to them, but I will make some statements that shall go forth to the world, and there find fitting judgment. There are some points, however, to which I shall have to advert, of which every one may judge.

1. It was stated by the Preacher that he could not himself believe the mysterious statements of the New Testament unless he first believed in their inspiration, and that this alone could command his faith. Now there was great candour in this, but no Scholarship. You cannot prove the Inspiration of the Bible except by first proving the truth of the Bible, for there are no proofs of Inspiration except what the Bible itself contains. To believe in the truth of the Bible, because it is inspired, and then to prove it inspired because it is true, is an error in reasoning inexcusable in the diocese of the Church of England, for an eminent Bishop of their own Church, Bishop Marsh, has abundantly exposed it.

2. It was stated that every Unitarian Minister in England was as much bound by the Improved Version, as every Clergyman of the Establishment was by the Articles of the Church. The Preacher has written his name beneath those Articles; as long as he remains in the Church he has, to use Milton's expression, to those Articles subscribed "Slave;" he has entered into a vow to preach nothing contrary to them; he belongs to a body of men organized to prevent all dissent from those Articles, and pledged to oppose and avenge every attempt to break up the dogmatical principle of their Church Union, and yet he stated solemnly before an assembled multitude that no Clergyman of the Church was more bound by the Articles of the Church than was every Unitarian Minister by a Book which one man edited on his sole literary respon-

sibility, and which other men contributed to publish, simply because they expected from it some valuable scriptural aid. Now when a man is capable of making such a statement, when his judgment will allow him to do so, his credibility as a witness to facts I do not dispute, but his *opinion* on any question, merely as coming from him, I cannot feel deserving of my confidence. I might quote passages of contemporary Unitarian criticism reflecting on the Improved Version; I might quote Dr. Carpenter in his answer to Archbishop Magee, ascribing the whole responsibility to Mr. Belsham; I might quote Mr. Yates in his able answer to Mr. Wardlaw, exposing the false impression made by Dr. Magee, that the Improved Version was the Unitarian Version; but I cannot so misuse your time. The Unitarians, most of whom never saw the work, and whose pride it is that their Ministers study the Scriptures freely, and lay before them the results, will smile at the idea of these Ministers being as much bound by the Improved Version as the Clergy by the Articles of the Church, though in a graver spirit they must morally condemn an assertion so recklessly made. It was stated that all Protestant Christians were satisfied with the received Version up to the time of the Improved Version, and, to advance no other proof of the ignorance displayed by such a statement, in the next breath it was declared that the Improved Version was on the basis of Archbishop Newcome's Translation, the title of which is this, "An Attempt towards revising our English Translation of the Greek Scriptures." But what means this attempt to fasten us down to the Improved Version? Is it not clear that these clergymen wish us to fight the battle upon a disadvantageous ground? Is it not clear that they wish us to take up some weak position, and defend that, rather than meet us in the strongest positions that criticism and scholarship enable us to assume and to maintain? Is not our controversy between Unitarianism and Trinitarianism, and what can be more unworthy of critics and

scholars than to conduct that controversy on any ground but that of the original Scriptures? We do not think of using *them* down to any particular critic of their own church, many of whom we could advance who abandon almost every position they maintain; we freely give them advantage of the best criticisms and the best scholarship they can anywhere obtain; and we do confess that we hold it very unbecoming towards us, and very unconfiding in their own strength, and very disloyal towards Truth, to tell opponents, I wish I could say fellow inquirers, that they are not to defend their cause by the best arguments known to them, but by a certain set of arguments published in a certain book more than thirty years ago, and before some of us now engaged in this controversy were born. Our controversy is not about the Improved Version, but about the Greek Testament; and I must certainly regard any attempt to intercept us in our appeal to the original Scripture, by thrusting any other Version in our faces, as a sign either of great weakness or of great unfairness. Where would the Lecturers at Christ Church have got matter of imputation against us, if it had not been for this Improved Version?

3. It was stated that minute examination of the Scripture Evidence for Trinitarianism hardly influenced the result, for so thoroughly were the Scriptures imbued with its doctrines, that if but a fragment of them remained, the mysterious truths that pervade the whole would be found in that fragment. Now I doubt not that men can say these things sincerely, and yet methinks they ought to ask themselves before they mislead a multitude, is there Reality in these statements? Now I can not only mention fragments, but whole books, in which Trinitarians themselves will confess that there is not a trace of these doctrines, the whole Gospel of St. Mark; the whole Gospel of St. Luke, for the portions respecting the miraculous generation cannot be proof of the Divinity of the person so generated; the whole of the book of Acts; and

very many of the Epistles. We have the Gospel which the apostle Peter delivered to the Gentiles, when he gave them his exposition of Christianity, and we find from it that Cornelius and the Gentiles might have believed *all* that the Apostle taught them, and yet, according to the Trinitarians, be lost everlastingly from the wantiness of their faith. Here then is the Gospel which Peter delivered to the Gentiles, containing the whole account he gave them of the doctrine of Christ: "Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons; but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him. The word which God sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ: (he is Lord of all;) That word, I say, ye know, which was published throughout all Judæa, and began from Galilee, after the baptism which John preached; how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed by the devil; for God was with him. And we are witnesses of all things which he did both in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem, whom they slew and hanged on a tree: Him God raised up the third day, and shewed him openly: not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, even to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead. And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead. To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whatsoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins."\* Now you will know what weight, what measure of calm and considerate truth attach to the assertions made at Christ Church, when you compare this account of Christianity by the Apostle Peter, with the bold statement that if only a fragment of the New Testa-

\* Acts 13—41.

ment remained, it would contain and show forth the mysterious doctrines of Trinitarianism.

4. It was stated that a slight degree of evidence might affect the introductory chapters of Matthew and Luke, if the statements they contain were not supported by the rest of the Gospels, but that so full were the Gospels of the peculiarities of these chapters, to remove them would be like removing the Portico from a Temple. The only evidence brought to support this large declaration was the last verse of the Gospel of St. Matthew, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." Now I am not concerned in the correctness or the incorrectness of the Improved Version's translation of this passage, *Lo, I am with you always, to the end of the age, or dispensation, that is, till the new dispensation was fully established*: for in the first place I have no difficulty in believing that the spirit and power of Jesus was with his followers when in the strength of love and trust they lived and died for him and for his truth, and that thus spiritually he still is with all who give him a place in their hearts, even unto the end of the world; and in the second place, translate this passage in any way you will, and it contains no assertion of the Deity of Jesus, and no confirmation of the miraculous conception. But when I hear it confidently asserted in the presence of a crowd ready to take the Preacher's word for anything he chooses to assert about Greek, that any scholarship is utterly contemptible that interprets the "end of the world" to mean "the end of the era or age," or that puts any other interpretation on these words than that of the received version, I confess I am amazed at the boldness with which men not habitually under correction will make rash statements, even at times when they must know that watchful eyes are upon them. I turn to Schlusener's *Lesson of the New Testament*, I look for the word in question, and I find from that authority that the word signifies primarily, an undefined period of considerable

extent, and, secondarily, the state of things existing within that period, I find him quoting the very passage in question which we are told *every scholar* would translate "to the end of the world," and explaining it to mean "to the end of the lives" of the Apostles; I find that in other cases where this word is used, a limit is put upon its meaning, restricting it to the signification of "age or dispensation," and rendering it impossible it should mean the "end of the world," in our sense, by such a clause as this, "Verily I say unto you, *this generation* shall not pass until all these things be fulfilled;" I find in our common version the plural of this word translated exactly as the singular, where if "dispensations" was substituted for "world," all difficulty would disappear: I find the interpretation of the Improved Version given by such scholars as Hammond and Le Clerc, and adopted consistently and throughout by Bishop Pearce, who argues for it against the common rendering, and whether it is true or not, which is really a matter of no importance, I do solemnly but solemnly protest against any man so abusing his actual place and his reputation for learning, as to proclaim to a multitude that no scholar would countenance such a translation, and that no interpreter would adopt it, except for the sake of an *à priori* meaning. No man who understood the dignity and the privileges of scholars would in this way forfeit them. §

5. It was stated that *no scholar* would translate the first verse of the Gospel of St. John thus: "In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God.":

\* Matt. xxiv. 3, 34.

† "The interpretation of the word *αἰών*, by the English word 'world,' in the common sense of the Bible, is the Hebrew. For proving this sense to be the original sense, there is not, I think, any authority to be found either in Hebrew or classic Greek."—*Nations in the Trinity*.

‡ 1 John. ii. 26.

§ "Wholly, from above, whereby I feel to mine weapons have been taken, and I feel the way 'to the end of the world,' and the ground that Christ's ministers, as ministers, are constituted, equally by the *beginning* of the fourth century."

|| *John. x. 36, 37, 38.*

Now for myself I do not agree with this translation. I think that the Logos, or Word, is a very usual personification of the Power and Wisdom of God. (See Prov. viii.) I think that this verse has no reference to Jesus whatsoever; that in the first place God alone is spoken of; his Power and Wisdom are described as belonging to and dwelling with him, that He is described as purposing to communicate or reveal these to men, for of course it is not God himself, but only a portion of his Knowledge and Will that can be revealed to us; and then for the first time in the fourteenth verse is Jesus introduced, as the person through whose character these attributes are to be communicated, "the Word was made flesh and dwelt amongst us." I dissent therefore from the translation which Mr. Hirth condemned; but when I am told that no scholar would tolerate such a translation, I turn to my books, and I find Origen and Eusebius not only tolerating but actually adopting and insisting upon this very translation. I recollect that Greek was the vernacular tongue of these eminent men, and when I am told by an Englishman, in this nineteenth century, that no Greek Scholar would do what Origen and Eusebius *have done*, I think it is not disrespectful to decline his authority in all matters that require calmness and accuracy.

6. It was stated that no scholar could translate the fifth verse of the ninth chapter of St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans thus: "Whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came; God who is over all he blessed for ever." Perhaps the more correct rendering would be, "whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came (i. e. from among whom the Messiah was to be born); he who was over all, was God blessed for ever:" or with more fidelity because with more rapidity, our language not admitting, like the Greek, the ellipsis of the substantive verb—"He who was over all, being God blessed for ever." With regard to the ellipsis of the substantive verb, nothing

can be more common. It occurs again and again in the verses that lie on each side of the text in question. And in ascriptions of praise it is almost uniform. And nothing can be more natural than that the Apostle should state as the closing distinction of the Jews, that over all their dispensations it was God who presided, the God of their signal Theocracy. Now when I am told that no scholar would so translate, let me simply name to you some of the Scholars who do adopt this translation: Erasmus, Bucer, Le Clerc, Grotius, and Wetstein; the first three most learned Trinitarians, and the last two, if not of unquestioned orthodoxy, only of suspected Heresy. Let me now give you some quotations from other Scholars of an earlier date, from the Christian Fathers, even when adopting the received translation of this passage. Tertullian, whose temper rather than his training has been preserved in controversy, says, "We never speak of two Gods or two Lords, but following the Apostle, if the Father and the Son are to be named together, we call the Father, God, and Jesus Christ, Lord." "But when speaking of Christ alone, I may call him God, as does the same Apostle; of whom it is Christ, who is God over all blessed for ever. For speaking of a ray of the sun by itself," continues Tertullian, "I may call it the sun; but when I mention at the same time the sun, from which this ray proceeds, I do not then give that name to the latter." "Some of the earlier GREEK FATHERS," who I suppose it will be admitted knew Greek, "expressly denied that Christ is 'the God over all.'" "Supposing," says Origen, "that some among the multitude of believers, *likely as they are to have differences of opinion*, rashly suppose that the Saviour is God over all; yet we do not, for we believe him when he saith, 'The Father who sent me is greater than I.'" Even after the Nicene Council, Eusebius, in writing against Marcellus, says: "As Marcellus thinks, He who was born of the holy virgin, and clothed in flesh, who dwelt among men, and

suffered what had been foretold, and died for our sins, was the very God over all; for daring to say which, the Church of God numbered Sabellius among Atheists and Blasphemers."\*

I have one other observation to make upon this verse. The translation of the passage depends very much on a question of punctuation, and, so far, is a question for Critics and Scholars. Now we have seen already the high authorities that give the punctuation in favour of the Unitarian rendering† I say nothing of the conjectural readings of these two passages, because, though brought by the Preacher as instances of unlicensed Conjecture, he treated them chiefly as mistranslations, with the view I suppose of introducing the same passages over and over again, to multiply the instances of Unitarian alterations. The conjecture is not adopted by the improved version; and yet, for allowing the same little weight to the authority of Dr. Whately in the latter case, for it allows none whatever to the conjecture of Crellius in the former, it is charged with two sins: first, the sin of adopting the conjecture; and secondly, the sin of omission after *rejecting* the conjecture. This is a method of multiplying sins, or rather charges. Indeed, if I understood the Preacher, he admitted that Crellius and Slichtingius, in the then state of Biblical knowledge, might very justifiably have made the conjectures, *for they were Scholars*. but that now, with all our new lights, such a conjecture is inadmissible; that is to say, Biblical Literature was not far enough advanced in their day to enable them to discover in these texts, what yet if they did not discover there, or somewhere else, they must perish overlastingly. And yet we were

\* Whately, quoted by Norton

† See note, page 10. I have no objection to the text of Sabellius, except as it is published by Taylor and Walton. This piece is printed after various facts which, however, it also gives in the case of the painting of Gumbach, contrary to the usual edition. I have as great an objection to the copy of it.

told that Christianity was not the property of critics and scholars, but the gift of God to all men.\*

Now when I examine into these things, my duty to scholarship, my reverence for its high functions, my duty to Truth, my duty to the public, who ought not, in matters not of opinion but of knowledge, to be misled by their Teachers, and my duty to the Pulpit, which suffers in power and credit by every unwarrantable statement that proceeds from it, all oblige me to declare that the impression which I carried away from Christ Church, that the supposed ignorance of a vast assembly was sported with, and their confidence abused, has been more than confirmed.

So much for scholarship and candour together. I have now to speak of "caution" alone.

1. A sentiment was quoted from Coleridge, expressing his belief, that if Jesus was not God, *he was a deceiver* and then the Preacher asked his audience, "Can the advocates of a system that makes Jesus a deceiver be Christians?" thus identifying Unitarians with the sentiment of Coleridge. How long will controversialists condescend to such practices? From any controversy so conducted no good can come: but great scandal to Religionists, and deep pain to all who love Religion and Truth better than their own party.

2. Advantage was taken of some words of my Colleague, the Minister of this Chapel, to produce the impression that Unitarianism, as a religious faith, was merely negative. Now the words themselves not only bear no such meaning, but guard against it; and the whole speech from which they were extracted is rich in the overflowings of the true, working, onward spirit of our faith, as you who have the privilege of worshipping here, well know everything from the same mind must necessarily be. The words quoted were these: "I conceive that, *contraveniently*, our system is correctly descri-

\* See Appendix for a full examination of these two extracts, and the Psalm of St. John's Gospel, p. 2. Rev. Mr. S.

bed as purely negative," and the whole object of the speech was to enforce the peaceful and fruitful view that the power of our religion proceeds not from what we disbelieve, but from what we believe. No man who read the speech could be ignorant of this; and it is remarkable, that the very next words, containing a passage quoted by Mr. Byrth, are these: "Let us place the utmost reliance upon positive religious principles; and especially let us act on our own internal convictions." My valued friend is abundantly equal to the task of defending himself, and not often should I do him the disservice of appearing for him, but as this statement was made in a lecture which it was my duty to answer, and as I am always confirmed in my view of my own that I can identify with him, I shall, to show that the present is no forced advocacy,\* extract a few sentences from an Article, which nearly at the time he was speaking, it happened to be my duty to be writing. "We are not devotional, we are not practical, in our *evangelical* aspects. We are on preliminary, not on Christian ground. We are not improving, we have not a Religion, until we have ceased contending and commenced cultivating. Moral progress proceeds from cultivation of the faith we rest in, producing its fruits in the warmth of love. We must pursue what is our own, and forget our controversial attitudes. They never will nourish the inner life of a Congregation, nor keep its interest alive. They give us no character of our own. They feed no intense yearnings, They make no devoted disciples. We must proceed upon our own views, not defending them, but loving them and studying them. We must pursue a more independent course of Development. We must understand our own mission, which is not to battle but to advance, not to be dogmatists of any kind, but cherishers of Spirit and of Truth. Our Union must be a moral one, a sympathy of Spirit. We can

have no intellectual or doctrinal union. We must give up therefore the idea of aggregate life, as a Body devoted to a uniform Belief, and held together by the forms of an uniform Ecclesiastical Government. The whole body can flourish only by the members having each life in himself. Our union must be one of sentiment and first principles; our life one of individualities." And again, speaking of Unitarian Ministers: "They should present a Christianity qualified by its energy to meet both the strength and the weakness of the spiritual being, to inspire a devoted love, and to lend souls raptive. They should take their stand upon no exclusive ground. They should eschew a religion of negations. Faith should be their great power; a faith that appeals to the faith of their hearers, nourishing it where it is, creating it where it is not. With no other bond of union than this power to satisfy the deep spiritual wants of those to whom they minister, they above all others should cultivate a Christianity that has positive attractions for the spirit of man, a Christianity that is fitted to draw upon itself the warmest and purest affections; a Christianity that engages to do for us what it did for Christ, to elevate the diviner tendencies, whilst it supports the weakness of our frail yet noble nature. From the absence of creeds, and its want of a mystical or formal interest, no sect so much as Unitarianism, requires a sympathetic, generous, deep-hearted faith, an affirmative and not a negative Christianity, to lay hold upon the religious affections, and feed the religious life of its Churches. There is no other sect to which coldness in Religion could be so fatal."†

I have now gone through all the evidence adduced on Wednesday evening, in support of the allegation, "The Unitarian interpretation of the New Testament based upon defective Scholarship, or an dishonest or unscrupulous Criticism." Such a declaration, again I say, should never have been made, or should have been adequately sustained. To fail in the

\* And especially since Mr. Byrth has alluded to the disapprobation with which this statement was received.

† Churchman, New Series, No. 1, pp. 21, 22.



proof is to pass upon the statement not intellectual only, but moral condemnation. We were told by the preacher that when the time came to support the allegation, he would not use imitating language, but sound argument. I strove to say that pledge was not redeemed. And the moral condemnation of advancing such a charge, and leaving it unproved, falls upon him. I understand that the lecture was continued yesterday evening; when the press puts it into my hands I shall have an opportunity of seeing what additional comment it may require. But when I was told by the preacher himself, on Wednesday evening, that on the evidence then adduced, and which I have now presented to you, he regarded his charge made out not only in one but in both its clauses, that in short he had been too forbearing, for that instead of the disjunctive he might have used the copulative conjunction, and made his accusation to be this, "The Unitarian Interpretation of the New Testament based upon defective scholarship, and on dishonest and un candid Criticism," I hold myself discharged from all further duty of attention.

And now, after the "expostulations" to which you have been subjected elsewhere, your convictions treated as sins, and the exercise of your conscientious judgment represented as exposing you to the wrath of a holy God, (strange combination of ideas, wrath and holiness!) I may, perhaps, not unbecomingly address a few words to you my fellow believers. Translations have the power to deny you the name of Christians; but they have not the power to deny you the Itality. They cannot prevent you being Christians; and it is a light thing for you to be judged by man's judgment, provided only you can disprove the judgment by preserving your Christianity unprovoked, by retaining your Christian love towards those who deny you the Christian name. The worst operation of persecution and fanaticism is its tendency to produce a reaction. The worst working of an Evil Spirit is that it calls up other evil spirits to oppose it. The temper we complain

of has a tendency to provoke the same temper in ourselves. And yet an evil spirit cannot be conquered by an evil spirit. This is one of the divine prerogatives of the spirit of goodness. You must overcome evil with good. You must be prepared to expect that men who deem themselves your religious superiors, will comport themselves accordingly. You must regard it as only natural that men who hold themselves to be the favourites of God, and never expect to meet you in heaven, should treat you with little respect on earth. Nay, you must even have some tenderness for the feelings of irritation which this very faith cannot fail to generate in the sordid nature of those who hold it. Holding you to be lost, and having human hearts, how can they avoid of assailing you with eager, anxious, and even persecuting aggression? I blame them not for this: I only wonder there is so little of it: that they leave us to our fate, with so little effort, to use their own favourite figure, to pluck the brands from the burning. Nay, my friends, more than this, their confidence in their own salvation depending on the dogmatical assurance with which they hold certain doctrinal ideas, they are naturally alarmed lest this *essential faith* should in any way be dislodged in their imaginations, and they come to look upon every free mind as a tempter and an enemy. And as their Faith is by their own boast not a rational Faith, as it has no roots in their intellectual nature, they feel that their danger is all the greater, and that their caution must be all the more. They are not happy in their exclusive faith. How can they if they have Christian hearts? It rests upon an evidence out of themselves, so that they cannot, at all times, be confident in it. It presents to them many unhappy images, a vindictive God,\* an exclusive Heaven, a condemned world, fellow beings against whom their religious feelings are embittered, but

\* By this I mean a God who cannot be except by one protestant, except a Church were to take by some of faith. It being always to remain whether the faith is right or otherwise.

towards whom their hearts still yearn. All these are reasons why you should exercise forbearance. You have an easier part. You have a faith that supports you in meek Hope and Trust for all. Your hearts are at peace both with Man and God. You can wait in patience until Heaven does justice unto all. Having this more blessed and peaceful faith, you must also make it more fruitful, and thus be enabled to meet the question, "What do ye more than others?"

For ourselves, let us pursue our own way, and love our own Christ in meek faith and trust. Doctrines are uncertain: but the spirit of Jesus is not uncertain. You know what that is; and that its fruits are, "love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." Love, venerate, obey in all things, the Heaven-sent and Heaven-marked Christ; cherish the growth of his spirit in your souls; place him before you in moments of trying duty; and in all times of nature's languishing see him at the open gate of Heaven, inviting you to be faithful to the end, that you may join him at the resurrection of the just. He this and your souls shall live. To be this is to be Christians. Others may hold a different language; but you owe no allegiance save to God in Christ. One is your master, and all ye are brethren.

## APPENDIX.

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See pp. 80, 81.

אַחֵרֵי הַיָּמִים—the end of the age.

"Hinc ob eandem Judæi universum tempus in duas magnas periodos dispartiri consueverunt, alteram Messiam adventum antecessoribus (אֶחָדֵי הַיָּמִים וְעַד לְבִיאוֹתָיו), alteram consequentem (אַחֵרֵי הַיָּמִים וְעַד לְבִיאוֹתָיו). Postremam illius (אַחֵרֵי הַיָּמִים) partem, id est Messiam adventum, non tantum אֶחָדֵי הַיָּמִים, sed אַחֵרֵי הַיָּמִים, ut supra videtur, vocant. אַחֵרֵי הַיָּמִים, est illiusque אֶחָדֵי הַיָּמִים, ut supra videtur, vocant. — Heroldi. *Christologia Judæorum Jesu Apostolorumque aude.* pp. 38, 39.

"On this account the Jews were accustomed to divide Time into two great Periods, one preceding the advent of the Messiah, and called 'this world,' 'this age,' or, 'the world that now is,' 'the age that now is;' the other subsequent to the advent, and called 'the world to come,' 'the age to come,' 'that world,' 'that age.' The latter portion of the former Period, that immediately adjoining the Messianic Age, they called 'the latter times,' 'the last time,' 'these last days,' and its close, (that is, the close of the ante-Messianic Period), 'the end of the world,' or, 'the end of the world,' 'the end of the age.'"

*The Introduction of St. John's Gospel*

See pp. 31, 32.

"In the beginning was the *Logos*, and the *Logos* was with God, and the *Logos* was God."

"There is no word in English answering to the Greek word *Logos*, as here used. It was employed to denote a train of conceptions concerning the Deity familiar at the time when St. John wrote, and ultimately blended with the philosophy of his age, but long since obsolete, and so foreign from our habits of thinking, that it is not easy for us to conform our minds to its application. The Greek word *Logos*, in one of its primary senses, answered nearly to our word *Reason*. It denoted that faculty, by which the mind disposes its ideas in their proper relations to each other; the Depositing Power, if I may so speak, of the mind. In reference to this primary sense, it was applied to the Deity, but in a wider significance. The *Logos* of God was regarded, not in its strictest sense, as merely the Reason of God, but under certain aspects, as the Wisdom, the Mind, the Intellect of God. To this the Creation of all things was especially ascribed. The conceptum may seem chosen inaptly; but the Cause why the creator was primarily referred to the *Logos*, or Intellect of God, rather than to his goodness or omnipotence, as to be found in the Platonic Philosophy, as it existed about the time of Christ, and particularly as taught by the eminent Jewish philosopher, Philo of Alexandria."

"According to that philosophy, there existed an eternal world of Ideas, formed by God, the perfect model of the Sun, Deity, visible, corresponding to that which is invisible may be compared with what a human, to the spirit of a building or city, which he architect forms in his own mind, before commencing its erection. The faculty by which God disposed and managed the world of reason was his *Logos*, Reason, or Intellect. This world, according to our representation, was supposed to have its seat in the Logos or Mind of God, each being to another, it was identified with the *Logos*. The Platonic philosophy further taught, that the Ideas of God were not merely the objects of a poet or scholar's language, the essential forms of all created things. In this philosophy, matter in its primary state, prior to matter, if I have so speak, was regarded merely as the sub-

stratum of all others, being in itself devoid of all properties, was impressed upon it by the ideas of often speaks of under the figure of *gold*. These Ideas related these materials, becoming connected with an inconceivable matter, and thus giving birth to all things sensible. But the seat of these ideas, or principles, being the *Logos*, or Intellect of God; and according to the other representations mentioned, these Ideas constituting the *Logos*, the *Logos* was, in consequence, represented as the great agent in creation. This doctrine being settled, the meaning of the Term gradually extended itself by a natural process, and came at last to comprehend all the attributes of God manifested in the creation and government of the Universe. These attributes, abstractly from God himself, were made an object of thought, under the name of the *Logos*. The *Logos* thus conceived, was necessarily personified or, as I shall figuratively say a person. In our own language, in describing an agency, agency, is its nature personal, and to be ultimately referred to God. We must indeed avoid attaching a personal character to the *Logos* conceived abstractly from God, by the use of the words *person* and *it*. Thus we might say, All things were made by it. But the Greek language afforded no such resource, the relative pronoun, in connection with *Logos*, being necessarily masculine. Thus the *Logos* or Intellect of God came to be, figuratively or literally, conceived of as an intermediate being between God and his creatures, the great agent in the creation and government of the universe." \* \* \*

The conception, and the name of the *Logos* were familiar at the time when St. John wrote. They occur in the Apocryphal book of the Wisdom of Solomon. The writer, speaking of the destruction of the first born of the Egyptians, says (chap. 10)

"Thou Almighty *Logos* hast drawn them down from heaven, from his royal throne, a fierce warrior, into the midst of a land of destruction."

In another passage, Wisdom, in the prayer addressed to Solomon, he is represented as thus addressing God (x. 3, 2)

"God of our fathers, and Lord of mercy,  
Who hast made all things by thy *Logos*,  
And hast made man by thy Wisdom." \* \* \*

St. John, writing in Asia Minor, where many, for whom he composed his Gospel, were familiar with the conception of the *Logos*, has probably, for this reason, adopted the term *Logos*, in the proem

of his Gospel, to express that manifestation of God by Christ, which is elsewhere referred to the spirit of God."

"That in return the conception that has been described having been formed of the Logos, and the Logos being, as I have said, necessarily personified, or spoken of figuratively as a person, it soon followed, as a natural consequence, that the Logos was by many *hypostatized*, or conceived of as a proper person. When the corrective of experience and actual knowledge cannot be applied, what is strongly imagined is very likely to be regarded as having a real existence, and the philosophy of the ancients was composed in great part of such imaginations. The Logos, it is to be recollected, was that power by which God disposed in order the basis of the archetypal world. But in particular reference to the creation of the material universe, the Logos came in time to be conceived of by many as hypostatized, as a proper person going forth, as it were, from God in order to execute the plan prepared, and to give order and arrange all things conformably to it, and to give sensible form to *primæval matter*, by impressing it with the ideas of the archetypal world. In many cases in which the term 'Logos' occurs, if we understand by it the *Disposing Power* of God in a sense conformable to the notions explained, we may have a clearer idea of its meaning than if we render it by the term 'Reason,' or 'Wisdom,' or any other which our language affords." \* \* \* \*

"From the explanations which have been given of the concept and concerning the Logos of God, it will appear that this term properly denoted an attribute or attributes of God, and that upon the course of an attribute or attributes, the idea of personality was superinduced." \* \* \* \*

"It was his (St. John's) purpose in the introduction of his Gospel, to declare that Christianity had the same divine origin as the Universe itself, that it was to be considered as proceeding from the same power of God. Writing in Asia Minor, for readers, by name of whom the term 'Logos' was more familiarly used than any other, to express the attributes of God viewed in relation to his creatures, he adopted this term to convey his meaning, because from their associations with it it was fitted particularly to impress and affect their minds; thus connecting the great truths which he taught with their former modes of thinking and speaking. But upon the idea primarily expressed by this term, a new Conception, the Conception of the proper personality of those attributes, had been superinduced. This

Conception, then, the doctrine of an hypostatized Logos, it appears to have been his purpose to set aside. He would guard himself, I think, against being understood to countenance it. The Logos, he teaches, was not the agent of God, but God himself. Using the term merely to denote the attributes of God as manifested in his works, he teaches that the operations of the Logos are the operations of God; that all conceived of under that name is to be referred immediately to God; that in speaking of the Logos we speak of God, 'That the Logos is God.'

"The Platonic Conception of a personal Logos, distinct from God, was the Embryo form of the Christian Trinity. It, therefore, the view just given of the purpose of St. John is correct, it is a remarkable fact, that his language has been alleged as a main support of that view doctrine the rudiments of which it was intended to oppose." — *Newton on the Trinity.*

I shall now give a paraphrase of the Introduction of St. John's Gospel in harmony with the Conception that the Logos is described first as dwelling in God, and afterwards as manifested through Christ, the Logos made flesh, "God manifest in the flesh," an expression which is rather from implying Trinitarianism, that it exactly expresses the Unitarian idea of Christianity as a revelation of God—of Deity imaged perfectly on the human scale, and the light of the knowledge of the glory of God on the face of Jesus Christ.

#### *Proem of St. John's Gospel*

"In the beginning was the Logos, and the Logos was with God, and the Logos was God. It was in the beginning, with God. By it all things were made, and without it was not any thing made, that was made. It was life (the source of life) and the source of life in blessedness was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not. There was a man sent from God. This man came as a witness to bear testimony concerning the light, that all men through him might believe. He was not the Light, but he was sent to bear testimony concerning the Light. That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. It was in the world, and the world was made by it, and the world knew it not. It came unto its own, and its own received it not. But as many as received it, it gave power to become the Sons of God (Laoson)—being born, not of frowmed flesh, nor through the will of

the flesh, nor through the will of man, but being children of God. And the Logos became flesh (now manifested through a man, the Mind or Spirit\* of God shown on the human image), and dwelt amongst us, and we beheld his glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth."

Romans ix. 5, page 22.

\* Whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, God who is over all, be blessed for ever." Amen.

Ἐν ᾧ πατέρες καὶ ἐξ οὗ κατὰ τὴν σαρκὸς ἐγέννηται ὁ υἱὸς ὁ ἀγαπῶμεν ὅτι ἀειγενὴς ἐστὶν ὁ Θεός.

The objections made to our rendering of this passage are these:—

1. That *ἀειγενὴς* first in the sentence must refer to the verb *γεννηται*. But there is no grammatical rule to prevent *ἀειγενὴς* commencing a sentence and referring to a subsequent substantive: so that to say it must refer to the preceding *πατέρες* is only to take the desired interpretation for granted.

2. That another article is required before *καὶ*, and the position of the words to be *καὶ τὸ θεὸς ὁ πάντων κτίστης, ὁ ἀειγενής*. If *καὶ* had been placed first in the sentence, the article would have been used, but the qualifying expression *ἀειγενὴς* more than supplies its place. A passage from Plin. exactly parallel is cited by the Rev. W. Hone in his very able Review of Dr. J. P. Smith's Scripture Testimony to the Messiah—*ἄνθρωπος ἀείωνος ὅτι θεός*. Ed. 1649. (apud Middleton,) p. 86. Also Clem. Rom. ad Cor. cap. xxxii. *ἀναρχὸς ὁ Θεός, ὁ ἀειγενὴς ὁ ἀκαταρτήτος* is equivalent to *ὁ θεὸς ἀρχὴ*. Eusebius has this passage, *ὁ ἀρχὴ πάντων ὁ θεὸς ὁ ἀειγενὴς ὁ ἀκαταρτήτος*. See Justin. Eccles. Hist. vol. ii. 225.

3. That *ἀειγενὴς* ought to come first in the sentence. But the words "for ever," *ἀειγενὴς*, whenever used, are placed at the end of the sentence, and this naturally draws attention to the same position, to avoid awkwardness or ambiguity. In the cases where *ἀειγενὴς* dependent words, then *ἀειγενὴς* comes first, that the words connected by construction may not be awkwardly separated: in the

\* We find in the *Præfatio* of the Trinity, the Logos and the Holy Spirit *Idem sed distincti*, meaningly connected by the Tertian. "What was John said that the Logos was made flesh, and the *ἀειγενὴς* (concerning the common conception) that the Spirit was made flesh, did they mean any thing distinct?"—*Trin. Præf. Advers. Praxian.* Cap. i. 15.

case of *ἀειγενὴς* having dependent words, as here, then *ἀειγενὴς* would naturally come first.

In the only three cases in which *ἀειγενὴς* stands alone occur in the New Testament they follow one another in this fixed order.

In the Septuagint, contrary to the statement of Whoby, there is one clear instance of a similar construction—*ἄνθρωπος ἀείωνος* Ps. lxxvi. 19.

Finally, *ἀειγενὴς* is nowhere in the New Testament applied to Jesus.

4. That our rendering requires another substantive verb. Of such ellipsis examples might be given without number. See *Act. x. 12, 2 Cor. x. 5, Ephes. iv. 6*, a case exactly in point. Rev. xxi. 13.

5. That there is an anastrophe intended by St. Paul between "as concerning the flesh," and "God over all." But the sentence is not an anastrophe but a *σύνθεσις* joined by Christ, as the *ἀκαταρτήτος* and at the close of a series of blessings and privileges, in acknowledgment almost spontaneously bestowed on God.

*Comments on the Rev. Mr. Byrth's Lecture entitled "The Unitarian Interpretation of the New Testament based upon defective Scholarship, or on dishonest or unaccounted Criticism."*

Page 108.—"It does appear to me extraordinary, that my opponents should appear to complain of the introduction of critical and scholastic considerations into this discussion." We make no such complaint. We complain that the *essence* of Christianity should be derived from the Criticism and Interpretation of *constrained* passages. Will my revered opponent state a single argument for Trinitarianism, or advance a single scriptural evidence, not fairly open to hostile Criticism or Interpretation? To us the Revelation is not derived from any thing doubtful, it is derived from those impressions of Jesus the Christ which Trinitarianism itself receives. To us the Revelation is the *Person*, (in which we include his Life, Character, Desires,) of the man Christ Jesus. We know not God when we know that he who was as full of grace as of truth was the Image of our Father's Mind: we know God's will for man when we look upon him who was perfected human nature: we know the connections of Heaven with Duty when we see the crucified made the glorified, and taken to the bosom of his Father.

Page 115.—"It does not, however, follow that, because the Unitarian interpretation of the New Testament bears this character, all Unitarians are defective Scholars, or unaccounted or dishonest Critics. Many of them may have received their opinions through the channel of traditional education, and may never have deemed it obligatory upon them to examine the matter for themselves." So, we have the choice of any one of three characters, viz., *Bad Scholars, Disrespectful Critics, or So-called Christians, who look nothing and care nothing about the matter.* Does Mr. Byrth really think that this last refuge removes the insult of his Title, or softens its indictment? Some of us, confined to a choice among these three descriptions, *perish* Christianity, and are therefore certainly bound "to examine the matter" for ourselves; nay is it to us that the suspicion usually attaches of receiving our "opinions through the channel of a traditional education."

"The dogmata are too few, too general, too important, to admit

inquiry, or to excite anxiety as to their truth." There is some truth in this, though not exactly of the kind the author contemplated. The interest of Trinitarianism depends greatly on the number of its dogmata, their intricacy, their supposed necessity to salvation, the exactness of their right mental positions. There is much in a wrong *Theology*, having an intricate scheme, and whose main principles and evidences are external to the mind of the believer, and therefore constantly agitating him with apprehension as to whether he has disposed them according to the precise conditions of orthodoxy, to occupy and sometimes oppress minds that have little affinity with a saving Religion, a simple spirit of Worship, Duty, and Trust immortal. *But is it true that these Unitarian Doctrines are "unimportant?"*—The Fatherhood of God—the Brotherhood of Man—the relations of Jesus to God as His Image, and to Man as his Model—the relations of Eternity—the Heaven of Duty?

Page 119.—See the Note.—Surely Mr. Byrth will perceive the unfairness of excluding a Book to be our Standard, merely because some *other* parties, very unfavourably disposed towards us, choose to represent it as such.

Page 124.—See the Note.—"I have been charged with almost altogether suppressing, in the delivery of this Discourse, the word 'controversially.'" I eagerly assure Mr. Byrth that no such charge was ever made, nor could be made with truth, and I am much grieved that any rumour has conveyed to him the pain of such an impression. Though using hard words to his opponents, and giving them the choice of any one of three bad characters, I believe him perfectly incapable of "dishonesty." Believing me to have made such a charge, whilst I do not excuse him for so believing upon hearsay, I feel obliged by his forbearance, and for a courtesy in denying the charge, which if made I should not have deserved. I complained that the "controversial" attitude of Unitarianism were confounded with its *own peaceful and positive ones*, two things that were most carefully separated in the speeches from which Mr. Byrth took extracts; and that he represented as a description of Unitarianism, what was distinctly stated to be Unitarianism, "controversially" described. Mr. Byrth, though giving the word "controversially," overlooked its *meaning*.

Page 132.—" Epiphanius asserts that the Ebionites," &c. (in the note marked †).

As it is exceedingly inconvenient to repeat subjects and answers, and so never to get rid of a topic, I refer Mr. Byrth and my readers to page B. on the Ebionites and their Gospel, in the Appendix to the Second Lecture of our Course.

Page 140.—See the note.—" I cannot but express my satisfaction, that in the very place where this book was thus regarded as an authority, and thus earnestly recommended, it is now renounced and disclaimed."

I do not know what Mr. Byrth includes in "renouncing" and "disclaiming." If these words mean "rejecting as a standard authority," then in the place alluded to was the *Improved Version of the Holy Scriptures* renounced and disclaimed.

The phrase quoted in the note certainly requires much qualification. Nevertheless the *Improved Version* is neither renounced nor disclaimed. We have no predilection for the mere principle of taking things, in the mass, or leaving them, in the mass, without discrimination. And I fancy that if our opponents were in these matters as much of liberty as ourselves, there are some of their opinions which would soon be thrice as widely.

Page 143.—" For even they would scarcely think highly of the relationship of Bishop Pearce."

I have quoted Bishop Pearce, not for his learning, though unquestionably that was respectable, but for the sake of stating that the acceptance by a Bishop of the English Church of a certain interpretation ought to have screened "a reputed Heretic" from the charge of accepting the same interpretation solely for the sake of an *a priori* meaning.

Page 146.—" Epiphanius has little authority with any one else." Mr. Byrth is quite right in his estimate of Epiphanius. But it is hardly wise for those who, like Mr. Byrth, rest their faith upon external testimonies, to look too closely into the characters of the witnesses, or have doubts respecting them in the public mind. We know how much of the weight of these testimonies rests upon Eusebius: and I doubt not Mr. Byrth knows very well that he is clearly convicted of having interpolated one passage in Josephus, and corrupted another.

How can we tell how far this process of recolonisation was carried? Why is it that we have not the works of the Heretics, of whose names ecclesiastical History is so full?

Page 147.—See the Note.—Mr. Byrth seems to think it impossible to have worked the Title of his Lecture so as not to have insulted some one. Will he allow me to suggest what the Title might have been without offence, though not with exact truth of description—"Some of the interpretations of the *Improved Version* of the New Testament based upon defective Scholarship." To attribute "dishonesty" and want of "caution" Mr. Byrth with I am sure feel to be too odious to be altogether worthy of his character as a Critic and a Scholar. In the text of his Lecture (p. 122), he indeed states his belief that Unitarian Interpretation, *of every kind*, wants scholarship, or wants honesty—and it was to the proof of this statement that he ought to have applied himself, or else to have altered the Title of his Lecture.

Page 148.—Luke iii. 23—"And Jesus himself began to be about thirty years of age, being (as was supposed) the son of Joseph."

This passage was not introduced into the first part of Mr. Byrth's Lecture as originally delivered. I state this only to excuse myself for having taken no notice of it in the body of my Lecture. This is the case also with some other passages. There were also expressions and sentiments of Mr. Byrth spoken, but not printed. I would not state this were it not necessary to justify some passages in my own Lecture. I refer especially to an oration which was made of a most objectionable and irreverent sentiment of Coleridge's, full of the very spirit of dogmatism and presumption. (P. 161.)

With regard to Luke iii. 23, The rendering of the *Improved Version* is that of Bishop Pearce, who I suppose had no historical reason for preferring it. I confess it does not seem natural. Dr. Caspenter thinks the words "as he was supposed," put in to guard against some Greek or Platonic error, and for the purpose of stating distinctly that he was the son of Joseph, as he was supposed to be. The same writer acutely remarks that it is most irresponsible, indeed next to impossible, that any writer should trace our Lord's descent from David through Joseph, and then declare that Joseph was only supposed to be his father, thus nullifying his own genealogy. Knobel gives a suggestion of Butler (2. 4.) which he evidently implies that *de auctoritate*

applies not to the supposed descent of Jesus from Joseph, but to the whole genealogy. I quote his note.

"*Adhuc ut in h. suscipiatur etiam verba de sanctis, non tantum non referenda esse, quod Judæi falso putaverint, Josephum esse Christum parentem, sed spectari quoque hoc verbum genealogiam ipsam h. l. exhibitam, etque reddenda esse: Anni potestest esse Jese genealogiam, non patris ejus Josephi, hujus patris Eli, etc.* ut adeo Lucas professus sit, se maxime genealogiam, prout ea in manus suas venisset, sicque authenticam illius verum defendere velle. Hæc ratione admissa, explicari forte etiam posset, qui testis sit, ut Lucas genealogiam ipsi suspectam, in Evangelio infanti Jese interpretari, ut eadem illius infante adjectam, h. l. insereret, quod necesse adparatum debetis habere, ut eam acciperet. Alii opinati sunt, hanc genealogiam, cum diversa sit ab ea, quæ in Mattheo commentariis reperitur, cum talia verculo superambibus copiosa sit, non in Luca ipso, sed verius auctorem esse."

Page 149.—See the Note—"Jacob begot Joseph, the husband of Mary of whom (Mary) was born (or was begotten) Jesus who is called the Christ."—Now it is possible to declare, in plain terms, that, though Jesus was born of Mary, who was married to Joseph, yet that Joseph *did not* beget him, —*Mary*. Great is the ingenuity here, wonderfully unapproach'd. Is it not clear that St. Matthew was tracing the descent of Jesus from David, and that he brings down the chain to the very last link, namely Joseph, that is, the very Joseph necessary to be included, the husband of the mother of Jesus? That Joseph, the very husband of Mary, from whom Christ was born, being thus shown to be a legal descendant of David, the Evangelist stops. What could he do more? His object being to trace the descent of Jesus from David, what could be more natural than, when he arrived at Joseph, to say—here is the unbroken succession, for this is the very man who was the husband of that Mary from whom Jesus was born. Of course the writer could not alter the form of expression until he arrived at the very man, whom he wished to identify as the husband of Mary—the mother of Jesus—and the reason for altering it then is very obvious.

If Joseph was not the father of Jesus, the genealogy is vitiated, for it is *through* Joseph that the descent is traced.

Pages 157, 158.—"He was in the world, and the world was made by

him, and the world knew him not."—"He was in the world, and the world was enlighten'd by him, and yet the world knew him not."

—L. V. The interpretation cannot, I think, be defended. I am sorry it was ever given. Yet Mr. Byrth's sarcasm is quite powerless against it, "what kind of light is that which blinds the eyes which it was intended to illuminate?" in the face of the text—"the light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not:" unless he adopts the interpretation of some of the Fathers,—"And the darkness did not receive itself into the light, interpretate and quench it."

Page 161.—The liberality of Rowan Hall. We desire to speak with respect of this great and good man. But perhaps it would be impossible to name a man more liberal as a controversialist, and who allowed himself such an unguarded use of unchristian language. It was only the other day I learned an anecdote of him from the person to whom the words were spoken, described at one of his vigils and his discourse: speaking of the Unitarians he said—"they are inspired from *heresy*,"—with a look and an air which never to be forgotten. Many passages might be brought from his writings, especially his Reviews, demonstrative of this temper; but the passage given by Mr. Byrth himself, in which he is satisfied to rest conclusions so innoxious and fearful upon reasonings so arbitrary and vague, is quite enough. When any man acquainted with the state of Theological opinion in the world, and with the impossibility of unanimity, can fix upon his own opinions as essential, and run a distinct line between Heaven and Hell, we require no further tests of his "liberality;" unless indeed he is, what Mr. Hall was not, only a traditional believer.

I have already remarked that some of my observations apply more to the spoken than to the printed lecture. Were it possible to efface the impressions made by the speaker, and which required to be counteracted, gladly would I efface every word of personal reference from my pages. Even now, with the recollection fresh upon my mind, of the un-giving contempt, both literary and moral, expressed by words and tones, not conveyed by the printed page, when the speaker, feeling that the sympathies of his audience were with him to the full, and that their knowledge of the subject required from him *the*



*broader statements, to render it intelligible, gave I myself to the excitement of the moment, — I have more than doubted whether it would not have been better to have avoided every personal allusion. — I believe that I have in no case overstated or misrepresented what was said. I deeply grieve to be upon my pages the suggestions, perhaps, of momentary excitement, which Mr. Hyatt's better feeling has, in some instances, refused to record; — and that the obligation I was under to remove an impression actually made, does not permit me to give full effect to the working of a Vindict Spirit, the manifestations of which, in other ways, I have respectfully to acknowledge.*

## LECTURE IV.

“THERE IS ONE GOD, AND ONE MEDIATOR BETWEEN GOD AND MEN, THE MAN CHRIST JESUS.”

BY REV. HENRY DEISS.

THERE IS ONE GOD, AND ONE MEDIATOR BETWEEN GOD AND MEN, THE MAN CHRIST JESUS. — 1 COR. 8: 6.

THE passage I have read suggests the subject of my lecture, the position in which we stand to our opponents will suggest the tendency of the commentary. The text announces the two great truths on which our entire system of Christianity is based, and ours in all essential points, we think, coincides with simple, with evangelical Christianity. The truths propounded in the text are, the Unity of God, and the Unity of Christ. — A unity in each case absolute and perfect, without division of nature or distinction of person. We believe that God is one, — that he is one being, one mind, one person, one agent. And this belief, and no other, we can deduce from the works of creation, and the teachings of the Scriptures.

That God is one universally and absolutely, we have impressed upon us from the order of creation; that he is great, we learn from the magnitude of his works; and that he is good, we learn from their blessedness and beauty. This sublime truth is illustrated in every region of existence, so far as we know it, and every illustration is an argument. It is written on the broad and immortal heavens in characters of glory and light; it is manifested in that mighty law which binds atom to atom into a world, and world to world in a

system, and system to system, until from that wonderful universe which science can traverse, we arise to him, whom no knowledge can fathom, whom no limits can bound, and in contemplating whom science must give place to faith.

The heavens declare the glory of God, the firmament showeth his handy work. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge—and that God is one, is proclaimed in this speech, and manifested in this knowledge. It gleams in the light, it breathes in the air, it moves in the life of all created nature; it is the harmony of creation, and the spirit of providence, the inspiration of reason, and the consistency of wisdom. The existence of our Supreme Intelligence is the Testimony of Nature, and to the same import are the testimonies of Scripture. We are told, and told it in every variety of tone, that to believe one God in three persons is absolutely needful to Salvation, yet we may read from Genesis to Revelations without finding such a doctrine either as a statement of truth, or a means of sanctity: but the simple and unqualified declaration that God is one, without any of these dogmatical distinctions which men of later ages have invented, I need not tell a Bible-reading audience, are interwoven with the whole texture of revelation. It was that for which Abraham left his home, and went forth a wanderer from his family and his nation; it was that for which Moses refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, and for which he chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God; it was that over which he had long thought in his shepherd-life in an Arabian wilderness; it was that with which he was more deeply inspired in the solemn retirements of Mount Horeb, it was that to which all his laws and institutions pointed. Our Saviour took the doctrine as a known maxim—and in this his disciples followed him. We have then the truth brought down to us through Scripture, in patriarchal tradition, in Mosiac legislation, in the poetry of prophets, in the words of Christ, in the preach-

ing of apostles.—and we have it brought down to us without one of those distinctions with which it has been since surrounded by theological ingenuity. We are zealous in the assertion of it, not for its mere metaphysical correctness, but for its moral power and its moral consistency. It does not divide our hearts, and it does not confuse our heads. It leads our minds up to one spirit, infinite in power, infinite in wisdom, and infinite in goodness. Without confusion or perplexity we can trace God in all and all in God; in the atom that trembles in a sunbeam, as in the planet that moves in boundless light, from the blush of a flower to the glory of the heavens—from the throbb of an insect to the life of an immortal. The Unitarian faith in the universal father is clear, simple, and defined; inflicting no violence on our understandings, and raising no conflicts in our affections. One, and one in the strictest sense, is our parent, one is our sovereign, one is our highest benefactor, one is our protector and our guide, one is our deliverer and sanctifier; one has bestowed all we possess, one alone can give all we hope for: one is holy who demands our obedience; one is merciful who pities our repentance; one is eternal in whose presence we are to live, and therefore whether we present our adorations in dependence, or bow down in submission, or send forth our praises in gratitude, there is one, and but one, to whom our aspirations can ascend, and to whom our hearts can be devoted. Thus impressed, we must feel united to one Father in filial obedience, and to all men in a common and fraternal relationship; we cannot look upon some as selected, and upon others as outcasts; we cannot look upon some as purchased, and upon others as reprobate; we cannot look upon some as sealed with the spirit of grace for ever unto glory everlasting, and upon others as abandoned, unprotected, and unprotected, the victims of an everlasting malediction. We regard men as bound in a community of good, consequently as bound in a community of praise; we regard them

as struggling in like trials, and therefore indebted to each other for mutual sympathy; we regard them as heirs of the same glory, and on the level of their heavenly hopes, standing on a basis of sacred and eternal equality. If these sentiments are false, they are at least generous, and it is not often that generosity is found in company with falsehood. Alas, how many heart-burning enmities, how many deadly persecutions have been caused by different apprehensions of God's nature or God's worship; how often have these differences broken all the fraternal bonds of humanity, made man the greatest enemy to man,—more savage and cruel than the beast, yea, and cruel in proportion to the zeal he pretended for his God. But never could this have been, had men believed in God, had men believed in Christ—had they believed in God as an impartial and universal Father, had they believed in Christ as an equal and universal brother.—Then we could have all sent our mingled prayers to the skies, and with a Christianity as broad as our earth, and as ample as our race, and generous as the soul of Jesus, we could have taken all mankind to our heart. We maintain it not in mere abstract speculation, but because we consider it a positive and a vital truth. Were the point metaphysical and not moral, we conceive it would be little worthy of dispute—and in that sense I for one would have small anxiety, whether God existed in three persons or in three thousand. In like manner we hold the simple and absolute unity of Christ; a unity of nature, a unity of person, and a unity of character. But as this topic is to occupy so large a space in the present lecture, I shall here forbear from further comments.

The statement of our subject in a text, was alluded to by the Christ Church Lecturer, in a tone that at least approached to censure. But we consider it amongst our privileges, that we can express our main principles in the simple and obvious language of Scripture; and if in this case deep scholarship and acute criticism be needed to give it to common minds

a meaning different from that in which we understand it, the fault certainly is not ours.—Neither, indeed, is ours the blame, if a similar phraseology pervades the whole Christian Scriptures; that in every page we read of God and Christ, and never of God in three persons, or of Christ in two natures. To find out such distinctions, we leave to Scholastic ingenuity; to give them definition and perpetuity, we consign to the framers of creeds and articles—and to receive and reverence them we turn over to the admirers of Athanasian perspicuity. We take the New Testament as the best terminology; we are satisfied with a religion direct and simple in its principles, and we long not for a religion of deducibles. We have been accused of tortuous criticism; and although we leave not to retort the accusation on our opponents, so far I mean, as it implies moral delinquency, we cannot forbear observing that the intellectual sinuities by which some of these deductions have been drawn from the New Testament to us, certainly, a subject of not a little admiration. Our motive in selecting this text was the best of all which governs men in the use of language, simply that with greatest brevity and greatest perspicuity, it enunciates our opinions. Our opponents, however, have no right to complain; the advantage of being first in the field was on their side, and the struggle was not provoked on our part but on theirs: they of course selected their own subjects, and they suggested ours. They could, therefore, have had no uncertainty either as to our views or interpretation of the text. I would not allude to a matter so small, were it not for the contradictory delinquencies with which Unitarians are accused— one time they are charged with dreading an appeal to Scripture, and when by the very title of their subject, they tacitly appeal to Scripture, there is wanting still no occasion to blame.

What, in Unitarian views, is Christ the Man, and what is Christ the Mediator, shall make the subject of the present Lecture.

1.—First, I beg your attention to the enquiry as to what we believe of Christ as man. To this we answer, that in his nature we think him simply and undividedly human; that in his character we regard him morally perfect. We cannot recognize in Christ a mixture of natures, and we wonder that any who read the gospel's records can. That he was simply and merely human, is a conclusion which meditation on these Records but fixes more profoundly on our understandings, and makes more precious to our faith. We derive the conclusion from Christ's own language—"Ye seek to kill me," he says, "a man—which hath told you the truth, which I heard of God."—Again, when a worldly and ambitious individual, mistaking the true nature of this kingdom, desired to become his disciple: "The foxes, said Jesus, have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not whereon to lay his head." Instances, too many to repeat, might be enumerated: but the only other I shall adduce is that in which Christ's human nature speaks from its deepest sorrows, and its strongest love: when Jesus, as he hung upon the Cross, saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing by, he saith unto his mother, "Woman, behold thy son." It is vain to tell us of an infinite God veiled behind this suffering and sweetness, the mind repels it, despite of all the efforts of theology.\*

The impression of a simple humanity was that which he left on the mind of his countrymen. What other impression could they have of one whom they daily saw amongst them as of themselves? who came weary to rest in their habitations, who came hungry to sit at their boards; whom they met in their streets sinking with fatigue; whom they might see upon their way-side asking drink from a well; one whom they saw weep over their troubles and rejoice in their gladness. Nay, the very intemperance of his humanity became

\* See Note on this page.

a matter of accusation. To many it seemed subversive of religion. That spirit which sympathized with human brings, in their joys and woes, which not only loved the best, but would not cast out the worst, was what those of strict and narrow hearts could not understand. He came eating and drinking, and they called him a man gluttonous and a wine-bibber. Had he said long prayers at the corners of their streets, and been zealous for the traditions of the fathers, they would have revered him as a saint. Those who were paupers in their own spiritual sufficiency knew not how he could be the friend of sinners; how he could associate with the deserted and the excommunicated; how he could take to his compassion the weary and the heavy-laden. The pharisee who proudly asked him to his house, but gave him no salute, no oil for his stiffened joints, and no water for his parched feet, had nothing within him whereby to interpret the feeling of Jesus towards her who anointed his head with nimentum, washed his feet with her tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head. Yet, it was this truth and fulness of humanity which made Jesus hateful to the pharisees, but loved and blessed by the poor; it was this that made the common people hear him gladly, and gave his voice a power which they never felt in the teachings of the scribes; which drew crowds around him, in wilderness and mountain, that hung raptured on the glad tidings which he preached. The stammer of Herod on a particular occasion cried out, "It is the voice of a god and not of a man;" but no one ever thought of insulting Jesus with such an exclamation.

The guilt of the Jews in crucifying Christ has been added to in the present controversy. But this is only an additional proof that Jesus left no other conviction on the minds of his countrymen than that he was simply a man. That our views diminish this guilt has been urged as a powerful objection against us; but, with reverence I say it, the objection turns more against Christ himself. Either then he was simply man,

or being Deity, he suppressed the evidence which would prove it, and allowed this people to contract the awful guilt of killing a God-man. If the first be true, the guilt asserted has no existence; if the second, I leave you to judge in what light it places the sincerity and veracity of an incarnate Deity. There is neither declaration nor evidence afforded by Christ by which the Jews could think him more than man. On the contrary he disclaims expressly the far lower honour at which they thought his presumption aimed, by a quotation from their own Scriptures: "It is written in your law," he observes, "I said ye are Gods. If he called them Gods, unto whom the word of God came (and the Scripture cannot be broken), say ye of him whom the Father hath sanctified and sent into the world, thou blasphemest, because I said I am the Son of God?"\* There is then no declaration, nor yet is there evidence. Miracles were not such, for the Jewish mind and memory were filled with instances of these, and to the performers of which they never thought of attributing a nature above humanity. If Christ was more, the fact should have been plainly manifested, for the idea of a God in a clothing of flesh was one not only foreign but repugnant to every Jewish imagination. The difference between the Jews and pagans in this particular is not a little striking. Jesus raised the dead before their eyes, and yet they thought him but a man having great power from the Creator. Paul in company with Barnabas, healed a cripple at Lystra, and the populace cried out, "The Gods are come down to us in the likeness of men." When Paul in Melita shook without harm the viper from his hand, the spectators who at first considered him a murderer, changed their minds, and said that he was a God. In proportion then to the natural and religious repugnance which the Jews had to humanize the divinity, should there have been clearness in the proof of it on the part of Jesus. No such proof was given.

\* JOHN x. 34-36.

The greatest miracle of Jesus distilled into the conviction of the Jews in his single human nature. The woman of Samaria, wondering at once at his charity and his knowledge, called her neighbours to see a *woman* who told her all things whatsoever she did. She asked them, then is not this the Christ? The blind man awakened by his touch from thick darkness into the marvellous light of God's creation describes him but as a man who assisted his eyes. The Jewish officers struck dumb before his wisdom, declare that never man spake like this man. The Jews who stood around him and saw Lazarus, whose body had been already dissolving, come forth quickened from the grave, beheld in him but the powerful and the loving friend. The multitudes of Judæa, who in desert solitude were amazed at his wonderful works, simply "glorified God who had given such power unto men."

Similar was the impression which he left upon his intimate friends. What would have been their emotions had they believed that continually they were in the bodily presence of the incarnate God? How would they not have bowed themselves in the dust and stamped the familiar word as it trembled on their lips? Instead of approaching with unfeeling hearts, how would they not have stood afar off and apart, and gazed with awe upon a being who was pacing a fragment of the world he created, instead of clinging to him as one of themselves? Whenever they saw his mysterious appearance, would they not call on the mountains to fall upon them, and the hills to cover them? But not so was it. The lowly, the humble, and the poor rejoiced to see him, and were glad when he entered their habitations. They were consoled by the benediction of peace with which he sanctified his approach and his departure. For him was the gratulations of loving friends, and for him were the smiles of little children. In Bethany, Martha, when he came, was busy in much serving, and the meek and gentle Mary sat at his feet to drink in his heavenly wisdom. At the last supper John leaned upon his bosom.

At the cross, when the head of Jesus bent heavily in anguish, and solitary torture was wearing away his life, there again we meet the same disciple, there also we meet the mother of Jesus and the grateful Magdalene, all three oppressed with darkest affliction and despair. Some of them we again behold at the sepulchre in utmost alarm. Now this grief at the cross and this perplexity at the tomb is consistent with no other supposition than that they regarded him simply as a man. Why else should they have been afflicted? What though his enemies were strong, if knowing him to be God, they must also have known that his power was boundless and his triumph certain. This sorrow and uncertainty, I repeat, can have no other foundation than a belief in his simple humanity. And surely if his mother had only such impression, it is hard to expect that the Jews at the time, and many Christians since, could have had any other.

I anticipate the objection that the glories of his deity were concealed, and that this concealment was necessary to his predicatorial work. I answer then, that when he had departed, and when such a secrecy was no longer needful, his apostles on some of the most solemn occasions merely asserted his humanity; on occasions, too, when, if he were God as well as man, the whole truth were to be expected. Paul,† in announcing him as the great and final judge of the world, calls him no more than man. Nor does his language assume a higher import when he speaks of him as the pattern and pledge of immortality ‡. No other conclusion is to be drawn from the address of Peter to Cornelius; and if a belief of Christ's deity be necessary to salvation, the centurion might, for anything Peter asserted, have gone direct to perdition. § Still more remarkable is it, that in Peter's first public address after the departure of his master to the skies, we have nothing more than the same declaration. The occasion and the circumstances not only justified, but demanded the highest announcement that could be made

respecting Christ. The disciples had just seen him taken up into heaven, and the awe of the ascension was yet upon their hearts. He who had trod this weary earth in many sorrows was taken from their sight. They who had recently seen his blood streaming warmly on Calvary, had come fresh from the glory of Olivet. He who had been their suffering companion and instructor was now their blessed and triumphant master. Alone in the midst of a gossaming and persecuting world, with gladness solemnized by reverence, and victory tempered by grief, they had assembled to await the promised Comforter. After that event they were to be separated, and each was to take his own path in the moral wilderness that stretched far and desolately before him. The Spirit of Promise came. The cloven tongues of fire fell upon them: that beautiful emblem of the eloquent spirit of the gospel that was to carry light and heat to the hearts of all generations, and through every language of earth: that beautiful emblem of a Christianity which might exist in many forms, but be at the same time enlightened and enflamed by the soul of a common charity. Multitudes from all nations were collected in the Holy City,—under the influence of recent and solemn events Peter rises to address them. The tragedy of Calvary was yet fresh in the general imagination, the stain of a slave and malefactor's death was still dark on the forehead of Christianity. This surely was the time to rouse the ignominy that lay on the humanity of Jesus by proclaiming the resplendent glory of his godhead. This was especially to be expected from Peter. He had on a preceding occasion spurned the idea of such a shameful death, though coming from Christ's own lips; now was the time to pour the glory of the God over the humiliation of the man; he too, who in an hour of weakness denied his master, was the one who in the time of his strength and repentance would be most ready to vindicate and assert his highest honour. It is said that the apostles were not

\* Acts xviii. 26, 27.

† 1 Cor. xv. 21, 22.

‡ Acts x.

thoroughly inspired, and did not fully know Christ before the day of Pentecost. But this was the day of Pentecost. If, besides, it was the speaker's object—as indeed it must have been—that Christ should be rightly and widely known, now was the opportunity to send forth his name and nature through every kingdom and in every tongue. If, according to the doctrine some since have propounded in Christ Church, the sin of the Jews was dark in proportion to the grade of being in which we place the Saviour, now was the time, while the event was recent, to strike their hearts with terror and compunction. Contrast, then, these natural, these fair and unexaggerated expectations, with the actual speech of Peter, and without a word of comment the contrast is itself the strongest argument. “Ye men of Israel hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles, and wonders, and signs which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves know: him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible that he should be helden of it.” (Acts ii. 22, 24.) Had you been listeners to this address, I ask your candour, I ask your intellect, could you conceive that the apostle was speaking, not of a glorified man, but of an incarnate Deity? No, certainly.

The testimony of Peter thus clearly given, is more and more confirmed as we look upon the life of Jesus. In every stage of that life we see him human, and though in all moral purity and moral grandeur, yet *simply* human. We are not ashamed of our belief. No, we glory in it, and we rejoice in it. We glory in it, for it is the proof that the elements of our nature can be moulded into such beauty; and we rejoice in it, for it is the proof that he who left a religion for the immortal heart of man was himself purely and simply of the nature he would sanctify. We see him as the infant

cradled in Bethlehem, the nursing hanging on a nurse's care, and we escape the moral and intellectual confusion of joining the omnipotence of a God with the freeness of a babe. We see him in maturer years in his social relations and social intercourse casting a holy light around him, and spreading the influence of all that is most blessed in human affections. We destroy not the virtue of the man by absorbing it in the glory of the God. Human, and *only* human, we see him in goodness, in duty, and in suffering. Even in his most marvellous works of mercy, so harmonious in his power with our common nature, that we feel as if they were merely ordinary acts of kindness. When he compassionated the widow's anguish and restored her son; when pitying the blind, he opened their eyes to the joy and beauty of light; when to the ears of the deaf he gave an outlet to the music of nature and the voice of friendship; when he cast out the dumb spirit and unlocked sealed lips in hymns of gratitude and praise; when he fed multitudes on the mountain's brow; when lepers went clean from his presence to their fellows and their homes; when parents clung to their restored children, and friends who had separated in despair met again in hope,—wonderful as are all these events, we connect them with the man Christ Jesus, the real, simple, holy, and perfect man.

The lectures in Christ Church stated three peculiarities which distinguished the Unitarian from the orthodox belief in Christ's humanity. The third of these was his pre-existence. The lecturer defined with admirable accuracy the essentials of humanity, one of which, as would be universally admitted, was *to be born*. I was therefore not prepared to hear the proper humanity of Christ before he was born most zealously defended. I look upon it, however, as a mere oversight, and no doubt it will be corrected in the printed lecture.

The main point is, however, that of Christ's pre-existence,

which independently of mystical arrangement or expression is a fair topic of argument and discussion. The Lecturer quoted a number of texts from the evangelist John,—from any other of the gospel-writers he could not have taken the shadow of a proof: these he seemed to think invincible evidence. Good scholars, however, and candid critics, eye and honest Christians, have found such explanations of these expressions as satisfied both their intellects and their consciences. Orthodox commentators are aware that the idiom of the New Testament frequently uses the tense grammatically past to signify events which are actually future. I ask those critics what they have urged, what they usually urge, against Roman Catholic controversialists, who, in proving the doctrine of transubstantiation, quote the text, "This is my body which is broken for you." What says the Protestant opponent? Oh, it is a mere idiomatic expression, by which an event is represented as complete which is yet to be accomplished. In like manner and with a like interpretation, we hear the orthodox use the phrase, "The lamb slain from the foundation of the world." They have in this case no sense to speak of that as actually existing which was merely contemplated in eternal foreknowledge. If it be said that all events are present to the mind of God, so we answer are all persons; and so was Christ. This view of the subject has satisfied many reflective, and whatever our opponents may think, many able and honest minds. But I avail myself of this opportunity to state distinctly and plainly, that though challenged by our opponents in the title of their subject to discuss this point, it is one on which Unitarians have great differences of opinion, but one which would not disturb a moment's harmony in Unitarian Churches. Personally the Lecturers in the present controversy, on our side, do not believe the pre-existence of Christ, but there are congregations and individuals amongst us, with whom we hold, and wish to hold, kindly, brotherly, and Christian communion, who cling

to this doctrine most sacredly and most reverently. We all agree in maintaining the absolute unity of God, and if I may so speak, the *characterization* of Christ. We desire to bind our charity to no dogmas, and we simply say, with the Apostle, "Let even man be persuaded in his own mind."

On this point, and indeed in this discussion generally, I have observed with great pain a disposition on the part of our opponents to connect the venerable name of Priestley with infidelity. It is an unworthy office for men of education in the nineteenth century. We take not the authority of Priestley, nor of any other, except Jesus. One is our Master, even *Christ*, and all we are brethren. But in venerating Priestley, yea, and in loving his memory, we are guilty of no Sectarianism, we but agree with the generous, the excellent, the enlightened of the earth: we but agree with Robert Hall, a stern but eloquent Unitarian, who in allusion to the Birmingham riots, deprecated in glowing language the insults offered to philosophy in "the first of her sons." Both his critical and his religious opinions are fair subjects for investigation and opposition. But great sacrifices and honourable consistency should render his moral character sacred, if any thing could melt the stony heart of polemical austerity. When we hear, as lately we did hear, that Priestley sought not for truth, but for arguments to sustain a system, we are not only impelled to ask, with Pilate, "What is truth?" but also to inquire, "Who are those who seek it?" One thing we do know, that if he gave himself to a system, it was a devotion to one which had little wherewith to recompense him, and we know also that as far as the good things of this world is concerned, that he might have turned his devotion to a far better purpose. Instead of having his home and his all shattered in the storm of popular turbulence, instead of being left homeless in the land of his nativity, he might have been great amongst the heads of colleges, or first upon the bench of bishops; instead of being expatriated



amidst vulgar execration, he might have spent his life fairing sumptuously every day, clothed in purple and fine linen, with a dignified hypocrisy: instead of burying his latest sorrows in a foreign land, and dropping there his last and most bitter tears, and leaving there his venerable dust, and his still more venerable memory, to the shame of England, and to the immortal honour of his most generous and hospitable entertainers, we might now have had proposals for a national monument to him, long lists of subscribers' names, and loud clamours of exulting praise. One consolation at least was left: his right hand was clean, and had he been dragged to the stake he need never have thrust it in the flame for having been the instrument to give signature to a lie, from a beggary, a dastardly, and a cowardly fear of death. If he could look from where he lives in heaven, he would have a still nobler consolation, in being aware that, despite of heights, his name is treasured in venerated recollection with the pious and philosophical of all sects and parties—that to give him due and most beautiful praise\* was amongst the last earthly acts of a kindred spirit, but of another sod, that fanatics may rant and rage, but the good will love. That when this, with such controversies in general, sink into the common and oblivious grave to which all polemical divinity is doomed, the good his invention have given to mankind will survive, and the witness he has left of an upright conscience will be an everlasting example.

The conviction of his reason, it is true, was so strong against the pre-existence of Christ, that he would suppose the apostle misunderstood the Saviour's words, or the amanuensis mis-transcribed the apostle's language. This was urged as a mighty accusation, as a most blasphemous transgression. There are here an opinion and an alternative. The opinion is the belief in Christ's simple humanity; the alternative is merely to suppose the want of memory in an evangelist,

\* *Curior*—see Note I.

or the want of accuracy in a copyist. Place in contrast to this Coleridge as quoted by our opponents. He has also an opinion and an alternative—his opinion is, that Christ was God, and his alternative is, that if not God he was a *deceiver*. If Mr. Priestley was wrong, he left not only Christ but his apostles morally blameless—if Coleridge mistook, he attributed directly and without compromise the want of even common honesty to the Author of our religion: I leave you to judge between the two cases. I do not wish to disparage erring and departed genius; but when the name of Coleridge is called up in my mind in connection with that of Priestley, it is not in human nature to avoid comparison. The one steeped the best part of his life in opinions, the other spent it in honourable toil; the one squandered his brilliant and most beautiful genius in discursive efforts and unguided conversations, the other with heroic self denial shut himself up in dry and laborious studies for the physical good, and the moral wants of mankind, the one wrote sweet and wild and polished poetry for their pleasure, the other has left discoveries for their endless improvement. Yet orthodox builders for one the shrine of a saint,—but like those who in other days dug up the bones of Wickliff to be burned, drag forth the memory of the other from the peaceful and forgiving past, to inflict an execution of which we might have supposed his lifetime had a sufficient endurance. Tranquil in the far-off and quiet grave he the ashes of the Saint and Sage: his soul is beyond the turmoils and battles of this fighting world. When these who are now in strife shall be at last in union, his will will be the spirit to whom that blessed consummation will give least enjoyment.

The preacher in Christ Church made some lengthened observations on the two-fold nature of Jesus. This topic will more properly be included in another lecture. I only mention it here for the purpose of making a passing remark. The preacher's language implied that among our reasons for re-

jecting the doctrine is, that it is a mystery. Now we maintain that a mystery is properly no doctrine, for it can be neither affirmed or denied. The lecturer observed that there are mysteries in life and nature. If by such he meant facts which we do not fully comprehend, or ultimate facts beyond which we cannot penetrate, he is right. But of these we assert nothing, of these we deny nothing. Intellectually or spiritually they are in no sense subjects of contemplation. The preacher, if my memory deceives me not, maintained that philosophy has also mysteries. The principles or phenomena of Philosophy are not mysteries—and so far as they are mysteries they are not philosophy. We reject not the doctrine proposed to us on any such ground. We reject it, not because we do not understand the terms in which it is expressed, but because we do understand them, and find them equally repugnant to reason and to Scripture. We reject it because it does equal violence to faith and intellect; we reject it, not only from the want of consistency, but the want of evidence.

The apology for mystery made by the defenders of the incarnation has been as often, as able, and as successfully used by the advocates of Transubstantiation. Among other questions, we are asked by both parties—It is a favourite illustration if we know how a grain of wheat germinates and fructifies! Without hesitation we reply—no. And not only do we not understand this *how*, but many others which might seem very much simpler. But where, I ask, is the analogy? A grain of wheat is sown in the earth, and the spirit of Universal Life prepares it for reproduction, and in the harvest it comes forth abundantly multiplied, to make glad the hearts of men. On this point I am equally willing to confess my ignorance and my gratitude. All the facts are not known to me, but such as I do know are perfectly consistent with each other. If I am told that I know not how a grain of wheat germinates, I admit it without hesitation;

but I should certainly be startled if I were also told, that besides being a grain of wheat it was also, by a mysterious compound of natures, the Planet Hecate's, or the archangel Michael. And yet this does not amount by infinite degrees of self-contradiction to the assertion, that the same being is God and man; that one part of the nature is weary, and hungry, and thirsty, bowed down by every want and grief, while the other is resting in peace and life-fulness—that in the same person there is one mind which is ignorant of that which is to come in a day, and another in which reside the secrets of the universe, of time, and of eternity.

The preacher, in speaking to Unitarians specially, commenced his address to us in a tone of exhortation, and closed it in that of rebuke. And what was the ground and subject of rebuke? Why, the smallness of our numbers. He exhorted us on our want of humility, of modesty, in opposing the whole Christian world. I wondered, if I were in a place of Protestant worship, or if I heard an advocate for the right of private judgment. My mind, as by a spell, was thrown back upon the early and infant history of Christianity; I saw the disciples going forth on that opposing world, of which their master had given them no enticing picture; I saw Peter at Antioch, and Paul harassed and toil-worn at Rome and Athens; I heard the cry of the vulgar, and the sarcasms of the philosophers, going forth in prolonged utterance in condemnation of the strange doctrine: I visioned before me the little knots of Christians, bound to each other in love, holding their own faith, despite of multitudes and despite of antiquity, fronting the world's scorn and the world's persecution. I thought of Luther, standing, as he confessed, against the world, an admission which was made one of the strongest arguments against him;—an argument that there are piles of divinity to maintain on the one side, and to repel on the other. I thought on the persecution of the Waldenses and the Albigenses; I saw them, few, and scattered, and

shivering, and dying, in their Alpine solitudes: for persecution, like the sun, enters into every nook. I thought of the early struggle of Protestantism in this country,—of Latimer, of Cranmer, and of Ridley; I thought of these honest and right-noble beings given, by a barbarous bigotry, to a death of infamy; delivered over to the fires of Smithfield; perishing amid vulgar yells; not only abandoned, but condemned, by episcopal domination. I remembered having read, in the Life of Saint Francis Xavier, precisely similar objections made against him by the bouzas of Japan. I also considered how many societies at present send missionaries to the Heathen. I considered that, amidst the populousness of India, the Brahmins might make a similar objection with much greater force. Our fathers, they might say, never heard these things—our people reprobate them.

But notwithstanding such general objections, we do not withhold our admiration from Xavier and such self-denying men who were willing to spend and be spent so that they might make known the glory of Christ; we rejoice in seeing men thus forget their persons in love to their principles, and in Doctor Carey standing alone, preaching under a tree opposite to Juggernaut: we recognize with joy the impersonation of Christian sincerity and Christian philanthropy. If numbers were the proof of truth, what changeful shapes might not truth assume to meet the clamour of the multitude! And we hear the immortal Chillingworth—the first of logicians, the most charitable of polemics—thus replying to one of his assailants: “You chide upon us,” says he, “that when Luther began, he being yet but one, opposed himself to all, as well subjects as superiors. If he did so in the cause of God it was heroically done of him. This had been without hyperbolizing, *Mundus contra Athanasium et Athanasius contra mundum*. Neither is it so impossible that the whole world should be for lie in wickedness (as St. John speaks,) that it may be lawful and noble for one man to oppose the world. But yet were

we put in our scales, we should not surely testify any such thing for you; for how can we say properly that he opposed himself to all unless we could say also that all opposed themselves to him?” The same noble writer goes on to say “that though no man before him lifted up his voice as Luther did, yet who can assure us but that many before him both thought and spake in the lower voice of petitions and remonstrances in many points as he did?”—One fact at least must be conceded, and we are entitled to any advantage it implies, that it is more painful and self-sacrificing to be of the few than of the many, that there is far more to endure in being a little flock, than of the great multitude; and that in maintaining with all honesty our opinions in the face of the world’s odium and the world’s revilings, in despite of popular outcry and theological accusation, if no other virtues, we can surely claim those of sincerity and fortitude, of moral courage and moral consistency.

The preacher alluded to the ransom which Christ paid for sinners, and compared it to that which anciently was given in exchange for slaves. The question is, to whom were non-kind slaves? To whom or what was the purchase-ransom to be paid? Was this slavery to sin, to Satan, or to God? Whosoever or whatsoever held the captive, must, of course, receive the price of redemption. To which of these was it due, and how holds the analogy? I leave the subject with the lecturer.

I now turn to what is greatly more agreeable in this discussion, the statement that we hold Christ to have been morally perfect. To this we assent with all our conscience, with all our hope, and with all our hearts. We regard him as pure and perfect in every thought and word. We see him with a holy piety illuminating his whole character and conduct. We see him, in solitude and society, holding communion with his Father and our Father, his God and our God. We see him in darkest moments, in periods of

deepest anguish, maintaining a hopeful and a trustful spirit; in every affliction holding true to his love for God and man. We see him with a patience that toiled for all, and never tired. We see him plodding through every thankless labour, which here can find no recompense, except it be that wherein the act itself is a blessing to the Spirit. We see him in vexation and sorrow; and, whilst we gaze upon his tranquil brow, we feel our stormy passions silenced into peace. We see him in his struggles and temptations, and we feel how poor and pitiful are our deepest griefs or sorest trials compared with his. We regard him in the greatness of his benevolence, and we hear from his lips such words as never man spoke before. We behold him, whose soul was never tainted with sin, turn most mercifully on the repentant sinner, striking the heart with rending anguish, yet filling the eye with sweetest and most hopeful tears. We see him with a bosom throbbing with all human charities, and an ear open to every cry of woe and wretchedness. We see him in all unselfish sacrifices, and all generous labours, and regarding our nature in him as most lovely, most glorious, and most triumphant, we rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory. We see him as the most perfect image of his Father; and the first, among all his brethren, filled with the inspiration of God, and spreading it forth abundantly on the souls of men.

Amongst other wrongs to Christ, we are accused of taking away all motives of love to him. It may be fair, then, to ask, for what do Trinitarians love him? And it may be also fair to ask, what is it in him that moves their affections which may not equally move ours? They cannot love Christ the God in the same sense or on the same grounds on which they love Christ the man. For what, then, do they love Christ the man, or Christ the mediator, for which, in that aspect, we may not love him as deeply and as truly? Is it for his many and great labours? On even the orthodox doctrine, these were the

traits of the manhood and not of the godhead. Is it for his sufferings? The God could not suffer, could not be weary, could not be persecuted, could not die, could neither be hoisted nor crucified; if, therefore, all the strongest motives of love to Christ be founded in his humanity, then I assert we have all these motives. On any supposition, it was not the second person of the godhead that bent his bleeding head on Calvary, it was the man Christ Jesus. If it be said that Unitarian views do not move the heart, we have only with sorrow to confess, that no views of Christ's nature or character move us practically as they ought; and for the small results which his doctrines have produced amongst us, we, with others, have reason to bend down our heads in deepest humiliation: but we solemnly deny that our convictions about Christ have any tendency to produce such an effect. In the case of wrong, the fault is in ourselves, and not in our doctrines.

If having thus explained our views on Christ as a man, I shall occupy the remaining part of this discourse by stating, as briefly as I can, the difference between Trinitarians and ourselves on his character as a mediator.

What are the religious needs of man? says the Trinitarian. Consequently, What is the office of the Messiah? If we take the Calvinistic scheme, and at present that is the most popular, the reply would be, or should be, thus:—There is a decree of eternal election and reprobation by which millions, before the foundation of the world, were destined to be saved or lost. The numbers were fixed, and could neither be enlarged or diminished. For the salvation of the elect, and these only, the second person in the godhead became incarnate: them he purchased with his blood, and the rest were left to perish. The elect entered into life with the seal of predestination on their brows, redeemed, to be justified, to be sanctified, and finally to be glorified. *The remainder* came into the same life burdened with the imputation of a sin committed centuries previous to their existence. Fore-

doomed to perdition, overpassed by the Father, and disregarded by the Son, and unvisited by the Holy Spirit, they die in their sins, enter on their predetermined destiny, and, to use the tremendous language of the Athanasian Creed, "perish everlastingly."<sup>1</sup>

In this statement, I do no wrong to Calvinism, and scarcely justice. It might easily be made more dark, and without a whit of controversial exaggeration. But if this be a true idea of Christianity, it is a system of terror and not of mercy, an anathema and not a blessing, the fiat of universal wrath and not the words of universal mercy, the proclamation from an austere and angry Deity and not a remedy for a weak and erring humanity. Orthodoxy in this scheme, instead of declaring Christ to the human heart, alienates and removes him from it; instead of making him an encouragement, renders him a terror; instead of placing him before us as the impersonation of almighty clemency, through him proclaims an almighty vindictiveness; places Jesus out of the sphere of human affections, and wrenches him from the warm and suffering heart of man. On the orthodox principle, he is out from us, and not of us. He is alone in his own mysterious nature. Our affections are perplexed, and our heads are bewildered. To offer our sympathy, or to look for his, would be the very climax of presumption. He is in no proper sense identified with us, or allied to us. His example is more an accident than an essential of his work. The substance of his work, on the orthodox scheme, might have taken place in the most secret recesses of the universe; and God would be satisfied, and the elect would be redeemed.<sup>2</sup>

What, says Unitarianism, are the moral wants of man? Consequently, what is the mediator he requires?

Religion, we maintain, was made for man, and not man for religion. The mediator, therefore, which we require, is one who would guide and not confound our nature; who

<sup>1</sup> See Note 2.

would enlighten but not perplex it. We would look for a mediator by whom we should receive the light and truth of God and heaven to our souls. We need to see the capacities, the duties, and the destinies of our kind, in one who is perfectly, but yet simply, of ourselves. Our sorrows, our sufferings, and our darkness, we regard as but so many reasons why our Redeemer and Saviour should be entirely of our own kind. We require one who would manifest to all that God is really interested in us. We require one who would show that we are not cast out from communion with the infinite, the invisible, and the future. We require one who would correct our evils, and yet resolve our doubts. We require one who could sympathize with our weakness. We require one who would show us of what our nature is capable, and thus flash upon us the guilt of our deficiencies, or inspire us with the hope of advancement. We are feeble, and need strength; we are tempted, and need support. Jesus proves to us that the strength is in us, if we use it; and that the support is at hand, if we choose to apply it. In our transgressions, we are but too much inclined to yield to, or justify ourselves with, a guilty sophistry; but our views of Jesus leave us no room for such delusion. Whilst Trinitarianism places most of our religious wants far off and outside us, Unitarianism fixes them within us. Whilst Trinitarianism demands a Christ which shall reconcile God to us, Unitarianism holds a Christ which shall conform us to God;—to us his word and work as a spirit of life, his word and work to them but dogma or mystery.

Upon our views, Christ is properly a mediator, on those of orthodoxy, he can bear no such character: compounded of Deity and humanity, he is truly of neither. It is said that we have no need of Christ; that, in fact, he has no purpose in our system; that he might be taken from it without creating any loss. We maintain the contrary. We maintain that Christ is one all in all; that he is the impersonation

of our religion, that he is *head* of our Christianity. Whilst others principally regard him in the retrospect, we have him as a present and a living-reality. Whilst others trust him for what he has done, we love him for what he was. Whilst others make his nature the subject of hard and abstruse dogmas, we hold it forth as the subject of affectionate contemplation. Whilst others propose faith, we propose imitation as the greatest virtue. We look upon him as the Instructor in our moral doubts; the enlightener of our ignorance, which, in so many cases, press down our hearts respecting the general course of Providence and our future destiny; of our ignorance respecting God, and all that belongs to the future, the Past, and the Invisible.

The Past, yea, and the present also, is filled, we confess, with difficulties that alarm our fears, and call forth our sorrows. And it is only when we look to Christ as really and simply human that we have any tangible consolation, or any solid support. The trials or temptations or sufferings of a God are not only repugnant to our reasons, but foreign to our hearts. Such ideas can create no confidence, and therefore can afford no ground of sympathy—and no ground of hope, of strength, or of consolation. If one who is a God—were impugned to such a being possible—overcomes temptation, on what grounds can any other conclude he can resist it?—If one who is a God resists indignity with quietude and calmness, on what ground can another make such conduct an example?—If one who is a God meets agony and death with confident and fearless mind—knowing that his life is safe in eternal beatitude—on what possible principles of reason or expectation can this be a consolation or hope to feeble mortals?—If a God by his own inherent power rise from the dead, by what logic of faith or intellect are we to conclude *men* as *men* is to live for ever? It is only then upon our principles that I think he can properly fulfil the offices that pertain to his character as Me-

diator, that he can be our Teacher, that he can be our Exemplar, that he can be the Discloser of our duties and our destinies, that he can be at the same time a revealer and a revelation, that he can be the foundation of our hope and the source of our strength:—that he can, I say, be our Teacher; for what is necessary to the position of a moral instructor? not merely to be able to announce truth, but to announce it with living effect. The being who suffered no pain would have no power in preaching fortitude. Sympathy is necessary to confidence, and confidence is necessary to moral influence. Christ in his simple humanity has a power which we could not give to him, supposing he was of a compound constitution. Without this belief that he was simply and naturally man, his instructions have small effect, and his actions have no reality.—Moreover, I assert it is only in this view he can be an exemplar, I mean the ideal, or representative of what we ought to be, or of what in a more perfect condition we will be: for it is utterly and outrageously absurd to propose as the pattern of human conduct or human hopes, one who had in the same person the might and security of a Deity with the dangers and the trials of a man: and in truth it is outrageously absurd to say he could have such dangers and trials at all,—it would not be a mystery but a mockery:—and, lastly, I contend, that it is our views—weakly I have expressed them—which bring to the human spirit most of strength and most of comfort. They give consistency and sublimity to his communion with God, and to his revealings of another world. They give immeasurable value to his miracles. They put the seal of divine confirmation on his resurrection as the pledge of human immortality. He is then our Instructor in every doubt; our Consolation in every sorrow; our Strength in the griefs of life, and our Support in the fears of death. We see him in his own ennobling and sanctifying human nature, and by his impressive and vital energy sending out from him the power for its redemption.

The character of God, as revealed in Christ's teaching, and manifested by Christ's life, in the Unitarian faith, is not only discerned with a clearer light, but commands a more sacred reverence, as well as a more willing love. He that hath seen me, says the Saviour, hath seen the Father. Now we believe this expression to be full of profound truth, if we receive it as a moral revelation, but orthodoxy reduces it to a mystical enigma, and robs it of meaning and of value. We discern God through Christ as a Father, universal, merciful, good, holy, and all-powerful. Thus we collect from the teachings of Christ; we could never deduce it from the teachings of Calvinism. If we turn to the teachings of Christ, we hear of a Father impartial and unbounded; if we turn to the teachings of Calvinism, we read of a God that, in any benign sense, is but father to a few, and these few purchased by the agonies of innocents; if we turn to the teachings of Christ, we are instructed of a Father who is merciful, and that mercy is proposed to us as the most perfect object of imitation; if we turn to the teachings of Calvinism, we are told of a Father who properly cannot be merciful at all, for the good he gives has been purchased, and is the equivalent of a price; a Father, I repeat, whose good-will is paid for; the primary element in whose character, as drawn in many popular creeds and formularies, is a stern wrath, falsely called justice; the imitation of which, in the creature, would turn earth into a darker hell than ever theology visioned. If we turn to the teachings of Christ, we find in them a Father supremely good, holding towards all his creatures a benignant aspect; who, when his children ask for bread will not give them a stone, — who casts with equal hand the shower and the sun-shine; who rules in the heavens with glory, and in earth with bounty; who hears the raven's cry as well as the Seraph's song. If we turn to Calvinism we are informed of a Deity who has seen the ruin and the wreck of his own workmanship, and pronounced a

curse over that which he did not choose to prevent, we are told that all creatures sicken under that original curse; that earth feels it to her centre; that it spreads a frown over heaven, and roars with a voice of destruction in the thunder and the tempest; that living creatures throughout all their countless tribes, suffer by it; that it pursues man from the first tears of infancy to the last pang of death. If we turn to the teachings of Jesus, we are taught that God is most holy, we are placed before that invisible Being who searches the heart, and sees it in its last recesses. Thus piercing to the very source of action, Christ makes guilt and holiness inward and personal, induces on the criminal the full penalty, and secures to rectitude its great reward: covering the one with moral hideousness, and the other with exceeding beauty. If we turn to the teachings of Calvinism, sin is contracted by imputation, and righteousness is acquired by imputation also. The lost endure the penalty of guilt in their own persons, the elect endure it by substitution in the person of another. If we turn to the teachings of Jesus, we have a Father whose power is infinite as his goodness, in which we trust for the redemption and perfection of the universe. If we turn to the teachings of Calvinism, we see God consigning a vast portion of his rational creation to eternal sin and misery, and therefore, if we would save his benevolence we are constrained to sacrifice his power. Christ, Saint Paul declares, is the image of God; but if the Father be the avenger, and Christ the victim, he is not his image, but his contrast, and then our souls, instead of ascending to God in love, turn from him, and fix all their sympathies on Christ. As Unitarians apprehend him, we conceive him in perfect union with the Father, imaging, with resplendent structure, the attributes of his Father's character. In the compassion, in the benevolence, in the purity, and in the miracles of Christ, we have revealed to us the goodness, the holiness, and the power

of God; upon the calm and gracious countenance of Jesus we may read the glory of God, and, as in a stainless mirror, behold the scheme of his providence.

Place these views side by side with common experience and human feeling, and which, I ask, is the most consistent? Who, in a healthy state of mind, has any compunction because Adam sinned—but who, with his moral emotions awakened, is not anxious to know what is the duty of man here, and what his destiny hereafter? By which scheme, I inquire, are these momentous problems best resolved? Testing these views by the common experience to which I have appealed, taking its ordinary convictions as the standard, I may fairly inquire, whether our principles are not consistent in their hopes, and high and pure in their consolations? Comparing each with the history and life of Christ, I have no doubt of what would be the result, if system or dogmatism did not interfere with our convictions. Regarding Christ as our perfect, immortal, but human Brother, we have the living evidence that God is our Father, and Heaven is our Home.—Our views of Christ makes his history of most precious value to us—his life, his death, his crucifixion and his resurrection—Christ becomes to us the great interpreter of Providence, equally of its fears and hopes. He becomes to us the symbol of humanity, equally of its grief and glory—near his cross we weep over death, and at his tomb we rejoice in the certainty of life. In Christ crucified, we see our nature in its earthly humiliation; in Christ glorified, we behold it in its immortal triumph. As Jesus on the cross sets forth our sorrow, so Jesus from the tomb sets forth our hope. Identified with Jesus in the one, we are also identified with him in the other. We behold "the man," and in that man we behold the two solemn stages of our nature, the struggle of affliction and the glory of success.—We see the man of sorrow and the man of joy—the man of earth, and the man of heaven—the man of death and the man of immortality. We are made more

assured of that doctrine to which we fly in every painful turn of life—and in which we seek a deeper and kinder refuge as years and troubles gather over us. Without this persuasion we feel ourselves creatures weak and desolate, when our pleasures here have sunk, when our hopes here have long since died. How much would we, in this wilderness, desire to lay our heads, as Jacob did, on a cold stone, if like Jacob we beheld an opened heaven; but how much more sweetly may we look upon the risen and the living face of Jesus. He was of ourselves. He was identified with us. I see then in Jesus, not the illustration of an argument or of a theory. I see in him the embodiment of human goodness, human affections, and human hopes, and human sorrows, and human destinies. When, especially, I think of human suffering, some necessary and some blameless,—when I behold the ignorant and the vicious, the ignorant and the wretched pining away in a crowded solitude,—when I see the man of weary years and many adversities, seeking at last but some spot in which to die,—when I see a sickened wretch, tired of existence, poor, indigent, cold and naked, the victim of almost every want and grief, toiling through life and shivering into death,—when I see laborious age, after few enjoyments of either soul or sense, lying at last on the bed where the weary are at rest, where at last the still small voice of Christ is more desired than all the logic of polemics,—when I see multitudes with dead, or dormant, or perverted energies—benevolent ardour wasted, or most honourable philanthropy defeated,—when I consider the thousands, and the tens of thousands of human beings chained to a dark facility in the destiny of moral and physical circumstances—the ignorance, the bondage, the cruelties, the unrevealed wretchedness without a name heaped on the heads of myriads, generation after generation,—when I think of unspoken and unspeakable agonies lurking in every corner of civilized society—hereditary penury, unavoidable ruin, unforfeited



misfortune, the pangs of noble minds struggling in vain against dependence; the writhings of dying hearts, concealing their last sighs from watching friends, the stifled laments of honest virtue cast forth on over-grown cities and populations, where sufferer after sufferer sink unheard in the noise of indifferent millions,—when I remember unceasing toil, fine spirits crushed, and fair names blighted,—when I see the enjoyment of the worthless and the prosperity of the vicious, the success of the worst passions, and the basest plans, the triumph of wickedness over truth and virtue,—when I reflect seriously and solemnly on the strange sights which this world has seen—the persecutor on the throne and the martyr at the stake, the patriot on the scaffold and the tyrant on the bench—the finest man ruined, and the villain the gainer,—I have before me, I admit, a dark and startling problem. In the dying Christ I have the difficulties: in the risen Christ I have their solution. In Christ on the cross I see our crucified humanity—in Christ risen and ascending I see the same humanity glorified; at the cross of Jesus my heart would sink, but at his empty grave my hope is settled and my soul at ease. I go to that vacant tomb, and there I am shown that the hands of death are loosed, and the gates of glory are lifted up. Near Jesus on the cross, I have but thick clouds and darkness; in Jesus risen the shadows are melted, and the gloom is lost in brightness, and the sun which burst it shines forth more resplendent—the blackness of the sky breaks forth into light, and the wrath of the ocean softens into peace, the curtain of mist is folded up, and a lovely world bursts upon my gaze. When I stand at the cross I have true imaged in fears, in struggles and in death. I have around me our nature in its crimes and passions; but when I see the ascending and glorified Christ, I behold humanity in its most triumphant hopes:—When I stand over the silent tomb of Jesus, and would weep, as if all beneath and beyond the skies were hopeless, a light

shines out from the darkness, and throws a halo of peace about the despairing soul. In Christ crucified, believing him human, simply human, I feel around me the right of man—in Christ risen, believing him also human, I exult in unclouded and unsetting light:—near Christ crucified, I tremble with exceeding fear; near Christ glorified, I am comforted with exceeding joy—and in each case because I feel he is truly and simply human.

In both parts of his life and history we have opposing aspects of Providence. But if in his sufferings we have the pillar of cloud, in his glory we have the pillar of fire; and in this wilderness pilgrimage we are sustained and solemnized by the one,—enlightened and guided by the other. Christ crucified and Christ glorified, united in our faith and feelings, identified with our nature, our history, and our race, opens views to the Christian's soul, not only of consolation but of triumph, that defy expression. It pours light and hope and dignity on universal destiny and on every individual condition. In analogy with God's material creation in its workings, it shows glory arising out of humiliation, and renewed beauty from apparent destruction—it shows in man as in nature—the world of grandeur, of purity, and of softness—born in the throes of chaotic formation; the streams of spring filled with the year's rejoicing gushing out of the frozen fountains of winter; the fresh, and bright, and peaceful morning generated in the midnight storm. If these views of Christ are seated in our hearts and faith: if we truly identify ourselves with one as with the other: feeling that in each case Christ is simply and perfectly our brother,—what can deaden our hope, and what can sever us from duty? Though friends be absent and enemies be fierce, and pain wreck our frames and poverty lay bare our dwellings, and disappointment war on our struggles, and grief thicken heavily on our souls, in Christ suffering there is our worst extremity; in Christ glorified there is that worst extremity redeemed

into the fulness of salvation, in Christ we see personified our entire humanity, except its sins; in him we behold its subjection and its triumph. View its pains in his humiliation, and its future prospects in his victory, and what a glory does it not spread upon our race? Is there a single track of the past on which it does not run showers of light—on which it does not leave the persuasion of immortal and universal existence? By Christ's doctrines and his life we are led to the conclusion that no human existence has been ever spent in vain; that of all the vast ocean of intelligent beings with which generations have flooded the earth; that in that vast universe of life, one heart has never panted without a purpose; that no thought ever started into being, not a throbb of misery, nor a solitary charity, not a silent prayer, not an honest effort, not a fervent wish or desire, not a single good intention, not a single instance of sacrifice or worth, ever existed to be destroyed, but that on the contrary they have been transferred to more genial scenes in another world, and left seeds for better fruits in this. Beholding on Christ the crucified and the glorified, and still regarding him as the image of God, it is pleasant to dwell equally upon the past and upon the future; to think of the good and true who suffered here for virtue, collected hereafter in all the unity of peace, having escaped the lightnings of earth, settled in the joys of heaven. But why confine ourselves to the excellent and the great? The glory of Christ proclaims life to all, it attracts to itself whatsoever lived or suffered on earth, all that ever will live or suffer. Into what a glory has Christ then not entered, go to the most seclusive church-yard: worlds there moulder in the smallest space; within its range as many sleep as might have peopled an empire, and in a few steps we may walk over millions. Beneath those pavines what parents and children, and companions, have mouldered? What friendships, and hopes, and energies have melted in this simple dust?

But why say a Church-yard? All earth is a grave. The world is sown with bodies, as futurity is filled with souls! Is this spot on which we breathe for a moment a mere speck between two eternities of infinite nothingness? Have the generations as they vanished, sunk into eternal sleep, so that "*It is finished,*" should be the proper epitaph of all departed humanity? Christ alone gives the full solution of this awful problem; and this solution is clear and consolatory, as we feel him to be of ourselves. He is thus the great type of our death and of our life, throwing light over the grave, and opening to our faith a growing and everlasting future:—where all exist, the great and good to more perfect, and the evil to be redeemed,—and where every stream that flows on to eternity will bear along with it a fresh burden of joy and beauty. Jesus the crucified, and Jesus the glorified, of simple but holy humanity, is the great interpreter of the past and the future, and by him interpreted, how glorious are the words, all our memories on earth and our hopes in heaven.

## APPENDIX.

I THINK it right to state here that one or two passages are printed in the lecture, which, as time was failing, I passed over in the delivery. They affect in no wise the general import or argument. I thought it possible that one sentence in reference to Mr. Jones's lecture would require to be expunged, but having now read the lecture in print, I see the sentence may stand. Mr. Jones defined with clearness and accuracy his belief in Christ's humanity—that Christ was really a man, "that he had a corporal and mental existence like our own," "that he possessed a body of flesh and blood, such as is common to our race," "that in that body dwelt a rational soul, to whose volitions it was subject," "that he was conceived in the womb, and born a helpless infant, and dependent on the care of his parents through the whole of his childhood and youth."\* Here, then, we have a set of qualities in the man Christ Jesus, which from their very nature must have commenced with his earthly life. Thus defined, the lecturer afterwards goes on to say that "though there was nothing in his corporal or mental powers essentially different from other men, yet were there certain peculiarities connected with his perfect manhood, which it is of momentous consequence that we should know and believe."† "First, he possessed moral perfection." On this all Unitarians are agreed. Secondly, the lecturer noticed the *miraculous conception*. On this we have differences amongst us. Now a *second* peculiarity was also marked, which by the order of the lecturer's argument we are entitled to rank with the others as belonging to the manhood of Christ. Mr. Jones is still speaking of *the man* Christ Jesus, and yet the *second* peculiarity is alleged to be *his pre-existence*. But if to have been born of a woman, if to have had a corporal and mental existence like our own, were essentials of his humanity, then this is a flat contradiction; if the attribute were meant to apply to him as God, we should have been told

so, and even then, the distinction would be wholly powerless, for no one thinks of comparing other men with Jesus as God. Mr. Jones does not introduce that portion of his subject until we have passed over several pages.‡ The analogy of body and soul in man is incessantly used to illustrate a two-fold nature in Christ. Nothing can be more fallacious. It breaks down at every step; for if it be used to signify the possible union of two different elements in one being, then Christ is not two-fold but three-fold, there are in his person the divine soul and the human soul, and in addition to all, the human body. If it be used to signify the union of two natures in one person, the soul and body are not two distinct natures, in the sense required, and therefore can neither illustrate nor prove the alleged complexity ascribed to Christ. Every nature that we know is composite, but it is one thing to be compounded of various qualities, and another to be a union of irreconcilable ones. If man had two souls in one body, so perfectly united as to make a single person, and yet that one should be ignorant of what the other knew, then we should have an illustration that would be correct and intelligible. Mr. Jones uses the following illustration, to show that we distinguish between the body and the soul when we do not express the distinction in words. "If we say," he observes, "that a neighbour is sick, or in pain, or hungry, or thirsty, or in want, we mean that his *body* is sick, or in pain, or hungry, or thirsty, or in want, and no one for a moment supposes that we refer to his soul. And if, on the other hand, we say that a man is learned, or ignorant, wise or unwise, happy or miserable, humble or proud, it is equally obvious that we refer to the *soul*, and not to the *body*."§ No such distinction is known either in grammar or philosophy, and the laws of thought as well as those of language equally repudiate it. A man may be healthy or sick by means of the excellence or defect of his body, but the assertion is made of the man as a person. He may in the same manner be wise or ignorant by means of the excellence or defect of the faculties of his soul; but again, the assertion is of *the person*. And, indeed, if we were to speak with severe and metaphysical precision, every instance which the preacher has adduced should be predicated of the Soul, for so far as they are sensations, they belong properly to the soul, and the body is but their medium or instrument. By the laws, then, both of thought and language, whatever Christ uttered of himself, he affirms

\* Lect. pp. 219, 222.

† Lect. p. 223.

‡ Lect. p. 222.

§ Lect. p. 224.

of his person, or the elements which they may that enter into its constitution. But how are we to think of the degrees for which such inter-splitting distinctions are allowed, distinctions which, had not the solemnity of the subject forbidden the use of ridicule, might be shown by all forms of speech to be as incongruous as they are poetic, and as idle as they are false.

Note on John x. i. See page 8.

On the supposition of our Lord's simple humanity, this chapter exhibits a most sublime revelation of his nature. On any other hypothesis it loses all its moral beauty, and leaves us nothing but inconsistency. The belief of his simple human nature gives a more sacred awe to the circumstances in which he was placed, explains to us those struggles and workings of his innermost soul, which were appearing the bitterness of his hour of travail. We can then appreciate the grandeur with which, in the spirit of duty, he went to meet the approaching storm, and we can also appreciate the lowliness and tenderness with which he drank for a moment from the cup which that awaited him. To say that the godhead withdrew its support from him is a solution conceivable in any sense. For through every moment of his existence he must have been conscious of his proper Deity: or he was not, if he was, why tremble to meet, then, during that period his godhead was mutually extinguished, and he remained simply man. But every utterance of his in this profound chapter is truly human, abstractions of that nature from its remotest recesses, struggling in duty, but struggling with fear and grief.

There is no period of our Lord's mission in which we see so profound a solemnity around him. He had come from the quiet and hospitable home of his friends in Bethany, had made his public and triumphant entry into Jerusalem; but the awful glare and condemnation was at hand: he knew that these insensibles would soon die have died on the spot, before their change into locusts and scorpions; and the hands which spread the palms were ready to drag him to the cross. The next day was his walk towards and tortures. The systems of death and the grave were to be resolved: and it is no dishonour to our Lord to suppose such a prospect should fill his heart with trembling for the most sturdy constituted nature is ever the most excitable, and those who receive slowly and vividly, apprehend circumstances which it never enters into crasser minds to discern. In proportion as our personal sensations are acute, is the victory of duty

noble that overcomes them, in the same proportion also is the strength of submission, or the beauty of patience. With these views, we can well interpret for our consolation and example the anguished exclamation of Christ,—"Now is my soul troubled, and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour; but for this cause came I to this hour."

If Christ were God as well as man, words like these are absolutely unaccountable, and as we cannot be so profane as to think that Christ spoke for mere effect, we have only to conclude that it was the fervent and simple exclamation of a being who felt he needed help from Heaven. This mere anxiety of the dearest die, if Jesus in one portion of his own person was infinite and omnipotent.

Note 1, see page 18.

Pringle, loaded with glory, was modest enough to be astonished at his good fortune, and at the multitude of beautiful facts which nature seemed to reveal to him alone. He forgot that her favours were not gratuitous, and that if she had so well explained herself, it was because he had known how to converse with her by his indelible perseverance in speculating her, and by a thousand ingenious means of wresting from her her answers. Others carefully conceal what they owe to accident. Pringle seemed to wish to ascribe to it all his merit. He repeats, with unexampled candour, how many times he had profited by it without knowing it, how many times he was in possession of new substances without having perceived them, and he never concealed the erroneous views which sometimes directed his efforts, and which he renounced only from experience. These confessions did but testify to his modesty, without denoting jealousy. Those whose views and methods had never led them to discovery, called him a mere maker of experiments, without method, and without an object. "It is not astonishing," they said, "that among so many trials and considerations he should find some that were successful. But real natural Philosophers were not duped by these vulgar errors."—After some remarks on Pringle's changes in religious opinions, and tracing rapidly his progress from fierce Calvinism to simple humanism, he thus beautifully describes the close of his laborious life. "His last moments were full of those feelings of piety which animated his whole life, and the improper control of which had been the foundation of all his errors. He craved the gospel to be read to him, and thanked God for having allowed him to lead an useful life, and granted him

a peaceful death. Among the list of the principal blessings, he ranked that of having personally known almost all his contemporaries. "I am going to sleep as you do," said he to his grand-children, who were brought to him, "but we shall wake again together, and, I hope, to eternal happiness;" thus evincing in what belief he died. These were his last words. Such was the end of that man, whom his enemies accused of wishing to overthrow all morality and religion, and yet whose greatest error was to mistake his vocation, and to attach too much importance to his individual sentiments in matters where the most important of all perhaps ought to be the love of peace.\*

The Edinburgh Review, † from which this extract is taken, introduces it with the following liberal and generous remarks:—

"We cannot pass unnoticed the *Edge* of Dr. Priestley, which brought his language into the field of theological discussion, and which deserves to be studied in a country where the Character of that extraordinary man, both as a Philosopher and a Christian, has been so greatly misrepresented.

The conclusion of the following extract is earnestly recommended to the consideration of those pious men who have been misled by the intolerant spirit of the day; and who, on lending their aid, without being conscious of what they are doing, to break the cords of affection which ought to unite the professors of our common Christianity.

NOTE 2. see page 26.

A great mass of the vulgar vocabulary, or the orthodox nomenclature of that phrase, is now called *evangelical*, and although that term, I admit, does not necessarily imply absolute Calvinism, yet, in point of fact, the greater number of those whom it designates are Calvinists. The opponents of Calvinism are often accused of misrepresenting it. For the reason I have endeavoured here to make it speak for itself—by some of its principal formulæ, by one or two of its popular writers, and by the author of it himself, in his own words.—Many will say they hold no such tenets; for the sake of human nature I sincerely believe them; if I thought such a faith (the terms being understood) could be extensively entertained, confidence in my species would be turned into fear. But, notwithstanding, many opinions which they do hold, logically pursued, tend directly to the conclusions contained

in the extracts, the writers of which were perfectly consistent with their system. Numbers who are called Calvinists, I am aware, not only do not believe its worst doctrines, but do not understand them. In the statement, however, of opinions, we cannot be guided by individual feelings, except in cases where we have individual protest to the contrary. The members of the Church of England may object to the Westminster confession of Faith, not being a formulary of their Church: it is, however, the sworn authority of a large body of clergy with whom, when purpose needs, they refuse not to hold friendly communion. It is, however, an accurate digest of Calvinism; in that relation I have used it,—to such of the English clergy as are not Calvinists it can have no reference. I wish to quote it as a theological and not as an ecclesiastical authority. But the seventeenth article of the English Church, though referred to in expression, is the same in sense. Hallett I know has made the unsuccessful effort to put it in bold relief for the sake of tender consciences; but that must be a most convenient and comprehensive latitude of phraseology which can sound all the notes of the theological scale, from high Calvinism down to low Arminianism. That the meaning of the article is properly Calvinistic, is plain from the terms in which it was completed, from the opinions of the men who drew it up, and from the terms in which it is expressed. Yet many thousand ministers with all varieties and shades of opinions, solemnly affirm they believe it, although the law demands that the articles shall be taken in their plain and grammatical sense. This is one proof of the consistency of words. I quote one author, Boston, who seems actually to feast and luxuriate amidst the dark obscurities which he pictures; his spirit appears to bound, and his heart to exult within him, at the sound of the dreadful trumpet which calls the wicked to their final doom: and one can almost imagine the rupture of his eye, as in fancy he saw the flame kindling, and the stroke of torment arising in which they were to burn for ever. In his description of hell he displays an ordinary degree of graphic and geographical talent, and when he comes to paint the sufferings of damned bodies, he is so accurate and anatomical, that as Paley it is learned anatomy, to write on natural theology, you would suppose that Horton learned it to enlarge with correctness on the physical tortures of the just. I wish not to fix his opinions upon any man or body of men; substantially, however, they are no more than Calvinism, though some might object to his mode of expressing them. This I may fairly say to any of those who do

\* Cowley's *Edge* or *Traveller*.

† No. 14, 1820.

not agree with Boston in their Calumnies, and would yet fix the Improved Version on us, that they are as bound to receive the one as we the other. Nay, more so, inasmuch as Boston's work is in a wider circulation, and with the evidence of most extensive approval. It is published by the London Tract Society, and I have an edition before me as late as 1834; it is sold by every evangelical bookseller, and it is to be found on the shelves of every evangelical circulating library. We are accused of rebellion against God and Christ; but let any one read dispassionately the extracts contained in this, and reflect on the sentiments to be deduced from their collective testimony, and then let him say when or where injury was ever done to God, or Christ, or man, than is inflicted by these repulsive dogmas. By these descriptions, if God is a being of love or justice, then language has no meaning, or we are to interpret the terms by their own traditions. If you were only to disguise the words but preserve the sentiments, and attribute the character implied in them to the owner of the most odious of Calumnies, he would spurn the representation with honest indignation. And, if we insist not by position on God, something analogous to goodness in man, what is it that we can intend? The observations in which these dogmas are overded by scholastic mysticism, like in the mind to their ordinary import. But let us suppose a illustration. Take the case of a barren father, who, granting he had the power, should pre-ordain his child to misery, should attribute a guilt to him, he never knew, should require from him what he had no power to accomplish, and condemn him because he had not fulfilled it; should place him in circumstances in which he was sure to grow worse, and yet withhold the help that could make him better; should, as the son sunk deeper in iniquity, heap heavier malediction on the wretch he abandoned; should see without pity the ruin that continually grew darker, and gaze richly, only on the suffering that was finally to be consummated in despair. Suppose further, and you render the picture complete, that such conduct was refined as the violation of parental dignity, the very glory of justice; and he who practiced it as a father of exceeding love. But we will go further, and suppose this father has the power to cast his child into misery everlasting, and that he does it, must we change the analogy here? No; we can carry it one step higher, and that being into infinite existence, make him omnipotent and omnipresent, place him on the throne of the universe, and put all creatures within his boundless control, he is then the God of Calvin's

theology. This view I gave not visible, nor without foundation; it is more than justified by the quotations that I bring forward. Our faith is characterized as a blasphemous heresy; we employ an epithet, but we are not afraid to have it contrasted with Calvinistic orthodoxy.

#### *Character of God.*

"Predestination is the everlasting purpose of God, whereby before the foundations of the world were laid; he hath constantly decreed by his counsel, secret to us, to deliver from curse and damnation those whom he hath chosen in Christ out of mankind, and to bring them to everlasting salvation, as vessels made to honour."—*From the 17th Article of the Church of England.*

"By the decree of God, for the manifestation of his glory, some men and angels are predestinated unto everlasting life, and others fore-ordained to everlasting death. These angels and men, thus predestinated and fore-ordained, are particularly and unchangeably designed; and their number is so certain and definite, that it cannot be either increased or diminished."

"The will of mankind God was pleased, according to the unsearchable counsel of his own will, whereby he extendeth or withholdeth mercy as he pleaseth, for the glory of his sovereign power over his creature, to pass by and to ordain them to dishonour and wrath for their sin, to the praise of his glorious justice."

"As for those wicked and ungodly men whom God, as a righteous judge, for former sins doth blind and harden, from them he not only withholdeth his grace, whereby they might have been enlightened in their understandings, and brought upon their hearts; but sometimes also withholdeth the gifts which they had, and exposeth them to such objects as their corruption makes occasion of sin; and withholdeth gives them over to their own lusts, the temptations of the world, and the power of Satan; whereby it cometh to pass, that they harden themselves, even under those means which God useth for the softening of others."—*Westminster Confession of Faith*, ch. iii. § 9. 4. 7. ch. v. 4. 9.

"God, in his providence, permitted some angels wilfully and irrecoverably to fall into sin and damnation, leaving and ordering that and all their sins to his own glory; and established the rest in holiness and happiness, employing them all, at his pleasure, in the administrations of his power, wisdom, and justice."—*Larger Catechism*, q. 18.

"I grant, indeed," says Calvin, "that all the children of Adam fell, by the will of God, into that misery of state whereby they be now bound; and this is it that I said at the beginning—that at length we must always return to the determination of the will of God, the cause whereof is hidden in himself. The angels which stood fast in their uprightness, Paul calleth the elect. If their steadfastness was grounded on the good pleasure of God, the falling away of the others proveth that they were forsaken; of which thing there can be no other cause alleged than reprobation, which is hidden in the secret counsel of God."—*Ibid.* note, b. iii. ch. 23, § 4.

"Predestination, whereby God adapteth some into the hope of life, and adjudgeth some to eternal death, no man, that would be accounted godly, dare deny." "Predestination we call the eternal decree of God; he had it determined with himself what he willed to become of every man. For all are not created to like estate, but to some eternal life, and to some eternal damnation, is fore-appointed. Therefore every man is created to one or the other end. So we say he is predestinated to life or to death."—*Ibid.* b. iii. ch. 21, § 5.

The Scripture teacheth that all men were in the prison of one man made bound to eternal death. Since this cannot be unpaired to nature, it is plain it proceeded from the wondrous counsel of God. But it is too much absurdity that these, the good patrons of the righteousness of God, do so stumble at a straw and leap over beams. Again I ask, how came it that the fall of Adam did wrap up in eternal death so many nations, with their children, being infants, without remedy, but because it so pleased God? Here their tongues, which are otherwise so prattling, must be dumb. It is a terrible decree, I grant, yet no man shall be able to deny but that God foreknew what end man should have, he created him, and therefore foreknew because he had so ordained by his decree."—*Ibid.* b. iii. ch. 23, § 7.

These quotations, did space permit, or the patience of my readers, might be multiplied to a much greater extent; and might do something, perhaps, to illustrate the character of the persecutor of Servetus. His notions, as a man, were not inconsistent with his ideas of God as a Theologian.

"Who can fully describe," asks Boston, "the wrath of an angry God? None can do it." "Wrath," he says, "is a fire in the affections of men, tormenting the man himself, but there is no picture but in God. His wrath does not in the least use that infinite respect which he hath in himself." Then, speaking of man generally,

he says, "There is a wrath in the heart of God against him, there is a wrath in the word of God against him: there is a wrath in the hand of God against him." We have here his statement of wrath in God as an agent, and, through pages of gloomy description, he makes man its unsheltered object. "There is a wrath on his body. It is a piece of accursed clay, which wrath is sinking into, by virtue of the first covenant. There is a wrath on the natural man's enjoyments. Wrath is an all he has: on the bread he eats, the liquor he drinks, and the clothes he wears."—*Boston's Fourfold State*.

#### *Character and Condition of Man*

"With such bondage of sin then as well is detained, it cannot move itself to goodness, much less apply itself."—*Calvin Inst.*, b. ii. ch. 3, § 5. London Edition, 634.

"Works done by unregenerate men, although for the matter of them they may be things which God commands, and of good use both to themselves and others, yet because they proceed not from a heart purified by faith, nor are done in a right manner, according to the word, nor to a right end, the glory of God, they are therefore sinful, and cannot please God, or make a man meet to receive grace from God, and yet their neglect of them is more sinful and displeasing unto God."—*Westminster Confession of Faith*, ch. xvi. § 7.

"Man in his depressed state is under an utter inability to do anything truly good."—*Boston*.

The same doctrine is taught more leniently in the 13th article of the Church of England, to that amongst the theologians, "the natural man," as they call him, was in a sad condition, for yet as he will be saved but sin, if he does good works, he commits sin, and if he neglects them he is guilty of still greater sins. Quotations in the spirit of those already adduced might be swelled into volumes from the vast treasures of Calvinistic divinity. But I shall close these by an extract from the author I have before mentioned and quoted from, as author, as I have said, highly popular and largely circulated; and here is a passage of his on Christ and the last judgment:—"The judge will pronounce the sentence of damnation on the ungodly multitude. Then shall he say also to them on the left hand, 'Depart from me: ye cursed into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels.' . . . The Lamb of God shall rise as a lion against them; he shall excommunicate and cast them out of his presence for ever, by a sentence from the Throne, saying, 'Depart from

me, ye cursed! He shall judge them in everlasting fire, and to the society of Devils for evermore. And this sentence also we suppose, will be pronounced with an audible voice by the man Christ. And all the saints shall cry, 'Hallelujah! True and righteous are his judgments!' None were so compassionate as the saints when on earth, during the time of God's patience: but now that time is at an end, their compassions for the ungodly is overflowed up to joy in the Mediator's glory, and his executing of just judgment, by which his enemies are made his footstool. Though when on earth the righteous did weep in secret places for their guilt, and because they would not live, yet he shall rejoice when he sees his vengeance, he shall wash his feet in the blood of the wicked (Ps. lvi. 10). No pity shall then be shown them from their nearest relations. The godly wife shall applaud the justice of the judge in the condemnation of her ungodly husband, the godly husband shall say ayes to the condemnation of her who lay in his bosom; the godly parent shall say *Hallelujah* at the passing of the sentence against their ungodly child, and the godly child shall, from the bottom of his heart, approve the condemnation of his wicked parents, the father who begot him, and the mother who bore him. The sentence is just, they are judged according to their work."—Rev. xv. 12.

It were surely preferable to labour under the blindest mistakes concerning the essence of God, or the person of Christ, than be guilty of believing such atrocious representations as these of their moral character. The makers may scout us if they choose, we will say; but if Calvinism and Christianity were identical, infidelity would be worse, it would be but the righteous rebellion of human nature against error, in violation of the truth of its own affections, and the rectitude of its God.

## PREFACE.

THE length of the following Discourse rendered it necessary to omit large portions of it in the delivery; the remainder has undergone no alteration in preparing the Lecture for the press.

It is one of the duties of the controversialist to drop each subject of debate as soon as every thing materially affecting it has been advanced; and to seize the time for silence, as promptly as the time for speech. This consideration would have led me to abstain from any further remarks respecting the Improved Version, did it not appear that it is considered disrespectful to pass without notice any argument adduced by our opposers. In briefly addressing to Mr. Byth's attacks on my former Lecture, contained in the Preface to his own, I am more anxious to avert from myself the imputation of discourtesy to him than to disprove his charge of "PARTIAL EXAMINATION;" which even the accuser himself, I imagine, cannot prudently esteem just.

Notwithstanding the returns of my respected opponent, I still maintain that a Subscriber to the British and Foreign Unitarian Association is no more responsible for the alleged delinquencies of the Improved Version, than is a Subscriber to the British and Foreign Bible Society for the known departures from the true standard of the text which its funds are employed to execute. Mr. Byth appears to enumerate three particulars, in which he thinks that the parallelism between these two cases fails.

First; "The Authorized Version does not profess to be a systematic Interpretation. It is not, in one word, a Creed and an Exposition. It is only a literal Translation, without note or comment." So much the worse, must we not say? Whatever deception a false text can produce, is thus wholly concealed and undetectable; the counterfeit passes into circulation, undistinguished from the pure gold of the Divine Word, bearing on its front the very same image and superscription. Did this version "profess to be a systematic Interpretation," readers would be on their guard; but while professing to be "without note or comment," it inserts "a note" or gloss (in the case of the Heavenly Witness) into the text itself. The doctrinal



bearing of this and other readings, in which Griesbach's differs from the Received Text, makes the Authorized Version, *quod hoc, a credit*, while it disclaims this character.

Secondly, To consider the Parallelism, the Bible Society ought to be, "The Trinitarian Society for promoting Christian Knowledge," and by publishing an "Improved Version of the Scriptures," &c. So long, then, as Churchesmen abstain from proposing "an Improved Version," and designate their society by neutral names, they may be acquitted, "in *conscientia*," for retaining any corruptions which may happen to exist in the *revised* Translation. It is easy to conjecture that, on this principle, it will be long before the Church incurs the needless guilt of an "Improved Version." Surely the Frank avowal, by the words "Trinitarian Society," of a party purpose, would rather abate than augment the culpability of retaining a Trinitarian *plura*; since the reader would have his warning that the work was edited under Theological bias. And one of the most serious charges against "the Improved Version" was precisely this: that its first edition was without party badge (the word *Unitarian* not appearing in the title); so that it might possibly derive the name

Thirdly, The parallelism would be *in extent*, the peculiarities of the Improved Version being much more numerous, and sustained by less evidence, than the like readings of the Authorized Translation. I cannot concur in this remark, in far as it affects the evidence against 1 John 5. 7. But I pass by this matter of opinion, to protest against the unjust exaggeration of a matter of fact, contained in Mr. Byrth's supposition of a Trinitarian counterpart to the Improved Version. He speaks of "a text corrected on the principles of" "*Theological criticism and conjecture*,"—he knows that *not one text* is so corrected; that Griesbach's second edition is followed without variation; that any proposed deviations from it are only typographically indicated, or suggested and defended in the notes. He speaks of the retention of "questionable passages," without "notice that their authenticity had ever been doubted," and the expunging of "as many profane doctrinal texts as possible"—he knows that *not one word* of the most approved text is expunged, or of any less perfect text retained, and that notice is given of every deviation on the part of the Editors, in questions either of authenticity or of translation, from their standards, Griesbach and Newcome, and from the Received Text. Mr. Byrth is aware that his opponents in this controversy do not altogether admire the Improved Version, but it is not fit that advantage should be taken of this to publish extravagant descriptions of it, in which the accuracy of the scholar, and even the justice of the Christian, are for the moment lost in the vehemence of the partisan.

It is desirable to add, that the Society which originally published the Improved Version, has long since been merged in the British and Foreign Unitarian Association. In this larger body three other societies (of which one, at least, surpassed in scale and influence the unfortunate object of our opponents' hostility) are consolidated, and its subscription list contains the names of those who previously supported any of the constituent elements of the Association. Hence it can, with no propriety, be called "The Society constituted for the circulation" of the Improved Version. It cannot be alleged that a subscriber is bound to anything more than a general and preponderant approbation of the simple objects of the Association, nor does he, by retaining his name on the list of its supporters, forego his right of dissenting from particular modes of action which its Directors may adopt.

May I assure Mr. Byrth, that I did not intend to insinuate, that his writings were produced "second-hand;" except in the sense that many of them had, in fact, been anticipated. I expressly guarded myself against any construction reflecting on the originality and literary honesty of our opponents.

The remaining animadversions of Mr. Byrth, involving no public interest, and having merely personal reference to myself, I willingly pass by; knowing that they can have no power but in their truth; and in that case I should be sorry to witness them.

## LECTURE V.

### THE PROPOSITION "THAT CHRIST IS GOD" PROVED TO BE FALSE FROM THE JEWISH AND THE GREEKIAN SCRIPTURES

BY REV. JAMES TRACTINSKY

### ERRATA

In the Second Lecture, "The Bible, what it is, and what it is not."

- Page 13, line 7 from the bottom, after 403, place *insert* with the Book of Acts.  
— 19, line 5 from the top, for Galilee read Galilee.  
— 25, line 14 from the bottom, for *season* read season.  
— 32, line 3 from the top, for *held* read bath.  
— 41, line 8 from the bottom, for *for* read at.  
— 45, line 24 from the bottom, for *convent* read convent.  
— 49, line 13 from the bottom, before *appointed* insert *they*.  
— 49, line 5 from the bottom, for *duration* read agitation.  
— 49, line 4 from the bottom, for *conduct* read directed.  
— 54, *inter*, line 10, for 747 read 747.  
— 54, line 2 from the top, for *is* *having* read *these* *because*.  
— 57, line 8 from the bottom, for *there* read *long*.

"FOR THOUGH THERE BE THAT ARE CALLED GODS, WHETHER THEY BE  
OR NO MATTERS, THERE TO MANY AND FARRE MORE, BUT  
TO US THERE IS BUT ONE GOD, THE CREATOR, BY WHOM ALL  
THINGS ARE MADE HIM, AND ONLY GODS ARE CREATED BY HIM  
AND ALL THINGS, AND WE WORSHIP HIM ALONE."

Scarcely had Christ retired from our world, before his influence began to be felt by mankind in two different ways. He transformed their *Worship*, and purified their interpretation of *Duty*. They have ever since adored a holier God, and obeyed a more exalted rule of right. Looking upward, they have discerned in heaven a Providence more true and tender than they had believed; looking inward, they have seen on earth a serene allotted to their conscience, nobler and more responsible than they had thought before. Watched from above by an object of infinite trust and veneration, they have found below a work of the most sacred, to be performed by obedient will beneath his sight. Faith has flown to its rest *there*, and conscience has rested in its rest *here*, with a tranquil energy never seen in a world not yet evangelized.

To suppose that a set of moral precepts, however wise and

authoritative, could ever have produced, in either of these respects, the effects which have flowed from Christianity; seems to me altogether unreasonable. Had Christ done no more than leave in the world a sound code of ethics, his work would probably have expired in a few centuries and have been very imperfect while it endured. A few prudential and dispassionate minds would have profited by its excellence; but never would it have trained the affections of childhood, or overawed the energy of guilt, or roused the rugged heart of ignorance, or consecrated the vigils of grief.

The power of Christ's religion is not in his precepts, but in his person; not in the memory of his maxims, but in the image of Himself. He is his own system, and, apart from him, his teachings do but take their place with the sublimest efforts of speculation, to be admired and forgotten with the reliques of Socrates, and the meditations of Plato. Himself first, and his lessons afterwards, have the hearts of the people ever loved: his doctrines, indeed, have been, obscured, his sayings perverted, his commands neglected, the distinctive features of his instructions obliterated, but he himself has been venerated still; his unmistakable spirit has corrected the ill construed letter of the Gospel; and preserved unity of life amid the various, and even opposing developments of Christian civilization.

The person of Christ may be contemplated as an object of religious reverence, or as an object of moral imitation. He may appear to our minds as the representative of Deity, or as the model of humanity; teaching us, in the one case, what we should believe, and trust, and adore in heaven, in the other, what we should do on earth: the rule of faith in the one relation, the rule of life in the other.

Did his office extend only to this latter, were he simply an example to us, displaying to us merely what manhood ought to be, he might indeed constitute the centre of our morality; but he would not properly belong to our religion: he would

be the object of affections equal and social, not devout, he would take a place among things human, not divine; would be the symbol of visible and definite duties, not of unseen and everlasting realities. A Christianity which should reduce him to this relation, would indeed be a step removed above the more cold preceptive systems, which depresses him into a law-giver; but it would no more be entitled to the name of a religion, than the Ethics of Aristotle, or the Offices of Cicero.

It is then as the type of God, the human image of the everlasting Word, that Christ becomes an object of our Faith. Once did a dark and doubting world cry, like Philip on the evening of Getsemane, "Show us the Father, and it sufficeth us:" but now has Christ "been so long with us" that we, "who have seen him, have seen the Father." This I conceive to have been the peculiar office of Jesus, to show us, not to tell us, the spirit of that Being who spreads round us in Infancy, and leads us through Eternity. The universe had prepared before us the scale of Deity; Christ has filled it with his own spirit; and we worship now, not the cold intellectual deity of natural religion; not the distant majesty, the bleak immensity, the mechanical omnipotence, the immutable stillness, of the speculative Theist's God; but One far nearer to our worn and wearied hearts; One whose likeness is seen in Jesus of Nazareth, and whose portraiture, suffused with the tints of that soul, is impressed upon creation; One, therefore, who concerns himself with our humblest humanities, and views our world with a domestic eye, whose sanctity pierces the guilty mind with repentance, and then shelters the penitent from rebuke: who hath mercy for the victims of Infinity, and a resili for the sleepers in the grave. Let Messiah's mind pass forth to fill all time and space; and you behold the Father, to whom we render a loving worship.

To order to fulfil this office of revealing, in his own pres-

son, the character of the Father, Christ possessed and manifested all the *major* attributes of Deity. His absolute holiness; his inflexible perceptions of right; his majestic rebuke of sin; his profound insight into the corrupt state of worldly and hypocritical natures, and to the central point of life in the affectionate and genuine soul; his well-proportioned mercies and disinterested love, fill the whole meaning of the word Divine: God can have no other, and no more, perfection of character intelligible to us.

These moral attributes of God, we conceive to have been compressed, in Christ, within the physical and intellectual limits of humanity, to have been unfolded and displayed amid the infirmities of a suffering and tempted nature: and, during the brevity of a mortal life, swiftly hurried to its close. And this immersion of divine perfection in the darkness of weakness and sorrow, so far from fulfilling our appreciation of him, inevitably deepens it. The addition of infinite force, mechanical or mental, would contribute no new ingredient to our veneration, since force is not an object of reverence; and it would take away the wonder and grandeur of his soul, by rendering temptation impossible, and exalting a pretence. Since God cannot be pious, or submit size to his own providence, or cast down in doubt of his own future, or agonized by the insults of his own creatures, such a combination seems to confuse and destroy all the grounds of veneration, and to cause the perfection of Christ to pass in unreality away.

To this view, however, of the person of Christ, Trinitarians object as defective; and proceed to add one other ingredient to the conception, *viz.*, that he possessed the physical and intellectual attributes of Deity; that he is to be exercised no less eternal, omnipotent and omnipresent, than the Infinite Father; the actual creator of the visible universe, of the very world into which he was born; and of the mother who bare him, of the disciples who followed and of the enemies

who destroyed him. These essential properties of Deity by no means, we are assured, interfered with the completeness of his humanity: so that he had the body, the soul, the consciousness, of a man; and, in union with these, the infinite mind of God. But in a question of mere words, in which the guidance of ideas is altogether lost, I dare not trust myself to my own language. To disturb the juxtaposition of charmed sounds, is to endanger orthodoxy; and, in describing the true doctrine, I therefore present you with a portion of that unexampled *congeries* of luminous phrases, commonly called the Athanasian Creed. "The Catholic faith is this: that we worship One God in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity; neither confounding the persons, nor dividing the substance. For there is one person of the Father, another of the Son, and another of the Holy Ghost. But the Godhead of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, is all one: the glory equal, the majesty co-eternal. Such as the Father is, such is the Son, and such is the Holy Ghost: . . . the Father eternal, the Son eternal, and the Holy Ghost eternal: and yet they are not three eternals, but one eternal. . . . So the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God; and yet they are not three Gods, but one God . . . So there is one Father, not three Fathers; one Son, not three Sons, one Holy Ghost, not three Holy Ghosts. And, in this Trinity, none is afore or after other; none is greater or less than another: but the whole three persons are co-eternal together and *co-equal*."

Of the second of these three persons, the second article of the Church of England gives the following account:—

"The Son, which is the Word of the Father, begotten from everlasting of the Father, the very and eternal God, and of one substance with the Father, took man's nature in the womb of the blessed Virgin, of her substance; so that two whole and perfect natures,—that is to say, the Godhead and the Manhood,—were joined together in one Person, never to

be divided; whereof is One Christ, very God and very Man; who truly suffered, was crucified, dead, and buried, to reconcile his Father to us."

In opposition to this theory, we maintain the Personal Unity of God, and the simplicity of nature in Christ. It is my duty at present to submit these contrasted schemes to the test of Scripture. In order to effect this, I advance three positions:

(1.) That if the Athanasian doctrine be found in Scripture, then, on our opponents' own principles, Scripture does not contain a revelation from God.

(2.) That if it be really in the Bible, certain definable traces of it there may justly be demanded; and, before opening the record, we should settle what these traces must be.

(3.) That such traces cannot be found in Scripture.

I. "If," says Bishop Butler, "a supposed revelation contain clear immorals or contradictions, either of these would prove it false."\* This principle, generally recognized by competent reasoners, has been distinctly admitted in the present discussion; and Dr. Tattershall, in particular, has employed much ingenuity to prove that the doctrine of the Trinity, containing no absurdity or contradiction, involves in no danger the authority of the writings supposed to teach it. But no subtlety can avail to remove the inherent incredibility of this tenet, which even its believers cannot, without uneasiness, distinctly and steadily contemplate. Long usage and Church authority alone prevent men from perceiving that the propositions, announcing it, are either simple contradictions, or statements empty of all meaning. The same remark is applicable to the notion of the two natures in Christ.

Before proceeding to justify this assertion, let me guard myself from the imputation of rejecting this doctrine because it is mysterious; or of supporting a system which insists on

banishing all mysteries from religion. On any such system I should look with unqualified aversion, as excluding from faith one of its primary elements; as obliterating the distinction between logic and devotion, and tending only to produce an irreligious and narrow-minded dogmatism. "Religion without mystery" is a combination of terms, than which the Athanasian Creed contains nothing more contradictory; and the sentiment of which it is the motto, I take to be a fatal caricature of rationalism, tending to bring all piety into contempt. Until we touch upon the mysterious, we are not in contact with religion; nor are any objects reverently regarded by us, except such as, from their unware or their vastness, are felt to transcend our comprehension. God, of whose inscrutable immensity creation is but the superficial film; Christ, the love of whom surpasseth knowledge; futurity, veiled in awful shadows, yet illumined by a point or two of light; these, which are slightly known, and greatly unknown, with something definite, representing a vast indefinite, are the peculiar objects of trust and veneration. And the station which the soul occupies, when its devout affections are awakened, is always this: on the twilight, between immeasurable darkness and refreshing light; on the confines, between the seen and the unseen; where a little is discerned, and an infinity concealed; where a few distinct conceptions stand, in confessed inadequacy, as symbols of ineffable realities; and we say, "Alas! these are a part of his ways; but the thunder of his power, who can understand?" And if this be true, the sense of what we do not know is as essential to our religion as the impression of what we do know: the thought of the boundless, the incomprehensible, must blend in our mind with the perception of the clear and true; the little knowledge we have must be clung to, as the margin of an invisible immensity; and all our positive ideas be regarded as the mere float to show the surface of the infinite deep.

\* *Analogy of Religion*, part 1, c. 2.

But mystery, thus represented, offers any thing but objects of belief: it presents nothing to be appreciated by the understanding; but a realm of possibilities to be explored by a reverential imagination, and a darkness that may be felt to the centre of the heart. Being, by its very nature, the blank and privative space, offered to our contemplation, nothing affirmative can be derived thence; and to shape into definite words the things indefinite that dwell there, is to forget its character. We can no more delineate any thing within it, than an artist, stationed at midnight on an Alpine precipice, can paint the rayless scene beneath him.

There cannot, however, be a greater abuse of words, than to call the doctrine of the Trinity a mystery, and all the analogies by which it is attempted to give it this appearance, will instantly vanish on near inspection. It does not follow, because a mystery is something which we cannot understand, that every thing unintelligible is a mystery, and we must discriminate between that which is denied admittance to our reason, from its fulness of ideas, and that which is excluded by its emptiness: between a verbal puzzle and a symbolical and finite statement of an infinite truth. If I were to say of a triangle, each of the sides of this figure has an angle opposite to it, yet are there not three angles, but one angle, I should be unable to shelter myself, under the plea of mystery, from the charge of bald absurdity: and the reply would be obviously this: 'never was any thing less mysterious put into words; all your terms are precise and sharp, of definable meaning, and suggestive of nothing beyond: the difficulty is, not in understanding your propositions separately, but in reconciling them together, and this difficulty is so palpable, that either you have affirmed a direct contradiction, or you are playing tricks with words, and using them in a way which, being unknown to me, turns them into me a nonsense.' If to this I should answer, that the contradiction was

only apparent, for that the *three* and the *one* were affirmed as *different* *aspects*; and that it would be very unfair to expect, in so deep a mystery, the word *angle* to be restricted to its usual signification, I should no doubt be called upon to explain *what word or use* this familiar term was here employed, since, in the interval between the expulsi<sup>o</sup>n of the old meaning and the introduction of the new, it is mere worthless vacancy. And if, then, I should confess that the strange meaning was some inscrutable and superhuman idea, which it would be impossible to reach, and presumption to conjecture, I should not be surprised to hear the following rejoinder: 'you are talking of human language as if it were something more than an implement of human thought, and were like the works of nature, full of unattainable wonders and unsuspected relations: *hidden properties of things* there doubtless are, but *occult meanings of words* there cannot be. Words are simply the signs of ideas, the media of exchange, invented to carry on the commerce of minds, the counters, either stamped with thought, or worthless counterfeits. Nay more, in this monetary system of the intellectual world, there are no coins of precious metal that retain an intrinsic value of their own, when the image and superscription imparted by the ray-light of intelligence are gone, but mere paper-currency, whose whole value is conventional, and dependent on the mental credit of those who issue it: and to urge propositions on my acceptance, with the assurance that they have some invisible and mystic force, is as direct a cheat, as to pay me a *dela* with a bill palpably marked as of trivial value, but, so the illegible types of your imagination, proved to be worth the wealth of Croesus.'

"Verbal mysteries," then, cannot exist, and the phrase is but a line-name for a contradiction or a riddle. The metaphysics which are invoked to palliate their absurdity, are fundamentally fallacious; and equally vain is it to attempt to press a verbal sentence into the service of defence. To the

case of a Theological mystery, we are asked to assent to two ideas, the one of which *excludes the other*; in the case of a natural mystery, we assent to two ideas, one of which *does not imply the other*. In the one case, conceptions which destroy each other are forced into conjunction; in the other, conceptions which had never suggested each other, are found to be related. When, for example, we say that the union, in our own constitution, of body and mind is perfectly heterogeneous, what do we really mean? Simply, that in the properties of body there is nothing which would lead us, antecedently, to expect any combination with the properties of mind, that we might have entertained for ever the notions of solidity, extension, colour, organization, without the remotest suspicion of such things as sensation, thought, volition, affection, being associated with them. The relation is unanticipated and surprising; for thought does not imply solidity but then neither does it exclude it; the two notions stand altogether apart, nor does the one comprise any element inconsistent with the other. It is evident that it is far otherwise with the union of the two natures in Christ; the properties of the Divine nature, omnipotence, omniscience, omnipresence, directly exclude the properties of the human nature, — weakness, fallibility, local movement and position; to affirm the one is the *only method we have* of denying the other, and to say of any Being, that besides having the omniscience of God, he had the partial knowledge of man, is to say that in *addition* to having all ideas, he possessed some ideas. All the natural analogies at which theologians hint in self-justification, fail in the same point. They tell me truly that it is a mystery to me how the grass grows. But by that is meant only, that from the causes which produce this phenomenon, I could not have antecedently predicted it; that if I had been a fresh comer on the globe, the meteorological conditions of the earth in spring might have been perceived by me without my suspecting, as a sequence, the development

of a green substance from the soil. We have again an example of an unforeseen relation; but between the members of that relation there is not even a seeming contradiction. Nor do I know of any other signification of the word mystery, as applied to our knowledge or belief, except in its usage to express magnitudes too great to be filled by our imaginations; as when we speak of the mysterious vastness of space, or duration of time; or, viewing these as the attributes of a Being, stand in awe of the immensity and eternity of God. But neither in this case is there any approach to the admission of ideas which exclude each other. on the contrary, our minds think of a small portion,—take into consideration a representative sample, of those immeasurable magnitudes, and necessarily conceive of all that is left behind, as perfectly similar, and believe the unknown to be an endless repetition of the known.

It is constantly affirmed that the doctrines of the Trinity, and of the two natures in Christ, comprise no contradiction; that it is not stated in the former that there are three Gods, but that God is three in one sense, and one in another; and in the latter, that Christ is two in one sense, and one in another.

I repeat and proceed to justify my statement, that if, in the enunciation of these tenets, language is used with any appreciable meaning, they are contradictions; and if not, they are senseless. I enter upon this miserable logicomachy with the utmost repugnance, and am ashamed that in vindication of the simplicity of Christ, we should be dragged back into the barren conflicts of the schools.

"If," says Dr. Tattershall, "it had been said that He is one God and also three Gods, then the statement would have been self-contradictory, and no evidence could have established the truth of such a proposition."\* Now I take it as admitted that this being is called one God; and that there

\* *Sermon on the Integrity of the Canon*, p. 10.

are THREE GODS, is undoubtedly affirmed *distributively*, though not *collectively*, each of the three persons being separately announced as God. In the successive instances, which we are warned to keep distinct, and not confound, of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, *proper Deity* is affirmed: in three separate cases, all that is requisite to constitute the proper notion of God, is said to exist; and this is exactly what is meant, and all that can be meant, by the statement, that there are three Gods. I submit then that the same creed teaches that *there are three Gods*, and also that *there are not three Gods*.

From this contradiction there is but one escape, and that is, by declaring that the word God is used to different senses; being applied to the triad in one meaning, and to the persons in another. If this be alleged, I wish to be informed of the new signification which is to be attached to this title, hitherto expressive of all the ideas I can form of intellectual and moral perfection. More than this, which exhausts all the resources of my thought, it cannot mean; and if it is to mean less, then it withdraws from Him to whom it is applied something which I have hitherto regarded as essential to God. Meanwhile, a word with an *arbitrary meaning* is a word with no meaning; and the proposition containing it is altogether *meaningless*.

But the favourite way of propounding this doctrine is the following: that God is Three in one sense, and one in another; Three in Person, but only One *individual, Subsistence, or Being*. The sense, then, if I understand aright, of the word *Person*, is different from the sense of the words *Individual, Being, or Subsistence*; and if so, I may ask what the respective senses are, and wherein they differ from each other. In reply I am assured, that by *person* is to be understood "a subject in which resides" "an entire set or series of those properties which are understood to constitute personality," viz. the property of *Life*, that of *Intelligence*, that of *Faculty*, and that

of *Activity, or power of Action*.\* Very well, this is distinct and satisfactory; and now for the *other sense*, viz. of the words *Individual, Being, and Subsistence*. About this an ominous silence is observed; and all information is withheld respecting the quite different meaning which these terms contain. Now I say, that their signification is the very same with that of the word *Person*, as above defined; that when you have enumerated to me a complete "set of personal attributes," you have called up the idea of an *Individual, Being, or Subsistence*; and that when you have mentioned to me those phrases, you have made me think of a complete set of personal attributes; that if you introduce me to two or three series of personal attributes, you force me to conceive of two or three beings; that a complete set of properties makes up an entire subsistence, and that an entire subsistence contains nothing else than its aggregate of properties. To take, for example, from Dr. Vandershall's list of qualities which are essential to personality; tell me of two *lives*, and I cannot but think of two individuals; of two *intelligences*, and I am necessitated to conceive of two intelligent beings; of two *will's* or *powers of action*, and it is impossible to restrain me from the idea of two Agents; and if each of these lives, intelligences, and volitions, be divine, of two Gods. The word *subsistence*, in fact, will hold no more than the word *person*, and to the mind, though not to the ear, the announcement in question really is, that there are three persons, and yet only one person. Thus men "slide insensibly," to use the words of Archbishop Whately, "into the unthought-of, but, I fear, not uncommon, error of Trinitarianism; from which they think themselves the more secure, because they always maintain the Unity of the Deity, though they gradually come to understand that Unity in a merely *figurative sense*; viz. as a Unity of substance, a Unity of purpose, concert of action, &c.; just as anyone commonly

\* See Vandershall's *System of Logic*, p. 106, 107, 108, 109, 110.



says, 'My friend such-an-one and myself are one,' meaning that they pursue the same designs with entire mutual confidence, and perfect co-operation, and have that exact agreement in opinions, views, tastes, &c., which is often denoted by the expression *one mind*.\*

No doubt this excellent writer is correct in his impression, that the belief in three Gods is prevalent in this country, and kept alive by the creeds of his own church. And how does he avoid this consequence himself? By understanding the word *Persons*, not in Dr. Tattershall's, which is the ordinary English sense, but in the Latin signification, to denote the *relations, or capacities, or characters*, which an individual may sustain, the *several parts* which he may perform: so that the doctrine of the Trinity amounts only to this, that the One Infinite Deity bears three relations to us. This is plain Unitarianism, veiled behind the thickest disguise of speech. Between this and Trinitarianism, it is vain to seek for any third estate.†

The contradiction involved in the doctrine of the two natures of Christ is of precisely the same nature and extent. We are assured that he had a perfect human constitution, consisting of the growing body and progressing mind of a man; and also a proper divine personality, comprising all the attributes of God. Now, during this conjunction, either the human mind within him was, or it was not, *conscious* of the co-existence and operation of the divine. If it was not, if the earthly and celestial intelligence dwelt together in the same body without mutual recognition, like two persons enclosed in the same dark chamber, in ignorance of each other, then were there two distinct beings, whom it is a mockery to call "one Christ:" the humanity of our Lord was unaffected by his Deity, and in all respects the same as if disjoined from it; and his person was but a movable sign, indicating the place and presence of a God, who was as much foreign

to him as to any other human being. If the human nature had a joint consciousness with the divine, then nothing can be affirmed of his humanity separately; and from his sorrows, his doubts, his prayers, his temptations, his death, every trace of reality vanish away. If he were conscious, in any sense, of omnipotence, nothing but duplicity could make him say, "of mine own self I can do nothing;" if of omniscience, it was mere deception to affirm that he was ignorant of the time of his second advent; if of his equality with the Father, it was a quibble to say, "my Father is greater than I." I reject this hypothesis with unmitigated abhorrence, as involving in utter ruin the character of the most perfect of created beings.

The intrinsic incoherence then of these doctrines, involving, as they do, "clear impossibilities and self-contradictions," would throw discredit on the claims of any work professing to reveal them on the authority of God. And whether we listen to the demands of Scripture on our reverential attention, must depend on this:—whether these tenets are found there or not. And to this inquiry let us now proceed.

One remark I would make in passing, on the supposed value of the theory of the two natures, as a key to unlock certain difficult passages of the Bible, and to reconcile their apparent contradictions. Christ, it is affirmed, is sometimes spoken of as possessing human qualities, sometimes as possessing divine; on the supposition of his being simply man, one class of these passages contradicts us; on the assumption of his being simply God, another. Let us then pronounce him both, and every thing is set right; every part of the document becomes clear and intelligible.‡

Now which, let me ask, is the greater difficulty: the obscure language, which we wish to make consistent, or the prodigious hypothesis, devised for the reconciliation of us

\* *Christologiae Leges*, Appendix, no. 6. Page 8.

† See note A.

‡ See Mr. Linnæus's *Lectures on the Prophecy*, Hæc verba of our Lord Jesus Christ, pp. 211, 242.

parts? The sole perplexity in these portions of Scripture consists in this,—that the divine and the human nature are felt to be incompatible, and not to be predicable of the same being: if we did not feel this, we should be conscious of no opposition: and the ingenious device for relieving the bewilderment, is to deny the incompatibility, and boldly to affirm the union. If you will but believe *both* sides of the contradiction, you will feel the contradiction disappear! What would be thought of such a principle of interpretation applied to similar cases of verbal discrepancy? It is stated, for example, in the Book of Genesis, that Abraham and Lot received a divine communication respecting the destruction of Sodom, and the hausers of the message are spoken of, in one place, as Jehovah himself; in another, as angels; in a third, as men.\* What attention would be given to any interpreter who should say; 'it is clear that these persons could not be simply God, for they are called men; nor simply men, for they are called angels; nor simply angels, for they are called God: they must have had a triple nature, and been at the same time perfect God, perfect angel, and perfect man? Would such an explanation be felt to solve any thing? Or take one other case, in which Moses is called God with a distinctness which cannot be equalled in the case of Christ: "Moses called together all Israel, and said to them: . . . I have led you forty years in the wilderness: your clothes have not waxen old upon you, and thy shoe is not waxen old upon thy foot. Ye have not eaten bread, neither have ye drunk wine or strong drink, that ye might know that *I am the Lord your God.*"† What relief, let me ask, should we obtain from the difficulty of this passage, by being told that Moses had two natures in one person, and must be received as God-man? Who would accept "a key" like this, and not feel that in loosening one difficulty, it locked fast another, and left us in labyrinthine darkness?

\* G. GEN. 18. 1, 2, 12; 19. 1, 10, 11.

† EXOD. 16. 4, 5, 6.

II. When a Trinitarian, and a Unitarian, agree to consult Scripture together, and to bring their respective systems to this written standard, it is essential that they should determine beforehand what it is that they must look for: what internal characters of the books are to be admitted in evidence; what kind and degree of proof each is entitled to expect. Each should say to the other before the Bible is opened, "Tell me now, distinctly, what are the marks and indications in these records, which you admit would disprove your scheme: what must I succeed in establishing, in order to convince you that you are mistaken?" The mutual exchange of some such tests is indispensable to all useful discussion. I am not aware that any rules of this kind have ever been laid down, or I would willingly adopt them. Meanwhile I will propose a few, and state the phenomena which I think a Unitarian has a right to expect in the Bible, if the Athanasian doctrine\* be revealed there, and its reception made a condition of salvation. If the criteria be in any respect unreasonable, let it be shown *where* they are erroneous or unfair. I am not conscious of making any extravagant or immodest petition for evidence.

If, then, the existence of three Persons, each God, in the One Infinite Deity,—and the temporary union of the second of these Persons, with a perfect man, so as to constitute One Christ,—be among the prominent facts communicated in the written Revelation of the Bible, we may expect to find there the following characters:

(1.) That somewhere or other, among its thousand pages, these doctrines, so easily and compendiously expressed, will be plainly stated.

(2.) That as it is important not to confound the three persons in the Godhead, they will be kept distinct, having some *discriminative and not interchangeable titles*: and moreover,

\* It is hardly necessary to observe, that I use the word "Athanasian" to denote the doctrine of the *Gods* revealed, not of St. Athanasius himself, who is known to have had no hand in the composition of that book.

since each has precisely the same claim to be called God, that word will be assigned to them with something like an impartial distribution.

(3.) That as, in consistency with the *UNITY*, the term God will always be restricted to *one only being or substance*; so, in consistency with the *TRINITY*, it will never be limited to *one person* to the exclusion of the *OTHER TWO*.

(4.) That when the *PERSONS* are named by their *distinctive divine titles*, their equality will be observed, nor any one of them be represented as subordinate to any other.

(5.) That since the *MANHOOD* of Christ commenced, and its peculiar functions ceased, with his *INCARNATION*, it will never be found ascribed to him in relation to events before or after this period.

All these phenomena, I submit, are essential to make scripture consistent with Arianism; and not one of these phenomena does scripture contain. Thus it is now my business to show:

III. (1.) Is then our expectation realized, of finding somewhere within the limits of the Bible, a plain, unequivocal statement of these doctrines? Confessedly not; and nations which, in one breath, are pronounced to be indispensable to salvation, are in another admitted to be no matters of revelation at all, but rather left to be gathered by human deduction from the sacred writings. "The doctrine of the Trinity," says a respectable Calvernic writer, Mr. Carlile of Dublin, "is rather a doctrine of inference and of indirect intimation, deduced from what is revealed respecting the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and intimated in the notions of a plurality of persons in the Godhead, than a doctrine directly and explicitly declared." And elsewhere the same author says, "A doctrine of inference ought never to be placed on a footing of equality with a doctrine of direct and explicit revelation."<sup>\*</sup> If this be so (and the method of

successive steps by which it is attempted, in this very controversy, to establish the doctrine of the Trinity, proves Mr. Carlile to be right), then to deny this more inference is not to deny a revelation. But why, we may be permitted to inquire, this slowness and hesitancy in the scriptures in communicating such cardinal truths? Whence this reserve in the Holy Spirit about matters so momentous? What is the source of this strange contrast between the formularies of the Church of England, and those of the primitive Church of Christ? The Prayer-book would seem to have greatly the

\* It is curious, at the present day, to affirm that the mysteries of the Godhead and Incarnation of our Lord were explicitly taught by himself through his humanity, as well as by his apostles afterwards; and Mr. Jones (Lectures, p. 207) asserts, as that he "perceived, during his voyage, whilst on a visit, four inspired men and angelic spirits." The custom here is to move clear-eyed, or rather, as they say, they were required to do by their thoughts that a great part of the "mystery" of their doctrine consisted in the *secrecy* in which they were long wrapped.

In the *allegorical* "Treatise" alluded to, were the Incarnation and the Lord's death contemplated; and the ecclesiastical writers of the first six centuries seem not only to have admitted that our Lord created his divinity from his divinity, but they were not sparing in their praise in this matter, but to have observed in this respect a profound wisdom, of which they frequently express their admiration. They urge that the Jews could never have been brought round to the faith, if those doctrines had not been kept back for awhile, — a strange thing, by the way, if the whole mind and disposition of the people were created to prefigure these mysteries. But let us turn our attention, which, from the rigour with which it was taught by succeeding writers, was gradually thought to apply exclusively, — it was necessary to conceal these mysteries from the Jews, so as could not be seen in the world, and defined every thing. The last of the remarkable words, "the Virginity of Mary, and the Birth and Death of the Lord were hidden from the People of the world." But this idea was equally enlarged upon by the later Fathers, for, as Carlier observes, "It was necessary to keep the Jews from the knowledge of the birth and death of the Lord, so as not to give them any ground for complaint." Jerome adds, that the vigilance of the Death, who repeated the Messiah to be born in some Jewish family, was excluded, and the Author of an anonymous fragment of the same age, cited by Tristram, suggests that, if Satan had known, he would never have put it into man's heart to crucify Jesus. And Julius, a monk of the sixth century, quoted by Photius in his Bibliotheca, and compiled by the learned Baronius in his *opere historico-critico*, says, "It was necessary to keep in the shade the mystery of the Incarnation of the Word, but, for the sake of converting the Gentiles, and in order to escape the notice of the Prince of Darkness." — See *l'Esprit des Loix*, M. de Montesquieu, l. 18, c. 10, §. 4.

\* *Journal of the Society for Christian Knowledge*, pp. 81, 82.

advantage over the Bible; for it removes all doubts at once, and makes the essentials most satisfactorily plain; compensating, shall we say, by "frequent repetitions," for the defects and ambiguities of Holy writ? Nay, it is a singular fact, that in the original languages of the Old and New Testaments, *no phraseology exists in which it is possible to express the creeds of the Church.* We give to the most learned of our opponents the whole vocabulary of the Hebrew and the Greek Scriptures, and we say, "with these materials translate for us into either language, or any mixture of both, your own Athanasian Creed." They will know, that it cannot be done: and ought not then this question to be well weighed? if the terms *independent*—for the expression of certain ideas are absent from the Bible, how can the ideas themselves be present? Scarcely can men *have* any important notions without the corresponding words,—which the mind cannot use just as it feels the need, and most assuredly they cannot *conceal* them. Let us hear no more the rash assertion that these tenets may be proved from any page of scripture, we frankly offer every page, with unrestricted liberty to re-write the whole; and we say, with all this, they cannot be expressed.

(2.) Let us proceed to apply our second criterion, and ascertain whether the divine persons, whom it is essential to distinguish, *are* so distinguished by *characteristic titles* in scripture; and share among them, with any approach to equality, the name of *God*.

It is self-evident, that a *verbal revelation* can make known *distinctions* only by *distinctive words*, that if two or more objects of thought receive interchangeable names, and the terms which had seemed to be appropriated to the one is transferred to the other, those objects are not discriminated, but confounded. We require, then, separate words in scripture to denote the following notions: of the One Divine Substance, or True Being:—of the First, of the Second, or the Third

person, in this infinite existence;—of the Divine Nature and of the Human Nature of Christ. For the Trinity, it is acknowledged, there is no scripture name; unless, indeed, the plural form of the word God in the Hebrew language is to be claimed for this purpose; and thus an attempt be still made to confirm our faith by an argument which an orthodox commentator calls "weak and vain, not to say silly and absurd."<sup>6</sup>—From the plural form of the word *Elohim*," says the great Calvin, "it is usual to infer that there are three persons in the Godhead. But as this proof of so important a point appears to me by no means solid, I rely not most upon the word. Let me then warn my readers against such violent interpretations."<sup>7</sup>—"I must be allowed," says Dr. Lee, Arabic Professor in the University of Cambridge, "to object to such methods of supporting an article of faith, which stands in need of no such support."<sup>8</sup> Of the first Person in the Trinity, the word "*Father*," it is to be presumed, may be considered as the distinctive name; of the Second person, the terms *Son*, *Son of God*, and the *Word* or *Logos*; of the Third person, the phrase *Holy Ghost*, *Spirit*, *Paraclete*; and of the human nature of Christ, as distinguished from the Second distinction in the Trinity, the names *Jesus of Nazareth*, *Son of Man*, the *Man*, *Christ*, *Jesus*. If these names be *not* distinctive, there certainly are no others; and if there be none at all, then the *differences themselves* are not impressed upon the record, they are altogether destitute of signs and expressions, and

<sup>6</sup> Lamberti Dantes, *encyclopaedia*, in quo dicitur de non. EUBII. cap. 200. Taurin. 2. l. See also *Index de quibus* p. 119. § 6.

<sup>7</sup> Comment. in Gen. 1. l. 1. Calvin add. "In arguing that they have but a plural for number, Arius, 146y, insinuates the mischief in the Sabellian error. Arius thought it wrong to judge of the Father, and that the Spirit of Father, was the same as the Son. If we are to make good that the three Persons are united, there will be no room remaining for a fourth and fifth, that the Son was self-generated, and that the Spirit is not of the Father, but of himself." For further notice of this passage see Note B.

<sup>8</sup> Grammar of the Hebrew Language, vol. 2, p. 202.

must be pronounced purely imaginary. Meanwhile we will assume the titles, which I have just enumerated, to be appropriated to the purposes which have been assigned. To the use of the words *Father* and *Son* I shall have particular occasion to revert.

The usage of the word *God*, in the New Testament, presents us with some remarkable phenomena. The Athanasian doctrine offers to our belief four objects of thought, to which this word is equally and indifferently applicable; the *True Divine Being*; and each of the three *Persons*; and its advocates profess to have learned from scripture the well-adjusted equipoise of these claims upon the great and sacred name. We are hardly then surprised by its instructions, distinct and emphatic as they are, for the following fact; allowing every one of the Trinitarian interpretations to be correct, the word *God* is used in the New Testament five times of Christ, and of some other object, upwards of THIRTYEVEN HUNDRED times.\* Whence this astonishing disproportion? Some cause, — something corresponding to it in the minds of the writers, it must have had; nor is it easy to understand, how an equal disposition of the Divine Persons in the habitual conceptions of the Authors, could lead to so unequal an award of the grand expression of Divinity.

Even the few instances, which for the moment I have allowed, will disappear on a nearer examination. This appears to be the proper place to pass under review the most remarkable passages, which, under Trinitarian exposition, appear to sanction the doctrine of the proper Deity of Christ.

(1.) The evangelist Matthew applies to Christ the following words of the prophet Isaiah, which, in order to give the truest impression of the original, I will quote from the

\* See *Scripture Texts and Scriptural Illustrations of Christianity*, by John Walton, second edition, 1847, p. 24, where will be found a curious table, exhibiting the usage of the word *God* in every book of the New Testament. Mr. Walton has calculated his numbers with great accuracy, and arranged them with great care. — p. 24.

translation of Bishop Lortch: "Behold the Virgin conceiveth, and beareth a son; and she shall call his name Emmanuel."† As this name is significant, and means "God with us," it is argued, that it could not be assigned to any one who was not properly God.

Now even if this name were really assigned by the prophet to Christ, the most superficial Hebraist must be aware that it teaches us nothing respecting the nature and person of our Lord. "The fact is unquestionable," says Dr. Pye Smith, "that the gratitude or hope of individuals, in the ancient scriptural times, was often expressed by the imposition of significant appellations on persons or other objects, in the composition of which Divine names and titles were frequently employed; these are, therefore, nothing but short sentences, declarative of some blessing possessed or expected."‡ Thus the name *Isaiah* means *God with them*; *Eligah*, *God the Lord*; *Elshu*, *God is he*. So that, to use the words of one of the ablest of living Trinitarian writers, "to maintain that the name *Isaiah* proves the doctrine in question is a fallacious argument."§

But, in truth, this name is not given to the Messiah by the prophet; and the citation of it in this connection by the evangelist is an example of those loose accommodations, or even misapplications, of passages in the Old Testament by writers in the New, which the most resolute orthodoxy is

† Isaiah vi. 12. The whole passage is as follows:  
 "Behold the virgin conceiveth, and beareth a son,  
 And she shall call his name Emmanuel,  
 Because and because shall he call,  
 When he shall have conceived what is evil, and will choose what is good,  
 For before that shall he not know,  
 To turn to the right, and to receive the good,  
 The Lord shall turn a dial,  
 By which thou shalt be judged and measured."

† *Commentary on the Prophecies*, p. 113.

‡ *Lectures on the Trinity*, by Noyes Smith, Professor of Sacred Literature in the Theological Seminary, Andover, U. S., 1842, p. 161.

unable to deny; and which (though utterly destructive of the theory of verbal inspiration) the real dignity of the Gospel in no way requires us to deny. Turning to the original prophecy, and not neglecting the context and historical facts which illustrate it, we find that Jerusalem was threatened with instant destruction by the confederated kings of Syria and Samaria; that, to the terrified Jewish monarch Ahaz, the prophet is commissioned to promise the deliverance of his metropolis and ruin to his enemies; that he even fixes the date of this happy reverse, and that he does this, not in a direct way, by telling the number of months or years that shall elapse, but by stating that ere a certain child, either already born, or about to be born within a year, shall be old enough to distinguish between good and evil, the foe shall be overthrown, and that this same child, whose infancy is thus chronologically used, shall eat the honey of a land peaceful and fertile once more. Nor is this interpretation any piece of mere heretical ingenuity. Dr. Pye Smith observes: "It seems to be as clear as words can make it, that the Son promised was born within a year after the giving of the prediction; that his being so born at the assigned period, was the sign or pledge that the political deliverance announced to Ahaz should certainly take place." Without assenting to the latter part of this remark, I quote it simply to show that, in the opinion of this excellent and learned Divine, the Emmanuel could not have been born *later* than a year after the delivery of the prophecy. It will immediately appear that there is nothing to preclude the supposition of his being already born, at the very time when it was uttered.

Who this child, and who his mother, really were, are questions wholly unconnected with the present argument. As the *date*, and not the *person*, was the chief subject of the Prophet's declaration, any son of Jerusalem, arriving at years of discretion within the stated time, would fulfil the main

conditions of the announcement: and, as a sign of divine deliverance, might receive the name Emmanuel. In fact, however, the child, in the view of Isaiah, seems to have been no other than the King's own son, Hezekiah; and the Virgin Mother to have been, in conformity with a phraseology familiar to every careful reader of the Old Testament, the royal and holy city of Jerusalem. Amos, speaking of the city, says, "The virgin of Israel is fallen." Jeremiah, lamenting over its desolation, exclaims, "Let mine eyes run down with tears night and day, and let them not cease: for the virgin daughter of my people is broken, with a great breach, with a very grievous blow."<sup>1</sup> Micah, apostrophising the citadel, bursts out, "O tower,"—"stronghold of the daughter of Zion,"—"is there no king in thee? Is thy counsellor perished? For paags have taken thee, as a woman in travail."<sup>2</sup> The fact that Hezekiah was already born, seems to confirm rather than to invalidate this interpretation. A living child to his parents, he was yet the city's unborn king. What sign more fitted to reassure the terrified and faithless monarch than this, that, ere his own fast-born should reach the years of judgment, his twofold enemy should be cast down? What language, indeed, could be more natural respecting an heir to the throne, of whom great expectations were excited in grievous times? The royal city dreamed of its promised life with gladness: he was the child of Jerusalem, in the hour of her anguish given to her hopes; in after years of peace fulfilling them. §

(b.) This prince appears evidently to have been the person described also in another passage, from which, though never cited in the New Testament as applicable to Christ at all, modern theologians are accustomed to infer his Deity. It is as follows:—"Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and his name shall be called wonderful: crasis bar; the

<sup>1</sup> Amos 5. † Jer. 31. 13.  
<sup>2</sup> Mic. 4. 4. ‡ Isa. 1. 31.

<sup>1</sup> See page 129, and page 130, 2 vols. 8vo. 1802.

mighty God; the everlasting Father; the Prince of Peace.\* We have only to look at the terms in which this great one's dominion is described, and the characters that are to mark his reign, in order to assure ourselves that he is some person very different from Christ; the Northern district of Palestine is to be delivered by him from the sufferings of an Assyrian invasion; he is to break the yoke which Tiglath-Pileser had imposed on the land of Gennesareth; to destroy the rod of the oppressor; to make a conflagration of the spoils of the battle-field, and burn the greaves and blood-stained garments of his country's enemies.† It seems to me impossible to imagine a more violent distortion of Scripture than the application of this passage to Christ. But, be it even otherwise, there are only two of these titles which can be thought of any avail in this argument. One is, the "everlasting Father," which, if it proves any thing, establishes that the second person in the Trinity is the first person, or else that the word *Father* must be given up as a descriptive name,—a concession destructive of the whole doctrine. The other is the phrase, "the mighty God," or by inversion, "God the mighty;" on which I presume no stress would have been laid if, instead of being presented to us as a translation, it had been given in the original, and called *QESHUHA*. For the word *God*, Martin Luther substitutes (Held) *Gotz*, as the juster rendering;‡ But, in truth, it is sad trifling thus to crumble Hebrew names to pieces, in order to yield a few scarce visible atoms of argument to replenish the precious pile of church orthodoxy, wasted by the attention of reason, the healthful dews of nature, and the sunshine and the air of God §

(c.) Let us turn to the Proem of St. John's Gospel; that most venerable and beautiful of all the delineations which

\* See Gen. 1. 1.

† See Gen. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12. 13. 14. 15. 16. 17. 18. 19. 20. 21. 22. 23. 24. 25. 26. 27. 28. 29. 30. 31. 32. 33. 34. 35. 36. 37. 38. 39. 40. 41. 42. 43. 44. 45. 46. 47. 48. 49. 50. 51. 52. 53. 54. 55. 56. 57. 58. 59. 60. 61. 62. 63. 64. 65. 66. 67. 68. 69. 70. 71. 72. 73. 74. 75. 76. 77. 78. 79. 80. 81. 82. 83. 84. 85. 86. 87. 88. 89. 90. 91. 92. 93. 94. 95. 96. 97. 98. 99. 100.

‡ Martin Luther's Works, vol. 1. p. 11.

§ See Gen. 1. 1.

Scripture furnishes, of the twofold relation of Christ's spirit, to the Father who gave it its illumination, and to the brethren who were blessed by its light. To our cold understandings, indeed, this passage must inevitably be obscure; for it deals with some of the characteristic conceptions of that lofty speculative reason which, blending the refinements of Platonism with the imaginative license of the oriental schools, assumed in early times the intellectual empire of the church, and has kept the world ever since in deliberation on its creations. I do not mean that the Apostle was a Platonist, or a disciple of any philosophical system. But he wrote in Asia Minor, where he was surrounded by the *infidels*, in constant familiarity with the *terms*, and accustomed to the *modes of thought*, peculiar to the sects of speculative religionists must prevalent in his time. At all events, it is a *fact* that he uses language nowhere employed by the other Evangelists or Apostles; and that this language is the very same which is the common stock, and technical vocabulary of Plato, the Platonizing Jew, and several Christian writers of the same or a kindred school. Before, however, endeavouring to suggest the idea which the Apostle did mean to convey, let me call your attention to that which he did not.

There cannot be a more misplaced confidence, than that with which the introductory verses of St. John's Gospel are appealed to by the holders of the Athanasian doctrine. Whatever explanation is adapted, which does not throw contempt upon the composition of the Evangelist, is at all events subversive of their system; and I do not hesitate to say, that *this is the only thing which I can regard as certain respecting this passage; that it never could have been written by an Athanasian*. In order to test this assertion, it is not necessary to look beyond the first verse; and before we read it, let us allow the Trinitarian to choose any sense he pleases of the word *God*, which is its leading term. Let us suppose that he accepts it as meaning here "THE FATHER," and that

the Word or Logos means God the Son. With these substitutions the verse reads thus:—

In the beginning was the Son; and the Son was with the Father, and the Son was the Father. This surely is to "confound the persons."

Let us then suppose the meaning different, and the whole Godhead or Trinity to be denoted by the word God. The verse would then read thus:—

In the beginning was the Son; and the Son was with the Trinity, and the Son was the Trinity.

We are no nearer to consistency than before; and it is evident that before the Trinitarian can find in the passage any distinct enunciation, the term God must be conceived to bear two different meanings in this short verse,—a verse so symmetrical in its construction as to put the reader altogether off his guard against such a change. He must read it thus:—

In the beginning was the second person in the Trinity; and the second person was with the first, and the second person was possessed of divine attributes as such.

We might verily ask, without unreasonableness, why, when the *unity* or personal affinity of the Son in the Godhead, is mentioned in the middle clause, the companionship of the *Father only* is noticed, and silence observed respecting the *Holy Spirit*; who at that moment could not possibly have been absent from the conceptions of any Athanasian writer. But independently of this, the awkwardness of the construction, the violence of the leading transposition of meaning, render the interpretation altogether untenable. If it be true, never surely was there a form of speech worse devised for the conveyance of the intended ideas.

In order to give the passage its true force, there is no occasion to assign to the word God any but its usual signification; as the name of the One infinite Person or Being who created and rules the universe. But it is less easy to em-

brace and exhibit with any distinctness, the notion implied in the phrase Word or Logos. The ancient speculative schools, seeing that the Deity had existed from eternity, and therefore in a long solitude before the origin of creation, distinguished between his intrinsic nature,—deep, remote, primeval, unfathomable,\*—and that portion of his mind which put itself forth, or expressed itself by works, so as to come into voluntary and intelligible relations to men.† This action of the Divine Mind, in which was attributable the authorship of the divine works, they called the *Logos*, or the *Parole of God*; both terms denoting the *expression or power which outwardly reveals* internal qualities; the one taking its metaphor from the *ear*, through which we make known our sentiments by speech. The other from the *eye*, to which is addressed the natural language of feature and lineament. If I might venture on an illustration which may sound strangely to modern hearers, I should say that the *Logos* was conceived of in relation to God, much as with us *Genius* is, in relation to the soul of its possessor; to denote that peculiar combination of intellectual and moral attributes, which produces great, original, creative works,—works which let you into the spirit and affections, as well as the understanding, of the Author. Any one who can so possess himself with the speculative temper of Christian antiquity, as to use with reverence the phrase *genius of God*, would find it, I am persuaded, a useful English substitute (though I am well aware, not a perfect equivalent) for the word *Logos*. Dwelling within the blank immensity of God, was this illuminated region of Divine ideas; in which, as in the fancy and the studio of an artist, the formative conceptions, the original sketches and designs, the inventive projects of beauty and good, shaped and perfected themselves; and from which they issued forth, to imprint themselves upon matter and life, and pass into executed and visible realities. From the

\* *ἀβυσσος ἀκατάβυστος.*† *ὁ λόγος ἐκείνου.*



energy of this creative spirit, or blessed genius of God, two very different orders of results were conceived to flow:—the forms and symmetrical arrangements of the material universe, by which, as by the engraving of a seal, Deity stamped his perfections into things: and the intuitions of pure reason and conscience in the human soul, by which, as by a heavenly tone or vibration, Deity thrilled himself into *consciousness*. And when I say *Deity*, I mean the *Logos of Deity*; for this alone, it was conceived, stood in any relation to us; the rest was an unexpressed and unfathomable Essence.

This portion of the Divine Infinitude was incessantly and vividly personified; so as to assume, even in the writings of the Jew and undoubted Monotheist Philo, the frequent aspect of a second God: though scarcely have you taken up this idea from one series of passages, before you are recalled and corrected by others, clearly showing that this is a false impression, too hastily derived from the intensity of the imagery and language. Indeed the distinction between a mere personification and a positive mythological personage is very faint. When a writer personifies an abstraction, *for the moment* he conceives of this object of thought as a person; and were this state of mind perpetuated, he would *believe* it to be a person. But his mental attitude changes; and, in a less excited hour, that which had constrained and painted itself almost into a being, fades away again into an attribute. Hence the fluctuation of writers, at once imaginative and speculative, like Philo and some of the early Christian Fathers, between the logical and the mythical method of speaking of the properties of the Divine nature. And it may be remarked, that the Apostle John partook, though in a very slight degree, of the same tendency. He was fond of abstract words: calling our Saviour the *way*, rather than the *guide*; the *truth*, rather than the *teacher*; the *light*, rather than the *discriminator*, and so I conceive, in the commencement of his Gospel, the *inspiration*, rather than the *inspired* of God. And then, as

if to remedy the indistinctness of this mode of representation, he resorts to personification: thus, at the dictation of his reverence, first reducing the living person to an abstraction; and afterwards, at the bidding of his imagination, recreating the abstraction into a person. The extent to which this personification may be carried, by an author who certainly had no notion but of One personal God, may be estimated from a few sentences, referring to this very conception of the Logos, from the Jewish Philo. The invisible and intellectual Logos, he says, is the image of God, by whom the world was fashioned; his first-born son, his vicegerent in the government of the world; the mediator between God and his creatures: the healer of all; God's divine Son, whose father is wisdom. In another place, the Logos is the very same with the wisdom of God; the most ancient angel, the first-born of God; in the resemblance of whom every one, who would be a son of God, must fashion himself. He is even the "second God." "To the Archangel, and most ancient Logos," says this writer, "God granted this distinguished office, that he should stand on the confines of creation, and separate between it and its Creator. With the incorruptible being he is the suppliant for perishable mortality. He is the ambassador of the Supreme to the subject creation. He announces the will of the Ruler to his subjects. And he delights in the office, and boasts of it, saying; I had stood between you and the Lord as mediator; being neither unbegotten as God, nor begotten as you, but between the two extremes, and acting as hostage to both." \* All this sounds very mysterious; the inopportune thing to bear in mind is, that the writer is certainly speaking not of any separate divine person, but of the impersonated attributes of One Sole Supreme.

\* Phil. l. c. Op. Solvay et R. J. Meyer, Francof. 1698. De M. c. l. c. 161. p. 5. C. p. 6 C. l. c. 1. p. 23. P. C. D. De M. c. l. c. 161. p. 274. P. C. D. 274. E. De M. c. l. c. 161. p. 274. P. C. D. 274. E. De M. c. l. c. 161. p. 274. P. C. D. 274. E. De M. c. l. c. 161. p. 274. P. C. D. 274. E.

St. John then, I conceive, does the very same; only he carefully warns us against thinking of his personification as otherwise than identical with the Supreme, by saying outright, that the Logos is God; and therefore that whatever he may say about the former, is really to be understood as spoken of the latter. The whole proem divides itself into two ideas: that from the Genus or Logos of God have proceeded two sets of divine works; the material world; and the soul and inspiration of heaven shed upon the world through Christ. This object, I believe, is to link together these two effects as successive and analogous results, physical in one case, spiritual in the other, of the same divine and holy energy. Having warned us, as I have said, in the very first verse, that this energy is not really a person distinct from the Supreme, he abandons himself without reserve to the beautiful personification which follows; assuring us that thereby were all things made at first, and thereby were all men being enlightened now; that our very world, which felt that forming hand of old, had not discerned the blessed influence which again descended to regenerate it: ungrateful treatment! as of one who came unto his own, and his own received him not. Yet were there some of more perceptive conscience and better hearts; and they, be they Jew or Gentile, whose spirits sprung to the divine embrace, were permitted to become, by reflected similitude, the Sons of God.

Thus far, that is, to the end of the thirteenth verse, there is no mention of Jesus Christ as an individual, there is only the embodied personification of the abstract energy of God in the original design, and the newer regeneration of the world. Nor should there be any difficulty in this separation of the Divine Spirit from its positive and personal results. Of the Creator Mind of God we can easily think, as not only prior to the act of creation, but still apart from the forms of matter; and so can we of the illuminating or regenerative Mind of God, as not only prior to its manifestation in

Christ, but apart from its embodiment in his person. In the next verse, however, the heavenly personification is dropped upon the man Jesus; the mystic divine light is permitted to sink into the deeps of his humanity; it vanishes from separate sight: and there comes before us, and henceforth lives within our view throughout the Gospel, the Man of Sorrows, the Child of God, with his tears and infirmities of our mortal nature, and the more perfection of the Divine. "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth."<sup>4</sup>

(d.) The spirit of this exposition is directly applicable to another passage, adduced to prove the deity of Christ: "God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory."<sup>5</sup> It is well known that in the most approved text, the word *God* does not exist, and the passage reads, "He who was manifest in the flesh," &c. Were it permitted to indulge personal wishes in such matters, I could desire that the common rendering were the true one. I know of no more exact description of Christ, than that he was a living and human manifestation of the character of God!

(e.) Let us now turn to the introductory verses of the Epistle to the Hebrews; a passage which is claimed as the clearest disclosure of the Deity of Christ; for no discoverable reason, except that from its great obscurity, it seems less, perhaps, than any other portion of Scripture, except the *Revelations*. From the earliest times it has been justly regarded as exceedingly doubtful whether the Apostle Paul was the author of this letter; the difficulties and darkness of which are of a very different character from those which embarrass us in his noble writings, and arise from mental habits far

<sup>4</sup> See Note C.

<sup>5</sup> 1 Tim. ii. 8.

<sup>6</sup> *Epistola ad Hebræos*, & *Quæstiones Insuper Brevi Synopsi Synoptice eod. lib. ab eod.* p. 19. edit. Lipsiæ, ab Magnæ, 1791.

more artificial and less healthy than his. But whatever be the authority of this work, and whatever the doctrine of its introductory portion, it is so far from giving any support to the Trinitarian sentiments, that it affords, even in its most exalted language, arguments sufficient to disprove them. The first verses of the epistle, altered slightly from the common translation, in order to exhibit more faithfully the meaning of the original, are as follows:—

“God who at sundry times, and in divers manners, spake in times past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath, at the close of these days, spoken unto us by his Son; whom he hath appointed heir of all things, through whom also he made the ages of the world, who, being the brightness of his glory, and the image of his nature, and ruling all things by the word of his power, having by himself made purification of our sins, sat down on the right hand of the majesty on high; being become so much greater than the angels, as he hath obtained by inheritance a more excellent name than they. For unto which of the angels said he at any time, ‘thou art my son; I have this day begotten thee?’ And again, ‘I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son.’ And whenever he may again introduce his first-born into the world, it [i. e. the Scripture] saith, ‘let all the angels of God pay homage to him.’ And with reference to the angels, it saith, ‘who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire.’ But with reference to the son, it saith, ‘thy throne, O God! is for ever and ever, a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom: thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity; therefore, O God! thy God hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.’”

I terminate the quotation here, because I do not believe that the following words have any relation to Christ. The writer’s argument not only admits, but requires, that they should be referred to the supreme God and Father of all.

Now observe with what distinctness the most lofty phrases

applied to our Lord in this passage, affirm his subordination, and deny his equality with the Infinite Father. At the very moment when he is addressed as God, he is said to have *fellows*, and to be set above them as a reward for his goodness; in the same breath which declares his throne to be for ever and ever, he is described as having a God who anoints him with the oil of gladness. He is greater than the angels, not by nature, but by the gift of a better inheritance. He is not the original divine effulgence, but an emanation of that glory, an image of that perfection; and in constituting the worlds, or rather the great eras of its appointed history, he is not the designer of its revolutions, but the instrument of God in effecting them.\* If this teaches the supreme Deity of Christ, in what language is it possible to disclaim and to deny supremacy?†

With respect to the peculiar terms of dignity applied in this passage to Christ, I would observe as follows:—

The words “Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever,” were originally addressed by a poetical courtier to Solomon or some other Hebrew monarch on his accession and marriage;† nor can the slightest reason be assigned for supposing that the ode in which the words occur had any reference more remote than the immediate occasion of its composition. The first half of the Psalm‡ is addressed to the bride, the remainder to his bride,§ who is exhorted to give her undivided affection to the new relation which she has formed; to “forget her own people, and the house of her father;” and who is consoled with the hope, that “instead of her fathers she shall have her sons, whom she shall make princes through all the land.” Those who can satisfy themselves with the theological conceit, that this is a prophetic allegory, descriptive of the relation between Christ and his Church, appear to have placed themselves so far beyond the reach of all the rules of

\* Isaiah lxxviii. 6.  
† 1 Kings ii. 12.

‡ Psalm xlv.  
§ v. 15-17.

interpretation, that argument becomes fruitless; *no possible medium of refutation exists*. They must belong to the class who have succeeded in spiritualizing the Song of Solomon; to whom therefore it has ceased to be a matter of the smallest consequence, *what words* are presented to them in Scripture, as they have attained the faculty of seeing one set of ideas, wherever they look, and an incapacity to see any thing else. Bishop Young, conceived that the prophetic claims of this Psalm must be relinquished, and that the term *God* in it is addressed merely to the Hebrew monarch, and therefore used in an inferior sense, renders the passage thus: "thy throne, O mighty prince, is for ever and ever."\* And surely, even those who can persuade themselves that scripture can have two intended meanings, and who imagine the poem in question to have referred primarily to Solomon, and secondly to the Messiah, must perceive that a word by which the Jewish prince might be denoted, cannot imply the supreme deity of Christ. Christ is said, in the common translation, to have made the worlds, but it is generally admitted that the phrase does not denote the construction of the material universe, and is even incapable of bearing this meaning. It describes Jesus as the agent of God in bringing about the successive states of our social world; in introducing the pre-luding revolutions, and the final catastrophe of human affairs. If it be asked, *what ages, what revolutions, are thus attributed to the instrumentality of Christ?* the answer must be sought in

\* *New Translation of the Psalms*, by Dr. M. Young, Bishop of Glasgow, &c. &c. Comp. Preface. When resident in Dublin I enjoyed the advantage of consulting this judicious work, supposed before to be published, for reasons sufficiently obvious to those who knew the work, and I then noticed the error on which orthodoxy gives to honor, and unaccountably to scorn and neglect. See Mr. Well-beloved's life in the *Western* Bishop Young's translation, &c. &c. May I venture to refer querulously opponents to the late merciful work, whenever they think proper to raise wine when kind of Old Testament theology a Christian may hold? It would be curious to know, probably participating with the usual "dogmatism" to determine, on which side of the division the Rev. Editors of the *Christian Church* stand for Mr. Westcott's "definition of language" or "worded and denoted with us."

the fact, that the author was a Hebrew, writing to Hebrews. He seized on the grand Jewish division of time and Providence into two portions, the period before, and the period after, the coming of the Messiah; and these were the two *æras*, frequently called "the present world," and "the world to come," which Christ is said to have constituted. Does any one inquire, in what way our Lord, if he were not at least pre-existent, could administer the arrangements of Providence in the former of these periods, that is, before his own mission to mankind? I submit, in answer, a suggestion which seems to me essential to the clear understanding of all the Christian records, and especially of those which relate to the years after the ascension. The advent of the Messiah was represented, *during those years, not as past, but as still future*; they were regarded as the close of the old and earthly epoch, not the commencement of the new and heavenly; so that all that Jesus of Nazareth had already done, the mighty changes which he had set in operation, were an action upon the *former* of the two great *æras*; nor would the latter be introduced till he returned from heaven; to rule, for a period vast or even indefinite, as the personal viceregent of God over his faithful children here. This event, which in our own days Millenarians are expecting soon, and which the early Christians expected sooner, was regarded as the true coming of the Messiah,—the point of demarcation between the *æras*,—the introduction of "the new heaven and the new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness." Meanwhile the old world was despoiling to a close, of which a warning like that given to Noah before the flood;† had been given by the preliminary visit, with unmistakable credentials, of one who was to be the Messiah; he had come in the flesh, and retired in the spirit; and was leaving time for the tidings of his appointment and his approach to spread, by the voice of witnesses and

\* See Acts iii. 19-21, and 33-35; 1 Pet. i. 10, 11; Hebrews i. 5; Titus ii. 12, 13; 1 Tim. ii. 1; James i. 2, 3; 1 Cor. ii. 10, Phil. ii. 5; 2 Thess. i. 7; 1 Pet. iii. 11.

preachers who published the pledges of his power. Of those pledges, which marked him out as the future prince of life and earth, none were so distinguished as his resurrection and ascension, by which God had given assurance that he would one day judge or rule the world in righteousness: \* by which he was declared to be the son of God with power, † and on the very day of which he became the first-born or the begotten child of God; ‡ and sat down on the right hand of the majesty on high; § Invested with his office, he yet abstained from immediately coming to claim its prerogatives; he continued sequestered in the heavens, allowing to the world a time of preparation, a solemn pause before judgment; repressing the impatient moment of the great revolution, and by his powerful word, bearing up like and upholding all things as they are ¶ If this were really the conception of the apostles, it follows, no doubt, that they prematurely expected the return of their Lord; but that they did so, is no new assumption; and in adopting it I protest myself by the authority of Mr. Locke, who says in a note on a passage of the Epistle to the Romans, “It seems, by these two verses, as if St. Paul looked upon Christ’s coming as not far off; to which there are several other concurrent passages in his epistles.”\*\*

If the foregoing interpretation of the introduction to this epistle be true, it follows that all the power and dignity there ascribed to Christ are described as *acquisition after his ascension*; that not till then was he accosted with the title of divinity previously applied to Solomon; not till then did he become greater than the angels, or receive an appointment of gladness above his fellows; not till then did he receive his heirship, his blessing, his sovereignty of God. Of his supreme Deity, scarcely could any more emphatic denial be conceived.††

\* Act. iiii. 26.

† Rom. i. 4.

‡ Act. iiii. 26—27, comp. Heb. i. 5.

§ Heb. i. 5.

¶ 2 Pet. i. 12.

\*\* Heb. i. 3.

\*\* Paraphrase on the Ep. to Rom. vol. II. p. 20.

†† From the word *Ben*, supposed to be derived to *Ben*, as the title of the third, 2 Cor. xii. 11, “the Deity of our Lord, as a word of power in the 2d

(f.) The following passage is sometimes quoted as affirmative of the Deity of Christ: “We know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true; and we are in him that is true, in for by) his Son Jesus Christ. *This is the true God, and eternal life.*”\* But it is surely evident that with Calvin, Newcome, Dr. Adam Clarke, † we must consider the concluding pair of epithets as parallel respectively with the two penultimates. “By him that is true,” says the Apostle, “I mean the true God,” “and this Jesus Christ is eternal life.” ‡ As to the pretence of over-nice grammarians, that the pronoun “*this*” must refer to Jesus Christ as the nearest antecedent, the Apostle John himself discovers it with this one sentence: “Many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. *This* (not Jesus Christ, it is to be presumed) is a deceiver and an antichrist.” § The antecedent, in this case, is not only *remote*, but *plural*.

[g.] I know of only one other set of passages requiring explanation from a Visitorian; and of these I take the following as an example; giving, you will observe, a translation slightly differing from the authorized version, but to which no competent judge will probably object:—“Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus; who, being in the form of God, never thought his equality with God a thing to be eagerly retained; but diverted himself of it, and took on him the form of a servant, and assumed the likeness of man; and being in the common condition of man, still humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, yea, and the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, &c.” ¶ Elsewhere Paul briefly expresses this sentiment thus: being rich, for your sakes he became poor. ¶

now, rendered. Yet this word, in the original, is *Christos*, when joined to *Ben*, he is called, is assumed, is possessed, is present, or dwelling of only one Person, and all this could mean less than *one* Person.

\* 2 John i. 20.

† *Notes on Ep.*

‡ Newcome

‡ 2 John 7.

¶ Heb. i. 3 = 5.

¶ 2 Cor. xii. 11.

Now, in order to appreciate the striking beauty of this passage, it is necessary to remember that the Apostle is writing to *Gentiles*; and to enter into his remarkable conception respecting the relation of the Messiah to them. This great object of promise was, according to the original idea of him, a mere national appropriation of the Jews; made their own by birth and lineage as well as by office. So long as these peculiarities belonged to him, he could not, without breaking through all the restraints of the sacred Mosaic law, stand in any friendly connection with the Gentiles; nor did our Lord, during his mortal life, ever extend his ministry beyond his native land. Moreover, there was nothing, Paul conceived, to prevent his realizing at once, had he willed it, all the splendid anticipations of the Hebrews, nothing to obstruct his sojourn, from the hills of Galilee, or the heights of Jerusalem, the promised royal sceptre, and making himself, without delay, the Lord of all below; nothing but his holy resolve to be no mere Jewish Messiah, and his desire to embrace the Gentiles, too, within the blessings of his way. And how could this be accomplished? Never, so long as the personal characteristics of the Israelite attached to him. He determined then to lay these aside, which could be done by death alone. On the cross, or in the ascension, he parted from the coil of mortality, in which were enveloped all the distinctions that made him national rather than human; the lineage, the blood, the locality, the alliance, passed away; the immortal spirit alone remained, and departed to the rest of God; and this his soul was not Hebrew, but was human; and so his relations expanded, and the princely Son of David became, through death, the divine Messiah of humanity. Writing then to Gentiles, the Apostle reminds them of this; tells them of what attainable splendours Jews had deprived himself, what rightful glories he had resigned, what anguish he had endured, to what death he had submitted, in order to drop his mortal peculiarities which had excluded the nations

from the peace of his dominion, and to assume that spiritual state to which they might stand related. It was not his God-land, nor the application of his miracles to his personal advantage, but the dignities of the Prince of Israel, the prerogatives and triumphs of God's vicegerent, of which he emptied himself, and for the Gentiles' sakes became poor. He whose office made him as God, became, by his pure will, a servant; he who, without the slightest strain of his rights, might have assumed an equivalence to Providence on earth, and administered at once the promised theocracy of heaven, was in no eager haste to seize the privilege; but, that he might call in those who else had been the exile and the outcast people, entered first the shadow of suffering and shame; he who might have been exempt from death, took the humiliation of the cross; showing a divine and self-forgetful love, which disregards his own rights to pity others' privations; and which gave a restless force to the exhortation, "Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others."<sup>a</sup>

(b.) In direct contrast with this past humiliation of Christ, is the present glory and future dominion with which, in the verses immediately following, the Apostle describes him as invested by the rewarding complacency of God. And here the passage enters the same class with three others,† of which the introduction of the Epistle to the Hebrews is one, but the most remarkable is the following: "Christ, . . . who is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature; for by him were all things created, that are in Heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers, all things

<sup>a</sup> See Note E.

† These texts naturally arrange themselves thus

Philipp. ii. 5-8.	} and, inasmuch	Psalm 96-101	} creation
2 Cor. v. 12-19.		2 Pet. i. 20-23	
		Col. i. 12-19	
		Heb. i.	

were created through him and for him; and he is before all things, and by him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the church; who is the beginning, the first-born from the dead; that in all things he might have pre-eminence: for it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell.\*

Calvin himself writes us that "the circumstances of this place require us to understand it as spoken," not of the original formation of the universe, but "of the renovation which is included in the benefit of Redemption."† Indeed a very superficial acquaintance with the phraseology of the Apostle, is sufficient to convince us that the language which we have here is *very unlike* that in which he speaks of the construction of the material system of things, and *very like* that in which he describes the regeneration of the world by the faith of Christ. Describing the natural creation, he makes no such strange selection of objects as thrones, principalities, dominions, powers, with unintelligible avoidance of every thing palpable; but says plainly, "The living God, who made Heaven and earth, and the sea, and all things that are in them;"‡ And characterizing, on the other hand, the effects of the Gospel, he says, "We are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works;"§ and "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things have passed away, behold all things have become new."|| Nor does the language of this passage appear so violently figurative as commentators have usually supposed. Apply to it the Apostle's conception respecting the return of his Lord from Heaven, to reign visibly upon earth, over a community holy and immortal, and the obscurity will no longer be felt. That advent, introducing the future age or world to come, would be attended by a revolution which could be called no

less than a "new creation." No term less emphatic would adequately describe the superseding of all existing arrangements, the extinction of earthly rule, authority, and power; ¶ the recall to earth of the spirits of the just; § the immortalizing of the saints who had not slept; || the gathering together the whole family of the holy in Heaven or earth; ¶ the everlasting destruction of the faithless from the presence of the Lord, and the glory of his power; || the bowing of every knee before the Prince of Life; ¶ the opening of the kingdom that cannot be moved; \*\* and the award of recompense to those who, having suffered, should reign with him.††

Already were the elements of this blessed society drawing themselves together, some in Heaven, others upon earth; the investiture with immortality had commenced. Christ was the beginning, the first-born from the dead: and the departed saints sharing his heavenly rest, and ready for the Lord to bring with him; ‡‡ the afflicted Church below, in earnest expectation of the manifestation of those Sons of God, and, though waiting for the redemption of the body, yet risen together with Christ to that spiritual mind which is life and peace; §§ all these were kept by the power of God unto the salvation, which was ready to be revealed in due time. ||| The multitude of the holy was thronging in, showing that no scant dominion was forming; but that it pleased the Father that, in his vicegerent, all fulness should dwell, and whatever is perfect be united. Lifted above the hostile reach of human right and dominion, above all mean comparison with earthly names of dignity, he sees all things already beneath his feet in the world as it is, and all things prospectively submissive in the world as it is to be. ¶¶ Nor was Jesus, in his retirement above, unoccupied with the glories of his commission,

\* Col. i. 15-19. Comp. Eph. iii. 10. where the apostle declares that the Ephesians were "created with all the fulness of God."

† Note in loc. ; 2 Cor. v. 17. § Eph. ii. 10. ¶ 2 Cor. v. 17.

‡ 2 Cor. v. 14

§ 1 Cor. xv. 51. 1 Thess. ii. 12; i. 10

|| 2 Thess. i. 9

¶ 1 Pet. i. 5

¶ John i. 6, Phil. ii. 10.

§ 3 Thess. ii. 14.

|| 1 Cor. i. 5.

¶¶ 2 Th. ii. 21, 22.

† 1 Thess. ii. 14.

‡ Eph. i. 10.

§ 1122. v. 24

|| Rom. ii. 13, 14, 6

or indifferent to the recompense of his followers, rather is he preparing and allotting to the glorified there, and the toiling here, the privileges and powers of the everlasting age which shall take place of the thrones and principalities of this. Over both portions of the community of Saints, the seen and the unseen, the Heavenly and the earthly, he is the living head, and his spirit filleth all.\*

This vision of the Advent, with all the magnificent ideas which gathered round it, seems to me to have given rise to the glorious "apture" of this passage; to have thrown in, at first, its light and darkness, and when applied now to its interpretation, to disclose the dim outline of its plan. And though, in form, the anticipation itself was at least premature, in spirit it receives, in the providence of the Gospel, one prolonged fulfilment; and many of its accompanying conceptions realize themselves perpetually. Though as yet Christ comes not back to us, yet do the faithful go to him, and there, not here, are far ever with the Lord. Though with no visible sway he dwells on earth, he more and more rules it from afar, wins and blesses the hearts of its people, bends their wills, sends his image to lie their conscience, and long has he had a might and name among us, far above our principalities and powers, and made the cross superior to the crown. And who can deny that he hath united in one the family in heaven and earth, ransomed death to fasten innumerable ties of love between the kindred spheres, and trained our rejoicing sympathies to see in creation but one society of the good, whether they toil in service and exile here, or have joined the colony above of the emancipated sons of God.

What then is the result of our inquiry into the scriptural use of the word *God*? That it is once applied, by way of transference, to Christ, in a passage of whose honours Solomon was the first proprietor. The views of the writer, and the purpose of his letter, might make this secondary application

\* Eph. i. 23.

of the Hebrew poem right and useful. But now, how miserably barren must be that religion, how unspeakably poor that appropriation of Christ, which thinks to glorify him, by throwing around him the cast-off dignities of a Jewish prince! All these convulsive efforts to lift up the rank of Jesus, do but carry men from that greatness in him which is truly divine. And after all they utterly fail—except in turning into caricature the image of perfect holiness, and into a riddle the statement of the grandest truths: for the scanty evidence will not bear the strain that is put upon it. Nothing short of centuries of indoctrination could empower so small a testimony to sustain so enormous a scheme, and enable ecclesiastics, by sleight of words, to metamorphose the simplicity of the Bible into the contradictions of the Athanasian creed.

Our remaining criteria may be very briefly applied.

(1.) Our next demand from a Trinitarian Bible is this; that as there are three persons equally entitled to the name *God*, that word must never be limited to One of these, to the exclusion of the other two.

Yet do the Scriptures repeatedly restrict this title to the Father so positively, that no more emphatic language remains, by which it would be possible to exclude all other persons from the Godhead. If the texts we shall adduce of this class do not teach the personal unity of God, let it be stated what texts would teach it, or whether we are to consider it as a doctrine incapable of being revealed at all, however true in itself. Meanwhile, I would ask, whether the most skilful logician could propose a form of speech, placing the Godhead against all but the Father, more absolutely than these passages; "There is but One God, the FATHER;" "FATHER! . . . this is he of whom, to know THEE, THE ONLY TRUE GOD, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent;" "The true worshippers shall worship THE FATHER"

\* 1 Cor. viii. 6.

\* John viii. 19.



in spirit and in truth; the Father seeketh such to worship him; God is a spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."\* "There is ONE GOD AND FATHER OF ALL."†

If such passages as these do not deny the Deity of all persons but One, it must be because the word "Father" is used in them to denote the whole Trinity; and if this be so, then this name ceases to be distinctive of the first person in the Godhead; no discriminative title of that person remains; it becomes impossible for language to characterize him, and the whole mechanism of speech, by which alone a verbal revelation could disclose the distinctions in the divine nature, vanishes away. You must either confess the absence of the distinctions themselves, or show the presence of distinctive names.

(4.) Our next demand from a Trinitarian Bible would be this, that when the *persons* are named, by their distinctive Divine titles, their equality will be recognized, nor any one of them be represented as subordinate to another.

If an Athanasian received a divine commission to prepare a Gospel,—a statement of the essentials of Christianity,—for the use of some unevangelized nation, he would not, we may presume, habitually represent the Son, in his very highest offices, as inferior to the Father, as destitute of independent power, as without undervalued knowledge, and possessed only of a secondary and awarded glory. At all events, these representations would not be made without instant explanation; and the writer would accuse himself of rashly periling the mysteries of God, if he committed himself to such statements without guard or qualification, in broad unqualified propositions. Yet these are precisely the phenomena of Scripture. It is perpetually maintained by Trinitarians, that the miracles of Christ were acts of power, unexplainable except by proper Deity, united with his humanity,

\* John iv. 24, 29.

† Eph. i. 4.

and that his supernatural wisdom was an expression of that Divine Nature which blended itself with his mortal constitution. If so, his miracles were wrought and his teachings dictated by that element of his personality which was God, — that is, by GOD THE SON;\* but this, our Lord unequivocally denies; "The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do;" "I can of mine own self do nothing."† "The words which I speak unto you, I speak not of myself; but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works;" "As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father;"‡ "The works which the Father hath given me to perform."§ These passages declare, with all the precision of which language admits, that the wisdom and the might which dwelt in Christ, were not those of the Son, but those of the Father; the incarnate God had no concern with them, for they are ascribed exclusively to him who never became incarnate. Indeed we ask, and we ask in vain, for any one divine act or inspiration ascribed by our Lord to this humanized Deity with whom his mortal nature was united: his teachings are one prolonged declaration that the divinity that dwelleth within him was THE FATHER. If he felt within him a co-equal Godhead, how could he make the unqualified affirmation, "My Father is greater than all?"¶ Or how a more specific disclaimer of Omnipotence be framed than this, "Of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the Angels who are in Heaven, NEITHER THE SON, but the

\* This is the source to which our opponents, the present controversy have repeatedly referred the divine element of Christ. Mr. Davis says, "It is not by the nature of the Godhead which dwelt within him, but by the Father, who is the God of the Christ, dwelt in him, bodily."† Mr. Luntan, that very aggressive heretic in our opponents' ranks, says, "Not could I, as we have already admitted, have wrought these divine acts of mine intelligence, except I were united to Him by the highest union, with which he was inseparably united."‡ Mr. Davis, "I speak these things," says Mr. Davis, "of the Father, who is God."§ "The Father is God," says Mr. Davis, "The Father is God."¶

† John vi. 17, 18.

‡ John vi. 19.

§ John vi. 21.

¶ John vi. 26.

¶ John vi. 27.

Father:"\* Dr. Adam Clarke, unable to resist this overpowering text, expresses his suspicion that it is not altogether genuine, and that the words, "neither the Son," should be expunged. It would appear that the temptations to "mutilation" are felt by other parties than the Editors of the Improved Version. If it be said, that in the passages which have been cited, the subordination alleged of Christ, refers to his human nature, and his mediatorial office, then it follows that his highest title may become the name of what is called his lowest capacity; and if this be so, no medium of verbal proof remains by which to establish any higher nature.† But can any supposition be more monstrous than this; that whenever our Lord used the familiar language of personality, and discoursed with the peasants of Galilee, and the populace of Jerusalem, he was perpetually performing a metaphysical resolution of himself into natures, characters, and offices, and putting forth, now a phrase from the divine, now another from the human capacity; here a sentence from the pre-existent, and there another from the mediatorial compartment of his individuality? And the absurdity is crowned, when writings, crowded thus with mental reservations, are handed over to us as a *Revelation*.

\* Mark iii. 12.

† Mr. W. is wrong in the meaning of the words, "The Son;" and apparently appears to vary these meanings in a way which serves the ends of reason, as well as the cause of truth. Mr. B. observes that in the passages which I have adduced, the Trinitarian hypothesis "stands on historical objections, because the word Son denotes in them the Jewish sense of a Mediatorial character." Mr. B. does not think he would say any such thing, in describing the persons, Sonship of Christ, as well as of the Holy Spirit, who, when he is properly called the *Right-hand Form*, "expressing in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost;" he begins to observe that it is not so the case, if *Christ the Mediator* that so seems to be implied. "Our Son with whom," he alludes, "not only did he converse, but especially he felt, even in the same time; for he does not say, 'the name of the Father and of myself, but of you and of him, of me and of you.'" Mr. B. is, as before, in the path of error. Let him observe that this statement is correct. Since the name "the Son," properly signifies the Mediatorial character, and such was the Christ's Word, may we ask Mr. B., how it is the Christ's Word that he hears the day and the hour, and read as nothing of himself? Mr. B. is *lost* p. 142.

(5.) Our last expectation from a Trinitarian Bible is this, that, since with the incarnation began and ended the peculiar office of Christ's humanity, he will not be spoken of as man, in relation to events before or after this period.

The glory which our Lord is thought to have possessed before his entrance into this world, was the essential, undivided, inalienable glory, which belonged to his Divinity; nor was his highest nature yet blended with the suffering elements, or capable of being deprived by the inferior titles, of his mediatorial office, or his mortal existence. Yet is it under the designation of *son* or *man* that he is described, according to the prevalent interpretation, as pre-existent; or is the *son* or *man* who "was before," in that state, whither he was to "ascend up again;" or was, "He that came down from Heaven,—even the *son* or *man*, who is in Heaven."† Whatever doubt there may be respecting the precise import of this title, it certainly cannot be thought to denote the separate divine nature of Christ, as it existed before the incarnation. In perfect consistency with this language, it appears that for the restoration of this original glory, Jesus declares himself wholly dependent on the Father; "And now, O Father, glorify me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was."‡ Here, if there be truth in the Trinitarian hypothesis, it was the man that prayed for a re-bestowal of that which the man never possessed, and which the God never lost or could receive from another. It must be admitted that no expression of dependence can be more solemn and absolute, than that which pours itself forth in prayer; and if our Lord was able to resume his former state, by the energy of his own Omnipotence, this act of supplication loses all semblance of sincerity. Yet, if here his dependence on the Father is acknowledged to be implied, with what consistency can another passage, relating also to

\* John iii. 16.

† John i. 1.

‡ John xvii. 5.

his departure from earth to heaven, he suited upon to prove that he *raised himself* from the dead, by that *inextinguishable* and glorious power, which, nevertheless, he entrusts the Father to restore? If his proper Deity brought back to life the crucified humanity, it was a mockery for his manhood to concern itself in prayer, for the restitution of the proper Deity. That his resurrection is not ascribed to inherent power of his own, is evident, not merely from the habitual language of the preachers of this great miracle, who declare without reserve that "this Jesus hath *God raised up*;"\* nor from the words of Paul, who calls himself "an Apostle by Jesus Christ and *God the Father, who raised him from the dead*;"† but even from the very text (when read without curtailment) which is adduced to prove the contrary; "No man taketh it [my life] from me, but I lay it down of myself; I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again, *this commandment have I received of my Father*."‡ "The Messiah is privileged to be immortal, and my seeming fall by hostile hands will neither disprove my claim to the office, nor deprive it of this peculiar feature: my mission give me a right to live, which will not be forfeited, though I exercise the right to die. Let no one think that my life is forced from me without consent of my own will; you can no more take it from me, than you can restore it to me. It is by the arrangement of the Father, whose will is also mine, that I take my Messianic immortality, not at once, but through a process of suffering and death."

If we pass forward, beyond the mortal life, to the final exaltation of Christ, he is still presented to us uninvested of his humanity. Listen to the modern preachers of Orthodoxy, and they will tell you that the judicial capacity of the Saviour could be filled by Deity alone; that to pass judgment on an assembled world, to read the secrets of all hearts, and allot

their final doom, are offices demanding nothing less than Omniscience, Omnipotence, Independence. But from the Apostle Paul we learn, that "God will judge the world in righteousness by that *man* whom he hath ordained;"§ and our Lord himself says, "I can of mine own self do nothing; as I hear, I judge;"¶ "The Father hath given him authority to execute judgment also, *because he is the Son of man*."‡ Nor is it the presumption of heresy alone that esteems it possible for God to confer on a human being the requisites for so august an office; for it is Archbishop Tillotson who says, "We may promise to ourselves a fair and equal trial at the judgment of the Great Day, because we shall then be judged by a man like ourselves. Our Saviour and judge himself hath told us, that for this reason *God hath committed all judgment to the Son, because he is the Son of man*. And this in human judgments is accounted a great privilege, to be judged by those who are of the same rank and condition with ourselves, and who are likely to understand best, and most carefully to examine and consider all our circumstances, and to render our case as if it were their own. So equitably shall God deal with us, that we shall be acquitted or condemned by such a judge as, according to human measures, we ourselves should have chosen, by and in our own nature, who was made in all things like unto us, that only excepted which would have rendered him incapable of being our judge, because it would have made him a criminal like ourselves. And therefore the Apostle offers this as a firm ground of assurance to us that God will judge the world in righteousness, because

\* Wicliffe's Discourses, ix. n. 117.

† Act. xiii. 31.

‡ John. x. 18.

§ John. v. 29. It is very difficult to determine whether this clause of scripture is rightly interpreted as referring to a final and certain judgment of mankind, the discussion of this point does not properly belong to our present subject; and the objection, to the title of heresy of judgment, on this subject interpreted as before, is simply answered.

\* Acts. x. 42.

† Gal. i. 1.

‡ John. x. 18.

his judgment shall be administered by a man like ourselves; He hath, saith he, appointed a day wherein he will judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom he hath ordained," &c.\*

It is, then, in his humanity, that this high prerogative belongs to Jesus. Yet are our opponents right in their assertion that, if there be any office attributed to him, requiring divine perfection, it is this; no higher exaltation remains, no superior glory is referred to him, from which, with any better reason, we can conclude his equality with the Father. Human in this, he is human in all things.

Not one then of the proper characteristics of a Trinitarian Bible can be found in the Scriptures, and it is vain for the Arian system to claim their support. This conclusion can be subverted only in two ways; either by showing, that

\* Johnson's *Discourse*, 2da. Lond. 1704, p. 209, 210.

I am aware that the error of this note will be not likely to have much weight with our opponents. In so speaking of them to waken the indulgence in a spirit of justice, which the modern Orthodoxy of the Church appears to consider altogether dis-buined. The Archbishop gives the following narrative of the trial which took its name from the Sacrament, "And yet to do right to the authors on that side I must say, that principally they set a pattern of the best way of disputing, and of debating matters of religion without heat and unbecoming reflections upon their adversaries, in the number of whom I did not expect that the First Vice-Chancellor of the Christian Canon would have been reckoned by down. They generally argue matters with that reason and gravity, and without the least display of passion and passion, which becomes serious and weighty arguments, and for the most part they reason clearly and clearly, with constant close and close studies, with great decency and decency, and yet with modesty and humility except, with a very gentle heat, and few hard words—wherein to be perceived otherwise they are that I have said is an error, and very worthy our remembrance." Yet the Archbishop, as if aware that his conduct might, by a very natural process, come to be regarded by his hearers, as an error, says, "The world they are the more in respect of a sect's cause, and which is dis-buined at the bottom, that perhaps the persons themselves, inasmuch that some of the Protestants, and the governing of the Popish system, and even of us deny themselves, who pretend to all the reason and authority in the world, are in comparison of them but mere words and bundles, when the whole matter, they have but this one grand desire, that they may a good cause and truth on their side; which if they had, they have reason and wit and strength enough to defend it."—*Johnson*, vol. p. 209.

the criteria which I have laid down, for ascertaining the theology of the sacred writings, are unreasonable and incorrect; or by showing, that the application of them does not yield any of the results which I have stated. I say any of the results, for if *all the phenomena* which I have assumed as tests, would be necessary to give a Trinitarian complexion to the Scriptures, the absence of even a portion of them would decide the controversy against our opponents' scheme, whatever difficulties might remain to embarrass our own. If the *list of criteria* be thought materially wrong, let it be shown where and why; let it be explained how there can be a *total revolution* of "distinctions," without any distinctive names; how, without such discriminative words, we are to know, *unless we assume the whole doctrine to be proved*, when the human nature of Christ speaks, or is spoken of, when the divine; how the *poor*, who first had the gospel preached to them, ascertained this with the requisite degree of acuity; and above all, we would request to be furnished with a better set of criteria, and to be distinctly informed, *what scriptural phenomena would be required, in order to disprove the Trinitarian scheme*. If, on the other hand, I have erred in the application of my tests, let it be shown how far into the substance of the argument the error extends. I cannot hope that the exposition which I have given will be found free from mistake and inaccuracy; and let these be exposed with such severity as they may deserve. Only let it be remembered, that the real question is not about the skill of the advocate, but respecting the truth of the scheme; and when all the errors of the one have been cleared away, let it be still asked, in what condition stands the evidence of the other. I have purposely taken my principal stand on the least favourable ground of the Unitarian argument, I have exhausted the strongest passages adduced against our theology; and I have done this the more readily, because these portions of scripture appear to possess an excellence and

beauty, which are obscured by their unresisted controversial repetition, and marred by the hieroglyphs of Orthodoxy.

And may we not, without immodesty, ask any candid Trinitarian, are these passages so very plain and easy, are they so numerous, are our interpretations so irrational and ignorant, as to justify the imputation of deceit, of blasphemy, of wilful mutilation of the word of God, which we are condemned perpetually to hear? As to that excellent man, who on Wednesday last, treated in this way our most cherished convictions, and our most innocent actions, I have said nothing in reply to his accusations; for I well know them to have failed in benevolence, only from excess of mistaken pity. Had he a little more power of imagination, to put himself into the feelings and ideas of others, doubtless he would understand both his Bible and his fellow-disciples, better than he does. Meanwhile, I would not stir, with the breath of disrespect, one of his grey hairs; or by any severity of expostulation disturb the peace of an old age, so affectionate and good as his. He and we must ere long pass to a world, where the film will fall from the eye of error, and we shall know, even as we are known.\*

In conclusion, then, I revert with freshened persuasion, to the statement with which I renounced, Jesus Christ of

\* Mr. Stewart's commands to our Ministers the conduct of a Jew, ch. II. who "cannot imagine to give. As his obligations to Jesus Christ, not apparently, from any display of the affection, or any reverence or duty, but from a prudent desire to run no risk of offending any possible power." "When I go to Heaven and see Jesus Christ, he will God, and I shall be allowed to look him in the face." It is remarkable that this principle, involving some objects of respect without regarding directly and merely, can be published without a Word from a Christian, ch. 11. And if Christ, to little know, to pass, through such fallow, were it possible, to be a prospect to his Father, instead of sending him, I am sensible that, in such, must make a sacrifice. In the Jewish, Father of prayer, which may be his name or name, and who will turn away from a renounce and the best preparation of the soul, unless his eyes, are all set right upon the light. What the world becomes, of the power of sinners and of evil, that duty may come the great up earth to the blessed God! "I hope, Not to world, to the Heaven, and I shall have Office, for setting patients on account of a wrong address."

Nazareth, God hath presented to us simply in his inspired humanity. Him we accept, not indeed as very God, but as the true image of God, commissioned to show what no written doctrinal record could declare, the entire moral perfections of Deity. We accept,—not indeed his body, not the struggles of his sensitive nature, not the travail of his soul, but his purity, his tenderness, his absolute devotion to the great idea of right, his patient and compassionate warfare against misery and guilt, as the most distinct and beautiful expression of the Divine mind. The peculiar office of Christ is to supply a new moral image of Providence; and everything therefore except the moral complexion of his mind, we leave behind as human and historical merely, and apply to no religious use. I have already stated in what way nature and the gospel combine to bring before us the great object of our trust and worship. The universe gives us the scale of God, and Christ his Spirit. We climb to the Infinitude of his nature by the awful pathway of the stars, where whole forests of worlds silently quiver here and there, like a small leaf of light. We dive into his Eternity, through the ocean waves of Time, that roll and solemnly break on the imagination, as we trace the wrecks of departed things upon our present globe. The scope of his Intellect, and the majesty of his Rule, are seen in the tranquil order and overhauling silence that reign through the fields of his valuation. And the Spirit that animates the whole is like that of the Prophet of Nazareth; his thoughts that fly upon the swift light throughout creation, charged with fates unnumbered, are like the healing surges of One that passed no sorrow by. The government of this world, its mysterious allotments of good and ill, its successions of birth and death, its hopes of progress and of peace, each life of individual or nation, is under the administration of One, of whose rectitude and benevolence, whose sympathy with all the holiest aspirations of our virtue and

our love, Christ is the appointed endem. A faith that spreads around and within the mind a Deity thus sublime and holy, feeds the light of every pure affection, and presses with Omnipotent power on the conscience; and our only prayer is, that we may walk as children of such light.

## NOTES.

A

### *On Impossibility, Physical and Logical.*

In order to break the force of all reasonings respecting the inherent incredibility of the Trinitarian doctrine, the principle has been frequently advanced, that a statement which would be contradictory, if made respecting an object *within reach* of our knowledge, cannot be assumed to be so, if applied to an object *beyond our knowledge*, since in the one case we have, in the other we have not, some experience to guide our judgment, and serve as a criterion of truth. Thus, it is said to affirm of man, that his nature comprises more than one personality, might, without presumption, be pronounced a contradiction, because we are familiar with his constitution: but knowing nothing of the mode of God's existence, except what he is pleased to reveal, we cannot prove the same statement to be contradictory, when made respecting his essence.

This rule, like all the Trinitarian reasonings on this subject, derives its plausibility from an ambiguous use of terms. It has one sense in which it is true, but inapplicable to the subject; and another, in which it is applicable, but false. The rule is sound or unsound, according to the meaning which we assign to the word *contradiction*; a word which, in other arguments besides this, has made dupes of men's understandings. There are obviously two kinds of contradiction:—one relating to *questions of fact*, as when we say, it is contradictory to experience that ice should continue solid in the fire; the other, relating to *questions of mere thought*, as when we say, it is contradictory to affirm that force is inert, or that the diameters of a circle are unequal. The former of these suggests something *at variance with the established order of causes and effects*, and constitutes a *natural or physical impossibility*; the latter suggests a combination of *incompatible ideas*, constituting a *logical or metaphysical impossibility*, or more properly, a *self-contradiction*.

It is almost self-evident that, in order to pronounce upon a physical impossibility, we must possess *experience*, and have a knowledge of

the properties of objects and successions of events external to us, and that to pronounce on a metaphysical impossibility, we require only to have the ideas to which it refers, of the coexistence or incompatibility of which with each other, our own consciousness is the sole judge. When I deny that ice will remain frozen in the fire, I do so after frequent observation of the effect of heat on resisting bodies, especially water, from the solid to the liquid form, and in reliance on the intuitive expectation which all men entertain, of like results from like causes. Experience is the only justification of this denial; and *a priori*, no belief could be held on the subject, a person introduced for the first time to a piece of ice and to fire, could form no conjecture about the changes which would follow on their juxtaposition. And as our judgment in such cases has its origin, so does it find its limits, in experience, and should it be affirmed that, in a distant planet, ice did not melt on the application of fire, the right of denial would not extend to this statement, because our knowledge does not extend to the world to which the phenomenon is referred. The natural state of mind, on hearing such an announcement, might be expressed as follows:—"If what you affirm to be true, either some *new cause* must be called into operation, equating the result which *she* would follow; or, some of the causes existing here are withheld; the sequence, I am compelled to believe, would be the same, unless the antecedents were *essentially* different. Were the fact even a miracle, this would still be true; for the introduction of a new or different divine volition would be in itself a change in the previous cause." But I am not authorized to pronounce the alleged fact impossible; its variance from all the analogies of experience, justifies me in demanding extraordinary evidence in its favour, but I do not say that, in the infinite receptacle of causes unknown to the human understanding, there cannot exist any form which such an effect could arise."

There is then, I conceive, no *physical* impossibility, which might not be rendered credible by adequate evidence; there is nothing, in the constitution of our minds, to forbid its reception under certain conditions of proof sufficiently evident. It simply states an expectation which, though necessary and intuitive *before* the fact, is not incapable of correction by the fact: it presents two successive phenomena, dissimilar instead of similar, and between two occurrences, allocated on different points of time, however much analogy may fail, there can be no proper *contradiction*. The improbability that both should be true, may stand a force almost, but never altogether infinite, a

force, therefore, surmountable by a greater. The thought can at least entertain the conception of their lock, nor is it more difficult to form the mental image of a piece of ice melted on the fire, than of the same substance melting away.

It is quite otherwise with a metaphysical impossibility or proper contradiction. The variance is, in this case, not between *successive* phenomena, but between *simultaneous* ideas. We deny that the diameters of a circle are unequal, without experience, without measurement, and just as confidently respecting a circle in the remotest space, as respecting one before our eyes. As soon as we have the ideas of "circle," "diameter," "equality," this judgment necessarily follows. Our own consciousness makes us aware of the incompatibility between the idea expressed by the word "circle," and that expressed by the phrase "unequal diameters;" the former word being simply the name of a circle having equal diameters. The variance, in this case, is not between two external occurrences, but between two notions within our own minds; and simply to say the variance is to *provoke their disagreement*. It would be vain to urge upon us that, possibly, in regions of knowledge beyond our reach, circles with unequal diameters might exist: we should reply, that the words employed were merely the symbols of ideas in our consciousness, between which we felt agreement to be out of the question, that so long as the words meant what they now mean, this must continue to be the case; and that if there were any one, to whom the same sound of speech suggested a truth instead of a falsehood, this would only show, that the terms *did not stand for the same things* with him as with us. It will be observed that, in this case, we cannot even attain any conception of the thing affirmed; no mental image can be formed of a circle with unequal diameters; make the diameters unequal, and it is a circle no more.

A further analysis might, I believe, reduce more nearly under the same class a physical and a metaphysical impossibility, and might show that some of the language in which I have endeavoured to contrast them, is not strictly correct. But the main difference, which the present argument requires, (viz., that no experience can remove the terms of a logical contradiction,) would only be brought out more clearly than ever. I am aware, for instance, that the distinction which I have drawn between my two examples—that the latter deals with *ideas within us*, the former with facts without us, does not penetrate to the roots of the question, that *external phenomena* are nothing to us,

till they become *internal*, nothing, except through the perceptions and notions we form of them; and that the variance (therefore, even in the case of a physical impossibility) must lie between our own ideas. I may accordingly be reminded, that the notion of "mixing with fire" is as essentially a part of our idea of "ice," as the notion of "equal diameters" is of our idea of a "circle," so that the final appeal might, with as much reason, be made to our own consciousness in the one case as in the other. Might it not be said, "so long as the word *ice* retains its meaning, the proposition in question is a *self-contradiction*, for that word signifies a certain substance that will melt on the application of heat?" This is true, and resolves the distinction which I have endeavoured to explain into this form: the word "*ice*" may be kept open to modifications of meaning; the word "*circle*" cannot. And the reason is obvious. The idea of the material substance is a highly complex idea, comprising the notion of many independent properties, introduced to us through several of our senses, such as solidity, crystalline form, transparency, coldness, smoothness, whiteness, &c.; the quality of fusion by heat is only one among many of the ingredients composing the perception, and should this even be found to be accidental, and be withdrawn, the idea would still retain so vast a majority of its elements, that its identity would not be lost, nor its name undergo dismissal. But the notion of the circle is perfectly simple: being wholly made up of the idea of equal diameters, and of other properties dependent on this; so that if this be removed, the whole conception disappears, and nothing remains to be denoted by the word. Hence a physical contradiction proposes to exclude from our notion of an object or event one part of many of its constituents,—an alteration perfectly alien to that which further experience itself often makes: a metaphysical contradiction denies of a term *all*, or the *essential part*, of the ideas attached to it. The materials for some sort of conception remain in the one case, vanish in the other.

Now the terms employed in the statement of the doctrine of the Trinity are abstract words, "person," "substance," "being," and the numerical words "One" and "Three," are all names for very simple ideas, not indeed (except the two last) having the precision of quantitative and mathematical terms; but having none of that complexity which would allow them to lose any meaning, and yet keep any; to change their sense without forfeiting their identity. The ideas which we have of these words are as much within ourselves, and as

capable of comparison by our own consciousness, as the ideas belonging to the words *angle* and *triangle*; and when, on hearing the assertion that there are three persons in one mind or being, I proceed to compare them, I find the word "person" so far synonymous with the word "mind" or "being," that the self-contradiction would not be greater, were it affirmed that there are three angles in one triangle—the mere forms of speech being varied to hide the absurdity from eye and ear. To say that our ideas of the words *ice*, *being*, *is*, *was*, for the words were invented on purpose to denote these ideas: and if they are used to denote other ideas, which we have not, they are vacant sounds. To assert that higher beings preserve this proposition to be true, really amounts to this, that higher beings speak English, for at all events not Hebrew, or Hellenistic Greek; but have recast the meaning of these terms, and to say that we shall hereafter find them to be true, is to say that our vocabulary will undergo a reedification; and words used now to express one set of ideas, will hereafter express some other. Meanwhile, to our present minds all these divine notions are inoperative; and using the words in question in the only sense they have, they declare a plain logical contradiction. Hence every attempt to give consistency to the statement of the Trinity, has broken out into a heresy, and the Indwelling and the Swedenborgian scheme, the modal Trinity of Welsh and Whately, the tritheistic doctrine of Dr. W. Sherlock, are so many results of the rash propensity to seek for clear ideas in a form of unintelligible or contradictory speech. *שלוש אנשים דומים על מה שאין אחד מהם.*

## B.

*On the Hebrew Plural Elohim.*

The perseverance with which this argument from the Hebrew plural is repeated, only proves the extent to which learning may be degraded into the service of a system. The use of a noun, plural in form, but singular in sense, and the subject of a singular verb, to denote the dignity of the person named by the noun, is known to be an idiom common to all the Semitic languages. Every one who can read a Hebrew Bible is aware that this peculiarity is not confined to the name of God; and that it occurs in many passages, which render absurd the inference deduced from it. For instance, from Ezek. xxxii. 2, it would follow, that there is a plurality of names or "distinctives" in the crucible, the name of which is these inward





we have created: and we send down rain from heaven by measure, and we cause it to remain on the earth," &c. "And we revealed our orders unto him, saying, . . . speak not unto us in behalf of those who have been unjust." "God will say: did ye think that we had created you in sport," &c. Ch. xxiv. pp. 281, 282, 287.

In the very passages in which Mohammed condenses the doctrine of the Trinity, the same form abounds: "Ye have prepared for such of them as are unbelievers a painful punishment." "We have received our will unto thee." "We have given thee the Kingdom, as we gave the plains to David." "O ye who have received the Scriptures, exceed not the just bounds in your religion, neither say of God any other than the truth. Verily Christ Jesus, the Son of Mary, is the apostle of God, and his Word, which he conveyed unto Mary, and a spirit proceeding from him. Believe therefore in God and his apostles, and say not, There are three Gods: forbear this; it will be better for you. God is but one God. Far be it from him that he should have a Son! Unto him belongeth whatsoever is in heaven and on earth. —Ch. iv. pp. 80, 81.

## C.

## On the Prophecy of an "Immanuel."

For the interpretation which identifies "the Virgin" with the city of Jerusalem, I am indebted to Ramsdun Ray, who has justified it by reasons which appear to me satisfactory. See his *Second Appeal to the Christian Public*, Appendix II. Calcutta, 1821, p. 125 seq. The use of the definite article with the word (הַמְּצִיטָה) points out the Virgin as some known object, who would be recognized by King Ahaz, without further description. It would hardly be maintained that this prince was so familiar with evangelical intimities as to understand the phrase of *Mary of Nazareth*. Nor does it seem at all likely that either the prophet's wife, or any other person not previously the subject of discourse, should be thus obscurely and abruptly described. But if "the Virgin" was a well-understood mode of speaking of Jerusalem, Ahaz would be at no loss to interpret the allusion. And that this metaphor was one of the commonplaces of Hebrew speech, in the time of the prophets, might be shown from every part of their writings. "Thou shalt be built *O virgin of Israel*, thou shalt again be adorned with thy palaces, and shalt go forth in the dances of them that make merry." "Then shall the

\* Jer. xlviii. 1.

*Virgin rejoice in the dance*." "The Lord hath trodden the Virgin, the daughter of Judah, as in a wine-press."† And Isaiah himself uses this expression respecting a foreign city. "Thou shalt no more rejoice. O thou oppressed Virgin, daughter of Sidon."‡ And expressing to the invader Sennacherib, the contempt which God authorized Jerusalem to entertain for his threats, he says, "The Virgin, the daughter of Zion, hath despised thee and laughed thee to scorn."§

It should be remembered, however, that the establishment of this interpretation is by no means necessary to the proof of invalidity in the Trinitarian application of the prophecy. The reasons which I have adduced, together with the use in a neighbouring passage, of the phrase "over the breadth of thy land, O Immanuel," appear to me to point out some prince as the Virgin's Son. But many eminent interpreters consider him as only one of the Prophet's own children, "whom the Lord had given him, for signs and for wonders in Israel."¶ And the first four verses of the next chapter certainly speak of Isaiah's son in a manner so strikingly similar, as to give a strong support to this interpretation. But whatever obscurity there may be in the passage, the one clear certainty as it is this, that it does not refer to any person to be born seven or eight hundred years after the delivery of the prediction. And it is surely satisfactory of any educated Theologian, possessing a full knowledge of the embarrassments attending the Trinitarian appeal to such texts, still to reiterate that appeal, without any specification of the mode in which he proposes to sustain it. Is it maintained that *Jesus of Nazareth* was the primary object of the prophecy? Or will any one be found deliberately to defend the hypothesis of a double sense? Or must we fear, that a lax and unscrupulous use is often made of allusions which stand still in the popular ear, without any distinct estimate of their real argumentative value?

It is no doubt convenient to get the best of every difficulty by the appeal to inspiration; to say, *e. g.*, that Matthew applies the word *Immanuel* to Christ, and with a correctness which his infallibility forbids us to impeach. But are our opponents prepared to abide by this rule, to prove its truth, to apply it, without qualification, to the New Testament citations from the Hebrew Scriptures? Will they, for instance, find and expound, for the benefit of the church, the prophecy stated by Matthew to have been fulfilled in Jesus, "He

\* Jer. xxiii. 13.

† Jer. xlv. 13.

‡ Is. xxiii. 12.

§ 2 Kings. xv. 21.

¶ Is. vii. 2.

¶ Is. viii. 18.

shall be called a Nazarene?" The words are declared to have been "spoken by the prophets." But they are not discoverable in any of the canonical prophecies: so that either the Evangelist took them from some inspired work now lost,—in which case the canon is imperfect, and Christianity is deprived of the benefit of certain predictions intended for its support, or, he has cited them so incorrectly from our existing Scriptures, that the quotation cannot be identified. I cannot refrain from expressing my aversment, that those, whose constant duty it is to expand the New Testament writings should be conscious of no danger in their authority, when it is strained so far as to include an infallible interpretation of the Older Scriptures.

## D

*On Isaiah ix. 6.*

The translation of this passage is not unattended with difficulties: and many of the versions which learned men have proposed leave nothing on which the Trinitarian argument can rest. It is clear that disputation ought to establish the meaning of the verse, before they reason from its theology. I subjoin a few of the most remarkable translations.

The Septuagint: "And his name shall be called 'Messenger of a great counsel:' for I will bring peace upon the rulers, and health to him."

The Targum of Jonathan: "And by the Wonderful in counsel, by the Mighty God who endureth for ever, his name shall be called the Messiah (the anointed), in whose days peace shall be multiplied upon us." The following allusion to the titles in this passage from Talmud Sanhedrin, 11 etc., will show to whom they were applied by Jewish commentators: "God said, to Hezekiah, who has five names, take vengeance on the king of Assyria, who has taken on himself five names also."

Cicero: "Wonderful: Counsellor of the Mighty God, father of the future age: Prince of Peace."

Editor of Calicut: "Admirable, Counsellor, Divine Interpreter, Mighty, Father of Future time, Prince of Peace."

Bishop Leath: "Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Father of the everlasting age, the Prince of Peace."

Many other translations might be added: and even if the pro-

phets were not obviously spoken of Hezekiah, we might reasonably ask, what doctrinal certainty can be found in so uncertain an announcement? And how is the fact accounted for that, important as it was to the apostles' success, to make the largest possible use of their ancient scriptures, not one of them ever alludes to this prediction?

## E

*On the Person of John.*

The objection which is more commonly entertained to the foregoing interpretation of the Person of St. John's Gospel, arises from the *strength and vividness* of the personification of the Logos. A *real personality* it is said, must be *animate*, in order to satisfy the terms of the description, which could never have been applied by the apostle to a mere mental creation.

I was by no means insensible to the force of this objection: though I think it of less weight than the difficulties which beset every other explanation. And it appears to be greatly relieved by two considerations: first, that a considerable part of the difficulty arises from a want of correspondence between the Greek and the English usage of language: secondly, that this personification did not originate with the apostle, but had become, by slow and defensible gradations, an established formula of speech.

1. The first of these considerations I will introduce to my readers in the words of Archbishop Whately: "Our language possesses one remarkable advantage, with a view to this kind of Energy, in the constitution of its genders: all nouns in English, which express objects that are really neuter, are considered as strictly of the neuter gender: the Greek and Latin, though possessing the advantage (which is wanting in the languages derived from them) of having a neuter gender, yet lose the benefit of it, by fixing the masculine or feminine genders upon many nouns denoting things inanimate, whereas in English, when we speak of any such object in the masculine or feminine gender, that form of expression at once confers *personality* upon it. When 'Victory,' e. g. or our 'Country' are spoken of as females, or 'Ocean' as a male, &c., they are, by that very circumstance, *personified*: and a stimulus is thus given to the imagination, from the very circumstance: that in calm discussion or description, all of these would be neuter: whereas in Greek or Latin, as in French or Italian, no such distinction could be made. The

employment of *ἄνθρωπος* and *θεός* in the feminine gender, can contribute, accordingly, no impulsion to the style, when they could not, without a solecism, be employed otherwise."\*

Now let any one read the English Poem of John, and ask himself, how much of the appearance of personality is due to the occurrence, again and again, of the pronouns "he," "him," "his," applied to the *Logos*; let him remember that *this work* is a mere imposition practised unavoidably upon him by the idiom of our language, and "give no animation to the style" in the original; and I am persuaded that the dialogue of the personification will be turned down to the apprehension of a very moderate imagination. It is true that the *Logos* does not, by this allowance, become impersonal; other parts of the personal conception remain, in the acts of creation and of illumination, attributed to this Divine Power, and hence the substitution of the neuter pronouns "it" and "its," for the masculine "he," "him," "his," though useful, provisionally, for shaking off the English illusion to which I have referred, cannot be allowed to represent the statement of the passage faithfully.

There appears to be another peculiarity of our language and modes of thought, as contrasted with the Greek, which exaggerates, in the feminine translation, the force of the personification. The English language leaves to an author a free choice of either gender for his personifications; and the practical effect of this has been, that the feminine personification has been selected as most appropriate to abstract qualities and attributes of the mind; and although instances are not wanting of masculine representations of several of the human passions, the figure is felt, in such cases, to be much more vehement and to rise entirely beyond the limits of prose, than the employment of the other gender. What imagination would naturally think of *Pity*, of *Fear*, of *Joy*, of *Genius*, of *Hope*, as male beings? It may be doubted whether our most imaginative prose writers present any example of a male personification of an attribute: I can call to mind instances in the writings of Milton and Jeremy Taylor, of this figure so applied to certain material objects, as the Sea, the Ocean, but not to abstract qualities or modes, unless when a conception is borrowed (as of "Old Time") from the ancient mythology. And accordingly, to an English reader, such a style of representation must always appear forced and strange. But a writer in a language like the Greek

cannot choose the sex of his personifications; it is decided for him, by the gender already assigned to the abstraction, about which he is occupied; and both he and his readers must accommodate their conceptions to this idiomatic necessity. In the German, the *Mann* is masculine, the *Frau* feminine, and every reader of that language knows the strange incongruities which, to English perceptions, this peculiarity introduces into its poetical imagery. For example, there is a German translation of Mrs. Barrow's Hymns in press; a passage of which, rendered literally into English would read thus: "I will show you what is glorious. The Sun is glorious. When She shineth to the clear sky, when She sitteth on the bright throne in the heavens, and looketh abroad over all the earth, She is the most excellent and glorious creature the eye can behold. The Sun is glorious; but He that made the Sun is more glorious than She." Again, "There is the Moon, lending His bright horns, like a silver bow, and shedding His cold light, like liquid silver, over the blue firmament." In the Greek literature, accordingly, the masculine personification of abstractions is as easy and common as the feminine, and the former occurs in many instances to which an English author, having free choice, would prefer the latter; thus in Homer, *Fear* is a son of *Mars*:

ὄψιν δὲ θεράποντος ἄνθρωπος ἐπέεσσιν ἔειπεν,  
 ἢ δὲ πόδες, φίλον υἱὸν, Σὺν ἔσπετον καὶ ἄραθον  
 "Ἰκάρου."

But in Coleridge a nymph:

"O Fear! thy wings are spread,  
 Their winged feet's weary length has past,  
 Where wilt thou rest, methinks, at last?"

And so in Coleridge,

"Black Vulcan stretched, and all the gale in dust,  
 Her mind drunk from the mare withering sweat!"

Finder must make *Envy* a masculine power:

"Hè βασίλειος αἵθετος ὄδρου"†

Coleridge describes thus the same feeling, giving itself speech:

"'Tis I, the fiercest spirit that the air contains,  
 Whom thou hast slain in a dead man's veins."

\* *Elements of Literary Jurisprudence*, p. 113.

\* *H. H. 228*  
 † *Idem*, p. 11.

† *Idem*, p. 277.  
 ‡ *Idem*, p. 278.

‡ *Idem*, p. 278.

And common as it is for English writers to give a feminine personification to Wisdom and Genius, Philo expressly says they are of the masculine gender (τοῖς ἀβραμ γινώσκουσιν ἐν τῷ νοῦν), and the husband of the chief faculties of the soul.

The divine attributes are, I think, uniformly represented by the pronoun *she*, in imaginative religious writers, like Bishop Taylor: mercy, justice, goodness, thus ascribed, in the works of that great man, the same form as Wisdom in the book of Proverbs; and it may be doubted whether, if the apostle John had written in the English language and with English feelings, the personification in his process might not have presented itself in the same shape. Any one who will read over the passage, with this idea, will find, I think, that the figure, thus undisturbed, appears by no means inconceivable. Have we not, in the peculiarity of our language to which I have alluded, one reason why English theologians appear to have felt more difficulty than foreign divines in raising the true idea of the Logos; and why the disposition to consider it as an objective and absolute Person has been much more prevalent, among all parties here, than on the Continent?

2. But a more important consideration, for the understanding of this Poem, is this: that the *Logos* is not the originator of the conception respecting the Logos, but simply adopted it in the shape, towards which it had been augmenting itself for centuries. Three successive states of the idea can be traced, in the Old Testament, it appears (in Prov. viii) as a mere transient personification of Divine Wisdom; in the Apocryphal Books of Ecclesiasticus and of Wisdom, it presents itself in a more permanent and mystical character; and, in the writings of Philo, it assumes so embodied and hypostatized a form, as to perplex the simplicity of his Monotheism. From his writings, the whole Person of his contemporary John (except where the Baptist and Jesus are mentioned by name) might be constructed. This coincidence in phrasingology so remarkable, cannot be considered as accidental. Is it thought impossible that John should say of an attribute of God, that it was with him from the first? We reply, Philo does say so, calling *Geonous* the most ancient of God's qualities: *Ἦνικον αἰδὴν τῆν ἀνωτέρω*; *Logos*, the *Assessor* (*ὑπάκουος* and *ἑταῖρος*) of God prior to all creations, a needed companion of Deity, as the joint originator with him of all things. And the Son,

\* De i. c. p. 124, D.

† Quod Præ. in Prov. c. p. 209. A. De char. p. 409. A. De Genes. p. 214. D. Tric. 5. 109 p. 24. B.

of Sirach says, in his personification of Wisdom, "I am come out of the mouth of the most High, first-born before all creatures." "He created me from the beginning, and before the world." Is it said that such a statement is unworthy of Revelation? We reply, it occurs in the writings of Solomon: "The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old." "then I was by him, as one brought up with him" (†) where the feminine form (see 2, 3) totally excludes the idea of Wisdom being any thing more than a personification. Is it thought impossible that an attribute of God should be called the only-begotten Son of God? We turn to Plato, and find this same *Logos* called the most Ancient Son of God (*ἀρχαιότατος υἱός θεοῦ*), the First-begotten (*ἰσπανότατος*). Is it inconceivable that, through this translating energy of God, those who received it should be said to become Sons of God? Philo says, "If you are not yet worthy to be designated a Son of God, be earnest to put on the graces of his First-begotten *Logos*, the most ancient angel, and, as they say, my Archangel or various titles." "And if we are not prepared to be esteemed children of God, we may at all events be thus related to the most Holy *Logos*, his eternal Image: for the most Ancient *Logos* is the Image of God." (‡)

All Theological considerations, suggested by heretics, are apt to be dismissed with mere expressions of surprise and contempt. I am happy to refer, in confirmation of the foregoing views, in the most essential particulars, to an Orthodox Writer, whose *character and natural learning*, and sound and grave judgment, have given him a merited pre-eminence among the Commentators on the Gospel of John. I allude to Professor Lucke, whose "Commentar über das Evangelium des Johannes" I have had the opportunity, since the delivery of this Lecture, of consulting. I wish that I could lay before my readers the whole of his admirable history of the rise and progress of the idea of the *Logos*; but I must content myself with translating a few brief extracts. §

"The origin and germ," he says, "of the theological Formula of

\* Ecclesiasticus viii. 2, 13. † Prov. viii. 22, 30.

‡ Ἐξ ἐμοῦ ἐγέννησεν τὸν υἱόν, ὃς ἁπλοῦς ἐστὶν ἀπὸ τοῦ πατρὸς, ὁμοῦς τῷ πατρὶ, ὁμοῦς τῷ πατρὶ ἐν ὄντι, ὁμοῦς τῷ πατρὶ ἐν ἰστανότατοι, ὁμοῦς τῷ πατρὶ ἐν ἀρχαίᾳ, ὁμοῦς τῷ πατρὶ ἐν ἀποστάσει. Καὶ ὅτι ἡ ἀρχὴ ἐστὶν ἡ ἀρχὴ τῆς ἀρχῆς, ὁμοῦς τῷ πατρὶ ἐν ὄντι, ὁμοῦς τῷ πατρὶ ἐν ἰστανότατοι, ὁμοῦς τῷ πατρὶ ἐν ἀποστάσει. Ἐκ τούτου, ὁμοῦς τῷ πατρὶ ἐν ὄντι, ὁμοῦς τῷ πατρὶ ἐν ἰστανότατοι, ὁμοῦς τῷ πατρὶ ἐν ἀποστάσει.

§ I have an impression of having seen translated an English translation of this work; but I have no means of ascertaining its title.

the Logos, are furnished in the Coptic and Hebrew Books (alluding to certain passages, especially Prov. viii which he has been showing to be mere poetical personifications of Divine Attributes). It obtained its full development in the Jewish Theology, in the writings of the Alexandrine Philo. And, in an intermediate state of formation, we find it in the Greek Apocryphal books of the Old Testament."

Lücke examines the conception in all these stages; and, from his analysis of Philo's mode of thought, I extract the following:

"According to Philo, God, in his interior Essence, is inconceivable, occult, solitary (das Absolute), self-completed, and without relations to any other existence. . . . Although the absolute cause of all that is, God cannot, in his own essence, and immediately, operate on the universe, either in the way of creation, preservation, or government. Concealed in his absolute separation, God is manifest and an object of knowledge in the world, only through his Powers (*δυνάμεις*): these, external forces of God in the universe, apart from his absolute essence, are the necessary medium of his presence in the universe. . . . These divine *δυνάμεις* Philo calls sometimes *λόγους*, sometimes *ἀγγέλους*, sometimes *λογος*. The identification of notions, powers, ideas, angels, logos, which is frequent in the writings of Philo, is of great importance for the right apprehension of his doctrine of the Divine Logos. This Logos he considers in a twofold relation. Sometimes he regards it as inherent (immanent), and refers it to him as a capacity (*δυσκότης*), when it is the Divine *λογος*, analogous to the human. . . . But this attributive conception gives way to that of the *ἀποκάλυψις*, as a living, energetic *λογος*, which tends to external action. Of this, Philo, in the spirit of Platonism, conceives as *ἰδέα*, *ἰδέα* the Ideal of things, the archetypal Idea, the pattern World, the *κοσμοειδής*, which is extant in God as a reality, before all outward creations of the actual universe. In this sense the *λογος* is the primary energy of God,—the *καύσις*, the *καύσις καὶ ἀποκάλυψις*.

But, at the same time, the *λογος* is also *ἐκπέμπσις*, and, as a formative activity, goes forth out of God. But *ἐκπέμπσις* is only another relation of the Divine Logos, viz., relation to the world, so as it is the product of the former, yet essentially one with it, like the *λογος* of the inherent Logos,—in human speech is the resident point of the idea, its form of manifestation. All living, active relations of God to the world, all his objective manifestations, are comprised in this emanated Logos. He forms the world or creates it, imprinting himself

in matter as a Divine seed (*σπέρμα*). And as he has created the world, (or otherwise, *God through him, ὑπὸ αὐτοῦ*) so he preserves it. He is the indwelling and sustaining power; full of light and life, and filling every thing with Divine light and life. So in the human world, he is both the natural divine power of every soul, the pure intellect, the conscience; and the bestower of wisdom, and the watch of virtue. He is the same with the Wisdom of God, the Holy Spirit of God in his objective manifestation in the world, partly because uniting and inspiring men, particularly in the capacity of Prophetic Spirit.

"Hence the Logos is the eldest Creation of God, the Eternal Father's eldest Son, God's Image, Mediator between God and the World, the Highest Angel, the Second God, the High-priest, the Redeemer, Intercessor for the World and Men, whose manifestation is especially visible in the history of the Jewish people."

It ought to be added, that some able writers, as Grotzenow and Giffner, conceive that Philo invested his Logos with a real personality. The reasons for this opinion do not appear to me to be satisfactory. Even those who adopt it assign to this hypostasis a rank wholly subordinate, in Philo's estimation, to the Supreme God; and Lücke strenuously persists (not both the Alexandrine philosopher

\* For the sake of brevity I have given rather an abstract than a translation. Consult also the *Evangel. de Sabaoth* von Dr. Friedr. Lücke, Berl. p. 224 p. 228. Bonn, 1823. It is not the real Philo and Lücke's Philosophy, which in conformity with the prevailing opinion of his countrymen, I have ventured to venture only to raise in question. It is always difficult to take the "original idea" as proposed in one country, and apply it, with any exactness, to the constitution of another, especially when the one is remarkable for the fixed and formal character of its theories of controversy; and the other, for the elasticity of its views, which it has derived (with shades of religious belief) derived by the only German scholar which has any real correspondence with English Evangelism, I mean the severe school of Grotze, Thulke, Hahn, Othmann, Celler would, no doubt, be pronounced defective in the faith. But he belongs to the class which approaches most nearly to them, both in the interpretation of Scripture, and in the estimate of its authority. He does not, like them, refer to Scripture as the direct source of Scripture with the apostles of Nazareth, and insist that the authority of the former is entirely of access to the latter; but having ascertained first the fact and character of Revelation, he then proceeds the comparison with philosophy, and defines the various constraints. He then belongs to the *Scriptural* was an original what is called the Ecumenical Council of Nice (see Theology). He is decidedly Trinitarian and Arianistic, and his authority has never been suspected, as he that of Schleiermacher, the father of his school. He was Professor of Theology in Göttingen before the recent printed disunion in Hanover.

and the apostle John apply the name *God* to the *Logos* only in a figurative sense (*εἰς εἰκασίαν*). He considers the clause "the Word was God," merely incidental, and unimportant compared with the preceding clause, "the Word was with God." "John," he observes, "takes up the purpose of the first verse in the words of the second; *ἔθεν δε ἐκείνη ἡρῶν ἡθε*. From his not taking up again the idea *ἔθεν δε ἐκείνη*, we must conclude, that he considered this position only as accessory. Thus the *ἡθε-εἰκόθεν* is evidently to be the more prominently marked assertion." "John would say, the primordial *Logos* is *ἡθε-εἰκόθεν*, that is, as in such communion with God, stands in such relation to him, that he may be called *θεός*. Looking at the historical connection between the mode of expression in Philo and in John, there is no room for doubt, that *θεός* is to be taken in the sense in which Philo applies the name *θεός* to the *λογος* *ἡθε-εἰκόθεν*—and explicitly calls the *λογος* *θεός*—*εἰς εἰκασίαν ἡθε*, but to prevent misunderstanding, expressly subjoins that this is only *εἰς εἰκασίαν*. Though John, as we have seen, understands by the *Logos* a real Divine Person, he yet, as a Christian Apostle, held the monotheistic conception of God in a still higher degree, and an incomparably purer form (xxii. 3, 1 John v. 26.) than Philo—and are we then at liberty to suppose, that by him, less than by Philo, the positive *εἰς εἰκασίαν ἡθε* is meant simply *εἰς εἰκασίαν*? It is true that the substitution for *θεός* of the objective *θεός* is at variance with the analogy of New Testament diction: but must we not, with the Alexandrine Fathers, especially Origen, conclude that *θεός* without the article, is to be taken as marking the difference between the indefinite sense of 'Divine nature,' and the definite absolute conception of God, expressed by *εἰκόθεν*? Thus would John's *θεός* correspond with Paul's *λογος καὶ θεός*. Such an accordance between the phrases of Paul and of John is an advantage which must appear an equally desirable result of exegesis, whether we consider it in its dogmatical, or its historical relations."\*

From this extract it appears, that if the author does not approve of the old Socinian interpretation, which considers the *Logos* as synonymous from the first with Jesus Christ: it is not because he knows, that *θεός* in the predicate cannot signify a god: or slight Origen's opinion on the usage of N. T. and Hellenistic Greek. We have here an authority, than which no higher can be produced from among

the living or the dead, in favour of a meaning which, to the fastidious scholarship of Liverpool theologians, is absolutely intolerable. *Logos* of course admits the general rule, respecting the omission of the article with the predicative noun; but he conceives greatly to the honour, no doubt, of those whose soul resides in syntax) that the good old Apostle would even have committed a solecism in respect of a Greek article, for the sake of clearing a great truth in respect of God. "If there had been any intention to express the substantial unity of the *Logos* and God, we should have expected the Apostle to write *εἰκόθεν*. On account of the equivocal meaning of *θεός* without the article, the article could not possibly have been absent." It is vain to say that such corrupt Greek as this cannot be ascribed to the Apostles. Here are examples from John, *ἰσχυροὶ τινὲς ἰσχυροῦ*; *τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον ἰσχυροῦ*; and here are others from Paul; *ὁ λόγος ἐστὶν πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον ἐκείνου ἰσχυροῦ ἰσχυροῦ ἰσχυροῦ*. Nay, we have an example in the following text, of a total inversion of the rule, the article being attached to the predicate, and not to the subject: *ὁ τὸν θεόν (τὸν) ἐκόθεν*†

It will be perceived by the text of this Lecture that I do not adopt the rendering of the Alexandrine Fathers; but I am anxious, in rejecting it, to pass no slight on the learning of those who maintain it, and to show that, out of England, orthodoxy can afford to be wise and just.

I think it right to add, that to the view which has been given of the *Proton*, an objection of some weight occurs in the twelfth verse. The clause "to them that believe on his name" presents the question, "ὡς ἔστιν ἐκείνου ἡ προνοία ἡθε—the *Logos* or Jesus Christ personally?" According to the interpretation which I have recommended, it should mean the former; according to the analogy of Scriptural diction, certainly the latter. Feeling the force of the difficulty, I yet think it less serious than those which attend every other hypothesis; and incline to think, that the clause is an anticipation of the personal introduction of the Euzoan *Logos* which immediately follows, a point of transition from the personification to the history.

In conclusion, may I take occasion to correct an erroneous state-

\* p. 243.

† 1 John ii. 6.

‡ 1 John v. 6.

§ 2 Cor. ii. 17.

¶ Gal. ii. 1.

\* ἰσχυροὶ τινὲς ἰσχυροῦ. There would be a difficulty in increasing the number of *εἰκασίαν* excepting *ἡθε-εἰκόθεν*.

ment in Mr. Byrtin's Lecture,—that Samuel Crell was a convert to Trinitarianism before his death. "He died," we are told, "a believer in the Supreme Divinity of Christ, and the efficacy of His atoning sacrifice." I have before me the most authentic collection of Socinian Memoirs which has been published, by Dr. F. S. Boek, Greek Professor, and Royal Librarian at Königsberg. The work is principally from original sources, and the testimony of the following passage will probably be received as unimpeachable. It appears that a vague statement in the *Hamburgische Literarische News* gave rise to the report of Crell's conversion: "Christ Crell ex Amstelredami, n. 1747, d. 22. Mnis, anno æt. 87. In *novis literariis Hamburg.* 1747, p. 703, narratur, quod circa vitæ suæ finem errorum suorum quædam penitentiam, hujusque penitentia non simulata humil obsecra sedent documenta, quæ Paulo Bergero, Archidiacono Hespericensi in insula novis publicis Hamb. 1748, p. 345. eam ob causam veri hæud admittit videtur, quæ vbi Amstelredam degenti Crellus, a. 1741, ore suo testatus fuit, in colloquiis cum Celsa. Schaffa Lugdunensi instituit, quædam placita, jam aliis dubia, tædita esse, adeo ut jam accepta even eadem hæreat. Sed in *videm novis* 1749, p. 92. et p. 480. certiores addunt: Crellum ad ultimam vitæ suæ halitum persistisse Unitarium, quod etiam frater ipseus, Paulus, multi coram pluribus verbis testatus est."†

## F.

In the rendering which I have given to this passage the word ἀπειθεῖς is considered as equivalent to ἀπειθήματα. The interpretation, however, in no way requires this; and if it should be thought necessary to maintain the distinction between them, to which the analogy of Greek formation, in the case of verbal nouns, undeniably points, and to limit the former to the active sense of the "operation of sending," the latter to the passive sense of "the object sent," the general meaning will remain wholly unaffected. The only difference will be this, that the whole of the sixth verse must, in that case, be considered as descriptive of the rightful glory of Christ; and the transition to his voluntary afflictions will not ensue till the 7th. The signification of this doubtful word simply determines, whether

the clause in which it stands shall be the first in the account of our Lord's dignity, or the first in the notice of his humiliation. The rendering, however, which I have adopted, is confirmed by the use made of this passage in the most ancient edition from this epistle. In the letter of the churches of Vienna and Lyons, the 6th verse is quoted, without the sequel, and the fact that Christ thought it not ἀπειθεῖς to be equal with God, is adduced as an example of *humility*, "qui secessit seipsum ad seculatorem et imitatorum Christi, qui hinc in the form of God thought not his equality with God, a thing to be eagerly seized."—*Facult. Eccl. Hist. Lib. V. § 2. Hebraïchen*, vol. ii. p. 36.

With considerable variation of expression, the same idea occurs in the 1st Epistle of Clement of Rome to the Corinthians. "Christ exultans qui se humiliat. Unus Jesus Christus, the sceptre of the majesty of God, came not in the show of pride and pre-eminence, though he could have done so; but in humility. Ye see, beloved, what is the model which has been given us." C. xv. If the Trinitarian view of the mediatorial office of Christ be correct, it is not easy to perceive how he could have come in the show of pride and pre-eminence, had he not laid aside the glories of his Deity, and clothed himself with a suffering humanity; his mission, as commonly conceived, could have had no existence, nor any one purpose if it had been answered. But he might have been the great Hebrew Messiah, had he not chosen rather, by a process of suffering and death, to put himself into universal and spiritual relations to all men.

† p. 357.

† *Historia Antiquitatum, nec non Scripturae et Ecclesiasticæ. Fred. Sævi. Bock. Tom. I. P. 307. 365.*



## PREFACE.

It will be apparent, from the unusual length of the following discourse, that its limits have been much extended since its delivery. The additional portions furnish, in detail, the interpretation which appears to me to reach the true meaning of the New Testament language, respecting the death of Christ. Few passages, I believe, relating to this subject, will be found unnoticed: and it is probable that, in the desire to avoid omission, I have been guilty of some prolixity and repetition.

The friendly diversity of opinion, which prevails among Unitarian Christians, is perhaps more considerable in reference to the subject of this Lecture, than to any other of the leading topics of theological belief. The reader will do justice to all parties, by bearing this in mind, while attending to the following pages, and by regarding every statement which he disapproves, as the mere expression of individual opinion.

It is impossible for me to leave unnoticed the charge of uncharitable violence and "vulgar personality," which Mr. McNeile has preferred against me, on the ground of certain strong expressions, contained in my first Lecture, respecting the late Archbishop Magee. I readily acknowledge that the instances are rare, which can justify the language which I employed, and I would never employ such, did I not feel that it was not simply justified, but demanded. He must be an unworthy controversialist, who has no generous delight in admitting and respecting a doctrinal adversary: who conceals and abhors at the moral delinquencies which prove an opponent wrong, without proving himself to be right. If Mr. McNeile could enable me to look with his eyes of violence and regard on "the illustrious Prelate," I should esteem it a privilege to read every word which I have put on record respecting him. But a careful study of his *Treatise on the Atonement*, with the habit of *trying his relations*, has revealed to me a system of controversy which, before, I should have esteemed incredible, and which no terms of censure can too severely describe. Paternal discipline, if has been observed with too much truth, is, of all influences, the most dangerous to the world here.

It seems to have been thought wrong in me, by my respected opponents, to state my general impression of Archbishop Magee's controversial character, without justifying it by specific arguments. And so it would have been, if his work had really been "unanswered": but every quality which I ascribed to it, has been shown to belong to it, by Dr. Carpenter; his work has received an reply; and surely a bystander may express a judgment on the merits of a controversy, and the polemical characters of its conductors, without the slightest obliga-

tion to lay open the contents of the discussion as self-justification. This appears to be Mr. Baileys's opinion, if we may judge from the pungent sentence in which he has characterized, without proof, one of Mr. Harrod's Discourses.\* In the present publication, however, I have supplied the deficiency which is the subject of complaint, and have shown, not only that the late Archbishop of Dublin dealt in terms of insult, which, if spoken instead of written, no cultivated and Christian society would endure; but that, with a shocking eagerness to blast the character of his opponents, he entreated the text of their writings, and drew his arguments from gilded quotations. If any one can convince me of mistake in what I have advanced, I shall most willingly retract and retract. But tell this I cannot qualify any expressions, however strong, which I have employed, for they are not the utterance of passion, but the measured language of conviction. More unwillingly would I ever wear the risk of wounding "the feelings of the living," by acknowledgments on the character of the dead. But, surely, personal attachments to the now must not be allowed to silence all public estimate of the author; and against the attempt, on this ground, to hold me up as the assailant of private affection, and the inveterate professor of censure, I protest, as equal and unjust. It is not the God I attacked "the name and memory" rather than "the book," of the late Archbishop; the words which I used described nothing but his work; and that they were words of most reprehension, arose necessarily from the nature of the complaint which we have to prefer against its contents. I do not understand the diplomatic arts by which a man may be analyzed into a plurality of characters, and permitted to do wrong in one capacity, while his reputation takes a quiet shelter among the rest: nor have I the ingenuity to rebuke latitude in a book, yet save the veracity of the author. If the "outrage" consisted in publishing an impression, unsupported by evidence, I only *hate*, that the addition of the proof will be found to bring on mitigation of the pain.

Let me add, that I entirely dispute the Rev. opponents of any appeal to the controversial arts employed by the Prelate whom they defend. Their admiration of his book ceases, I am aware, from ignorance of its real character, to understand which requires a much greater acquaintance with Unitarian literature than they appear, in any instance, to possess.

Let it should be thought disrespectful in me to pass without notice the strictures on my last published Discourse, contained in the Ninth Lecture of the *Tamaris* series, I will ask the indulgence of my readers for a few moments more.

\* *Works*, 2. 400. Note.

Mr. Bates accuses me of making a mutilated quotation from Deut. xix. 1—6. The whole passage stands thus: the part which I did not use being included in brackets:—[1. These are the words of the covenant, which the Lord commanded Moses to make with the children of Israel in the land of Moab, beside the covenant which he made with them in Horeb. 2. And Moses called unto all Israel, and said unto them, Ye have seen all that the Lord did before your eyes in the land of Egypt unto Pharaoh, and unto all his servants, and unto all his land. 3. The great temptations which the Lord hath exercised, the signs, and those great miracles. 4. Yet the Lord hath not given you an heart to perceive, and eyes to see, and ears to hear, unto this day. 5. And I have led you forty years in the wilderness: your clothes are not worn old upon you, and thy shoe is not worn old upon thy foot. 6. Ye have not eaten bread, neither have ye drunk wine, or strong drink: that ye might know that I am the Lord your God.]

My object was to show, that, if no latitude is to be allowed in the application of these grammatical principles of interpretation, we must admit "that Moses is called God with a distinctness which cannot be equalled in the case of Christ." For this purpose, I had no reason to quote more than the 5th and 6th verses, containing the phrase, "I am the Lord your God," the only question being, *who is the speaker, grammatically denoted by the first personal pronoun "I."* To make this evident, I went back to the opening of the sentence, which determined that point:—"Moses called together all Israel, and said unto them." The omitted clauses of his speech have no relation whatever to the matter in debate, and have no effect, not to *separate the parts*, without altering the sense, of the grammatical construction. So far from proving that Moses speaks, as if *personally identified* with the Lord, because teaching in his name, they prove just the reverse, for Jehovah is introduced in them in the *third person*, not the first: "ye have seen all that the Lord (not 'I') did before your eyes," &c. The first verse I did not quote, because it seems to belong to the preceding chapter, and to have no reference to the words cited. The only delinquency in this matter which I have to confess is, that I wrote by mistake, "Moses called together," instead of "unto all Israel." Mr. Bates draws attention to this by Roman capitals, as if to hint at something very remarkable in the error. I can only say, that after repeated examination of the word "unto," I can discover no mysterious significance in it; if it be an orthodox tetragrammaton, my disregard of its claims was wholly inadvertent. As to the argument itself which this passage was alleged to enforce, I cannot perceive that it is in any way affected by the Lecturer's remarks: we can say no reasonably doubt that if the New Testament had contained such a passage as this, "The Lord be us called unto the

multitudes and said, . . . I have led you into a desert place and fed you with the five loaves. But ye might know that I am the Lord your God." Trinitarians would have appealed to it as a triumphant proof of the Deity of Christ, whatever number of clauses might have severed the beginning from the end of the sentence, and however often the name of the Lord, in the third person, might have occurred in the interval.

Nor have I been successful in discovering in what way I have misapprehended Mr. Bates's meaning respecting the word "son;" in the following verse: "Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." I may doubtless have misread his words, and if in his eyes the misstatement has any "serious suavity," I sincerely regret its occurrence. Nothing but the constant habit of short-hand writing, enabling me to take verbatim reports of public addresses, would have given me confidence enough in my correctness, to found an argument on an unpublished verbal criticism. Even short-hand, however, being fallible, I relinquish the words; and the more suitably, because Mr. Bates's own report appears to me absolutely identical in meaning with my own. He says, that the baptism enjoined in the verse just cited cannot, so far as our Lord is concerned, be "baptism in the name of a Mediator," "our Lord's words prevent such misapprehension: he says not 'In the name of the Father and in my name' (my mediatorial name); but 'In the name of the Father and of the Son,—the only begotten, co-eternal, co-eternal, and co-equal, with the Father and the Holy Ghost.'" I represented him as saying, that our Saviour's words "expressly exclude such a construction, for he does not say, the name of the Father, and of myself, but of the Son, that is the Eternal Word." The difference between "preventing such misapprehension" and "excluding such construction" is not very obvious. I understand the argument to lie, that there is something in the form of expression in the second clause, forbidding us to think of any thing less exalted than our Lord's Divine Nature; the only expression contained in the clause is "the Son;" this term then, I argued, was limited by the Lecturer to Christ's Divine Nature, and must have been replaced by some other phrase, if his mediatorial character had been the subject of discourse. In drawing a general conclusion from this particular statement, I only gave the Lecturer credit for understanding the bearing of his own argument. For of course, all reasoning from the intrinsic force of an expression must be co-extensive with the occurrence of that expression. If I have not correctly explained Mr. Bates's argument, it evades my apprehension altogether.

## LECTURE VI.

### THE SCHEME OF VICARIOUS REDEMPTION INCONSISTENT WITH ITSELF, AND WITH THE CHRISTIAN IDEA OF SALVATION

BY REV. JAMES MACKENZIE.

—NEITHER IS THERE SALVATION IN ANY OTHER, FOR THERE IS NONE OTHER NAME UNDER HEAVEN GIVEN AMONG MEN, WHEREBY WE MUST BE SAVED.—ACTS 4.

THE scene which we have this evening to visit and explore, is separated from us by the space of eighteen centuries; yet of nothing on this earth has Providence left, within the shadows of the past, so vivid and divine an image. Gently rising above the mighty "field of the world," Calvary's mournful hill appears, covered with silence now, but distinctly showing the heavenly light that struggled there through the stormiest elements of guilt. Nor need we only gaze, as on a motionless picture that closes the vista of Christian ages. Permitted history to take us by the hand, we may pace back in pilgrimage to the hour, till its groups stand around us, and pass by us, and its voices of passion and of grief mock and rail upon our ear. As we mingle with the crowd which, amid noise and dust, follows the condemned prisoners to the place of execution, and fix our eye on the faint and panting figure of one that bears his cross, could we but whisper to the sleek priests close by, how might we startle them, by telling them the future fate of this brief tragedy,—brief in act, in blessing everlasting; that this Gol-

lean contact shall be the world's confessed deliverer, while they that have brought him to this, shall be the scorn and by-word of the nations; that that vile instrument of torture, now so object that it makes the dying slave more servile, shall be made, by this victim and this hour, the symbol of whatever is holy and sublime; the emblem of hope and love; pressed to the lips of ages; consecrated by a veneration which makes the sceptre seem trivial as an infant's toy. Meanwhile, the sacerdotal hypocrites, unconscious of the part they play, watch to the end the public murder which they have privately suborned; stealing a phrase from Scripture, that they may speak with holy lips; and leaving to the plebeian soldiers the mutual jest and brutal laugh, that serve to bewilder the hard but hated work of agony, and that *creep forth from the sufferer that burst of forgiving prayer, which sunk at least into their centurion's heart.* One there is, who should have been spared the hearing of these scoffs; and perhaps she heard them not; for before his nature was exhausted more, his eye detects and his voice addresses her, and turns round her the filial arm of that disciple, who had been ever the most loving as well as most beloved. She at least list the religion of that hour in its humanity, and behold not the prophet but the son—had not her own hands wrought that seamless robe for which the soldiers' lot is cast, and her own lips taught him that strain of sacred poetry, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" but never had she thought to hear it *thus.* As the cries become fainter and fainter, scarcely do they reach Peter standing afar off. The last notice of him had been the rebuking look that sent him to weep bitterly; and now the voice that alone can tell him his forgiveness, will soon be gone! Broken hardly less, though without remorse, is the youthful John, to see that head, lately resting on his bosom, drooping passively in death; and to hear the involuntary shriek of Mary, as the spear struck upon the lifeless body, moving now only as it is moved—whence he dares, on whom

she leaned, records the fact. Well might the Galilean friends stand at a distance gazing; unable to depart, yet not daring to approach; well might the multitudes that had cried "crucify him" in the morning, shudder at the thought of that clamour *at night*; "beholding the things that had come to pass, they smote their breasts and returned."

This is the scene of which we have to seek the interpretation. Our first natural impression is, that it requires no interpretation, but speaks for itself; that it has no mystery, except that which belongs to the stirrings of deep guilt, and the sorceries of disinterested love. To raise our eye to that wrong countenance, to listen to that submissive voice, to note the subjects of its utterance, would give us no idea of any mystic horror concealed behind the human features of the scene; of any invisible conditions, as from the hair of demons, in the soul of that holy victim; of any sympathetic connection of that cross with the bottomless pit on the one hand, and the highest Heaven on the other; of any moral revolution throughout our portion of the universe, of which this public execution is but the outward signal. The hastening drop no hint that its sufferings, its afflictions, its relations, were other than human,—raised indeed to distinction by miraculous accompaniments; but intrinsically, however signally, human. They mention, as if bearing some appreciable proportion to the whole series of incidents, particulars so slight, as to vanish before any other than the obvious historical view of the transaction: the thirst, the sponge, the rent clothes, the mingled drink. They ascribe no sentiment to the crucified, except such as might be expressed by one of like nature with ourselves, in the consciousness of a finished work of duty, and a fidelity never broken under the strain of heaviest trial. The narrative is clearly the production of minds filled, not with theological anticipations, but with historical recollections.

With this view of Christ's death, which is such at night

be entertained by any of the primitive Churches, having one of the gospels only, without any of the epistles, we are content. I conceive of it, then, as manifesting the last degree of moral perfection in the Holy One of God; and believe, that in thus being an expression of character, it has its primary and everlasting value. I conceive of it as the useful preliminary to his resurrection and ascension, by which the severest difficulties in the theory of Providence, life, and duty, are alleviated or solved. I conceive of it as immediately procuring the universality and spirituality of the Gospel, by dissolving those corporeal ties which gave nationality to Jesus, and making him, in his heavenly and immortal form, the Messiah of humanity: blessing, sanctifying, regenerating, not a people from the centre of Jerusalem, but a world from his station in the Heavens. And these views, under unimportant modifications, I submit, are the only ones of which Scripture contains a trace.

All this, however, we are assured, is the mere outside aspect of the crucifixion; and wholly insignificant compared with the invisible character and relations of the scene; which, localized only on earth, has its chief effect in Hell; and though presenting itself among the occurrences of time, is a repeat of the decreata of Eternity. The being who hangs upon that cross is not man alone; but also the everlasting God, who created and upholds all things, even the sun that now darkens its face upon him, and the murderers who are waiting for his expiring cry. The anguish he endures, is not chiefly that, which falls so poignantly on the eye and ear of the spectator; the injured human affections, the dreadful momentary doubt; the pulses of physical torture, doubling on him with full or broken wave, till driven back by the overwhelming power of love disinterested and divine. But he is judicially abandoned by the infinite Father; who expends on him the unreasonable wrath due to an apostate race, gathers up into an hour the lightnings of Eternity, and lets them

loose upon that bended head. It is the moment of retributive justice; the expiation of all human guilt: that open brow hides beneath it the despair of millions of men; and to the intensity of agony there, no human wail could give expression. Meanwhile, the future brightens on the West; the tempests that hung over their horizon are spent. The vengeance of the lawgiver having had its way, the sunshine of a Father's grace breaks forth, and lights up, with hope and beauty, the earth, which had been a desert of despair and sin. According to this theory, Christ, in his death, was a proper expiatory sacrifice; he turned aside, by enduring it for them, the infinite punishment of sin from all past or future believers in this efficacy of the cross; and transferred to them the natural rewards of his own righteousness. An acceptance of this doctrine is declared to be the prime condition of the divine forgiveness; for no one who does not see the pardon, can have it. And this pardon again, the clear score for the past, is a necessary preliminary to all sanctification; to all practical opening of a disinterested heart towards our Creator and man. Pardon, and the perception of it, are the needful preludes to that conforming love to God and men, which is the true Christ in salvation.

The evidence in support of this theory is derived partly from natural appearances, partly from scriptural announcements. Involving, as it does, statements respecting the actual condition of human nature, and the world in which we live, some appeal to experience, and to the rational interpretation of life and Providence, is inevitable; and hence certain propositions, affecting to be of a philosophical character, are laid down as fundamental by the advocates of this system. Yet it is admitted, that direct revelation only could have acquainted us, either with our lost condition, or our vicarious recovery; and that all we can expect to accomplish with nature, is to harmonize what we observe there, with what we read in the written records of God's will; so that the main

stress of the argument rests on the interpretation of Scripture. The principles deduced from the nature of things, and laid down as a basis for this doctrine, may be thus represented :

That man needs a Redeemer ; having obviously fallen, by some disaster, into a state of misery and guilt, from which the worst penal consequences must be apprehended ; and were it not for the probability of such lapse from the condition in which it was fashioned, it would be impossible to reconcile the phenomena of the world with the justice and benevolence of its Creator.

That Deity only can redeem ; since, to preserve verity, the penalty of sin must be inflicted ; and the diversion only, and the annihilation, of it, is possible. To let it fall on angels, would fail of the desired end ; because human sin, having been directed against an infinite Being, has incurred an infinitude of punishment, which, on no created beings, could be exhausted in any period short of eternity. Only a nature strictly infinite can compress within itself, in the compass of an hour, the woes distributed over the immortality of a thousand. Hence, were God personally One, like man, no redemption could be effected ; for there would be no Deity to suffer, except the very One who must punish. But the triplicity of the Godhead relieves all difficulty ; for, while one Infinite inflicts, another Infinite endures ; and resources are furnished for the atonement.

Amid a great variety of forms in which the theory of atonement exists, I have selected the foregoing ; which, if I understand aright, is that which is vindicated in the present controversy. I am not aware that I have added anything to the language in which it is stated by its powerful advocate, unless it be a few phrases, leaving its essential meaning the same, but needful to render it compact and clear.

The scriptural evidence is found principally in certain of the apostolical epistles ; and this circumstance will render it neces-

sary to conduct a separate search into the historical writings of the New Testament, that we may ascertain how they express the corresponding set of ideas. Taking up successively these two branches of the subject, the natural and the biblical, I propose to show, first, that this doctrine is inconsistent with itself ; secondly, that it is inconsistent with the Christian idea of Salvation.

1. It is inconsistent with itself.

(1.) In its manner of treating the principles of natural religion.

Our faith in the infinite benevolence of God is represented as destitute of adequate support from the testimony of nature.\* It requires, we are assured, the suppression of a mass of appearances, that would scare it away in an instant, were it to venture into their presence ; and is a dream of sickly and effeminate minds, whose belief is the inward growth of amiable sentimentality, rather than a genuine production from God's own facts. The appeal to the order and ingenuity of creation, to the structures and relations of the inorganic, the vegetable, the animal, the spiritual forms, that fill the ascending ranks of this visible and conscious universe ;—to the arrangements which make it a blessing to be born, far more than a suffering to die,—which enable us to extract the relish of life from its toils, the affections of our nature from its sufferings, the triumphs of goodness from our temptations,—to the seeming plan of general progress, which elevates truth by the self-destruction of error, and by the extinction of generations gives perpetual rejuvenescence to the world ; this appeal, which is another name for the scheme of natural religion, is dismissed with scorn : and sin and sorrow and death are flung in denance across our path ;—barriers which we must remove, ere we can reach the presence of a benignant God. Come with us, it is said, and listen to the wail of the sick infant ; look into the dingy haunts where

poverty means its life away, bend down your ear to the accursed hum that strays from the busy lives of guilt; spy into the hold of the slave-ship; from the factory follow the wasted child to the gin-shop first, and then to the cellar called its home, or look even at your own tempted and sin-bound souls, and your own perishing race, snatched off into the dark by bandits through the activity of a destroying God; and tell us, did our benevolent Creator make a creature and a world like this? A Calvinist who puts this question is playing with fire. But I answer the question explicitly: all these things we have met steadily, and face to face; in full view of them, we have taken up our faith in the goodness of God; and in full view of them we will hold fast that faith. Nor is it just or true to affirm, that our system hides these evils, or that our practice refuses to grapple with them. And if you confess, that these ills of life would be too much for your natural piety; if you declare, that these rugged foundations and tempestuous elements of Providence would starve and crush your confidence in God, while ours strikes its roots in the rock, and throws out its branches to brave the storm, are you entitled to taunt us with a faith of puny growth? Meanwhile, we willingly assent to the principle which this appeal to evil is designed to establish; that, with much apparent order, there is some apparent disorder in the phenomena of the world: that from the latter, by itself, we should be unable to infer any goodness and benevolence in God, and that were not the former clearly the predominant result of natural laws, the character of the Great Cause of all things would be involved in agonizing gloom. The mass of physical and moral evil we do not profess fully to explain; we think that in no system whatever is there any approach to an explanation, and we are accustomed to touch on that dread subject with the humility of filial trust, not with the confidence of dogmatic elucidation.

Surely the fall of our first parents, I shall be reminded,

gives the requisite solution. The disaster which then befel the human race, has changed the primeval constitution of things; introduced mortality, and all the infirmities of which it is the result, introduced sin, and all the seeds of vile affections which it compels us to inherit, introduced also the penalties of sin, visible in part on this scene of life, and developing themselves in another in anguish everlasting. Fresh from the hand of his Creator, man was innocent, happy and holy; and he it is, not God, who has deformed the world with guilt and grief.

Now, *as a statement of fact*, all this may or may not be true. Of this I say nothing. But who does not see that, *as an explanation*, it is inconsistent with itself, partial in its application, and leaves matters incomparably worse than it found them? It is inconsistent with itself; for Adam, perfectly pure and holy as he is reputed to have been, gave the only proof that could exist of his being neither, by succumbing to the first temptation that came in his way; and though finding no enjoyment but in the contemplation of God, gave himself up to the first advances of the devil. Never surely was a reputation for sanctity so cheaply won. The canonizations of the Romish Calendar have been copiously bestowed, on beings sufficiently remote from just ideas of excellence; but, usually, there is *something* to be affirmed of them, legendary or otherwise, which, *if true*, might justify a momentary admiration. But our first parent was not hid even under this necessity, to obtain a glory greater than canonization; he had simply to do nothing, except to fall, in order to be esteemed the most perfectly holy of created minds. Most partial, too, is this theory in its application; for disease and hardship, and death unmerited as the infant's, afflict the lower animal creation. Is this, too, the result of the fall? If so, it is an *unredeemed* effect; if not, it presses on the benevolence of the Maker; and by the physical analogies which connect man with the inferior creatures, force on us the impression, that his corporeal sufferings have an original source not dissimilar from theirs.

And again, this explanation only serves to make matters worse than before. For how puerile is it to suppose, that men will rest satisfied with tracing back their ills to Adam, and refrain from asking, who was Adam's cause! And then comes upon us at once the ancient dilemma about evil, was it mistake, or was it malignity, that created so poor a creature as our progenitor, and staked on so precarious a wall the blessedness of a race and the well-being of a world? So far, this theory, falsely and injuriously ascribed to Christianity, would leave us where we were: but it carries us into deeper and gratuitous difficulties, of which natural religion knows nothing, by appending eternal consequences to Adam's transgression; a large portion of which, after the most sanguine extension of the efficacy of the atonement, must remain undredmed. So that if, under the eye of naturalists, the world, with its generations dropping into the grave, must appear (as we heard it recently described)\* like the populous precincts of some castle, whose governor called his servants, after a brief indulgence of liberty and peace, into a dark and inscrutable dungeon, never to return or be seen again: the only new feature which this theory introduces into the prospect is this; that the interior of that cavernous prison-house is disclosed; and while a few of the departed are seen to have emerged into a fairer light, and to be traversing greener fields, and sharing a more unlessed liberty than they knew before, the vast multitude are discerned in the grips of everlasting chains, and the twist of unmitigable torture. And all this induction is a penal consequence of a first ancestor's transgression! Singular spectacle to be offered in vindication of the character of God!

We are warned, however, not to start back from this representation, or to indulge in any rash expression of the view which it gives of the justice of the Most High; for that,

\* See Mr. H. Moreley's *Lectures: The Progress of our Lord the only Ground of Consistency in His Work*. Boston: 26, pp. 207, 210.

beyond all doubt, parallel instances occur in the operations of nature; and that if the systems deduced from Scripture accords with that which is in action in the creation, there arises a strong presumption that both are from the same Author. The arrangement which is the prime subject of objection in the foregoing theory, viz., the vicarious transmission of consequences from acts of vice and virtue, is said to be familiar to our observation as a *fact*; and ought, therefore, to present no difficulties in the way of the admission of a *doctrine*. Is it not obvious, for example, that the guilt of a parent may entail disease and premature death on his child, or even remote descendants? And if it be consistent with the divine perfections, that the innocent should suffer for others' sins at the distance of one generation, why not at the distance of a thousand? The guiltless victim is not more completely severed from identity with Adam, than he is from identity with his own father. My reply is brief: I admit both the fact and the analogy; but the fact is of the exceptional kind, from which, by itself, I could not infer the justice or the benevolence of the Creator; and scarce, were it of large and prevalent amount, I could not even reconcile with these perfections. If then you take it out of the list of exceptions and difficulties, and erect it into a cardinal rule, if you interpret by it the whole invisible portion of God's government, you turn the scale at once against the character of the Supreme, and plant creation under a tyrant's sway. And this is the fatal principle pervading all analogical arguments in defence of Trinitarian Christianity. No resemblances to the system can be found in the universe, except in those anomalies and seeming defects which perplex the student of Providence, and which would undermine his faith, were they not lost in the vast spectacle of beauty and of good. These disorders are selected and spread out to view, as specimens of the divine government of nature; the mysteries and horrors which offend us in the popular theology are extended by their side; the comparison is



made, point by point, till the similitude is undeniably made out; and when the argument is closed, it amounts to this: do you doubt whether God could break men's limbs? You mistake his strength of character; only see how he puts out their eyes! What kind of impression this reasoning may have, seems to me doubtful even to agony. Both Trinitarian theology and nature, it is triumphantly urged, must proceed from the same Author; aye, but what sort of Author is that? You have led me in your quest after eulogies, through the great infirmary of God's creation; and so haunted am I by the sights and sounds of the lazar-house, that scarce can I believe in any thing but pestilence; so sick of soul have I become, that the mountain breeze has lost its scent of health, and you say, it is all the same in the other world, and wherever the same rule extends - then I know my fate, that in this Universe Justice has no throne. And thus, my friends, it comes to pass, that these reasoners often gain indeed their victory; but it is known only to the Searcher of Hearts, whether it is a victory against natural religion, or in favour of revealed. For this reason, I consider the "Analogy" of Bishop Butler (one of the profoundest of thinkers, and on purely moral subjects one of the justest too,) as containing, with a design directly contrary, the most terrible persuasives to Atheism that have ever been produced. The essential error consists in selecting the difficulties, which are the rare, exceptional phenomena of nature,—as the basis of analogy and argument. In the comprehensive and generous study of Providence, the mind may, indeed, already have overcome the difficulties, and with the lights recently gained from the harmony, design, and order of creation, have made those shadows pass imperceptibly away; but when forced again into their very centre, unrepelled to adopt them as a fixed station and point of mental vision, they deepen round the heart again, and, instead of illustrating any thing, become solid darkness themselves.

I cannot quit this topic without observing, however, that

there appears to be nothing in nature and life, at all analogous to the vicarious principle attributed to God in the Trinitarian scheme of redemption. There is nowhere to be found any proper transfer or exchange, either of the qualities, or of the consequences, of vice and virtue. The good and evil acts of men do indeed affect others *as well as* themselves; the innocent suffer *with* the guilty, as in the case before ad- dressed, of a child suffering in health by the excesses of a parent. But there is here no endurance *for* another, similar to Christ's alleged endurance in the place of men; the im- duction on the child is not deducted from the parent; it does nothing to lighten his load, or make it less than it would have been, had he been without descendants; nor does any one suppose his guilt alleviated by the existence of this innocent fellow-sufferer. There is a nearer approach to analogy in those cases of crime, where the perpetrator seems to escape, and to leave the consequences of his act to descend on others; as when the successful cheat eludes pursuit, and from the stolen gains of neighbours constructs a life of luxury for himself; or when a spendthrift government, forgetful of its high trust, turning the professions of patriotism into a lie, is permitted to run a prosperous career for one generation, and is personally gone before the popular retribution falls, in the next, on innocent successors. Here no doubt the harmless suffer *by* the guilty, in a certain sense *in the place of* the guilty, but not in the sense which the analogy requires. For there is still no substitution; the distress of the unoffending party is not struck out of the offender's punishment; does not lessen, but rather aggravates his guilt; and instead of fitting him for pardon, tempts the natural sentiments of justice to follow him with surer condemnation. Nor does the scheme receive any better illustration from the fact, that whoever attempts the cure of misery must himself suffer; must have the shadows of ill cast upon his spirit from every sadness he alleviates, and interpose himself

to stay the plague which, in a world diseased, threatens to pass to the living from the dead. The parallel fails, because there is still no transference: the appropriate sufferings of sin are not given to the philanthropist; and the noble pains of goodness in him, the glorious strife of his self-sacrifice, are no part of the penal consequences of others' guilt; they do not cancel one iota of those consequences, or make the crimes which have demanded them, in any way, more ready for forgiveness. Indeed, it is *not* in the good man's *sufferings*, considered as such, that any efficacy resides; but in his *efforts*, which may be made with great sacrifice or without it, as the case may be. Nor, at best, is there any proper annihilation of consequences at all, accruing from his toils: the past acts of wrong which call up his resisting energies, are irrevocable, the guilt incurred, the penalty indestructible; the series of effects, foreign to the mind of the perpetrator, may be abridged; prevention applied to new ills which threaten to arise; but, by all this, the personal fitness of the delinquent for forgiveness is wholly unaffected; the volume of sin has gone forth; and on it, then, as surely as sound on a vibration of the air, the verdict of judgment.

Those who are affected by slight and failing analogies like these, would do well to consider one, sufficiently obvious, which seems to throw doubt upon their scheme. The atonement is thought to be, in respect to all believers, a reversal of the fall: the effects of the fall are partly visible and temporary, partly invisible and eternal; linked, however, together as inseparable portions of the same penal system. Now it is evident, that the supposed *redemption* on the cross has left precisely where they were, all the *visible effects* of the first transgression: sorrow and toil are the lot of all, as they have been from of old; the baptized infant utters a cry as sad as the unbaptized; and between the holiness of the true believer and the worth of the devout heretic, there is not discernible such a differ-

ence, as there must have been between Adam pure and perfect, and Adam lapsed and lost. And is it presumptuous to reason from the seen to the unseen, from the part which we experience to that which we can only conceive? If the known effects are unredeemed, the suspicion is not unnatural, that so are the unknown.

I sum up, then, this part of my subject by observing, that besides many inconclusive appeals to nature, the advocates of the vicarious scheme are chargeable with this fundamental inconsistency. They appear to deny that the justice and benevolence of God can be reconciled with the phenomena of nature; and say that the evidence must be helped out by resort to their interpretation of scripture. When, having heard this auxiliary system, we protest that it renders the race sadder than before, they assure us that it is all benevolent and just, because it has its parallel in creation. They announce and adopt, in the same breath, the religious appeal to the universe of God.

(2.) Another inconsistency appears, in the view which this theory gives of the character of God.

It is assumed that, at the era of creation, the Maker of mankind had announced the infinite penalties, which must follow the violation of his law; and that their amount did not exceed the measure which his abhorrence of wrong required. "And that which he saith, he would not be God if he did not perform; that which he perceived right, he would be unworthy of our trust, did he not fulfil. His veracity and justice, therefore, were pledged to adhere to the word that had gone forth: and excluded the possibility of any free and unconditional forgiveness." Now I would note in passing, that this announcement to Adam of an eternal punishment impending over his first sin, is simply a fiction; for the warning to him is stated thus; "In the day that thou eatst thereof thou shalt surely die;"\* from which our progenitor must have

\* Gen. 2:17.

been ingenious as a theologian, to extract the idea of endless life in Hell. But to say no more of this, what notions of vengence have we here? When a sentence is proclaimed against crime, is it indifferent to judicial truth, upon whom it falls? Personally addressed to the guilty, may it descend without a lie upon the guiltless? Provided there is the suffering, is it no matter *where*? Is this the sense in which God is no respecter of persons? Oh! what deplorable reflection of human artifice is this, that Heaven is too venacious to abandon its proclamation of vengeance against transgressors; yet is content to vent it on goodness the most perfect. No darker deed can be imagined, than is that ascribed to the Source of all perfection, under the insulted names of truth and holiness. What reliance could we have on the faithfulness of such a Being? If it be consistent with his nature to *punish* by substitution, what security is there that he will not *reward* vicariously? All must be loose and unsettled, the sentiments of reverence confused, the perceptions of conscience indistinct, where the terms expressive of those great moral qualities which render God himself most venerable, are thus spouted with and profaned.

The same extraordinary departure from all intelligible meaning of words is apparent, when our charge of vindictiveness against the doctrine of sacrifice is repelled as a slander. If the rigorous refusal of pardon, till the whole penalty has been inflicted (when, indeed, it is no pardon at all; be not vindictive, we may ask to be furnished with some better definition. And though it is said, that God's love was manifested to us by the gift of his Son, this does but change the object on which this quality is exercised, without removing the quality itself; putting us indeed into the sunshine of his grace, but *the Nation* into the tempest of his wrath. Did we desire to sketch the most dreadful form of character, what more emphatic condemnation could we invent than this; to pour in the execution of penal suffering; and indifference as to the person on whom it falls?

But in truth this system, in its delineations of the Great Ruler of creation, bids defiance to all the analogies by which Christ and the Christian heart have delighted to illustrate his nature. A God who could accept the spontaneously returning sinner, and restore him by corrective discipline, is pronounced not worth saving, and an object of contempt.\* If *any* Jesus sketched an object of contempt when he drew the father of the prodigal son, opening his

\* "Father, left for the Son, in the 'Prodigal's' fit moment, to save a wretch, in order to save ourselves, or to quit those who turn, in order to save a wretch. If the wretch must go, what has it to do with us? He goes, and is paid for by *another* if possible to return. No character, no interest, no justifications of all equitable governments, advocates the separating discipline between right and wrong, except condemnation in Heaven, and prodigal objects of Hell. Such a God would not be worth saving. Such sentences, instead of implying that sinners *must* be saved, and *ought* to be saved, imply that *Heaven* is not worth saving." *Mr. H. Wain's Remarks*, p. 312.

Surely too, in a description, not of the doctrine, but of the Lecturer's own creed. It is surely no part of his apostrophe, that God *must* deliver the guilty to his flames, and that *Heaven* is to receive his character. This arrangement, by which pardon gives a moral retaliation, is then framed, in the conclusion of the Discourse, against what *Philanthrop* professes, and which Mr. M'Nelly himself makes upon an occasion throughout his *Lectures*. "We think," he says, "that *Heaven* can be reserved to the only true power of improvement, to reward good, and forgiveness of the guilty." "What is his moral step of pardon, but an overlook of *Heaven's* guilt," and what is the reward, of *Heaven's* pardon, but a retaining of character," whether we say by *positive discipline*, or the *influence* of the Holy Spirit remains now. But is it that the guilty is never asked, if *Heaven* endured its penalty? I ask again, whether *Heaven* regards only the act, or the suffering, or the *good* consistent with *Heaven's* desire? Was it possible for the state of *Heaven's* God, freely to forgive the penitent? And how was the infinite of liberating the guilty, or not, by the measure of the impenitent? Here is the verdict against him. "The Lord that forgiveth, is just." And how is this verdict executed? The soul that had sinned *Heaven* to die, and *Heaven* that *Heaven* is not to die. And this is called a divine vision of truth and mercy, being the most precise regimen of both, of which any conception can be formed. First, to lay the demands of all mankind upon a solitary victim of their first parents, and then to leave a diabolic power on that victim to break it down, to violate the human constitution, to compromise for the fit, and yet continue to demand obedience to the original and perfect moral law; to give the absolute infidelity of that holy law, great as the whole have a voice for the *Heaven's* method of reward, what is later every class of transgressors, and makes it the *Heaven's* justice, to forgive that which is itself *Heaven's*, or *Heaven's* of the *Heaven's* of God, in its shock and conquest all

arms to the poor penitent, and needing only the sight of his misery to fall on his neck with the kiss of welcome lance. Let the assertions be true, that sacrifice and satisfaction are needless preliminaries to pardon, that to pay any attention to repentance without these is mere weakness, and that it is a perilous deception to teach the doctrine of mercy apart from the atonement; and this parallel of our Saviour's becomes the most pernicious instrument of delusion: a statement, absolute and unqualified, of a feeble and sentimental heresy. Who does not see what follows from this scornful exclusion of corrective punishment? Suppose the infliction not to be corrective, that is, not to be designed for any good, what then remains as the cause of the Divine retribution? The sense of insult offered to a law. And thus we are virtually told, that God must be regarded with a mixture of contempt, unless he be susceptible of personal affront.\*

(3.) The last inconsistency with itself, which I shall point out in this doctrine, will be found in the view which it gives of the work of Christ. Sin, we are assured, is necessarily infinite. Its multitude arises from its reference to an Infinite Being, and involves as a consequence the necessity of redemption by Deity himself.

The position, that guilt is to be exterminated not by its amount or its motive, but by the dignity of the being against whom it is directed, is illustrated by the case of an insubordinate soldier, whose punishment is increased, according to his rebellion against an equal, or any of the many grades among his superiors. It is evident, however, that it is not the dignity of the person, but the magnitude of the effect,

no one of us would wish an infidel to receive publicity of a single proselyte. You will be glad that they say, "God is true," but the blasphemy is not in the words, but in the deed.

\* "The Jews are likely to be misled by representing Christ as 'one who has made a gift.' They held, that no guilt is imputed, till it is received of him; the Jews, but that he had pardoned, even before, with the intention."

— 4. c. 2. §. 11.

which determines the severity of the sanction by which, in such an instance, law enforces order. Insult to a monarch is more sternly treated than injury to a subject, because it incurs the risk of wider and more disastrous consequences, and superadds to the personal injury a peccil to an official power which, not resting on individual superiority, but on conventional arrangement, is always precarious. It is not indeed easy to form a distinct notion of an infinite act in a finite agent; and still less is it easy to evade the inference, that if an immoral deed against God be an infinite demerit, a moral deed towards him must be an infinite merit.

Passing by an assertion so unmeaning, and concealing it for the sake of progress in our argument, I would inquire what is intended by that other statement, that only Deity can redeem, and that by Deity the sacrifice was made? The union of the divine and human natures in Christ is said to have made his sufferings meritorious in an infinite degree. Yet we are repeatedly assured, that it was in his manhood only that he endured and died. If the divine nature in our Lord had a joint consciousness with the human, then did God suffer and perish; if not, then did the man only die, Deity being no more affected by his anguish, than by that of the reprobators on either side. In the one case, the perfections of God, in the other the reality of the atonement, must be relinquished. No doubt, the popular belief is, that the Creator literally expired; the hymns in common use declare it; the language of pulpits sanctions it; the consistency of creeds requires it; but professed theologians repudiate the idea with indignation. Yet by silence or ambiguous speech, they encourage, in those whom they are bound to enlighten, this degrading humanization of Deity; which renders it impossible for common minds to avoid ascribing to him emotions and affections, totally irreconcilable with the serene perfections of the Universal Mind. In his influence on the worshipper, *He* is no Spirit, who can be invoked by his agony

and bloody sweat, his cross and passion. And the pity that is thus taught to bring its increase, however sincere, before the mental image of a being with convulsed features and expiring cry, has little left of that which makes Christian devotion characteristically venerable.

II. I proposed to notice the inconsistency of the doctrine under review with the Christian idea of salvation.

There is one *significant scriptural fact*, which suggests to us the best mode of treating this part of our subject. It is this; that the language supposed to teach the atoning efficacy of the cross, does not appear in the New Testament till the Gentile controversy commences, nor ever occurs apart from the treatment of that subject, under some of its relations. The cause of this phenomenon will presently appear; meanwhile I state it, in the place of an assertion sometimes incautiously made, *viz.* that the phraseology in question is confined to the epistles. Even this mechanical limitation of sacrificial passages is indeed nearly true, as not above three or four have strayed beyond the epistolary boundary, into the Gospels and the book of Acts: but the restriction in respect of subjects, which I have stated, will be found, I believe, to be absolutely exact, and to furnish the real interpretation to the whole system of language.

(1.) Let us then first test the various schemes by reference to the sentiments of Scripture generally, and of our Lord and his apostles especially, where this controversy is out of the way. Are their ideas respecting human character, the triguerous of sin, the terms of everlasting life, accordant with the cardinal notions of a believer in the atonement? Do they, or do they not, insist on the necessity of a sacrifice for human sin, as a preliminary to pardon, to sanctification, to the love of God? Do they, or do they not, direct a marked and almost exclusive attention to the cross, as the object to which, far more than to the life and resurrection of our Lord, all faithful eyes should be directed?

(2.) Now to the fundamental assertion of the vicarious system, that the Deity cannot, without inconsistency and imperfection, pardon on simple repentance, the whole tenor of the Bible is one protracted and unequivocal contradiction. So copious is its testimony on this head, that if the passages containing it were removed, scarcely a shred of Scripture relating to the subject would remain. "Pardon, I beseech thee," said Moses, pleading for the Israelites, "the iniquity of this people, according to the greatness of thy mercy, and as thou hast forgiven this people, from Egypt even until now: and the Lord said, *I have pardoned according to thy word.*"\* Will it be affirmed, that this chosen people had their eyes perpetually fixed in faith on the great propitiation, which ~~was~~ close their dispensation, and of which their own ceremonial was a type?—that whenever penitence and pardon are named amongst them, this reference is implied, and that as this faith was called to mind and expressed in the shedding of blood at the altar, such sacrificial offerings take the place, in Judaism, of the atoning trust in Christianity? Well then, let us quit the chosen not on altogether, and go to a heathen people, who were aliens to their laws, their blood, their hopes, and their religion; to whom no sacrifice was appointed, and no Messiah promised. If we can discover the dealings of God with such a people, the case, I presume, must be deemed conclusive. Hear then what happened on the banks of the Tigris. "Jonah began to enter into the city," (Nineveh); "and he cried and said, yet forty days and Nineveh shall be overthrown. So the people of Nineveh believed God, and proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them even unto the least of them." "Who can tell," (said the decree of the king ordaining the fast,) "if God will turn and repent, and turn away from his fierce anger, that we perish not? And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil that he

\* N. N. II. 17, 18.

had said he would do unto them; and he did it not."\* And when the prophet was offended, first at this idleness to Nineveh, and afterwards that the canker was sent to destroy his own favourite plant, beneath whose shadow he sat, what did Jehovah say? "Thou hast had pity on the gourd, for which thou hast not laboured, neither madest it grow; which came up in a night and perished in a night; and should not I spare Nineveh, that great city, wherein are more than six-score thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand?"† and who are not likely, one would think, to have discerned the future merits of the Redeemer.

In truth, if even the Israelites had any such prospective views to Calvary, if their sacrifices conveyed the idea of the cross erected there, and were established for this purpose, the fact must have been privately revealed to modern theologians; for not a trace of it can be found in the Hebrew writings. It must be thought strange, that a prophetic reference so habitual, should be always a secret reference; that a faith so fundamental should be so mysteriously suppressed; that the uppermost idea of a nation's mind should never have found its way to lips or pen. "But if it were not so," we are reminded, "if the Jewish ritual prefigured nothing ulterior, it was revolting, trifling, savage; its worship a butchery, and the temple courts no better than a slaughter house." And were they not equally so, though the theory of types be true? If neither priest nor people could see *at the time* the very thing which the ceremonial was constructed to reveal, what advantage is it that *divines can see it now*? And even if the nation was conveyed to the Jewish mind, (which the whole history shows not to have been the fact,) was it necessary that hierarchies should be slain, age after age, to intimate obscurely an idea, which one brief sentence might have lucidly expressed? The idea, however, it is evident, slipped

\* Job. iii. 25-26.

† Jer. xii. 10, 11.

through after all; for when Messiah actually came, the one great thing which the Jews did not know and believe about him was, that he could die at all. So much for the preparatory discipline of fifteen centuries!

There is no reason then why any thing should be supplied in our thoughts, to alter the plain meaning of the announcements of prophets and holy men, of God's unconditional forgiveness on repentance. "Thou desirest not sacrifice, else would I give it; thou delightest not in burnt offering; the sacrifice of God are a broken spirit, a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise."\* "Wash you, make you clean," says the prophet Isaiah in the name of the Lord, "put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes, cease to do evil, learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow. Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."† Once more, "When I say unto the wicked, thou shalt surely die; if he turn from his sin, and do that which is lawful and right; if the wicked restore the pledge, give again that he had robbed, walk in the statutes of life without committing iniquity; he shall surely live, he shall not die."‡ Nor are the teachings of the Gospel at all less explicit. Our Lord treats largely and expressly on the doctrine of forgiveness in several parables, and especially that of the prodigal son; and omits all allusion to the propitiation for the past. He furnishes an express definition of the terms of eternal life; "Good master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life? And he said unto him, why callest thou me good; there is none good save one, that is God, but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments." And Jesus adds, "if thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven, and come, follow me."§

\* P. l. 24, 25. † Is. i. 16-18. ‡ Ezek. xxxiv. 14-15. § Matt. xix. 16-21.

This silence on the prime condition of pardon cannot be explained by the fact, that the epistle had not yet taken place, and could not safely be alluded to, before the course of events had brought it into prominent notice. For we have the preaching of the Apostles, after the ascension, recorded at great length, and under very various circumstances, in the book of Acts. We have the very "words whereby," according to the testimony of an angel, "Cornelius and all his house shall be saved;" these, one would think, would be worth hearing in this cause. "God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost, and with power; who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil, for God was with him. And we are witnesses of all things which he did, both in the land of the Jews and in Jerusalem; whom they slew and hanged on a tree; him God raised up the third day, and showed openly; not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, even to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead. And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify, that it is he who was ordained of God to be the judge of quick and dead. To him give all the prophets witness, that, through his name, whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins."<sup>6</sup> Did an Evangelical missionary dare to preach in this style now, he would be immediately discovered by his employers, and dismissed as a disguised Socinian, who kept back all the "peculiar doctrines of the Gospel."

(b.) The emphatic mention of the resurrection by the apostle Peter in this address, is only a particular instance of a system which pervades the whole preaching of the first missionaries of Christ. *This*, and not the cross, with its supposed effects, is the grand object to which they call the attention and the faith of their hearers. I cannot quote to you

the whole book of Acts; but every reader knows, that "Jesus and the resurrection" constitutes the leading theme, the central combination of ideas in all its discourses. "This truth was shed, from Peter's tongue of fire, on the multitudes that heard; amazed the inspiration of the day of Pentecost." Again, it was his text, when passing beneath the beautiful gate, he made the cripple leap for joy; and then, with the flush of this deed still fresh upon him, leaned against a pillar in Solomon's porch, and spoke in explanation to the awe-struck people, thronging in at the hour of prayer.<sup>7</sup> Before priests and rulers, before Sanhedrim and populace, the same tale is told again, to the utter exclusion, be it observed, of the essential doctrine of the cross.<sup>8</sup> The authorities of the temple, we are told, were galled and terrified at the apostle's preaching: "naturally enough," it will be said, "since, the real sacrifice having been offered, their vocation, which was to make the propitiatory and typical oblation, was threatened with destruction." But no, this is not the reason given: "They were grieved because they preached, through Jesus, the resurrection from the dead."<sup>9</sup> Paul, too, while his preaching was spontaneous and free, and until he had to argue certain controversies which have long ago become obsolete, manifested a no less remarkable predilection for this topic. Before Felix, he declares what was the grand indictment of his countrymen against him; "touching the resurrection of the dead, I am called in question of you this day." Fellow men far away from his own land; and, with foreigners, he harps upon the same subject, as if he were a man of one idea; which, indeed, according to our opponents' scheme, he ought to have been, only it should have been *another* idea. Seidon, however, can we meet with a more exuberant mind than Paul's; yet the resurrection obviously haunts him wherever he goes: in the synagogue of Antioch, you hear

<sup>6</sup> Acts, 13: 31.

<sup>7</sup> Acts, 3: 1.

<sup>8</sup> Acts, 13: 26.

<sup>9</sup> Acts, 13: 34.

him dwelling on it with all the energy of his inspiration; and, at Athens, it was this on which the scepticism of Epicureans and Stoics fastened for a scull.<sup>1</sup> It is equally, too, where he enlarges so much on justification by faith, when we inquire what precisely is this faith, and what the object it is to contemplate and embrace, this remarkable fact presents itself: that the one only important thing respecting Christ, which is *never once* mentioned as the object of justifying faith, is his *death, and blood, and cross.* "Faith" by itself, the "faith of Jesus Christ," "faith of the Gospel," "faith of the Son of God," are expressions of constant occurrence; and wherever this general description is replaced by a more specific account of this justifying state of mind, it is *faith in the resurrection* on which attention is fastened. "It is Christ that died, *yea rather, that is risen again.*"<sup>2</sup> "He was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification."<sup>3</sup> "Faith shall be imputed to us for righteousness, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead."<sup>4</sup> Hear, too, the Apostle's definition of saving faith: "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thy heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved."<sup>5</sup> The only instance, in which the writings of St. Paul appear to associate the word *faith* with the death of Christ, is the following text: "whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood,"<sup>6</sup> and in this case the Apostle's meaning would, I conceive, be more faithfully given by destroying this conjunction, and supposing the words thus: "whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation by his blood, through faith." The idea of his *blood, or death*, belongs to the word *propitiation*, not to the word *faith*. To this translation no Trinitarian scholar, I am persuaded, can object,<sup>7</sup> and when the true meaning of the writer's sacrificial

language is explained, the distinction will appear to be not unimportant. At present I am concerned only with the defence of my position, that the death of Christ is never mentioned as the object of saving faith; but that his resurrection unquestionably is. This phenomenon in Scripture phraseology is so extraordinary, so heterely repugnant to every thing which a hearer of orthodox preaching would expect, that I hardly expect my affirmation of it to be believed. The two ideas of *faith*, and of our *Lord's death*, are so naturally and perpetually united in the mind of every believer in the atonement, that it must appear to him incredible, that they should never fall together in the writings of the apostles. However, I have stated my fact; and it is for you to bring it to the test of Scripture.

(c.) Independently of all written testimony, moral reasons, we are assured, exist, which render an absolute remission for the past essential to a regenerated life for the future. Our human nature is said to be so constituted, that the burden of sin, on the conscience once awakened, is intolerable; our spirit cries aloud for mercy; yet is so straitened by the bands of sin, so conscious of the sad alliance lingering still, so full of hesitancy and shame when seeking the relief of prayer, so blinded by its tears when scanning the heavens for an opening of light and hope, that there is no freedom, no unrestrained and happy love to God: but a pinched and anxious mind, bereft of power, striving to work with bandaged or paralytic will, instead of trusting itself to loosened and self-oblivious affections. Hence it is thought, that the sin of the past must be cancelled, before the holiness of the future can be commenced; that it is a false order to represent repentance as leading to pardon; because, to be forgiven, is the pre-requisite to love. We cannot forget, how-

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. xiii. 2.    <sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. xv. 20.    <sup>3</sup> Rom. vii. 25.    <sup>4</sup> Gal. iii. 26.

<sup>5</sup> 1 Cor. xii. 13.    <sup>6</sup> 1 Cor. x. 4.    <sup>7</sup> 1 Cor. x. 16.

<sup>8</sup> 1 Cor. xii. 13.    <sup>9</sup> 1 Cor. x. 4.    <sup>10</sup> 1 Cor. x. 16.

we could not express, but with *freedom* and *readily*, I trust that reads the passage, "He who propitiatus est nostris peccatis in sanguine suo per fidem." — *De Trinitate*, c. 1. c. 1. p. 416.



ever, how distinctly and emphatically he who, after God, best knew what is in man, has contradicted this sentiment; for when that sinful woman, whose presence in the house shocked the sanctimonious Pharisee, stood at his feet as he reclined, washing them with her tears, and kissing them with reverential lips, Jesus turned to her and said, "her sins, which are many, are forgiven: for she loved much."\* From him, then, we learn what our own hearts would almost teach, that love may be the prelude to forgiveness, as well as forgiveness the preparative for love.

At the same time let me acknowledge, that this statement respecting the moral effects of conscious pardon, to which I have invoked Jesus to reply, is by no means an unmix'd error. It touches upon a very profound and important truth; and I can never bring myself to regard that assurance of divine forgiveness, which the doctrine of atonement imparts, as a demoralizing state of mind, encouraging laxity of conscience and a continuance in sin. The sense of pardon doubtless reaches the secret springs of gratitude, presents the soul with an object, strange before, of new and divine affection; and binds the child of redemption, by all generous and filial obligations, to serve with free and willing heart the God who hath gone forth to meet him. That the motives of self-interest are diminished in such a case, is a trifle that need occasion small anxiety. For the human heart is no labourer for hire; and, where there is opportunity afforded for true and noble love, will thrust away the proffered wages, and toil rather in a free and thankful spirit. If we are to compare, as a source of duty, the grateful with the merely prudential temper, rather may we trust the first, as not the worthier only, but the stronger too; and till we obtain emancipation from the latter,—forget the computations of hope and fear, and precipitate ourselves for better for worse on some object

of divine love and trust,—our nature will be puny and weak, our wills will turn in sickness from their duty, and our affections shrink in aversion from their heaven. But though personal gratitude is better than prudence, there is a higher service still. A more disinterested love may spring from the contemplation of what God is in himself, than from the recollection of what he has done for us; and when this mingles most largely as an element among our springs of action; when, humbled indeed by a knowledge of dangers that await us, and thankful, too, for the blessings spread around us, we yet desire chiefly to be fitting children of the everlasting Father and the holy God; when we venerate him for the graciousness, and purity, and majesty of his spirit, impersonated in Jesus; and resolve to serve him truly, before he has granted the desire of our heart, and because he is of a nature so sublime and merciful and good; then are we in the condition of her who bent over the feet of Christ; and we are forgiven, because we have loved much.

(2.) Let us now, in conclusion, turn our attention to those portions of the New Testament, which speak of the death of Christ as the means of redemption.

I have said, that these are to be found exclusively in passages of the sacred writings which treat of the Gentile controversy, or of topics immediately connected with it. This controversy arose naturally out of the design of Providence to make the narrow, exclusive, ceremonial system of Judaism, give birth to the universal and spiritual religion of the Gospel; from God's method of expanding the Hebrew Messiah into the Saviour of humanity. For thus the nation was not prepared; to this even the Hebrew Christians could not easily conform their faith; and in the achievement of this, or in persuading the world that it was achieved, did Paul spend his noble life, and write his astonishing epistles. The Jews knew that the Deliverer was to be of their peculiar stock, and their royal lineage; they believed that he would gather upon himself all the singularities of their

\* Luke x. 47.

race, and he a Hebrew to intensity, that he would literally restore the kingdom to Israel; age, and extend it too, immeasurably beyond the bounds of its former greatness; till, in fact, it swallowed up all existing principalities, and powers, and thrones, and dominions, and became co-extensive with the earth. Then in Jerusalem, as the centre of the vanquished nations, before the temple, as the altar of a humbled world, did they expect the Messiah to erect his throne; and when he had taken the seat of judgment, to summon all the tribes before his tribunal, and pass on the Gentiles, excepting the few who might submit to the law, a sentence of perpetual exclusion from his realm; while his own people would be invited to the seats of honour, occupy the place of authority, and sit down with him (the greatest at his right hand and his left) at his table in his kingdom. The holy men of old were to come on earth again to see this day. And many thought that every part of the realm thus constituted, and all its inhabitants, would never die; but, like the Messiah himself, and the patriarchs whom he was to call to life, would be invested with immortality. None were to be admitted to these golden days except themselves; all else to be left in outer darkness from this region of light, and there to perish and be seen no more. The grand title to admission was conformity with the Mosaic law, the most ritually scrupulous were the most secure; and the careless Israelite, who forgot or omitted an offering, a tithe, a Sabbath duty, might incur the penalty of exclusion and death: the law prescribed such mortal punishment for the smallest offence; and no one, therefore, could feel himself ready with his claim, if he had not yielded a perfect obedience. If God were to admit him on any other plea, it would be of pure grace and goodness, and not in fulfilment of any promise.

The Jews, being scattered over the civilized world, and having synagogues in every city, came into perpetual contact with other people. Nor was it possible that the Gentiles,

among whom they lived, should notice the singular purity and simplicity of the Israelitish Theism, without some of them being struck with its spirit, attracted by its sublime principles, and disposed to place themselves in religious relations with that singular people. Having been led into admiration, and even profession, of the nation's theology, they could not but desire to share their hopes; which indeed were an integral part of their religion, and, at the Christian era, the one element in it to which they were most passionately attached. But this was a stretch of charity too great for any Hebrew; or, at all events, if such admission were ever to be thought of, it must be only on condition of absolute submission to the requirements of the law. The Gentile would naturally plead, that as God had not made him of the chosen nation, he had given him no law, except that of conscience; that, being without the law, he must be a law unto himself; and that if he had lived according to his light, he could not be justly excluded on the ground of accidental disqualification. Possibly, in the provocation of dispute, the Gentile might sometimes become forward and insolent in his assertion of claim; and, in the pride of his heart, demand as a right that which, at most, could only be humbly hoped for as a privilege and a free gift.

Thus were the parties mutually placed to whom the Deliverer came. Thus dense and complicated was the web of prejudice which clung round the early steps of the Gospel; and which must be burst or disentangled ere the glad tidings could have free course and be glorified. How did Providence develop from such elements the divine and everlasting truth? Not by neglecting them, and speaking to mankind as if they had no such ideas; not by forbidding his messengers and teachers to have any patience with them; but, on the contrary, by using these very notions as temporary means to his everlasting ends; by touching this and that with light before the eyes of apostles, as if to say, there are good capabilities in

these; the truth may be educed from them so gently and so wisely, that the world will find itself in light, without perceiving how it has been quitting the darkness.

So long as Christ remained on earth, he necessarily continued his ministry to his nation. He would not have been the Messiah had he done otherwise. By birth, by language, by locality, by habit, he was altogether theirs. Whoever then, of his own people, during his mortal life, believed in him and followed him, became a subject of the Messiah; ready, it was supposed, even by the apostles themselves, to enter the glory of his kingdom, whenever it should please him to assume it: qualified at once, by the combination of pedigree and of belief, to enter into life, to become a member of the kingdom of God, to take a place among the elect; for, by all these phrases, was described the admission to the expected realm. If, then, Jesus had never suffered and died, if he had never retired from this world, but stayed to fulfil the anticipations of his first followers, his Messianic kingdom might have included all the converts of the Israelitish stock. From the exclusion which fell on others, they would have obtained salvation. Hence, it is never in connection with the first Jewish Christians that the *death of Christ* is mentioned.

It was otherwise, however, with the Gentiles. They could not become his followers in his mortal lifetime; and had a Messianic reign then been set up, they must have been excluded; no missionary would have been justified in addressing them with invitation; they could not, as it was said, have entered into life. The Messiah must cease to be Jewish, before he could become universal; and this implied his death, by which alone the personal relations, which made him the property of a nation, could be annihilated. To this he submitted; he disrobed himself of his corporality, he became an immortal spirit; thereby instantly burst his religion open to the dimensions of the world; and, as he ascended to the

skies, sent it forth to scatter the seeds of blessing over the field of the world, long ploughed with cares, and moist with griefs, and softened now to nourish in its bosom the tree of Life.

Now, how would the effect of this great revolution be described to the proselyte Gentiles, so long vainly praying for admission to the Israelitish hope. At once it destroyed their exclusion; put away as valueless the Jewish claims of circumcision and law; nailed the hand-writing of ordinances to the cross; reconciled them that had been far off; redeemed them to God by his blood, out of every tongue, and kindred, and people, and nation; washed them in his blood; justified them *by his resurrection and ascension*; an expression, I would remark, nameless on any other explanation.

Even during our Lord's personal ministry, his approaching death is mentioned, as the means of introducing the Gentiles into his Messianic kingdom. He adverts repeatedly to his cross, as designed to widen, by their admission, the extent of his way: and according to Scripture phrase, to yield to him "much fruit." He was already on his last fatal visit to Jerusalem, when, taking the hint from *the visit of some Greeks to him*, he exclaimed: "The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified. Verily, verily, I say unto you, except a grain of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." He adds, in allusion to the death he should die; "and I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." \* It is for this end that he resigns for awhile his life,—that he may bring in the wanderers who are not of the commonwealth of Israel: "Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold and one shepherd: *therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that*

\* John vi. 51, 52, 53.

I may take it again." \* Many a paradise did Jesus offer, proclaiming his Father's intended mercy to the unrepentant nations; but for himself personally he declared, "I am not sent, but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." † His advent was a promise of *their* economy; his office, the traditional hope of their fathers, his birth, his life, his person, were under the law, and excluded him from relations to those who were beyond its obligations. On the cross, all the concrete peculiarities of the Nazarene ceased to exist: when the seal of the sepulchre gave way, the seal of the law was broken too; the nationality of his person passed away; for how can an immortal be a Jew?—Thus then was the time to open wide the scope of his mission, and to write to God's acceptance those that fear him in every nation. Though before, the disciple might "have known Christ after the flesh," and followed his steps as the Hebrew Messiah, "yet now henceforth was he to know him no more," these "old things had passed away," since he had "died for all,"—died to become universal,—to drop all exclusive relations, and "reconcile the world," the Gentile world, to God.‡ Observe to whom this "ministry of reconciliation" is especially confided. As if to show that it is exclusively *the vicar Christ* who belongs to all men, and that his death was the instrument of the Gentiles' admission, their great Apostle was one Paul, who had not known the Saviour in his mortal life, who never listened to his voice, till it spake from heaven; who himself was the concern of his ascension; and bore to him the relation, not of subject to the person of a Hebrew king, but of spirit to spirit, unembarrassed by anything earthly, legal, or historical. Well did Paul understand the freedom and the sanctity of this relation, and around the idea of the Heavenly Messiah gathered all his conceptions of the spirituality of the gospel, of its power over the unconscious affections, rather

than a reluctant will. His believing countrymen were afraid to disregard the observance of the law, lest it should be a dishonour to God, and disqualify them for the Messiah's welcome, when he came to take his power and reign. Paul tells them, that while their Lord remained in this mortal state, they were right; as representative of the law, and filling an office created by the religion of Judaism, he could not but have held them *free* to its obligations; nor could they, without infidelity, have neglected its claims, any more than a wife can innocently separate herself from a living husband. But as the death of the man sets the woman free, and makes null the law of their union, so the decease of Christ's body emancipates his followers from all legal relations to him; and they are at liberty to wed themselves anew to the risen Christ, who dwells where no ordinance is needed, no tie permitted but of the spirit, and all are as the angels of God.§ Surely, then, this mode of conception explains, why the death of Jesus constitutes a great date in the Christian economy, especially as expounded by the friend and apostle of those who were not "Jews by nature, but sinners of the Gentiles." † Had he never died, they must have remained aliens from his sway; the enemies against whom his power must be directed, without hope in the day of his night; strangers to God and his viceregent.

But, while thus they "were yet without strength, Christ died for " us " ungodly;" † died to put himself into connection with them, else impossible; and rising from death, drew them after him into spiritual existence on earth, analogous to that which he passed in heaven. "You," says their Apostle, "being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him," giving you, as "risen with him," a life above the world and its law of exclusion,—a life not "subject to ordinances," but of

\* Luke x. 25. † John vi. 10. ‡ 1 Cor. x. 13-15. § 1 Cor. x. 17.

\* See Rom. vi. 11. † Gal. ii. 20. ‡ Rom. vi. 6.

secret love and heavenly faith, "hid with Christ in God;" "blotting out the hand-writing of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and taking it out of the way, nailing it to his cross."\* God had never intended to perpetuate the division between Israel and the world, receiving the one as the sons, and slaving out the other as the slaves of his household. If there had been an appearance of such partiality, he had always designed to set these bondmen free, and to make them "heirs of God through Christ,"† "in whom they had redemption through his blood" from their servile state, the forgiveness of disqualifying sins, according to the riches of his grace.‡ Though the Hebrews boasted that "there was the adoption,"§ and till Messiah's death had boasted truly; yet in that event, God "before the foundation of the world," had "blessed us" (Gentiles) "with all spiritual blessings, in heavenly places," "having predestinated us unto the adoption of children, by Jesus Christ, according" (not indeed to any right or promise, but) "to the good pleasure of his will," "and when we were enemies, having reconciled us, by the death of his son,"¶ "that is the fulness of times he might gather together in one *all things* in Christ;"\*\* "by whom we" (Gentiles) "have now received this salvation" (reconciliation); †† that he might have no partial empire, but that "in him might all fulness dwell."‡‡ "Wherefore," says their Apostle, "remember that ye, *Gentiles in the flesh*, were in time past without Messiah, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenant of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world; but now in Christ Jesus, ye, who sometime were afar off, are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us" (not between God and man, but between Jew and

Gentile); "having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments, contained in ordinances; for to make in himself, of twain, one new man, so *making peace*; and that he might reconcile both unto God, in one body, by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby; and came and preached peace to you who were afar off, as well as to them that were nigh. For through him we both have an access by one spirit unto the Father."††

The way, then, is clear and intelligible, in which the death and ascension of the Messiah rendered him universal, by giving spirituality to his rule; and, on the simple condition of faith, added the uncovenanted nations to his dominion, so far as they were willing to receive him. This idea, and this only, will be found in almost every passage of the New Testament (excepting the Epistle to the Hebrews) usually adduced to prove the doctrine of the Atonement. Some of the strongest of these I have already quoted; and my readers must judge whether they have received a satisfactory meaning. There are others, in which the Gentiles are not so distinctly stated to be the sole objects of the redemption of the cross; but with scarcely an exception, so far as I can discover, this limitation is implied; and either creeps out through some adjacent expression in the context; or betrays itself, when we recur to the general course of the Apostle's argument, or to the character and circumstances of his correspondents. Thus Paul says, that Christ "gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time;" the next verse shows what is in his mind, when he adds, "whereunto I am ordained a preacher, and an apostle, a teacher of man: *Gentiles in faith and verity*;" and the whole sentiment of the context is the *Universality of the Gospel*, and the duty of praying for Gentile kings and people, as not abandoned to a foreign God and another Mediator; for since Messiah's death, to us *all*††† there is but One

\* Col. 2. 13; 11. 2.

† Gal. 3. 26, 27.

‡ Eph. 1. 7.

§ Rom. 9. 4.

¶ Eph. 1. 2, 3.

\*\* Rom. 8. 19.

†† Eph. 1. 10.

††† Rom. 8. 11.

††† 1 Cor. 1. 10.

††† Eph. 1. 10-12.

God, and One Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus;" wherefore the Apostle wills, that *for all*, "men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath, and doubting,"—without wrath at their admission, or doubt of their adoption.\* And wherever emphasis is laid on the *vast number* benefited by the cross, a contrast is implied with the *few* (only the Jews) who could have been his subjects, had he not died: and when it is said, "he gave his life a ransom *for many*;"† his blood was "shed *for many*, for the remission of sins;"‡ "thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us by thy blood, *out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation*; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests; and we shall reign on the earth;"§ "behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of *the world*;" || by all these expressions is still denoted, the efficacy of Christ's death in removing the Gentile Disqualification, and making his dispensation spiritual as his celestial existence, and universal as the Fatherhood of God. Does Paul exhort certain of his disciples, "to feed the church of the Lord, which he hath purchased with his own blood?"¶ We find that he is speaking of the *Gentile* church of Ephesus, whose elders he

\* 1 Tim. ii. 1, 2.

† 1 M. i. 10, 11; Mark. x. 45.

‡ 1 Cor. xvi. 24.

§ Rom. x. 9, 10.

John. 10. "You see hereby at the end of the word 'world' touching the Gentiles, see Rom. vi. 11—13, where St. Paul, speaking of the rejection of the Messiah by the Jews, declares that it is only the putting of that which has given occasion for the adoption of the Gentiles, so will sin break by what man returns, to the re-admission of Israel, a redemption in which the Gentiles should regard as their blessing and high commendation." "He" he says, "tho' all of them; he is referred to the riches of his world (the Gentiles), and the dispensing of them, the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fathers!" "For I speak to you, Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I will testify by affliction, by any means, I may provoke to envy them, which is my duty (the Jews) and comfort of them; for if the calling away of them to the receiving of the word, what shall the provoking of them be to their envy, the word?"

¶ Acts. xvi. 18. "It is hardly necessary to say, that the *church* of our evangelic series 'church of God' means the church of the best workmen; and that with the special exception of the one, who represent *all the Gentiles* (see 1 Cor. xii. 13, 14). See *See C.*

is instructing in the management of their charge, and to which he afterwards wrote the well-known epistle, on their gentile freedom and adoption obtained by the Messiah's death. When Peter says, "ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation, received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot;"\* we must enquire *to whom* he is addressing these words. If it be to the Jews, the interpretation which I have hitherto given of such language will not apply, and we must seek an explanation altogether different. But the whole manner of this epistle, the complexion of its phraseology throughout, convinces me that it was addressed especially to the *Gentile converts* of Asia Minor; and that the redemption of which it speaks is no other than that which is the frequent theme of their own apostle.

In the passage just quoted, the form of expression itself suggests the idea, that Peter is addressing a class which did not include himself: "ye were not redeemed, &c.:" further on in the same epistle the same sentiment occurs, however, without any such visible restriction. Exhorting to patient suffering for conscience sake, he appeals to the example of Christ: "who, when he suffered, threatened not, but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously: who, his own self, bare *our* sins in his own body on the tree: that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness;" yet, with instant change in the expression, revealing his correspondents to us, the Apostle adds, "by whose stripes ye were healed. For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the shepherd and bishop of your souls."† With the instinct of a gentle and generous heart, the writer, treating in plain terms of the former sins of those whom he addresses, puts himself in with them, and avoids every ap-

\* 1 Pet. i. 18, 19.

† 1 Pet. i. 19, 20.

prance of that spiritual pride, by which the Jew constantly rendered himself offensive to the Gentile.

Again, in this letter, he recommends the duty of patient endurance, by appeal to the same consideration of Christ's disinterested self-sacrifice. "It is better, if the will of God be so, that ye suffer for well doing than for evil doing: for Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God." And who are these "unjust" that are thus brought to God? The Apostle instantly explains, by describing how the "Jews by nature" lost possession of Messiah by the death of his person, and "sinners of the Gentiles" gained him by the resurrection of his immortal nature; "being put to death in flesh, but quickened in spirit; and *thereby he went and preached unto the spirits in prison, who formerly were without faith."* This is clearly a description of the Heathen world, ere it was brought into relation to the Messianic promises. Still further confirmation, however, follows. The Apostle adds: "Inasmuch, then, as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, *and yourselves likewise with the same mind; for the time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles; when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings, and abominable debilities."* If we cannot admit that to be a just description of the holy Apostle's former life, we must perceive that, writing to Pagans of whom it was all true, he beautifully withholds from his language every trace of invidious distinction, puts himself for the moment into the same class, and seems to take his share of the distressing recollection.

The habitual delinquency with which Paul, like us, classed himself with every order of persons in turn, in whom he had any thing painful to say, is known to every intelligent reader of his epistles. Hence, in his writings too, we

have often to consider with whom it is, that he is holding his dialogue, and to make our interpretation dependant on the answer. When, for example, he says, that Jesus "was delivered for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification;" I ask, "for whose?"—was it for every body's?—or for the Jews; since Paul was a Hebrew? On looking closely into the argument, I find it beyond doubt that neither of these answers is correct: and that the Apostle, in conformity with his frequent practice, is certainly identifying himself, *Israelite though he was, with the Gentiles, to whom, at that moment, his reasoning applies itself.* The neighbouring verses have expressions which clearly enough declare this; "when we were yet without strength," and "while we were yet sinners," Christ died for us. It is to the *Gentile Church at Corinth, and while expatiating on their privileges and relations as such, that Paul speaks of the disqualification and legal unholiness of the Heathen, as vanishing in the death of the Messiah; as the recovered leper's uncleanness was removed, and his banishment reversed, and his exclusion from the temple ended, when the lamb without blemish, which the law prescribed as his sin-offering, lies beneath the knife, so did God provide in Jesus, a lamb without blemish for the exiled and un sanctified Gentiles, to bring them from their far dwelling in the leprous haunts of this world's wilderness, and admit them to the sanctuary of spiritual health and worship: "He hath made him to be a sin-offering for us (Gentiles), who knew no sin; that we might be made the justified of God in him,"—entering, under the Messiah, the community of saints. That, in this sacrificial allusion, the Gentile adoption is still the Apostle's only theme, is evident hence; that twice in this very passage, he declares that he is speaking of that peculiar "reconciliation," the word and ministry of which have been committed to himself; he is dwelling on the topic most natural*

\* 1 Pe. iii. 17, v. 1.

\* 2 Cor. v. 21.

to one who "magnified his office," as "Apostle of the Gentiles."

To the same parties was Paul writing, when he said, "Christ, our passover, is sacrificed for us."\* Frequently as this sentence is cited in evidence of the doctrine of Atonement, there is hardly a verse in Scripture more utterly inapplicable; nor, if the doctrine were true, could anything be more inept than an allusion to it in this place. I do not dwell on the fact that the paschal lamb was neither sin-offering nor proper sacrifice at all: for the elucidation of the death of Jesus by sacrificial analogies is an easy and welcome, as any other mode of representing it. But I turn to the whole context, and seek for its leading idea, before multiplying inferences from a subordinate illustration. I find the author treating, not of the *deliverance* of believers from curse or exclusion, but of their duty to keep the churches cleansed, by the expulsion of notoriously profligate members. Such persons they are to cast from them, as the Jews, at the passover, swept from their houses all the leaven they contained; and as for eight days at that season, only pure unleavened bread was allowed for use, so the church must keep the gospel-festival, free from the ferment of malice and wickedness, and tasting nothing but sincerity and truth. This comparison is the primary sentiment of the whole passage: under cover of which, the Apostle is urging the Corinthians to expel a certain licentious offender: and only because the feast of unleavened bread, on which his fancy has alighted, set in with the day of passover, does he allude to this in completion of the figure. As his correspondents were Gentiles, their Christianity commenced with the death of Christ; with him, as an immortal, their spiritual relations commenced; when he rose, they rose with him, as by a divine attraction, from an earthly to a

heavenly state; their old and corrupt man had been buried together with him, and, with the human infirmities of his person left behind for ever in his sepulchre; and it became them, "to seek those things which are above," and to "yield themselves to God, as those that are alive from the dead." This period of the Lord's sequestration in the heavens, Paul represents as a festival of purity to the disciples on earth, ushered in by the self-sacrifice of Christ. "The time is come," he says; cast away the leaven, for the passover is slain, blessed bread of heaven to them that taste it! let nothing now be seen in all the household of the church, but the unleavened cake of simplicity and love.

Paul again appears as the advocate of the Gentiles, when he protests that now between them and the Jews "there is no difference; since all have sinned and come short of the glory of God;" that the Hebrew has lost all claim to the Messianic adoption, and can have no hope but in that free grace of God, which has a sovereign right to embrace the Heathen too; and which, in fact, has compassed the Gentiles within its redemption, by causing Jesus the Messiah to die; "by whose blood God hath set forth a propitiation, through faith; to evince his justice, while overlooking, with the forbearance of God, transgressions past,—to evince his justice in the arrangements of the present crisis; which preserve his justice (to the Israelite), yet justify on mere discipleship to Jesus." The great question which the Apostle discusses throughout this epistle, is this: "on what terms is a man now admitted as a subject to the Messiah, so as to be acknowledged by him, when he comes to erect his kingdom?" "He must be one of the circumcised, to whom alone the holy law and promises are given," says the Jew. "That is well," replies Paul; "only the promises, you remember, are conditional on obedience; and he who claims by the law must



stand the judgment of the law. Can your nation slide this test, and will you stake your hopes upon the issue? Or is there on record against you a violation of every condition of your boasted covenant; wholesale and national transgression, which your favourite code itself recognises with "cutting off?" Have you even rejected and crucified the very Messiah, who was tendered to you in due fulfilment of the promises? Take your trial by the principles of your law, and you must be cast off, and perish, as certainly as the Heathen whom you despise; and whose rebellion against the natural law, gross as it is, does not surpass your own offences against the tables of Moses. You must abandon the claim of right, the high talk of God's Justice and pledged faith;—which are alike ill-suited to you both. The rules of law are out of the question, and would admit nobody; and we must ascend again to the sovereign will and free mercy of Him, who is the source of law; and who, to bestow a blessing which its resources cannot confer, may devise new methods of beneficence. God has violated no pledge. Messiah came to Israel, and never went beyond its bounds; the uncircumcised had no part in him; and every Hebrew who desired it, was received as his subject. But when the people would not have him, and threw away their ancient title, was God either to abandon his vicegerent, or to force him on the unwilling? No: rather did it befit him to say; "if they will reject and enslave my servant,—why, let him die, and then he is Israelite no more; I will raise him, and take him apart in his immortality; where his blood of David is lost; and the holiness of his humanity is glorified; and all shall be his, who will believe, and love him, as he there exists, spiritually and truly." Thus, according to Paul, does God provide a new method of adoption or justification, without violating any promises of the old. Thus he makes Faith in Jesus,—a moral act instead of a genealogical accident,—the single condition of reception into the Divine kingdom upon earth. Thus, after the passage of

Christ from this world to another, Jew and Gentile are on an equality in relation to the Messiah; the one gaining nothing by his past privileges; the other, not visited with exclusion for past idolatry and sins; but assured, in Messiah's death, that these are to be overlooked, and treated as if cleansed away. He finds himself invited into the very penetralia of that sanctuary of pure faith and hope, from which before he had been repelled as an unclean thing; as if its ark of mercy had been purified for ever from his unworthy touch, or he himself had been sprinkled by some sudden consecration. And all this was the inevitable and instant effect of that death on Calvary; which took Messiah from the Jews, and gave him to the world.

With emphasis, not less earnest than that of Paul, does the apostle John repudiate the notion of any *claim* on the Divine admission by law or righteousness; and insist on liberal and unqualified acceptance of God's free grace and remission for the past, as the sole avenue of entrance to the kingdom. This avenue was open, however, to all "who confessed that Jesus the Messiah had come in the flesh;"\* in other words, that, during his mortal life, Jesus had been indicated as this future Prince; and that his ministry was the Messiah's preliminary visit to that earth on which shortly he would re-appear to reign. The great object of that visit was to prepare the world for his real coming; for as yet it was very unfit for so great a crisis, and especially to open, by his death, a way of admission for the Gentiles, and frame, on their behalf, an act of oblivion for the past. "If," says the apostle to them, "we walk in the light, *as he is in the light*" (of love and heaven), "we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin."† the Israelite will embrace the Gentiles in fraternal relations, knowing that the cross has removed their past unho-

liness. Nor let the Hebrew rely on any thing now but the divine forbearance; to appeal to rights will serve no longer: "if we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us."\* Nor let any one despair of a reception, or even a restoration, because he has been an idolater and sinner. "Jesus Christ the righteous" is "an advocate with the Father" for admitting all who are willing to be his; "and he is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only (not merely for our small portion of Gentiles, already converted); but also for the whole world,"† if they will but accept him. He died to become universal, to make all his own; to spread an oblation, wide as the earth, over all that had embarrassed the relations to the Messiah, and made men aliens, instead of Sons of God. Yet did no spontaneous movement of their good affections soften this change. It was "not that we (Gentiles) loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son, the propitiation for our sins; † he sent his only-begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him."‡ That this epistle was addressed to Gentiles, and is therefore occupied with the same leading idea respecting the cross, which pervades the writings of Paul, is rendered probable by its concluding words, which could hardly be appropriate to Jews: "keep yourselves from idols."§ How little the apostle associated any vicarious idea even with a form of phrase most constantly employed by modern theology to express it, is evident from the parallel which he draws, in the following words, between the death of our Lord and that of the Christian martyrs: "hereby perceive we love, because Christ laid down his life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren."¶

Are then the *Gentiles alone* beneficially affected by the death of Christ; and is no other efficacy ever assigned to it in Scripture? The great number of passages to which I have

already applied this single interpretation, will show that I consider it as comprising *the great leading idea* of the apostolic theology on this subject; nor do I think that there is (save of the Jewish to the Hebrews, which I shall soon notice) a single doctrinal allusion to the cross, from which this conception is wholly absent. At the same time, I am not prepared to maintain, that this is the *only* view of the crucifixion and resurrection ever present to the mind of the apostles. Jews themselves, they naturally inquired, how *Israel*, in particular, stood affected by the unanticipated death of its Messiah; in what way its relations were changed, when the offered Prince became the executed victim; and how far matters would have been different, if, as had been expected, the Anointed had assumed his rights and taken his power at once; and instead of making his first advent a mere preliminary and warning visit "in the flesh," had set up the kingdom forthwith, and gathered with him his few followers to "reign on the earth." Had this—instead of submission to death, removal, and delay—been his adopted course, what would have become of his own nation, who had rejected him;—who must have been tried by that law which was their boast, and under which he came, who had long been notorious offenders against its conditions, and now brought down its final curse by despising the claims of the accredited Messiah? They must have been utterly "cut off," and cast out among the "aliens from the commonwealth of Israel," "without Messiah," "without hope," "without God;" for while "circumcision profiteth, if thou keep the law; yet if thou be a breaker of the law, thy circumcision is made uncircumcision."‡ Had he come *thru'* "to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe;"—had he then been "revealed with his mighty angels;"—who he might have summoned by "legions";—it must have been

\* 1 John: 6.            † 1 John: 1, 2.            ‡ 1 John: 9, 10.  
 † 1 Pet.: 2, 21.        ‡ 1 John: 16, 17.

\* Rom.: 8, 2.

"in despising life, taking vengeance on them that knew not God, nor obeyed the glad tidings of the Lord Jesus Christ;" to "punish with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and the glory of his power."\* "The sins and prospects of Israel being thus terrible, and its rejection imminent (for Messiah was already in the midst of them),—he withheld his hand; refused to precipitate their just fate; and said, "Let us give them time, and wait; I will go apart into the heavens, and peradventure they will repent; only they must receive me thus spiritually, and by hearty faith, not by carnal sight, admitting thus the willing Gentile with themselves." And so he prepared to die and retire; he did not permit them to be cut off, but was cut off himself instead; he restrained the curse of their own law from falling on them, and rather perished himself by a foul and accursed lot, which that same law pronounces to be the vilest and most polluted of deaths. Thus says St. Paul to the Jews: "He hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us; for it is written, 'Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree.'"† In this way, but for the death of the Messiah, Israel too must have been lost; and by that event they received time for repentance, and a way for remission of sins; found a means of reconciliation still, saw their Providence, which had been lowering for judgment, opening over them in propitiation once more; the just had died for the unjust, to bring them to God. What was this delay,—this suspension of judgment,—this opportunity of return and faith,—but an instance of "the long-suffering of God," with which "he endures the vessels of wrath (Jews) fitted to destruction; and makes known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto

glory?"‡ If Christ had not withdrawn awhile,—if his power had been taken up at once, and wielded in stern and legal justice, a deluge of judgment must have overwhelmed the earth, and swept away both Jew and Gentile, leaving but a remnant safe. But in mercy was the mortal life of Jesus turned into a prelude of notice and warning, like the tidings which Noah received of the flood; and as the growing frame of the ark gave signal to the world of the coming calamity, afforded an interval for repentance, and made the patriarch, as he built, a constant "preacher of righteousness,"§ so the increasing body of the Church, since the waning retreat of Christ to heaven, proclaims the approaching "day of the Lord," admonishes that "all should come to repentance,"¶ and by times to that faith and baptism which Messiah's death and resurrection have left as an ark of safety. "Once, in the days of Noah, the long suffering of God waited while the ark was preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls, were saved by water: a representation, this, of the way in which baptism (not, of course, carnal washing, but the engagement of a good conscience with God,) saves us now, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ; who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels, and authorities, and powers, being made subject to him."§ Yet "the time is short,"¶ and must be "redeemed,"\*\* "it is the last hour,"†† "the Lord,"‡ "the coming of the Lord,"§§ "the end of all things,"¶¶ are "at hand."†††

I have described one aspect, which the death of the Messiah presented to the Jews; and, in this, we have found another primary conception, explanatory of the scriptural language respecting the cross. Of the two relations in which this event appeared (the Gentile and the Israelitish), I believe the former to be by far the most familiar to the New Testament

\* 1 Thim. ii. 16.

† Gal. iii. 13. (See also the Spanish version which reads, *quem crucifigunt in ligno*, "crucifigunt" of the cross; for he adds, "that the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, through Jesus Christ.")

‡ Rom. ix. 22, 23.

§ 2 Pet. ii. 2.

¶ 1 Pet. iii. 9.

§ 1 Pet. ii. 20—22.

¶ Col. iii. 23.

\*\* Eph. v. 16. Col. iii. 7.

†† 1 John ii. 18.

‡ Phil. iv. 5. James v. 7. 1 Pet. iv. 7.

authors, and to furnish the true interpretation of almost all their phraseology on the subject. But, as my readers may have noticed, many passages receive illustration by *reference* to either notion: and some may have a meaning compounded of both. I must not pause to make any minute adjustment of these rôles, on the part of the two interpreting ideas: it is enough that, either separately or in union, they have now been taken round the whole circle of apostolic language respecting the cross, and detected in every difficult passage the presence of sense and truth, and the absence of all hint of vicarious atonement.

It was on the *unbelieving* portion of the Jewish people, that the death of their Messiah conferred the national blessing and opportunity to which I have adverted. But to the *converts* who had been received by him during his mortal life, and who would have been heirs of his glory, had he assumed it at once, it was less easy to point out any personal benefits from the cross. That the Christ had retired from this world was but a disappointing postponement of their hopes: that he had perished as a felon, was shocking to their pride, and turned their ancient boast into a present scorn: that he had become spiritual and immortal made him no longer theirs "as concerning the flesh," and, by admitting Gentiles with themselves, set aside their favourite law. So offensive to them was this unexpected slight on the institutions of Moses, immemorially revered as the ordinances of God, that it became important to give some turn to the death of Jesus, by which that event might be harmonized with the national system, and be shown to *effect the abrogation of the Law, on principles strictly legal*. This was the object of the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews; who thus gives us a third idea of the relations of the cross.—bearing, indeed, an essential resemblance to St. Paul's Gentile view, but illustrated in a manner altogether different. No trace is to be observed here of Paul's noble glorying in the Cross: so studiously is every

allusion to the crucifixion avoided, till all the argumentative part of the epistle has been completed, that a reader finds the conclusion already in sight, without having gained any notion of the *nude* of the Lord's death, whether even it was natural or violent, a literal human sacrifice, or a voluntary self-immolation. His ignominy and its agonies are wholly unmentioned, and his mortal infirmities and sufferings are explained, not as the spontaneous adoptions of previous compassion in love, but as God's fitting discipline for rendering him "a merciful and faithful high priest." They are referred to in the tone of apology, not of pride; as needing rather to be reconciled with his office, than to be boldly expounded as its grand essential. The object of the author clearly is, to find a place for the death of Jesus among the Messianic functions; and he persuades the Hebrew Christians that it is (not a satisfaction for moral guilt, but) a commutation for the Mosaic Law. In order to understand his argument, we must advert for a moment to the prejudices which it was designed to conciliate and correct.

It is not easy for us to realize the feelings with which the Israelite, in the yet palmy days of the Levitical worship, would bear of an abrogation of the Law;—the anger and contempt with which the mere heathen would repudiate the suggestion;—the terror with which the new convert would make trial of his freedom;—the blank and infidel feeling with which he would look round, and find himself drifted away from his anachrony of ceremony; the sinking heart, with which he would hear the reproaches of his countrymen against his apostasy. Every authoritative ritual draws towards itself an attachment too strong for reason and the sense of right, and transfers the feeling of obligation from realities to symbols. Among the Hebrews, this effect was the more marked and the more pernicious, because their ceremonies were, in many

instances, only remotely connected with any important truth or excellent end; they were separated by several removes from any spiritual utility. Rites were enacted to sustain other rites; institution lay beneath institution, through so many successive steps, that the crowning principle at the summit early passed out of sight. To keep alive the grand truth of the Divine Unity, there was a gorgeous temple worship: to perform this worship there was a priesthood: to support the priesthood, there were (among other sources of income) dues paid in the form of sacrifice: to provide against the non-payment of dues there were penalties: to prevent an injurious pressure of these penalties, there were exemptions, as in cases of sickness: and to put a check on trivial claims of exemption, it must be purchased by submission to a fee, under name of an atonement. Wherever such a system is received as divine, and based on the same authority with the great law of duty, it will always, by its definiteness and precision, attract attention from graver moral obligations. Its materiality renders it calculable: its account with the conscience can be exactly ascertained: as it has little obvious utility to men, it appears the more directly paid to God: it is regarded as the special means of pleasing him, of pleading his anger, and purchasing his promises. Hence it may often happen, that the more the offences against the spirit of duty, the more are rites multiplied in propitiation; and the harvest of ceremonies and that of crimes reaped together.

At a state not far from this, had the Jews arrived, when Christianity was preached. Their moral sentiments were so far perverted, that they valued nothing in themselves, in comparison with their legal exactitude, and looked all beyond themselves for their want of it. They were eagerly expecting the Deliverer's kingdom, nursing up their ambition for his triumphs; curbing the lip, as the lash of oppression fell upon them, in suppressed anticipation of vengeance; satiating a temper, at once fierce and servile, with decays of

Messiah's coming judgment, when the blood of the Patriarchs should be the title of the world's nobles, and the everlasting reign should begin in Jerusalem. Why was the hour delayed, they impatiently asked themselves: Was it that they had offended Jehovah, and secretly sinned against some requirement of his law? And then they set themselves to a renewed precision, a more slavish punctiliousness than before. Ascribing their continued depression to their imperfect legal obedience, they strained their ceremonialism tighter than ever: and hoped to be soon justified from their past sins, and ready for the mighty prince and the latter days.

What then must have been the feeling of the Hebrew, when told that all his punctualities had been thrown away; that at the advent, faith in Jesus, not obedience to the law, was to be the title to admission; and that the released at that day would be, not the scrupulous Pharisee,—whose good works would be of no avail; but all who, with the heart, have worthily confessed the name of the Lord Jesus? What doctrine could be more unwelcome to the haughty Israelite? it dashed his pride of ancestry to the ground. It brought to the same level with himself the polluted gentile,—whose presence would alone render all unclean in the Messiah's kingdom. It proved his past ritual anxieties to have been all wasted. It cast aside for the future the venerated law; left it in neglect to die; and made all the apparatus of Providence for its maintenance end in absolutely nothing. Was then the Messiah to supersede, and not to vindicate the law? How different this from the picture which prophets had drawn of his golden age, when Jerusalem was to be the pride of the earth, and her temple the praise of nations, sought by the feet of countless pilgrims, and decked with the splendour of their gifts! How could a true Hebrew be justified in a life without law? How think himself safe in a profession, which was without temple, without priest, without altar, without victim?

Not unnaturally, then, did the Hebrews regard with reluctance two of the leading features of Christianity, the death of the Messiah, and the freedom from the law. The epistle addressed to them was designed to soothe their uneasiness, and to show, that if the Mosaic institutions were superseded, it was in conformity with principles and analogues contained within themselves. With great address, the writer links the two difficulties together, and makes the one explain the other. He finds a ready means of effecting this, in the sacrificial ideas familiar to every Hebrew; for by representing the death of Jesus as a commutation for legal observances, he is only ascribing to it an operation, acknowledged to have place in the death of every lamb slain as a sin-offering at the altar. These offerings were a distinct recognition on the part of the Levitical code, of a principle of *equivalents* for its ordinances; a proof that, under certain conditions, they might yield: nothing more, therefore, was necessary, than to show that the death of Christ established those conditions. And such a method of argument was attended by this advantage, that while the *practical end* would be obtained of terminating all ceremonial observance, the Law was yet treated as in *theory* perpetual; not as ignominiously abrogated, but as legitimately commuted. Just as the Israelite, in paying his offering at the altar to compensate for ritual omissions, recognized thereby the claims of the law, while he obtained impunity for its neglect; so, if Providence could be shown to have provided a legal substitute for the system, its authority was acknowledged, at the moment that its abolition was secured.

Let us advert then to the functions of the Mosaic sin-offerings, to which the writer has recourse to illustrate his main position. They were of the nature of a *multa* or *acknowledgment rendered, for unconscious or inevitable disregard of ceremonial habits, and contraction of ceremonial uncleanness*. Such uncleanness might be incurred from various causes; and while removed by the appointed methods of

purification, disqualified from attendance at the sanctuary, and "cut off" "the guilty" "from among the congregation." To touch a dead body, to enter a tent where a corpse lay, rendered a person "unclean for seven days;" to come in contact with a forbidden animal, a bone, a grave; to be next to any one struck with sudden death; to be afflicted with certain kinds of bodily disease and infirmity; unwillingly to lay a finger on a person unclean, occasioned defilement, and necessitated a purification or an atonement.\* Independently of these offences, enforced upon the Israelite by the accidents of life, it was not easy for even the most cautious worshipper to keep pace with the complicated series of petty debts which the law of ordinances was always running up against him. If his offering had an invisible blemish; if he omitted a tithe, because "he mist it not;" or inadvertently fell into arrear, by a single day, with respect to a known liability, if absent from disease, he was compelled to let his ritual account accumulate; "though it be hidden from him," he must "be guilty, and bear his iniquity," and bring his victim.† On the birth of a child, the mother, after the lapse of a prescribed period, made her pilgrimage to the temple, presented her sin-offering, and "the priest made atonement for her.‡ The poor leper, long banished from the face of men, and unclean by the nature of his disease, became a debtor to the sanctuary, and on return from his tedious quarantine, brought his lamb of atonement, and departed thence, clear from neglected obligations to his law.§ It was impossible, however, to provide by specific enactment for every case of ritual transgression and impurity, arising from inadvertence or necessity. Scarcely could it be expected that the courts of worship themselves would escape defilement, from imperfections in the offerings, or unconscious disqualification in people or in priest. To clear off the whole

\* Num. vii. 11-20; Lev. xv. 25, 26; Num. vi. 9-12.

† Lev. x. 1-10.      ‡ Lev. xii. 1-5.      § Lev. xiv.

invisible residue of such sins, an annual "day of atonement" was appointed; the people thronged the avenues and approaches of the tabernacle: in their presence a kid was slain for their own transgressions, and for the high-priest the more dignified expiation of a heifer: charged with the blood of each successively, he sprinkled not only the exterior altar open to the sky, but, passing through the first and Holy chamber into the Holy of Holies, (never entered else) he touched, with finger dipped in blood, the sacred lid (the Mercy-seat) and foreground of the Ark.\* At that moment, while he yet lies prostrate behind the veil, the purification is complete; on no worshipper of Israel does any legal unholiness rest; and were it possible for the high-priest to remain in that interior retreat of Jehovah, still protecting the expiatory act, so long would this national purity continue, and the debt of ordinances be effaced as it arose. But he must return; the sanctifying rite must end; the people be dismissed; the priests resume the daily ministrations; the law open its stern account afresh, and in the mixture of national exactitude and neglects, defilements multiply again till the recurring anniversary lifts off the burden once more. Every year, then, the necessity comes round of "making atonement for the Holy sanctuary," "for the tabernacle," "for the altar," "for the priests, and for all the people of the congregation." Yet, though requiring periodical renewal, the rite, so far as it went, had an efficacy which no Hebrew could deny; for ceremonial sins, unconscious or inevitable (to which all atonement was limited), it was accepted as an indemnity; and put it beyond doubt that Mosiac obedience was remunerable.

\* Lev. xvi., vers. 20-22; Ex. xxv. 10, Num. vii. 1-11.

† To this end four instances, in which, as we have seen, the offering is rendered from the presence of some accidental impurity. But in all of these cases, the outside purification was only for the day, a ceremonial measure with the altar, that the expiation might be viewed as fresh. The atonement applied to the actual offering, not to the two-fold character of the altar—was once a ceremonial duty, not a moral one; and requiring, to remedy the one, the offering and the other, the other could hardly be so considered as set by the Hebrew High-priest, of Heliopolis.

Such was the system of ideas, by availing himself of which the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews would persuade his correspondents to forsake their legal observances. "You can look without uneasiness," he suggests, "on your ritual omissions, when the blood of some victim has been presented instead, and the penetralia of your sanctuary have been sprinkled with the offering: well, on no other terms would I soothe your anxiety; precisely such equivalent sacrifices Christianity exhibit, only of so peculiar a nature, that for all ceremonial neglects, intentional no less than inadvertent, you may rely upon indemnity." The Jews entertained a belief respecting their temple, which enabled the writer to give a singular force and precision to his analogy. They conceived, that the tabernacle of their worship was but the copy of a divine structure, devised by God himself, made by an exalted hand, and preserved eternally in heaven—this was "the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man;" which no mortal had beheld, except Moses in the mount, that he might "make all things according to that pattern:"\* within whose Holy of Holies dwelt no emblem or emanation of God's presence, but his own immediate Spirit, and the celestial furniture of which required, in proportion to its dignity, the purification of a nobler sacrifice, and the ministrations of a diviner priest, than hefted the "worldly sanctuary"† below. And who then can mistake the meaning of Christ's departure from this world, or doubt what office he conducts above? He is called by his ascension to the Pontificate of heaven; consecrated, "not after the law of any carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life;"‡ he drew aside the veil of his mortality, and passed into the innermost court of God: and as he must needs "have somewhat to offer,"§ he takes the only blood he had ever

given." Heb. x. 12, 13. Cf. 9. 11, 12, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100.

\* Heb. ix. 24. † 1 Cor. i. 23, 24. ‡ Heb. ix. 14. § Heb. ix. 12.

shed,—which was his own,—and, like the High-priest before the Mercy-seat, sanctifies therewith the people that stand without, “redeeming the transgressions” which “the first covenant” of rites entailed.\* And he has not returned; still is he had within that holiest place; and still the multitude he serves turn thither a silent and expectant gaze; he prolongs the purification still, and while he appears not, no other rites can be resumed, nor any legal defilement be contracted. Thus, meanwhile, ordinances cease their obligation, and the sin against them has lost its power. How different this from the offerings of Jerusalem, whose temple was but the “symbol and shadow” of that sanctuary above! In the Hebrew “sacrifices there was a remembrance again made of sins every year,”† “the high priest annually entered the holy place,”‡ being but a mortal, he could not go in with his own blood and remain, but must take that of other creatures and return; and hence it became “not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins,” for instantly they began to accumulate again. But to the very nature of Christ’s offering, a perpetuity of efficacy belongs; bearing no other than “his own blood,” he was immortal when his ministration began, and “ever liveth to make his intercession;”§ he could “not offer himself often, for then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world,”—and “it is appointed unto men only once to die:” so that “once for all he entered into the holy place, and obtained a redemption that is perpetual,” “once in the end of the world hath he appeared, and by sacrificing himself hath absolutely put away sin;” “this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins, for ever sat down on the right hand of God,” “for by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.”¶ The ceremonial law, with its periodical transgressions, and atonements, is suspended; the services of the outer

tabernacle cease, for the holiest of all is made manifest,\* one who is “priest for ever” dwells therein; one “consecrated for evermore,” “holy, harmless, undefiled, in his celestial dwelling quite separate from sinners;† who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people’s; for this he did once for all when he offered up himself;‡

\* Heb. ix. 4.

† Heb. vii. 24—25.

‡ Heb. vii. 27. Let the reader look carefully again into the verbal and logical structure of this verse, and then ask himself whether it is not as plain as words can make it that Christ “once for all” offered up “one sacrifice for his own sins, and that for the people’s.” The argument runs as this: “he went not to the duty, though he has done it once for all, the first finished work of order (see the single act of his atonement).” This sentence bears its meaning, unless that which he did once for all signifies a thing which he did thrice—and what was that?—the offering up of the High-priest of a sacrifice first for his own sins, and then for the people’s. What, what propriety, then, can Mr. Bushnell ask in this question:

Why is he said to have offered the Jewish High-priest in so offering a sacrifice for himself? I explain, that so much thing is said—but that, on the other hand, it is positively affirmed that Christ did offer sacrifice for his own sins. So plain indeed is that, that Christianian commentators are forced to slip in a remaining word and an additional statement, into the last clause of the verse. Thus Pierce:—“Who has no need, like the priests before the law, from time to time to offer up sacrifice first for his own sins, and after that for the people’s.”—It is the latter he did once for all when he offered up himself, and as to the former, he had no occasion to do that at all.” And so Bushnell writes of the apostle as if he had said just this, if he included in that the kind of contrast, which orthodox theology requires, between Jesus and the Jewish priests. He quotes the opposition between them to be our just ruler,—the Son of Man who offers daily,—the Son of God once for all. Divine must also be more peculiar; that the Jewish priest atoned for the clothes of sins, his own and the people’s—Christ for the people’s only. Suppose for a moment that that was the author’s design. That the word “thrice” instead of being its proper grammatical antecedent, may be restrained, as in the customary ritual above, to the sacrifice for the people’s sins.—then the word “daily” may be left out, without disturbance to the most judicious particulars of the context. The verse said then stands thus: “who needeth not, as those High-priests, to offer up sacrifice for his own sins, for he offered up sacrifice for the people’s sins, when he offered up himself.” Here, all the reasoning is obviously gone, and the sense is become a mere tautology. To make sense, we must, instead of the latter clause, the sentence of Paulus, “for he has no occasion to do this at all.” Thus, however, at an insertion of the clause on, more solemn for the author’s orthodoxy, I can do no composition. I think it necessary to say that, by leaving out the most emphatic word in the verse (the word *once*) Mr. Bushnell has perverted the author’s intention and secured the suggestion of his own. I have

\* Heb. ix. 13. † 1. 13. ‡ 1. 12. § 1. 1, 20.

¶ 1. 4. †† 1. 25. ††† 1. 25—27. 12. v. 14, 15.



Nor is it in its perpetuity alone, that the efficacy of the Christian sacrifice transcends the atonements of the law; it removes a higher order of ritual transgressions. It cannot be supposed indeed, that Messiah's life is no nobler offering, than that of a creature from the herd or flock, and will confer no more immunity. Accordingly, it goes beyond those "*days of ignorance,*" those ceremonial inadvertencies, for which alone there was remission in Israel; and reaches to *voluntary* neglects of the sacerdotal ordinances; ensuring indemnity for legal omissions, when incurred not simply by the necessities of the flesh, but even by intention of the covenant. This is no greater boon, than the dignity of the sacrifice requires; and does but give to His people below that living relation of soul to God, which he himself sustains above. "If the blood of bulls and of goats . . . sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh; how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purify (even) your conscience from dead works (ritual observances) to serve the living God!"\* Let then the ordinances go, and the Lord "put his laws into the mind, and write them in the heart;" and let all have "boldness to enter into the holiest

no doubt that this was unceremoniously done; but it shows how system rules off the scales of scriptural differences. I quote a part of the note of John Calvin the passage: "In nomine Christi baptizari. Quod vult significare Christus? quod aliud, quam nosse Pontificem, nisi in statu de quaestione delectat. Peter gildes autem baptismi obligationem per gratiam papalem, et de obligatione gratie in Christi hinc persequitur, et supercunctis, et per se ipsum non tantum in mente, sed et in re."

The words of the text for candles must have been of the same order, in the popular and in himself, certainly therefore no more in their character, but ceremonial. His death was, for himself no less, than for his Hebrew disciples, a commutation for the Mosaic ordinance. Had he no died, no more have continued under their power, "were he on earth, he would not be a priest," so have "supplanted that more excellent ministry," by which he clears away, in the courts above, all possibilities of ritual's return; and himself emerges from legal to spiritual relations.

\* Heb. x. 10, 14.

† This is obviously the necessity of *each* judgment, in a passage, from time to time, and in the case alluded to, only, not, as in the common service, daily.

by the blood of Jesus, by this new and living way which he hath consecrated for us;" "provoking each other to love and to good works."†

See, then, in brief, the objection of the Hebrews to the gospel; and the reply of their instructor. They said, "What a blank is this; you have no temple, no priest, no ritual! How is it that, in his ancient covenant, God is so strict about ceremonial service, and permits no neglect, however incidental, without atonement; yet in this new economy, throws the whole system away; letting us run up an overlasting debt to a law confessedly unrepaid, without redemption of it, or atonement for it!"

"Not without redemption and atonement," replies their evangelical teacher; "temple, sacrifice, priest, remain to us also, only glorified into proportions worthy of a heavenly dispensation; our temple, in the skies; our sacrifice, Messiah's mortal person; our priest, his ever-living spirit. How poor the efficacy of your former offerings! year after year, your ritual debt began again: for the blood dried and vanished from the unrepaid which it purified; the priest returned from the river shone, and when there, he stood, with the interceding blood, before the emblem, not the reality, of God. But Christ, not at the end of a year, but at the end of the great world-era of the Lord, has come to offer up himself, — no lamb so unblemished as he; his voluntary and immortal spirit, than which was nothing ever more divinely consecrate, becomes officiating priest, and strikes his own person with annihilating blow; it falls and bleeds on earth, as on the outer altar, standing on the threshold of the sanctuary of heaven: thence he ascends with the memorials of his death, vanishes into the Holy of Holies of the skies, presents himself before the very living God, and sanctifies the temple there and worshippers here: saying to us, 'drop now for ever the legal

† Heb. x. 24, 25, 26, 27.

burdens that weigh you down; doubt not that you are free, as my glorified spirit here, from the defilements you are wont to dread; I stay behind this veil of visible things to clear you of all such taint, and put away such sin eternally. Trust then in me, and take up the freedom of your souls: burst the dead works, that cling round your conscience like acerments of the grave; and rise to me, by the living power of duty, and a loving allegiance to God.\*"

So far then, as the death of Christ is treated in scripture dogmatically, rather than historically, its effects are viewed in contrast with the different order of things which must have been expected, had he, as Messiah, *not* died. And thus regarded, it presented itself to the minds of the Apostles in three relations;

First, to the Gentiles, whom it drew in to be subjects of the Messiah, by breaking down the barriers of his Hebrew personality, and rendering him spiritual as well as immortal.

Secondly, to the unbelieving Jews; whom his retirement from this world delivered from the judgment due to them, on the principles of their own law, both for their *general* violation of the *conditions* of their covenant, and for their positive rejection of him. His absence re-opened their opportunities; and to tender them this act of long-suffering, he took on himself the death which had been incurred by them.

Thirdly, to the believing Jews; the terms of whose discipleship the Messiah's death had changed, destroying all the benefits of their lineage, and substituting an act of the mind, the simpler chain of faith. It was therefore a commutation for the Ritual Law, and gave them impunity and atonement for all its violations.

With the last two of these relations, beyond their remarkable historical interest, we have no personal concern. The first remains, and ever will remain, worthy of the glorious joy, with which Paul regarded and expounded it. God has committed the rule of this world, to no exclusive Prince, and

no sacerdotal power, and no earthly majesty; but to one whose spirit, too divine to be limited to place and time, broke through clouds of sorrow into the clearest heaven: and thither has since been drawing our human love, though for ages now he has been unseen and immortal. An impartial God, a holy and spiritual Law, an infinite hope for all men,—are given to us by that generous cross.

It is evident that all three of the relations which I have described, belonged to the death of Jesus, in *his capacity of Messiah*; and could have had no existence, if he had not borne this character, but had been simply a private martyr to his convictions. The foregoing exposition gives a direct answer to the inquiry, pressed without the slightest pertinence upon the Unitarian, why the phraseology of the cross is never found applied to Paul or Peter, or any other noble confessor, who died in attestation of the truth; why "no record is given that we are justified by the blood of Stephen; or that he bare our sins in his own body, and made reconciliation for us."† I know not why such a question should be submitted to us; we have assuredly no concern with it; having never dreamt that the Apostles could have written as they did respecting the death of Calvary, if they had thought of it only as a scene of martyrdom. We have passed under review the whole language of the New Testament on this subject; and in the interpretation of it have *not even once* had recourse to this, which is said to be our only view of the cross. We have seen the apostles justly announcing their Lord's death, as a *proper propitiation*; because it pleased whole classes of men, without any meritorious change in their character, in saving relations: declaring it a *strict substitute* for others' punishment; on the ground that there were those who must have perished, if he had not; and that he died and retired, that they might remain and live: describing it as a

\* Mr. Haldane's Lecture on the Atonement, p. 111.

sacrifice which put away sin; because it did that for ever, which the Levitical atonements achieved for a day: but we have not found them ever appealing to it either as a satisfaction to the justice of God, or an example of martyrdom to men. The Trinitarians have one idea of this event themselves; and their fancy provides their opponents with one idea of it; of the former not a trace exists, on any page of Scripture; and of the latter, the Unitarian need not avail himself at all, in explaining the language, whereof it is said to be his solitary key.

Nowhere, then, in Scripture do we meet with anything corresponding with the prevailing notions of vicarious redemption; everywhere, and most emphatically in the personal instructions of our Lord, do we find a doctrine of forgiveness, and an idea of salvation, utterly inconsistent with it. He spoke often of the unqualified clemency of God to his returning sinners; never once of the satisfaction demanded by his justice. He spoke of the joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth; but was silent on the sacrificial faith, without which penitence is said to be unavailing. Nor did he, like his modern disciples, teach that there are two separate salvations, which must follow each other in a fixed order, first, redemption from the penalty; secondly from the spirit, of sin; pardon for the past, before sanctification in the present; a removal of the "hindrance in God," previous to its annihilation in ourselves. If indeed there were in Christianity two deliverances, discriminated and successive, it would be more in accordance with its spirit to invert this order: to read from alienation first, and announce forgiveness afterwards, to restore from guilt, before cancelling the penalty; and permit the *Arcting* to anticipate the *pardoning* love. At least, there would seem, in such an arrangement, to be a greater jealousy for the holiness of the divine love; a severer reservation of God's displeasure for those who have broken from the service of sin,

than in the system, which proclaims impunity to the rebel will, ere yet its estrangement is renounced. If the outward remission precedes the inward sanctification, then does God admit to favour the yet unsanctified; guilt keeps us in no exile from him: and though the holy Spirit is to follow afterwards, it becomes the peculiar office of the cross to lift us as we are, with every stain upon the soul and every vile habit unretraced, from the brink of perdition to the assurance of glory: the divine love is given to us, before the divine love is awakened in us; and the heirs of heaven have yet to become the children of holiness. With what consistency can the advocates of such an economy accuse its opponents of dealing lightly with sin, of deluding men into a false trust, and administering seductive flatteries to human nature? What! shall we, who plant in every soul of sin a Heil, whence no foreign force, no external God, can pluck us, any more than they can tear us from our identity;—we, who hide the fires of torment in no viewless gulf, but make them ubiquitous as guilt;—we, who suffer no outward agent from Eden, or the Abyss, or Calvary, to encroach upon the solitude of man's responsibility, and confuse the simplicity of conscience;—we, who teach that God will not, and even cannot, spare the sinner, till they be sinner no more, but must permit the burning lash to fall, till they cry aloud for mercy, and throw themselves freely into his embrace,—shall we be rebuked for a lax administration of peace, by those who think that a moment may turn the sinner into the elect? It is no flattery of our nature, to reverence deeply its moral capacities: we only discern in them the more solemn trust; and see in their abuse the sadder shame. And it is not of what men are, but of what they might be, that we encourage noble and cheerful thoughts. Doubtless, we think exaggeration possible (which our opponents apparently do not) even

\* See Mr. W. N. C. L. G. 12, pp. 202, 214, 223, 246, 261.

in the portraiture of their actual character: and perhaps we are not the less likely to weaken true convictions of sin, that we strive to speak of it with the voice of discriminative justice, instead of the monotonous thunders of vengeance; and to draw its image in the natural tints provided by the conscience, rather than in the preternatural flame-colour mingled in the crucibles of Hell.

In making *personal* redemption and *moral* redemption separate and successive, the vicarious scheme, we adhere, is inconsistent with the Christian idea of salvation. Not that we take the second, and reject the first, as our Trinitarian friends imagine, nor that we invert their order. We accept them both; putting them however, not in succession, but in super-position, so that they coalesce. The power and the punishment of sin perish together; and together begin the holiness and the bliss of heaven. Whatever extracts the poison, cools the sting; nor can the divine vigour of spiritual health enter, without its freedom and its joy. That there can be any separate dealings with our past guilt and with our present character, is not a truth of *God*, but a fiction of the schools. The sanctification of the one is the redemption of the other. The mind given up to passion, or chained to self, or any how alienated from the love and life divine, dwells, whatever be its faith, in the dark and terrible abyss, while he, and he only, that in the freedom and tranquillity of great affections, communes with God and toils for men, understands the meaning, and wins the promises, of heaven. Am I asked, 'What then is to persuade the sinful heart, thus to draw near to God;—what, but a proclamation of absolute pardon, can break down the secret distrust, which keeps our nature back, wrapped in the reserve of conscious guilt?' I reply; however much these fears and hesitations might cling round us, and restrain us from the mystic Deity of Nature, they can have no place in our intercourse with the Father whom Jesus represents. It needs only that Christ

be truly his image, to know "that the hindrance is not with him, but entirely in ourselves;" to see that there is no anger in his look; to feel that he invites us to unreserved confession, and accepts our self-abandonment to him, that he lifts the repentant, prostrate at his feet, and speaks the words of severe, but trust, hope. Am I told, 'that only the gratitude excited by personal rescue from tremendous danger, by an unconditional and entire deliverance, is capable of winning our reluctant nature, of opening the soul to the access of the Divine Spirit, and bringing it to the service of the Everlasting Will?' I answer, to acknowledge, that *some* such disinterested power must be awakened, some mighty forces of the heart be called out, ere the regeneration can take place that renders us children of the Highest, ere we can break, with true new-borns, from the shell of self, and try and train our wings in the atmosphere of God. The permanent work of duty must be wrought by the affections; not by the conscious, however solemn, of hope and fear; no self-perfecting process, elaborated by an anxious self, has warmth enough to ripen the soul's divine fruits; the walks of outward morality, and the slopes of deliberate meditation, it may keep smooth and trim; but cannot make the true life-blossom set, as in a garden of the Lord, and the foliage wave us with the voice of God among the trees. I gladly admit that to a believer in the vicarious sacrifice, the sense of pardon, the love of the great deliverer, may well fulfil the blessed office, of carrying him out of himself in genuine allegiance to a being most benign and holy. And perceiving that, if this doctrine were removed, there is not, in the system of which it forms a part, and which else would be all terror, anything that could perform the same generous part, I can understand why it seems to its advocates, an essential power in the renovation of the character. But

great as it may be, within the limits of its own narrow sphere, ideas possessed of higher moral efficacy, are not wanting, when we pass into a region of nobler and more Christian thought. Shall we say that the view of the infinite Ruler, given in the spoken wisdom or the living spirit of Christ, has no sanctifying power? Yet where is there any trace in it of the satisfactionist's redemption? When we sit at Messiah's feet, that transforming gratitude for an extinguished penalty on which the prevailing theology insists, as its central function, becomes replaced by a similar and profounder sentiment towards the eternal father. If to rescue men from a dreadful fate in the future, be a just title to our reverence, *wasst du nicht* that fate claims an affection yet more devoted; if there be a divine mercy in annihilating an awful curse, in shedding only blessing there is surely a diviner will. Shall the love restored to us after long delay, and in consideration of an equivalent, work mightily on the heart; and shall that which asked no sacrifice, which has been veiled by no cloud, which has enfolded us always in its tranquillity, nor can ever quit the soul opened to receive it, fail to penetrate the conscience, and dissolve the frosts of our self-love by some holier flame? Never shall it be found true, that God must threaten us with vengeance, ere we can feel the shelter of his grace.

In truth, the Christian idea of salvation cannot be better illustrated, than by the *donor* which has been entertained respecting the proper translation of my text. Some, referring it to spiritual redemption, adhere to the common version; others, seeing that the apostle Peter is explaining "by what power, or by what name" he had cured the lame man at the temple gate, refer the words to this miracle of deliverance, and render them thus; "nautier is there *healing* in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we can be *healed*." It matters little which it is; for whether we speak of body or of mind, Jesus

"*wasst*" us by "*making us whole*;" by putting forth upon us a divine and healing power, by which past suffering and present decrepitude disappear together: which supplies the defective elements of our nature, cools the burning of inward frets; or calls into being new senses and perceptions, opening a divine universe to our experience. The deformed and crooked will, bowed by Satan, led these many years, and nowise able to lift up itself, he loosens and makes straight in uprightness. The moral paralytic, collapsed and prostrate amid the stir of life, and incapably gazing on the moving waters in which others find the health, has often started up at the summons of that voice, though penitence "he wist not who it was," and going his way, has found it to be "the sabbath," and owned the "work" of one who is in the spirit of "the Father." From the eye long dark and blind to duty and to God, he has caused the film to pass away, and shown the solemn look of life beneath a heaven so tranquil and sublime. Even the dead of soul, else wrapped in bandages of selfishness, — that greediest of graves, — have been quickened by his piercing call, and have come forth; to learn, "when risen," that only in the weakness that can obey is there the power to command; only in the love that serves is there the life of heart-felt liberty. To call, then, on the name and trust in the spirit of Christ, is to invoke the restoring power of God; to give symmetry and speed to our lame affections, and the vigour of an athlete to our loping wills. There is not any Christian *salvation* that is not thus identical with Christian *perfection*: "nor any other name under heaven given among men, whereby we may be (thus) *made whole*." Let all that would "be perfect be thus minded;" seek "the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ;" and they shall find in him a "power to become the Sons of God."\*

\* Ph. i. 12. 13.

\* Ep. i. 10.

\* John. i. 12.

## NOTES.

### A.

#### *Relation between Natural Religion and Revelation*

It is not easy to determine, with any precision, what is Mr. McNeile's estimate of the capabilities and defects of natural religion. It is subjected to a vague and indistinct disparagement throughout his lecture: the impression is left, that the character of God cannot be vindicated by appeal to his works, but I do not perceive that the lecturer commits himself to any logical proposition on the subject. One of his auditors,\* however, has supplied this deficiency, and taking, as his antagonist, a sentence from the second Lecture of the present series, has argued at length, that "The moral Character and Unity of God are not discoverable from the works of Creation." He affirms that "to talk of 'discerning the moral attributes of God on the material structures of the universe,' is not only idle, but unreasonable." and the justification which he offers of this bold statement seems to comprise the two following arguments:

That the universe is analogous to a cathedral or other human edifice, which declares something of the Architect's genius and power, but nothing of his moral qualities: and

That the mixture of good and evil in the world perplexes the mind with opposite reports of the Creator's character.

If scepticism were a just object of moral rebuke, in what terms might we not speak of this "infidel" rejection of God's ancient and everlasting oracles of nature? For the serious doubts and perplexities of the devout student or creature, an unqualified respect may be entertained. But it is to be regretted that the necessities of a system should exempt the expounder of revelation to speak, with reckless indifference,

\* See, D. James, in his Lecture 2001, 4. "The doctrine of the Trinity, p. 106 & a passage from the Deity of our Lord Jesus Christ," p. 266 - 275.

the primitive sentiments of all religions. The assercion of orthodoxy to the theology of the uneducated reason and heart is however to be classed among the natural unipainities. Among all the extravagancies of modern English divinity, unknown to the sound and healthy common national church, it is perhaps the most significant. Inducating that first obscuration of Christianity, in which it cannot be made to shine without putting out every other light. This destructive mode of argumentation, which discredits everything foreign to the favourite system, is the prime result of fear, not of faith: it is a theological adoption of the Chinese policy, and keeps the Chinese Empire safe, by regarding every stranger as a possible spy, and excluding all allusions as foreigners' revelations. The model of faith is defended, by making the most dreadful havoc of every power which ought to be its strength and ornament. Pat not reason, but save the Trinity; submit experience, but prove depravity; disparage conscience, but secure the Atonement; bewilder the sentiment of justice and benevolence, only guard the everlasting Hell,—have long been the instructions of orthodoxy to its defenders, and now we are asked to place the authority of nature to the God of *fact*, that points without disturbance may prove in the God of *reason*; and to withdraw our eye from the telescope of science, which reveals the vastness of the Creator's work, that we may examine, through a closer microscope, the minuteness of a Hebrew word. Can those who paint the Unitarians with the negative character of their system, give a satisfactory account of the positive merits of a religion which disbelieves reason, distrusts the moral sense, dislikes science, derides its nature, and for all who are without the bible and a fit interpreter, disowns the moral character of God?

In commenting upon Mr. James's position on this last point, I will confine myself to three observations. — the first, relating to the consequences of his doctrine, if true; the others explaining, by separate reference to his two arguments, why I conceive it to be false.

(1.) If there is not see in nature of the moral attributes of God, there can be no disclosure of them in Scripture. The character of the Revealer is our only guarantee for the truth and excellence of the Revelation; and if his character is antecedently unknown, if there is nothing to persuade the idea of his being deceitful and malignant, how can we be assured that his communication is not a deception and a lie? It is not the preternatural rank, but the just and fair mind, of a revealed Being, that enables him to manage its reception; and

scarcely it is this alone which, in our opponents' own system, makes the whole difference between the suggestions of Satan and the inspiration of God. But let us hear, in this matter, the judgment of one who adorned the English church, in times when solidity of thought and truth of sentiment were still in esteem among her clergy. Archbishop Tillotson observes; "Unless the knowledge of God and his essential perfections be natural, I do not see what sufficient and certain foundation there can be of revealed religion. For unless we naturally know God to be a Being of all perfections, and consequently that whatever he says is true, I cannot see what divine revelation can signify. For God's revealing or declaring such a thing to us, is no necessary argument that it is so, unless antecedently to that revelation, we be possessed firstly with this principle, that whatever God says is true. And whatever is known antecedently to revelation, must be known by natural light, and by reasonings and deductions from natural principles. I might further add to this argument, that the only standard and measure to judge of divine revelations, and to distinguish between what are true, and what are counterfeit, are the natural notions which men have of God, and of his essential perfections." And sheweth, still more explicitly, "The strength and surest reasonings in religion are grounded upon the eternal preferences of God, so that even divine revelation itself *God* suppose these to its foundation, and can signify nothing to us, unless these be first known and believed. Unless we be first persuaded of the providence of God, and his particular care of mankind, why should we believe that he would make any revelation of himself to men? Unless it be naturally known to us, that God is true, what foundation is there for the belief of his word? And what signifies the laws and promises of God, unless natural light do first assure us of his sovereign authority and faithfulness? So that the principles of natural religion, are the foundation of that which is revealed, and therefore we reason nothing can be admitted to be a revelation from God, which plainly contradicts his essential perfection; and consequently if any pretends divine revelation for this doctrine, that God hath from all eternity absolutely decreed the eternal ruin of the greatest part of mankind, without any respect to the sins and demerits of men, I am as certain that this doctrine cannot be of God, as I am sure that God is good and just; because this grates upon the notion that mankind have of





all, then, there are phenomena which depose to the character of the Creator, if we can only interpret their attestation aright.

The rules for the treatment of conflicting evidence are plain and intelligible; nor is there any reason why they should not be applied to the great problems of natural religion. The preponderant testimony being permitted to determine our convictions, the evils and inequalities of the world cannot disturb our faith in the benevolence and holiness of God; but must stand over, as a residue of unreduced phenomena, to be hereafter brought under the dominion of that law of love, which the visible systematic arrangements of Providence show to be general.

Happily, no sceptical reasonings, like those on which I am now proceeding, can permanently prevent the natural sentiments of men from asserting their supremacy. To use the words of Bishop Butler, "*Our whole nature tends us to ascribe all moral perfection to God, and to deny all imperfection of Him. And this will for ever be a practical proof of his moral character, to such as will consider what a practical proof is, because it is the voice of God speaking in us.*"

From the opposite appearances of good and evil in the world, Mr. James derives an argument against the Unity of God, and admits that "*reason thinks it more reasonable to admit the existence of two slightly and independent Beings, the one eternally good, the other eternally evil.*" If the Lecturer's "*reason*" really recommends to him such extraordinary conclusions, and insists on personizing the Manichean doctrine, the intellectual faculty may well be in bad theological repute with him. The constant origin of pain and enjoyment, good and evil, from the very same arrangements and structures, renders the partition of the creative work between two antagonistic principles not very easy of conception; and it yet remains to be explained, how the laws which produce the breeze can proceed from one Being, and those which spread the hurricane from another; how hunger can have one author, and the refreshment of food another; how the power of right moral choice can be the gift of God, and that of wrong moral choice of a Demon.

The reverend Lecturer attempts to weaken the argument from the unity of the creation in that of the Creator. His recent remarks on comets I must leave to the consideration of astronomers. The

\* Introductory to the Analogy.

† Lecture, p. 371.

rest of the argument is entitled to such reply as the following words of Robert Hall may give to it. "To prove the unity of this great Being, in opposition to a plurality of Gods, it is not necessary to have recourse to metaphysical abstractions. It is sufficient to observe, that the notion of more than one author of nature is inconsistent with that testimony of design which pervades her works, that it solves no appearances, is supported by no evidence, and serves no purpose but to embarrass and perplex our conceptions."

## B.

### *Transgression and Utilitarian Ideal of Justice*

It is only natural that the parable of the Prodigal Son should be no favourite with those, who deny the unconditional mercy of God. The place which this divine tale occupies in the Unitarian theology appears to be filled, in the orthodox estimate, by the story of Zolueus-king of the Locrians, which has been appealed to in the present controversy by both the Lecturers on the Atonement, and seems to be the only suitable illustration presented, even by Pagan history, of the execution of vicarious punishment. This monarch had passed a law, condemning adulterers to the loss of both eyes. His own son was convicted of the crime, and to satisfy at once the claims of law and of clemency, the royal parent "commanded one of his own eyes to be pulled out, and one of his son's." Is it to be held a heresy to confess, that there seems to me something heathenish in this example, and that, as an exponent of the Divine character, I more willingly regard the father of the prodigal, than the father of the adulterer?

Without entering, however, into any comparison between the Locrian and the Galilean parable, I would observe, that the vicarious theory receives no illustration from this fragment of ancient history. There is no analogy between the cases, except in the violation of law and wisdom which both exhibit; and whatever we are restricted to admire in Zolueus, will be found, on close inspection, to be absent from the orthodox representation of God. We pity the Cretan king, who had made a law without foresight of its application, and so sympathize with his desire to evade it, that any quibble which legal ingenuity can devise for this purpose, passes with slight condemnation; casually refused to be severe with a son implicated in such a difficulty

\* Matt. x. 1-12. Luke xv. 11-32.

But the Creator and Legislator of the human race, having perfect knowledge of the future, can never be surprised into a similar perplexity: or ever pass a law at one time, which at another he desires to evade. Even were it so, there would seem to be less that is unworthy of his moral perfection, in saying plainly, with the ancient Hebrews, that he "repented of the evil he thought to do," and said, "it shall not be," than in ascribing to him a desire for preserving consistency, in which no one capable of appreciating variety can pretend to discern any sincere fulfilment of the law. However barbarous the idea of Divine "repentance," it is at least ingenuous. Nor does this incident of Zaleucus and his son present any parallel to the alleged relation between the Divine Father who receives, and the Divine Son who gives, the sat starting for human guilt. The Locris king took a part of the penalty himself, and left the remainder where it was due; but the Sovereign Law-giver of Calumny puts the whole upon another. To sustain the analogy, Zaleucus should have permitted an innocent son to have both his eyes put out, and the convicted adulterer to escape.

The doctrine of Atonement has introduced among Trinitarians a mode of speaking respecting God, which grieves most painfully against the reverential affectings due to him. His nature is dismembered into a number of attributes, severed to each other, and preferring rival claims; the Divine tranquility appears as the equilibrium of opposing pressures,—the Divine administration as a resultant from the collision of hostile forces. Goodness pleads for that which holiness forbids, and the Paternal God would do many a mercy, did the Sovereign God allow. The idea of a conflict or embarrassment in the Supreme Mind being thus introduced, and the believer being haunted by the feeling of some tremendous difficulty affecting the Divine government, the vicarious atonement is brought forward as the relief, the solution of the whole perplexity; the vision, by a blessed compromise, of attributes that could never combine in any scheme before. The main business of theology is now to consist, in stating the conditions, and expounding the solution, of this imaginary problem. The cardinal difficulty is thought to be, the reconciliation of Justice and Mercy; and, as the one is represented under the image of a Sovereign, the other under that of a Father, the question assumes this form: how can the same being at every moment possess both these characters, without abandoning any function or feeling appropriate to either? How, equally, can the Judge remit,—as it beyond

his power, yet, how can the Parent punish to the uttermost?—it is contrary to his nature.

All this difficulty is merely fictitious: arising out of the determination to make out that God is both wholly Judge, and wholly Father: from an anxiety, that is, to adhere to two metaphors, as applicable, in every particular, to the Divine Being. It is evident that both must be, to a great extent, inappropriate: and is nothing surely is the impropriety more manifest, than in the assertion that, as Sovereign, God is naturally bound to execute laws which, nevertheless, it would be desirable to remit, or change in their operation. Whatever painful necessities the imperfection of human legislation and judicial procedure may impose, the Omniscient Ruler can make no law which he will not to all eternity, and with entire consent of his whole nature, deem it well to execute. This is the Trinitarian answer to the constant question, "How can God forgive in defiance of his own law?" It is not in defiance of his laws: every one of which will be fulfilled to the uttermost, in conformity with his first intent, but nowhere has he declared that he would not forgive. All justice consists in treating moral agents according to their character, the inexorability of human law arises solely from the imperfection with which it can attain this end, and is not the essence, but the alloy, of equity: yet God, who searches and controls the heart, exercises that perfect justice, which permits the proud sinner to depart only with the moral fruit; and pardons, not by cancelling any sentence, but by obeying his eternal purpose to meet the wanderer returning homeward, and give his blessing to the restored. Only by such restoration can any past guilt be effaced. The thoughts, emotions, and sufferings of sin, once committed, are woven into the fabric of the soul, and are as incapable of being absolutely obliterated thence and put back into non-existence, as moments of being struck from the past, or the parts of space from infinitude. Hence we behold alike "the goodness and the severity of God," and adore in him not the balance of contrary tendencies, but the harmony of consentaneous perfections. How plainly does experience show that, if his personal unity be given up, his moral unity cannot be preserved!

The representation of God as a Creator, to whom his subordinate creatures are in debt to the amount of their moral obligations, is no less unfit to serve as the foundation of serious reasonings, than the idea of him as a Sovereign. As a loose analogy, likely to produce a vivid impression on minds filled with ideas borrowed from the initi-

return of property, it unavoidably and inevitably occurs to us; but to force any doctrinal sentiments from it is to strain it beyond its capabilities. Mr. Biddison describes it as a favourite with the Unitarians, "our opponents assert, that this may be regarded as debt and no debt only."<sup>1</sup> I will venture to affirm that no Unitarian who heard this believed his own ears. (I have seen it in print,) so incredible great must be the separation of Unitarian theology which could dictate the statement. The sentiment attributed to us by our agents which our whole body of moral doctrine is one systematic protest, and which has place in our arguments against the vicarious scheme, *only because it is the fundamental idea, on which that scheme is usually declared to rest.* In one of the most recent and deservedly popular Unitarian publications on this subject, I find a long note devoted to the destruction of this primary analogy, which, the Author observes, "is not very incomplete and unsatisfactory. Punishment is compared to a debt, supposed to be incurred by the commission of the offence. To a certain degree there is a resemblance between the two things, which may be the foundation of a metaphor; but when we attempt to argue upon this metaphor, we fall into a variety of errors."<sup>2</sup> That philosopher does not seem to argue upon this metaphor, "is not only," and the present controversy is not deficient in specimens. "All that the creature can accomplish is a debt due to the Creator," says Mr. James, who reasons out the mercantile view of redemption with an unshaking precision, unparalled since the days of Shylock; who insists on "eye for eye, tooth for tooth, life for life," and condemns any alteration (of course, our Lord's) of this rule, as "false charity, a mistaken compassion,"<sup>3</sup> who inquires whether, in the payment of redemption, an angel might not go for a number of men, and *deduce* in the negative, because "the highest created angel in existence" (having as much as he can do for himself) "could not produce the smallest amount of supererogatory obedience or merit to transfer to a fellow angel, or to man,"<sup>4</sup> and who, in reply to the question, "What price will God accept for the lives that are justly sentenced to eternal death?" says, "the answer to this is very simple: he will accept nothing but what will be a real equivalent—

a full compensation—a adequate price."<sup>5</sup> In what bible, or Moise's or of Maimonides all this is found, I know not, sure I am, it was never learned at the feet of Christ.

Unitarians object to the reality and justice attributed to the Eternal Father, in laying upon the innocent Jesus the punishment of guilty men. Mr. Biddison's reply, though not new, is remarkable. "Do we, however, assert any thing as to the *fact* of our Lord's suffering, which they who deny it at present do not also assert? If, then, it be a fact, (as I think) that he did suffer through his agency in the garden, and die on the cross, does it not appear much greater merit to God, to impose those sufferings, which Jesus was admitted to have undergone, without any benefit to the transgressor, or any exaltation of his own glory?"<sup>6</sup>

I had always thought, and still think, that our Unitarian friends do assert a great deal "as to the *fact*" (or, the *cause* and *essence* of *events*, apart from the *effects*) "of our Lord's sufferings, which we cannot admit. A human being, says the Unitarian, died on the cross, with such suffering as a perfect human being may endure." Will Mr. Biddison be content with this description of "the *fact*?" and does he merely wish to signify, that on the death of "this man," God took occasion to forgive *all* men who are to be saved at all? If so, I admit that the imputation of cruelty is groundless, and have only to observe, that there is no perceptible relation of cause and effect between the occasion and the boon; and that the cross becomes simply the date, the chronological age, of a divine volition, arbitrarily attached to that point of human history. But then, how can Mr. Biddison defend (as he does) the phrase "*blood of God*?" Theology can perform strange feats, and to its sight of words nothing is impossible. The doctrine of the *communication of properties* between the two natures of our Lord, comes in to relieve the difficulty: and having established that whatever is true of either nature may be affirmed of Christ, and by inference, even of the *other*, it proves the propriety of saying, both that the Divine nature cannot suffer, and yet that God died; *Heterodox* however, in its perseverance, still thinks with Le Clerc of this *verba divinitus*, that it is "as intelligible, as if we were to say, there is a circle so united with a triangle, that the circle has the properties of the triangle, and the triangle those of the circle."<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Lect. iv. p. 241.

<sup>2</sup> Remarks on the commonly received Doctrine of Atonement and Satisfaction, by Rev. W. Turner, &c. &c. New York, 1825, 8vo. 2d. edition.

<sup>3</sup> Course, p. 113.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. p. 116.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. pp. 112, 114.

<sup>6</sup> Lecture, p. 113.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid. pp. 231, 232.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid. p. 102.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid. p. 102.

<sup>9</sup> See Course, P. 1. 1825, 8vo. p. 113.

## C

*The reading in Acts xv. 28*

No competent critic, I apprehend, can read without surprise Mr. Paddison's note (H.) on the reading of this verse. The slight manner in which Griesbach is set aside, to make way for the authority of critical relations of the N. T. since his time, the vague commendation of the edition of Dr. Scholtz, "welch, it may well be hoped, leaves us little more to expect or desire,"—as if there were nothing peculiar or controverted in the critical principles of that work; the citation of a passage from this Roman Catholic writer, in which the critic becomes the theologian, and makes use of his own reading of *eos* to prove "that Christ is God;" together with the statement that the reading is of *no doctrinal importance*; combine to render this a remarkable piece of criticism. If the learned Lecturer had *defended* his dissent from Griesbach, as attempted to invigilate the reasoning of that Editor's elaborate note on the passage, some materials for consideration and argument would have been afforded. But no reason is assigned for the preference of *eos* over *episc.* except that Dr. Scholtz adopts it, and says nothing about it, though Griesbach rejects it, and says a great deal about it, and very conclusively too, in the opinion of most scholars, not excepting Mr. Byrth. Surely the paradoxical preference which Scholtz gives to the Byzantine recension is not a reason for hoping that he has left us nothing more to expect in the determination of the text of the N. T., still less is it a reason why his readings, simply because they are his, should supersede Griesbach's,—from whom, I submit, no sober critic should venture to depart, without at least intimating the grounds of his judgment. I have not seen the critical edition of the learned Roman Catholic, but unless its Prolegomena contain some much better reasons than are assigned in his "Bibisch-kritische Beleg," for his attachment to the Constantinopolitan family of manuscripts, it may be safely affirmed, that Griesbach will no more be superseded by Scholtz, than he was anticipated by Matthæi.

The text in question is not new, on the reading of which Griesbach expresses his opinion with any hesitation. "Ex his uerbis luculenter apparet, per lectionem *episc.* ne uisum quidem uultum adferam, qui sine uelitate, sine intermissione sua testis idoneus et inextinguibile oritur, quæst. Non reperitur, nisi in libris recentioribus, lix.

denique uel gentes consequendus, uel miseris, multis uultus in locis, interpretatus."—"Quomodo igitur, saluis criticæ artis legibus, Actio hæc, utpote omni uelitate iuxta disticta, defendi queat, equidem diuul intelligo." In the face of this decision, Mr. Paddison reads *eos*: and does any one then believe, that in Unitarians alone, theological bias influences the choice of a reading?

The attempt to elicit from the word *episc.* the same argument for the Deity of Christ, which might be derived from the reading *eos*, I confess myself unable to comprehend. Does Mr. Paddison intend to assert, that when any person is called *episc.* (Lord) in the N. T., it means that he is Jehovah? Or, when this is denied, is there some peculiarity of grammatical usage, indicating the fact? If so, it is of a nature that this should be pointed out, and illustrated by examples; the ideas not being adequately described by saying that "the word" is "put in the form of an unqualified and unqualified preference."

## D

*Archbishop Magee's controversial Character.*

In the year 1815 a discussion arose out of the general controversy on the doctrine of the Trinity, respecting the proper use of the word UNITARIAN. Those who were anxious to be designated by this name were divided in opinion as to the latitude with which it should be employed. One class proposed to limit it to believers in the simple humanity of our Lord, and to exclude from it all who held his pre-existence, from the lowest Arian to the highest Athanasian. Another class protested against this restriction: suggested that, both by its construction and its usage, the word primarily referred, not to the nature of Christ, but to the personality of the Godhead: that as Trinitarians denoted, by the prefix (Trī) to their name, the three persons of their Deity, so by the prefix (Uni) should Unitarians express the one person of theirs, that in no other way could the numerical anthesis, proximate to the ear, be afforded to the mind; and accordingly that under the title Unitarian should be included all Christians who directed their worship to one personal God, whatever they might think of the nature of Christ. It is evident that, in this latter sense, the name must comprehend a much larger class than in the former. The discussion between the two parties was conducted in the pages of the Monthly Repository, at that time the organ of the English Unitarian theology.

Meanwhile, the defenders of orthodoxy were not indifferent to the subject of debate, nor at all more agreed about it than their theological opponents. The majority regarded the word Unitarian as a creditable name, which was by no means to be abandoned to a set of heretics, Lutherans held up to opprobrium by the title of National. They accordingly proposed to consider it as expressing the belief in *One God* (without reference to the number of persons), in contradistinction to the belief in *many Gods*: so that its opposite should be, not as the analogy of language seemed to require, *Trinitarian*, but *Polytheist*. Thus defined, the appellation belonged to Trinitarians as well as to others; and the assumption of it, by those who dissented from the doctrine of the Trinity, was construed into a charge of Treason against the orthodox. Another party, however, comprising especially Archbishop Magee to the church, and the High Asians out of it, treated the name as just, not of honour, but of disgrace;—were anxious to fix it exclusively on Mr. Beisham's school of Semanarians, and to assign the believers in the pre-existence of Christ, of every shade, from its pollution;—and affected to regard every extension of it to those, as a disingenuous trick, designed to swell the appearance of numbers, and to act as "a decoy" for drawing "to Mr. Beisham's class" all who were "against Athanasius." And so the poor Unitarians could please nobody, and were in imminent danger of being altogether anonymous. If they did not extend their name as is to take in every church, Athanasian and all, they were guilty of false imputation on Trinitarians, and of monopolising an honour which was no property of theirs. If they did not reserve it to "Mr. Beisham's class," they were accused of "reproachment," and of knowingly dragging the hundreds Asians into participation of their disgrace. If they denied that the whole Church of England was Unitarian, they committed an act of impudent exclusion; if they affirmed that Mr. Locke and Sir Isaac Newton were Unitarian, they were chargeable with a no less impudent assumption, and rebuked for "pseudonymous proselytism."

Of the three possible meanings of the word, the Homogenitarian, the Impersonal, and the Athanasian, Mr. Aspland's plea and career fully indicated the second, in opposition to Mr. Norris, a Trinitarian

\* *Magee on the Creed*, vol. iv. p. 343. Note. See Editor. This note is a good re-echo of the *Annals*, vol. i. the *Monthly Repository*. And shows that the *Annals* must have been the *Orthodox* or *Trinitarian* and his cause always been profitable.

contradictor, who insisted on the third, and declared he would call his opponents Socinians, and amid the reproaches of Archbishop Magee, who clung to the first, and denounced the wider application as a "dishonest" management of the term." With these clings in mind, let the reader attend to the following passage from that gentleman's celebrated work.

"How great are the advantages of a well-chosen name! Mr. Aspland, in his warm recommendation of the continuance of the use of the word *Calvinist*, in that ambiguous sense in which it had already done so much good to the cause, very justly observes, from Dr. South, that 'the generosity of mankind is wholly and absolutely governed by words and names;' and that 'he, who will set up for a skilful manager of the rabble, so long as they have but ears to hear, needs never enquire whether they have any understanding, whereby to judge;—but with two or three popular empty words, well tuned and tuned, may whistle them backwards and forwards, upwards and downwards, till he is weary, and get upon their backs when he is so.' *Month. Rep.* vol. x. p. 481.—And what does Mr. Aspland deduce from all this? Why, neither more nor less than this,—that the name Unitarian must never be given up, but all possible changes rung upon it, let the opinions of those who hear that name be ever so various and contradictory."

Now what does the reader think of Mr. Aspland? He despises him, as the deliberate proposer of an imposture, as one who sets up for "a skilful manager of the rabble," and who argues for the name "Unitarian," because it may enable his party to "get upon the backs" of the multitude. The Archbishop, I presume, means to leave this imposture. Let us look then to the facts.

The quotation is from Mr. Aspland's "Plea for Unitarian Dissenters." The author is expostulating with Mr. Norris, who had vowed not to foster the term Socinian on dissenters from the doctrine of the Trinity, and is urging the impropriety of inviting a religious body by giving them a dishonest and confessedly unsuitable designation. Mr. Aspland introduces his reference to Dr. South by the following passage.

"It is not without design that you cling to a known error. The name of Socinian is rebuked by us; this is one reason why an ungenerous adversary may choose to give it;—and again, the term having

\* *Magee on the Creed*, vol. iv. pp. 313, 314. Note.

been used (with some degree of propriety) at the first appearance of this class of Unitarians, which was at a period when penal laws were not a dead letter, and when theological controversies were personal quarrels: it is associated in hearts with a set of useful phrases such as *pestifer heretics*, *wretched blasphemers*, and the like, which suit the conscience of writers who have no abundance of erudition but a lack of argument, and who, whilst they are reduced to the necessity of borrowing, are not secured by their good taste or sense of decorum from taking, to loan, the excesses of defunct authors: this is a second reason why the name 'Socinian' is ready to linger in books, long after Socinians have departed from the stage.

Then follows the note from which Archbishop Magee has quoted: but from which he has omitted the parts enclosed in brackets.

{ "Once more, I must beg leave to refer you to Mr. South, for an appropriate observation on this, as to the fatal imposture and force of words. }

"The generality of mankind is wholly and absolutely governed by words and names: *Præterea*, may, for the most part, even against the knowledge men have of things. Ten multitudes or common sorts, like a drove of sheep, or an herd of oxen, may be managed by any noise, or cry, which their drivers shall occasion them to.

"And, he who will set up for a skilful manager of the rabble, so long as they have his ears to hear, needs never enquire whether they have any understanding whereby to judge. but with two or three popular, empty words, well-tuned and humoured, may whistle them backwards and forwards, upwards and downwards, till he is weary; and get upon their backs when he is so."

And now, may I not ask, what does the reader think of Archbishop Magee? Mr. Aspland indignantly censures the "imposture" practised by false names; and by a patched quotation, he is held up as accessory to it. He *really says* to his opponents, "Call us Socinians no more, for you must know it is unjust:" he is *represented* as saying in his *friends*, "We will never cease to call ourselves Unitarians, for it is a capital trick." And thus, by scoring out and uttering, his own expostulation against a base policy is metamorphosed into an indictment, charging him with the very same. Mr. Blyth and Mr. McNeill are men, as I believe, of honourable minds: and the latter has rebuked, as they deserve, "garbled quotations." I

\* Monthly Repository of Theology and General Literature, vol. vi. (1815), figure from this work, rather than from Mr. Aspland's " plea for Unitarianism," in substance to the Archbishop's use of it.

ask them to acquit me of "outraging the memory of departed greatness."

"My respected opponents know as well as I do," "that dishonest criticism, as well as dishonesty of every kind, consists not in the number of the acts which are perpetrated, but in the unprincipled disposition which led to the perpetration."\* I might therefore be content with the example of "misrepresentation the most black" which I have given. But from the list which lies before me, I think it right to take one or two instances more, admitting of brief exposure.

In the Authorized Version, 1 Cor. xv. 47 stands thus; "The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven;" the substantive verb in both parts of the verse having nothing, as the *Ecclésiaste* indicates, to correspond with it in the original; but being insured at the discretion of the translators to complete the sense. From the second clause Trinitarians usually derive an argument for the pre-existence of Christ, conceiving that it teaches the origin of our Lord from heaven. Some of their best commentators, however, understand the clause as referring not to Christ's past entrance into this world, but to his future coming to judgment. Thus Archbishop Newcome renders; "The second man *will be* [the Lord] from heaven." And Dr. Whitby paraphrases; "The second man is the Lord [*descending*] from heaven [*to raise our bodies, and advance them to that place*];" and he defends this interpretation in a note.† Mr. Belsbam adopts this rendering, both in the "Improved Version" and in his "Calm Enquiry," giving, with the sanction of the authorities I have cited, a *past* verb to the first clause, a *future* verb to the second. The admirable Newcome and Whitby, then, must share the Archbishop's rebuke, for "the total inadvisability of this *extraneous* rendering of the Unitarians, and the *grossness* of their *delusion* to pervert the sense of Scripture." "Here," he observes, "we have a change of tense, which not only has no foundation in either the Greek or Latin text, but is *in direct opposition to both*, since in both the perfect sameness of the corresponding clauses obviously determines the sameness of the tense."‡ Of the "unwholesome exaggeration" of this criticism I say nothing, merely wishing it to be observed in passing, that Mr. Belsbam's version is not of Unitarian origin, and proves on doctrinal bias, much less any "dishonesty."

\* Preface to Mr. Blyth's Lecture, 1814, p. 40.

† Newcome and Whitby, &c. 16.

‡ Magee on the Atonement, &c. 16, p. 322.

But a question arises respecting the text, as well as the translation, of this verse, the phrase "the Lord," in the second clause, being marked by Griesbach as probably to be omitted; and the word "heavenly" to be appended at the close. The original of the common translation stands thus: *Et spiritus descendit de celo, et in terra descendit et alios de caelo.* With the probable exceptions the latter clause would read thus: *Et spiritus descendit de caelo et in terra;* and Archbishop Newcome's translation, conforming to this text, becomes that of Mr. Belsham: "The first man was from the ground, earthly; the second man will be from heaven, heavenly."

There are then, two points to be determined respecting the passage—the *reading*, and the *rendering*, which, in this case, is equivalent to the *interpretation* also. Mr. Belsham, in his *Calm Inquiry*, treats of both, and is accused by the Archbishop, in the following passage, of discussing the "unimportant matter" of the text with great pomp; while adding, in favour of his translation and the future tense, no authority *except the Vulgate*:—"primus homo de terra, secundus: secundus homo de celo, celestis." The indictment and argument run thus:—"The grand point to be established for the Unitarians is, as we have seen, the use of the *future* in the second clause of the text: 'the second man will be from heaven'—for, if we read 'was from heaven,' *was* *est*? it is all over with the Unitarians, inasmuch as, in this passage, the origin of the universe, without any possible pretence as to the doctrine, is unequivocally the subject. How does Mr. Belsham proceed? Having made a good deal of flourish, as the Improved Version had also done before him, about the words *signi* and *clausura*; having also lumped together some irrelevant matter about the Polish Scribner and Dr. Price, and having observed somewhat upon the interpretation of Newcome, Bishby, and Alexander; having, in short, appeared to say a good deal, while he took care to preserve a profound silence throughout (as the Improved Version also has done,) respecting any arguments in favour of the future tense in the second clause—the single point on which the entire question rests, he all of a sudden, very hastily and compressedly asserts, 'The Vulgate renders the text, "The first man was of the earth, earthly. The second man will be from heaven, heavenly."' (Calm Inq. p. 121.\*) He then triumphantly concludes, and all is set-

\* In the 2d Edition it is 123. All Mr. Belsham's remarks, from the Edition of Mr. B. work, published in 1816, and also the 3d Edition of Archbishop Magee's, published in 1812.

tled. In this manner, one text after another, of those that proclaim our Lord's pre-existence, is extinguished by the *Calm Enquirer* and his conductors. And as the cause of Socinian expurgation goes forward

"Perhaps, in the annals of dishonest controversy, another instance like this is not to be found. A discussion of an important matter is *busily* kept up: the main point of difference, and in truth the only one deserving of attention, the *change of tense*, is passed over, as if it were a thing not at all in dispute; the Vulgate is then quoted, in *direct opposition to the truth*, as reading the words 'was' and 'est' in the two corresponding clauses; and thus, indirectly, the false rendering of the text by the Unitarians is sustained by a false quotation from the Vulgate; and by a quotation which the author, if his memory had been from one page to the other, must have known to be false. Next, in the preceding page, he had himself cited the very words of the Vulgate:—"Primus homo de terra, terrenus; secundus homo de celo, celestis"—in which words there is not only no justification of the change from *was* to *will*, but there is, on the contrary, as in the original Greek, a declaration, as strong as the analogies of language will admit, that the tense employed in the first clause must pass unaltered into the second. In a word, there is given by the Vulgate itself a direct contradiction to the report which is made of it by the *Calm Enquirer*. The man of 'sound understanding,' however, whom he addressed as English on the one page, being possibly not exactly acquainted with what was contained in the *Latin* on the other, and being consequently unaware that his author was imposing on him a false translation, would of course be fully satisfied on the authority of the Vulgate (more especially as so much had been said to leave the ground impression of uncertainty as to the true reading of the Greek text, and the consequent opinion, that the Vulgate was the only ancient authority to be relied on,) that in this passage could be found no proof of our Lord's pre-existence! What are we to think of the cause that needs such support; and what of the interests that can attract such supporters!"

We are to understand, then, that Mr. Belsham's only authority for the *text* of his version is a wilful mistranslation of the Vulgate; and that he knowingly conceals from the more English reader the circum-

\* Magee on the Apostles, vol. iv. pp. 312, 313.

stance that the Vulgate, having no verb, has no sense. Now, as to the last point, he distinctly informs his reader that there is no verb in the Latin, and as to the former, he never appeals to the *verbum* of the Vulgate at all, but to the *verbum* only. "How can this be?" I shall be asked; "for the Archbishop cites his words, 'The Vulgate *verbum* the text, &c.'" True, but the Archbishop quotes him falsely, and the real words are, "The Vulgate *reads* the text." &c. Let the original and the citation appear side by side.

Mr. Belsham's words.

Archbishop Magee's quotation

"The Vulgate *reads* the text.

"The Vulgate *verbum* the

"The first man was of the earth,  
and the second man will be  
from heaven, heavenly."

text, "The first man was of the  
earth, earthly. The second man  
will be from heaven, heavenly.""

"This is not improbably the  
true meaning."

The verbs, in both clauses, Mr. Belsham has printed in italics, to indicate (in conformity with the usual practice in his work, and the Improved Version, as well as in our common translation) the absence of any corresponding words in the Latin text. This circumstance, which destroys the whole accusation, his accuser has suppressed.

And as to the "preserving a profound silence throughout respecting any arguments in favour of the future tense in the second clause," it so happens that the "somewhat" which is observed "upon the interpretation of Newman, Whately, and Alexander," is simply an appeal to these authorities on this very matter of the future tense, — "the single point on which the entire question rests."

On the whole, can our upright and learned opponents tell, whether "in the annals of disabuseful controversy, another instance like" the foregoing "is to be found?" I can assure them, that from the same work, I could produce many more.

In our present controversy, our Rev. opponents have been misled by their reliance on this unscrupulous adversary of the Unitarians:

\* There is a possibility, which I think it right to suggest, of a difference between the two Editions of Mr. B's work. In, however, the citation is still found in the newest Edition of the Archbishop's book I conclude that this is not the case. Indeed, even if the Bishop's quotation had been exactly true, I would in spirit have been no less false. In, at all events, Mr. D. cites the Vulgate, to give evidence as to the *text*, not the *translation*, and had he used the word *quod*, it would only have been because it is a term so really *secundum* when a change is added to determine a *Præteritum*.

and by, not referring to his pages, have taken his heavy responsibility on themselves. In the first Lecture of the series, Mr. Ould has represented Dr. Priestley as saying, that the sacred writers produced "lame accounts, improper quotations, and inconclusive reasonings." Dr. Magee has exhibited this sentence as a citation from Priestley's 12th Letter to Mr. Burn; the fact being, that he wrote only six letters to Mr. Burn; and that neither in these, nor any where else, is such a sentence to be found. The first phrase, indeed, ("lame accounts") was once applied by Dr. Priestley to the early chapters in Genesis, but deliberately retracted with an expression of regret that it had been used. Let the learned prelate pass sentence on himself, he says, "It is surely a gross falsification of his author, to give, as our constant quotation from him, (as the established meaning of the form here employed, unequivocally implies,) that which is an arbitrary selection of words drawn violently together from a lengthened context;" I can assure our respected opponents, that their Lectures contain other citations, drawn from the same source, which, after the most careful search, I believe to be no less false. And is not an ungenerous use made of obnoxious writings, when we find enumerated and quoted among Unitarian authors, Kearton, whose scepticism received its most effectual replies from Priestley and his friends, and Gogginus, who was an orthodox professor of the Sorbonne, and preacher to Francis the First?

For other instances of Archbishop Magee's flagrant injustice and misrepresentation, I must refer to the "Examination of his charges against Unitarians and Unitarianism," by my learned and venerated friend Mr. Carpenter, who has found it only too easy to fill a volume with the exposure of a mere portion of them. I have purposely taken fresh examples, not hitherto noticed, so far as I know; and it may be supposed that the earlier gleanings by Mr. Carpenter would naturally yield the most remarkable results: so that the cases now adduced cannot be thought to be peculiarly unfavourable specimens.

If our reviled opponents, having read this Prelude's work, really think my charge against him, of "abuse the most coarse," an "unwarrantable attack on the reputation of the dead," I cannot hope to justify myself in their estimation: these must be an irretrievable distance between their notion of "coarse abuse" and mine. I regret that

\* Page 21

† Magee on the Account, vol. 1. p. 170

‡ Vol. iii. p. 57



we cannot agree in a matter of taste which, to say the least, borders as closely on rancour as to be scarcely distinguishable from there, and to be connected with the same strong feelings of abhorrence or disgust. With what liberty must a writer speak with moral terms, what indistinct impressions must he have of moral qualities, when having pronounced an opponent (I quote the language of the Archbishop of Mr. Meibom) "a *monster of depravity*,"<sup>1</sup> can yet proceed to charge him with "artifice and dissimulation,"<sup>2</sup> with "*padding up a matter*,"<sup>3</sup> with "*striking away a portion of evidence*,"<sup>4</sup> with "*discreditions of hisse teeth*,"<sup>5</sup> and with "*bad faith*, uncheck'd by learning and unobscured by shame."<sup>6</sup> I can not wonder at the spirit pouring Mr. Beech's letter to my friend and colleague Mr. Thoms, when I find that he sees nothing coarse or abusive, but only the expression of "dejected greatness," in accusing an opponent of "incredible stupidity,"<sup>7</sup> of "downright and unresistable nonsense,"<sup>8</sup> of "propounding" a suggestion "as he *exam* with great confidence,"<sup>9</sup> of "distilling" twenty-eight pages of the most extraordinary quibbles,<sup>10</sup> of begging him to "rest assured, that to know the Greek language it must be learned,"<sup>11</sup> in proclaiming that he "stands in a pillory"<sup>12</sup> erected for him by a Bishop; that he belongs to "the family of Boethius in Metaphysics and Metaphysics,"<sup>13</sup> and is "connected with that of Malapropos in Mathematics,"<sup>14</sup> in ridiculing the idea of publishing his remarks;<sup>15</sup> in asking him whether he has "lost his senses,"<sup>16</sup> and hinting that, whereas he knows not "how to choose between two *books*" of evidence, he is *at* *last*;<sup>17</sup> Are we to consider it a condemnation in this distinguished Prelate, that he lends from his Episcopal dignity to console the Dissenting ministers in their "contemplation of the advantages of the national clergy," and assures them that they have "not only *use* of positive profit," but, "in addition to this," "the indulgence of vanity, and the gratification of spleen,—qualities which, *gone out of mind*, have belonged to the family of *Boethius*,"<sup>18</sup> nay, further, that in preparation for their ministry, they have a much lighter "*ratio*" "in point of expenditure," since among Nonconformists, in some cases at least, "the individual is his own University; confers his own degrees and orders; and has little more difficulty in the way of his vocation, than to *find* a new Lat, a stout pony, and pair of saddle-bags."<sup>19</sup> This is very smart, no

<sup>1</sup> Vol. i. p. 257.    <sup>2</sup> Vol. iii. p. 214.    <sup>3</sup> p. 263.    <sup>4</sup> p. 210.    <sup>5</sup> p. 220.

<sup>6</sup> p. 249.    <sup>7</sup> p. 274.    <sup>8</sup> p. 258.    <sup>9</sup> p. 23.    <sup>10</sup> p. 71.

<sup>11</sup> p. 330.    <sup>12</sup> p. 24.    <sup>13</sup> n. 212.    <sup>14</sup> p. 275.    <sup>15</sup> p. 36.

<sup>16</sup> p. 142.    <sup>17</sup> pp. 275, 276.

doubt, and does the Church exclude us from the Liturgy, that her Bishops may enjoy the enjoyment of ranking us their high-rogue, and indulging lampoons against us? Does she injure us first, that we may be insulted afterwards?

Mr. McNele speaks of the late Archbishop's work as "a barrier in the way of Unitarianism." It is so; and if its influence were only that of fair argument, we should wish the barrier to stand in all its strength. But the book has become a standard authority for every kind of false and malignant impression respecting Unitarians, and prevents, instead of advancing, the knowledge of what we are. To be held up as interfering "for real and deliberate purpose of falsifying the word of God!" as guilty of "indecisions" to "subvert through *feud* what had been found unprejudicial by force;" as "*striking*" our "very salvation on the adoption of a reading which is against evidence;" as distinguished for "steady and unswerving efficiency," and "shameful *disregard*;"<sup>1</sup> as discerning in our Lord "*charac* *ters* *from* *us* *which* *we* *are* *terrible* *to* *look*;"<sup>2</sup> as so "determined to resist and subvert *the great truth*;"<sup>3</sup> that we "yet but little value on every other," and make a "*prevalent practice*" of "*usurp* *and* *obscure* *the* *truth* *of* *the* *gospel*;"<sup>4</sup> to be thus censured by one, for whose labours and accomplishments have proceeded, from the pure spirit of the age, & credit is owed to any possible learning or excellence of ours—this, being a grievous wrong to the character of Christianity as much as to our own, we confess to be a trial hard to bear: and we may well feel like the good men under successful calumny, which wounds himself a little, but truth and virtue more. Nevertheless, injury may have its compensations; and since, to prove his accusations, even this distinguished Prelate had occasion to tamper with the evidence, we have a fresh presumption that our cause is one, against which burning and scorching, under the restraints of justice, find themselves of no avail.

<sup>1</sup> Vol. iv. of the *Account*, Bishop, p. 51.

<sup>2</sup> Vol. i. p. 10.

<sup>3</sup> p. 67.

<sup>4</sup> p. 67.

<sup>1</sup> Vol. i. p. 105.

<sup>2</sup> p. 104.

<sup>3</sup> p. 105.

<sup>4</sup> p. 11, 14.

## PREFACE

THE Rev. Dr. James commences the Preface to his Lecture with these words:—“Modern Unitarianism is a compound of Infidelity and Heresy.” It would be very easy for me to say what modern Trinitarianism is, and to attach to it two epithets which Mr. James would wish no more than I to Infidelity and Heresy. It is evident, however, that this calling of names proves nothing but the unfitness of the mind which so indulges its *temper and feeling* to be engaged in *intellectual and argumentative controversy*. Does Mr. James expect to convince or persuade any Unitarians, by calling them Infidels and Heretics? The Church which method of Conversion is very well for Infidels, who have only to denounce, and for “ordained Clergymen,” who, with a simplicity of extravagance approaching the sublime, shrink from no consequences of their first principles, and boldly assert that the Holy Spirit is their Interpreter of Scripture,—but it displays a strange ignorance or contempt of the only avenues by which the minds of their fellow Christians can be approached, and of the moral and argumentative means by which alone conviction can be produced.

In what sense does Mr. James use the word “Heresy,” in the sentence quoted? If in the sense of *error*, then is he of the infallible Church that he decides *authoritatively* on such points? If in the sense of *schism and division*, who does not know that the Creed-making Church is the Mother of the Errors, the fomentor of our religious strifes? With what grace or justice does that man call another an infidel, who believes in an infidel as necessary to the primal and universal Revelation, and applies himself to blot out the divine signatures from the soul of man, and the material works of God? There is no infidelity so bad as this. The Apostle speaks of the law written on the heart, and of the Gentiles who had not the Jewish Law, being yet a

Law unto themselves, and the Psalmist speaks of the eternal fidelity and constancy of God being shadowed forth by the unflinching of His material Laws,—but Mr. James, who makes strange work with scripture, maintains in opposition to both Scripture and Philosophy, "the moral character and unity of God are discoverable from the works of Creation." I have been long prepared for this. Those who must maintain Trinitarianism have no other resource than to blot out the lights of the ORIGINAL REVELATIONS.\* Nature and the Soul must be discredited if the Trinitarian Theology is to hold its place. This has been long evident to all who have watched the progress of knowledge, and the signs of the times. The words of God, and the oracles of the Soul, must be treated, that the Church, the Church, and the People may remain.

I have referred respectfully to Mr. James's Lectures in the following pages, because I wished to build up an independent argument of great importance, and would not be in a list of my way to answer reasons and statements which, being answered, would leave the real controversy undisturbed, and without a ray of advancement. Nor could it be of moment to discuss the Consistency that links the Trinity to a Hebrew plural—the Reasoning that (in violation of one of the maxims of Philosophy, to attribute no more Images than are adequate to the objects) in the Works of an Omnipotent Creator and in unity of Design is proof of Unity of Being—the Scriptural Authoritative that lays down the Moral Law of Vengeance, "an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth," expressly confirmed by Christ, as necessary even of man, as the morality of God himself, "the principle of eternal right, and the law of his own government"—the transcendental Mysticism that sees no difficulty in the infinite and omnipresent Deity becoming incarnate in a human frame, on the ground that "spirits occupy no space, and that thousands of them might be within a thimble, and the thimble on the finger of the omnipotent, and her finger touch none of them."

There are, however, some statements in the Preface to Sir James's Lectures, professing to be text drawn from Antiquity to the Trinitarian Doctrine, which demand some notice. To establish his inaccuracy I shall simply oppose to his statements the statements of Professor Burton.

1. "The word Trinity, is found in the writings of Justin Martyr, who was converted to the Christian faith about the year of our Lord

140"—p. v. Mr. James mentions in a note that some divines dispute the authenticity of the work in which the word is found: but Mr. James is not out of these divines, for he proceeds to assert, that the passage in Justin Martyr "brings the use of the word within half a century of the apostolic age."

Now let us hear Dr. Burton.—"Theophrastus *de Analogy*, lib. ii. c. 15." I quote this passage, not on account of the sentiment which it contains, (for the allusion is sufficiently guarded,) but because it is the earliest passage (i. e. 180) in the works of any of the fathers, where we find the Greek word *τριάς*, Trinity—and we can thus prove that the term was applied to the three persons of the Trinity as early as toward the end of the second century.

"Theophilus had been giving an account of the creation, as described by Moses in the book of Genesis, and following that a legendary method of interpretation, which the fathers borrowed too freely from the schools of Alexandria, he extracts a hidden meaning from the fact of the heavenly bodies being created on the fourth day. "In her manner also the three days, which preceded the luminaries, are types of the Trinity, of God, and His Word, and His Wisdom." Burton adds in a note—"This passage is overlooked by Saenger in his *Thesaurus*, v. 241, who very properly observes, that the *Expositio contra confessionem*, in which the word occurs, and which has been ascribed to Justin Martyr, is later than that writer by some centuries"—*Great Works*, vol. ii. 2nd part, p. 24.

2. "The next who makes use of the word in his writings is Theophilus, a Gentile convert"—p. vi. Let us hear what Burton says of this Theophilus, and of his use of the word Trinity, the first who used it in such connection.

"Some doubts have been raised concerning the identity and date of Theophilus—but it seems to be generally agreed, that the person whose works have come down to us was the archbishop of Antioch, and was appointed to that see about the year 168. He tells us himself that he had been bred up in heathenism, and it is plain that his language and thoughts retained a lasting impression from the Pagan philosophy."—p. 13.

"We perhaps ought not to infer from the words of Theophilus that the term *τριάς* had come in too early to bear the signification of a Trinity in unity. He may have used it merely to express *three things*, and the *three days*, which he compares with the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, might have been spoken of by him as *partes triunitatis*

\* Luke. 1. Mr. James's Lectures, p. 100. 2 spoken, not printed.

trials, or trinity of days. In this sense Clement of Alexandria speaks of 'the holy triad, or trinity, faith, hope, and charity;' and Origen uses the terms *trias* and *trias* for periods of three and four years respectively. Tertullian also, at the end of the second century, used the term *trias* in the same optimistic sense, for any three things.

"I would not therefore argue from the mere occurrence of the word in the writings of Theophilus, that *trias* contained a negation of unity, as well as of trinity: but this much is at least evident, that Theophilus must have considered some resemblance, if not equality, to have existed between the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, or he would not have included them in the same type."—p. 36.

3. "Polycarp, a disciple of St. John, when at the stake, addressed a prayer to God, which he concluded in this manner:—'*For all things I praise thee, I bless thee, I glorify thee, together with the eternal and heavenly Jesus Christ: with whom, were thou, and th' Holy Spirit, be glory, both now and for ever, world without end.*'—*Apost.*"—p. 52.

Professor Burton.—"Such are the concluding words of the prayer in the edition of Archbishop Usher: but Eusebius has quoted them differently, 'I glorify thee, through the eternal High Priest, Jesus Christ, thy beloved Son, through whom be glory to thee, with him in the Holy Ghost, both now and for evermore.'—*Apost.*"

"The early orthodox writers," as Bishop Hall goes on to remark, "while they glorified the Father through the Son, intended to express the subordination of the Son, in his relation of Son, and the pre-eminence of the Father, in his relation of Father: but by adorning the Son together with the Father, they intended to express his being of one substance, and his existing in the same divine essence and nature with the Father."—"Theodoret informs us, that in the middle of the fourth century the clergy and people of Antioch were divided, some using the conjunction *and*, when they glorified the Son, (*i. e.*, saying *and to the Son*;) and others applying the preposition *through* to the Son, and *in* to the Holy Ghost. This was the period when the dispute concerning the form of deology became general: and Philostorgius, the Arian historian, in speaking of the same time and place, when he says, 'Flavianus was the first person who used the words *Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost*, for before his time some had said, *Glory to the Father through the Son in the Holy Ghost*, which was the expression in most general use: and others *Glory to the Father in the Son and Holy Ghost.*'"—pp. 7, 8, 9.

"It is true that Eusebius appears to have found a different read-

ing in his copy of Polycarp's prayer: and a critical question like this can never be demonstrably settled."—p. 53.

4. "Justin Martyr! says—'*Him (the Father) and that Son who hath proceeded from him, and the PROPHETIC SPIRIT, we worship and adore.*'"—p. 57.

Where did Mr. James find this quotation? I shall supply some words which he has omitted, coming in between two clauses, which he has printed as *consecutive* parts of the sentence. The omitted words supply a good test for a *fundamental principle of Trinitarian interpretation*, that of *equalizing all persons joined together by the conjunctive conjunction*. I shall give the omitted words in italics.

"Justin is answering the charge of atheism, which was brought against the Christians, and charges, that they were punished for not worshipping evil demons, which were not really gods. Hence it is that we are called atheists: and we confess that we are atheists with respect to such reputed gods as these: but not with respect to the true God, the Father of justice, temperance, and every other virtue, with whom is no mixture of evil. But Him, and the Son who came from him, and gave us this instruction, and the host of the other good angels which attend upon and resemble them, and the prophetic spirit, we worship and adore, paying them a reasonable and true honour, and not refusing to deliver to any one else, who wishes to be taught, what we ourselves have learnt."—

After such careless quotations, to say the best of them, I am not surprised to find Mr. James, with singular self-devotion, placing himself beside Mr. Byrch: to share the condemnation that falls upon injurious representations, not only unproved, but disproved. Mr. James speaks of the *common* crime of distorted representations, as proved by Mr. Byrch. Mr. James may make common cause with Mr. Byrch, if he is wise enough to do so: but I can assure him that his own burden is heavy enough to bear, without encumbering himself with any portion of another's.

To the greatest part of his quotations Mr. James has given no reference, so that it is impossible to verify them. If he is correct, he has been more fortunate in some cases than Professor Burton. I should be glad to have the means of testing his extracts from Origen. He ought to have stated, that both Bishop Hall and Dr. Priestley, when speaking of the Ante-Nicene Fathers, never confounded the Trinity of these Fathers with the Post-Nicene Trinity, or with modern Orthodoxy.

Nothing can be more unphilosophical than the manner in which testimonies to modern opinions have been found in the Fathers. Any words that will bear the sense have been pushed forward as authorities. No distinction has been made between the ideas suggested by the words to *modern readers*, and the ideas of the writers originally suggesting the words. The *suggested* and the *suggesting* ideas would be found strangely different. Whoever wishes to have clear ideas on this question, the opinions of the Ante-Nicene Fathers, and the origin of the Trinity, should read the portions of Curdworth's Intellectual System that bear upon the subject.

## LECTURE VII.

### THE UNSCRIPTURAL ORIGIN AND ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY OF THE DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY.

BY REV. JOHN HAMILTON, D.D.

THE LECTURE FIRST DELIVERED IN THE HOLY COMMUNION CHURCH,  
DUBLIN, 18

It is a profound observation of Professor Dequard Stewart, that you never destroy an error until you have traced it to its sources, until you have accounted for its origin. A popular doctrine, full of life in the strong faith of those who hold it, cannot be encountered at the height of its power, and struck down at once by an argument: the world is apt to take for granted that whatever is widely believed must have some roots in truth, and you must go up the stream of opinion, if you would gradually remove this idea so supporting to error, of its strength and fulness, stripping away the impressions of magnitude as you ascend, until at last you have left all the strength behind you, and have come to where you can contemplate, undeluded, the weak and miserable beginnings of the turbid flood. Were some Grecian idolater to have followed the gliding steps of his river God, until his majestic governments were shortened into the trickling of the mountain spring, if the deity did not entirely disappear, it would at least have changed its *form*, and melted into the minor symbol of the Fountain.

Whenever we encounter the doctrine of the Trinity, as it is received at the present day, and attempt to arrest it by the

strength of Reason and the strength of Scripture, the flood is too strong for us, the faith of the world flows upon the current, and we are swept aside as things that had vainly interposed to intercept the rushings of some mighty tide. We must travel up to the first droppings if we would demonstrate the derived nature of this now full stream of faith. If the ascent terminates before it reaches Christ and the Apostles, then its origin is not Scriptural but Ecclesiastical, its fountain is not in the depths of the nature of God, but in the airy speculations of the vain philosophy of man.

My subject is entitled "The unscriptural Origin and Ecclesiastical History of the Doctrine of the Trinity." I shall invert the order of these topics. I shall show first *where it has its origin*, that we may be saved the unnecessary toil of tracing and distorting our vision, in searching for it where it is not to be found. If I can exhibit its birth in Ecclesiastical history, this will so far be a proof that it had no previous birth in Evangelical History. If I can not cut it off from the living fountain of Revelation, and show it proceeding from other springs, this will so far be a proof that it is human and not divine. The positive assertion contained in my title, if established, will establish also the negative portion of it—for the Ecclesiastical rise and progress of the Trinity are the negation of its Scriptural origin.

Christianity was originally delivered to Jews; and the question naturally arises, how could their pure theism ever assume the Trinitarian modification of Unity; how, to use the early language of this Controversy, could the monotheism ever be diluted into the trinitarism, if it had not been constrained to adopt this form by the overpowering distinctness of a Revelation? Now we are able to prove that the Jewish Christians never did accept the doctrine of the deity of Christ; that on this account they are classed with Heretics by the Greek and Latin Fathers, under the names of Nazarenes and Ebionites, and that not until after the Gospel passed

out of the keeping of the Apostles, and, cut off from its Jewish spring, was cast into the midst of the Gentile world, to modify and to be modified, did it come into contact with Heathen Philosophy, and slowly take the impress of its spirit.

There were two very marked divisions of the Jewish people, under widely different influences of Religion and Philosophy, and not acquainted, perhaps, with the same language;—the Jews of Palestine, and the Jews of Egypt. The Jews of Palestine, sheltered from commerce with the world, more by their unsocial Faith, than by the deep and quiet valleys of their sequestered land, partook little of the spirit of the Times, and imparted to it nothing; and though after the Babylonish Captivity, Gentile Philosophy had tinged and in some sense expanded their religious views, yet when they returned again to their homes that influence was cut off, the living connection was no longer maintained, and its effects were rather traditional mixtures, than seeds of progress.

In contrast with the insulated life of the Jews of Palestine, the Jews of Alexandria lived in the very centre of the world's freest ideas—their dwelling was the mart of nations—and Grecian and Oriental Philosophy met together in their famous Schools, and mingled their Wisdom. "The arms of the Macedonians," says Gibbon, "diffused over Asia and Egypt the language and learning of Greece; and the theological system of Plato (before Christ, 360) was taught, with less reserve, and perhaps with some improvements, in the celebrated School of Alexandria. A numerous colony of Jews had been invited, by the favour of the Ptolemies, to settle in their new capital. While the bulk of the nation practised their legal ceremonies, and pursued the lucrative operations of Commerce, a few Hebrews, of a more liberal spirit, devoted their lives to religious and philosophical contemplation. They cultivated with diligence, and embraced

with ardour, the theological system of the Athenian Sage. But their national pride would have been mortified by a fair confession of their former poverty: and they hoistly marked, as the sacred inheritance of their ancestors, the gold and jewels which they had so lately stolen from their Egyptian masters. One hundred years before the birth of Christ, a philosophical treatise, which manifestly betrays the style and sentiments of the School of Plato, was produced by the Alexandrian Jews, and unanimously received as a genuine and valuable relic of the inspired Wisdom of Solomon. A similar union of the Mosaic faith and the Grecian philosophy, distinguishes the works of Philo, which were composed for the most part under the reign of Augustus. The material soul of the Universe might offend the piety of the Hebrews: but they applied the character of the *Lodov* to the Jehovah of Moses and the patriarchs; and the Son of God was introduced upon earth under a visible, and even human appearance, to perform those familiar offices which seem incompatible with the nature and attributes of the Universal cause.\*

It is not necessary that I should inquire here with great accuracy into the nature of the Trinity as taught by Plato. I think it is most probable that Plato's Trinity was a Trinity of Attributes rather than a Trinity of Persons; that it corresponded rather with Sabellianism than with the Orthodox form of the Doctrine. This is a question, however, in which it is impossible to speak with certainty, owing, partly, to the nature of the ideas which constitute this compound conception of Deity, and partly to the gorgeous style of the imaginative metaphysician, whose figures we hardly know whether we are to harden into Realities, or to fuse into Ideas. Authorities are divided upon this point—and we have the name of Cudworth upon the one side, and the scarcely less illustrious one of Guizot upon the other. Whatever may

\* *Works of Plato*, vol. ii. p. 211.

have been the view of Plato himself,† it is certain that before Christ, his followers, some of the purest of the later Platonists, as they are called, taught a doctrine of the Trinity exactly corresponding to the forms in which it was established nearly three hundred years after the death of our Saviour, by the first General Council of the Christian Church. The Platonists contemplated one original fountain of being, a simple unity, “which virtually containeth all things;” from whence all other things, whether temporal or eternal, whether created or uncreated, were altogether derived. This *Monad* or *Unity* the Platonists considered as the only absolute or perfect existence, superior to intellect or wisdom, (*Logos*); for these two reasons—first, because Intellect being concerned with ideas, implies numbers and multiplicity; whereas the Supreme is *Unity*; and secondly, that because “Knowledge is not the highest good, there must be some substantial thing in order of Nature superior to Intellect.” In the same way the *Goodness* and *Unity*, the properties of the self-existent God, were supposed to be superior to Mind or Wisdom, the second principle, so in its turn Intellect was supposed to be superior to the moving spirit or energy which carried ideas (the ideas of the *Logos*) into Action. The *Monad*, or Supreme Unity, generated Intellect, and Intellect as containing the indefigible ideas or archetypes of all sensible things, generated Soul or the spirit of Action. Hence the Platonic Trinity: THE ONE GOOD; Intellect (*Logos* or *Nous*); *Psyché*, or operating energy.‡ In Platonic lan-

\* “That the Trinity (*Monad* or *Good*, *Wisdom*, *Spirit* or *Energy*) were not first of all a mere invention of Plato, but much anterior thereto, is manifestly shewn by Plato in these words: ‘The three Deities are not a new sort of principles, but have been very anciently believed, though obscurely, the substance was not being.’ And Explication of them, appears from *Plato’s own writings*, *Platonism* (as being *antedeistic*). *Cudworth’s Intellectual System*. See also Bishop Berkeley’s *Sermons* 141, 145.

† “The principle of every thing is more simple than the things made. It is not the good, it is not wisdom, it is not intellect, and it is not spirit, and it is not matter, and it is not time, and it is not space. For it is the principle of all things, and it is not itself affected by any of them.”

judge, the First in this Trinity is said to be *All things Universally*; the second, *All things intellectually*; and the third, *All things actively or productively*. I shall give one example of the style of the Platonists in expressing these Trinitarian conceptions. It is exactly that which the earlier Fathers would have used when speaking of the Christian Trinity: "That which is always perfect generates what is Eternal, and that which it generates is always less than itself: What shall we say therefore of the most absolutely perfect Being of all. Does that produce nothing from itself? Or rather, does it not produce the greatest of all things after it? Now the greatest of all things after the most absolutely perfect Being is Mind or Intellect; and this is Second to it. For Mind beholdeth this as its Father, and standeth in need of nothing else besides it: whereas that First Principle standeth in need of no (Logos) Mind or Intellect. What is generated from that which is better than Mind, must needs be Mind or Intellect, because Mind is better than all other things, they being all in order of nature after it, and junior to it, as PAVINE itself, or the First Soul; for this is also the Word or Energy of Mind (Logos), as that is the Word or Energy of the First Good.\* Perfect Intellect," (Logos, the second in the Trinity,) "generates Soul" (Psyche, or Moving Spirit, the third in the Platonic Trinity), "and it being perfect must needs generate, for so great a Power could not remain sterile. But that which

but simple, as Number from Unity. If that which understands brings, so can it be that which is understood which conveys its influence, does not produce another mind, and thus is the First Principle understood in the Trinity, neither as Essence nor as Quality; but the Second, a thing in order of nature, as the First Good and speaking up from itself, as that which is united with desire towards it." *Plotinus, op. Cit.* vol. 2, p. 244.

\* "The Trinity is also all manner of other numbers in its attributes the arrangement of the words of the First God, but order to account him the Father of that God, who is its daughter. The Spirit, to whom the progeny of Intellect is attributed, is therefore properly called the Movement, as the contriving Architect, in whom the Hieroglyphic World is contained, and the First Being, or Principle of the Whole Universe. The Truth it only which moveth about Mind or Intellect, the Light or Efficiency thereof, and its Being is generated, which always

is here begotten also, cannot be greater than its Begetter; but must needs be Inferior to it, as being the Image thereof." — (*Plotinus, op. Cit.* p. 245.)

Now to connect such speculations as these with Gentile Christianity we have the intermediate link of the Platonizing or Alexandrian Jews. About two hundred years before Christ the Hebrew Scriptures were made accessible to Grecian curiosity through the medium of the Septuagint Translation; and when comparison came to be instituted between the wisdom of their Sacred Books, and the wisdom of the Schools, a strong temptation came into force upon the Jewish Platonists, by a system of allegory and fanciful interpretation to make their Scriptures divulge recalcitrate doctrines, and by such imaginative means to metamorphose its simplest statements into the likeness of the deep and mysterious teachings of Philosophy. Hence arose the whole system of allegorizing which prevailed so extensively among the Jews of Alexandria. They were under two sets of influences, an affection for the Platonic or Eclectic Philosophy of their Schools, and a jealousy for their Religion that made them shrink from the idea that any Philosophy should contain secrets not there divulged.<sup>4</sup> They combined these two affections, and made

depend upon it, and were according to it. This is a view which reduces to a single Principle of the First Simple Soul, and the Architectonic Principle of the Second into Act and Energy. This is the first state, and as it were, the very origin of the whole world, in which actually Heaven, Earth, and Hell both exist all." *Plotinus, op. Cit.* vol. 2, p. 244.

<sup>4</sup> "It was the introduction of the Greek or Christian Philosophy, the Jews were persuaded of the possibility, the possibility, and immortality of souls, and Providence was provided by a supposition, that they were confined to their earthly condition, and that they were confined to a temporary state. Now the degrees of purity and corruption are almost innumerable. It might be fairly presumed that the most virtuous and virtuous of the Jews was infused into the offspring of Mary and the Holy Ghost; that his attainment was the result of a voluntary choice, and that the object of his study was to purify, not to corrupt, but the sin of the world. On his return to his native place he received the influence of his existence, the everlasting kingdom of the Most High, which had been formerly forfeited by the practice, under the cruel images of brass, of conquest, and of dominion. Omnipotence could not have the least influence of



their Scriptures speak the language of the Schools by means of the transforming process of allegorical interpretation. Examples without end might be given of the most extravagant transfigurations of the events of Hebrew History.

As a preparation for the manner of speaking on these subjects afterwards adopted by the earlier Christian Trinitarians, I will extract one passage, which perhaps most faithfully represents the pure views of Philo of Alexandria, the most eminent of the Jewish Platonists, and whose influence operating upon Christianity through the minds of the Gentile philosophical believers, as to this day felt upon the popular forms of our faith. I have only to premise that he is speaking of the Attributes of God abstractly from God himself; and though it is more than probable that Philo as well as Plato never separated these Attributes from the Supreme Deity, still it was the necessary tendency of such personifications to harden into distinct persons, and with common nouns personified Attributes very soon came to be considered as Real Beings. This then was the original source of the Christian Trinity. To keep the lofty and retired Essence of God apart from all contact with matter which was looked upon as evil, and from number which was looked upon as imperfect, the Powers of God were first considered as Emanations from Him by successive generation—*INTELLEGET* proceeding from the One God, and operating *ENERGET* or *SENSET* proceeding from Intellect (*Logos*) to consummate its Ideas, and then gradually came to be separated from Him, by a very natural process of philosophic determinations, and to be fixed down into independent personalities. With these explanations I now quote from Philo. He belonged to the age of Christ, but was born some time anterior to the Christian era. Broucker says twenty years. Philo is allegorizing the appearance of the three angels to Abraham, into a threefold manifestation of the One God: "The FATHER is in the middle of all, who in Holy Scripture is by a peculiar name styled *THE BEING* [*HE WHO IS*]; and on each side are [two] most ancient Powers next to *THE BEING*, whereof one is called the Effective (creative Power) and the other Royal; and the Effective God, for by him [the Father], made and adorned the Universe; and the Royal, LORD, for it is *ET* he should rule and govern what he has made. Being therefore attended on both sides with his Powers, to a discerning understanding he appears one while to be *ONE*, and another while to be *THREE*. *ONE* when the mind being in the highest degree purified, and passing over not only a multitude of numbers, but also that which is next to no Unit," [the Monad] "the number of two," [the other two, *Logos* and *Psyche*] "endeavours after a simple and uncompounded Idea, perfect of itself: and *THREE*, when not as yet sufficiently exercised in great mysteries, it busies itself about lesser, and is not able to conceive *THE BEING*, [*HE WHO IS*], without any other, of itself, but by his Works, and either as creating or governing."\*

Such, then, were the prevalent modes of Conception at the time when the Gospel passed out of the hands of strictly Jewish interpreters, and came to be inspected by the eyes of

\* Philo is the extent of his celestial office. In the language of analogy, the out-look of God has not been yet fully confined to the first parent, and his inseparable minister, his only co-agent, his might claim, without assumption, the religious, though secondary worship of a subject world.

\* The Jews of the East, which had already taken to the rocky and ungravelled soil of Judea, were transplanted, in full parity, to the happy shores of the Cæsars; and the strikers of Rome or Asia, who never beheld the monarch, were the more readily disposed to embrace the divinity of Christ. The polytheist and unphilosophic Jews and the heathen, who alike accustomed to conceive a long succession, an infinite chain of angels or demones, or Genii, or aërs, in emanations, rising from the throne of light. It is worth it to be strange or incredible, that the first of these *zōnētes* (Genii) and all of the same substance with the Fishes, should have it upon earth to discover the Trinity, and to be the first to be the first of the world's annals. (Hilary, loc. cit. p. 271.)

\* Philo de Abraham. Le Clerc's Supplement to Hilary, p. 168.

Gentile Philosophers. With more or less purity of conception, all the Platonists personified the divine Attributes; and some of them represented these personified Attributes as distinct Existences, not hesitating to speak of a second God, though holding him to be derived and dependent. There is no trace among the purer Platonists of any belief of three co-equal Gods, each possessing within himself the fullness of Deity, yet mysteriously united. The second and third persons in the Platonic Trinity were carefully represented as derived, dependent, and subordinate, under the similitudes of the stream and the fountain, the branch and the vine, the sun and its outstanding effulgence; the relation between them being like that of three apparent Suns,—“two of them being but the *parheliæ* of the other, and essentially dependent on it: for as much as the second would be but the reflected Image of the first, and the third but the second reflected.”\*

Now it so happened that the Apostle John, living at Ephesus, “the centre of the mingling opinions of the East and West,” made use of this term “Logos” as already familiar to those for whom he wrote, and with the purpose of impressing upon the word the higher and purer meaning attached to it by the Jews of Palestine; wresting it from the philosophical to the strictly Jewish or Christian sense. Nothing could be more natural than that the Apostle should adopt the style of the philosophic schools in the midst of which he wrote, especially since it was not peculiar to them, but already in use among the Jews; and that endeavouring to connect truth with familiar modes of speaking, he should attempt to infuse into the word the more spiritual ideas with which it was already associated in his own language.

“St. John,” says Guizot, “was a Jew, born and educated in Palestine; he would naturally, then, attach to the word *Logos* the sense attached to it by the Jews of Palestine.

\* Coleridge, p. 570.

Closely examined, the ideas which he gives of the *Logos* cannot agree with those of Philo and the school of Alexandria, they correspond, on the contrary, with those of the Jews of Palestine. Perhaps St. John, employing a well known term to explain a doctrine which was yet unknown, has slightly altered the sense: it is this alteration which we appear to discover on comparing different passages of his writings. It is worthy of remark, that the Jews of Palestine, who did not perceive this alteration, could find nothing extraordinary in what St. John said of the *Logos*, at least they comprehended it without difficulty; while the Greeks and Graecising Jews, on their parts, brought to it prejudices and preconceptions easily reconciled with those of the Evangelist, who did not expressly contradict them. This circumstance must have much favoured the progress of Christianity. Thus the fathers of the Church, in the two first centuries and later, formed almost all in the school of Alexandria, gave to the *Logos* of St. John a sense nearly similar to that which it received from Philo.\* Their doctrine approached very near to that which, in the fourth century, the Council of Nice condemned in the person of Arius.†

It would not be possible, within my present limits, to trace, with a minute accuracy, how the *Logos* of the schools be-

\* “It was in this mode of apprehending the Divine Being that the doctrine of the Trinity took its origin. The *Logos* of the Jews was person or word, the view of the Father, both as attribute or attribute of God, and a proper person. This philosophy was, in general, that of the Jews Platonists, and they transferred from a true Christian sense of Conception. An image of the Father, so strange, and one which would be to them a mystery of his essence, the *Logos* suggests a passage from *Logos*, the immutability of which with the conception of Philo and the Jews remains is apparent. It thus must be seen, that the *Logos* is properly the Word of God; and in Christian use, generated. For the Word of the God and Father of All has no life being in him, conceived analogous to the conception of human nature. But if any one be capable of coming to him as an organized being of divine form of thought which comprehend the *Logos* (the archetypal form) of all things, being indeed not life, and being so it were a soul, he will know that the Word of God, who is divine, very creature, pronounced a glory containing his self. The Lord created me, the *Logos*, in the way to his works.”—Origen, *De re. 19*, 46. Quoted by Newman on the Trinity, p. 274-7.

\* Migne's *Galilee*, vol. iii, p. 311.

come connected with the Logos of the Gospels; and afterwards, under the necessity of adjusting these conceptions with the nominal Unity of God, changed its form into the present theory of the Trinity. It will readily be imagined that the Gentile Christians, accustomed to associate ideas of external power with their Deities, and at the same time to contemplate them in connection with humanity, would shrink from the bare and unclouded conception of the crucified Jesus; would endeavour to throw around their new faith a mystic splendour that might protect it from the ridicule of Heathen scoffers, and naturally seize upon means so obvious, the language offered by St. John, and the ideas offered by their own philosophy, to connect the pre-existent soul of Jesus not with Humanity, but with God. In this way they could remove the shame and odium of the cross, that stinging block to the Jews, and to the Greeks foolishness. We little realize with what distaste and abhorrence a Hebrew looking for the Messiah, and a Philosopher speculating on the nature of the divine Emanations that were the Mediators between God and men, would contemplate the despised Galilean executed as a malefactor. Neither do we realize, as we ought to do in this connection, the magnanimity of Paul: "I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ and him crucified;" so much has the technical jargon of theology obscured the moral sublimity of the Apostle's spiritual meaning.

I shall now, with as much distinctness as a subject purely literary will admit, attempt to exhibit to you the gradual transformations, by which these Conceptions slowly assumed the present orthodox form of the doctrine of the Trinity. If this had been a doctrine of Revelation, it would, of course, have been perfect at once; but arising out of accidental circumstances and accidental ideas, it naturally required many firm adjustments to make it consistent with itself, and to protect it, by skillfully chosen words, against all the troublesome attacks of theological ingenuity. This was not the work of a

moment nor of a century.— hundreds of years passed over before the doctrine assumed any fixed form; nor was it until the thirteenth century that the present form of the doctrine of three Gods, numerically one, was authoritatively decreed.\* Those who tell us of an "unimproved and unimprovable Revelation," must surely be strangely ignorant of the history of Trinitarian Theology.

There are three Creeds of the Church of England, each of them to be referred to distinct Periods of Ecclesiastical History, and becoming more Unitarian in proportion as we approach the Apostolical times, more Trinitarian in proportion as we recede from those times. These three Creeds I shall make serve as heads under which to introduce my proofs of the rise and progress of the Trinitarian Doctrine.

The *first* Creed is UNITARIAN. It was the only Creed known to the Church for three hundred and twenty-five years.

The *second* Creed is partly TRINITARIAN, giving the Deity of Christ, but saying nothing of the Deity of the Holy Spirit.

The *third* Creed contains Trinitarianism, though not in its final and perfected, yet in its boldest and most extravagant, form.

The first Creed is known by the name of the Apostles' Creed. It is not known by whom it was written, nor when it was written;† but though we have no verbatim copy of it until after the Nicene Council, but only more or less of the substance, and some of its clauses are evidently of a later date, it may substantially be regarded as descriptive of the faith of the

\* See Mackintosh, p. 68, 4.

† "The creed which was then adopted, and that perhaps in the very earliest age, by the Church of Rome, was first clearly given in the year 451, at the Council of Chalcedon, and it was the general confession of the Church of that century; and, in fact, it was actually the profession of that blessed general assembly. It is not surprising, therefore, to find it so much referred to, and still less that some writers have referred to it by name. But there is no reasonable ground for the supposition that the form of faith which we still regard as the true one was in use and current in the early and the propagation of our religion."— *Hadford's History of the Church*, p. 27.

often speak of him in such a manner as if, even in respect of his divine nature, he was *finite, visible, and circumscribed in place.*" Such sentiments are only to be paralleled by some passages from these Fathers themselves, who declare that such notions as they had of the divinity of Christ they had derived solely from the Gospel of St. John, and that the other Evangelists had but an obscure knowledge of this subject. "None of them," says Origen, "disclosed his divinity so purely as John."<sup>\*</sup> "John," says Eusebius, "commenced with the doctrine of the divinity, that having been reserved by the divine Spirit for him as the most worthy."<sup>†</sup> And, later, Chrysostom declares that the other Evangelists were like "little children, who hear, but do not understand what they hear, being occupied with cakes and childish play-things;" but John taught, "what the angels themselves did not know before he declared it." "This doctrine was not published at first, for the world was not advanced to it. Matthew, Mark, and Luke did not state what was suitable to his dignity, but what was fitting for their hearers. John, the Son of Thunder, advanced at last to the doctrine of the divinity."<sup>‡</sup>

I shall now cite some proofs from the Christian writers of the three first centuries, to show that though, in correspondence with Platonic doctrines, a derived and subordinate divinity was ascribed to Jesus, nothing like the present orthodox faith was dreamed of; and that the highest authorities on these subjects, Cudworth for instance, are fully aware that, for nearly four hundred years, the Creeds of the Church embraced nothing more than the Platonic Trinity.

And, first, I shall give one distinct testimony from Origen, to which others might be added from Irenæus and Tertullian, of the *Unitarianism of the Jewish Christians*:

"And when you consider the faith concerning our Saviour

<sup>\*</sup> Comment. in Joh. lib. 1. c. 3.

<sup>†</sup> Hist. Eccl. lib. 5. c. 21.

<sup>‡</sup> Opera Ep. ad Rom. lib. 1. c. 11. m. 2.

of those of the Jews who believe in Jesus, some thinking him to be the son of Joseph and Mary, and others of Mary only, and the Divine Spirit, but still without any belief in his divinity."<sup>\*</sup> "And they of the Jews who have received Jesus as the Christ, go by the name of Ebionites."<sup>†</sup>

I am next to cite evidence that, for the first three hundred years, the Christian writers acknowledged *the inferiority of Jesus to his FATHER*, though ascribing to him a derived divinity. It is not until a. d. 140 that we find any very distinct mention even of this description of divinity as belonging to Jesus.<sup>‡</sup>

*Justin Martyr, A. D. 140.*

"I will endeavour to show that he who appeared to Abraham, Jacob, and Moses, and who is called God, is different from the God that made all things, *numerically different*, though not *in will*; for I say that he never did any thing but what that God who made all things, and above whom there is no god, willed that he should do and say."<sup>§</sup>

*Irenæus, A. D. 178.*

"We hold the Rule of Truth, that there is ONE GOD ALMIGHTY, who created all things by his LOGOS. . . . This is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; and of Him it is that Paul declared, There is ONE GOD, even the FATHER, who is above all, and through all, and in us all."<sup>||</sup>

*Clement Alexandrinus, A. D. 194.*

"There is one unbegotten almighty FATHER, and one first

<sup>\*</sup> Opera in M. c. 1. c. 10.

<sup>†</sup> In Ebionit. lib. 1. c. 26.

<sup>‡</sup> Tertullian's *Deus* gives some instances of the use of the word *Deus* by Irenæus, A. d. 178, in reference to Jesus Christ. Nothing can be more slender and insufficient than his other evidence of the *inferiority* to a *new* doctrine by the Apostles' Fathers.

<sup>§</sup> *Quæst. contra Gentes*, c. 139.

<sup>||</sup> *Lib. 1. cap. 10. c. 1. cap. 8.*

begotten, by whom all things were, and without whom no thing was made. For one is truly God, who made the beginning of all things, meaning his first-begotten son."<sup>2</sup>

*Tertullian, A.D. 200.*

"I do not speak of Gods and Lords; but I follow the Apostle; so that if the Father and the Son are to be named together, I call the Father God, and Jesus Christ Lord: though I can call Christ God when speaking of himself alone." And he goes on to explain this by declaring, that a ray of the sun may, with sufficient propriety, be called the sun.<sup>3</sup>

*Origen, A.D. 230.*

"We may by this means solve the doubts which terrify many men, who pretend to great piety, and who are afraid of making two Gods, and, through this, fall into vain and impious opinions; denying that the nature of the Son is different from that of the Father, and who acknowledge that he is God in name only, or denying the divinity of the Son, and then maintaining that his nature and essence is different from that of the Father. For we must tell them that he who is *God of himself*, is *THE GOD*, as the Saviour states in his prayer to the Father, 'that they may know thee, THE only true God,'<sup>4</sup> but that whosoever becomes divine by partaking of his divinity, cannot be styled *THE GOD*, but a *GOD*, among whom especially is the first born of all creatures."<sup>5</sup>

*Novatian, A.D. 251.*

"He, although he was in the form of God, did not think of the robbery of being equal with God. For though he knew that he was God, from God the Father, he never likened or compared himself with God the Father, remembering that

he was from the Father, and that he had what he had because the Father had given it to him."<sup>6</sup>

*Lactantius, A.D. 310.*

"He showed his fidelity to God, so that he taught that there is ONE GOD, and that he alone ought to be worshipped. Nor did he ever say that he himself was God. For he would not have preserved his fidelity if, being sent to take away a number of gods, and to assert ONE GOD, he had introduced another besides that one. Wherefore, because he was so faithful, because he arrogated nothing to himself, that he might fulfil the commands of Him who sent him, he received the dignity of perpetual priest, and the honour of Supreme King, the power of a judge, and the title of God."<sup>7</sup>

And not inconveniently to multiply evidence, let us come at once to the very orthodox Athanasius himself, and we shall find how little this Father knew of the nice adjustments of that Creed which now passes under his name.

*Athanasius, A.D. 325.*

"For there is one God, and there is not another besides Him. When it is said that the Father is the only God, that he is one God, 'I am the FIRST,' and 'I am the LAST,' it is well said. This is not said, however, to take away from the Son; for he also is in the ONE, FIRST, and ONLY ONE, as being the only *Logos*, Wisdom, and Fidelity of Him who is one ONE, and the ALONE, and the SUPREME."<sup>8</sup>

"And Athanasius himself, who is commonly accounted the very Rule of Orthodoxy in this point, when he doth as often resemble the Father to the Son, or the original Light; and the Son to the splendour or brightness of it, (as likewise doth the Nicene Council and the Scripture itself,) he seems hereby to imply some dependence of the Second upon the

<sup>2</sup> *Supra*, p. 44. *Trinity*, B. 1. Ch. 1. O. 10. 11.

<sup>3</sup> *Supra*, p. 13.

<sup>4</sup> *Contra Gentes*, p. 41.

<sup>6</sup> *Supra*, p. 54.

<sup>7</sup> *Lib. 1. c. 11.*

<sup>8</sup> *De Incarnat. Verbi*.

First, and subordination to it. Especially when he declar-eth, that the *Three Persons of the Trinity* are not to be looked upon as *Three Principles*, nor to be resembled to *Three Suns*, but to the *Sun*, and its splendour, and its derivative light.\*

Now I may sum up the impression of these passages in the words of the very learned Cudworth:—"But particularly as to their gradual subordination of the *Second Hypostasis* to the *First*, and of the *Third* to the *First and Second*, our Platonic Christian doubtless would therefore plead them the more excusable, because the generality of *Christian Doctors*, for the first three hundred years after the Apostles' times, plainly asserted the same; as Justin Martyr, Athenagoras, Tatianus, Irenæus, the Author of the *Recognitions*, Tertullian, Clemens Alexandrinus, Origen, Gregorius Thaumaturgus, Dionysius of Alexandria, Lactantius, and many others. All whose testimonies, because it would be too tedious to set down here, we shall content ourselves with one of the last mentioned,—"Both the Father and Son is God: but he as it were an exuberant fountain, this as a stream derived from him: He like to the sun, this like to a ray extended from the sun." And though it be true, that Athanasius, writing against the Arians, does appeal to the tradition of the ancient Church, and amongst others cites Origen's testimony too; yet this was only for the Eternity and Divinity of the Son of God, but not at all for such an absolute *co-equality* of him with the Father as would exclude all *dependence, subordination, and inferiority* of those opinions so

unanimously agreeing therein, that they are by Petrus therefore taxed for Platonism, and having 'by that means corrupted the parity of the Christian Faith, in this article of the Trinity. Which how it can be reconciled with those other opinions, of Ecclesiastic Tradition being a Rule of Faith, and impossibility of the visible Churches erring in any fundamental point, cannot easily be understood. However, this general Tradition, or Consent of the Christian Church, for three hundred years together after the Apostles' times, though it cannot justify the Platonists in anything discrepant from the Scripture, yet may it in some measure doubtless plead their excuse, who had no Scripture Revelation at all to guide them herein; and so at least make their error more tolerable or pardonable."†

We come now to a time when these fluctuating and indefinite conceptions were to assume more fixed forms. It is apparent that so far the Christian Fathers fluctuated between their desire to exalt Jesus into the Logos of God, and the restraining fear of adapting ideas or expressions not reconcilable with the strict unity of the Deity. "The suspense and fluctuation," says Gibbon, "produced in the minds of the Christians by these opposite tendencies, may be observed in the writings of the theologians who flourished after the end of the apostolic age, and before the origin of the Arian controversy. Their suffrage is claimed with equal confidence by the orthodox and by the heretical parties; and the most inquisitive critics have fairly allowed that if they had the good fortune of possessing the Catholic Verity, they have delivered their conceptions in loose, inaccurate, and sometimes contradictory language."‡ Ideas so naturally irreconcilable,

p. 107. Gibbon remarks that, after the council of Nice had determined, the Nicene Creed meant nothing more than that the Son was generally God, of the same nature, but necessarily inferior, having his own distinct Essence. See also Dr. Bampton on a passage in the Nicene Creed, which is already quoted, where he remarks, by not naming up to that instant in the Creed, Nicene, vol. ii. p. 69.

\* Cudworth, *Jurid. Syst.* p. 229.

\* Cudworth, *Jurid. Syst.* p. 229.

† Introduction to the *Discourses* of the whole assembly of the Roman's learned men in the *Antient Fathers*. There is no doubt that the deity of the Son and even of the Holy Ghost is spoken of before the Council of Nice, but always in the Plurality of Persons, and not in the present orthodox sense of equal and independent. The word *subordination* gives nothing to the contrary, for Platonists would not have objected to the application of the word to the second and third persons in the Trinity, so much as it is to be used from the Council of the Nicene Synod. See Cudworth's arguments in the *Discourses*, *Jurid.*

as Jesus when contemplated as the Son of God, and Jesus when contemplated as the Wisdom of God (*Logos*), with personality attached to it, were certain sources or later to betray their inconsistency, and to stand out from one another in opposing attitudes. They could be held in combination only so long as two very strong but opposite influences, (a desire to meet the conceptions of the prevalent Philosophy, and a desire at the same time to preserve unviolated the Jewish and Christian doctrine of the Unity of God,) operated together to prevent theologians looking too closely into their Faith, or attempting too strictly to harmonize its elements.

The elements of a necessary separation existed in that confused system by which the earlier Fathers brought together Jesus the Christ, and the *Logos* of the great Platonists, into the same conception; some of them inclining to the idea of the Son of God being an eternal emanation from the Father, like light from the sun, veiling the difficulty of a Son being co-eternal with his Father under the unmeaning phrase, 'everlasting generation'—and some adopting the lower view that he was only the highest emanation from the origin of all Spirits, the first of created Beings, and the instrument of God in all the other works of Creation. "These speculations," says Gibbon, "became the most serious business of the present, and most useful preparation for a future life. A theology which it was incumbent to believe, which it was impious to doubt, and which it might be dangerous and even fatal to mistake, became the familiar topic of private meditation and popular discourse."<sup>4</sup> The cold indifference of philosophy was effaced by the fervent spirit of devotion; and

<sup>4</sup> "It was, by the side of the Christian's, of the third century, to write their creed, to create, naturally and spontaneously, if we consider it in itself, or to address to benevolent subjects of themselves, a language more willing to gain the assent of reasonable men."—Waldstein. The rage for the metaphysics had been commonly excited to religion by the contempt of *idolatry*; but the former in all things considered, in one as that the other was almost only different. With the philosophy such questions were objects of the *substantiating* or, subject of the *phantasy* (as *phantasy* is called) or, when the words, *legibility* of a minute

even the metaphors of common language suggested the fallacious prejudices of sense and experience. The Christians, who abhorred the gross and impure generation of the Greek mythology, were tempted to argue from the familiar analogy of the filial and paternal relations. The character of *Son* seemed to imply a perpetual subordination to the voluntary author of his existence; but as the act of generation in the most spiritual and abstracted sense, must be supposed to transmit the properties of a common nature, they durst not presume to circumscribe the powers or the duration of the Son of an eternal and omnipotent Father.—Their tender reverence for the memory of Christ, and their horror for the profane worship of any created being, would have engaged them to assert the equal and absolute divinity of the *Logos*, if their rapid ascent toward the throne of heaven had not been imperceptibly checked by the apprehension of violating the unity and sole supremacy of the great Father of Christ and of the Universe.<sup>5</sup>

Christ, when viewed as the Wisdom or *Logos* of God, was by a natural transition of thought placed within the effulgence of the divine glory; but when viewed not as an Attribute but as a Person, the Son and Messiah of the

in order, the empty of a subject, but with the Christian they were matters of much or *idolatry*, of belief, or distinct. Hence arose an intense anxiety respecting the result, and thus the passions were awakened, and great only broke loose and pursued their every aspect. From the moment that the *question* of their questions was stamped by any other method in the Christian expression of the words of Scripture, as seen in the copious language of *Grace* was rigidly applied to the extension of several things, and the explanation of *divinity* (as the field of contention) seemed to be removed from earth and heaven, the *divine* being nothing visible to rest upon, where arguments were made, and where the *divine* was to be, and to be, and to be, so that the *divine* grew more and more as it was less divided, and more angry as it became more partitioned and compared. Add to this the *divine* and points of the *divine*, for the origin of these disputes may be traced without any exception to the *divine* (as the *divine*) of the *divine*.

<sup>5</sup> "We read also mention the *divine* as a *divine* principle of that age, which had prevailed before the appearance of Christianity, and had been in a certain extent, accepted by its professors, *the divine* *divine*, which justified the *divine* by the *divine*, and *divine* *divine* and *divine* by the *divine* of *divine*."—Waldstein, *Works*, p. 101.

Father, this dual idea would pass away, and the distinction between God and Christ become too visible to be confused. In this state of opinion two parties naturally appeared, separating the two ideas that entered into the prevalent conception of Christ, each taking up one of them as representing *the whole truth* respecting his nature and person. The Arians, alarmed at the idea of two Gods, inclined to that part of the conception which represented Jesus as the Son and Messenger of the Father, but at the same time elevating him above all other created beings, and giving him an existence before the worlds were. The Athanasians, on the other hand, inclined to that part of the conception which represented Him as the Logos of the Deity, and under the reaction, and the necessity for more strictly defining the hidden sense of doctrines, produced by the Arian Creed, attempted to conquer the difficulty of his Sonship by representing him as an eternal emanation from the very substance of the Deity, and exalted him into an equality with God, though at the same time they described it as a derived and subordinate equality. It is unavoidable in describing these views to make use of contradictory words. The ideas are irreconcilable, and were only saved from plainly appearing so by being involved in a cloud of mystical or rather no-meaning words; for words must either be significant of ideas, or no-sense. This then was the subject of the great Arian and Trinitarian Controversy, which in the fourth Century shook the peace of the world. It turned upon this point, whether Christ was of the same essence as the Father, and therefore not created but begotten or emanating; or whether he was as the Arians thought, made out of nothing, and therefore a created Being. Neither of them contemplated him as independent of the Supreme Deity, but the Athanasians regarded him as a co-substantial and co-eternal emanation; the Arians, though assigning him the highest rank, regarded him as created like other beings. Such are the great questions of a metaphysical and dogmatical religion. Such are the

mysteries on which Synods and Councils have legislated. Such are the subjects in which Ecclesiastics have shown more interest than in the spirit of the life of Christ, and the moral hopes and preparations of immortality. Such are the subject-matter of Creeds, the dry husks of doctrine, the spiritless formulas on which souls are starved, the bread of Christ converted into a stone, and yet in the eyes of many, superior to practical discipleship, to Charity and the Love of God, to the spirit of Brotherhood and the trustful faith of Duty.

It was to settle this dispute that the first general Council of the Church was assembled at Nice A. D. 325. The Emperor Constantine attended in person. He had previously communicated with the contending parties, and entreated them not to disturb the peace of the Empire and of the Church, for matters the most insignificant and small.\* But he did not know the temper of Controversialists; nor what things become important in their eyes. † The Athanasians prevailed,

\* *Intercipiens in dextera.*

† "Let us imagine, then, a council called by a Christian Emperor, by a Constantine, a Constant, a Theodosius, a Justinian, and three, or four, or five hundred prelates, assembled from all quarters, to decide a theological debate."

"Let us consider a little by what means those that favour men may be influenced, as by resistance to the emperor, or to his counsellors and advisers his distant dominions, by force of arms, or by gifts, as a Bishop of Rome or of Alexandria, who had it in his power to smother, or to stir up all the bishops within and without his jurisdiction, by the threat of penance for heretics, and of being reformed, called, excommunicated, excommunicated, imprisoned, banished, fined, beheaded, or dead if they refused to submit, by episcopal visitations, excommunication, and imprisonment, by a reference to a synod, by a love-drawing and dissuading, of exhortation and reproof, by rancour and party spirit, by a total ignorance of the question in debate, or a total indifference, by private friendships, by family and neighbourhood, by old prejudices, by hopes of gain, by an exclusive disposition, by good nature, by the temper of attendance, and a desire to be at home, by the love of peace and quiet, and a dread of a riotous, &c."

"Whosoever takes these things into due consideration, will not be disposed to pay a blind deference to the authority of general Councils, and will rather be inclined to judge that the Councils held by the Apostles were the first and the last in which the Holy Spirit was believed to be afforded to his people."

"Thus far we may safely go and worship an Apostolical Synod, but if we are to proceed one step beyond that we go we know not whither. If we add to it



and "the con-substantiality of the Father and the Son was established by the Council of Nice." Under this word however lurked future Controversies, and by con-substantiality the Council of Nice meant, not the present doctrine of three persons in one God, but merely sameness of nature or kind, such a sameness as three men may possess who are generally the same but numerically different; and this is openly admitted by the highest authorities, Petavio, Cudworth, Le Clerc, Jortin. "The majority," says Gibbon, "was divided into two parties, distinguished by a contrary tendency to the sentiments of the Trinitarists, and of the Sabellians. But as those opposite extremes seemed to overthrow the foundations either of natural or revealed religion, they mutually agreed to qualify the rigour of their principles; and to disavow the just, but invidious, consequences which might be urged by their antagonists. The interest of the common cause inclined them to join their numbers, and to conceal their differences; their animosities were softened by the healing counsels of toleration, and their disputes were suspended by the use of the mysterious *Homoousion* (Consubstantial), which either party was free to interpret according to their peculiar tenets. The Sabellian sense, which about fifty years before had obliged the Council of Antioch to prohibit this celebrated term, had endeared it to those theologians who entertained a secret but partial affection for a nominal Trinity. But the more fashionable saints of the Arrian times, the intrepid Athanasius, the learned Gregory (readily next General Council, why not of monks? And where shall we say? As the first Nicene Council, A. D. 325, so at the second Nicene Council, A. D. 787) — they who made — positive judgments, and being the stability of the Church, set upon strictly to keep the faithful of the Council's doctrine, who like them to thumbar Serapion, and now from D. C. A. Ch. show to be careful not to separate use to yield the words regard to be homousion, homousion, homousion. Neither of them may go for itself, and to think the old Trinitarist may be applied to—

\* *For each proper signum unum personam.*

If such Councils as the significant changes, it must have been by "strong good luck"—*idem, Eccl. Hist. vol. 1. p. 133. 1.*

Naxianzen, and the other pillars of the Church, who supported with ability and success the Nicene doctrine, appeared to consider the expression of *substance* as if it had been synonymous with that of *nature*; and they ventured to illustrate their meaning, by affirming that three men, as they belong to the same common species, are con-substantial or homousion to each other. This pure and distinct equality was tempered on the one hand by the internal connection, and spiritual penetration, which indissolubly unites the divine persons, and on the other by the pre-eminence of the Father, which was acknowledged as far as it is compatible with the independence of the son. Within these limits the almost invisible and tremulous ball of Orthodoxy was allowed securely to vibrate. On either side beyond this consecrated ground the heretics and the dangerous lurked in ambush to surprise and devour the unhappy wanderer. But as the degrees of theological hatred depend on the Spirit of the war, rather than on the importance of the Controversy, the heretics who degraded, were treated with more severity than those who annihilated the person of the Son.\*

We are now arrived at that great period in the faith of the Church, when the dignity of the Son was authoritatively settled by the Nicene Council. Here is a brief account of its proceedings. — The Bishops began by much personal dissension, and presented to the Emperor a variety of written accusations against each other; the Emperor burnt all their libels and exhorted them to peace and unity. They then proceeded to examine the momentous question proposed to them. It was soon discovered that the differences which it was intended to resolve might in their principle be reduced to one point, and that point might be expressed by *one word*, and thus the question appears to have been speedily simplified (as indeed was necessary that so many persons might

came to one conclusion on so mysterious a subject) and reduced to this—whether the Son was or was not *consubstantial* with the Father. Then arose subtle disquisitions respecting the meaning of the word, about which some conflicted with each other, dwelling on the terms and minutely dissecting it; it was like a battle fought in the dark; for neither party seemed at all to understand on what ground they vilified each other.\* However the result was perfectly conclusive; they finally decided against the Arian opinions, and established respecting the two first persons in the Trinity, the doctrine which the Church still professes in the Nicene Creed.†

This doctrine is as follows:—you will perceive that it is partly Trinitarian, and only partly, a *derived* deity being attributed to the Son, and *no deity whatsoever* attributed to the Holy Spirit. Changes were afterwards introduced into this Creed to adapt it to the growing orthodoxy of the times. I shall mention these in their proper places; meanwhile I give the Nicene Creed of the Nicene Council:—

*The Nicene Creed, A.D. 325.*

“We believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of all things visible and invisible; and in our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, begotten and only begotten of the Father; that is of the substance of the Father, God of (out of) God, Light of (from) Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father, by whom all things were made both in heaven and in earth: who for us men, and for our salvation, descended and was incarnate, and was made man, suffered, and rose again the third day, ascended into the heavens, and will come to judge the living and the dead. (We believe) also in the Holy Ghost.

“The Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church anathematizes

\* Waddington, Church Hist. p. 52.

those who say that there was a time when the Son of God was not, and that before he was begotten he was not, and that he was made out of nothing, or out of another substance or essence, and is created, changeable, or alterable.”

“Such,” says Justin, “was the Nicene Creed, as it stood originally and before it was interpolated by subsequent Councils. Our church hath dropped the anathematizing clauses at the end, and one cannot help wishing that the Nicene Fathers had done the same. The Christians in times following were perpetually making anathematisers, even upon the slightest and poorest occasions; and it is really a wonder that they did not at last insert in their Litany, ‘We beseech Thee to curse and confound the Pelagians, Semi-pelagians, Nestorians, Eutychians, Monothelites, Jacobites, Iconoclasts, and all heretics and schismatics.’”‡

The history of the fourth century is almost entirely taken up with the persecutions of Consubstantialists against Arians, Arians against Consubstantialists, and the minor strokes of the subdivisions of these sects. After the death of Constantine, the Emperor Constantius sided with the Arians, and then the persecuted became the persecutors, for wherever a dogmatical Religion is held, wherever Creeds are the Essentials of Salvation, of course no Charity can be learned in the School of Suffering. There is an admirable passage contained in Archbishop Justin’s most instructive remarks on Ecclesiastical History. It extends a smile to observe with what unconsciousness dogmatic Theologians of all ages insult their fellow-disciples, in the name and for the love of God, and close their acts of persecution with the words of affection and blessing:—

“In the fourth century were held thirteen Councils against Arians, fifteen for Arians, and seventeen for the Semiarrians; in all forty-five.†

† P. 4. l. Hist. vol. 7. p. 216.

‡ The Christian Religion, which is itself its own end and purpose, &c. (Continued)

"How could the Arians, in the time of Constantine and Valens, bring themselves to such an un-Christian persecuting temper? How could they oppress their fellow-Christians, the Consubstantialists, who, supposing them to have been in error, fell into it through a religious fear of ascribing too little to their Redeemer, and of not paying him sufficient honour? Can a man love his saviour, and hate his brother for a mistake of this kind?

"And how could the Consubstantialists persuade themselves that an Arian, who perhaps had suffered for professing Christianity in times of distress, who believed Christ to be his Maker, his Saviour, his King, and his Judge, would choose to detract from his dignity, and to offend him in whom he placed all his hopes of salvation? Human nature is not capable of this folly; and if the man were in an error, yet in such a person the error must have been involuntary, a mere defect of the understanding, and not a fault of the will.

"A Christian and a lover of peace, who lived in obscurity, and whose name I cannot tell, stood up and said:—My brethren, the things to be believed are few, the things to be done are many: but you behave yourselves as if the reverse of this were true. St. Paul tells you, "The grace of God that bringeth Salvation hath appeared to all men; teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world, looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearance of the great God, and (of) our Saviour, Jesus Christ." Concerning the nature of *Jesus* you can dispute incessantly, and concerning the work *Grace*, you will probably dispute no less; but the rest of

our *faith* is by the design of expiation. Instead of created by the genius by the weight of his authority, he chose to be propagated, by verbal disputes, the doctrine which he vainly wishes had existed. The light of his *reason* was not only brought out, but he was himself every way in the Assembly, which they all *heard*, and as if they intended to refine the whole text, a *third* party, the golden construction of the poem, was almost ruined by their busy and repeated journey.—*Travellers*, by Gilpin, vol. ii. p. 317.

the sentence you disregard as of small consequence or importance. What, I beseech you, must the Jews and the Pagans conceive of you and of your religion? And what do the holy angels think, who look down upon your contentions? Those blessed and compassionate spirits pity you, and think you mere children. But when from contending you proceed to beating your fellow-servants, to persecuting and destroying, they consider you as most malicious and wicked children; their pity is changed into indignation, and they would strike you dead, if the Supreme Governor did not stay their hand, and remind them that such disorders must needs arise, and shall one day be rectified!

"So said this Unknown; but behold the consequence! The Consubstantialists called him a *Arian*, and the Arians called him a *Consubstantialist*.

"The Nicene Fathers having anathematized the Arians, the Emperor seconded them, and banished Arius and the bishops who sided with him, and ordered the books of Arius to be burnt; and added, "If any man be found to have concealed a copy of those books, and not to have instantly produced it and thrown it into the fire, he shall be put to death. The Lord be with you all!"—(*Eccles. Hist.* vol. ii. p. 205.)

I shall now summon two authorities, the one Cudworth, the other Jortin, to prove that the Nicene Fathers had no knowledge of the present doctrine of the Trinity, and that they believed Christ to be the same with God, not numerically, but as partaking of the same nature, belonging to the same class of beings:—"Wherefore it seemeth to be unquestionably evident, that when the ancient orthodox Fathers of the Christian Church maintained against Arius, the Son

"Constantine's conduct was, in all respects, for the security and stability of the Christian religion, and he acted as he was influenced at different times by the considerations of each party, who accused one another, not only of heresy, but of being enemies to the Emperor, and of other faults and imperfections.—*Ibid.*"

to be Co-essential or Consubstantial with the Father, though the word be thus interpreted. *of the same essence or substance, yet they universally understood thereby, not a sameness of singular and numerical, but of common or universal essence only; that is the general or specific Essence of the God-head; that the Son was no Creature, but truly and properly God.*" \* \* \*

"We have now given a full account of the true and genuine Platonic Trinity; from which it may clearly appear, how far it either agrees or disagrees with the Christian. First, therefore, though some of the later Platonists have partly misunderstood, and partly adulterated that ancient Cabala of the Trinity, as was before declared, confounding therein the differences between God and the Creature, and thereby laying a foundation for infinite Polytheism; yet did Plato himself and some of his genuine followers, (though living before Christianity,) approach so near to the doctrine thereof, as in some manner to correspond therewith." . . . . . "From whence it may be concluded, that as Arianism is commonly supposed to approach nearer to the truth of Christianity than Photinism, so as Platonism undoubtedly more agreeable thereto than Arianism, it being a certain middle thing betwixt that and Sabellianism, which is general was that mark that the Nicene Council also aimed at."

This is more fully explained in the next extract:—

"Athanasius in sundry places still further supposes those three divine Hypostases to make up one entire divinity, after the same manner as the *Stem* and the *Stems* make up one entire river; or the *root*, and the *stock*, and the *branches*, one entire tree. And in this sense also is the whole Trinity said by him to be one Divinity, and one Nature, and one Essence, and one God. And accordingly, the word *Hypostasis* (Consubstantial) seems here to be taken by Athanasius in a further sense besides that before mentioned; not only for things agreeing in one common and general essence, as

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Three individual men are co-essential also for such as concurrently together, and are therefore jointly essential, which doctrine of his there is no genuine Platonist would readily admit it may be concluded, that the doctrine is not so much from the doctrine of the Nicene Council, as some late writers have supposed."—(*Intellect. Sys. p. 100. 608, 619-20.*)\*

"But here it will be asked, perhaps, what was the doctrine of the Nicene Fathers, and what did they mean by Consubstantiality. It is impossible to answer this question without using logical and metaphysical terms.

"By the word *Consubstantial*, they meant not of the same numerical, or individual substance, but of the same general substance or subsistence. As, amongst men, a son is consubstantial with his father; so, in their opinion, the Son of God is consubstantial with the Father, that is, of the same divine nature.

"By this word therefore they intended to express the same kind of nature, and so far, a natural equality. But according to them, this natural equality excluded not a relative inequality; a majority and minority, founded upon the everlasting difference between giving and receiving, causing, and being caused.

"They had no notion of distinguishing between *persona* and *being*, between an *intelligent agent*, and an *intelligent active substance, subsistence, or entity.*

"When they said that the Father was God, they meant that he was God of himself, *originally, and undervived.*

\* "Notwithstanding all which it may be granted, that though the co-essentiality of the three persons in the Trinity does imply them to be all God, yet does it not follow from thence of necessity that they are therefore the God's God.—(*ibid. p. 110.*)

"When they said that the Son was God, they meant that he was God by generation or derivation.

"The Unity of God they maintained, and they defended it, first, by considering the Father as the First Cause, the only undivided and self-existing; secondly, by supposing an intimate, inseparable, and incomprehensible union, consubstantial, indivisible, and co-existence, by which the Father was in the Son, and the Son in the Father; and thirdly, by saying that in the Father and the Son there was an unity of will, design, and consent, and one divine power and dominion, originally in the Father, and derivatively in the Son.

"In process of time, Christians went into a notion that the Son was 'of the same individual substance with the Father, and with the Holy Spirit,' and they seem to have done this with a view to secure the doctrine of the Unity.

"The schoolmen took up the subject, and treated it in their way, which they call *explaining*, and which men of sense call *insupportable jargon*."—*Jortin, Eccles. Hist.* vol. ii. p. 202.

You will observe, that as far as mention had been made of the separate deity of the Holy Spirit. The original Nicene Creed is silent upon the subject. It was a question that grew out of the deity of Christ. The philosophy of the times, no less than the reluctance to be deemed the followers of a crucified man, led to the deification of Jesus, and afterwards, from the personifications of the Holy Spirit, in such expressions as "I will send unto you the Comforter, even the Spirit of Truth;" and from its frequent connection with the name and mission of Christ, arose the idea of a separate divinity, a third person in the Trinity. The Platonic Trinity would indeed have naturally led the early Fathers to the conception of a third principle, and in some of the Anti-Nicene Writers this conception appears; but the Controversy was carried on with almost exclusive reference to the deity of Christ, which

independent of the general burden of their writings, clearly appears from the fact, that when defending themselves against the charge of violating the Unity of God, they always state the objection, so as to show that the accusation against them was that they were "introducing a second God."

Accordingly it was after the Council at Nice, when the deity of the Son was established, that orthodoxy took a second and consequent step, and proceeded to establish the deity of the third person in the Trinity.\*

This was effected towards the close of the fourth century, A.D. 381, by the Second General Council, that of Constantinople, when the following addition was made to the previously deficient orthodoxy of the Nicene Creed. The Nicene Creed had simply stated, "We believe in the Holy Ghost." The Council of Constantinople rectified the error thus: "We believe in the Holy Ghost, the Lord and Giver of life; who proceedeth from the Father; who with the Father and Son together is worshipped and glorified; who spake by the prophets." Still, however, the adjustments were not correct, nor the formula of perfect orthodoxy. It occurred to the Church, centuries after, that the Holy Spirit was described in the Scriptures as being dependent not upon the Father alone, but as being "sent" by the Son; and that therefore the Third Person must hold that relation to the Second which the Second did to the First, and must therefore be derived not from the Father alone, but from the Fa-

\* That rule is laid concerning the separate deity of the Spirit of God in the Scripture is evident in every body; but the reason that I propose is not so fit, will not be easily imagined. In order to account for the Apostle's saying so little for, among the deity of the Holy Spirit, and among the mention of him after that of the Father and the Son, (as when Paul says, "there is one God and Father of all, of whom are all things, and of whom are all things, by whom are all things;" he says that the Apostle will operation of the Spirit, He did not choose to introduce much of himself, let it should give us an example of summing up words) by's History of the Councils of the Trinity, p. 60.

ther and Son together.\* Accordingly this new idea, essential to Salvation, was included in the formula so long in this respect defective, with what fatal consequences we are not told; and at last, in the ninth century, a perfectly accurate and saving description of the procession of the Holy Spirit from the Father and the Son was embodied in the Nicene Creed, some five hundred years after its first construction. So slowly did the "unimproved and unimprovable revelation" of dogmatic divines advance to its perfection. Yet we are gravely told of the faith of the Church,—a faith human all over; and of the traditions of Christian antiquity,—traditions whose origin we can trace at great distance from apostolic times, and whose constant increase, in proportion as we recede from those times, would seem to imply that the further Councils of the Church were removed from the Apostles the more they knew about them—the accuracy of inspired Tradition differing, as of course it should, from common Memory and common History, by being in an inverse ratio to the distance. This is no subject for ridicule; but only the sacred feelings and high themes that are necessarily associated with such extravagance, have so long saved it from the most merciless exposure. Those solemn themes, the awe and loveliness of which Ecclesiastical History has

\* "The Holy Spirit, if he be God, as the objection is raised by Basil, must either be begotten or unbegotten. If he be unbegotten, he is the Father; if begotten, the Son; and if he is neither begotten nor unbegotten, he is a creature."—*Pringle's Hist. Early Ages*, vol. II. 111.

† "I wish to bear witness as a Christian I could find of the genuine object, not made to the separate duty of the Holy Ghost as distinct from the doctrine now first proposed. The planer and manner some of the objection, uncharitably handled by the Fathers, I withhold from exposure. But for the reader consult the Ecclesiastical History of the Period. The difficulty raised by Athanasius, Basil, and others, was overcome by establishing a certain mysterious or rather unmeaning difference between *begotten* and *proceeding*. Such is always the easy refuge of mystic. The line is a fence between ungodly ideas and no ideas at all. "The personality of the Son," says Augustin, "differs from the procession of the Spirit, otherwise there would be others." I doubt whether it is right to distinguish at all upon the moral authority of Theology, but I assure my readers that I am reverentially following

done its best to lower and degrade service by dropping something of its unworthy pages, and by taking even with God and Christ within the of reverence, have shielded itself from unsparing criticism which perhaps were able to testify, and productive of a more profitable towards both Christ and God.

In the history of the doctrine of the Trinity, the settlement of one Controversy always gave birth to another, in the progressive attempt to make mysteries intelligible. The deity of Christ naturally gave rise to some curiosity respecting the humanity of Christ. Hæreticall parties, Arians, Athanasians, and Unitarians, according to their respective views, had for the most part agreed that the Christ consisted of one body and one spirit, and their controversies related simply to the rank and nature of that spirit. The Arians believed the soul of Jesus to be the first of created intelligences, the highest Emanation from God. The Platonic Christians thought that the Logos used instrumentally the body of Jesus, and supplied the place of a human soul. When the Council of Nice, however, established that the spirit of Jesus was *consubstantial* with that of God, the idea naturally presented itself that, since Jesus expired upon the cross, this was to represent the divine nature as capable of suffering and death. Now those who were the most orthodox, whose views and language receded to the extreme distance from those of the heretical Arians, would necessarily fall into modes of conception and expression which implied the revolting extravagance. Accordingly Apollinaris, one of the most zealous Athanasians, and the bitter enemy of Arius, freely, and unconscious of heresy, followed out his principles with perverse consistency, and openly spoke of the Logos of God supplying the place of a human soul in the body of Christ; and, of course, undergoing all that a spirit,

so situated, could suffer.\* But so narrow is the way of orthodoxy, that the zealous Father was made quickly to discover that by starting aside from one heresy, only a little too sharply, he had immediately fallen into another; for the pitfalls of diametric error lie upon each side of the hair-breadth way of Salvation. By pursuing too exclusively the deity of Christ, Apollinarius overlooked his humanity, and taught the heresy of "one incarnate nature," and the consequent sufferings and death of God. This impious extreme, being condemned by the Asiatic Church, though popular in Egypt, orthodoxy naturally took a rebound; and Apollinarius, having confused the two natures into one, Nestorius separated them into two, to such an extent, as virtually to destroy the mystical union. Here was another and an opposite heresy equally

\* "In the age of religious freedom, which was witnessed by the Council of Nice, the deity of Christ was measured by private judgments, according to the individual rule of Scripture, or reason, or tradition. But when a pure and proper deity had been established as the rule of Acts was, the faith of the Catholics had been fixed on the reign of a single God, where it was impossible to decide, dangerous to trust, desirable to fall; and the men fall on either side of this great were agitated by the sublime character of their theology. They wanted to preserve, not God himself, the second person of an equal and co-eternal Trinity, but manifested in the flesh, for who being who provides the universe, had been confined in the womb of Mary, that his eternal duration had been marked by the days, and that he, and parts of human existence; that the Almighty had been lowered and crucified, that the impossible essence had felt pain and anguish; that his omniscience was not exempt from ignorance; and that the source of life and immortality expired in Nemi Calvary." They abating consequences were shown with implacable simplicity by Apollinarius, Lucius of Lydia, and one of the luminaries of the church. The son of a learned grammarian, he was skilled in all the sciences of Greece, literature, and law, and philosophy, and founded in the volume of Apollinarius, were highly deemed as the articles of religion. The war by friend of Arianaeus, the worthy successor of Julius, he bravely opposed with the Arians and Polytheists, and though he adopted the rigour of geometrical demonstration, the Quinquagesima revealed the literal and allegorical truth of the Scriptures. A mystery which had long shrouded in the bosom of popular belief, was lifted by his generous diligence as a lecturer from, and he has proclaimed the memorable words, "One incarnate nature of Christ," which could be echoed with homage the name in the churches of Asia, Egypt, and Aethiopia. He taught that the Christ had been united in strength with the body of a man, and that the Logos, the eternal wisdom, supplied in the flesh the place and office of a human soul. — Gibbon, vol. viii. p. 177.

fatal to the orthodoxy of the Church and the salvation of mankind; for if such was the loose connection of the two natures, then, God being incapable of suffering, only the human nature of Jesus underwent crucifixion and death. But, on the other hand, if this was so, then the sufferings of Christ were only those of a man, and all the mystery of the Incarnation was dissipated, and became ineffectual for any theological purpose.

A new controversy consequently arose, respecting the right adjustments of these saving connections between the humanity and the deity of the Christ. "Before this time," says Mosheim, "it had been settled by the decrees of former Councils, that Christ was truly God and truly man; but there had as yet been no controversy, and no decision of any council, concerning the mode and effect of the union of the two natures in Christ. In consequence, there was a want of agreement among the Christian Teachers in their language concerning this mystery." This controversy, which, for some time had been carried on without attracting towards it definitively the public authorities of the Church, drew at last the eager notice of all Christendom; when Nestorius, the Prelate of Constantinople, carried the distinction between the two natures to so definite a point as to deny that the Virgin Mary could, with any propriety, be denominated the "Mother of God;" and that her titles should be limited to that of "Mother of Christ" or "Mother of Man." This was regarded, by the orthodox, as reducing the death of Christ to that of a mere man, and the mystery of the Incarnation to little better than a trick of words. It was no easy matter in those times to avoid, on the one hand, confounding the two natures; and, on the other, separating them so distinctly as to destroy the whole theological value of the mystical incarnation: nor have modern Theologians been more successful in adjusting this puzzle than their perplexed and perplexing predecessors.

The chief alarmist upon this occasion of the heresy of Nestorius was Cyril, the Patriarch of Alexandria, an arrogant and aspiring man, who gladly seized upon a tempting opportunity to humble his rival, the bishop of Constantinople. "Some jealousy which at that time subsisted respecting the relative dignity of the two sees, probably heightened the contention, and is believed by some to have caused it. Whether that be or not, the two Patriarchs anathematized each other with mutual violence, and such troubles were raised that the Emperor (Theodosius the younger) deemed it necessary to convoke a General Council for the purpose of appeasing them. It was assembled at Ephesus A.D. 431, and stands in the annals of the Church as the THIRD GENERAL COUNCIL. Cyril was appointed to preside, and consequently to judge the cause of his adversary; and he carried into this office such little show of impartiality, that he refused even to wait for the arrival of the bishop of Antioch and others, who were held friendly to Nestorius, and proceeded to pronounce sentence, while the meeting was yet incomplete. To secure or presecute his advantages, he had brought with him from Egypt a number of robust and daring fanatics, who acted as his soldiers, and it had been skilfully arranged that Ephesus should be chosen for the decision of a difference respecting the dignity of the Virgin; since popular tradition had buried her in that city, and the imperfect Christianity of its inhabitants had readily transferred to her the worship which their ancestors had offered to Diana."\*

Such are the assemblies from which our Creeds date their birth; by whose authority the Rule of Faith was determined; and whose character is described in the words of the Emperor Theodosius when dismissing this very Council of Ephesus—"God is my witness, that I am not the author of

this confusion. His providence will discern and punish the guilty. Return to your provinces; and may your private virtues repair the mischief and scandal of your meeting." At this council it was decreed, by bishops who could not write their own names,† that the Union of the human and divine nature in Christ was so intimate that Mary might properly be called the Mother of God. The influence of Cyril prevailed chiefly by intimidating the bishops and bribing the imperial household. "Thanks to the purse of St. Cyril," says Le Clerc, "the Romish Church which regards Councils as infallible, is not, at the present day, Nestorian." "The Creeds of Protestants are equally indebted to St. Cyril for their purity."‡

The triumphant opponents of Nestorius, as is invariably found in the history of Church Controverses, pushed their triumph to such an excess, as to fall into the opposite error, and revived the formerly condemned heresy of Apollinarius, of the incarnation of but one nature. Eutyches the friend of St. Cyril and the bitter enemy of Nestorius, openly preached "that in Christ there was but one nature, that of the incarnate Word." The Church was again in a blaze, and again the Emperor summoned a Council at Ephesus, A.D. 449, over which presided Theodosius, the successor of St. Cyril as Patriarch of Alexandria. Here the sentence of the last Council was reversed, and Orthodoxy was pronounced to be the doctrine of one divine nature in Christ, and only one. This Council, however, owing principally to the opposition made to it by the Bishop of Rome, was never authoritatively recognized by the Church, and such was its character for tumult and brutality that it is marked in Ecclesiastical History by the expressive name of the Assembly of Banditti.

Speedily then was this heresy, inconveniently sanctioned by a Council of the Church, of only one nature in Christ, which

\* Waddington's Hist. of the Church, p. 432.

† Jones, vol. iii. p. 115.

‡ Newton on the Trinity.



in effect represented God as subject to suffering and death, replaced by the orthodoxy of two natures in one person, which was attended, however, with the opposite difficulty of so separating the God from the Man as to nullify the mystical efficacy of his sufferings.\* But who will devise a form of words in which irreconcilable ideas shall be reconciled, and no weak point be exposed in the skilful statement of a fiction? THE FOURTH GENERAL COUNCIL of the Church was held at Chalcedon, A.D. 451. There are two things most remarkable respecting this Council; first—that it declared Jesus to be of the same essence with God as to his divine nature, only in the sense in which he was of the same essence with other men as to his human nature, thus denying his *numerical* oneness with God, and merely referring him to the same class of Beings, making him generically one, as two men are;† and secondly—that though the majority of the Bishops favoured the doctrine of one nature, they were obliged by the obstinacy of the Emperor Marcian, in conjunction with the Bishop of Rome, to reverse at one of their sittings their decision at a

\* Hence many questions arose, which gave rise to as many controversies. For example, it was debated (What) is the two sources in Christ were reputed to be before one; or whether they remained distinct? Whether, once Christ was born, and died, and rose again, it could be said that *he* was born and died, and rose again?

† Whether the Virgin Mary, who was the Mother of Christ, could be called the Mother of God?

‡ Whether Christ had two persons, or only one?

§ Whether Christ was everywhere present in his human, as in his divine nature?

¶ Whether one person of the Trinity could be said to suffer for us?

\*\* Whether the whole Trinity could be said to suffer for us?

\*\*\* Whether in Christ there were three substances, or only one?

†† These great and profound objections and difficulties, and their answers, are, and then follow "age and number."—*Idem*, vol. iv. p. 117.

‡‡ There might be added the question proposed by the Emperor Marcian, A.D. 429, to a Bishop.—"Whether Christ, of one person but two natures, was created by a single or a double *Verbum*?" This gave rise to what was called the *Monothelite* (or *single nature*) controversy, as that regarding the single nature was called the *Monophysite* (or *one nature*) controversy.

§ § *Idem*, vol. iv. p. 118.

former, and finally to decree that orthodoxy consisted in believing "Jesus Christ to be one person in two distinct natures, without any confusion or mixture." "It was in vain," says Gibbon, "that a multitude of episcopal voices (the advocates for only one nature) repeated in chorus 'The definition of the Fathers is orthodox and immutable.' The heretics are now discovered! Anathema to the Nestorians! Let them depart from the synod! Let them repair to Rome!" The Legates threatened, the Emperor was absolute, and a committee of eighteen bishops prepared a new decree, which was imposed on the reluctant assembly. In the name of the fourth general Council, the Christ in one person, but in two natures, was announced to the Catholic world: an invisible line was drawn between the heresy of Apollinaris and the faith of St. Cyril; and the road to paradise, a bridge as sharp as a razor, was suspended over the abyss by the master hand of the theological artist. During ten centuries of blindness and servitude, Europe renewed her religious opinions from the Oracle of the Vatican, and the same doctrine, already vanquished with the rust of antiquity, was admitted without dispute into the creed of the Reformers, who disclaimed the supremacy of the Roman pontiff. The synod of Chalcedon still triumphs in the Protestant churches; but the ferment of controversy has subsided, and the most pious Christians of the present day are ignorant, or careless, of their own belief concerning the mystery of the incarnation.††

Still the great difficulty pressed upon this decision, that the God was so separable from the man as to destroy the mystical value of the incarnation with respect to the sufferings of Jesus. A resource was found, (for when are Theologians without resources?) in what has been called the doctrine of the *Continuance of Properties*, which meant that though God was incapable of sufferings or death, yet that through the

mystical union of the human and divine, there might be a transmission of qualities from the one to the other, so as to attach an infinite efficacy to the sufferings and death of the human part of the compound Christ. "The doctrine of the Communication of Properties," says Le Clerc, "is as intelligible as if one were to say, that there is a circle which is so united with a triangle, that the circle has the properties of the triangle, and the triangle those of the circle." "What sense those who have asserted the sufferings of God have fancied that the words might have, is a question which, after all that has been written upon the subject, is left very much to conjecture. I imagine that it is at the present day, the gross conception of some who think themselves orthodox on this point, that the divine and human natures being united in Christ as the Mediator, a compound nature different from either, capable of suffering, was thus formed."<sup>1</sup>

I have now detailed the progress of the doctrine of the Trinity, as it gained accessions from the various controversies that arose out of the Nicene Creed. We come now to the THIRD CAUSE of the English Church, that of Athanasius. Orthodoxy in this creed approaches to its perfection of precise, if not intelligible, statements; though, strange to say, we shall find that even here something of completeness is wanting, and that the later schemes of the Trinity have corrected the Athanasian formula, as dwelling too much upon the derived nature of the Son, and not asserting with sufficient force his independent identity.

No general Council of the Church established the Athanasian creed, nor does any one know who wrote it, nor when it was first introduced. From one of its clauses, the procession of the Holy Spirit from the Father and Son, which secret was not made known to the Church until the eighth century, it becomes evident that this theological paradox proceeded from

<sup>1</sup> Newton on the Trinity, p. 75.

the ingenuity of some monk of the dark ages. The whole force of this Creed depends upon two distinctions, which I presume no one can perceive, between "created" and "begotten," and between "begotten" and "proceeding." The Son is not *created* but *begotten*—and the Holy Ghost is not *begotten* but *proceeding*. And this is saving truth! food for the Soul; the heavenly light sent from God to refresh man's inner spirit, and to fill him with the aspirations after perfection, which in this world of temptation we to keep him true to his immortal destinies, to connect him with his Kinsman and Fore-runner, once tried upon the Earth, now peaceful amid the skies! To one asking, "What shall I do to inherit eternal life?" the answer of Jesus addressed itself to the spiritual life of the disciple, but the answer of the Church of England addresses itself to a perception of certain metaphysical distinctions, and is contained in that creed which "unless a man keep whole and undefiled, without doubt he shall perish everlastingly."

*The Athanasian Creed. (A. D. 500—500.)*

Whoever will be saved: before all things it is necessary that he hold the Catholick Faith.

Which Faith, except every one do keep whole and undefiled: without doubt he shall perish everlastingly.

And the Catholick Faith is this: that we worship one God in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity;

Neither confounding the Persons; nor dividing the Substance.

For there is one Person of the Father, another of the Son: and another of the Holy Ghost.

But the Godhead of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, is all one: the Glory equal, the Majesty co-eternal.

Such as the Father is, such is the Son; and such is the Holy Ghost.

The Father uncreate, the Son uncreate: and the Holy Ghost uncreate.

The Father incomprehensible, the Son incomprehensible: and the Holy Ghost incomprehensible.

The Father eternal, the Son eternal: and the Holy Ghost eternal.

And yet they are not three eternals: but one eternal.

As also there are not three incomprehensibles, nor three uncreated: but one uncreated, and one incomprehensible.

So likewise the Father is Almighty, the Son Almighty: and the Holy Ghost Almighty.

And yet they are not three Almighties: but one Almighty.

So the Father is God, the Son is God: and the Holy Ghost is God.

And yet they are not three Gods: but one God.

So likewise the Father is Lord, the Son Lord: and the Holy Ghost Lord.

And yet not three Lords: but one Lord.

For like as we are compelled by the Christian verity: to acknowledge every Person by himself to be God and Lord:

So are we forbidden by the Catholick Religion: to say, There be three Gods, or three Lords.

The Father is made of none: neither created, nor begotten.

The Son is of the Father alone: not made, nor created, but begotten.

The Holy Ghost is of the Father and of the Son: neither made, nor created, nor begotten, but proceeding.

So there is one Father, not three Fathers; one Son, not three Sons: one Holy Ghost, not three Holy Ghosts.

And in this Trinity none is afore, or after other: none is greater, or less than another;

But the whole three Persons are co-eternal together: and co-equal.

So that in all things, as is aforesaid: the Unity or Trinity, and the Trinity or Unity, is to be worshipped.

He therefore that will be saved: must thus think of the Trinity.

Furthermore, it is necessary to everlasting salvation: that he also believe rightly the Incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ.

For the right Faith is, that we believe and confess: that our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is God and Man;

God, of the Substance of the Father, begotten before the world: and Man, of the Substance of his Mother, born in the world;

Perfect God, and perfect Man: of a reasonable soul and human flesh subsisting;

Equal to the Father, as touching his Godhead: and inferior to the Father, as touching his Manhood.

Who although he be God and Man: yet he is not two, but one Christ;

One; not by conversion of the Godhead into flesh: but by taking of the Manhood into God.

One altogether; not by confusion of Substance: but by unity of Person.

For as the reasonable soul and flesh is one man: so God and Man is one Christ;

Who suffered for our salvation: descended into hell, rose again the third day from the dead

He ascended into heaven, he sitteth on the right hand of the Father, God Almighty: from whence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

At whose coming all men shall rise again with their bodies: and shall give account for their own works.

And they that have done good shall go into life everlasting: and they that have done evil into everlasting fire.

This is the Catholick Faith: which, except a man believe faithfully, he cannot be saved.

I shall now give you the history and character of this Athanasian Creed in the words of Waddington, one of the ablest Ecclesiastical Historians, I might say the ablest, for Justin did not pretend to write a History, that the Church of England has produced. You will recollect that one of the Lectures, to be delivered at Christ Church, announces "the Athanasian Creed to be explained and defended." Without wishing to anticipate that Lecture, bear now, and recollect then, the opposing voices of the Church.

“ Before we take leave of this period, (from A. D. 400, to A. D. 800,) it is proper to mention, that the first appearance of the Creed, commonly called Athanasian, is ascribed to it with great probability. There can be no doubt that this exposition of faith was composed in the West, and in Latin; but the exact date of its composition has been the subject of much difference. The very definite terms, in which it expresses the Church doctrine of the Incarnation, are sufficient to prove it posterior to the Councils of Ephesus and Chalcedon, or later than the middle of the fifth century \* Again, if we are to consider the doctrine of the double procession of the Holy Spirit, as being expressly declared in it, since that mystery was scarcely made matter of public controversy until the eighth century, it might seem difficult to refer a creed, positively asserting the more recent doctrine, to an earlier age. But the historical monuments of the Church do not quite support this supposition; the Creed, such probably as it now exists, is mentioned by the Council of Antioch, in the year 450, and its faithful repetition by the Clergy enjoined; and we find the same injunction repeated in the beginning of the ninth age. Thus it gradually gained ground; nevertheless there seems to be great reason for the opinion, that it was

\* “ Vigilius Tapponius hath been supposed, by many, to have been the Author of the Athanasian Creed, about the close of the fifth century. Others ascribe it to the sixth. It is generally held by us, as we shall see when it will be argued.” *Journal Eccles. Hist.* vol. i. p. 150.

not universally received even in the western church until nearly two centuries afterwards.

“ Considered as an exposition of doctrine, the Athanasian Creed contains a faithful summary of the high mysteries of Christianity as interpreted by the Church of Rome. Considered as a rule of necessary faith enforced by the penalty of Eternal Condemnation, the same Creed again expresses out of the most rigid principles of the same Church. The Unity of the Church comprehended Unity of Belief: there could be no salvation out of it; nor any hope for those who deviated even from the most mysterious among its tenets. And thus, by constant familiarity with the declarations of an exclusive faith, the heart of many a Romish priest may have been closed against the sufferings of the Leticie, secured (as he might think) by the merciful chastisement of the Church from the flames which are never quenched.”

“ It would be irrelevant in this work, and wholly unprofitable, to inquire how far any temporary circumstances may have justified the introduction of the Athanasian Creed into the Liturgy of our own Church — considered as that Church is on the very opposite principle of Universal Charity. But we cannot forbear to offer one remark naturally suggested by the character and history of this Creed, that if at any future time, it should be judged expedient to expunge it, there is no reason, there is scarcely any prejudice which could be offered by such erasure \* The sublime truths which it contains are not expressed in the language of Holy Scripture; nor could they possibly have been so expressed, since the inspired writers were not studious minutely to expound inscrutable mysteries, neither can it plead any sanction from high antiquity, or even traditional authority; since it was

\* “ The epistles of some of our own Churchmen, who have collected by Clarke in his works, are the same. The expressions of Bishop Yelande cannot be so generally known. We know, however, that different persons have declared different, and even opposite sentiments on the subject, and some

52 THE UNACCESSIONAL ORIGIN AND ECCLESIASTICAL

composed many centuries after the times of the Apostles, in a very corrupt age of a corrupt Church, and composed in so much obscurity, that the very pen from which it proceeded is not certainly known to us. The inventions of men, when they have been associated for ages with the exercises of religion, should indeed be touched with respect and discretion; but it is a dangerous error to treat them as inviolable, and it is something worse than error to confound them in holiness and reverence with the words and things of God.\*

In reading these words the wish involuntarily arises that the temper, as well as the sound learning and philosophical spirit, of the able writer was shared by all his brethren. Yet it does sound strange to hear a dignitary of the Church of England describe a Creed of his own Church, as having its only use, during the days of Romish intolerance, in shutting up, through familiarity with its persecuting spirit, the avenues of relenting mercy in the hard hearts of priests; and now in the milder Church of England, constructed, we are told, though we had not discovered it, on the "principle of Universal Charity," of absolutely no use whatever, so that there hardly exists even a prejudice which its erasure would offend. Yet this is the very Creed which, in the course of this controversy is to be explained and defended. If the Church of England is, indeed, founded in the principle of Universal Charity, some of its Ministers are very heretical interpreters of its spirit, and yet we must do them the justice

\* "It is not only that there were many errors among Christians, but since the Gospel was introduced, no man's degree of error will exclude him from eternal happiness. I am ready to acknowledge that in my judgment, more corrupted by the authority of Origen, and other Church-writers, would have been more wrong; and there is undoubtedly with us general principles of wisdom and piety, if I had not adapted the damning clauses of the Athanasian Creed. (Though I am y because that the doctrine of the Trinity of this Creed are all founded in Scripture. I cannot but still believe it both necessary and pious to declare, that our Father, and his Son, and his Holy Spirit, are all one God, in substance, and yet distinct persons, part of the same God."

\* Church History, p. 720.

of confessing that the Creeds and Articles of the Church are equally unfortunate exponents of the spirit of Universal Charity. Men of Christian and gentle temper interpret Articles of Faith through their own gentle spirit; but fanatics read hard formulas with different eyes. We can only wish that the religion of this excellent historian was the religion of his Church, and that his Creed was as Christian as his heart.

I have now only to mention the more modern and final form of the doctrine of the Trinity. It arose out of the still unsettled meaning of the long used word *Consubstantial*, which, as I have before stated, was used by many of the later Fathers, and these numerous pro-consubstantialists, as Cyril, to signify not a numerical sameness, but merely a sameness of species or nature, and so the Trinity virtually taught the doctrine of three Gods. And this corruption was prevalent not only after the Council of Nice, A. D. 325, but after the later Councils of Constantinople, A. D. 381, and of Ephesus, A. D. 431. I give the history of the last transformation of the Trinity in the words, and with the authority of Cudworth:

"It is certain that not a few of those Ancient Fathers, who were therefore reputed orthodox, because they resolutely opposed Arianism, did entertain this opinion, that the three hypostases or Persons of the Trinity had not only one General and Universal Essence of the Godhead, belonging to them all, they being all God; but were also Three Individuals, under one and the same ultimate species, or specific essence and substance of the Godhead, just as three individual men, (Thomas, Peter, and John,) under that ultimate species of Man, or that specific essence of Humanity, which have only a numerical difference from one another."

"And because it seems plainly to follow from hence, that therefore they must needs be as much Three Gods as there

are Three Men, these learned Fathers endeavoured with their logic to prove, that *Three Men* are but abstractly and improperly so called *Three*; they being really and truly but *One*, because there is but *one and the same Specific Essence or Substance of human nature* in them all; and seriously persuaded men to lay aside all that kind of language. By which same logic of theirs, they might as well prove also, that all the men in the world are but *One Man*, and that all Epicurus's Gods were but *one God* neither. But not to urge here that, according to this hypothesis, there cannot possibly be any reason given why there should be as many as *Three* such individuals in the *species of God* which differ only numerically from one another, they being but the very same thing thrice repeated; and yet that there should be no more than *Three* such utter, and not *Three Hundred*, or *Three Thousand*, or as many as there are individuals in the *species of Man*; we say not to urge this, it seems plain that the *Trinity*, is no other than a kind of *Trithēia*, and that of *Gods independent and co-ordinate too*. And, therefore, some would think that the ancient and genuine Platonic *Trinity*, taken with all its faults, as to be preferred before this *Trinity of St. Cyril*, and *St. Gregory Nyssen*, and several other reputed orthodox Fathers; and more agreeable to the principles both of *Christianity* and of *Reason*. However, it is evident from hence, that these reputed orthodox Fathers, who were not a few, were far from thinking the three Hypostases of the *Trinity* to have *the same singular existent essence*; they supposing them to have no other, *one and the same essence of the Godhead* in them, nor to be *one God*, than three individual Men, have *one common specific essence of Manhood* in them, and are all *One Man*. But as this *Trinity* came afterwards to be deemed for *Trithēia*, so, in the room thereof, started up that other *Trinity of Persons numerically the same*, or having all *one and the same singular existent*

*essence; a doctrine which seems not to have been owned by any public authority in the Christian Church, save that of the Lateran Council only.*"†

Such is the close of the Ecclesiastical History of the doctrine of the *Trinity*. The fourth general Lateran Council, A. D. 1215, which established the doctrine of *Transubstantiation*, the growth of the dark ages, passed also out of the hands of theological artists, in its perfected and orthodox form, this singular evidence of the fixed and primitive faith of those who taunt Unitarianism with its want of fixeness, and describe their own creeds as the "unimproved and unimprovable revelation." It is this workmanship of Councils which is so confidently referred to the inspiration of Apostles. No wonder that they who preach orthodoxy as saving Faith, revealed from the first by God in a perfect form, say so little to their hearers of the history of their creeds. There is good reason why Ecclesiastical History should be little encouraged by the divines of the English, or of any other dogmatical Church. It is with good reason that the Universities show about the same degree of favour to Ecclesiastical History and to Moral Philosophy. They have an instinct that tells them of their enemies.

Let me now summarily restate the obligations of the doctrine of the *Trinity* to the *human and rising sources of orthodoxy*.

- I. Oriental philosophy led the Jews of Alexandria, before the time of Christ, to *allegorize* the Old Testament Scriptures.
- II. The Jews of Alexandria formed the connecting link between Christianity and Grecian Philosophy.
- III. Platonic Theology put its own mythological meanings on the expressions *Logos*, and *Son of God*.‡

† *ibid.* 391, p. 402, 1.

‡ It may be acknowledged that the first converts from the Jews, who took advantage of their substitute between Egyptian and Platonic deities, were

IV. At the beginning of the fourth century this psychological conception had gained such ground that, with a severe struggle, and a controversy that shook the world, a general Council decreed that Christ in his divine nature belonged to the same class of Beings with God.

V. In a second general Council, the third Person in the Platonic Trinity found, by public authority, a parallel in the Christian Trinity, and became, for the first time, the faith of the Church.

VI. A third general Council, A. D. 431, distinguished, for theological purposes, the deity from the humanity of Christ.

VII. A fourth general Council, A. D. 451, found it necessary, for theological purposes, to unite the deity and humanity in one person.

VIII. The fourth general Lateran Council, A. D. 1215, canonized the Trinity and prepared the way for the Inquisition. Having established such a faith, it became necessary to take means to enforce it. Persecution is the first-born of Dogmatism. In the phrase of Robert Hall, quoted with approbation in Christ Church as a felicitous expression, orthodoxy is "necessitated" to be a Persecutor, to treat as a Demon and Enemy of Souls every form of Christianity but her own. It is a necessity of her nature, she pleads,—a simple consistency with her own principles. True, the reasoning is without a flaw; but then a question arises, does a Nature of which these are the "necessities" breathe the spirit of Jesus? Who can think of Jesus as being necessitated to condemn any thing but *his*?

Having shown how much the doctrine of the Trinity has to do with Ecclesiastical History, I have now to show how little it has to do with Scripture.

the subject of the Godhead, so apply the principles of their old philosophy to the explanation and confirmation of the axioms of their faith. They defended it by arguments drawn from Platonic principles, and even possessed it in historic language."—*Bishop Hareley*.

[1. It is admitted by all, Trinitarian and Unitarian alike, that a belief in One God is the first principle of a pure religion. The slightest departure from this truth involves polytheism and idolatry. One Creator, one Father, one object for our worship and our love, is the plain and broad distinction between an idolatrous religion, and the Supreme Veneration of that spiritual God who claims an undivided empire throughout the vastness of creation. A perception of this truth does not require an advanced state of Society or Mind: nor can it be proved that even in the thick-ness of pagan darkness it was ever doubted. Heathen Philosophy, though it might associate with the One Spirit, two pure and immovably serene beings, to come in contact with matter, subordinate agents of creation (which does not differ much from the Trinitarian conception\*), yet could read the glory of one Mind upon the outward universe, and see one Intelligence, one Power, one Will, of love diffused through Nature: Judaism had this idea for its soul: and the Gospel has republished it in such distinct and resplendent light, that it is the universal faith of Christendom. So overpowering is the evidence, so clear is Nature's testimony to the existence of one God, so conspicuously has Revelation set it forth in the centre of her splendours, that Trinitarianism, with what consistency we shall presently inquire, claims to be received as a belief in the Unity of Deity. It is a most triumphant acknowledgment of the brightness with which this great truth, that God is One, shines out from his Workshop and from his Word, that

\* See the Rev. Dr. James's acknowledgment of the Subordination of the Son and the Holy Spirit to the Father—of their *essential* inferiority: and the illustrations of the King and the Duke of Wellington, which Unitarian Theology thinks opposite.

† We were told, indeed, in Christ Church, by the Rev. Dr. James, that there might exist any number of persons in the divine Essence, three thousand as well as three, and that only because Scripture had revealed no more had Christians fixed upon that number as making up the divine Unity. And this is so near a consequence of the principles of Unitarian Theology, that the view must be ascribed to all Trinitarians. Scripture, however, though it has *only* revealed

even the Trinitarian perceives the necessity of reconciling his views with this fundamental principle; and rather than depart from it, he prefers to maintain that three may be one, and one may be three;—though the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, have each separately all that constitute an infinite and all-perfect God, and have distinct offices, and appear in distinct, if not directly opposed characters, yet that there may be a mysterious unity in the essence of a tri-personal Deity.

I am relieved then from the necessity of proving that God is One. It is a truth which no one explicitly denies; which the Trinitarian professes to hold as firmly as the Unitarian; and therefore as the undisputed doctrine of the Bible we take it as the admitted groundwork of our argument. We might call upon Nature to multiply proofs of the Unity of the designing Mind, which the universe reveals; we might appeal to the regularity of her silent movements and to the sublime order that reigns throughout her gliding worlds, to attest the Oneness of that Intelligence whose volitions she obeys; we might ask Philosophy whether ONE INFINITE CAUSE WAS NOT SUFFICIENT for the finite or infinite wonders of creation, whether in all her discoveries she has ever perceived a single evidence of a divided government; and whether eternal Laws holding immutable dominion throughout all worlds that Science has explored, are not sublimest proofs of the fidelity of the one presiding Spirit who trifles not

them. We are relieved that the same is ever proved in the first part of what is to follow, and also when it is shown that the divine Mind, once to the Father, once to the Person.

But for the sake of this it was declared by the Rev. D. Jones that nature could be the witness of the God, and that in the Trinity, and that of the Son, and that many Gods might be to build the world, as many could be united to build the Law, and the same He, etc. What would the Architects of this building say to the wisdom of the way of his doing it? Mr. Jones is very much mistaken in his estimate of the strength of his argument. Such is the position which we occupy. The language of the Bible is to be considered as a promulgation of the revealed principle.

with the feeble intellect of man, but reveals himself consistently to the seeking minds of His children: we might go to our own hearts, and feel the pressure of one giving hand upon its tumultuous affect ons, and ask whether in our sorrows or our joys, our wants or our aspirations, we resorted to more than one God, or needed other shelter than that of one all-sufficing Father and Friend; and, finally, we might open the volume of Revelation, and read to you the testimony of Prophecy from Moses to Christ, that the Lord our God is one Lord, and there is none other but He. But it appears it would be a needless task to prove a doctrine which no one doubts, or to treat as a question of controversy the universal faith of the Christian world.

We stand at once then upon the undisputed truth of the Oneness of Deity, and taking this as our uncontested vantage ground, we proceed to inquire how much is involved in the admission. What are we to understand by this sublime and unquestioned, and apparently simple truth, that God is One? There are two answers to this question, and the statement of each of them will introduce us to the Controversy. The Unitarian answers, that the words are human words, and of course used in a human sense; that the revelation was to man, and that no caution was given to him that he was not to attach human ideas to the language in which it is conveyed; that God is too tender and too faithful to sport with the understandings of His children, to involve their frail intelligence in inextricable perplexities; and that, therefore, when He publishes to the World, without explanation, the Unity of his own nature, he intends men to affix to the words the ideas always associated with them; he does not use language to mislead, but asserts the simplest and most intelligible of truths, that God is one Mind, one Person, one undivided and indivisible Spirit, to whom alone belong undivided existence, and infinite perfections, and unshared dominion. These are the only ideas our minds ordinarily attach to such



language,—this is the only experience we have of Unity; and if the words, when applied to God, bear a different meaning, and so have a tendency to deceive us, some caution, we think, would have been given by a God who was delivering a *Revelation* to his Children. The Unitarian believes that a revelation from God is a revelation of *light*; and without any temptation to pervert the meaning of words, he receives, in the simple and ordinary import of the language, the plain and reiterated announcement that "God is one." If God used human words, he surely used them for the purpose of conveying ideas to human minds; for language is not necessary to Him, much less would human language be the vehicle of His infinite thought. If, then, He used the words in a sense not human, and therefore unknown to us, instead of instructing, it would betray and mislead.

The Unitarian answers, that though he believes in the Unity of God, yet that Unity is totally different from the unity of all other beings. He believes that in the One God there are *three* distinct and infinite persons, presenting themselves to human contemplation in different characters, and as the objects of different affections; the first reigning in Heaven, the second in intimate and inseparable connection with a dying man upon the earth, the first immovable in his serenity, the other coming down from his eternal throne to wrap his infinite essence in a covering of human flesh, the Father sending the Son, and the Son satisfying the demands of the Father; the Father the cause and origin of all things, but holding himself loftily apart, whilst the Holy Spirit takes the office of communion with men, and becomes the Comforter, Teacher, and spiritual friend of the human soul, whom the Father's creative energies, acting through the Son, have called into existence. This, then, is the doctrine of the Trinity—three equal Persons, each Supreme, each a perfect and infinite Deity, and yet so united as to constitute but one undivided God.

We are tauntingly told of the vague statements of Unitarian Doctrine. Now nothing can be more unjust than this, or further from the facts. "Controversially despicable," Unitarianism is the most definite thing imaginable. It simply says, *No*, to every one of the allegations of Trinitarianism. There are, at the very least, five different forms in which the doctrine of the Trinity has been explained and defended; and to every one of these five shifting modifications, we repeat our definite *negative*. There is the widest difference among Trinitarian Theologians as to their method of stating and explaining the influence of Atonement and of Original Sin; and to every one of these varieties we equally repeat our simple negative. Where, then, is the superior definiteness of Trinitarian statements? We admit, of all its characteristic doctrines, that they are untenable *in any form whatever*. This, surely, is definite enough.

I am not aware that I have stated the doctrine of the Trinity in a way which any Trinitarian could dissent; and the first observation I make upon it is this, that in this view of the oneness of God, in connecting the deity of the Father, and the deity of the Son, and the deity of the Holy Spirit, with a strict unity in the godhead, the Trinitarian has at least departed from the ordinary acceptation of language. We will not assert the absolute impossibility of his retaining a belief in the Unity of God, because we have no right to question his own solemn assertion of the fact, or to set brains to the powers of another's faith; but he will not deny that he believes God to be one, in a sense totally different from that in which he believes himself to be one; that it is a unity of three minds, each a perfect God, and capable of acting separately,—in so much that it is a warning of the Circles,—not to confound the Persons. It is not a unity of Mind, nor a unity of Will, nor a unity of Agency, nor a unity of Person, which the Trinitarian regards as constituting the Unity of God, but *three Minds, three Wills, three Agents, three Per-*

sons, mysteriously making one Deity. I ask, were it not for the overpowering brightness with which the Bible reveals the doctrine of one God, would the Trinitarian encumber himself with the difficulty of combining it with his other views, would he not rather simply confess that three persons made three beings, and not one being; and represent the world as under the threefold, but harmonious, government of a Creator, a Saviour, and a sanctifying Spirit?

We have thus, then, two admissions on the part of the Trinitarian, which I ask you distinctly to bear in mind. He admits the Unity of God; and he admits that when he attempts to combine that Unity with a Trinity, he uses the word in an unintelligible sense, and understands, or rather wants, by it something entirely different from the oneness of any other being,—a oneness in short at which he himself is capable of forming no conception. That is, he retains the *form of words* that God is one; but these words convey to him no distinct idea,—and yet words are the signs of human ideas; he confesses that God is not one in any sense of that word that he can comprehend; and that, therefore, when he professes his faith in the Unity of God, he is using language which is unintelligible even to himself. Thus he must acknowledge, for he calls the Trinity a mystery, but the mystery he will admit is in the Unity, not in the Trinity: the mystery (that is, the *no-meaningness* to man, for this is the only meaning the word will here bear, the difficulty being not in the vastness or spirituality of the Conceptions, but in their irreconcilableness,) is not that there are three Persons, but that the three are *one*. Now this is the confession of every Trinitarian; he can form very distinct notions of the Trinity, but he admits that he cannot reconcile these notions with any human idea of unity; it is unintelligible, it is inconceivable, it is an apparent contradiction to all other men, to him only a paradox; it is an unfathomable mystery (a sad devaluation of that solemn word), but still he professes to

believe it,—he maintains that he can hold “the form of sound words;” and as to *thoughts*, it is his duty to have none upon the subject. He *knows* that it is revealed that God is One; and he *thinks* it is revealed that God is in Three; and without any attempt to harmonize these two statements, he professes to believe them both.

Now taking our stand on the conceded truth that God is revealed to be one, we ask for equal evidence that He is revealed to be Three Persons. We ask throughout the Bible for one plain assertion of this doctrine. We shall be satisfied with even one, and we think it is not asking much. We ask not for a single text in which it is declared that there are three infinite Minds in the Unity of but one infinite God.

It is admitted that there is no distinct statement of this doctrine in any part of the Scriptures, and here again we rest upon another confession of all retracted Trinitarians,\* that this mystery is nowhere found in express terms; that if taught at all it is taught by implication; that it is no part of the direct revelation, but merely an inference which may be collected from certain appearances, certain verbal phenomena. Now I ask if this doctrine was intended to be revealed, *could it have been so left?* If the Trinity is as strictly true as the Unity, could the one have had the witness of Prophets and Apostles, and shone forth as the clearest light on the revealed page, whilst the other was left to be gathered from some obscure and incidental intimations which the most gifted minds have not been able to perceive? Is it credible that if the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, were three Persons in one God, there should be *nowhere in the Bible a single*

\* Who are the Congress Critics of whom Mr. Beech speaks as retaining the text of the *Gene Heavenly Witnesses*?—(C. D. Pop. in *Witness*, I suppose to the Nat. Free Churchian Convention. Mr. Beech would have called *these* the *critics* of the *critics*.) He can do no more to furnish us with allusions upon his own side. See a curious passage of the *General Assembly* of the *Free Church*, 1844, in the second volume of *Harriet's Theological Works*, p. 111, 112, 113, 114, 115.

statement of that truth;\* and ought not this extraordinary fact make us very cautious to try the soundness of the *inferences, human and erring modes of reasoning*, upon which, as upon its foundation, this stupendous doctrine is laid?

There are two passages in the Bible, and only two, in which God, and Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit are mentioned together. It is recorded in St. Matthew's Gospel as the last words of the risen Jesus, that he ascended to his Father, leaving to the world the legacy of his truth:—"Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name (properly into the name) of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost"—baptizing them into a belief of God, and of Christ, and of the power and comfort of the Holy Spirit accompanying the truth, and witnessing to it in the hearts of all who receive it purely.<sup>†</sup> The Apostle declares of the Jews that they were baptized into Moses, and the Evangelist declares of Christians that they were baptized into Christ; (see also Rom. vi. 3, Gal. iii. 27,) and the plain meaning of such language is that they were baptized into the Truth which God had revealed through Moses and through Christ. What support then is there here for the doctrine of a Trinity? Is this indeed the strongest scriptural evidence that Trinitarianism can boast of—that because three distinctions follow one another—God, and his Prophet, and his Spirit witnessing to his truth in the hearts and before the eyes of His children—therefore the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of God in communication with man, must be a person, distinct from God, because the other two words express persons

—and therefore these three are unequal and are one. Such is the Interpretation that produces Trinitarianism. Is there a single hint in this passage of three persons in one God? What can be made out of it more than the Saviour's last injunction to his followers, to carry through the world that glorious and sanctifying truth, which the one God manifested through his well-beloved Son, and accompanied with the energy of his spirit. The Holy Spirit is a Scripture expression for *God in communication with man*, naturally or supernaturally.

The *only other* passage in which Jesus Christ, and God, and the Holy Spirit, are mentioned in the same sentence, must receive a precisely similar explanation. St. Paul concludes his Second Epistle to the Corinthians in these words—"The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all." Now what is this but a beautiful and affectionate prayer that the Corinthians might be partakers of the grace of God that was in Jesus Christ, of the love of their Heavenly Father, and of the gifts and influences of his holy spirit? Indeed this passage, like all others brought to prove the Trinity, is of itself quite sufficient to overthrow that doctrine. The name God in it, is not applied to Jesus Christ nor to the holy spirit: and to prove that holy spirit does not mean a person, but the spiritual energies of God in communication with man, the word *communion* is used:—a participation or communion of a *person* is without meaning—a communion in holy and heavenly influences is beautiful and everlasting truth. Such are the only pretences that Trinitarianism puts forth, that it is openly taught in Scripture! We ask for no other passages scripturally to disprove the doctrine.

Let us now attend to that *inferential reasoning* by which it is attempted to be proved that Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit are united with the Father, to form three persons in

\* It is reasonable to expect, that those disciples, which form the leading society of any system, should be properly instructed in the principles which profess to make that system known to the world.

† "Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." That is, "Go ye therefore and all the world, and teach all disciples of all nations, baptizing them into the profession of the true and eternal religion in which the Father and the Son, and the Spirit from God the Father, and continue, I by the Holy Ghost."—*London.*

one God. There are some texts in which divine attributes are supposed to be ascribed to Jesus, and the same mode of reasoning being applied to the Holy Spirit, it is inferred that Christ is God, and that the Holy Spirit is God—and that to preserve the consistency of Scripture, it is necessary to admit both that God is One, and that God is Three. Now I ask, does not this look like a seeking of evidence for the doctrine after Ecclesiastical History had introduced it, under the influences and motives already described, rather than like the natural way in which such a doctrine would break from Revelation itself upon the notice of the world? Had not the doctrine its true origin in human and worldly influences, and then was not an origin sought for it in the Orientalisms of Scripture language? This then is the method of reasoning by which this doctrine, so vast, so awful, if it be true, is attempted to be proved; and upon the soundness of this inferential process does Trinitarianism depend. So that Orthodoxy after all its sneers against the pride of Human Reason, depends for its own life upon the correctness of human reasonings,—and then erects the results of this process of fallible reasoning into the Essentials of Salvation.

There are several passages in which Christ is supposed to be called God, though there is not, I think, one clear instance of such an application of the words; and even if there was, we have Christ's own interpretation of the only sense in which such language could be applied to him. "Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, I said ye are gods? if he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the Scripture cannot be broken; say ye of him whom the Father hath sanctified and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest? because I said I am the Son of God!"

There are only two passages in the whole gospels, in which the title has ever been supposed to be given to Christ, and

John 1:1-34.

these both occurring in the same gospel, so that three of the gospels never were even supposed to have a trace of such language. One of these passages in the Proem of St. John's Gospel has already been explained in the course of the present Controversy, and the other is the expression of Thomas, who, the moment before he made the exclamation, knew so little of Christ and of Christianity that he would not believe that Jesus was risen from the dead. It is from the lips of the unbeliever of one moment, and the inspired of the next, that we are to receive the high mystery of the Trinity. But in truth the exclamation of Thomas will not bear to be siphoned down into a revelation of doctrine—"My Lord, and my God!" The first of these clauses was an exclamation of surprise, a sudden and passionate recognition of Jesus; the second was the natural and immediate transference (common in cases of supernatural impression, with all minds, pious or profane,) of the thoughts of Thomas to that awful and wonder-working God, whose power and presence were so visibly manifested in the resurrection of his Christ. There is no evidence, in the remainder of the gospel, or in the book of the Acts, or throughout the New Testament, that Thomas, or the rest of the Apostles, for a moment believed that Jesus was God. Now, since this was a doctrine that they certainly had no conception of, previous to the death of Christ, there must have been an occasion, when, if true, it broke for the first time on the astonished minds of the disciples. Now is it possible to believe that such an occasion could have passed unmarked—that no amazement, no awe would be expressed—and that as we follow them in their course, we should be unable to distinguish between the moments when they did not, and the moments when they did understand, that the being with whom they had been living in familiar intercourse was the everlasting God? Could such a discovery burst upon any human mind, and that mind manifest no emotion—not a ripple on the current of sentiment and feeling to show when

it was that these disciples first began to know that they had been the familiar friends of the living God? I confidently state that the thing is not credible nor possible. The disciples would not have been human, if such things could be. We know that after the ascension, as before, they always speak of him as "the man approved by God, by signs and miracles which God did by him, and whom God raised from the dead?" Do such things admit of explanation from the known course of human sentiments and emotions, if Trinitarianism is true? We think not.

There is another passage in the Gospels supposed to teach the deity of Christ—and hence so far used as an inferential proof of the doctrine of the Trinity:—"I and my Father are one." Beautiful expression of the soul of Christ, exalted in beauty only by that life which yet more spiritually declared that He and his Father were one, for "what the Son seeth the Father do, these also doeth the Son likewise." Why are we compelled to examine coldly, or turn an instant from the deep religious meaning of this perfect filial utterance of the Son of God? It expresses that harmony of purpose with God which is the result and peace of the spirit of true religion, and which was perfect in the mind of Jesus, because in him was perfect the spirit of faith in Providence, of trustful submission to his Father's will. "The cup that my Father hath given me, shall I not drink of it?" Well might he say, and yet how wondrous it is that any being could say, and yet retain his intense humanity, "I and my Father are one!" Clear proof of the inspiration of the Christ? But how the beauty fades away if this very being was God himself, and all his submission of will is but an artifice of words! How hard, artificial, and unlovely, does the ever fresh gospel become when submitted to the tortures of systems, and system-makers! What a difference in genuine spiritual power on the heart of man between Jesus living and dying in the peace of faith, in the trust that a holy God will keep the destinies of a holy

man, that his Providence will recompense the Right—and Jesus not living and dying in the strength of the *moral* elements of faith, but actually associated with the omniscient mind of God, so as to be an inseparable person! Such should be the difference between the genuine spiritual energy of Unitarian and Trinitarian representations of Christianity.

Jesus, in the context, explains in what sense he uses this beautiful expression, "I and my Father are one," and he there positively denies that the employment of it implies any claim of equality with God. Let our Lord be his own interpreter, and let the solemn and affecting words I am about to quote, silence for ever the vain plea, that this exquisite expression of the moral sentiment and spirit of Jesus, was intended to be doctrinal and Trinitarian. If so, there is equal proof for all Christians being portions of the Godhead. "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one; as thou Father art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us.—and the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one; I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them as thou hast loved me." \*

The only other passage of any force in which deity is supposed to be accorded to Jesus, &c. I do not notice here, because it has already been abundantly examined in the present Controversy.

I would now call your attention to the precise state of the argument so far as we have advanced in it. We have taken for granted the Unity of God, which no Christian denies. We have found that the belief of three persons in one God is not reconcilable with any *human* conception of that admitted unity: we have found that there was no *direct* evidence in the Bible for the doctrine of the Trinity: and lastly,

\* John. xiv. 21.

† Rom. vi. 3.

we have examined some of the very strongest passages of Scripture, on which that doctrine is attempted to be established, *through an inferential mode of reasoning*

I might stop here then, and without looking at the Scripture evidence against the doctrine, but only the evidence in its favour, declare that such a doctrine could not possibly have such an insufficient publication. The very passages brought forward to sustain it, disprove it. They all speak of derived powers, and of glory communicated. They are all in the strain,—“Therefore God, even his God, hath highly exalted him, and given him a name that is above every name.” Nay, take that passage, that which there is none in which dominion is more emphatically ascribed to Christ, and see how it closes:—“and when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that did put all things under him, that God may be all in all.”—1 Cor. xv. 28. We shall not, however, treat Trinitarianism so lightly as to dismiss it, unproved upon its own showing: we shall not rest satisfied with pointing out the insufficiency of its Scriptural authority, but bring against it the overpowering force of opposing Scripture, and as we have given specimens of the biblical evidence for, advance something of the biblical evidence against, the Trinity.

In the first place, then, this doctrine cannot be true, because there are some passages in which it is *expressly and plainly declared* that the Father alone is the one God, not the Father, and the Son, and the Spirit, but the FATHER. “Father”—this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent.” “But to us there is but one God, the FATHER, of whom are all things, and we in Him, and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him.”

“There is one Lord, one faith, one baptism, One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.”

“Of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no not the angels which are in Heaven; neither the Son, but the Father.”

These declarations are surely sufficient to protect Unitarianism from having no warrant in Scripture. They contain direct, positive, definite assertions; they assert that there is one God, and that Jesus Christ is not that God. It is not possible for human language to express more clearly or more guardedly the simple faith of Unitarian Christianity. Yet we are told that only the ingenuity of heretics has obliged Trinitarians to have recourse to unscriptural language. Strange, certainly, that Holy Writ should have itself expressed the creeds of heresy and damnable error, and rendered it impossible to express in its sacred words the Creeds of Truth!

I quote, in the second place, some passages out of a multitude, in which ideas are connected with Christ which are utterly inconsistent with the supposition of his deity. “I came not to do mine own will.” “I can of myself do nothing.” “If I honour myself, my honour is nothing; it is my Father that honoureth me.”—John vii. 54. “For as the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself.”—John v. 26. “As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father.”—John vi. 57. “I have not spoken of myself, but the Father who sent me, He gave me a commandment what I should say, and what I should speak.”—John xii. 49, 50.

“The word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me.”—John xiv. 24.

“I ascend to my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God.”—John xx. 17.

“When ye have lifted up the Son of man on high, then shall ye know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me I speak these things.”—John viii. 28.

Ecclesiastical History has already acquainted us with the device that sets aside the plain meaning of these passages. It is said that Jesus Christ had *two natures*, was composed of two minds, that he was both man and God; and thus does Trinitarianism openly assert mysteries of an opposite character. Three Persons in one Essence is unintelligible enough; but no sooner is this propounded to us, than we are called off to a directly opposite mystery of two Essences in one Person. And here we cannot be put off with the metaphysical sophistry that we do not know the nature of God, for we do know something of the nature of man; and we do say that never was there a greater abuse of the moral meanings of the word Faith, than to set forth, that God's nature and man's nature so united together as to form one inseparable person, may be embraced as an object of Faith. The true nature and office of Faith is to carry us from the seen to the unseen,—to give us moral confidence in that world which we do not see, from our moral experience in this world which we do see,—and in that portion of God's ways which the future conceals, from what we know of that portion of them which the present unfolds. Faith is moral, not metaphysical; and, above all, finds no merit and no efficacy in assenting to unmeaning words.

As before, of the doctrine of the Trinity, so now of this doctrine of the Hypostatic Union, as it is called, I ask for a single hint throughout the New Testament of the inconceivable fact that, in the body of Jesus, resided the mind of God and the mind of man,—two natures, the one finite, the other infinite, yet making but one person,—a difficulty you will perceive the very opposite of that of the Trinity; for whereas it teaches three persons in one nature, this teaches two natures in one person. But we have already traced, in Ecclesiastical History, the origin of this view, and the necessity of its appearance, in subservience to the doctrine of the Trinity.

I will only apply one scriptural test to this theory of the two natures in Christ. And it is one from which Trinitarians cannot escape by their ordinary refuge of avoiding one set of statements by referring them to the humanity of Jesus, and another set of statements by referring them to his deity. It is God the Son, whom Trinitarians represent as becoming incarnate in the body of Jesus; it was God the Son who took humanity into union with deity: therefore whenever Jesus, in his human nature, speaks of the deity that dwelt within him, inspired him, and wrought through him, it must be God the Son to whom he refers. But this is never the case: Scripture does not know this doctrine, nor support its requisitions. It is always, "*the Father who dwelleth in me, He doeth the works.*"

It was asserted in Christ Church, that if there is not a plurality of persons in the godhead, the oriental style, "let us make man in our own image," and the use of the plural where we use the singular, made the word of God an agent of deception, and affected the aurality of the divine mind. This is bold language; and, considering the evidence, as unscholarlike as bold. We refrain from a retort in the same spirit. We look with unaffected wonder upon the mind that is reckless enough, and ignorant enough of the sources of error within itself, to dare to say, "if I am not right in my interpretation of Scripture, God is a deceiver." Yet such men can charge others with making themselves judges of revelators, and saying what God *must* mean.

I have not taken up that other thread of supposed scriptural intimations, which is thought to connect the Holy Spirit as a third Person in the unity of the godhead. This portion of the argument, strangely neglected by Trinitarians, who generally take for granted the deity and personality of the Holy Ghost as following without debate from the deity of Christ, since three not two is the favourite mythological and theological number, is however to form the subject of a separ-

rate Lecture in Christ Church, not yet delivered. Why there should be any necessity, on Trinitarian principles of theology, for a third person in the Godhead to perform "*the work*," as it is called, of the spirit of God in communication with man, after the sacrifice of Christ has left the Father's love free to operate, we cannot perceive, except upon the Platonic principle, that the Supreme One in the Trinity is an Essence perfectly abstracted, immovable, and without action. Not wishing, however, to anticipate the argument, I shall only adduce one remarkable passage, in proof that the Holy Spirit could not, in the first age of the Gospel, have a deity and personality ascribed to it distinct from the deity and personality of God the Father. When Paul came to Ephesus, he found there some disciples, of whom he inquired,—“Have you received the Holy Ghost since you believed?” The answer is remarkable: “We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost.” None is it possible that the Holy Ghost should be the third person of the Trinity, a constituent person in the Christian God, and that these “believers,” though only disciples of John, should have been uninstructed in the doctrine? The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God, God himself in communication with man, naturally or supernaturally, the enlightening influence of the Spiritual Father revealing Himself to the spiritual nature of His children.

I do not know what may appear convincing to other minds, but to me the Ecclesiastical History of the Doctrine of the Trinity, with its rise in *human sources of Philosophy and Metaphysics*, and not in Revelation, seems a fact capable of being most clearly traced. Rarely indeed does the origin of an error so conspicuously disclose itself: rarely is its course so open to observation. On the other hand, if there is not decisive proof in Scripture of the strict and personal Unity of God, I must think that it is vain to prove any doctrine from the words of the Bible—for sure I am that there is no

doctrine more distinctly, more guardedly, more simply, more repeatedly stated, than the great doctrine, that there is One God, and that the Father is that God.

We are told that the “invisible things of God are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and godhead.” Yet the Universe reveals no Trinity. Reason knows and requires no Trinity. Natural Religion is not Trinitarian. Scripture speaks of One God the Father, and of One Lord Jesus Christ. Gentle Philosophy and Ecclesiastical History *are* Trinitarian. In *their* pages we find this subject. Ecclesiastical History has narrated the rise and progress of these doctrines—and to Ecclesiastical History shall they finally be referred,—when another chapter is added, a chapter that unhappily yet remains to be written, the history of their decline and fall.



## LECTURE VII.

### MAN, THE IMAGE OF GOD.

BY ST. BARNABAS.

- “ FOR A MAN INDEED OUGHT NOT TO COVER HIS FEET, PARASITIC AS HE IS THE IMAGE AND GLORY OF GOD.”—*Eccl. 10.* 15.
- “ AND WITH ME CAME TO HIMSELF, HE SAID, FOR MANY THINE SERVANTS OF MY FATHERS HAVE UNPAID ENOUGH AND TO SPARE; AND I KNOW WELL MYSELF I HAVE UNPAID, AND DO TO MY FATHER; AND WILL SAY UNTO HIM, FATHER, I HAVE SINNED AGAINST HEAVEN AND BEFORE THEE; AND AM SO MUCH WORTHY TO BE CALLED THY SON: MAKE ME AS ONE OF THY HIRE-SERVANTS.”—*Eccl. 10.* 17.

We are often told that man was originally created in the image of his Maker; and, in the same connection, we are told that, in his fall, he lost it. If this be true, we might expect that Scripture writers, in alluding to fallen man, would never ascribe to him so holy a resemblance. Paul, however, does it in one of the texts I have quoted; and Paul is not alone in this ascription. In an ordinance to Noah, immediately after the deluge, we find the same truth made the foundation of a most solemn injunction. “Whoso sheddeth man’s blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man.”\* Had the resemblance of God been effaced from the soul of man in the fall of Adam, there had been in this ordinance neither meaning nor solemnity. Since, therefore, the sacred writer uses the fact of man’s likeness to God to stamp deeper guilt on the crime of murder,

\* Gen. ix. 6.

since, moreover, that fact is alleged after the narration of the fall--we are justified by Scripture in claiming this high and glorious distinction for our universal nature.

I have quoted the second text, because the principle implied in it is identical with that which I stand here to maintain, namely, that sin is not of our nature, but against it, that it is not consistent with it, but contradictory to it; that to be sinful, is not to be natural, but unnatural. Sin, properly speaking, is moral delirium; and the progress towards that last paroxysm which, by revelation, arouses the soul from its madness, is eloquently symbolized in the parable from which our second text is taken. Having tried all that sin could offer him, having sunk to the very brink of carnal appetites, and vainly sought thus to satisfy the hunger of an immortal soul, scoured, disappointed, and disgusted; resisted, but not satisfied, the prodigal awakes from his wretched dream, the delirium that so long held him is dispersed, with a calm and clear brain he finds himself in open day-light, and discerns the empty and unsubstantial vanities for which, on a false hope, he spent his labour and his strength, to reap at last, in the bitterness of a repentant heart, nothing but grief, tribulation, and anguish.

Sin is not a following of nature, but a violence on it; not conformity, but contradiction to it. And so, as when returning life beats in the palsied heart, or the dawn of reason bursts again on the madman's brain, the prodigal is said "to come to himself;" when the spirit of moral renovation opens on him with compassionate visitings of nature, and reveals to him a full sense of his condition. In his guilt he was at variance with all the moral instincts of humanity; and, in the sorrow of repentance, he needed as much to be at peace with himself as with his father. It is universally thus. God has established a certain order and harmony in our nature, appointed to each faculty a place and a pur-

pose; and, in disturbing this arrangement, we become transgressors. We cannot sin against God without also sinning against our own souls, for in them is the primitive revelation of God; and in thus sinning against our own souls, we may practically resist all the divine attributes of which our weak faculties are the fita reflection: God's wisdom in the abuse of our intellect, his greatness in the loss of our moral dignity; his goodness in the destruction of our charities; his purity in the corruption of our hearts. Unitarians are accused of making sin a light matter. We protest against the justice of the accusation. We hold sin to be the greatest of evils, and the most dice of miseries. We hold it not as a mere social impropriety, but we regard it as a dark disloyalty against conscience and against God. Much suffering, we know, it inflicts on society; but slight, indeed, is it compared with the ruin and devastation it works in our own souls. Here, at first, God impressed his image; here, at last, he sees his tribunal--it is here his voice was heard in kindness, it is here it shall be also heard in judgment. God's government is, like himself, spiritual. Man rules by outward power, God by inward inspiration; and it is the peculiarity of the divine legislation that, in the same individual, it attaches the condemnation to the crime; forces transgression, to pronounce its own sentence, and to inflict its own punishment. Human society has set up various bulwarks to guard its security; human law-givers have accompanied their enactments with fiercest penalties; and before Draco, and since, millions upon millions of God's erring creatures have been offered, a sanguinary sacrifice to justice: superstition has personified all hideous evil in Satan,—the mighty sinner of creation,—the minister of eternal vengeance,—the great executioner of the universe; superstition has spread the limitless prisons of hell, and filled them with tortures, and in those flames which it asserts are kept burning by the breath of an angry God, and are never to be quenched during his everlasting existence;

but we assert, there is no scorn of society, there is no torture of most cruel laws, there is no hell of supererogation, deep, burning, and eternal as it may be, that can equal the agonies which man's own sense of wrong and degradation heap upon his overwhelmed and sunken spirit. The glory of an immortal soul is beyond all outward glories; the majesty of empires and crowns, the splendour of the sun, the beauty of the firmament, the riches of the universe, are nothing in comparison. We say to those to whom it is our privilege to minister, though you were stripped of all that constitute your frail and present happiness; though saddest reverses became your lot; though God laid his hand heavily upon you and your family, tore you from that rank and station that now make your glory; though your children and friends were one by one snatched from you, until you stood in the world-wilderness like a branchless and blasted tree, though all bitterness of body and grief of soul were yours,—having an upright soul, it is but a light affliction compared with a guilty conscience, which could wield over earth a universal scepter. The wages of sin is death,—death in the most tremendous meaning of that tremendous word,—death of purity, death of holy confidence, death of self-respect, death of inward and outward peace. Sin is misery, and the worst of miseries,—one that carries with it its own vengeance, is self-punished and self-cursed. True, we recognize no omnipresent and invisible tempter; true, we hold no gross and eternal punishment; we preach no original ineluctation, and no inherent depravity; we proclaim no sin which shuts out all light and hope around the mercy-seat of God, and scathes the heart of man with everlasting despair. True, we show you no marian penitents, bewildered in the mazes of remorse, shrieking on the death-bed which conscience reaped with furies. We announce no deity coming from heaven, putting on the frail existence of humanity, and expiating on the cross the sin which had closed all access to peace. We cannot, and if we

could we would not, freeze your hearts with ideas of torture, nor appal you with threatnings, nor echo on your ears the groans that never cease, the weepings, the wailings, the knocking of teeth, the sighs and hopeless complainings that swell far ever and ever a thickening smoke of torment. Independently of these things, there are other considerations more solemn,—more solemn, because more true,—there is our conscience; there is our peace; there is the dignity of our whole spiritual nature; there is reverence for duty; there is the power to enjoy what is pure and beautiful; there is fitness for communion with God, with all the righteous and the excellent,—these may be lost, or clouded by sin; and they may be so lost as never fully to be recovered. We cannot sin no slight evil, either as to its inward spirit or outward influence— as I have stated, so we preach. And here, once for all, I enter my protest against the impeachment which charges us with stripping guilt of its danger and its awfulness.

I. Human nature, according to the point from which we regard it, has a good or an evil aspect, each perfectly distinct, and each perfectly true. The whole truth is then in neither separately, but in both conjointly. Fixing too intently on either, and carrying our ideas to extremes, we may, on the one side, flatter human nature above its merits; or, on the other, be guilty towards it of injustice; on the one side see in it all possible good, and on the other nothing but incorrigible evil: on the one side soar into Utopianism, and on the other descend into Calvinism. The Calvinistic view we hold to be false, the Utopian impossible. We have no idea of any perfect goodness or perfect happiness in this world, either possessed or to be attained. Whilst we pace our way in this earthly pilgrimage, sin and suffering must more or less track our steps; the prodigal's confession, and the publican's prayer, must still be ours; the most favoured of God's children have to meet, and bear their allotted griefs,—to see their glory grow dim, the desire of their eyes

vanish, and to look onward and backward through the mist of tears. Sufficient of stern realities press upon us to crush at once the vision of a painless and sinless beatitude. Physical wants and sufferings, the inevitable condition of our mortal nature, were there no other, are of themselves equal to the purpose. While an hospital exists among men, breathing with groans and sickly in its very look; while a death-bed is found, steeped in the weepings of affliction; whilst a stone marks and commemorates a spot where the dust is sacred to affection and to sorrow; the wildest dreamer has enough to rebuke his enthusiasm, and to cast it into soberness. And extreme or exaggerated expectations of our nature, are in still stronger contradiction to our moral constitution than our physical. In every individual, however humble his grade, and however sluggish his faculties, there is abundance to make him aware that perfection here is neither his condition nor his destiny;—numberless desires, passions, hopes, fears, expectancies; and no one imagines that all his desires are to be gratified, all his passions fulfilled, all his hopes accomplished, all his fears removed, all his expectancies realized. Want and wish pursue their strife to the end. As it is with the individual, so is it with society: for as society is an aggregate of individual persons, social character is an aggregate of individual characters. Evils, sins, and sorrows, must always, we fear, exist, both in the depths and on the surface of the great community: we look for no period in future time, when those antagonist passions and realities shall be extinct;—which place man into resisting contact to man, when riches, and fame, and power, shall not be sought for with avidity and strife, and create the throng of passions which spring from their desire and then abuse: we look for no period when the strong universally will use their strength in righteousness and mercy, when the poor and the weak shall cease to be victims, and have full justice done to them: we dare scarcely hope for a period when the massive

throne of tyranny, whether political or sacerdotal, should be swept away upon the flood of emancipated progression; and, with equal fear, we think of the tyrannies of caste and creed, not less dark or obdurate: and although not entirely in despair, we look forward with timid anticipation to a time when the war of opinion shall be changed for Christian peace, and the fierce cry of ligotey give place to the hymn with which the angels sang our Saviour's birth. We see no prospect that man shall lay aside their selfishness, and act in the spirit of universal charity, or that they shall so curb it as to harmonize it with the good of others! that they shall become universally disinterested, forbearing, candid, and generous; that the proud man will quit all his scorn, and the oppressor break or throw away his sceptre. Moral and social evils will unquestionably be mitigated, but the sources of them be too deep for extinction,—were extirpation desirable, which it is not: for these elements of our nature are wrong only accidentally, while, essentially, they are right. Knowing that an argument gains nothing by concealing the objections to it, I have thus far been liberal in admissions: I will make one admission more. I acknowledge that an over-estimate of the actual condition and prospects of human nature, as well as their undue depreciation, is likely to have injurious consequences. One of the worst is this: that, creating vivid and unreal hopes, they rebound with harsh and cruel disappointments; the fervour of expectation turns into despair, the glow of generous, but blasted enthusiasm, ends down into apathy, or it does not wither into cynicism; ecstasy that was too intense to last, and too extravagant to be well founded, either renounces altogether its early faith, or, casting away its hope, complains through life in grief and despondency. Desires, bright and beautiful, are broken, and their light scattered in the dust. Aspirations, pure too high for utterance, turn back to the bosom that nourished them,—lithero their palace, now their prison,—and there waste away in hopeless thinking, or die in

the echoes of unavailing murmurs. Such mistakes are to be lamented, but not to be scorned, for that suffering is not to be despised which has its foundation in profound and extensive sympathy. And it is not in the power of minds more obtuse and slow to measure or conceive the pain of those who, with a moral imagination that goes out to the very limits of humanity, and a piercing acuteness that enters into the hidden places where suffering weeps unnoted, and sin lies down unredempted, that in the spirit of unselfish love feels the moe and guilt of a race, as though they were personal afflictions, it is not easy, I say, to estimate the pain such men undergo: when some conjuncture of events, which seemed the dawn of virtue, of liberty, of peace, of brotherhood, turns out a mockery and a contradiction; when they live to see that their noblest aspirations were but as the babblings of vanity; that the circumstances of which they augured most hopefully, proved as empty as shapes of vapour painted by the rising sun, that changes, of which they prophesied in most exulting strains, reversed all their calculations. This is no vague speculation; there have been many instances in fact, and we can imagine many more. Had Luther been defeated in his attempt for religious reformation; had Howard departed to his rest with the sorrowful conviction that he left cells as dark, and prisoners as hopeless, as he found them; had Williberforce chosen his life in despair of all redemption for the slave; had Washington fought in vain the fight for independence, seeing no prospect for his country, but submissively to bear the yoke for ever; we have no doubt that each would have experienced a more oppressive anguish than from the keenest of personal afflictions. In such cases there were, of course, the soundness of conception and wisdom of execution which insure success; but in others, it often happens that the disappointment is not the less bitter because the expectations were baseless.

Opposed to this scheme is that of rigid Calvinism. By

the latter system the whole nature is described as hopelessly corrupt, and language affords no colouring which can give shades deep enough for the theological picture. Minutest analysis is used to prove man such a being, that when considered you find him to be a compound of fiend and brute—such a being that you wonder God would allow him to disgrace existence, to pollute erration, and not annihilate, and blot him out from the universe, such a being that if correctly described the very continuance of society becomes a miracle and a marvel. His intellect, we are told, is utterly and spiritually darkened, his will the slave of sin, set to work iniquity greedily, his imagination corrupt, his passions rebellious, his affections perverted, incapable of good in thought, word, or deed, and completely devoted to evil. Taking this view as correct, we might suppose the prime use of man's understanding was to devise wickedness, of his memory to prolong the thoughts of it, of his will to form only guilty resolves, and of his passions to riot in all that is vile and ungodly. We have thus the whole spiritual and moral man steeped in black and hateful infamy. To sustain these assertions, appeal is made to experience; and proof is found of entire and universal depravity in history, laws, and literature. Any conclusion drawn from these goes but to testify what we are ready to concede, that man is an imperfect being, and that the evidence of his imperfection is stamped upon most of his actions and productions. But the testimony is partially and unjustly quoted. Another estimate of the same evidence would argue as strongly, and even more so, for the inherent goodness of man. If we take the instance of human laws it will at once illustrate and confirm my assertion. If laws prove the existence and universality of crime, they prove also the existence and universality of the sense of justice, for laws, so far as they embody general principles, are the expression of common and collective sentiments. Indirectly, they prove yet more: for, after all, the great mass of

truth and rectitude exists independently of laws, as such as we here could reach, is in fact such that without it no laws could have a moment's force. In the effort to make good an indictment against human nature, an industry and labour are expended, as perverse as they are pertinacious, the lowest parlours of depravity are raked, the deepest mines of wickedness are worked with a zeal as ardent as the veriest miser would seek for hidden treasure, the blackest evils of the worst times are adduced, the pages of history that are the most darkly stained, are torn out and severed from the context; and for what purpose is all this?—Why, to make the noblest work of God odious; to vilify that nature which was glorified in the person of our Lord Jesus Christ. If human nature is so thoroughly depraved and vile, as so frequently asserted, the scheme of orthodoxy is most unprofitable, and a fallen humanity, as it paints humanity, instead of giving Christianity consistency, renders in the most perplexing of paradoxes. For if man be thus naturally vile and depraved—corrupted in every faculty, whence these high counsels in heaven concerning him; whence the union of three infinite and co-eternal persons to save a wretch, the extinction of whom would have been mercy to the universe; whence the counsels of the Father, the incarnation of the Son, and that death of a God-man on Calvary, at which we are told the angels trembled and creation stood aghast; along with all, the constant and supernatural agency of the Holy Spirit?—If man be really as worthless and as wicked as we are often told he is, all this, with reverence I speak it, seems a want of wisdom and a waste of strength. Though it may be considered over bold I will go a step further. If the one sin of Adam was to work such complete ruin in all his countless posterity; if it was to be the source of such an irremediable wickedness, and unrelieved misery, if notwithstanding the united work of three infinite agents, there was still to be a bottomless pit and an everlasting stroke of torment, a black and boundless ocean of guilt

and pain, swelled by gloomy streams ever and ever flowing in from earth, for which infants were sealed in their birth, to which the lost are consigned in their death—of this be the lot to which the great mass of our species is destined—of which the first tear is a symbol, and the last sigh a passport.

If hell still is more peopled than heaven, then the infinite agencies of redemption might have been spared, this hopeless and allimitable anguish might have been extinguished, and the annihilation of our first parents would have been the greater mercy and the greater salvation.

Appeal is made to scripture with still greater confidence than to experience. There is one to whom reference is never made for testimony to this doctrine, and that is our Lord Jesus Christ; and if such doctrine were true, it is strange that he who actually met that any should testify of him, because he knew what was in men, did not reveal it, and stamp it with all the solemnity of his authority. It may with confidence be asserted that such a dogma as the inherent and universal corruption of human nature is neither asserted nor justified by any Scripture from Genesis to Revelations. The Bible, I admit to be a moral, and also a providential history; and in this relation, I admit also, that it contains many strong statements of human weakness: but they all refer to periods of peculiar degeneracy, and a fair study of the context will plainly show they have defined limitations. In the appendix to this lecture I will subjoin a list of texts usually pleaded for this doctrine, the mere exhibition of which is sufficient to expose its utter want of a Scriptural foundation.\* On the present occasion I shall confine my remarks to the proofs alleged from Paul to the Romans. Stripping the subject of all the mysticism with which it has been encumbered, and being tying ourselves with the mind and tones of the apostle, let us clearly see what was his object, and then we shall truly appreciate the nature of his argument. Paul's object was twofold—first, to show that the Gospel was

\* See App. 4th. Note 1.

universal. This was opposed to the circumscribed nationality of Judaism. Secondly, that it was inward and spiritual. This was again opposed to the ritual and legal exactitude of Judaism. The General course, therefore, of the argument is directed against Jewish thoughts and Jewish prejudices, and to maintain the admissibility of the Gentiles to the Christian Church. He has then to make good two propositions, namely, "that God is impartially and equally the God of all men; and that fidelity of heart is the essence of all true religion. We might sum up the whole system of the Apostle in two simple sentences of his letter: "Is he the God of the Jews only? is he not also the God of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also." The other assertion is, that "with the heart man believeth unto righteousness." Proving these two principles, he utterly demolishes all Jewish claims. The Apostle proceeds to open the new aspect which Jesus presented of the character of God—that of grace or mercy. Moses proclaimed Jehovah as a God of law, Jesus revealed him as a God of grace. Paul tactfully, but with power, argues most convincingly that in this relation only can men confidently approach him, but in this relation there is free access for all. None have a claim from merit, for all are guilty. With remarkable prudence, he takes, first, the case of the Gentile, and the state of the world in his own time supplied him examples in melancholy abundance. There was, therefore, no ground for Gentile exultation or Jewish jealousy, for the gospel was offered to the Heathens, not as a thing of merit but of favour, not as reward for their holiness, but as a remedy for their sin. To the Jews, who looked with bitter contempt on all men but themselves, who imagined every spiritual advantage was for them alone, this would be most offensive. The next question which therefore arose was this:—As the Gentiles obviously were accepted before God, only on the ground of his mercy, whether the Jews could claim acceptance on any other ground? The Apostle had most con-

vincingly shown that the Gentiles had violated the sense of duty inscribed upon their hearts, with equal force of reasoning he proves that the Jews had violated the precepts written in their law; one, therefore, had no right to accuse the other—both were guilty in the sight of God, and both had equal need of his mercy.—But, the Jews were not only wrong in their ideas on the extent of the Creator's goodness, but also on the true nature of human virtue. As they considered his special providence confined to themselves, so they imagined the only acceptable obedience was in the rigid observance of their own minute precepts and ceremonies. In opposition to this Paul contends that justification is by faith, and not by the works of the law—not a faith which implies a mere assent to a series of scholastic propositions, but a faith which consists in a trusting and confiding spirit. The Apostle places saving holiness, not in outward and measured precepts, but in living and inward principles—in allegiance to God and Christ, in the loyalty of a true and pure heart—in the spirit that makes obedience more a life than a law. To say then that God holds man sternly to a code of inevitable condemnation, to say that any one transgression, however slight, sets at naught the whole tendency of the character and life, not only leaves Paul's reasoning without force, but subverts the gospel to its very foundations. Our Lord in the parable represents a master as thus addressing his unforgiving servant, "O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt because thou desiredst me—shouldst not thou also have had compassion on thy fellow-servant, even as I had pity on thee?" The character of God as described by orthodoxy is the contradictory of this. But we are informed that God is a Judge, and, analogous to human judges, on the tribunal of the universe, lays aside all private considerations. The assimilation is at once low and false. God has no evidence to examine, no probabilities to balance, no decision to arrive at, no formal sentence to pronounce—there is no distinction in the

case between God and man, analogous to that between an earthly judge, and his accused fellow-mortal; there is no such distinction with God as a personal relation and a public one, for God is the same in all relations. His dominion is in the spirit; there he rewards, and there he punishes; there is no reward separate from the direct results of righteousness itself issuing in blessedness, and no penalty separate from the results of sin itself issuing suffering, and each in the proportion in which the character is sanctified or depraved. Forgiveness of sin then, is peace of conscience, springing from a regenerated heart, and when man with a thoughtful and enlightened spirit can forgive himself, God forgives him. We, at least those of us personally engaged in this controversy, maintain no such doctrine as the pardon of sin on condition of repentance—as if repentance were something offered and remission an equivalent received instead. On the contrary, we see in repentance but the painful revulsion of a soul from a moral state found by sad experience to be unworthy of it, a struggle upward by many sighs and fears to the high estate from which it has fallen, in repentance itself we see but an additional instance of the anguish which sin never fails to entail. We regard it not as a merit, but a penalty. We grant the universality of sin, as fully as any can assert it. We know it is written, "all men have sinned and come short of the glory of God" and we admit the truth of the assertion. Wherever man is, there will be sin, for we expect in no place—no, not in heaven itself—to find in man the perfection of a deity. It has been asserted, that every man has an ideal in his soul above his actual conduct. This has been used for condemnation of our nature, we take it as the glory of it—as an evidence that the spirit of God is extinguished in no man. We are ready to concede, not that the open transgressor comes short of the glory of God, but the best men come far short of the glory of their own ideal, and the sense of that short coming is acute, in the degree

that their apprehensions of moral levelness are clear and purified. Every man with his conscience in a right state laments with more heart-felt sorrow the sins which are inward than those which are outward, not those which have been exposed to the world, but those which only God has seen. We desire in no sense to mitigate the deep injury of sinfulness; but when we are told, that God, in vindication of his holy law, must subject man to an unsparring standard of judgment, orthodoxy to be consistent should have the unmitigated penalty inflicted on every personal transgressor. We are unable to conceive how the righteousness of any law can be vindicated by contriving an escape for the guilty by the suffering of the innocent. We do not make and the law—say, we establish it, for we hold, and we preach it also, that transgression vouchsafes in the person of the sinner the claims of holiness, righteousness and completeness, in anguish and tribulation. I bear close the polemical division of this lecture, and now for the remaining time I shall dwell on views more positive.

II. Having elucidated two extreme and false systems of inhuman nature, I shall now adduce some of these essentials which properly entitle it to be considered in the likeness of God. I shall pass over the faculties of mere intellect and taste, for these are not denied. I do this for the sake of brevity, for it would be easy to prove that without sense of moral beauty in the soul, even these could have no high development, philosophy would lose its wisdom, science its uses, painting its glow, architecture its majesty, sculpture its grace, poetry and eloquence their inspiration. It would be easy, I maintain, to show, that without conceptions of the divine, the true, the right, and the beautiful, there would be neither power nor materials in human nature from which to create a single great work of mind, nothing to exceed the might of genius or the immortality of thought. I shall, however, in all my subsequent remarks, confine myself to



what without dispute is strictly moral. We contend not for an infallibility in man's reason, neither do we assert impeccability in his will; as we admit error in the one, we can admit sin in the other. But when we speak of the moral nature of man, we regard it not partially, but as a whole, not in its accidental exceptions, but in its essential constitution. Of this constitution we assert that virtue and goodness are the true and native attributes. For the position that sin is not natural but unnatural, not in accordance with humanity but contrary to it, we have the testimony of the great bishop Butler.\*—"Every work," he says, "of nature and art is a system; and as every particular thing, both natural and artificial, is for some use or purpose, out of or beyond itself, one may add to what has already been brought into the true idea of a system, its conduciveness to this or more ends. Let us instance in a watch: Suppose the several parts taken to pieces and placed apart from each other; let a man have ever so exact a notion of these several parts, unless he considers the respect and relations which they have to each other, he will not have any thing like the idea of a watch. Suppose these several parts brought together, and any how united, neither will he yet, be the union ever so close, have an idea which will bear any resemblance to that of a watch. But let him view these several parts put together, or consider them as to be put together in the manner of a watch—let him form a notion of the relation which these several parts have to each other, all conducive in their several ways to this purpose, showing the hour of the day,—and then he has the idea of a watch. Thus it is with the inward nature of man. Appetites, passions, affections, and the principle of reflection, conscience, considered severally as the inward parts of our inward nature, do not at all give us an idea of the system of this nature. And this our nature is adapted to virtue, as from the idea of a watch it ap-

\* Part in Sermons.

pears, that its nature, that is, constitution or system, is adapted to measure time. What in fact commonly happens is nothing to the question. Every work of art is apt to be out of order: but this is so far from being according to its system, that let the disorder increase, and it will destroy it." The author then goes on to say, that—"Nothing can possibly be more contrary to our nature than vice, meaning by nature not only the several parts of our internal frame, but also the constitution of it. Poverty and disgrace, tortures and death, are not so contrary to it. Misery and injustice are indeed equally contrary to some different parts of our nature taken singly, but injustice is moreover contrary to the whole constitution of the nature." And here I will repeat a fine remark from the same noble thinker, used already, in a note by one of my fellow-labourers in this discussion.—"We should learn," says the philosophical prelate, "to be cautious lest we charge God foolishly, by ascribing that to him, or the nature he has given us, which is wholly owing to its abuse. Men may speak of the degeneracy and corruption of the world, according to the experience they have had of it, but human nature considered as the divine workmanship should, methinks, be treated as sacred: for in the image of God made he man."\*

In human nature, under all its forms, we recognise two eternal moral elements; which, though frequently perverted, can never be destroyed. I mean sympathy and conscience, the feeling of a common nature, and the sense of right and wrong. If we consider the truth, the power, and extent of sympathy, though nothing else remained in man, this alone would prove his assimilation to God; would prove, to use the language of the Apostle, that he was still a partaker of the divine nature. In what numberless forms is it manifested!—rising from instinct to godliness. We see it in family affections. Wherever we meet a human, however rude

\* See Note 7

the brings that it shelters, whether it be scooped in the snow, or be a tent on the desert. wherever the loves of parents and children, of brothers and sisters, are interchanged within the sphere of its operation, we have the spirit of a common heart. We see it also in love of country. From those who surround him in his dwelling, man enlarges the compass of his affections, until they embrace those who, with himself, tread the same soil, and speak the same tongue. The general glory, honour, and prosperity of his country, become dear to him; and from habits of loving association, there, more than any where else, the heavens have a brighter smile, and nature wears a kinder face. Every nation has had its patriots; and, whether successful or not, whether victorious in the field or bleeding on the scaffold, they evince the power with which the sentiment of common good can overcome the force of selfish interests. We see the strength of sympathy in the love of man generally, and especially in that species of it which assumes the form of compassion. Whence else the mass of goodness which proves that humanity, with all its evils and its errors, is a most merciful nature. Mercy, in any form, is an appeal that is rarely disregarded. The stranger, whose face we never saw before, if it be rent and marred by suffering, in his misfortune becomes a brother, and what is yet harder, our foe, in his sorrow, seems once more a friend. Men find it hard to pardon a prosperous enemy; but there are few so callous whom a fallen one would not disarm of hatred. Hunger, thirst, cold, nakedness, desertion, orphanage, imprisonment, sickness—every want that afflicts the wretched—have their provision in human mercy, not only from individual hands, but from collective hearts. When man is malign'd as utterly corrupt—as at enmity with God and his kind, we may point to thousands occupied in works of beneficence, and to refugees far misery in every land, and claim as witnesses against the nescisers. And we stop not with the woes that fall directly

under the senses;—sufferers who wasted their sight and their tears in darkness, have been thought of with grief by those whom they knew not, and visited with glad tidings when they least expected. The piercing supplication of wretchedness has been sometimes wafted across continents and oceans without failing, or being weakened by the distance; and the cry of anguish, uttered at one extreme of earth, has fallen with power on human hearts at the other. We speak not of bodily wants alone, but equally of the soul's wants. The ignorant have those who feel and work for them, and there are some who do not scorn the most guilty; there are many pure souls who never themselves knew contamination, who can turn with mercy to the despised, and bleed with sorrow that the work of God should be so deep in ruin. And, whether with right or wrong principles, whether by right or wrong agencies, whether in right or wrong methods, this sentiment can have no illustration so sublime as the various exertions here, and throughout the globe, for the religious regeneration of mankind. Is there, then, nothing godlike in the spirit which gives unity and love to home; nothing godlike in the spirit which, with unselfish devotion, causes a man to sacrifice his own interests in his nation's good; nothing godlike in the spirit which makes the sufferer a brother, whether stranger or enemy; which can pierce the bounds of loathsome want; which can feel for the body and the soul, and draw near, in generous pity, both to distress and crime, which dreams, with tortured imagination, of the unseen tribulation of the Gangean, and rests not until the fresh breeze is on the prisoner's brow, and the bright and cheerful sunshine on his eye; which stretches forth its ample charity to the utmost regions of earth; and, wherever there is a complaint of physical or spiritual need, admits it is a brother's cry, and hears it not in vain?

The very passions, which might seemingly be urged against this reasoning, are but so many confirmations of it. Men have sometimes tried to be independent of others: they

failed. Men have tried to live apart from others, and to dispense with the general affections of life; they failed. Men have tried to set opinion at defiance, and to disregard externals; they also failed. And, in the few rare and extreme cases in which men have been more than usually sordid, selfish, and anti-social, the isolation to which they have been abandoned evinced their conduct to beaverse to nature; and, whilst it proved their folly, inflicted their chastisement. Emulation, envy, jealousy, vanity, ambition, and various other passions, afford evidence to the same purpose: for, what is emulation, but the struggle for the greatest share of appreciation; and envy, but the malignity of disappointment; and jealousy, but the suspicion of not possessing it,—perhance, of not deserving it; and vanity, but the petty desire to attain, or the blind hope that it already has it; and ambition, but the strong effort of a strong nature to have a lasting life in the admiration and memory of men: all, in these several ways, converging in evidence of one truth, namely, that community of feeling is amongst the greatest distinctions of our nature. In truth, it is only by this that man understands man. It is this that opens to man the heart of man: that, from the first human being to the last, forms a chain of common emotion, which indissolubly links mankind of all generations into one brotherhood. Without this, history would be a dead letter; laws and customs, but puzzles; arts, confused and shapeless; past languages and literature, but empty bubbles; and by-gone religions and philosophy, but unintelligible names. This common sympathy is that by which we know the meaning of history; by which we know the force of laws and customs, by which we know the beauty and immortality of art; by which we are enabled to interpret language, literature, philosophy, and religion; by which we are made one with our race, and identified in kindred with all that have ever ennobled or adorned it.

A second characteristic I have mentioned, in man, is the sense of duty, the sense of right and wrong. In this more

than in any other quality he bears the impress of his divine original. The sense of duty is an essential part of human nature. A man might as well endeavour to lay aside the consciousness of his rational existence as to get rid of the idea of an unmoveable distinction between good and evil, between virtue and vice. I know that, in the operations of the moral sense, there have been apparent contradictions: but if we were to deny it on this ground, we should deny the existence even of reason itself, for many of its conclusions are apparently contradictory. We assert the reality of the rational faculty, but not its infallibility; in like manner, we assert the reality of the moral faculty, but not its infallibility. I know that it seems various in its operation, not only from national and religious differences, but also from individual sophistries. Men pronounce just judgment on the sins of others; but when they come to pass sentence on their own, they invent a thousand excuses for justification or leniency: but these excuses do not satisfy themselves. And when they are alone with their own hearts, in silent and sober thought, the deception will not bear to be scrutinized, and truth is justified by conscience. The sense of duty is universal. Whenever we meet man, we meet one who, in some way or other, is the creature of moral feeling; and although the moral sentiment may be superstitiously or fanatically directed, there are essential ideas in which it never changes. Wild actions and awful evils may, I know, be perpetrated under a mistaken sense of duty, and done with the fiercer zeal because they are considered to be duty. Under its influence, men can not only sacrifice others but themselves: in one age or country, a man can incarnate himself before an image or an idol, or look calmly on the rack on which a tortured fellow creature suffers, or he can come from his retreat of self-infliction to the place where he persecutes; and, if the case compelled, he could go himself from that to the stake of martyrdom. The sentiment is true to itself, and the misdi-

rection of it lies in other sources; yet with all its diversities, justice, mercy, and truth, have ever the instinctive approval of conscience, whilst wrong, cruelty, and falsehood, under whatever forms disguised, are abhorrent to it. The sense of duty presents man to us in the most glorious aspects of his nature; and that sentiment is not always misdirected. By its power in the soul, we observe appetites governed, passions subjected, and temptation overcome; by its inspiration, when necessity calls, we observe men devoting themselves in the spirit of martyrdom to truth and right, casting pleasure aside, forsaking whatever was dear to them, and despising life itself. Whatever change for good has occurred in the history of man, is a witness for the force of duty, for it has been worked out in much travail and self-denial; whatever we have most precious in our spiritual or social blessings, whether our liberties or our religion, we owe to the spirit of duty; it is enshrined in the memory of all our benefactors; it is consecrated in the blood of martyrs. Signal instances of this kind may strike more forcibly from their distinctness and salience; but the mightiest energy of duty is in the economy of general life. Go into the open mart of the world, and, in all the astonishing complexities that are spread over that wide scene, consider to what an extent man trusts man, and is trusted in return, mutual confidence forming the immutable foundation of the vast social structure. It is base injustice to human nature to assert that all this is the effect of interest or fear; without prevailing conscience, mere interest or fear would be as powerless to sustain society as the arm of man to move the orb of heaven; without conscience, human laws could either have no existence or no power,—mere ropes of sand, that a touch could sever; passion would have no scruple, desire no limit, but power; and selfishness no control, but a superior opposing force; the strong would prostrate the weak by violence, and the weak would in turn overreach the strong by guile, deceit, and fraud.

I am willing to admit, as I have before admitted, that social man is encompassed with many injurious influences, and I know that he does not always escape guiltless: I know that many vices are generated in society, and nourished by its corruptions; that pride, both worldly and religious, walks through life with anti-social heart and clouded brow, wrapped up in its own miserable importance, exulting in vanities, self-worshipping and self-enslaved; that covetousness, surfeited with acquisition, still works on, and still cries "more;" that licentiousness goes its way in darkness, and leaves destruction in its path; that envy broods over its own solitary and unacknowledged malice, sickens at the pleasure or the fame it cannot reach; that gospel charity is often slain in the collision of creeds and passions, and Christian zeal heated into bigotry; but these, I repeat again, are not our nature, and judgment against it on such grounds is quite as unjust, as if we should seek out the hospitals to test the health of a community, visit our prisons to decide on its morals, and pass only through asylums for lunatics to form an opinion of its intelligence. But even in its sins, humanity loses not the evidence of its divine relationship. The image of God may be darkened, but the impress is deep as ever. The capacity of sin equally implies the capacity of holiness; transgression implies the knowledge of a law, inspired or revealed; the violation, therefore, of moral injunctions includes the high capability of moral perception. Whence but from the greatness of our nature is the deep misery of sin—whence, I might say, but from its holiness?—whence but from its adaptation to goodness, are the ruin and the dislocation which guilt can work in our whole inward frame and constitution? Thence it is, that it is that the conscience, dethroned and humiliated, is torn by remorse, worse incomparably than bodily torture: thence it is, that the affections either become a total and disorganized wreck, or, wounded by a sense of shame and lost dignity, bow down with sorrow

or wither in despair. Thence it is, that the good and pure are shinned, and the evil sought, for the one cause a feeling of contrast too painful to be borne, the other afford a refuge by their moral assimilation, and the spirit needs support wherever it can be found. Thence it is, that when the guilty have utterly lost their own respect, and the approbation of the virtuous, that crime becomes desperate and remorse madness,—that conscience is silenced in delirious self-defence, and that plunge after plunge sink them lower and lower in the gulf of spiritual perdition. And yet human character is rarely ever such a wreck as not to have some remnant to justify its origin and parentage; some embers of the sacred fire smouldering in the sanctuary,—some gleams of affection,—some drawings of memory, that open to the weary spirit the quiet and happiness of better days,—some touches of energy that bid yet a sigh for wretchedness,—some visitings of compunction,—some unconscious desires to be good once more,—some timid hopes of pardon,—some secret prayers to be made better. The human soul is a great mystery, and so indeed is human life, we observe a few palpable and external manifestations, but how little know we of the secret and unseen workings! That the good in every human being, even such as strikes us as the worst, preponderates over the evil, is, I am persuaded, not the imagination of a fanciful charity, but a fact and a reality.

But though more crime existed in actual life than has ever been alleged, our doctrine would yet be true. We enter on no defence of man in the whole of his conduct. We contend for his inherent capacities, and in arguing for these, we are entitled to select our illustrations from the highest specimens of nature, and not from the lowest. We contend for its capacity to subjugate passion to principle—to sacrifice present desires to progressive good—to renounce selfish interests to human ones—to give the spiritual and eternal a pre-dominance over the sensual and the temporal—and we con-

tend for this, not as a thing possible, but a thing proved—we contend for what has its evidence in abundance of examples. If we could point to one patriot, to one philanthropist, to one martyr, to one holy man, in each of these the fact would have sufficient attestation: but humanity has its armies of patriots, and philanthropists, and martyrs, and saints. With these the lowest of us are tested in a kindred nature, and dignified by a common brotherhood. But passing from characters of this magnitude, come we to the ordinary existence that is common to us all. Every life, from the palace to the cottage, is one more or less of self-denial and labour—one in which we must continually defer to others and work for them. Cast your imagination over the vast throng of this busy world: consider the countless modes in which they are all toiling with head and hand, from the man of genius to the labourer of field or factory,—from the proudest merchant to his humblest servant, scarcely a movement in it all that has not a reference to others beyond the agent,—scarcely a movement that has not some connection with a human love or a human duty. Retire from the crowd to their dwellings, and, except in cases of last degradation, they are, on the whole, retreats of mutual kindness. If there be grief, there is compassion, if there be illness, there is unwearied tenderness,—if there be death, there is sorrow. It will perhaps be said, that all this may very well co-exist with a reprobate state. If so, it only proves that no state is so reprobate, as not to be consistent with a great mass of excellence. If to confer happiness and show mercy be not goodness, we are at a loss to explain the goodness of God or of Christ. And as we descend in the scale of society, we discover human nature with peculiar trials, and also with peculiar virtues. Amongst the poor and laborious classes we may find some grossness, but we find much goodness, and to a considerate mind the wonder will be, that their grossness is not more, and their goodness less. We behold them siten patient under

manifold oppressions, forbearing against many wrongs; uncomplaining in the midst of afflictions, toiling on from youth to age in the same routine of laborious monotony; resigned in illness, though it takes that strength from them which is their only refuge, merciful to each other, giving aid to want out of want; all divine evidence that there is in humanity a godlike spirit, which nothing can suppress, not sin, ignorance, poverty, nor any ill of life.

I have spoken of our divine affinity chiefly in the goodness that unites us to our species, but there is a tendency towards God himself in which that affinity is still more clearly seen. It is made manifest in our capacity to know God. God is a spirit, and must be spiritually apprehended. We must therefore have some attributes in common. If there be not some qualities in our souls corresponding to the nature of God, he would be to us a nonentity, and we could neither know him nor love him. The knowledge of God is a spiritual revelation, and by that which is within us we interpret the revelation and give to it a meaning—his power in the movement of our will—his intelligence in the rectitude of our reason—his goodness in the sympathies of our affections—his holiness in the law of our conscience. It is made manifest in our capacity to imitate God. The apostle says, "Be ye followers of God as dear children," and our Saviour himself exhorts us to "be merciful even as he is merciful," and to be "perfect even as he is perfect." To imitate any being with whom we had no assimilation of nature, it requires no argument to prove an utter impossibility. But this principle has a moral value far beyond its theological import—in breaking down the distance which we usually place between our hearts and God; in drawing him within the circle of our nearest affections; in uniting us to him in a more blissful trust, in taking fear from our love and inspiring life in our obedience—proving to us that God is verily and indeed our Father, as Christ is our brother, that God our Father is imitable by his children;

that Christ our brother by a perfect conformity to him will has revealed and proved its truth. That we have affinity with God is further made manifest by our need of him. Consciously or unconsciously every man is seeking after God, or after what God alone can give him. Whether blindly or otherwise, we all feel the want of him in our souls, for in whatever direction we turn our desires, we are yearning after the perfect and the infinite: we have the proof of it in our disgust, our dissatisfactions, and discontents. Who does not hear of the insufficiency of the world? And what does that mean? The vanity of pleasure. But why is pleasure vain: why does he who tries it in all its enchantments, weary at last even to repugnance? The vexations of wealth? But why are riches vexatious? Why do they disappoint the hope that longed so deeply for them, and leave complaints still in all the fullness of success? The fatigues of power? But, why again is power intriguing, when no sacrifices were too painful, and no toils too harassing in the career for its attainment? It is simply because pleasure, wealth, or power, can never fully occupy the human soul, unlimited in capacity and desire, perishable things bring it only chagrin, when in lavish expectation it looks for complete fruition. Nor is it alone that we call the world, which proves insufficient, but still higher, the pursuit of knowledge, and the creations of genius; the greatest sage feels himself at last a child, and the most inspired poet wishes for things more beautiful than he has ever conceived, and agrees brighter than he has ever imagined. Even in truest religion this sentiment may be discerned in operation, in alternations between fear and faith, between despondency and hope. A longing for the invisible and the boundless may be traced in all the higher forms of superstition—in every effort to overcome the thralldom of the body and to achieve the spiritual emancipation, from the ascetics that in the first centuries peopled the deserts of Asia to the flagellants that in the middle centuries overran the

continent of Europe; from the penitent that scratches himself on an Indian plain, to the monk that lashes himself in a Spanish cloister. Now to what do all these, some true and some mistaken, refer, to what do they point? Evidently to something which the soul cannot find on earth, in God, perfect and infinite, in whom at last it will strain repose and fullness. And thus we have two great truths intimated at the same time; for the conscious want that tells us of our need of God reveals also our immortality, and the one is the glory of the other.

Now, in conclusion, let me ask to what purpose is all this blackening of human nature? It cannot promote humility; for to be humble is not to be degraded. If a sense of degradation corresponded with humility, we should be more humble as we descended to the level of the brutes. It cannot inspire a poignant sense of guilt, nor a true feeling of confession, for as it takes away natural dignity it leaves nothing from which a man can fall; and as it denies personal capacity, it must in the same degree weaken the feeling of personal accountability. He whose moral sorrow will ever be most profoundly is one that has the consciousness of having abused high and great capacities; of having, by his own sins, become unworthy of his nature; of having done despite to the spirit of God within him, the light that lighteneth every man that cometh into the world; of having apostatised from his godlike destiny. But to tell a man, as orthodoxy does, first that he is morally in-herite, and then that he is personally guilty, is an absolute derangement and confusion of all our moral ideas. It is well that essentially the sources of our conduct in general, are beyond the reach of theology; or doctrines like these, would stop all motives to exertion, would destroy the hopes of the good, and strike dead the efforts of the penitent, as it is they are not without great and serious evils. They take from virtue that which is its most noble distinction.

when rightly understood, a sense of individual and independent action—they attach a slavish spirit to religion, which, to a great extent, stifles the free and voluntary service of the heart. Yet worse still, to maintain an extreme theory, men are driven to malign their nature, and to seek for all manner of blame against it—to deny the excellence and reality of virtues—of which an unsophisticated observer could not entertain a doubt, to invent all motives for goodness but the true ones. It is a sad necessity in which men place themselves when they are compelled to violence to their own hearts, and injustice to those of others, when their system forces them to repress their rising pleasure in the beauty of virtue, and to change their unbidden admiration into qualified condemnation. If the man called heretical, or one called unregenerate, visit the sick, clothe the naked, do in fact every work of mercy, have a heart of love and a hand of bounty—revere his God in all sincerity, and worship him in truth, the evangelical moralist must assert, that it is all worthless, and is, in fact, of the nature of sin. Though one who is called regenerate should do no more, and to all evidence, not in a better spirit, he is esteemed a most godly and pious Christian. The man who cannot believe as the creeds or a party require, may do every work which Christ will judge him by, and be refused his name; but if he has the blessing of his master in heaven, he may cure little for the ailments of men upon earth. If Unitarianism delivered us from nothing else than this spiritual injustice, it is a great redemption.

If I am asked, in turn, why I maintain the doctrine of human dignity, I answer, first, because it raises my homage to God. I understand him no otherwise than as he is embled in the human soul, exalted and purified: without this creation is a blank to me, and the scripture a dead letter. Regarding it also as his work, I revere him through his work, the more profoundly, the more I believe it worthy of him.

I cannot conceive it an honour to God, that the only being here who has capacity to know him, the only being who reflects his attributes, the only being who admires his universe and discerns him in it, should be wholly corrupt: I cannot think that such a doctrine gives him glory. I answer secondly—because it teaches me to hope for man; teaches me to hope for him in this world and the next: while I have faith in the capacity, I can never lose hope in the development, but if man be powerless as well as depressed, I have no proper ground for expectation, and the difficulties of the present are softened by no light from the future. But as it is, believing that man has great inherent capabilities, for knowledge, for liberty, for virtue, and for happiness—I lose not my confidence, I observe him as in the struggle of discipline, and in preparation for the period of redemption; and wherever I see ignorance, or slavery, or vice, or misery, I do not despair of a time, when these heavenly faculties shall have achieved their emancipation. I answer, lastly, I maintain the doctrine because it teaches me to honour man. I feel how necessary it is for us in this world of outward show, and where outward show has so much power, that we should have some strong sentiment by which to give our appreciation to those who have no external dazzle with which to attract us: in this world of grades and inequalities, where rank and wealth, and genius, so continually throw their enchantments about us, we need a sentiment before which rank and wealth and genius are nothing, in regarding those who have them not, and also those who have: and no sentiment can be more powerful, more holy, or more sublime than this, that they are the immortal children of God, destined for his presence, and made after his likeness. Having this faith, then, ignorance, sin, poverty, may come safely before us, without any fear of that infidel contempt with which they are too often treated. Show me then a man, and no matter what his condition, if I be true to this faith, you point me

to an object of most solemn interest. Show me the red man of the American forests, or the black man of tropical deserts, and untame and ferocious though he be, he has within him an indelible title to my reverence. His rude and unwelthed form enshrines a soul in the image of God, as well as the most polished of his civilized brethren. Show me the venetian serf or slave who seems chained to the soil—the gospel which is equal to bond and free, tells me to behold in him the heir of a glorious inheritance; his title is his nature; it burns in his blood, and it is stamped upon his brow, its appeal is in the fire or moisture of his eye—no power can efface it, for the hand of God has impressed it:—show me even the criminal who seems all but lost to every sense of duty, I am not justified in despairing, much less have I any title to scorn. We dare not despise in the lowest state the child whom God regards: we dare not cast off whom Christ has not rejected, nor disown the brother for whom he died. If we be right-minded, and have any sympathy with the spirit of Jesus, his moral wretchedness should be his most eloquent appeal. We never know the whole power of Christianity until we have interest in man as the child of God, and revere him as God's image, until we behold the throng around us in relation to their mighty and improvable capacities—until we see in the lowest and the worst, subjects of hope and moral influence, with underlying souls which no vice or passion should conceal. In this faith the messenger of God may go with confidence to guilt and suffering, and bring with him no mocking offers of blessedness and peace. Men may be called on souls to rejoice which were ready to perish in despair, pour the dew of heaven on many a closing hour, and silence the doubts of many a fearing spirit. Thus, believing we should have trust unshaken, look forward to the consummation, when that humanity which here has only its trials, shall be hallowed with the infinity and eternity of its maker.



## NOTES

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### Note I. — See page 13

HAVING in the Appendix of my former lecture stated from sources of authority the Doctrines of Calvinism on the nature of man, I here introduce some of the principal texts on which these doctrines are said to be founded. The question, it is to be kept in mind, is not whether man is or is not capable of great depravity, whether sin of various degrees and extent has not existed in all ages, and does not exist at present in all places. That sin has entered into the world is a fact undisputed, no matter when or how, that sin is universal is a point also upon which we are on both sides agreed. The true subject of dispute between us is, simply, this: Is human nature a nature of radical and inherent depravity? or is not depravity more properly its characteristic than evil? Now we maintain that all its essential tendencies establish the latter question in the affirmative, and no Scriptures prove the former. I shall take the ground in the most approved Calvinistic formulæ.

Gen. iii. is alleged as giving an account of the origin of sin: "And the Lord said to the woman: what is this thou hast done? And the woman said, the serpent beguiled me and I did eat." There we have the account of Adam's temptation and transgression, with the penalty pronounced upon the beguiler and his dupes. Now in whatever light we regard this passage, whether as a mythos, as allegory, or as literal narrative, it implies nothing of the doctrine asserted, or the consequences attributed to it: namely, the loss of all original righteousness, and entire depravity in all the faculties and parts of the soul and body; the imputation of that sin to mankind, heretofore with the penalty of eternal death. When we find these ideas extracted out of one obscure passage, we may well ask, at Calvinism: Is there any authority which adds to the Scriptures? These ideas are not

in the passage itself, nor to any other supposed to be co-relative, nor to any number of passages fairly conjoined and fairly interpolated.

Gen. vi. 5. "God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth." This states merely a general fact, that of an evil condition of society, for which judgment of God is represented as poured out from heaven. But it is alleged, that in the same context we read "that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart is only evil continually." This clause only expresses the original idea with more impressive force. No one in the worst state of an individual or a nation will attempt to maintain that such words can have a rigid and literal application. Besides, in that very time, Noah is made an express exception: for we read that "the Lord said unto Noah, come thou and all thy house into the ark, for thou have I seen righteous before me in this generation."\* But though the literal meaning were insisted on, it could but literally extend to men of that time, and the title of interpretation by which our opponents define the character of man, we are entitled in the next verse to apply to the character of God. "It repented him," we are told, "that he had made man in the earth, and it grieved him at his heart."† If on the literal principle we are to conclude man wicked in every thought and imagination, on the same principle we are to conclude that God can repent, and that he can be grieved at the heart.

Jer. xiv. 9. "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked;" is an exaggeration of the same kind with that we are considering. It was uttered when the Jewish nation was in a state of sad corruption, and the prophet's feelings were passionate against his countrymen in grief and indignation. If we are to take all the prophet's words as coolly and definitively uttered, then what shall we say to the tremendous language in which he curses his existence and his birth.

Eccl. vi. 29. "God hath made man upright, but they have sought many inventions." This expression contains no matter of controversy: the first part states our view, and the latter clause of the verse, by no torture of criticism can be made to imply inherent and entire depravity.

Psalms l. 5. "Behold I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me." The import of this expression is to be judged of from the general tone of the Psalm, which is most passionate and preterit, inspired by the deepest spirit of remorse. David uttered these uncomplaining, or profoundest self-recriminations; but there would

be little for repentance to deplore, if he could remove the blame from himself in his utterance, and bury individual guilt in a corruption to which he was subjected in common with all men. The force and meaning—the piercing and eloquent deprecation of the whole composition, combine to show it is one of individual experience, the idea of original sin: it is vivid and pointed, makes it, not the anguish of a convicted sinner, but the sophistry of a concluded hypocrite; not a lamentation for vice, but an excuse for it. These passages are the few which can be found in the Old Testament that bear any direct reference to a tenet said to be implicated throughout the whole of Scripture. If we turn to the New Testament we find the evidence quite as scrupulous, and quite as inconclusive. The texts advanced are commonly taken from the epistles, principally from those of Paul, and of Paul's, mostly from the Romans. Few or none can be advanced from the gospel histories, and the discourses of Christ have no reference to such a doctrine.

Rom. iii. 10. "There is none righteous, no not one: there is none that understandeth." &c. &c. Corresponded to this passage is the 14th Psalm. Both David and Paul refer to the peculiar depravity of their times. But, in the sense of absolute and guiltless perfection, unquestionably, the general assertion may be made of all men.

Rom. v. 12—19, and 1 Cor. xv. 21, 22, 45, 49. The apostle, I apprehend, institutes a comparison between the imperfect man symbolized in Adam, and the perfect man revealed in Christ, between the earthly and the heavenly, the mortal and the immortal; death shown forth in the one—life manifested in the other.

Rom. vii. 18. "For I know that in me, (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing; for to will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good, I find not." Ver. 25. "So then with my mind, I serve the law of God, but with my flesh the law of sin." And the apostle had said in the preceding verses, "I delight in the law of God after the inward man: but I find a law in my members warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members." This is an eloquent and fervent out-pouring of individual experience, no more intended as a universal description than any passage in the journal of John Wesley or Thomas Scott. Involving as human nature does, a twofold constitution, a struggle between desire and conscience is a necessary condition of its moral existence. This is inevitable, unless a being is

\* Gen. vi. 9.

† Gen. vi. 6.

above or beneath temptation, but the very struggle implies the power of the moral sense; the possession of the moral sense as an element of human dignity is even in defeat, how much more in triumph. Without the power of transgression, or the danger of falling, there is of course no fall, and in the human sense no crime. But there are other expressions of Paul's more general and comprehensive, and to these I shall devote one or two remarks.

Rom. vii. 5. "The carnal mind (as opposed to grace) the mind of the flesh) is hostile against God, for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be."

Gal. v. 17. "For the flesh lusteth against the spirit, (το πνευμα εναντιον της σαρκος πορευεται) and the spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary the one to the other." The scriptural use of the word "flesh" (σαρξ) implies two meanings: first, the express of the inferior desires, which is in itself contrary to God, and therefore the ; for God, though he has implanted these subordinate desires, has subjected them to certain laws, beyond which they seek to range, with us will certainly be providence. In this sense the carnal mind is properly in enmity with God, and is not subject to the law of God. Secondly, the inferior desires, parenthetically not actually sin, but in general the cause of it. When St. Paul says iniquity is the root of all evil, we do not surely understand him to mean that the pursuit of gain is in all cases a root of wickedness, for we may narrative innumerable instances in which the struggle for money is connected with the sublimest of virtues. We merely conclude that it is a very dangerous device, and liable to very dangerous abuses. Under the designation, therefore, of earthly or fleshly, may be classed three orders of desire—that of gain, that of pleasure, and that of power. These are essentially evil in themselves, or they are not. If we conclude they are, we must then charge the fault on God who has given them, or we must become Manichees, and suppose the existence of two principles, one good, and the other evil, if they are not, the evil is in their abuse, and not in their existence, and though the criminal be condemned the nature is absolved. I shall mention but a very few more texts engaged in favour of this doctrine.

Eph. i. 1—3. "And you hath he quickened," &c. A mere description this, of the age, answerable both to Jews and Gentiles, and to the same purpose is the passage from the same epistle, (iv. xv. v. 18.) "having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because

of the blindness of their hearts." Such is the scriptural evidence for one of the most appalling and destructive declivities that ever clouded humanity, a doctrine which sweeps the best and truest affections, and destroys at one fell stroke the ties of spontaneous virtue,—which is compelled to classify the most beautiful and most base, if devoid of certain doctrinal distinctions, under one appellation,—which debases human nature—gives man the violence of a slave, but does not honour God with the glory of a sovereign. To exhort men to have the perfection of an angel, and to tell him he has the nature of a fiend, to tell him that he is "utterly indisposed, disabled, and made opposite to all good, and wholly inclined to all evil, amidst absurd proofs of theology, is surely the most absurd. And however believing this, or rejecting it, the only alternative left us, is to be at one side or the other of the gulf which separated Lazarus from Abraham.

See Dr. Hammond's excellent Essay on Original Sin, and a very admirable tract on the same subject, by the late Dr. Cogan, entitled "A Layman's Letters to Mr. Wilberforce."

Note 2. See page 19.

There is no writer in modern times to whom we owe so much for a true and elevated Philosophy on Human nature as to Bishop Butler, the most profound and accurate analyst of the moral faculties of man that has ever illustrated the principles of Christian ethics. He was not a man to take whigism's assertions, he subjected our moral nature to the exact and rigid test of philosophical anatomy, and one deliberate sentence of his, is worth ten thousand disquisitions from traditional theologians, who, parol-like, repeat and repeat upon the jargon, that has grown as stale from month to month, as the stork's "let me out, let me out"—many of whom have no other reason than that they have heard it so tried out before them. Bishop Butler has examined human nature, and he has given testimony in its favour—he has vindicated its dignity, and he has by a deep philosophy, which seemed to be little comprehended by those who would debase humanity demonstrated its essential excellence. He has proved by irrefutable arguments, its natural disinterestedness, its goodness, its necessary conformity with truth and virtue. These are to be sure but its general tendencies, with many exceptions—yet, why such a line of argument should be deemed insufficient in moral philosophy, and be

admitted for cogent as natural theology, it is difficult to conceive — Take for instance: in the body the case of the eye or the ear — no one questions, that the eye is admirably adapted for seeing, and the ear for hearing; and though the one may grow dim or the other become deaf, it is never asserted that the constitution or nature of either — on the whole — is contradictory to that for which it was intended. Thus we, it is true, various civil legislations in human nature, but these are others good — at least in seeming. Civil Philosophers and Calvinistic Theologians contend in making the evil substantial, and the good fortitious. The answer which this profane reasoning gives to the philosophical opponents of human nature, will be a sufficient reply to both. “Suppose,” he says, “a mass of learning to be writing a grave load upon human nature,—and to show in several parts of it, that he had an insight into the subject he was considering. Amongst other things the following one would require to be accounted for, the appearance of benevolence or good-will in men towards each other in the instances of natural relations and in others. Cautious of being deceived with outward show, he retires with himself to see exactly what that is in the mind of man from whence this appearance proceeds, and upon deep reflection asserts the principle in the mind to be only the love of power and delight in the exercise of it. Would not everybody think here was a mistake of one word for another? That the philosopher was contemplating and accounting for some other human action, some other behaviour of man to man? And could any one be thoroughly satisfied, that what is commonly called benevolence or good-will was really the affection meant, could he by being made to understand that this learned person had a general hypothesis, to which the appearance of good-will could no otherwise be accounted? That what has this appearance is often nothing but ambition, that delight in reputation often supposes always a mixt mixt with benevolence, only makes it more specious to gain it and than the hope of the too, but to reality that passion does no more account for the whole appearance of good-will than this appetite does. Is there not often the appearance of one man’s wishing that good to another when he knows himself unable to procure him, and rejoicing in it, though procured by a third person? And can love of power and glory possibly come into account for the desire to do good? Is there not often the appearance of men’s distinguishing between two or more persons, preferring one before another, to do good to, to those where the love of power cannot in the

least account for the distinction or preference? For this principle can no otherwise distinguish between objects, than as it is a greater instance and exertion of power to do good to one rather than to another. Again, suppose good-will in the mind of man be nothing but delight in the exercise of power, men might indeed be restrained by civil and accidental prohibitions, but these restraints being removed, they would have a disposition to, and a delight in mischief as an exercise and proof of power, and this disposition and delight would arise from the same principle in the mind, as a disposition to, and a delight in charity. This cruelty as distinct from resentment, would be exactly the same in the mind of man as good-will, that one tends to the happiness, the other to the misery of our fellow-creatures, i. e. it seems, merely an accidental circumstance, which the mind has not the least regard to. There are disorders which even men of capacity and men, when they have occasion to believe their nature; and will professedly disclaim that image of God which was originally stamped upon it — the traces of which, however faint, are plainly distinguishable upon the mind of man.” Many passages might be quoted from this great writer in vindication of humanity, but I will not here but one other — it is from the same discourse, (The first sermon on Human Nature) as that I have already extracted — and much to the same purpose. “Man kind,” he says, “have ungenerous passions, which they will gratify at any rate, as well as the injury of others as in contradiction to higher private interests, but as there is no such thing as subdued, so neither is there any such thing as ill-will in one man towards another, emulation or resentment being away — whereas there is plainly benevolence or good-will, there is no such thing as love of injustice, oppression, rapine, ingratitude, but only eager desire after such and such external goods, which, according to a very ancient observation, the most abandoned would choose to obtain by ungenerous means, if they were as easy and efficient to their end: even emulation and resentment by any who will consider what those passions really are in nature, will be found serving to the purpose of this objection, and the principles and passions in the mind of man which are distinct both from self-love and benevolence, privately and more directly lead to right behaviour with regard to others as well as to himself, and only servilely and accidentally to what is evil. Thus though men to avoid the stigma of one villain are often guilty of a greater, yet it is easy to see that the original tendency of Shame is to prevent the doing of shameful actions, and its leading men to

conceal such notions when done, is only the consequence of their being done, that is, of the passions not having answered its first end." —(See also the second and original Essay of Mr. Hutcheson, on The Principles of Human Actions, in which the leading idea of Butler's Philosophy is rightly examined and illustrated.)

Pascal vindicates the dignity of Human nature in some of his most beautiful thoughts. Those who are acquainted with the theology of Pascal (and who are not?) will scarcely suspect him of leaning too partially to the brighter side of our nature. I quote a few passages from his writings, so much for the pleasure of copying them, as for the support they afford to my general argument.

"L'homme est si grand, l'homme est si grand, sa grandeur peut même en ce qu'il se connaît misérable. Un arbre ne se connaît pas misérable, il est vrai que c'est être misérable que de se connaître, qu'on soit libre, mais nous c'est grand que de connaître qu'on est misérable. Ainsi toutes nos âmes protestent sa grandeur, et vont au-devant de grand seigneur, au-devant d'un roi de posséder."

"Nous avons si grande idée de l'âme de l'homme que nous ne pouvons souffrir d'en être séparés, et d'être pas dans l'étendue d'une âme, et toute la félicité des hommes en cette date cette science."

"Si c'est, soit cette cause de gloire que les hommes cherchent une grande marque de leur mérite et de leur bonté, c'en est une autre de leur excellence, car quelque possession qu'il ait sur la terre, de quelque sorte et commodité présente le qu'il jouisse il n'est pas satisfait, s'il n'est pas dans l'estime des hommes. Il estime si grande la raison de l'homme que quelques avantages, qu'il ait dans le monde, il se croit malheureux s'il n'est plus, aussi avantageusement dans la raison de l'homme c'est la plus belle place du monde: l'âme ne peut le déchoir de ce désir, et c'est la qualité la plus ineffable du cœur de l'homme. jusque là que ceux que méprisent le plus les hommes, et que les égaux et aux bêtes veulent encore en être admirés, et contraignent à eux-mêmes par leur propre sentiment: la nature, qui est plus puissante que toute leur raison, les contraignent plus fortement de la grandeur de l'homme que la raison ou les convenances de sa bonté." "L'homme n'est qu'un rayon le plus faible de la lumière; mais c'est un rayon puissant. Il ne faut pas que l'univers entier s'arme pour l'écraser. Une vapeur, une goutte d'eau suffit pour le tuer. Mais quand l'univers l'écrasait, l'homme serait encore plus noble que ce qui le tue, parce qu'il sait qu'il meurt, et l'avantage que

l'univers a sur lui, l'homme n'en sait rien. Ainsi toute notre dignité consiste dans la pensée, c'est de là qu'il faut nous relever, non de l'espace et de la durée." "Il est d'ailleurs de ne voir l'homme touché de ses passions bêtes sans lui montrer sa grandeur. Il est une chose digne de lui faire reconnaître sa grandeur sans sa bassesse. Il est plus dangereux de lui laisser ignorer l'un et l'autre, sans être très-avantageux de lui représenter l'un et l'autre." (Pensées de Pascal.)

I have adduced the testimony of Bishop Butler as to the soundness of our views on Human nature: I shall here transcribe a few passages from a writer, in whose language a United Philosophy becomes most eloquent and inspiring. I know Doctor Channing — "I cannot," he says, "showing the moral power of faith in the divine capacities of man, to resemble our Maker we need not quarrel with our position on earth. Our present state, made up as it is, of noble and mean, is worthy of God, and may be used throughout to resemble us to him. For example: our domestic life, the relations of an labourer to a landlord, the daily interchanges of thoughts and feelings, the daily certainties of kindness, the daily risks of want and suffering, those and other circumstances of our social state, form the best sphere and school for that benevolence which is God's brightest attribute, and we should make a sad exchange by substituting for these natural aids any self-invented artificial means of sanctity. Christianity, our great guide to God, never leads us away from the path of nature, and never wars with the unqualified dictates of conscience. We get with our Creator by every right exercise of the powers he gives us. Whenever we invigorate the understanding by honestly and resolutely seeking truth, and by withstanding whatever might warp the judgment; whenever we invigorate the conscience by following it in opposition to the passions; whenever we receive a blessing gratefully, bear a trial patiently, or encounter peril or scorn with moral courage; whenever we perform a disinterested deed; whenever we lift up the heart in true adoration to God; whenever we war against a habit or desire which is strengthening itself against our higher principles; whenever we think, speak or act with moral energy, and devotion to duty, be the occasion ever so humble or familiar; then the divinity is glowing within us, and we are ascending towards our Author. The religion thus bleeds with common life. We thus draw nigh to God without forsaking men. We are thus without parting with our human nature, to clasp our-

silver with the divine" (Discourse at the ordination of the Rev. P. A. Farley.) Honour is due to all men on the ground of the worth and dignity of their nature, and of this the eloquent writer shows Christianity's proof and an illustration. "The whole of this religion is a testimony to the worth of man in the sight of God—to the importance of human nature—to the infinite purposes for which we were created. God is there set forth as sending, to the honour of his human family, his beloved Son, the bright image and representative of his own perfections; and sending him, not simply to roll away a burden of pain and punishment, (for this, however magnified as a system of theology is not his highest work) but to create man afresh that divine image which he himself bears, to purify the soul from every stain, to communicate to it new power over evil, and to open before it immortality as its aim and destination—immortality by which we are to understand, not merely a perpetual, but an ever-improving and celestial being. Such are the views of Christianity. And these blessings it proffers, not to a few, not to the elevated, not to the eminent, but to all human beings, to the poorest and the most fallen; and we know that through the power of its promises, it has, in not a few instances, raised the fallen to true greatness, and given them in their present state and place, an earnest of the heaven which it unfolds. Such is Christianity. Men viewed in the light of this religion, are beings loved by God, to whom he has given his Son, in whom he pours forth his spirit, and whom he has created for the highest good in the universe, the participation of his own perfections and happiness. Such is Christianity. Our scepticism in our own nature cannot quench the bright light which religion sheds on the soul and on the prospects of mankind, and just so far as we receive its truth we shall honour all men" (Discourse on "Honour due to All Men.")

"Theologian" remarks a powerful writer, "say, that the very infant comes into the world under the wrath and curse of the Deity. They never learned that by observing the glory of God in the face of Christ. No such withering frown ever on his benignant countenance. Think of Christ's wrath with a child! Think of Christ cursing a child! I must read in the Gospel that he did so, before I believe that God does so, and that the Calvinistic doctrine of original sin is true. In the strong horror of the human heart at the unaccountable combination of such a person with such an action, I read the condemnation of that gloomiest article of a gloomy creed; and if it be a

fool calumny on Christ, it must, exalted as he was, be a yet fouler calumny on God. I would sooner believe the one than the other. I would sooner imagine some Jews of Nazareth encountering some fond father and fondler mother, in the first holiness of their parental feelings, as they pass beneath the gate of the temple which was called the Beautiful, less beautiful is the sculptured form of marble on which the gorgeous architecture rested than in the living human group which were there bearing the babe to the altar to dedicate it to the God of its fathers; and encircling them with that solemn mediation which would sink into their soul and corrode their lives; than I would imagine Calvinists, which witness each man's birth, life, and death, to be in all earth's scenes of parental piety and fondness ever helpless injury, the unperceiving presence of an Almighty care. Yet this is the doctrine into which thousands upon thousands of children are catechised. Why will not parents and teachers lend them, not to Calvin, but to Christ? No should they receive a blessing, even as did these children, now understanding that there were not wanting, even then, among disciples to intercept their approach and fulfil their course. As his blessing was on them, so as that of his and our God. His doctrine, his conduct. "Their angels," he says, "do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven." they are the presiding officers of the providential care which, by the teacher, and withers, and power of those supposed winged messengers, was bestowed upon them, and again, "Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come to me, for of such is the kingdom of heaven!"—*Christ and Christianity*, a series of Sermons, by the Rev. W. J. Fox: who's fee energy of thought, richness and beauty of imagery, truth of moral analysis and description, force and eloquence of language, may be placed in the very highest class of pulpit oratory, and even in that class be ranged with its most specimens. "The lust of heresy has robbed them of their due fame, for in three days, without the proper advantage of rathedology, logic only beats the air, and eloquence speaks to the deaf while that will not hear the voice of the eloquent, charm he never so sweetly.

I quote with great pleasure one or two passages from Mr. Dewey, as illustrative of our common doctrine as human nature:

"The theologian says that human nature is bad and corrupt. Now taking this language in the practical and popular sense, I find no difficulty in agreeing with the theologian. And indeed, if he would confine himself to saying vague and general declamation and

technical phraseology, or he would confine himself to facts, if he would confine himself to a description of actual bad qualities and the positions in which, I think he could not well go too far. Nay more, I am not certain that any theologian's description, so far as it is of this nature, has gone deep enough into the faithful mass of human degeneracy. For it requires an acute perception that is rarely possessed, and a light and subtle conscience, perhaps that belongs to say, to discover and declare how bad, and degraded, and degrading a thing a *bad man* is. I confess that nothing would hurt in our a higher respect for man, a real—*not* a theoretical and fanciful—but a real and deep sense of human selfishness and insensibility—of the mighty wrong which man does to himself, to his religion, and his God, when he yields to the evil and accursed influences that find place in him. This moral indignation is not half strong enough in those who profess to talk the most about human degeneracy. And the objection to them is, not that they *feel* too much or speak too strongly, the actual wickedness, the crime and distinct sin of the wicked, but that they too vaguely and generally speak of human wickedness, that they speak with too little discrimination to every man as if he were a murderer or a monster, that they speak, in fine, too argumentatively, and too much full of say, say so) with a sort of argumentative satisfaction, as if they were glad that they could make this point so strong."

The next extract is an advocacy of human nature, eloquently pleading for it in a low and guilty condition.

"The very pirate that dyes the ocean wave with the blood of his fellow-creatures, that wrecks his defenceless victims in our lonely sea where no eye but his can be his head, and plunges his dagger to the heart that is pleading for life, which is clinging upon him by all means of heaven, of children, and of angels, to spare—yet the very pirate is such a man as you or I might have been. Orphanage and child-headed, an orphaned youth, no cost, *compensation*, a resort to sinful pleasures, familiarity with vice, a sensual and lighted sense, seized and trusted affections, despite the fortune—these are the steps that might have led any one amongst us to suffer on the high seas the bloody dag of universal infamy, to have waged war with our kind, to have put on the terrific attributes, to have done the dreadful deeds, and to have died the awful death of the ocean robber. How many affecting relationships of humanity plead with us to pity him! That head that is doomed to pay the price of blood once tasted upon a mother's bosom. That head that did that accursed work, and

shall soon be stretched pale and nerveless in the felon's grave, was once taken and cherished by a father's hand, and led in the ways of sportive childhood and innocent pleasure. The dearest mother of crime but once here the object of strictly love and all domestic culturement. Pity him, then. Pity his blighted hope and his crushed heart. It is a wholesome sensibility, it is meet for frail and sinning creatures like us to cherish. It forgives no moral determination. It feels the crime, but feels it as a weak tempted and rescued creature should. It reverts the great Master, and looks with indignation upon the offender, and yet is grieved for him! —*Deery*.

#### Religious Remarks, &c.

"Our Lord Jesus Christ," says Mr. Haldicott, "but solemnly and emphatically said, 'He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but that believeth not shall be damned.'" (Yes, but is this to believe what our opponents tell us, and to be baptized into the faith of Athanasius?) "Unitarians," he continues, "assert that they fulfil the requirement, and therefore are safe from the penalty. We, on the other hand, are assured, that, as it would be reason against the sovereignty of their system, to acknowledge her claim only to a part of her dominion, while her equality over the remainder was utterly denied, so the Unitarian scheme which would give unto the Saviour the honours of a prophet and a witness, while it would asphere him from that full-armed glory wherein He shines through the revelation of His grace, is treason against him and against the Majesty of God, who will not that all men should honour the son, even as they honour the father." Thus convinced, we deem the professors of that system to be under sentence of spiritual outlawry, which if it be not reversed, will lead in due to ours of the second death." (Act. 8, pp. 218, 220.)

The time is *short*, we have once been spoken of in this controversy as prone to assume that we in some degree doubt the sincerity or faculty of our opponents. We deny them neither. We know the history of religion well enough to be aware that as severe things have been done in sincerity as to pronounce that men dishonour Christ and God, that they are under sentence of spiritual outlawry, and if they repeat that (if it do not turn to the opinion of their antagonists) shall surely endure the second death, we can easily believe that men say these things sincerely, for except from the necessity of conviction, we do not suppose they would tolerate pollution

and denunciation as often as they do. We deny not the sincerity in which an opponent may hold an opinion or resist one; but though the motive may not be impeachable, the quality of the opinion itself may be in the last degree unchristian and pernicious. The men who built the Inquisition did it in perfect sincerity; the men who sat on its judgment-seats were for the most part sincere; so were those who dragged the heretic from his bed to the dungeon, and from the dungeon to the stake. And so are those who tell us that our faith is damnable. Men may on account of belief consign antagonists to half-fire for eternity; but unless the evidence be most clear, to pronounce the judgment requires a goodly quantity of courage. As heretics willing are we to refuse our opponents the charity they claim, if by that be meant a desire to promote good in their idea of it; but we may very fairly doubt the justice of that idea. Believing that heretics, such as we, are in the way to eternal destruction, it is neither inconsistent with courage or charity to tell us so, in the hope of reclaiming us; and if theologians imagined that inflicting bodily suffering might have a similar effect, we are compelled to admit them to the same merit. The worst effect of harsh and austere doctrine is that they produce harsh and austere feelings; and the professors of them, while their indurating process, can do deeds from principle which even mad men would rarely do from passion. One perverted motive is worse than a thousand evil actions. Charity in her own native sweetness is meek and gentle as the dove, and yet theology has often made her venomous as the viper; charity as she came from heaven marked her way in times of mercy, but theology could so pervert her as to cause her walk in times of blood. The charity of the heart is very different from the charity of words; and when we hear English Evangelists condemn the Romish Church as uncharitable, we naturally ask on what ground? Is it because she entertained heretics? So do we. Is it because she has a wrong test of heresy? Her test is substantially the same as your own. You claim that we do not believe in Christ, because we do not believe in your creed; she assumes that you do not believe in Christ because you do not believe in her councils; you denounce eternal torments on us for want of your faith; and she delivers you to the same destiny for want of her faith: the technical ground of heresy and schism may be circumstantial or extensive—the points may be few or many, the principle is the same, or if there be any difference, it is but between the leg and of the little end of the egg. We are accused as traitors against God

and Christ, and to make the indictment clear against us, it is illustrated by the instance of rebellion against a sovereign. This is a heavy charge, but one both unjust and false. It is an evil intention that constitutes crime; a traitor opposes his sovereign and intends his dethronement; but though we should even misstate the nature of Christ, can any we who think for a moment venture to say our intention is for his dethronement? Let us suppose the case, no uncommon one, of an Eastern monarch who should disguise himself, and that some of his subjects failed, by their ignorance of his rank, to pay him the customary honours; what should we think of his justice, if he should call this treason, and punish the wretches who were unconscious of having offended him. It is too monstrous even for Eastern despotism. Or take the case in our own history; what should we think of Alfred's rectitude and clemency, if when he ascended the throne from his poverty, he should have thrown the shepherd's wife into a dungeon and chains, because, in his disguise, she uttered against him a surly rebuke. The instance is not entirely parallel, but the analogy goes far enough for my purpose. Now, though Christ were in reality the Deity which orthodox proclaim him, the circumstances of his earthly life, and the consequent of his infinite nature, were certainly sufficient to excite some in ignorance for taking him to be that which he appeared; and to punish them for so natural an error, would not be a vindication of majesty, but a capricious exhibition of cruelty.

The legal and political mode of illustration is a favourite with the reverend lecturer. P. 450, we have a quotation from Blackstone, and the distinction very admirably elucidated of private wrongs and public wrongs, civil injuries, crimes and misdemeanours, &c. Sir William Blackstone never, I imagine, anticipated the honour that his Commentaries would be used to illustrate the principles of the divine government; and one of the last ideas I apprehend, that entered his brain in delivering his lectures, was, that he was giving expositions on the ways of Providence. The Preacher in the order of illustration, gave a passing blow "at those wretched and guilty disturbers of the public peace in one of our own colonies, who lately crossed the borders of a friendly state to slay and ruin and destroy, under the name of sympathizers." An allusion, doubtless, extremely loyal; but in the present case not very logical (Lect. p. 452.) In this part of the discourse we have other distinctions, showing that man is a public offender, that God is not a parent but a sovereign, in relation to guilty man, and that a sovereign is different from a person; that God is out



credit, but a judge, and that a judge is different from a creditor. All this may be very acute, very legal, but, theologically, it has one imperfection, that of sustaining entirely the relation between God and man, of turning false analogies into false premises, and, of course, deducing from them false conclusions: of properly having nothing to do with the true matter in hand, and leaving the question precisely where it was before. "Our opponents," says the Preacher, "assert that man are to be regarded as *debtors*, and as *debtors* only." We assert no such thing, have never asserted it, but all the exegesis, and to such an idea the whole tone of our argument and of our system is in most perfect contradiction. We have no such low view of God as to think that man could owe him anything, nor any such presumptuous view of man as to imagine he could make payment to his God. Yet upon this poor assumption whole pages of declamation are wasted, for if it serves any purpose it is but to beat down the moral straw which the lecturer himself had fastened. We hold no such view, and therefore we have never defended any such. We do not try to maintain what we assert, if others assert doctrine for us, we leave them the pleasure of the relation. Although it is only with men invent opinions for opponents that they have the double enjoyment of first building up and then pulling down. We do not regard man as debtors for which payment can be made to God, but we may fairly assert that on that principle—by the whole system of orthodoxy, What are the atonement and righteousness of Christ but a payment to God for the salvation of the elect?—the very nature of the system implies this idea, and in truth it is the only idea that gives it even the appearance of consistency. For crime as such cannot be punished in the person of another, but a debt can be fairly paid by the money of another. If I commit high treason against the sovereign—to borrow an analogy from the Preacher—it would be well worth to lay the head of some one else on the block for it—but if I owe a severe creditor ten thousand pounds, a rich and generous friend may pay it in my stead, and no social principle is violated by the substitute.

Mr. Boddicom makes the following modest apology for the presumed infallibility of himself and brethren, and their right to attack all heretical deniers of it. "While, however," he observes, "we are prepared to contend for the justness and duty of an effeminate tread upon the regions of spiritual error, we remember that our movement is not purely and primarily aggressive. A volume of Lec-

tures, preached expressly on the controverted doctrines of Christianity (as the lecturer denominated his subjects), in a chapel now occupied by one of our respected opponents, has been before the world. In these and other similar measures, the fortress of true Christianity, the only safe mansion of souls for the souls of men, hath been attacked by noise, and rap, and open assault. And shall there be no attempt to re-ascertain, no rally made, no arm raised, in a forward movement for the truth as it is in Jesus? Our regret is rather due to the culpable silence of the past, than to the proceeding of the present hour." (Lect. p. 140.) The *reverend and respected* Preacher refers to a volume of Lectures, by the Rev. George Henry delivered in this town some years ago; these Lectures, unfortunately, I do not possess, but I have read them with much pleasure, and many passages of them I should wish to quote in support of my own general arguments. But the Lectures greatly mistakes its language; that we complain of orthodox aggression. Controversy, political and religious, is the fair expression of civilized and progressive opinion. We do not blame those who oppose us—we have never done it—we have not complained that war was made on us, but we did most righteously complain that the fair laws of warfare were denied us. Our people were invited to go to Christ Church to listen to wise and learned men, to be converted, by hearing their religion spoken of as blasphemy and outlawry—to hear themselves designated as enemies to their God, and dethroners of their Saviour, and the spiritual slayers of their kind. They were denied any religious equality. They were abused, and vituperated, and denounced, but they were not listened to—their condemnation was silently uttered—but their defence had not even the poor tribute of a hearing. Nay, grave clergymen pleaded that they could not have their religious sensibilities disturbed or hurt by Unitarian roughness, as if merely non-orthodoxists were to shrink from opposition with the fastidious delicacy of timid devotees. We neither complained of controversy, nor avoided it, on the contrary, we met it promptly, sincerely, and willingly—with what, it is possible, inferior to our opponents—but not with less zeal, less fidelity, or less honesty. When our respected opponents challenged our witnesses, it was not as antagonists on the opposite sides of a subject open to discussion, but as accused to give in their confession of repentance, or as criminals to hear their last sentences of punishment. We, however, blame not the Lecturer, nor his party—we rather agree with them and them. We have received a lesson which we needed, Unitarians

have stood too long on the defensive, when they should have been on the aggressive: had they been faithful to their trust, it may be that the degrading dogma of original sin, and the atrocious doctrine of election and reprobation could not now, in this country, be matters of dispute. "Our regret (to use the words of the Lecturer) is rather due to the culpable silence of the past than to the proceedings of the present time." It is a remarkable fact in the history of religion, that all the doctrines which have been most generally condemned as heresies, have been pure or benignant ones; and all persecutions and religious interests, bodily or social, have been directed against their professors. Not to mention the Christians, who burned Jerome and Huss; we might refer even to the Scythians who poisoned Socrates—to uphold the personality of Satan—the reality of his existence, and the malignity of his nature,—to declaim upon hell's torments and to engage eternal perdition on the great mass of God's family,—to create excitement by the grossest pictures of vice and misery is the certain way to popularity. The popular taste, as it has yet been developed or nurtured, has been coarse and ferocious, and if any thing could prove to me the doctrine of universal depravity, it would be the toleration of the horrors of Calvinistic orthodoxy.

## PREFACE.

In preparing this Lecture for the press, after an examination in its printed form of that to which it is a Reply, I do not find that the Trinitarian argument has been strengthened by additional evidence, or by a more logical statement, or as to require any modification of my impressions of its weight and character.

Mr. Bates has in his Appendix shown out some of the scriptural evidence, and I can only request any one to examine it, in order not only to estimate its accuracy in reference to this particular question, but also to obtain a very accurate idea of the peculiar genius of Trinitarian interpretation. I shall select two passages as perfectly descriptive of the manner in which the believer in a verbal and logical revelation draws doctrinal conclusions from the mere words of scripture.

Here is one of the Trinitarian *Scriptural proofs* of Three Persons in the Unity of the Godhead.

"2 Thess. iii. 5. 'The Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ.'

"In these passages the Three Persons are distinguished. The Lord to whom the prayers in both instances directed; God, *even our Father*; and *our Lord Jesus Christ*. That the Lord thus distinguished from *God the Father*, and *our Lord Jesus Christ*, and addressed in prayer, is the Holy Ghost, is evident from the analogy of Scripture, which teaches that sanctification, for which the Apostle prays, is the peculiar work of the Holy Ghost."—*Mr. Bates' Appendix*, p. 300.

Now, using the same description of logic, we have only to quote a passage in which sanctification is ascribed not to the Holy Ghost, but to *God our Father*, in order to overthrow the whole of this verbal and uncritical railing with the sublime and vast platform of revelation.

"Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are: Sanctify them through thy truth—the word is truth."—*John xvii. 11, 17.*

The second descriptive specimen I select, of the genius of Trinitarian interpretation, is the following alleged *scriptural proof* of the separate Deity and Personality of the Holy Spirit.

"2 Cor. x. 4. 'I have in the seven Churches which are in Asia: Grace be unto you, and peace, from him which is, and which was, and which is to come: and from the seven Spirits which sit before his throne.'"

The seven Spirits, we are told, is a symbolical designation of the *True Spirit*. Nothing, however, can be more clear, even on the total principle, than that the seven Spirits are the seven Messengers, Angels, or Ministers,

which, partaking distinctly of God's Spirit, were His instruments of conveyance with the seven Churches of Asia comprehended by the Author of the Apocalypse, and which are represented as being before His throne, desiring that some inspiration from Him. "The mystery of the seven stars which thou seest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels of the seven Churches; and the seven candlesticks which thou seest are the seven Churches." Rev. i. 20.

On this, the last opportunity, perhaps, which I may have, of saying any thing in connection with these lectures, I cannot but express my awe and reverence, and point it out to public notice, that we have been necessitated, by circumstances, not to prepare merely and deliver ex tempore addresses, but to print and fix in a permanent form, disseminate upon most important and agitated questions, within a period of time so short that frequently, in doing any justice, I will not say to the subjects, but even to our own ideas of the subjects. The accidental advantage, in this respect, obtained by the Lectures on the Trinity and Theology, with an ample and undisturbed opportunity to bring out a single Lecture on a single subject, might well be studied as an object of judgment, if the real value of the controversy seems it to be estimated by any, by the results of the present controversy. You yourself, it is with great pain that I think of so much written, in the most sacred cause, almost unexpended. That this necessity has accompanied any defects except such as have been necessary to our own want of Faith, by failing to bring out its full strength, I am not aware. I am not aware that, in any respect, we have, through haste, overrated our cause. I am aware, for my own part, that it might have been much strengthened by additional force of evidence, and clearness of statement. I may be allowed to state, that in the course of three months I have been obliged to write and print to the extent of an octavo volume of nearly four hundred pages. It is possible that such an expenditure of our views should not be recorded with impartial eyes, and impartially felt; but it might be. May we ask that (its consideration will be taken into the account by all those who are now forming an opinion of the merits of the Trinitarian and Unitarian Theology, from this discussion of it. May we ask those who, in the love of the Truth, and in confidence in the God of Truth, that no Truth can injure them, with the real evidence to be presented to their minds, to read the original sources, the New and the Old Scriptures, afresh, without fear, without an unfair and biasing horror of what they have been trained to deal as heresy, without the trifling and trifling of studying a revelation from God with the previous interpretations of men, colouring all their assertions with the very words of the document, and presenting them with a seeming a pure impression from the original, yet tinctured with the whimsies and suggestions of some self-anthorized *Interpreters* who, in so doing, let they should never be considered, be considered as ignorant, and desire to see at some time that they should destroy.

London, April 1837.

## LECTURE IX.

THE COMFORTER, EVEN THE SPIRIT OF TRUTH, WHO DWELLETH IN US, AND TEACHETH ALL THINGS.

BY JOHN WILKINSON, D.D.

IF YE LOVE ME, KEEP MY COMMANDMENTS AND I WILL PRAY THE FATHER AND HE SHALL GIVE YOU ANOTHER COMFORTER, THAT HE MAY ABIDE WITH YOU FOR EVER, EVEN THE SPIRIT OF TRUTH, WHOM THE WORLD CANNOT RECEIVE, BECAUSE IT SEETH HIM NOT, NEITHER KNOWETH HIM: BUT YE KNOW HIM, FOR HE DWELLETH WITH YOU, AND SHALL BE IN YOU. I WILL NOT LEAVE YOU COMFORTLESS: WITH COME TO YOU. — JOHN XIV. 15-17.

It is very remarkable that whenever the doctrine of the Trinity is discussed, the debate is almost always exclusively occupied by the single question of the deity of the Christ, and if that can be established, the controversy is considered at an end. Controversialists glide from the doctrine of the deity of the Son, to the separate deity of the Holy Spirit, in a way which plainly shows that our mind being affected on the personal unity of God, and the principle once loosened, another division of it is conceded upon much easier terms, without fear, without caution, without reverence. Why indeed should men scruple to admit three persons into the unity of the Godhead after having got over the first great difficulty of admitting two? A third person adds nothing to the difficulty of a second person, and if we cannot maintain unbroken the principle of one God, in our own sense of oneness, then the extent to which the principle is violated, whe-

ther by three persons, or any other number, is really a matter of a very minor importance. Having admitted that there may be two persons in the godhead, it would be very absurd to take an objection against there being three, for the analogy of unity, in the only sense we are acquainted with it, the unity of a human being, having once failed us, we must never plead it again. The principle that admits two words in the being of one God will equally admit any number whatever, provided Scripture accords to them the dignity, and our struggle and reluctance will be felt most strongly on the first of these instances of our own idea of unity, and will yield more and more readily at each successive one.

This is the only explanation I can conceive, and a very natural one it is, of the weak and unguarded state in which Trinitarians have left the separate personality and deity of the Holy Ghost. I do not wonder at their preference for that word, *Ghost*, in this connection. It materializes the word *Spirit*, puts the true idea out of immediate sight, and is so far a preparation for introducing the conception of a third person, which never would naturally have arisen from the use of the more intelligible expression "the Holy Spirit," "the Spirit of God." I apprehend that all minds, though long familiarized with the idea of a plurality of persons in the godhead, would be greatly shocked, if that plurality was conceived to be either more or less than the mystic number three. A multitude of deities, discharging different offices, but partaking of the *ess* essence of the godhead, would be thought a completely Heathen conception—and a reduction of the present orthodox idea, so as to represent only two persons in the one God, would strike a Christian mind as scarcely less pagan. Yet upon Trinitarian principles this is evidently a mere prejudice of Custom. There is no more reason, so far as our understanding is concerned, for there being three persons in the godhead than for there being only two, and whether there be one, two, three, or a

endless number, is a question to which our Reason might be entirely indifferent, having no *a priori* opinion or principle of its own upon the subject: and submitting to the letter of the Revelation with equal readiness, whether it distributes the Essence of the Deity among a Trinity, or among any other plurality of minds. Now I would ask Trinitarians whether they have schooled themselves into submission to this principle—whether they would receive four persons in the Godhead as readily as they receive three, provided the same mode of inferential interpretation which now establishes the Trinity, succeeded in showing that a further distribution of the essence of the godhead was required, in order to make our Theology consistent with the exact wording of the Scriptures. I apprehend that most minds amongst us would revolt at the idea of four persons in one God, *contemplated as a mere possibility*. Yet surely as a Trinitarian this would be very unreasonable. As a Scripture doctrine he might reasonably discard it as unfounded—but as a possibility, as a subject on which, previous to Revelation, he ought to have no prejudice whatever, he must on his own principles have no objection to the plurality of divine persons extending to any number, and be as prompt, to submit his faith to five as to three, provided five can be shown to be the proper inference from the words of Scripture. A consistent Trinitarian must feel *no a priori* objection to any number of divine persons united together. Having conceded that on this subject his Reason is no guide, and his Nature no usage, there is but one question he has a right to ask,—“Is it so written?”

And even if it should be granted that Scripture reveals three divine persons and reveals no more, yet upon his own principles, a consistent Trinitarian should be cautious in asserting that there *are* no more. Scripture nowhere asserts that there are *only* three persons in the godhead—and surely it is being wise above what is written, for a Trinitarian to confining God's essence within the limits in which He has been

pleased to reveal Himself, and to make the communications He has opened upon us the measures of the infinite possibilities of His being. A Trinitarian reverently and with becoming modesty stating his own doctrine, and not presuming to know more of God than is revealed, ought to content himself with saying—that Scripture discloses three divine minds in one Deity, but that whether there are any more than three, Scripture does not declare, and he would hold it arrogant to assert. If the Unitarian is wise *contrary* to what is written in confining the unity of God to one person; the Trinitarian is wise *above* what is written in confining it to three persons, and with less excuse, for that one is neither more nor less than one is at least a natural supposition.—but after having admitted that one may be three, there is nothing but precipitancy and dogmatism in determining that it can be *only* three. A consistent and scripturally modest Trinitarian should simply state, that God his Father, God his Redeemer, and God his Sanctifier, contained all the revelation that was required for the salvation of his soul—but as to whether there might not be other divine persons in the plurality of the godhead, he held it to be a high mystery, which he did not presume to speak upon—that only these were revealed, and therefore he knew no more, but yet he did not dare to assert that his necessities, the requirements of a being so feeble, compressed and exhausted the whole capabilities and personalities of the godhead. But Trinitarians are not so modest. They charge the Unitarian with presumption for limiting the divine essence to one Person—and then they proceed themselves, with no warrant from Scripture, and none they assert from Reason, to limit it to Three.

If two not three had been the favourite mythological number, if a Duality and not a Trinity had been the Platonic conception, then, I am satisfied, that the Christian world, though it might have witnessed the deification of the Christ, would never have heard of the separate deity of the Holy

Spirit. And this assertion is amply borne out by the historical fact, that the deification of the Spirit followed afterwards as a consequence from the deification of the Son, and that the earliest form of the charge made against the Platonicizing Christians by stricter believers in the unity of the Deity, states the whole extent of their heresy to be that of introducing a *second* God, nothing as yet being said about third.

It is well known to all in whose duty has so far prevailed over distaste, as to make them turn in sorrow the heavy pages of Ecclesiastical History, that there was no discussion respecting the divinity of the third person in the Trinity until nearly the end of the fourth century. Nothing can surpass the cool and easy confidence which sets aside this undeniable fact by boldly asserting that up to this time the doctrine was never disputed—and that the absence of evidence in support of this doctrine only arises from the absence of doubt, that nobody stated what nobody denied. What, the separate deity and personality of the Holy Ghost never doubted, and yet not one prayer addressed to Him in Scripture, not one inscription of praise, not one doxology in which his name is introduced, so that when the Church desired to associate the third person in the honours of Christian worship it could find no Scripture formula, and had to make one for the occasion,—not one debate for nearly four hundred years upon the deity of the Holy Ghost, although the deity of the Second Person, to whom the Third Person even after his deification was held to be subordinate, was constantly debated, and yet the doctrine never doubted nor denied! Now if the doctrine was never doubted or denied, since the doctrine of the deity of the Son was most certainly both doubted and denied, why is it that the Holy Spirit does not appear as the Second person in the Trinity instead of the Third—why is it that the Council of Nice previous to this time, when the doctrine began to be doubted and denied, asserts the deity of the

Father, and the deity of the Son, but does not assert the deity of the Holy Ghost—and why is it that the earliest charge against the philosophizing Christians was that of introducing a second God, if there was already a second divine person acknowledged, and therefore the true charge should have been that of introducing a third? It is remarkable that the same very learned writer, the late Professor Horton, who is the great Trinitarian authority upon these subjects, after having resolved the absence of controversy into the possible absence of doubt as to the deity of the holy Ghost, records the very first instance in which the Holy Spirit is introduced into a doxology of the Church as taking place in the fourth century. He quotes Philostorgius the Arian historian, who declares, "that Flavianus of Antioch, having assembled a number of monks, was the first to shout out, Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the holy Spirit; for before his time some had said, Glory to the Father, through the Son in the holy Spirit, which was the expression in most general use; and others, Glory to the Father, in the Son and holy Spirit."<sup>14</sup> Gibbon relates this matter thus. He is speaking of a temporary triumph of the Arians over the Athanasians, and of the means employed by the Achanasian party to manifest their unwilling acceptance of the Arian Bishops. "The Catholics," says the historian, "might prove to the world, that they were not involved in the guilt and heresy of their ecclesiastical governors, by publicly testifying their dissent, or by totally separating themselves from his communion. The first of these methods was invented at Antioch, and practised with such success, that it was soon diffused over the Christian world. The doxology, or sacred hymn, which celebrates the glory of the Trinity, is susceptible of very nice, but material inflections; and the substance of an orthodox or heretical creed, may be expressed by the difference of a disjunctive or

a copulative particle. Alternate responses, and a more regular psalmody were introduced into the public Service by Flavianus and Diodorus, two devout and active laymen, who were attached to the Nicene faith. Under their conduct, a swarm of monks issued from the adjacent desert, bands of well-disciplined singers were stationed in the cathedral of Antioch, the Glory to the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost, was triumphantly chanted by a full chorus of voices—and the Catholics insouled, by the purity of their doctrine, the Arian prelate, who had usurped the throne of the venerable Eusebius."<sup>15</sup> Out of such disorders in the Church, from the rebellious device of hymns to insult an heretical Bishop, sprung the doxology of our present creeds.

It is very instructive to look a little closely into some of the passages from the early Fathers which are brought by Trinitarians as evidence of the recognition of their doctrines by the primitive Church. There is unquestionably much vague language that will really coincide with the conceptions of a modern orthodox believer; but as soon as you examine with any strictness, you find that though they use language very loosely, nothing could be farther from their modes of thinking than modern orthodoxy. For instance, we find the Son and the Holy Spirit mentioned as objects of a Christian's reverence—but it is very remarkable how many of these cases occur when the writers are defending themselves against a charge of Atheism, as if they were desirous when repelling such charge to show how many sources of veneration their religion disclosed. The early Christians who believed in only one God were called Atheists by the Heathens. To believe in only one God was in their estimation the next thing to believing in none at all. Those who believed in many gods were likely enough to call the Christians Atheists, just as in the present day sectaries in Christ Church call Unitarians non-God denying Heresy.\* In vindicating them-

\* See Emerson's original paper, in the *Christian Trinitarian*, p. 40.

\* See the Rev. F. S. May's *Elements of Theology*, p. 10.

velves against this dangerous column; the early Christians were naturally led to extend rather than to diminish their objects of worship, and accordingly in a passage quoted by Professor Burton, from the earliest Father on whom dependence can be placed, we find not only the Son and the Spirit, but interposed between the Son and the Spirit, the angels of Heaven, associated together in their reverence. Hence the passage is quoted by Roman Catholics in support of the worship of Angels. And if it is good for the one purpose, it is equally good for the other; nay, if it is any proof of the separate deity of the Holy Spirit, it is equally proof of the deity of the angels who are mentioned before him. The passage is from Justin Martyr whom Professor Burton places A. D. 150. "Hence it is that we are called Atheists: and we confess that we are Atheists with respect to such reputed gods as these: but not with respect to the true God, the Father of justice, temperance, and every other virtue, with whom is no mixture of evil. But Him, and the Son who came from Him and gave us this instruction, and the host of the other good angels which attend upon and resemble them, and the prophetic Spirit we worship and adore, paying them a reasonable and true honour, and not refusing to deliver to any one else, who wishes to be taught, what we ourselves have learnt."\* There is another passage from Justin Martyr, also given by Burton as evidence of the early recognition of the Trinity, but which is manifestly nothing more than the natural anxiety of the writer when meeting a charge that perilled his life, the charge of Atheism, to show the full extent of his sentiments of reverence. "That we are not Atheists," says Justin Martyr, "who would not acknowledge, when we worship the Creator of this Universe, and Jesus Christ who was our instructor in these things, knowing him to be the Son of this true God, and assigning to him the second place. And I shall prove presently, that we honour the prophetic Spirit in

\* Burton, Great Works, 267. Colver, p. 115.

the third rank, and that we are reasonable in so doing."\* Now let it be recollected that these two passages, extending as far as possible the objects of a Christian's reverence, occur in Justin Martyr's Apology for Christianity against its Gentile oppressors, in which he complains that the Christians were treated as Atheists, and unjustly punished for not worshipping the gods. I shall only quote one other passage exhibiting the modes of thinking respecting the Holy Spirit among the early Fathers. It is from Origen, A. D. 240, perhaps the most eminent of them all, and shows clearly, notwithstanding the frequent vagueness and obscurity of their writings, how far they were removed from modern Trinitarianism, and that their *series* of thought were derived from Platonism much more than from Christianity, or more strictly from Platonism engrafted on Christianity. He is speaking of the Son, and commenting on those words at the beginning of St. John's Gospel—"all things were made by him?"

"If it is true," says Origen, "that *all things were made by him*, we must inquire whether the Holy Ghost was made by him: for as it seems to me, if a person says that the Holy Ghost was made, and if he grants that all things were made by the Logos, he must necessarily admit that the Holy Ghost was also made by the Logos, the latter preceding him in order of time. But if a person does not choose to say that the Holy Ghost was made by Christ, it follows that he must call him unproduced, if he thinks that this passage in the gospel is true. But there may be a third opinion, beside that of admitting that the Holy Ghost was made by the Logos, and that of supposing him to be uncreated, namely, the notion of there being no substantial individual existence of the Holy Ghost distinct from the Father and the Son. We, however, being persuaded that there are three hypostases (persons), the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and believing that nothing is unproduced beside the Father, adopt this as the more pious and the true opinion, that all things being

\* Burton, p. 21.

made by the Logos, the Holy Ghost is more honourable than all of them, and more so in rank than all the things which were made by the Father through Christ. And perhaps this is the reason why he is not called the very Son of God, there being only one who by nature and origin is Son, viz. the only begotten, who seems to have been necessary to the Holy Ghost, and to have assisted in forming his hypostasis, not only that he might exist, but also that he might have wisdom, and reason, and righteousness, and whatever else we suppose him to have, according to his participation in those qualities which we have before mentioned as attributed to Christ." "Such," says Burton, "is this extraordinary, and I must add unfortunate passage of Origen, which I have quoted at length, and have endeavored to translate with the utmost fairness. If the reader should derive from it that Origen did not believe in the eternity of the Holy Ghost, he will think that the enemies of Origen were not without grounds when they questioned his orthodoxy. It is not my intention entirely to exculpate him. He is at least guilty of indiscretion in entering upon such perilous grounds and in speculating so deeply upon points which after all must elude the grasp of human ideas and phraseology." Professor Burton calls this passage "unfortunate," for no reason that we can see, except that it discloses too plainly Origen's ignorance of Modern Trinitarianism, and shows too clearly in what sense we are to understand the Platonic language of the Fathers.

There are two modes of proof by which Trinitarians undertake to establish the separate existence of the Holy Spirit as a third person in the godhead. The first mode is by inferences from such passages of scripture as seem to attribute the titles and offices of deity to the Holy Spirit. The second method of proof is by independent considerations of Theology which profess to demonstrate the necessity of a third person in the godhead in order to complete the work of man's salvation.

Trinitarians say, that Scripture both calls the Holy Spirit

God, and assigns to Him a work which none but God could accomplish. Now in both these respects we have not a shadow of difference with the Trinitarians. We believe as truly and we hope as fervently as they do, that the Holy Spirit is God, and that the Holy Spirit has connections with our souls which none but our God could hold. We have no controversy with the Trinitarians, when they assert the Deity, and Personality, and Operations of the Holy Spirit. It is a mere piece of controversial dexterity to put these points prominently forward as the true grounds of our difference - and, whether designedly or not, an unfair impression is produced against us, by such a mode of statement, as if we were deniers of the deity and agency of the spirit of God - if indeed any meaning could be found in such a denial, supposing we were extravagant enough to make it. To deny the deity of the Spirit of God, would be a proposition absolutely without meaning as to deny the humanity of the spirit of man. We were told by the Lecturer in Christ Church to whom this subject was committed, that it was of no avail for Unitarians to advance passages in which the Holy Spirit signified not God himself, but his power and influence exerted upon man, for that these occasional meanings of the expression were fully conceded; and that what we have to do, is to disprove the Trinitarian interpretation of *other* passages which attribute to the Holy Spirit, deity, personality, and operation. Now the Trinitarians must allow us the privilege of taking our faith from ourselves, not from them, and in entering out for us this employment, the Lecturer at Christ Church would set us to the task of disproving our own convictions, of overthrowing our own interpretations, of asserting and opposing ourselves. There is only one point of difference between the Trinitarians and ourselves upon this subject, and that is the only point to which their arguments never have a reference. They maintain and we maintain that the Holy Spirit is God. They concede and we concede that the ex-



pression "Holy Spirit" in scripture frequently signifies that portion of God's spirit which is given to man naturally or supernaturally. They maintain however that the Holy Spirit is, not the one God, but a third person in the godhead—and *hence we separate from them*, maintaining that the Scripture evidence for such a distribution of the Godhead among several persons is totally imaginary, and that the theological reasons for such a distribution betray the most arbitrary and unworthy limitations assigned by man to the infinite and spiritual nature of God. Now will it be believed that when Trinitarian controversialists treat this subject they uniformly put forward those views of it which we do not deny, as if we denied them, and they as uniformly pass over the only point of difference between us, and avoid all close grappling with it, laboriously proving that the holy Spirit is God, which of course we believe, and then taking for granted that he is a *third person* in a Trinity, leaving the argument at the very point where argument ought to have commenced? Will it be believed that the Lecturer at Christ Church exhausted his strength and time in assiduously proving that the spirit of God was God, and that it had understanding, will, and power? Will it be believed that of nearly a three hours' lecture certainly not more than five minutes was devoted to the only point of difference between us— that the common parts of our faith were laboriously proved— if indeed such an identical proposition, as that the spirit of God is God, can be called faith—and the single controverted part left intact? I in my own take the liberty of declaring that it is of no avail that Trinitarians adduce passages of scripture attesting the Deity, Personality, and Operations of the Holy Spirit, for that this is conceded, if an identical proposition can be conceded—and that what they have to do is to prove that the spirit of God is not the one God, but a third person in the godhead—and if the Lecturer had devoted his three lectures to this, the only point in controversy, he might have greatly

aided, or greatly injured his cause, and have afforded an opportunity for testing the mutual strength of our views in a way which is now not possible. Disappointed of finding the controversy conducted with any closeness by the Lecturer in Christ Church on the only point by us denied, namely a deity of the Holy Spirit, personally separate from the deity of our one God, I turn to a published sermon of Dr. Tattershall's, in the hope of finding some discussion of our true difference from an associated authority. But here unfortunately again precisely the same principle is pursued of proving what is not denied, and of passing most slightly over the only point of difference. In a sermon consisting of thirty-four pages just three are devoted to the matter in controversy,\* and these I grieve to say occupied with reasonings so verbal and unsatisfactory, that one is amazed that a man's and reverent mind could offer or could accept them as the solid and substantial proofs of a doctrine that affects to such an extent the being and nature of God. I think it not unbecoming here to declare, that with respect to the two modes of proof adopted by Trinitarians to establish the separate deity of the Holy Spirit, the Scriptural proof, and the Theological proof, I have long and laboriously sought in their own writers, for some distinct controversial statement of the scriptural and theological adjustments of this subject, I have examined their scholars and critics for the verbal part of the argument, and their divines for the theological part of it, and nowhere can I find anything definite or tangible to grapple with or oppose. It is at least my conviction that never was so serious a doctrine as that of a third person in the godhead admitted upon evidence so small, and I cannot conceal my strengthened impression, that it has glided into most minds as an easy consequence from the deity of Christ. Again we avow our belief that the Holy Spirit is God, but we declare that we cannot find any scriptural evidence that he is a separate God (personally) from

\* The only outgrowth of the Holy Spirit, pp. 21-23.

God our Father, or any theological evidence that He performs a work within our souls, which work may not be performed by God our Father. If Trinitarians wish to establish their own doctrine, it is to these two points that they ought to confute themselves.

Abandoned then to our own methods of discussing this subject by opponents who assert a doctrine that we deny, and prove only those portions of it that we admit, I shall endeavour to ascertain, first, the Scriptural meaning of the expression, "the Holy Spirit" or "Spirit of God."

I shall examine the more difficult passages which are usually appealed to in this controversy.

I shall examine what Trinitarians call "the work of the Spirit," in order to ascertain whether it requires a third person in the godhead, or whether God our Father is not sufficient for it.

And I shall close with some sketches of our own views of the connections of the spirit of God with the spirit of man.

The expression "Holy Spirit" when used in scripture will I think always be found to designate not God as He is in Himself, whom no man knoweth, but God in communication with the spirit of man. Whether the Deity holds intercourse with his creatures naturally or supernaturally, the name applied to Him in scripture, with respect to those felt or manifested connections, is that of the Holy Spirit. And there is most holy and beautiful reason for this peculiar usage. God is a spirit; and he is therefore only spiritually discerned. Through our spirits He speaks to us. In our spirits He abides with us. Eye hath not seen him; ear hath not heard him—but through that portion of His spirit which He has given us, we know Him, and are His. It is not God without us, but God *within* us that we know and feel. Externally we know Him not; personally we conceive Him not; as He is, in his own essence and perfections we cannot think of Him—but He has put His own spirit within us, and that, in

proportion as we have it and cherish it, reveals Him unto us—He has lighted up from Himself a candle of the Lord in our spiritual being, and if by communion with Him we keep oil in our lamps, and our lamps remain and burning, His spirit which bloweth where it listeth, beareth to blow upon us and to feed our flame. And how shall the spirit of man prepare itself for fresh communications from the spirit of God? Only by removing from his own spirit whatever is at variance with the spirit of God—by cleansing the temple, that the holy one may be able to come to us and manifest himself to a nature that has reverently sought to get away all deadening impurity, and to brighten the spiritual mirror in which it was made—by casting the voices of the soul—by listening amid the tumults of the world to hear God speaking in our conscience—by cherishing through obedience, and inviting through prayer the intimations, that by His spirit, from which ours are derived, He gives us of His will. The spirit of God originally made the spirit of Man: the spirit of God retains its connections with the spirit of Man so long as man does not by unholy and alien sympathies drive out that Holy Spirit: and in measure more abundantly as we prepare ourselves to receive of His, does He hold communion with us through affections and affluents fitted to apprehend Him, and He transforms the will that obeys Him from glory to glory as by the spirit of the Lord. I apprehend that the preparation which was made by God for the reception of the gospel and spirit of Jesus Christ, shows the preparation which all men must make who would qualify themselves for fresh communications from the Holy Spirit of our Father. The baptism of repentance prepared the way for the baptism of the holy spirit and of fire. The heart had to be cleansed before the spirit of God could descend upon it, and hold communion with it. And ever must there be a Baptist Ministry breaking the dread repose of sin, awakening the dead heart, and creating the consciousness of want, before the Christ of God can breathe in his gentle breath upon us.

souls, saying unto us, "receive ye the holy spirit." The holy spirit of God reveals itself to the spirit of man in proportion as we renounce unholiness from us. What use of language then can be more affectingly elevating and solemn than that which designates God, when in communication with man, as the Holy Spirit? A spirit, he is spiritually discerned: and holy, only those that are holy have affinities with Him.

Such then is the primary signification of the expression Holy Spirit when used in the Scriptures—the Holy Spirit of God naturally or supernaturally in communication with the spirit of man, and in fuller communication in proportion as man by holiness seeks it and prepares himself for it. From this however there is derived a secondary signification, and so natural and easy is the derivative meaning, that it is a strong confirmation of its primary. That portion of His spirit which God communicates to man, may be regarded as separated from Him. It has entered into man and become his. It is a gift, an inspiration from our God. Man has become the possessor of it, but still God is the origin of it, and therefore though imparted to us it may still be spoken of as God's holy spirit. There are therefore in Scripture two significations of the Holy Spirit—the primary one—God in communication with man—and the secondary one—that portion of His spirit which God has communicated, naturally or supernaturally, and which has become ours. We have received the Holy Spirit, when we have spiritually received what only God can communicate. These two comprise, I believe, all the meanings of the expression, Holy Spirit, *first*, God communicating to man, and *secondly* that portion of His spirit, which, by communication, man's spirit has received.

I shall give some instances of each of these applications of the phrase.

There can be no difficulty in all those cases in which the holy Spirit signifies God himself in spiritual communication

with man—<sup>8</sup> And when they bring you into the synagogues, and unto magistrates, and powers, take ye no thought how or what thing ye shall answer, or what ye shall say. For the Holy Ghost shall teach you, in that same hour, what ye ought to say."—Luke xii. 11, 12. Now in the parallel passage in St. Matthew's Gospel we have the expression, the Holy Ghost, explained to mean the spirit of God our Father. "But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak. For it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak. For it is not ye that speak, but the spirit of your Father which speaketh in you."—Matt. x. 19, 20. "Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man, but holy men spake, as they were moved by the Holy Spirit." "As they ministered to the Lam and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them—so they being sent forth by the Holy Spirit departed unto Seleucia."—Acts xiii. 2, 4.

The expression the "Spirit of God" is sometimes used with the same signification, only with this difference, that "the Spirit of God" frequently signifies the essence and being of God as He is in Himself, whilst the expression "the Holy Spirit" is I believe never employed except to designate our heavenly Father when in living communication with the spirits of his children. "What man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of a man that is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man [or no one] but the spirit of God."—1 Cor. ii. 11. Here if the spirit of man means man, the spirit of God must mean God, and how in opposition to language so precise and definite, a separate personality could be introduced into the god-head, called the spirit of God, it is difficult to imagine. "Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence?"—Ps. cxxxix. "By his spirit he has

garnished the heavens: his hand has fastened the crooked serpent, (the galaxy) : Job, xxvi. 11.

I shall now adduce some of the more remarkable cases in which the various expressions, "spirit," "holy spirit," and "spirit of God," are used to designate that portion of God's spirit which naturally or supernaturally has entered into man, and become ours, but which in reference to Him from whom it was cleaved, and with whom it retains blessed communications, is called the spirit of God. God being a Spirit, and man being a spirit, whatever man knows or feels of God, may, not figuratively, but with the strictest truth, be called the Holy Spirit within him. "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him."—Luke, xi. 13. Now that the Holy Spirit signifies here not a third person in the godhead, but our heavenly Father's gifts and inspirations to the soul, is clearly shown by the parallel passage in St. Matthew's gospel: "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in Heaven give good things to them that ask Him."—Matt. vii. 11. "But as it is written, eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his spirit: for the spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God."—1 Cor. ii. 9, 10. Now here the spirit is used first in its primary sense of God in communication with man, and immediately after in its secondary sense of that portion of His spirit communicated to man, for it is just in proportion as it partakes of His spirit that the spirit of man searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. God enlightens and man receives—but the light which has entered into man, since it came from God, may well continue to be called the Spirit of God. "Now we have received<sup>†</sup>, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which

is of God:—but the natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But we have the mind of Christ."—1 Cor. ii. 13—16. Here the Apostle distinctly declares that our portion of the spirit of God is "the mind of Christ." In proportion as we have that we know Him, the only true God, whom to know is life eternal. "Likewise the spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings that cannot be uttered."—Rom. viii. 26. Now not only can he more marvelously in all the miracles of our stage interpretation, than that this spirit within us which coars itself in groanings that cannot be uttered should ever have been referred to a third personality in the godhead. How be careful is this passage when truly and *spiritually* considered? We know not what to pray for as we ought: our spiritual apprehension is feeble and dim; and our vague yearnings after the heavenly and the perfect are not distinct enough to present clearly-defined objects to our pursuit and love: yet we have a holy impulse within us, a divine tendency leading us towards God; God has given us this Spirit, and partaking of His nature it sighs after the perfection to which it is tending; it knows not fully its heavenly origin and end, but still true to the divine instinct it yearns after Him and tends towards Him; it sighs for a glory and a happiness which it cannot distinctly conceive or express, but God who gave it understands the prayer, and hears this intercession of His own spirit: that divine impulse imparted by Himself which now suggests Him to make bright its dim longings and to help it forwards unto that glory towards which the intimacy within it tends: and He who searcheth the heart knoweth what is the sound of that spirit which He himself put there, and that it *maketh* intercession with Him, for all holy ones,\*

\* And in that sense the heart breatheth what is the mind of the Spirit, saying the words which are for the Father, the glory of the Lord of God!—Rom. viii. 27.



Christ," for this would imply the possession and acceptance of all the religious ideas associated with his person and ministry—and accordingly we find that in every recorded case of baptism or allusion to baptism in the Acts of the Apostles, and in the Epistles, the expression simply and briefly is to "baptize into Christ," and never once is there an allusion to the form of baptism into the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost. Now this demonstrates two things: first that the Apostles did not look upon these words as a *form prescribed by Christ*; and secondly, that they did not regard *them* as a confession of faith in a tri-personal God, else would they never have neglected all mention of the *first and third* persons, and simply baptized into Christ, that is, into the religion of the Christ. There is a remarkable confirmation of this view, if indeed it can be supposed to want confirmation, in the language of Paul to some disciples at Ephesus, who had not received the witnessing power and presence of the Holy Spirit. They declare that they had not so much as heard whether there was any Holy Spirit. To *what*, then, says the Apostle were you baptized; not into *whom*, observe, but into *what* were you baptized, that is, was not the manifestation and participation of God's Spirit one of the religious ideas and expectations of your faith as converts. And they answer that they *had* only been baptized into the baptism of John, who had *promised* the Holy Spirit, but had no power to confer it. And then Paul baptized them into Jesus, and they received the Holy Spirit. Now can any one read this passage and believe that the Holy Ghost implies the third person in a Trinity; was it not simply a portion of God's spirit received by the first believers as an attestation to the religion of the Christ?

Noticing can be more arbitrary than to assert that baptism implies the personality and deity of that in to which a person is baptized. The Apostle Paul says that Christians were baptized into the death of Christ. Rom. vi. 3. Is the death

of Christ therefore a person and a God? Is it not simply one of the religious ideas which their faith embraced?

The personality and deity of the Holy Spirit we indeed do not deny; but the methods by which Trinitarians attempt the proof of this self-evident proposition, are, like all proofs of identical propositions, unsatisfactory to an extreme. The Factorer in Christ Church, when meeting the objector, that baptism into Christ was no proof of his deity because we have also the expression, "baptism into Moses," dropped out of sight the true bearing of the objection against the *deity* of Jesus, and argued that the expression, "baptism into Moses," was so far a proof of the personality of the Holy Spirit, because Moses was a person. Was the death of Christ, a person? Was Mount Gerizim, a person? We do not deny the personality of the Holy Spirit—though this is no way of proving it. We do deny that the deity of Christ is implied in baptism into his name, and the force of the expression, baptism into Moses, in this bearing of it, was either not seen or was put aside.

The argument, that because *these words* follow one another, without any expressed distinction, they must all refer to subjects of the same nature, coequal and coextensive, and this, too, as the strongest, indeed the *only direct* evidence of a Trinity in the Godhead, is *really* one of those arguments for a doctrine of revelation, which a mind with any reverence knows not how properly to distrust. I am glad to be able to say, that Dr. Pate's *et* pronouners this to be only a *presumptive* proof of the separate personality of the Holy Spirit, that is, in fact, no proof at all, but merely such a hint as might lead to the presumption that there may be additional evidence, and which, therefore, in the absence of such additional evidence, amounts to nothing. If any one, however, advances such an argument, we have only to ask first, is any one really content to rest such a doctrine on such a proof, and call this Revelation? and secondly, to advance in our turn, other pas-

sages of Scripture, where this principle of interpretation cannot be maintained. If the concurrence of the words, Father, and Son, and Holy Spirit, necessarily implies that each of these refers to a person who is God, and that when taken together they make up the entire nature of God—then, I ask, what is the necessary inference from such expressions as these,—“I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels, that thou observe these things?”—1 Tim. v. 21. Now if the argument is conclusive that infers in the one case the deity of Jesus, it must be equally conclusive, when it infers, in the other, the deity of the elect angels. The Trinitarian answer will be,—“We know that the angels are not God, and in accordance with this knowledge, we interpret the passage;” and equally do we answer, that when such a passage is given us as *proof* of the deity of the Lord Jesus, we know that he was a man, and in accordance with this knowledge do we interpret the passage. Other instances might be given of similar modes of expression:—“And all the people greatly feared the Lord and Samuel;” 1 Sam. xii. 18; and more strikingly still, Rev. iii. 12, where the name of a *place* is associated as a religious idea, with the names of God and Christ. “Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out, and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is New Jerusalem, which cometh down out of Heaven from my God, and [I will write upon him] my new name.”

There is only one other passage in which these three expressions occur together; and it must have a precisely similar explanation:—“The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, be with you all.” Now here the expression “*communion of the Holy Spirit*,” fixes the meaning of the passage. The word communion signifies “participation;” “a having in common.” Thus St. Paul speaks of “the communion of the

sufferings of Christ;” Philippi. iii. 10. In this sense, then, it can have no reference to a person, and must signify simply a participation of that spiritual presence, comfort, and power of God, which was the promise and the witness of the religion of the Christ. In explaining such passages, we have again and again to recal ourselves to the belief, that we are actually considering the strongest Scriptural assertions of the doctrine of a Trinity of persons in the unity of the Godhead. The first Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians closes thus:—“The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. My love be with you all in Christ Jesus.” Who thinks of inferring the equality of Paul with Jesus? And yet, if such a mode of reasoning is allowable, from the close of the Second Epistle to the Corinthians, it is impossible to give any reason for its not being equally conclusive when applied to the close of the first Epistle of the Corinthians. But such verbal reasonings are in every way unworthy of the solemn character of revelation, nor can the mind long dwell upon them without feeling how painfully they interfere with the sentiment of Reverence, and what a lowering it is of Christ and Christianity to place them in such lights.

The portion of Scripture, however, which is mainly relied upon to prove the *distinct* deity and personality of the Holy Spirit, is that most solemn and faithful promise of Christ to his disciples, in which the Spirit of Truth is described as a Comforter which the Father would send in his name, and who, when he came, would testify of Jesus, and bring to their remembrance all things that he had said unto them, but which they had not understood. Now let us connect this promise of a Comforter previous to his death, with a similar promise after the resurrection, and then endeavour to ascertain the meaning. In the first chapter of the Book of Acts, at the eighth verse, it is written:—“Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me, both in Jerusalem, and in all Judæa,

and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth." Now we shall find that the Holy Spirit which came upon them was the Spirit of Truth, a truer knowledge of Christ, a portion of the Spirit of God, a sympathy with and an understanding of the Mind of the Father of Jesus, which they did not possess before:— in the one case comforting them for the loss of their friend and their master, by giving them a participation of his and of his Father's Spirit;— in the other case, qualifying them specially to be witnesses unto him, to be his Apostles and Preachers, an office for which their previous misconceptions of the true character of the Christ, their alienation from the true Spirit of God, as manifested in Jesus, had totally disqualified them. Why it was that Jesus must "go away," in order that the Spirit of Truth might come unto them, in order that the Spirit of the world should be separated from their ideas of the Christ, and the Spirit of God take its place, we shall fully see. Previous to the death of Jesus, the views of the Apostles respecting their Messiah were Jewish and worldly; after the Resurrection and Ascension they became Christian and spiritual. How was it that Jesus must personally leave them, in order that the Spirit of Truth might come unto them? "It is expedient for you that I go away, for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you."

The Death, the Resurrection, and the Ascension of the Christ, introduced a necessary change into the conceptions of the Apostles; these drove out of their Messianic idea the spirit of the World, and introduced into it the spirit of God. They could not retain their Jewish ideas of the reign of the Messiah, in connexion with the crucified Jesus. If they held by their Jewish faith on this matter, they must abandon Jesus. If they held by Jesus, they must abandon their Jewish ideas, and remodel their faith. But God takes care that they shall hold by Jesus; and this is His mode of spiritualizing their conceptions of Christ and of Christianity.

God lifts him from the dead and places him in Heaven. The Christ returns to earth to show that God was with him; and he ascends into Heaven, to repel the imagination which otherwise might possibly arise, nay, which actually had arisen, that even yet he might raise his standard on the earth, and realize the gigantic illusion of the Jew. By this means, the Apostles were placed in this position:— they must retain their faith in Jesus, for how could they battle against God, or hold out against such evidence as the Christ rising from the tomb, and the Christ passing into the skies;—and yet if they are to regard Jesus as their Messiah, they must modify all their Jewish views, and conceive of the Christ anew. And accordingly this was the plan and process of their conversion, of their introduction to the true Christianity, of their baptism into the Spirit of God. Since Jesus was thus evidently the Christ, and yet could not be adapted to their Jewish views, of course all their Jewish views must yield, and adapt themselves to him. His life and destinies were the fixed facts, with which their conceptions of the Christ must now be harmonized. You now see how when the Spirit of Truth came upon them, it testified of Jesus, it took of him, and showed it unto them, it threw illumination upon words and deeds of his, which, when contemplated from the Jewish point of view, ought not the sympathies of their souls, and like invisible writing, waited for the heat and light of Truth to fall upon them, and bring out the meaning. His Death struck down a principal part of their errors; and his Exaltation sowed upon them a new idea of his kingdom. Never again could they confound the Messiah with a temporal prince. Whatever Christianity might be, henceforth it must be connected with the immortality of Heaven. Christianity could not be separated from the Christ, and the Christ was with God; and they remembered his prayer and promise, that they were to be with him where he was.



All this would necessarily be suggested to them from their identifying the Christ with the risen Jesus. Nothing more would be necessary to unfold this train of spiritual thought. It was the first fulfilment of that profound prophecy, "When the Comforter is come, even the Spirit of Truth which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me, and shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." And this Spirit of Truth did lead them into all truth—it gave them no new revelation, but it called to their remembrance, and taught them to understand a revelation which Jesus had before offered to them in vain—and so, in the words of his own promise, it glorified him, for it "took of his, and showed it unto them." The Apostles were now in a position to look upon the Christ from a right point of view, and to receive the Spirit of Truth and God. The scales of illusion dropped from their eyes, and they began to see Jesus as he was. From the hour that circumstances constrained them to draw their Christianity from the life and destiny of the Christ, their minds began to open, and the Spirit of Truth to teach them all things, and to call to their remembrance whatsoever Jesus had said unto them, no longer dimly understood, but irradiated with moral light, because seen in right connexions, and explained by the interpretation of events. Who can retain his fancies in opposition to direct experience? and experience was now enlightening the Apostles. How could they go on dreaming of an Earthly Prince, when their Christ was in the skies? From that hour their souls began to be transfigured, and they walked in the light of the other world, and the Christ to whom they looked became their leader to immortality. How could they go on in their unspiritual imaginations, when the Captain of their salvation stood constantly before their eyes, a crucified man, and a risen immortal? From that hour they became soldiers of the Cross, and their only victories were

over themselves, and the powers of evil, and the only battle-ary of the Son of Man, when idol after idol fell prostrate before the Truth, and their Master in the skies, in the successes of his faith, led on the movements of humanity, and, wherever his spirit struck root, banded a new force against the enemies of man, and mustered fresh hosts for conquest. How could they go on in their national arrogance, and in their sectarian intolerance, when they were obliged to draw their moral notions of Christianity from the life of Christ, and that spoke such different lessons? From that hour their anti-social temper began to soften, their exclusiveness to bend and give way, their deep-and lines of national distinctness to disappear in the fully developed features of our common humanity. In the light of *his* Spirit, what could they be but children of God, and brethren of mankind? They had to harmonize his Kingdom with his Character, and that led them into all truth. They had to read the glory of God in the face of Christ; and the light that beamed there was grace and truth. They had to take their Christianity from the Master's life, and that kept them right. Its lesson was of the one fold, and the one shepherd—of the one God and Father of all, and of one type of the connexions between humanity and Heaven—one Mediator between man and God, the man Christ Jesus. And so at last, when fitted for it by the teaching of events, the Spirit of Truth, at once their Comforter and their Teacher, descended upon them, and then they became "witnesses unto men." They read his life anew, and reported it to the world, and the world read it too, and has ever since been studying that exhaustless revelation. They saw in it more and more of the Saviour's spirit and purposes, and after the illumination had come upon them, the providence of God so disposed the external events that affected the infant Church, that they went forth bearing the light that lighted them unto all the world. Persecution scattered them from hill to land, and they went carrying with them their priceless treasure. They were hunted from city to city, but all the faster flew the Gospel.

All this could necessarily be suggested to them from their identifying the Christ with the risen Jesus. Nothing more would be necessary to unfold this train of spiritual thought. It was the first fulfilment of that profound prophecy, "When the Comforter is come, even the Spirit of Truth which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me, and shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." And this Spirit of Truth did lead them into all truth; it gave them no new revelation, but it called to their remembrance, and taught them to understand a revelation which Jesus had before offered to them in vain—and so, in the words of his own promise, it glorified him, for it "took of his, and showed it unto them." The Apostles were now in a position to look upon the Christ from a right point of view, and to receive the Spirit of Truth and God. The scales of illusion dropped from their eyes, and they began to see Jesus as he was. From that hour that circumstances constrained them to draw their Christianity from the life and destiny of the Christ, their minds began to open, and the Spirit of Truth to teach them all things, and to call to their remembrance whatsoever Jesus had said unto them, no longer dimly understood, but irradiated with moral light, because seen in right connection, and explained by the interpretation of events. Who can retain his faculties in opposition to direct experience? and experience was now enlightening the Apostles. How could they go on dreaming of an Earthly Prince, when their Christ was in the skies? From that hour their souls began to be transfigured, and they walked in the light of the other world, and the Christ to whom they looked became their leader to Immortality. How could they go on in their unspiritual imaginations, when the Captain of their Salvation stood constantly before their eyes, a crucified man, and a risen immortal? From that hour they became soldiers of the Cross, and their only victories were

were themselves, and the powers of evil; and the only battery of the Son of Man, when idol after idol fell prostrate before the Truth, and their Master in the skies, in the successes of his faith, led on the movements of humanity, and, wherever his spirit struck root, banded a new force against the enemies of man, and mustered fresh hosts for conquest. How could they go on in their national arrogance, and in their sectarian intolerance, when they were obliged to draw their moral notions of Christianity from the life of Christ, and that spoke such different lessons? From that hour their anti-social temper began to soften, their exclusiveness to bend and give way, their deep-cut lines of national distinctness to disappear in the fully developed features of our common humanity. In the light of *his* Spirit, what *could* they be but children of God, and brethren of mankind? They had to harmonize his Kingdom with his Character, and that led them into all truth. They had to read the glory of God in the face of Christ; and the light that beamed there was grace and truth. They had to take their Christianity from the Master's life, and that kept them right. Its lesson was of the one fold, and the one shepherd—of the one God and Father of all, and of one type of the connection between humanity and Heaven—*one* Mediator between man and God, the man Christ Jesus. And so at last, when fitted for it by the teaching of events, the Spirit of Truth, at once their Comforter and their Teacher, descended upon them, and then they became "witnesses unto him." They read his life anew, and reported it to the world, and the world read it too, and has ever since been studying that exhaustless revelation. They saw in it more and more of the Saviour's spirit and purposes, and after the illumination had come upon them, the providence of God so disposed the external events that affected the infant Church, that they went forth bearing the light that lighted them unto all the world. Persecution scattered them from land to land, and they went carrying with them their priceless treasure. They were hunted from city to city, but all the faster flew the Gospel.

The stake received them, and it became as a new cross of Christ, and the blood of his martyrs witnessed unto him. Are we speaking of the same men who in Gethsemane's garden forsook their Lord and fed—who in the Temple Court covered him to his face—who, when he was led to the Cross, abandoned him in terror, and when he died there, laid their heads in the dust, because their poor ambition was fallen to the earth?—Are they the same men, who in the Gospels are narrow-minded, ambitious, and false—that in the Acts of the Apostles come forth bold, resolute, spiritual witnesses for Jesus, and countless martyrs to his truth? We can scarcely believe that we are reading of the same men, when we turn from the page of the Evangelists to the record of their deeds, after the Death and the Ascension of the Christ annihilated their errors, and the Spirit of Truth and of God had fallen upon them. Contrast the prayer,—“Lord grant us to sit on thy right hand and on thy left to thy kingdom.” or,—“Lord wilt thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?”—with this, “Lord, thou art God, which hast made Heaven and Earth, and the Sea, and all that is therein; who by the mouth of thy servant David hast said, why did the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things? The kings of the Earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ—For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done.—And now, Lord, behold their threatenings, and grant unto thy servants that with all boldness they may speak thy word; by stretching forth thine hand to heal, and that signs and wonders may be done by the name of thy holy child Jesus?” How came this difference? What passed over them and turned them into new men? The Spirit of Truth had come unto them, that great Comforter, the Spirit of Understanding and of God; they saw it all, and they were worldly and weak no more, but

strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might: And this Comforter never again left them; the truth broke upon them and became their stay for ever,—it was the Spirit of God dwelling in them, and abiding for ever, his imperishable light in the soul, once given never to be withdrawn. It was just the difference between Spiritual light and Spiritual darkness, in their effects upon character. It was just the difference between the spirit that is of the world, and the spirit that is of God. It was just the difference between our nature when it is right and when it is wrong with God; when it is stumbling in darkness, the dupes of illusions, and when it is furnished with everlasting principles, and walking in the light of life. In the Gospels they are men palsied by the feebleness of error—in the Acts of the Apostles they are men omnipotent in the power of Truth. Is this change in their characters capable of being accounted for? Yes, if you grant the facts of Christ's history,—but not otherwise. How otherwise are you to get across the chasm between the Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles, I know not. Take these facts as causes, and the bridge is easy. What a step is it from the fishermen of Galilee to the Apostles of Christ—from the ignorance of Jewish peasants, to the Communicators of the mightiest impulse that Society has ever felt, the agents of the mightiest influence that ever Providence has put forth upon the soul of man,—the creators of new institutions, new forms of character, new civil relationships,—before whose preaching religions and empires fell,—at whose word Liberty first started into life, not as a spirit of opposition, but as the gentle child of brotherhood and love,—and who are still in the monuments they have left behind them, the heralds of human progress and the revolutionizers of the world! Who will deny that the spirit of God was here? Not we: we are ready to maintain it against the world. Who denies that the spirit of God still accompanies his Gospel? Not we: we believe it in the depths of our hearts. How wonderful the impulse, these men gave, and still give to the heart

of the world! What difficulties had they to conquer! their own characters, and violent prepossessions—and they conquered these. The curse of the Priest, the aim of the Ruler, the scoff of the People—and they conquered these. The attractions of Heathenism; the licentiousness of its morality; the gracefulness of its idolatry; its religion for the senses; its philosophy for the sceptic; its indifference to speculative truth; its equal regard for all gods; and all forms of worship that would only be content to dwell together in peace, and they conquered these. Think of this wonderful History, and say whether you can explain it except as the New Testament explains it. What would account for the fortunes of the Apostles, if Christianity was not from God? The world of Causes and Effects is but a game of Chance, if such things can be, and their origin an accidental imagination, their foundation a falsehood or a dream. Who will account for such men being enlightened against their own wills, and forced into the front ranks of humanity contrary to their own desires—if the history is not true? But rob not the History of its true power—take not the spirit of life out of the gospel—by telling us of a third person in the Trinity whom Jesus sent to supplant the free minds of the Apostles. No, it was the free spirit of God acting upon the free spirit of man that opened their eyes to see the things that were hidden from them before; and they walked forth in the light of these wondrous events, and looked now upon their Christ as those from whose spiritual sight the bondage of the world had been taken away. The Comforter, which is the Spirit of TRUTH, came unto them, and taught them all things, and rectifying their former misconceptions took of the things of Christ, and showed it unto them. He spoke not of himself. He added nothing to the revelation already made by Jesus:—the divine characters were already impressed on the life and desires of the Chaste—and the Spirit of Truth guided them to it, and brought out the full meaning of the already finished revela-

tion. Still does the world want light to read that revelation. Still does many an interpreter come to the reading of it with a Jewish veil upon his heart. But there is new light and to break forth out of God's word. Although it would almost seem as if another day of Pentecost would be needed to drive out the spirit of the world, the spirit of system and of man, by the mightier Spirit of God—and to guide our exclusive temper, our sectarian and narrow hearts into the religion of reality—of the merciful and perfect Christ, full of grace and truth.

It is impossible to display with any minuteness the confusion that is introduced into the Scriptures by the supposition that the Holy Spirit is a third infinite Mind associated with the Father and the Son. In our passage it is said, "If I cast out devils by *the Spirit of God*, then the kingdom of God is come unto you;" in another passage it is said, "If I with *the finger of God* cast out devils, no doubt the kingdom of God is come unto you." Are we to understand then different things by "the Spirit of God" and "the finger of God," or do they not both plainly signify the power and presence of the One God who wrought in Christ:—"the Father who dwelleth in me, He doeth the works."

In one passage it is said, "Wait for the promise of the Father—ye shall be baptized with *the Holy Spirit* not many days hence." In another passage of the same writer it is said, "Tarry ye in the city, until ye be endued with *power from on high*." Are we to understand by the Holy Spirit anything different from "power from on high," or rather are we not to understand by both the fulfilment of the promise of the Father by His own power and presence?

In one passage it is said, "We are his witnesses of these things, and so is also *the Holy Spirit*, which God hath given to them that obey Him." In another passage it is said, "The works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me." Is it not evident then that *the works* which the Apostles

Des did, were the works of God, His spirit working by them, witnessing to the truth of their testimony?

If the Holy Spirit is a distinct Person from God the Father, then the third Person, and not the first person in the Trinity, nor the second person, must on the Trinitarian view be regarded as the Father of Jesus, for it is written, "the Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee." And yet the Trinitarian hypothesis is, that it was neither the third person, nor the first, but the second person in the godhead, that took humanity into union with his deity. But there is no end of these painful inconsistencies. So again Jesus is said to be raised from the dead by God, and again to be "quickened by the Spirit;" but surely the Trinitarian hypothesis would require that the divine nature of the Christ, the second person in the Trinity, should raise up the human Jesus, with which it had been united. Who will harmonize these things for us? Who can without pain, nay, without asking pardon of God for the irreverence, contemplate His spiritual nature in such representations?

It is said of the Holy Spirit, that He would not speak of himself. Can He then be a distinct God in the unity of the godhead, and not speak of Himself? Is this the reason that Scripture contains no proof of his separate existence? Is it not evident that the Spirit of Truth, *added nothing* to the revelation that was in Christ, but brought it out, *illuminated*, by an *aliter* influence on the minds of the Apostles, what he said and did?

It is said in Scripture that no one knows the Son but the Father—and that no one knows the Father but the Son:—but if the Holy Spirit is a third person in the godhead, equal in every respect, this must be an erroneous statement.

The last scriptural proof I shall give that the Holy Spirit is not a third infinite Person in the godhead is the very decisive one that Scripture offers not a single ascription of praise

or glory to Him, and contains not a single doxology in which He is included. Could this be so if he was really and distinctively God? Scripture contains ascriptions of praise to Christ, and even to the Angels; it connects together the names of God and Christ, in innumerable cases where it makes no mention of the Holy Spirit. John v. 41. *giv.* 21. "Father!—this is life eternal to know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." Now if Trinitarianism is true, the Father, and even with the addition of Jesus Christ whom He has sent, does not constitute the only true God.

"Our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ."—1 John i. 3.

"Hence be with you, mercy, and peace, from God the Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, in truth and love."—2 John i. 3.

"He that abideth in the doctrine of the Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son."—2 John i. 9.

"For whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, of him shall the Son of Man be ashamed, when he shall come in his own glory, and in his Father's, and of the holy angels."—Luke ix. 26. 1 Tim. v. 21.

"He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father and before his angels."—Rev. iii. 5.

"And every creature which is in Heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth on the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever."—Rev. v. 13.

Now if it be a fact that there is not one scriptural ascription of glory to the Holy Ghost, how is it that the Church of England can so confidently say, "Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost: as it was so in the

*beginning, is now, and ever shall be.*" The beginning that is here spoken of must have *begun after* all the books of the New Testament were written. We have already traced in ecclesiastical history the beginning of that doxology, in the latter part of the fourth century;—and a beginning in its attendant circumstances not very reputable, nor such as should be countenanced by those who preach submission to Church Authorities.

The learned and profound Landor, modest as learned, remarks upon the assumption contained in this doxology of the prayer book, "as it was in the beginning." "Doubtless this is said by many very frequently, and with great devotion. But can it be said truly? Does not that deserve consideration? Is there any such doxology in the New Testament? If not, how can it be said, to have been *in the beginning*? Are not the books of the New Testament the most recent, and the most authentic Christian writings in all the world? It matters not much to inquire, when this doxology was first used, or how long it has been in use, if it is not in the New Testament. And whether it is there or not may be known by those who are pleased to read it with care—as all may, in Protestant countries, where the Bible lies open, to be seen and read by all men." (Postscript I to "A Letter on the Logic.")

Weak and almost incredibly insufficient as is the *scriptural* evidence for a third Person in the godhead, the *theological* evidence is still weaker and more arbitrary, and betrays most fully those inadequate conceptions of the divine nature which form the supports of all the popular creeds and churches. You are aware of the Trinitarian argument for the necessity of a second person in the godhead; for these orthodox theologians presume to reason upon abstract principles about the nature of God to an extent that the Unitarians whom they condemn for this very practice never have approached to, and which indeed we hold to be arbitrary and presuming to

the last degree. We are gravely told by divines who profess the utmost humility and a horror of all speculation, that if God was one Being in the sense that we are one, He would have no resources in His own Nature enabling Him to forgive Sin; and that if there were not at least two persons in the godhead, the one to make atonement and the other to receive it, our Father in Heaven would be placed in these circumstances, — either He must forgive, and since His Law had been broken without the infliction of an adequate penalty, exhibit His Character without Terror, or He must refuse to forgive, and retaining His Truth, exhibit His Character without Mercy. Now when a *learned reasoner* lays down these premisses as necessary parts of the constitution of the divine mind, I am amazed that he has ever after the conscience to charge other men with such speculations on the subjects of Theology, or with reasoning upon abstract principles about the things of God. Atonement is made for every sin: it is that the Trinitarian is right. The sinner bears upon a burdened soul the weight of the cross, and dwells in sorrow. Through a crucifixion and an agony does every willing heart return to God. The penalty is paid in bitter shame and tears, in the consciousness of degradation and of eternal loss, in the deep humiliation of a spirit that has quailed within at the divine flame, and treated with no respect the image of God in which it was made. Can such a being sin and escape without atonement—can a spiritual creature darken the angel and cherish the animal, and yet pay no penalty, start at last with no horror, and die with no remorseful agony? No. The sinner must die in his sins, if he is to escape the piercings of his better nature, the open eye of his conscience fixed in awful steadiness of gaze upon the terrors of his state. Who that has ever felt a throbb of penitence, who that has ever known the prostration of a soul awakened to a sense of sin, the deep misery of the purer spirit looking sorrowfully on the debasements of our being,

as Christ looked upon Peter, who that has ever felt these things will deny that sin, every sin, has its atonement, and instead of questioning the vicarious sacrifice as too dreadful, will not rather put it away from him only as too easy, too unreal, too remote from the sense of individual agency and burden, to meet and satisfy the inward and intransmissible reality? We blame not the Trinitarians for speaking of the atonement required by sin. We blame them for not treating that subject with sufficient strictness, with sufficient severity, with sufficient energy of application to individual consciences. How much more awakening it is to tell a man of the atonement that he pays within, of the cross that is laid upon his humiliated heart, than to tell him of a metaphysical necessity in God's nature that required the death of an infinite being, the blood of God, for this awful expression is used and defended at Christ Church, to make satisfaction for the offence of a finite creature. This is the arbitrary assumption of Trinitarianism that requires most to be exposed, that the sin of a finite being is an infinite quantity, and that his penitence cannot atone for it, for his penitence is not infinite. Now the men who assert this strange thing, should at least be cautious how they charge Unitarians with arbitrary reasonings and speculations. Can Reason exhibit, or does Scripture any where say, that the sin of finite man is infinite in the sight of God, and yet unless this most extravagant of all propositions can be established the whole Trinitarian Theology falls to the ground, for then the only atonement for sin will be the contrition of the erring and repenting spirit, and none more dreadful can be given or conceived. I am perfectly aware that cautious and refined controversialists would not assert the infinite character of man's sinfulness, and that they would explain away the doctrine of the Atonement, but the Lecturers at Christ Church are not cautious controversialists, they have no no-

\* See the Rev. Mr. Boddam's Letters.

tion of such refinements, and they do assert it with out abatement. If God's mercy, says one of them,\* was like man's mercy, He could not forgive, yet preserve His holiness. And therefore I suppose, since man has no tri-personal resources in his unity, that He can forgive only because his holiness is of an imperfect kind, and as his holiness becomes more strict he will less readily forgive, so that when he becomes quite perfect he will be quite insupportable. But perhaps the Trinitarian resource in this difficulty, is that man too forgives, yet keeps his truth and holiness, in consideration of the atonement offered for all sin. The moral plea that man is not the *Lawgiver*, cannot be offered by those whose difficulty is one respecting holiness. A holy mind is as much bound by the laws of holiness, as if it was itself the Lawgiver.

I have introduced here this arbitrary, metaphysical, and unscriptural speculation, employed by the Trinitarians to establish, *a priori*, the necessity of a second person in the godhead, only to prepare you for a similar mode of reasoning which is applied to prove the necessity for a *third* person in the godhead. There are works, they say, carried on in the soul of man, that require a Third Person, another infinite Mind in the godhead. Solemnly we say that this is talking too free with the infinite nature of God. What are those works, or what works can be conceived, to which God our Father is not adequate? Is it not very like interference for a human being to say,—my salvation cannot be carried on by one infinite and perfect Spirit, but requires three infinite and perfect Spirits? Ought not such conclusions of Reason as these to be very distinctly supported by Revelation before they are advanced with any boldness, and other men called no Christians, and treated accordingly, for no other iniquity than that of humbly refusing to speak so confidently of God's nature, and to put these limitations upon Him without proof? But even supposing that the orthodox reasonings

\* The Rev. H. M'Nale.

about the nature of sin were correct, and the inability of one perfect mind to forgive his creatures, and rescue a sinner from his sins, established, what necessities remain that require the existence of a *third* infinite Mind—what operations within the human soul are to be carried on, for which God the Father and God the Son are not sufficient? I know nothing more wonderful than that the Christian world should at this day admit the existence of a *third* person in the godhead, without ever raising the question, or having the doubt suggested to them, is not God our Father *sufficient* for these things? I entreat you to discard from your minds the Trinitarian assertion that we deny the operations attributed by them to the Holy Spirit—we do not deny them—the communications of the Spirit of God with the spirit of man we hold as the most solemn, intimate and blessed truth, the very soul of worship, of hope, and of spiritual life—take away this, and religion has neither power nor meaning—but we do deny that the Spirit of our Father is insufficient to maintain every spiritual connection with the souls of His children; we bring the secret griefs, penitence, and aspirations of our being to Him who heard the prayers and strengthened the soul of Christ;—and when light descends upon us, so that we almost hear the encouragements of His voice, and see the beckoning of His hand, we know that it is the Spirit of our Father who sends the blessing from above, and gives to them that ask.

We entreat Trinitarians to address themselves to this particular point, and to explain to us the moral or metaphysical necessities that require a third person to the godhead, and render two perfect and infinite Minds inadequate to the work of Man's Salvation. They are very explicit and full in their statement of reasons exhibiting the incompetency of one infinite spirit to save a sinner, and necessitating the introduction of a second—we ask them to be equally explicit in explaining to us the inadequacy of two Beings each of them

possessed of the full perfections of godhead, to rescue, teach, comfort, and bless, that not naturally unkindred spirit of man, which Scripture tells us is 'the candle of the Lord,' and 'the inspiration of the Almighty.' It will not serve the Trinitarian theologians to refuse us this explanation on the grounds that they take the doctrine as it is revealed, and inquire no further—for they *do* enter into very copious explanations of the theological necessity for a *second* person in the godhead, and they very confidently state it as a fact in divine metaphysics, that if the resources of God could not have supplied two infinite minds, no sin could ever have found a pardon—and if after this readiness of explanation respecting the second person they refuse us all explanation respecting the third, the conclusion will certainly be suggested, that they offer no explanations only because they have none to offer. Considering for a moment the fundamental principles of Trinitarian theology, that the Father of our spirits could not receive the penitence of His children and shed His blessing upon their returning hearts, until forgiveness was rendered possible by a co-equal and co-eternal God meeting the demands of a Righteousness that, if dwelling in only one perfect Mind, could not pardon,—what is there I ask after the sacrifice of Christ had removed the difficulty, and opened the communication between God and his children, and left the divine spirit free to love, and operate upon, the justified,—what is there remaining to restrict the workings of the Omnipotent and Omnipresent Spirit of God our Father—to render him incompetent for our sanctification, in addition to the previous incompetency for our redemption, which Trinitarians see so far from scrupling to assign to Him that they make it a first principle of their theology, and attempt to prove it by Reason.

Our One God they tell us in the human sense of oneness, would be a helpless Being: so their very first sin, his children would be plucked out of His hands, and fall in a God



unable to save. Or, if He could forgive the repentance of His creatures, it would imply a Morality so lax, that He would be a God not worth serving.\* To such dizzy heights of Theology do Trinitarians who abjure Reason in religion carry their reasonings upon the nature of God, and look into the great profound, and speak confidently, as if they understood it all. Again I say, let us grant them all this, and still the question remains that never has been answered, after the sacrifice of Christ has set at liberty the Spirit of our Father to come freely into heaven, regenerating, and sanctifying contact with the spirits of his children, what necessity is there for a *third* person in the godhead to bless and save our souls, or what works are to be carried on *within* us, which God the Father and God the Son are not competent to perform? Has not the spirit of our Father access to His children, who are brought nigh to Him through Christ; and if so, what is the office and what the need of a *third* infinite Mind? We acknowledge with all our soul's devotion that every good and every grace in man comes, yes, and comes immediately, from the Spirit of our God; but is not our Father with us, and is His Spirit stretched that he cannot save? On this matter we abide with the Apostles who say:—"Every good and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." We are told that the Holy Spirit uses "the word," as its instrument, in the work of spiritual regeneration. If so, the Holy Spirit must be God our Father, for the Apostle goes on to say: "Of his own will beget He us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first fruits of his creatures." "Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts and establish you in every good word and

\* The Rev. H. McNeill's Lecture.

work." Now here, whilst no mention whatever is made of the Holy Spirit as a separate agent, the peculiar offices of the Comforter are ascribed to the spirit of our Father, and, what to Christians is equivalent, the spirit of Christ, for who hath seen *him*, hath seen all that man can see of the moral perfections and spirit of our God. And not with Apostles only, but with Christ himself, do we abide in the blessed faith of our Father being our Comforter. "Holy Father, keep, through thine own name, those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one as we are. While I was with them in the world I kept them through thy name:—I pray not that thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that thou shouldst keep them from the evil. Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth." Here Christ prays to God the Father to sanctify the spirits of the disciples, when he should be no more with them to instruct and keep them. Now Sanctification is assigned by Trinitarians to the Holy Spirit as his peculiar office. What then can be more clear than that the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of our Father in communication with his children, and that this was the Comforter, even the Spirit of Truth, portion of the true spirit of God, which the Christ prayed his Father to communicate to his darkened disciples,—to take away the Jewish veil from their hearts, and to guide them into the blessed light of the pure gospel!

The Apostles pray to the Father to be a *Guard* and *Comforter*: Jesus Christ prays to the Father to be a *Sanctifier* and *Enlightener*, these are the works, and *the only* works, ascribed by Trinitarians to the Holy Spirit. No reason has been offered in the present Controversy for the necessity of a *third* person in the Godhead to be the agent of these operations; nowhere in orthodox theology have I been able to find a reason: I respectfully invite the attention of our opponents

\* 1 Thes. ii. 13.

† 1 Thes. ii. 13.

‡ 2 Thes. ii. 14.

to this neglected point. Let them not mistake our demand. We do not deny that the works of the Holy Spirit can be done by God alone: but we ask for a reason why God our Father is not sufficient for these things. Until this question is satisfactorily answered, it must be evident that the Trinitarian Theology is entirely arbitrary.

It is not a little remarkable that Bishop Sturtevant, in attempting to prove that the Holy Spirit performs the work of the Gospel within the mind, by the very texts that he himself adduces identifies this Holy Spirit with the Spirit of God our Father; "No man can come unto me, except the Father which hath sent me, draw him." "No man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father." "He that is of God, heareth God's word."<sup>16</sup>

There was only one of the operations ascribed to the Holy Spirit by the Lecturer in Christ Church, to which I could not give my assent. We were told that the Holy Spirit interpreted the Scriptures to all true believers. I believe that some portion of the Spirit of God is in every man who loves the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. I believe that every one who does His will, knows of the doctrine whether it is of God. Morally and spiritually, I do believe that the Spirit of God is still a witness to the truth of Christ. The Spirit of the Father was in Christ, and to those who love him and keep his commandments the Father still cometh, and maketh His abode with them. And so far we know that we are of the truth, because we love and are partakers of the Spirit that dwelt in Jesus. But if any man presumes to extend this sympathy with the Spirit of the Christ from moral to *contrasted* truth, and to pretend that he is not only spiritually but intellectually instructed, so that he has not only a living faith, but a true creed, we abandon him to his conviction, satisfied that how-

ever sincere, it is unscriptural and a delusion. How can men persuade themselves that it is humble, that it is Christian, that it is in the spirit of a modest self-knowledge, to proceed to this intellectual infallibility, that God not only inspires the labours of their walls, but protects their judgment from all error? When we ask those who tell us that only *their* creeds can save, what infallible interpreter preserves *them* from all doctrinal error, they do not scruple to proclaim that the Spirit of God is their instructor in the controverted tenets of theology. Now we only ask how this can be made clear either to other men, or to themselves? Have they alone sincere convictions on these subjects? Have they alone sought the truth with the tools and prayers of earnest and humble minds? Have they alone emptied themselves of all prejudice, and desired only the pure light from God? Have they alone put worldly considerations from their hearts, and left all things that they might follow Christ? What evidence is there in their position, or in their sacrifices, that only the Spirit of God can be their guide, for that they are manifestly self-devoted to the cause of truth? Are *they* the meek adherents to persecuted principle, so that against the outward storm nothing short of the inward witness of the Spirit can be their omnipotent supports? Do they alone give evidence by the scorn and insult which they cheerfully bear for Christ's sake and the gospel's, that they must be taught of God, for that no man could endure this social persecution unless God was with them? Ah, my friends, does it become the followers of popular opinions to turn to the persecuted, and say, we who stand upon the world's favour, we who have no sacrifices to bear for conscience' sake, we to whom godliness is a present income (*saque*, at all that men most love—we give evidence of being supported through all this peace and popularity by the Holy Spirit—but *you*, whom we persecute and scorn, you whom we lecture and libel, you who have to bear upon your

<sup>16</sup> See St. Rev. J. P. Hunt, *op. cit.* Lib. Preface to the Rev. P. 117, 118, 119.

<sup>17</sup> See St. Rev. J. P. Hunt, *op. cit.* Lib. Preface to the Rev. P. 117, 118, 119.

innocent hearts the cease friction of intolerance and of rude fanaticisms, you, though you have to endure all this, give no evidence that your convictions of Christ and your faith in God are dead unto you,— you are voluntary sufferers, and the distresses of your position, which we shall aggravate in every way we can, are no proof that you stand the rude peltings of the pitiless storm, only because you dare not abandon conviction, or turn away from what you believe to be the light of God within you? I ask can any thing surpass the unmitigated Popery of all this, except its unmitigated cruelty and injustice? How is it that the Minister of a state religion, the preacher of popular creeds, whose lightest words raise echoes of assent—who gets the support and sympathy of crowds on far easier terms than others get bare toleration and existence, can so remove from him all self-knowledge and energy, as to have the heart to tell the man whom he persecutes, we who have every thing to gain from our religion and nothing to lose, give evidence of being supported through all this ease and triumph by the Spirit of God, but you, who in this world have every thing to lose by your religion, and nothing to gain, give no evidence of having the Spirit of Truth, and are lovers of your own selves more than of Conscience and of God? We suspect them not, God forbid we should, of being innocently tempted and misled, and with a true sincerity we declare that we have no sympathy whatever with the ungenerous vulgarity of such a charge,— but at the same time, they ought to be aware, and if they were truly generous in their torn they would be aware, that all the *ostentatious* marks by which men may judge of the sincerity of convictions, and the strength of inward reliance, and allegiance to God, are upon us, not upon them.

The other offices assigned to the Holy Spirit besides that of being an infallible interpreter to the orthodox, were the

\* See the Lecture of the Rev. Dr. James, and indeed the whole course and spirit of the Trinitarian Cause. Mr. Fox is deceived that we derived the personality of the Holy Spirit, only because we had received his operations.

following — to bring our souls into sympathy and union with the Spirit of Jesus — to draw us by spiritual affinities unto the Christ; to sanctify our nature through communion with the Holy One, cleansing the temple of the spiritual God, to govern our moral being, and supply the diviner impulses that lift us to imperishable things, and teach us to love and to pray aright; and to give us through the spiritual witness within ourselves, a pledge and earnest of the loving purpose of God, and of the glory that remaineth.—Must we indeed renounce these connexions of our spirits with the Spirit of our God, unless mechanically settling the distribution of offices, we receive these influences through the departmental arrangements of the Trinitarian Theology? Will God our Father not come to us and make His abode with us, if we are unfortunate enough to find no evidence in Scripture for a third infinite Mind associated with him, and every up to Him the unbroken sum of our love, our faith, our worship, and our prayers? Will He reject us only because we pour out our all before Him, and knowing Him to be all-sufficient, feel our derived spirits to be at every moment within the shelter of His parental presence?—And yet, if the Trinitarians were right, if only a believer in a tri-personal God could hold these spiritual connexions with the source of all good, the fountain head of all holiness and hope, if these were the only conditions on which our souls could feel life from above — then should we become the most grateful, the most devoted, the most submissive of their disciples—we would treat them to show us the way of knowledge, that we might ascend unto the hill of the Lord, and stand in His holy place,—and to lift up for us, in mercy, the everlasting doors of our darkened hearts, that the King of Glory might come in;—and we would flee from our Unitarianism as we should from Atheism, for it would be Atheism if it closed our access to the Spirit of God.

But, though not fond of speaking personally of religious experiences, we do declare, and we do know, that the spirit of man

may hold communion with the Spirit of our Father. Every impulse after holiness is the Spirit of God. Every "sighing that cannot be uttered" after the pure, the perfect, and the good, is the Spirit of God. Every devotion of our souls to things unseen and eternal, when solicited by things seen and temporal, is of the Spirit of God. Every dictate of Duty is the spirit of God. Every answer to the prayer of a pure heart is the spirit of God. Every movement of disinterested love is the spirit of God. Every self-sacrifice for the sake of justice or of mercy is made in the strength of the Spirit of God. Every inward hope in this world's darkness, and undying trust amid this world's death, is an inspiration from Him who is a very present help in the time of trouble, a spiritual intimation from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. The spirit that conforms itself to the will of God, that removes from it whatever is alien to His nature, that puts away the defiling breath of the passions, that seeks Him by prayer, by efforts of duty, by struggles of penitence, by resistance to all sin, by self-purification and constant converse with His image in the Christ, that spirit nurtured more and more of the glory of God, feels more and more His power and peace within the soul, and receives of His fulness, and grows in His likeness, throughout eternity.

If there are any to whom all this appears visionary, and who charge the religious mind with mysticisms,--we are ready to bear our share of that charge; for thus far we confess ourselves to be Mystics. Yet, so far are we from holding it to be Mysticism, that we are confident that nothing which sense perceives, or thought takes in, is so real, so enduring, so full of life, as this spiritual and imperishable connexion of the soul of man with the Spirit of God. This connexion, whatever may have been the inspiration of peculiar times, we now regard as part of the established providence and operations of our Father's Spirit. He gives of His Spirit, to all who observe the conditions on which

He has promised to pour out His Spirit upon them. No pure mind ever sought Him in vain. No erring heart ever turned to Him in penitence, and found no peace. Whenever our holier nature awakes to earnest action, God enters into the soul. Whenever prayer purifies our desires, and rectifies our estimates, and places great realities in spiritual lights, God is present with us. Every effort to sink our imperfections, and to feel purely, places us within the affluencies of His Holy Spirit. There is no miracle in this. God reveals himself to the spirit that assimilates itself to Him, and seeks Him by growing like to Him. There are no limits to those spiritual communications. He that asketh receiveth; he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it is opened. This is of God's grace; not now of miracle, but of nature. We are His children, and in proportion as we love Him purely, and follow after Him, He reveals Himself to us. Revealing himself through our spirit, He abides with us for ever. Inaged within us in juster proportions, as we reject impurity, and impose the harmony of His will upon all our desires, He guides us into all truth, and causes us to feel within, the blessed intimations of His sympathizing Spirit. Correcting our false estimates, and fixing our trusts upon His own great realities, He comforts us amid the shadows of Time and Death, whilst we repose upon a world that cannot be moved, and rely upon the faithfulness of God.

Jesus Christ is our most perfect image of the Spiritual Father. He develops within us the ideas that are akin to God. He brings us through sympathy with himself within the affluencies of the Holy Spirit, for God was with him. By the baptism of ever fresh penitence, and still fresher purity, he prepares us for the higher baptism of the Holy Spirit, and of fire. We grow in light as we grow in purity. If we keep holy the Temple of the Spirit it abides with us, and, doing His will, we know of the doctrine whether it be of God. The soul that quenches not the Spirit, that suffers not

intimation from God to pass unheeded, that looks upon the face of Christ, and reads in characters of blended grace and truth the mind of the Father, is continually born again, and again, into new and still newer light, for the kingdom of heaven is a reaching forth unto things that are before; and he that is in Christ Jesus has within him a spring of life, and is ever a New Creature. And he is ever nearest to God who through purity and prayer has disposed his own spirit to receive light from the Holy Spirit of God, and waits and watches for fresh communications from His unexhausted Christ.

Were another great Teacher to appear amongst us, were another Christ to come to us, and apart from the narrow technicalities of system, to unfold sublime and quickening views of the moral and spiritual world, where might we expect to find the kindred minds, that would most instantly recognize the voice of the Divinity, and upon whose ready sympathies the heavenly words would fall like sparks upon the fuel? Perhaps those who best understand what it is "to be born again" might not be of the number of the learned, the instructed, the Masters in Israel. It is certain that they would not be found among the adherents of unchanging systems—the Pharisees of the faith, who think that they *already* possess the absolute Truth imprisoned in creeds—and expect no new light to break forth upon their souls. The wind bloweth where it listeth—nevertheless its course is not uncontrolled—it has laws though we know them not—and where would the Spirit of God list to blow, if it was now breathing from the lips of some inspired man, into what hearts would it find its way, and fan the latent affarities into the flame of spiritual life? Might it not again pass by the College of the learned, and the Temple of the Priest, and descend in living fire upon the poor man's soul? All that we can do is to look out for light—to expect it—to keep near through prayer and inward communion to Him who is its Fountain—to have the inward sentiments pure, the place of

the Spirit unsoiled, that if light should come into the world, it may not reject us as unworthy, finding no mirror for itself in our stained souls—and above all, never to be possessed with that insatiation of confidence, that blindness of sufficiency, that self-idolatry of the creature, which looks for no regeneration to descend upon it—and ignorant of its poverty, its error, and its want, asks with the young Ruler, "what lack I yet," or with Nicodemus, "How can a man be born again?" We may be born again, and again, if we will only lay ourselves out for it. The light will come if it is looked for. It will not open the closed eye that seeks no more illumination, but it will fall upon every expecting spirit. The only essential condition of being born again, is that the sincere heart, listening to God within, and reading the mind of His Spirit in Christ his image, remove from itself every moral disqualification, and lie in wait for light and truth. Wherever they are found, and whatever be their creed, the Spirit of God "listeth" to blow upon such minds.

## LECTURE X.

### CREEDS THE VOES OF HEAVENLY FAITH, THE ALLIES OF WORLDLY POLICY.

BY NEIL SHERBURN GILMAN.

LET EVERY MAN BE FULLY EQUIPPED IN HIS OWN MIND.—  
EPI. 10. 2.

The essential spirit of the religious revolution which in the 16th century shook Europe and its throne, was resistance to ecclesiastical authority. When Luther burned the Pope's bull, in Wittenberg, in one act pregnant with meaning and with consequences, he broke the spell which had chained the minds of men for a thousand years, and spread its fascination over the whole space of Christendom. That single act was a virtual denial that any church, however high in pretension, however venerable in institutions, however universal in dominion, however mighty in power, had a right to enslave his intellect or to silence his conscience. The English martyr, when ready to be offered up, hastened to his fellow-sufferer that they would that day kindle such a flame in England as should never be put out; but the blaze of a piece of parchment in the hand of the German reformer, was a light far more significant and impressive—a light at which thousands started from their slumbers, and although it has often smothered and been clouded, it does yet, and ever will, point the way to mental and religious freedom. Luther and the other reformers, objected to the church of Rome, the usurpation of unjust authority, and the establishment of a false

standard in faith and practice: they objected to her that she claimed a dominion over the souls of men which God alone can hold; and they object that she set aside the supremacy of Christ by encumbering his gospel with her own traditions. Not alone for alleged errors in doctrine, but for this error in the very root and foundation of her constitution, they separated from her communion, and protested against her jurisdiction. They declared the Bible to be the only ground of a Christian's faith—the only guide of his religious convictions, and they claimed for themselves the right of private judgment and of individual interpretation. We make the same declaration and assert the same claim, and we neither restrict nor qualify it by creed, catechism or confession, by tests or articles, by pains or penalties. Modern Protestant churches, like the reformers, speak proudly of religious liberty, but like the reformers also, it is a liberty they are very unwilling to share—a liberty for themselves and not for others: without claiming infallibility in name, they assume it in reality; and without giving, as Rome does, the promise of unerring guidance, they aim at an authority as despotic, and would wrest a submission as slavish.

The energetic maxim of Chillingworth, "The Bible and the Bible alone is the religion of Protestants," is ever and ever repeated even by those who are pledged to find in it the Athanasian creed and the thirty-nine articles, and by others who are compelled to extract out of it the Westminster confession and the longer catechism. With a zeal that never grows fatigued, it is translated in every tongue and circulated in every nation; nay, the hissing child must have it to the very letter, and a fierce war-ery is opened should a school, by selections or omissions, leave the youthful mind without an opportunity to study the patriarchal genealogies, the prophecies of Daniel, or the apocalypse of Saint John. The wide circulation of the Bible we regard as a great social blessing; but when it is sometimes asked,

whether its indiscriminate reading is suited to all ages and classes, the very question is taken as an evidence of popery or infidelity in the proposer. To doubt the perspicuity of God's word, is to doubt the wisdom of God's providence. The first object of man in speaking to man, is to be understood, how much more in God addressing his creatures, and on the most momentous concerns! The Bible, it is asserted, is so plain that the child may understand it, that he who runs may read, and that way-faring men, though fools, shall not err therein. If this be true, it is in itself the death-blow of creeds, for then they are both unnecessary and absurd—unnecessary, because the statements can be as clearly, can be as easily found in the Bible as in the creed; absurd, because it is monstrous folly to attempt making that more distinct which is manifest enough already. The Bible being, on the orthodox theory of plenary inspiration, literally the word of God, there is even a degree of impiety in the presumption of pretending to give a summary of its meaning in human fabrications, whether from Trent or Angsburgh, from the palace of the Lateran or the hall of Westminster.

That simplicity is a characteristic of the Bible, at least in its main tendency, I cordially admit; it is the especial quality of the gospel. I could desire no better text by which to try the value of creeds. If the evangelists John or Matthew were again to appear on earth, bringing with them their first simplicity, ignorant of the wrangling disputes, of the vain scholasticism which have disturbed this world and the church since they were taken to their rest—if the Athanasian document were put into their hands, there is nothing in their gospels which enables me to think they could understand it; if moreover they were told that the whole of it could be deduced from their writings, I speak in all earnest solemnity when I say, that at such an assertion I can conceive of them as no otherwise than utterly bewildered and surprised.

Take our Lord's sayings and discourses as reported by his evangelists, and contrast them with the creed we are discussing. With what unobscured simplicity is God ever spoken of, always presented in some intimate relation to our duty or his own providence—as an object of worship, of trust, or of love? Pray to thy Father who is in secret, and thy Father who seeth in secret shall reward thee openly. If ye being evil know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give good things to them that ask him. Touch me not for I have not yet ascended to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God. Such is the clear and touching phraseology in which Christ always speaks of God, and thus gives, not a scholastic dissertation, but a revelation to human affections. And in the same spirit of simplicity is his own nature also manifested: he who in all things was meek and lowly in heart, who went about doing good, and came to seek and save the lost. Astonishing mysteries indeed has Athanasian theology made out of these plain statements, having found in them a trinity in deity, and a unity in trinity: the Father uncreated, the Son uncreated, and the Holy Ghost uncreated; the Father incomprehensible, the Son incomprehensible, and the Holy Ghost incomprehensible, the Father eternal, the Son eternal, and the Holy Ghost eternal, and so on; and though each is distinctively asserted to be uncreated, incomprehensible, and eternal, we are to believe on pain of eternal damnation, that they are not three eternals, but one eternal—not three uncreated, but one uncreated—not three incomprehensibles, but one incomprehensible. Surely of all incomprehensibles this theological jumble is the most incomprehensible. If to defy contradiction by the very sublimity of absurdity be a safeguard from refutation, the Athanasian creed must stand eternally unconfuted. Plausible falsehood, however ingenious, may be stripped of its sophistries, but there is a certain degree of wild fabrication which may challenge all the

efforts of philosophers and logicians, yet remain as firm as before in the bulwarks of its unmeasurable nonsense. It may be truly said that these are things on which we cannot reason; most certainly they are, for they subvert at once all possible principles of reason and of truth. But the climax of these astounding marvels is, that we are assured that if we do not hold this Catholic faith, "without doubt we shall perish everlastingly." And this precious document, this compilation of monkish mysteries and scholastic jargon, is set forth as the accurate definition of the Christian faith—the test of saving belief or of damnable heresy; the production of crazy or crafty churchmen, this concentration of heavy absurdities, of bewildered metaphysics, and of savage bigotries, presumes to utter the judgment of God, and to launch the thunder of the skies. Beginning with the pride of infallibility, it closes consistently with a sentence of perdition; and for this there is picaged the language of the gospel—language evidently misinterpreted, as any language must be which would identify the spirit of Christ with the spirit of Athanasius. So on the ground of two false assumptions, those who pride themselves in this Athanasian orthodoxy are privileged to denounce with a safe and quiet conscience perdition on their heretical brethren. First, it is assumed that when the gospel says, "He that believeth not," it must mean, he that believeth not the three creeds; and, secondly, it is assumed that when the gospel says, "He that believeth not shall be condemned," the condemnation implied is everlasting destruction. This is in the genuine spirit of Church and Creed Christianity, fencing in a little and a barren paradise with the brambles and the briars of theological definitions, making holiness and virtue dependent on ecclesiastical syllogisms, and shutting out all from heaven who may be compelled to disagree with the doctors of Nice, or the compilers of our English liturgy, who hold the faith of Milton and Locke, but cannot be convinced by Bull, Waterland, or



Sherlocke. Creeds pronounce perdition, and Churches hold up Creeds; and ministers come forth to magnify the glory of these Churches and to maintain the verity of these Creeds; but men of meek tempers and tolerant hearts seem half ashamed of their work, and in the effort to soften dogmatical ferocity, make a vain effort at compromise between their consistency and their charity. It is all fruitless: the dark and damning malediction is written on these Creeds with a pen of adamant; the preacher's feelings are of no avail, and he is constrained by his system to proclaim them aloud and afar—to hold them as warrants of eternal death to all who gainsay or deny them. At the best, orthodox charity, after all admissions, can only embrace different shades of Trinitarians; Unitarians must still remain outside the pale of hope, if therefore condemned we must be, it is of but small importance in what form or on what theory. To those who are to enter the regions of the lost for ever, questions on essences and persons, with many other most grave disquisitions, can signify but little; nor can much consolation be derived from the reflection, that but a hair's breadth from the Unitarian heresy, theology by evasions and distinctions might have given us a refuge in the doctrine of Sabellianism. We are, however, most gravely told that he who receives not the Athanasian Creed, cannot be saved: a Creed at which reason, as it was well said, stands aghast, and Faith itself is half confounded; a Creed, of which it was better said, that it is alike contrary to common sense, to common arithmetic, and to common charity.

Were the exposure of the Athanasian formulary the design of this Lecture, I should feel that I had undertaken a very needless and a very presumptuous task, needless, because in this age there are few that attach any importance to it; presumptuous, because, if minds are not affected by its self-confutation, I have not the vanity to pretend to any arguments which could shake their convictions. But one can scarcely

suppress a feeling of sorrow and surprise at seeing this document dragged out for defence in the nineteenth century; this mixture of monkish metaphysics and scholastic bigotry, a production which multitudes of the orthodox themselves conspire to repudiate, and of which many of the best and highest minds in the Church of England have been most heartily ashamed—of which they desire to be well rid. Were the defence of such a creed to be taken as a true sign of the times, there would be cause indeed for pain to think that we had been rolled back again into the dark ages; but it is not so; such things are rather marks that show us how far the advancing tide has moved beyond them. In the course of the present Lecture I desire it to be distinctly understood, that I oppose creeds in their very principle; it is not alone such as I think false, but though I believed them true, I would yet oppose their use. My opposition is directed against the spirit of creeds, and if my own opinions were attempted to be forced in that form, my opposition would be the same. I am in this place to maintain a principle, the principle of intellectual, moral, and Christian freedom, and because creeds, as I think, are at variance with this, I denounce them. I intend nothing against individual professors. If I should give them offence, I have no wrong motive with which to charge myself, and must attribute it to the necessity of plain speaking on a subject by no means agreeable; but whether pleasant or not, I have a duty to perform, and I must as far as my power goes, endeavour to do it honestly and faithfully.

The title of this Lecture is, that creeds are the foes of heavenly faith, and the allies of worldly policy. It is my object to show that this accusation is not lightly or unjustly advanced; and in making good this two-fold charge, the greatest perplexity which attends it, is the multifarious and abundant evidence whereby it can be established.

I proceed first to prove them the foes of heavenly faith.

Creeds disqualify the mind for the pursuit of truth. This is my first assertion, and I shall establish its correctness in several particulars. Creeds generate mental apathy and mental dependence, and this is first in the very outset. To a spirit of inquiry there is needed an impulsive intellectual activity, and to this activity there is needed a desire for the thing to be attained, and a sense of its importance. There is no labour without motive, and if in religious belief, the creed has defined before-hand all that is necessary for my salvation, I have no necessity to take any more trouble in the matter. If I am to rest on authority at last, it is just as well for me to be satisfied with it at first—if after toilsome inquiry, at the peril of my soul's eternal peace, the dogmas of the creed are those to which my conclusions must return, I had better be at once content—if I must believe as the Church believes, if I must believe as the Creed says I should believe, if I must believe as the priest declares my hope of heaven requires, if after criticism and research, long and patient, I must arrive at but one exposition of the Bible, it is but wisdom to spare myself from such a pressure of useless labour. But indulgence in this case is not merely allowable, it is, in fact, the safest. If to doubt be danger, and if to disbelieve be sin, then the earnestness which stimulates examination may lead me into ruin, whilst implicit submission, that receives all and questions nothing, is a condition of peaceful security. The incitements to mental labour are analogous to those to any other sort of labour: it is that one shall be the richer and the better for it, and that what he acquires he may justly possess. But, if by independent inquiry I may become morally poorer and spiritually worse, if I shall have no right to my own thoughts, and must be despoiled of my convictions, or punished for them, when I have worked them out

with the struggle of every faculty, it is exceeding folly to risk the misery and irritation of being torn between my opinion and my creed, conscience forcing me to acquiesce, and reason compelling me to doubt. This view is no supposition; it is fact. Submission to Creeds and Churches, is the true cause of that wide spread mental torpor in every country where Creeds and Churches have dominion. There is nothing so rare as intelligent, independent religious conviction, and how can it be otherwse, when each looks upon his priest, and the priest gives him ready-made opinions, as they were framed a thousand years ago. There is a general and profound ignorance of the sources of opinion, the history of opinion, of the philosophy of opinion, and of the Bible, both in its letter and in its spirit. Speak to multitudes of religion, in any broad or liberal sense, and it seems to them as if it were an unknown tongue. To have any chance of attention, you must use terms which Creeds have sanctified, you must address them in trinitarian phrases, which have the sectarian or sacerdotal currency. This never could have been had religion been recommended as a subject of individual and independent study, leaving the mind free, both in its pursuit and its conclusion. That I have stated nothing but what fact justifies, I may appeal to any one who has considered the religious condition of this country, or of Europe generally, and considered it in every rank of society. I speak not of the Spaniard, who has not yet rid himself from the palsy of the Inquisition, who can go from the prostration of the confessional to scenes of the wildest crime, I speak not of the Italian, that compound of profaneeness and credulity, of sin and devotion, who can bow before an image, and with the same hand cross himself, by which a murmur before he plunged his stiletto in his fellow-creature's heart. I speak not of our own peasantry, who Sunday after Sunday, walk stately to church or chapel, and know little more than that they went there and came back again; I speak not of the fashionable wealthy, who, on this point, are commonly as

ignorant as the *hoor*, and choose religion as they choose every thing else, as it happens to be the mode; I pass these by, because it may be said, that pleasure and gaiety leave them no time for study; but I will refer to multitudes who are esteemed devout and serious Christians, whose minds passively receive the mould of their teachers, and to whom religion never presents itself as a system of various thought and of independent examination. Now, this ignorant apathy has bad effects, which are not merely negative; and at the risk of anticipating, I will allude in a few words to one or two of them: it gives stability to every error and corruption, and holds to them with an obstinacy, against which wisdom has no power; it is the very soil in which priestcraft grows darkest and fittest; and the hierarchy in any age or country has never risen to its full stature of lordliness, until the people have lain lowest in torpid submission. And, in addition to this, there is no incharitableness so inveterate, there is no bigotry so intolant, as that which this species of character nurtures, for as it is unable to comprehend an opposite opinion, it is equally inadequate and unwilling to weigh the arguments in its favour, or to estimate the evidence on which it is maintained. Having no conception of independence itself, independence in another appears presumptuous, if not something worse, and never having imagined that other opinions could possibly be true except its own, to hold any different could only be explained by supposing a want of honesty or a want of grace.

I ought dwell upon the fear by which Creeds paralyse the faculties of weak or sensitive natures, by which they deprive them of all power for calm and deliberate examination, by the fear of being excluded from their Church, by the fear of being discarded by their friends, by the fear of being cast into hell, above all these, by the fear of losing the favour of God, and the friendship of Jesus, and with right and true minds, this is the greatest of all fears. In the midst of so many terrors,

it is too much to expect that our weak humanity could be calm,—that it could look with unmoved heart at the appalling indications of so many and dire threatenings, it is like examining a man on the terms of his faith, while the officials of persecution are arranging the faggots or putting screws in the rack. From this topic, disagreeable in any shape, I pass on, and assert, that Creeds are enemies to truth, because, by preconception and prejudice, they disqualify the mind to seek or apprehend it. This is my second, and in this section, my last position.

The statement of the Church of England respecting the three Creeds, is this: that they "ought thoroughly to be received and believed, for they may be proved by most certain warrants of Holy Scripture." The Catholic doctrine, with equal decision, asserts that the Infallibility of the Roman Church may also be proved by most certain warrants of Holy Scripture. Suppose then a Church of England Christian with the Bible before him; he has been previously indoctrinated in the three Creeds, and these ideas pre-occupying his mind will so far influence his interpretation. Suppose a Roman Catholic in a like position; he has ever present to his mind the Infallibility of his Church, and *her* decisions must be the limits of his conclusions. Intellectually or morally, no position can be conceived worse than this for the pursuit or discovery of truth. The mind is biased from the first; its calmness and its caution are subverted, and it is no longer a judge, but a partisan; it is not to decide on evidence, but, (to use a legal term) to act on the instruction of its brief. That Creeds have the tendency to distort and fetter the intellectual workings of the mind, we know from the fact, too palpable to need proof, that Theologians have always been the most obstinate in resisting the discoveries of science, and ever the last to yield. Astro-

mony, in its glitterings of scientific truth, was none Church heresy. A Father of the Church, as it is well known, had denounced that man as infidel and profane who should dare to assert that the earth moved round the sun, and not the sun round the earth. On the other side of this controversy, we have been told that the arts and sciences have their correspondents as well as religion. It was a most unfortunate analogy: for how would it have been now with art and science, had Astronomy been made a Creed at the Council of Nice, and a confession on Chemistry been compiled by the Westminster divines? Galileo was pronounced a heretic; and the early Chemists laboured under strong suspicion of witchcraft. Had we been bound by Astronomy as we are in Theology, Joshua should be our authority, decisive and irrevocable, and the calculations of Newton and Laplace should be placed in the index expurgatorius of Ecclesiastical dogmatism. Even Luther himself, the author of the greatest of moral revolutions since Christianity, smiled at the idea that the earth should move round the sun, and said, "that according to Holy Scripture, Joshua commanded the earth to stand still, and not the sun."<sup>1</sup> Had not the progressive energy of human intellect been stronger, in what a position should we yet have been as to the true principles of the construction and motion of the universe? Geology at yet is a scientific heresy; and, to avoid the stigma, orthodox Geologists have been driven into all modes of evasive explanation, some to derive the first verse of Genesis from all that follows, and others to the supposition that a day may mean a thousand years, or if the speculator needs it, ten thousand or a million. The intellectual immorality thus occasioned, it is not possible to estimate; for it is a coarse view of sin to place it along there in the materialization of the passions: certainly, the sins which ever afflicted mankind most, were

<sup>1</sup> Melancthon, i. p. 147. 178.

the moral perversions of the intellect. And this may be at once conceived if we have read the history of the Church, and are able to take a calm and impartial review of its councils and controversies. I will not mention here the loss of kindly affections, the loss of charity, the loss of grace; I merely allude to the immense intellectual waste which has been occasioned by men setting out on their inquiries with a foregone conclusion. I shall say nothing on the torments, enough to make a library as great as that the Turkish soldier burned, which have been written to defend the Trinity—[I take an example to Protestants more grateful—I mean, transubstantiation. What was it that for centuries perpetuated a false and absurd philosophy in Europe? What was it that made Aristotle the supreme ruler of the Christian Church, not Aristotle, as he was, the philosopher, but as Churchmen used him, a verbal quibbler—was it not for the purpose of constructing syllogisms with orthodox exactness, and by theories on essences, species, forms, and so forth, to make it evident that under the appearance of bread and wine, 'tis very God who created the heavens and the earth, and the very man Christ Jesus who died on Calvary, were actually present? Go into any great library, and on this subject alone you may find volumes of which the very names are too many for memory. Yet, in these there is abundance of talent, of subtilty, and of acuteness—all in the train to sustain a theory. No one can deny, no one will, who knows how equally the Creator scatters his gifts, that minds of the very highest order were amongst the schoolmen; yet all these imaginative powers were expended to sustain one or two thousand positions, enslaving their own intellect, and by their authority and their influence, enslaving the intellect of Christendom; and, from the reformation to this hour, there have been the same waste and perversion of thought. Just consider what tortuous logic, what wire-drawing ingenuity have been exercised to defend god by impudency, and righteousness

by imputation—aburdities as great morally, as transubstantiation is intellectually. This is the work of Creeds.

Dissenters are sometimes taunted with want of scholarship. The taunt may have foundation in fact; perhaps it has, but on what are we to place the blame? Dissenters, we presume, have a measure of intellect on the average of other men, and are gifted with as many mental faculties as those who subscribe the articles of our National Church. God does not distribute his blessings on the ground of subscription, however Universities may. The gifts of mind are equal and beautiful like the beneficence of creation. The same full hand that showers sunlight over hill and valley, that opens fountains in the rocks, and sows the wilderness with flowers, without reference to Sect or Church, impregnates all understandings with the elements of thought, and all fancies with the germs of beauty. The Dissenter, as the Churchman, hath eyes, hands, organs, dimensions, senses, affections. If then this fair portion of our Maker's mercy be equally given, whence are we to trace the want of its proper cultivation? If the orthodox close the Universities against us by Creeds, draw fast the iron bolt by an iron theology, take away the key of knowledge, and repulse those that with all their hearts would enter, place before us tests which, if stupid enough, we might subscribe without understanding, and if dishonest enough we might subscribe without believing, but, candidly confessing we neither understand them nor believe them, therefore refuse to sign them,—where then is the magnanimity or the generosity which throws in our teeth, though it were true, that we have not the science of Cambridge, or the classicity of Oxford. Yet, despite of all restrictions, Dissent has had a goodly number of noble and cultured minds—minds able and honest, which, in the hour of need, even the Church herself was not ashamed to acknowledge, or ashamed to use.

Creeds set us mighty temptations,—as the very Statues of

theology;—and they are not temptations to the covetous and ambitious only, but also to the weak and good. When *Sects* and *Creeds* are the standards of preferment, those with whom preferment is the great object, are made to add the sin of sanctimonious hypocrisy to that of Ecclesiastical covetousness and Ecclesiastical ambition. But there are others good in their own hearts, yet not mighty enough to be martyrs, whom Creeds keep in a whole life of agony. There are those who entered a religious community, believing its opinions most enthusiastically, who, by the further progress of intellect or judgment, may be brought to doubt or deny them. They are then driven to a desperate alternative, either to belie their conscience, or to do violence to their hearts. Take the case of many of the curates and incumbents of the Church of England. Suppose, that on receiving orders they assented to all the bishop or the Church prescribed, but that after years of thinking they were compelled to disbelieve the Athanasian Creed. They are then periodically reading, with the most serious faces, and from the most solemn place, a statement of doctrine which they conceive in their souls to be false and false, reading it as the contradiction of their own judgments, and as that which ought to be the saving faith of all men. If the conscience is not wisely harkened, if the religious sensibilities are not torn out from the heart, this must be continually as the torture of the rack. Like all human faculties, conscience has a limit: beyond a certain point it can endure no more, and so when bigoted extraction has scratched it to the last, it must revolt or expire. The alternative in the end is, moral apathy or theological rebellion—a quiescent hypocrisy, or an open opposition. But few can brave the contest, and they have no refuge except a tacit and unwilling submission. Honest men, it may be said, when they ceased to believe the doctrines they solemnly affirmed, would renounce them with a denial as public as their profession. It is easy to say this, but, even for honest men,

it is sometimes hard to do it. In the clerical order especially there are numbers, whose position has been attained by long study and weary toil—whose very means of life—art to speak of their station and their friendships hang upon adherence to the Creed of their Church. What are these men to do? To beg they are not able, and to beg they are ashamed. Yet I can easily conceive that many could abandon rank and friendship, and count them light, in comparison with their faith, to conscience, that they could take a cell in the wilderness for their dwelling, quench their thirst at the running stream, and seek their food on the briar and the bramble, sooner than be false to their convictions, and do dishonour to the integrity of their souls. But it may be, that others with themselves are to suffer,—those whose lives are bound up in their lives,—those to whom they are the only earthly support and refuge, the wife, the child, the aged father, or the widowed mother,—worn to cast on the friendless world, were worse than a thousand marionettes. Think, then, of the poor curate of the Church of England, or the humble incumbent, who has grown long into life, with claims most pressing multiplying around him,—one who once out of his pulpit knows not where to turn for the bread which his children crave—and we cannot judge harshly or uncharitably, if the power of his affections is too strong for the stern demands of duty. I know there have been those who could commit father, and mother, and wife, and children, to that good Provider who feedeth the raven and sheltereth the nest of the sparrow; who could speak the truth and take the consequences;—I trust there are those yet in the world who could do the same; but in this or any other age, martyrs must be few, and the spirit of martyrdom rare. We blame not too severely those who have not the highest courage of religious heroism, but we may condemn with honest indignation those institutions that by forcing their position with Creeds and Articles, compel them to be hypocrites. I do not apply these assertions to members or ministers of the Church of England,

or other Churches, individually, but any one who has studied the history of religion, or watched the tendency of institutions, knows that in the English Establishment, in the Romish, in all establishments that have been narrowly restrictive, the hypocrisy of ambition, or the hypocrisy of fear, has been deeply and abundantly nourished.

The Church does not deny a small amount of liberty—no Church care. It will therefore allow you to read the Bible, if you desire it, but you must find nothing therein but what the Church proposes. In the study of the Sacred text, you must have always before your eyes the three Creeds and the thirty-nine Articles; and what these prescribe, and it is all the better for your peace and comfort; miss them, and you are open to social and spiritual condemnation. Churches which dictate creeds, use words without meaning, when they say, that you may read the Bible, for they tell you also, at the commencement, what you ought to find in the Bible. I shall give an illustration here of my meaning, by an extract from one of the Oxford Tract writers.—I know well that some object to these writers, but so far as I have been able to study the subject—and I have read, attentively or casually, the whole of what are called the Oxford Tracts. I think their statements and their doctrines are entirely in the spirit of their system, and in most exact consistency with their asseverations and their Creed. There is no medium, we require an infallible tribunal, or we must have a free judgment; but the authorities of the English Establishment will give us neither; for with that we must encounter the twofold endurance of an erring Church and an enslaved understanding. I think, therefore, the Oxford doctors in most perfect consistency with their profession; and thus believing, I quote the following passage, illustrative of these writers, and of the spirit of Ecclesiastical authority in general. It is a portion of a dialogue between a minister and his parishioner. Not to spoil the dramatic effect of it, I shall give you a little more than absolutely belongs to my

subject. Thus speaks the Parishioner to the Pastor:—"My good mother, said he, not long before her death, said to me very earnestly, My dear Richard, observe my words: never dare to trifle with God Almighty. By this I understood her to mean, that in all religious actions we ought to be very careful, and seek nothing but what is right and true. And I knew she had always disapproved of people's saying, as they commonly do, that it little matters what a man's religion is, if he is but sincere, and that one opinion, or one place of worship, is as good as another. To say, or think, or act so, she used to call 'trifling with God's truth;' and do you not think so, (addressing himself to me,) that she was right?"

"Indeed I do, said I.

"And, he said, I was very much confirmed in these opinions by constantly reading a very wise, and as I may say to you, a precious book, which a gentleman gave me some years ago, whom I met by chance as I was going to see my father, in the suburbs. It is called, 'A Selection from Bishop Wilson's Works,' and there are many places which show what his opinions were on this subject, and I suppose, Sir, there can be no doubt, that Bishop Wilson was a man of extraordinary wisdom and piety. Then, after a slight remark from his interlocutor, he observes, And what Bishop Wilson says is this, or to this effect, that to reject the government of bishops is to reject the ordinance of God. Having mentioned some controversy he had with a Dissenter, he observes, it seemed to me (and I told the man so,) like going round and round in a wheel, to say, that if he is God's minister, he preaches what is good, and if he preaches what is good, he is God's minister, for still the question would be, what is right or good? And some would say one thing, and some another; and some would say, there is nothing good or right in itself, but only as it seems most expedient to every person for the time being. So, for my own satisfaction, and

hoping for God's blessing on any future endeavours, I resolved to search the matter out for myself, as well as I could. My plan was this: First to see what was said on the subject in the Church Prayer Book, and then to compare this with the Scriptures. If, after all, I could not satisfy myself, I should have taken the liberty of consulting you, Sir, &c. Yours, replied this Rev. instructor to his prudent catechumen, was a good plan."

This passage contains the whole spirit of Creeds and Churches. Take the Prayer Book with you, keep the fear of the bishop before your eyes, and walk reverently in the way of the Articles. Then read the Scriptures if you will, but read them to show that all this is Holy Writ.

Creeds are, further, an enemy with truth, because they resist its development, and embarrass its progression. The world could never have advanced beyond a fixed point, had it been governed by Churchmen, in the true Church spirit. For what is it that Creed-makers so insantly attempt? They attempt what is alike inconsistent with the glory of truth and the nature of man. Truth is infinite, *hinc inde*, and they would confine it within the limits of the Nirene and Athanasian formularies. Truth is eternal and progressive, but Creeds would sweep us to the worst barbarisms of the worst ages. Truth is discovered and carried onward by the independent working of free and various minds, but Creeds would reduce all to an apathetic uniformity, and had not truth been greater than Creeds, all that has been done for religion and science, would now be in eternal silence. Creeds not only thus retard the progress of Truth, by the sanction of authority, by the influence of prejudice, by the tenacity of habit, but give errors all but immortality. Creeds are foes to whatever is most heavenly to our nature: to conscience, in its rectitude, and to charity in its gentleness; to conscience by an utter perversion of the moral sense, making that to be guilt which is not guilt, and giving merit to that which deserves none, making it

righteous to believe one proposition, and sinful to doubt another, thus creating a factious vice, and as often denying the evidence of real virtue; in clarity, also, Creeds, I have said, are foes, and such they are by their exclusiveness, by wrong terms of communion and brotherhood, by dissension, by families and contentions, and by hatred in all its most odious shapes.

Creeds have failed in all the objects for which it is pretended they were made, and they have infinitely multiplied the evils against which it is pretended they are the guards. They are useful, it is said, for the preservation of the Faith, and instead of preserving the Faith, they have provoked the wildest unbelief; they are required, it is argued, as bonds of unity, and instead of this they have bred divisions and heresies without number; they are means, some will go so far as to say, of maintaining Christian peace, and instead of this they have roused in wars and persecutions the most infernal and the most sanguinary. The history of religion shows that unbelief is never so prevalent as when the Creed is most rigid. The countries and the times in which Theological ingenuity left least scope for the free play of intellect, have always been the country and times, when, under the outward guise of a uniform faith, there has been the most absolute contempt for the popular religion, as well as for Christianity in general. For the proof of this need I refer to the French Church, and the withering scepticism which it nurtured; the Spanish Church; the Italian Church; and to sustain the same principle we might likewise accumulate heaps of evidence from the Protestant Churches. As to heresies, the case is still more clear. One heresy may have called forth a Creed, but one Creed has produced a thousand heresies: and Creed-makers, when they imagined their work complete, to their sorrow have found it was but merely commenced. The history of heresies would be at once humiliating and instructive. In all varieties we have them on every point in religion, and

on all that has connection with it; on the nature of God. Men not satisfied with a simple trust, must speculate on the Divine Being: must ascertain whether he was essentially one, or numerically divided; Churchmen must define, and after much labour we have such a document as the Athanasian Creed, and such a doctrine as the Athanasian Trinity. On the nature of Christ, we have the same subsiding process; we are tossed between Arius and Athanasius, and having got clear of these, we are again to be handled between Nestorius and Eusebius, and to determine whether Christ's godhead and manhood were so united as to make one nature, or so divided as to constitute two natures; whether his divinity was not instead of a human soul, or in what relation his human soul stood to his divinity; whether he had one will or two wills, whether his death was a substitution or not; whether it was for the elect only, or for the whole race of man universally. On the Church; what its constitution, what its extent, what its authority; is it fallible or infallible; and if infallible, where does that infallibility rest; in the Pope, in a Council, in both together, in a congregation, or in every individual Christian? On the Sacraments, are there two or seven; what is their nature and efficacy; does baptism cleanse from original sin, or does it not; is it necessary to salvation or not? Roman Catholics affirm both, and so do the Oxford Tract writers. Is it to be consequent on personal belief or not; is it to be administered to infants, or to persons of mature years, and to be by immersion or by sprinkling? Again, we have a whole crowd of divisions and heresies on the Lord's Supper; are the elements actually changed into the substance of Christ, or is Christ merely present along with them, or is he spiritually, but not personally, present; is it a rite mystically effective, or is it merely commemorative? All these questions have been sources of endless division of opinion; ever at the present hour, the Oxford divines teach a doctrine concerning the Eucharist, which it



requires marvellous perspicacity to distinguish from transubstantiation, while the Calvinistic evangelicals maintain views which might content the very lowest sacramentarian. But why speak of Creeds and Articles as means of religious unity, when the Church of England herself affords us the means of giving such assertion a flat denial? Within her pale, she has had men of all and opposite opinions—Arminian and Calvinist, Unitarian and Trinitarian—every possible hue that orthodoxy could assume. Paley smiles at the idea, as one of most grotesque absurdity, that men should be thought to believe the articles they sign, they are, according to his morality, mere articles of peace, intended to exclude no one but Papists and Anabaptists. If this be true, a man might, as an able writer on non-conformity says, take a benefice with a good conscience from the Grand Turk. Nay, not to speak of believing the Articles, we have heard it asserted, in connection with the Universities, that the youthful subscribers are not supposed to understand them, or in some cases even to have read them. The Church of England is perhaps wise in not pushing matters too far, for in her former efforts to force uniformity, she lost the best of her sons by thousands, an event that she has cause to regret to the latest hour of her existence, and for which America should bless her for ever. The distinction between essentials and non-essentials, is one of the most quibbling of Theological vanities. Every one knows that each sect has its essentials and non-essentials, according to the compass of its Creed, some many and some few: with the Roman Catholic, Transubstantiation is as essential as the Trinity: he condemns the orthodox Protestant to perdition for not holding one as well as the other, whilst both confine to pass sentence on the unfortunate Unitarian who can receive neither. Again, I assert the distinction is petty and quibbling, for who is to fix it, where is it to stop; who is to decide it, and what are to be grounds of the decision? All things are important to us,

as they bear relation to our conscience or our convictions, one man esteemeth only herbs, another eateth all things; one man esteemeth one day above another, another esteemeth every day alike: let every man be persuaded in his own mind; that is the Apostle's view of the subject, and that is the true, the safe, the charitable one. Protestantism has not lessened or softened the number or the inventory of religious divisions infinitely more perplexed than Romanism in her views of religious authority, she has given importance to doctrines which the Church under that system scarcely noticed: such as grace, predestination, and other similar disputed theories: thus the sting of controversy has been added to topics that were before sufficiently repulsive in their dry and technical abstruseness. But it is pitiful, it is humiliating, not merely to our common Christianity, but to our common human nature, to see the arrogant assumption with which pious men decree what their brothers are to believe, now and in all future times, tying down the mind that should be free as heaven, as it is as progressive as it is eternal: putting themselves on the throne of God, and dealing judgment where he deals mercy. The minuteness of theological definition has surpassed all other efforts of human ingenuity, but it has not alone deadened the freedom of intellect, but also injured its honesty. On the Trinity, more especially, heresy has ever been treading closely on orthodoxy, "until, after revolving round the theological circle," as Gibbon says, "we are surprised to find that the Sabellian ends where the Eusebian had begun." Each theological speculator has his own Trinity, his own exposition of the Athanasian mystery, until amidst the whirl of dogmatical contradictions, the mind grows giddy, and knows not where to rest. The Church of England, as I have observed before, has all systems between the extremes of Sherlock's Trinitarianism and South's Sabellianism: between the three infinite minds of the one, and the three *nomensata* of the other. The ancient Christians afforded full occasion for the caustic

description which Gibbon gives of their disputes, and the modern Christians have not grown wiser, or learned better. "The Greek word," he says, "which was chosen to represent this mysterious resemblance, bears so close an affinity to the orthodox symbol, that the practice of every age divided the furious contests which the difference of a single diphthong excited between the Homousians and the Homoiousians. As it frequently happens that sounds and characters which approach nearest each other, accidentally represent the most opposite ideas, the observation would be itself ridiculous, if it were possible to mark any sensible difference between the doctrine of the Semiarrians, as they were improperly styled, and that of the Catholics themselves. The Bishop of Poitiers, who in his Phrygian exile, very wisely aimed at a coalition of parties, endeavours to prove, that by a pious and faithful interpretation, the Homoousian may be reduced to a nonsubstantial sense. Yet he confesses that the word has a dark and suspicious aspect; and, as if darkness were congenial to theological disputes, "the Semiarrians who advanced to the doors of the Church, assailed them with the most unrelenting fury." If it be said, that the Creeds are not the creators of divisions, but that divisions are the creators of Creeds, I admit that they act and react on each other. If they create not the differences which they make, they give them all their bitterness. If it be said, that independently of Creeds, there would still be endless variety of grosser opinions, I grant it; I go further, and say, it were most desirable there should be such divisions. It is Creeds that injure religion, and turn dissent into dissension. A man who felt he could form his opinion in freedom, and hold it in peace, would never persecute another; would never hate another; would never pretend authority over another; he would give the liberty he used. It is the authority which Creeds pretend, that constitute one of their greatest evils. The ancient Church then had Creeds in plenty, but no unity, the Reformed Churches

are in the same position. If it be asserted they have agreement in essentials, I refer to what I have already said on this point; but if it be maintained that their difference is only in name, then, I say, the matter becomes worse, and plainly shows that Creeds, out of small disputes, can cause gigantic evils. Nothing could be more bitter than the Sacramentarian Controversy amongst the Reformers: nothing could be more vile than the language with which they assailed each other, nothing more furious than the invectives with which they pelted one another. Each would fix on his opponent what he did not believe himself, and yet there occasionally peeps out a glimmer, that they had some sense of their inconsistency. "It is of great importance," says Calvin, in writing to Meibethon, "that the least suspicion of the divisions that are among ourselves pass not to future ages; for it is ridiculous beyond all things that can be imagined, that after we have broken off from the whole world, we should so little agree among ourselves since the beginning of the Reformation." The clarity of Calvin was not equal to his discretion, as we may see by this extract.

"Honor, glory, and riches," says he to the Marquis de Poët, "shall be the reward of your pains; but, above all, do not fail to rid the country of those zealous scoundrels who stir up the people to revolt against us. Such monsters should be exterminated, as I have exterminated Michael Servetus, the Spaniard."

In the same spirit is the language of Austin, who was Calvin's master, not only in his doctrine, but also in his zeal. "O, you Arian heretic," he says, "the thief knew him when he hung upon the cross: the Jews feared him when he rose from the dead; and you treat him with contempt, now he is reigning in heaven. Take care, beloved, of the Arian pestilence!" (Quoted from *Baluzac's Ecclesiastical Researches*, pp. 345. and 131.)

Division and heresy are, in truth, innumerable, and the

idea of stopping them by Creeds, is to imitate the peasant standing on the river's bank, and waiting until it should have all flowed by. "One doctor of the Lutheran Church," says Robert Robinson, of Cambridge, "has given a comment on heresy and schism, and hath inserted no less than six hundred and thirty-two sorts of heretics, heresiarchs, and schismatics, diversified as the birds of heaven, and agreeing only in one single point, the crime of not staying in what is called the Church."

I have now shown that Creeds did not promote unity in the ancient Church; that they did not promote it in the Roman Church; that they did not promote it in the Reformed Church; that in the present day they do not promote it in any of the Protestant Churches; not to allude again to our own Establishment; to many in the Scotch Church, they are a dead letter; they are entirely so in the French and German Churches; and in the Genevese Church, the very school where blackest Calvinism was fabricated, the arena where the stern persecutor burned Servetus, Calvus's spirit is extinct, and his creed repealed. I have shown, then, that they never produced unity, and I believe the most intrepid Ecclesiastic will not affirm they have been favourable to Christian peace. Turn to the page of history, look abroad over the face of the world, and you have lamentable evidence of the charge. Creeds have broken the peace of Christendom, and given unbounded fury to all its strifes; Controversies have arisen without number, and have been maintained with furious zeal, fury, and detestation. What shame should the opposite conduct of Philosophers flash in the face of theologians;—men, who in quietness pursued their own studies, and left their results for the progressive amelioration of their species—what the jaughings of Churchmen, warring through every age, have been empty of all things but their enmity. Why is it, that we in this hour are not more profitably engaged, why is it, that we are not rather seeking out the ways that

crush down humanity, and joining forces to remove them,—why is it with so much of what is positive to be done, so much of wretchedness to relieve, so much sin to remove, so many solemn claims on all sides of us, that when we think of it, we feel as if this were the veriest trifling; why are we thus in strife, when we might be in union; why are we compelled to say hard things, and to repel them? It is all to be charged to Creeds, which with the spirit of Cain, has risen the hand of brother against brother, and caused contention and an evil heart, where there ought to be charity and peace. It is all vain, it is not human nature, no matter how strongly disclaimed, to think, that polemical contention can be perfectly free from the wrong passions, and it is better not to pretend to meekness, when the opposite is frequently but too evident. The days of physical strife in religion, it is to be hoped, are gone; but upon the head of Creeds there is a blood-stain, a blood-guiltiness, which the whole ocean could not wash out. Religion was made the watch-word for war; the cross was raised as the symbol of destruction, and the gathering of nations were around it, to carry ruin as a flood, on, into those very scenes, where it once bore the dying form of him, who said, "I came not to destroy men's lives, but to save them." War, in its simplest utterance, is a word of horror; but religious war leaves nothing darker to be imagined. In worldly enmities, when the contest is deadliest, there are touches of human compassion; in the most sanguinary strife, the voice of mercy is sometimes heard, and the hand of help is given; fiercest opponents will occasionally be generous—the oppressed, in the hour of triumph, can be magnanimous to the tyrant in his fall, but place men against each other with different religious sentiments, unsheath the sword of the orthodox against the heretic, the heart becomes steel, the bosom becomes ruthless, and the man is lost in the fiend. Demand you evidence of this? It is written in gore over the whole face of earth; call up the shades of the thousands that

sunk in the valleys and the mountains of Judæa; of those in the solitudes of the Alps, that fell under the sword of Romish and merciless extermination; of those with whose life-blood the fierce Spaniard dyed the soil of South America; of those who were laid low in the glens of Scotland by Episcopalian fury, — you would have army of witnesses which no man could number, the accusers of those who for different faith became the slayers of their brethren. Creeds are naturally allied to the spirit of persecution, for they establish the principle, and act on it, that belief may be a sin, and this is the very life of the persecuting spirit; it was this that built the Inquisition, which for so many ages spread its ruthless tempest in the Christianity of Europe, it was this that called forth the rack, and kindled every fire in which a heretic was ever sacrificed to the demon-god of bigotry: *it was this executed a Dominic*. Protestants are fond of calling the Roman Catholic Church a persecuting Church, but that Church can retort the accusation. Every Church is in truth a persecuting Church which acts in the spirit of a Creed. The Reformers maintained the right of the civil magistrate to punish heretics. This, if it needed proof, is triumphantly made out by Besset. "There is no need here," he says, "of explaining on that question, whether or no Christian princes have a right to use the sword against their subjects, enemies to sound doctrine and the Church, the Protestants being agreed with us in this point. Luther and Calvin have written books to make good the right and duty of the magistrate in this point. Calvin reduced it to practice, but against Servetus and Valentine Gentili. Melancthon approved of this procedure by a letter he wrote him on the subject." John Knox maintained the same doctrine, and even quoted the extermination of the Canaanites as a case which would justify like treatment of heretics. Nay, in the present day, one of the Oxford theologians asserts, "that we ought to anticipate the evils of error in the person of the heresiarch," because he contends that it is better he should

endure pain, than that his error should be propagated, and bring ruin on his infatuated but less guilty followers. This is the true inquisitorial religion. A man who holds sentiments like these is a persecutor in his heart, and it is only by accident that he is not a persecutor with his hand. A man who could send forth that expression, in other days might have been grand inquisitor or a familiar of the Holy Office, and would have dragged his victims to the stake, or glouted over their tortures on the rack. A heresiarch, he maintains, is unworthy of compassion: and in correspondence with this are some passages of Tremetis, quoted with approbation in the Tracts for the Times: "What prospect, then, of peace have we," says this reverend and transcendent Ecclesiastic, "who are foes to the brethren? What sacrifice do they think they celebrate, when they become rivals to the Parashood? When gathered together beyond the pale of the Church, do they think that Christ is still in the midst of them? Though men like these were killed in the profession of their faith, not even by their blood would these spots be washed out. The offence of discord is a weighty offence, it includes no expiation, and is absolved by no suffering." "They cannot remain with God," he says, "who will not remain with one heart in God's Church. Though they be cast to the place, to the fire to be burnt, or lay down their lives by being a prey to wild beasts, they will gain not the crown of faith, but the penalty of perfidy; their end, not the glorious consummation of religious excellence, but the death-blow of despair. Such men may attain unto death, but can never attain unto the crown." Creeds have sharpened the sword of persecution, though the civil arm was used, and if it now be idle in the sheath, it is more owing to the tolerance of civil governments, than to any change in the spirit of Churchmen. If Rome had her Inquisition, England had her Star Chamber, if Rome had her Dominic, England had her Lord. I wish not, however, to pass unmitigated censure: I am willing and glad

to acknowledge that the Church of England has had many men who were the lights of their age, but they had minds which were not cast in the Athanasian mould. It is not Churches only that persecute, but also sects; not great Churches, but little ones equally; thus did the Genevese, whilst the spirit of Calvin ruled in it; thus did the Dutch Churches, while the Dort-decrees had power, and even Socinus himself persecuted Francis David. A Credo, however simple, can be made an instrument of unjust power, as well as the most complex one. The persecuting spirit is not extinct, but changed; it is now a social and a moral persecution. Long experience has shown that physical torture is useless, and if the principle remained, the power is gone. But never can we sum up the whole amount of evil which Creeds inflicted on the world, until we can count the sighs that have died unheard in the dungeon; until we know all the bitterness of heart which waits on hopeless captivity; until we count the pangs of torture which gave slow consuming death; until we can follow the course of merciless wars, unsoftened by a touch of pity; until we know all the friends that have been made enemies, and the griefs which have in many cases made life a martyrdom; until, in fact, we have all laid bare before us which that day alone will reveal, which reveals all the hidden works of darkness.

II. I have so far shown that Creeds are the enemies of truth, and disqualifying the mind to seek truth aright, by resisting and embarrassing its free development, by enervating conscience and destroying charity; I have shown their failure in their proposed objects, and their instrumentality in producing all the evils they pretend to avert, and I proceed in the remaining observations, to establish the second charge. It is one, however, which does not need much elaborate argumentation. It will be easy to discover their tendency, if we consider who are commonly the framers of Creeds, in

what periods they are formed, and in what temper they are usually imposed. They are framed by Ecclesiastics, and for the main purpose of supporting Ecclesiastical supremacy. If we take a few names connected with Credo-making, or with furnishing the materials out of which Creeds are made, we can easily see the spirit in which they are conceived, and of which they are the expression. We have then an Athanasius, an intriguing and ambitious Ecclesiastic, not only the fomenter of spiritual strife in the Church, but by political intermeddling, the fomenter of civil strife in the Empire: a Cyril, the opponent of Nestorius, and the hater of Origen; the composer of mighty tomes of divinity, which with much the same kind success, were equally massive, and equally obnoxious; a popular preacher at first, and afterwards a most orthodox patriarch; at once the persecutor of the philosophic Pagans, and the heretical Christians: a Tertullian, that exulted in the prospective domination of heretics, with a zeal that almost rivals some modern Calvinistic writers; a Dominic, that has left the memory of a sanguinary monk, and the name of a saint; who has been often commemorated in the flames of many an auto-de-fe, and has had a durable monument to his glory in the dark piles of the Inquisition: a Calvin, the stern Theological tyrant of Geneva, and the slayer of Servetus; a Lincol, who pleaded for the extermination of the heretical after the manner of the Carizmites; a Cromer, who caused so many, both of Catholics and Protestants, to be led to the stake by laws which changed with the fickle will of a tyrant's will, who at last himself bleached before the fate that had been so often prepared for others: a Laud, the pillar of a star-chamber, and the downfall of a throne. Such are some of the men concerned in the formation of Creeds: men of stern natures, of haughty minds, and of boundless spiritual ambition. And as to the periods in which Creeds are commonly made, we know they are in times of religious strife, when different parties are labouring for the ascen-

dancy, when no pains are spared to gain it, when no acts however shameful or dishonest are thought too bad to use, if they assist to humble an opponent, or secure a victory; when passion is heated and malignant, and the judgment totally unfit for impartiality. The history of Councils and Theological cabal is the shame of Christianity. Yet, formularies thus fabricated are to be made the everlasting standards of truth, and men are to be punished here and hereafter because they do not receive as Divine Truth these shapeless abortions of Churchmen's folly. And the temper in which they are imposed is quite in conformity with that in which they are conceived—oppressive, exclusive, unjust. With war a vindictive and grasping spirit have not the Clergy of the English Church laid hold on all they could monopolize of privilege and power; with what resistance to the loss they have undertaken to shut out Dissenters from all the rights of Citizens and of citizens. To this hour, had it been in the power of Ecclesiastics, the Test and Corporation Acts had never been repealed, or the Catholic disabilities removed. That which is their power gives sufficient evidence how they would act if they had exclusive possession of more. I mean the Universities, which they keep closed against Dissenters with such an obstinate and godlike bigotry. Nor does the injustice end here; there is a silent, social injustice, which Dissenters suffer; every one feels it, though it is not easily defined. The Churchman, on the strength of signing a Creed which he does not always believe, assumes to be of a higher religious caste than the Dissenter. It is not sufficient that Dissenters contribute from their worldly good to support a system which has no alliance with their conscience, but they must still further undergo the humiliation of being regarded as spiritual and moral inferiors. Creeds are the allies of worldly policy, and ever have been since Christianity had the misfortune to become a state religion, for they are the main ties of that unnatural union of Christ's

religion to human governments—a union injurious to both, making the government unjust and partial, and religion selfish and secular. They are worldly in their objects, and they are worldly in their instruments and means. They are made the stepping stones to wealth, rank, and power; for if the Establishment did not give wealth, rank, and power, numbers of expectants would be moderate enough as to the Articles and Creeds. It would seem anomalous if universal history did not make it evident, that a body of men in all ages, pledged to denounce covetousness and earthly passions, pledged to preach humility after the example of a crucified master, pledged to curb by heavenly motives the abuse of power, should be of all men themselves the most insatiate in their desires after gain, the most haughty in their elevation to station, the severest and the most grinding in the exercise of prerogative, the least willing to relinquish it, and the most determined not to share it. In every period of the Church, the worldliness of Ecclesiastics, their ambition, and their love of lucre, have been proverbial, the scandal of Christians, and the scorn of unbelievers. The covetousness of the Priest, has, in all periods, been outstripped by his pride alone; and under every change in society, the Priesthood have taken care to secure themselves so that their lives should fall in the most pleasant places. The struggle is a worldly one from beginning to end—it is all of the world and the things of the world; if the price were not of earth, we should hear far less noise amongst the combatants. The struggle is a worldly one, the policy is a worldly one, the means and ends are worldly. For are there any means so evil, that Creeds, if there is a purpose to be gained, will not tempt to, or assist with force, if there be the power to use it; with fraud, if there is a necessity that demands it? Creeds and doctrines have been maintained by frauds the most barefaced, by every artifice and by every falsehood. But Creeds are indirectly the cause of dire immorality, of immorality

the worst of its kind, and the most evil in its effects: they corrupt nature in its very source, they weaken that sense of inward sincerity necessary to all that is true and noble in human character, they punish honesty, and they bring to hypocrisy. How many minds have been robbed of their truthfulness, how many consciences have been despoiled of their integrity, how many hearts sacrificed their purity on the altar of interest and expediency. It would be a long and dark catalogue to enumerate. And it is truly painful to think, that this result is prepared for in the brightest and the best period of life. What must be the effect on a young man who, at the very threshold of his College studies, must profess to believe dogmas that he has scarcely read, that he has never examined; how much worse if he has examined and disbelieves them: if he be honest, he is excluded; the fear of his family starts before him, or he spares them, he turns his soul; if he speaks the truth, he wrecks, perhaps, all his worldly fortunes beyond redemption. When he sees then the most solemn interests made mere matters of form, religious declarations the tests of honours and of office, the professors of grave Ecclesiastics but a pompous and solemn hypocrisy, the zeal for religion itself only a means to get wealth and power; when, I say, he beholds all this, he can have no other feeling than that of unmitigated contempt for the hollow show of orthodoxy; he must observe that it is only an instrument, a mere make-believe, theatrical acting; and the chances are many, that, disgusted with the whole affair, he transfers his disgust to religion in general, and makes shipwreck both of faith and virtue. Creeds are the support of Priestly intolerance; these are the statutes of the Priest. He does not, it is true, require you to believe them; but he requires you to say you believe them: say but that and your peace is made. These are his statutes on which he condemns, or on which he acquits; by which he tries your alle-

giance to sacerdotal authority, and by which, if he can, he will enforce it. Creeds are instruments of worldly and of spiritual despotism. The relation of the Priesthood to the civil power, is changeful and capricious; one time its slave, another time its tyrant. Cunning Kings have always had the sagacity to see that the safest course was to flatter and enrich the Priesthood, giving them the shield of the temporal power, and receiving in return the support of the whole spiritual armory either from heaven or hell; and both thus agreed and united, have been enabled to enslave the people with a most hopeless bondage. Let the Prince not heap good things on the Church, hate her enemies, cause her opponents, purchase her friends, the Church gratefully in return submits to him with most obsequious obedience. But reverse the case, and suppose the Prince not only ventures to do without the Priests, but attempts to curtail some of their good things, then no spirit is too strong to mark his iniquity, he is then profane, heretical, infidel; and if the superstition of the people give them the power, they compel him to bend before spiritual process, and from being their master, reduce him to their slave. The spirit of a Creed-maintaining Clergy is also seen in this fact, that they dislike the civil power more and more as that power becomes liberal and enlightened; they oppose it, and abuse it in exact proportion as it deserves to be admired and praised: if there be but a symptom that their monopoly is likely to be broken, and that others are about to share blessings which they had so long kept to themselves as to think only their own, immediately the Monarch must be prepared to meet the fierceness of their enmity. It is a conflict to which many a Monarch has been unequal, and to which many a one has fallen a victim. Tyranny on their side, and slavery on that of others, is the congenial element in which most established Priesthoods move, breathe, and have their being; therefore themselves are the victims of their circumstances.

circumstances which the influence of Creeds have made; for Creeds are the parents of Priestcraft, and Priestcraft is identical with religious despotism.

Creeds are the allies of worldly policy; Creeds are the creatures of the Church, and the Church is the creature of the state. A national Church with Creeds for its tests, and legal support and legal penalties, can be nothing else. And the English Establishment is peculiarly in this condition; are not her Bishops appointed by the government? Are we not all aware that every *Prelate* is virtually the selected of the minister for the time being? Are we not aware that her canons and constitution, her catechisms and articles, her rubrics and her ceremonies, are enforced and established by acts of parliament? Are we not especially aware that her wealthy revenues are derived from compulsory exaction, and that payment is wrenched from Dissenters by the strong arm of the law? Whence, but from this source, can the Clergy claim their wealth? By what other power could they enforce it? Every one, who is not a simpleton, knows that the vast possessions in which the Church rejoices, are not free will offerings, and that they have stronger security in the Courts of Exchequer and Chancery, than in the consciences of those who pay them. They were at first endowments to the Church of Rome; it is by act of parliament that they enrich those who maintain the Thirty-nine Articles, instead of paying for souls in Purgatory. The Monarch, in this country, is acknowledged the supreme head of the Church on earth; and though that Monarch may be a girl of eighteen, a boy of eleven, an infant, or an idiot, it is exclusion from the established ministry to deny it, and was once high treason. To be persuaded of this fact, we have only to recollect that the law of the land deposed the Romish Priesthood, and that the Act of Uniformity excluded from the service of the altar two thousand non-conforming Ministers. "The second Canon excommunicates every one who shall endeavour to limit or

extenuate the King's authority in Ecclesiastical cases, as it is settled by the laws of the kingdom; and declares he shall not be restored until he has recanted such impious errors." "The thirty-seventh Canon obliges all persons, to their utmost, to keep and observe all and every one of the statutes and laws made for restoring to the crown the ancient jurisdiction it had over the Ecclesiastical state." "The twelfth of King James's Canons declares, that whoever shall affirm that it is lawful for the order, either of Ministers or Laics, to make canons, decrees, or constitutions, in Ecclesiastical matters, without the King's authority, and submits himself to be governed by them, is, *ipso facto*, excommunicated, and is not to be absolved before he has publicly repented and renounced these Anabaptistical errors." Queen Anne, in an angry letter to the Archbishop, made the convocation aware that "she was resolved to maintain her supremacy as a fundamental part of the constitution of the Church of England." "Archbishop Bancroft, when at the head of all the Clergy of England, delivered articles to King James for increasing the Ecclesiastical courts, and for annexing all Ecclesiastical as well as Civil power to the Crown. This may be seen at large in Lord Coke's third institute." On such grounds as these, men claim authority to impose Creeds on their fellow-citizens, to proclaim themselves the commissioned messengers of heaven, to assert religious supremacy and to arrogate a divine right: to bind and loose, to condemn and to forgive. I heard a person lately well remark, that if you gave him the incomes of the Clergy, he would give you the moral status of those from whom they were taken, and *vice versa*. At ordination, they solemnly affirm that they are moved by the Holy Ghost: but if the extreme stipend were two or three hundred a year, this inspiration would seldom be found to fall on the son of a Duke, or the brother of an Earl.

But, whatever be the abuses which Creeds occasion, or whatever be the evils they inherit, it may still be said the



Church has authority to decree them, and what she has authority to decree, she has authority to enforce. To one of the strongest arguments on this point lately renewed, and more strenuously urged than it had ever been before, I shall here devote a few general observations.

The claim to dictate and enforce Creeds by the Clergy of our Establishment, is founded on another claim which, by a party of divines, is recently asserted with a zeal not inferior to that of the Romish Priesthood, I allude to the doctrine of Apostolic succession. It is pretended that the national Clergy by deriving a mission from the immediate disciples of Christ, have authority, by a mystical communication of divine energy transmitted to them from age to age, an authority to decide what is, and what is not, the true faith. On this ground the high Churchmen consistently deny to all other Ministers the power to teach or to preach, and with one fell stroke, cut off the whole of the Dissenters from the spiritual body of Christ. On this ground we may ask several questions which must receive very unsatisfactory, or very contradictory answers. First—where, in the gospel history, is it proposed, as an essential qualification of a religious teacher, that he shall have an uninterrupted succession from the Apostles? Paul, in his letters to Timothy and Titus, enumerates many qualities which should distinguish the Christian Minister; but Apostolical succession is not once mentioned amongst the number. In the early age of Christianity, we have abundant evidence, both from Evangelical and Heresiasical history, that many preached the gospel who had no such authority as Churchmen call Ordination or Holy orders. Secondly— is it possible that the Apostles could have any successors? The Apostles had powers to which no Priest in his highest grade will dare to lay claim, the Apostles healed the sick, cast out demons, raised the dead; they proved their mission by miracles, and thus gave a peculiarity to their office which, it will be admitted, was not transfers

able. Besides, between the office of an Apostle and that of a Bishop, there is no identity, and few analogies. An Apostle was a missionary, a Bishop is a temporal and spiritual peer: there is no more resemblance of one to the other, than of his grace of Canterbury amidst the sumptuous luxury of his palace, to a Moravian preacher in the snows of Lapland, than of the Bishop of Coeur declaiming politics in the senate, to Felix Nefz proclaiming Christ amidst the Alps. An Apostle was a poor man, a Bishop is a rich one; an Apostle was a pilgrim and wanderer, a Bishop is a seated prince, an Apostle was the object of contumely and scorn to a world which was not worthy of him, a Bishop is the praised and the applauded by a world of which he is worthy, an Apostle was the servant of the humble and the lowly, a Bishop is the companion of the exalted and the great; an Apostle was the object of state persecution, a Bishop is the favourite of state patronage: by what paradoxical mistake, therefore, our office came to be derived from the other, it is a puzzle to conjecture. Thirdly— by what sort of evidence is the succession to be proved, what are the conditions which render it true and genuine? By what signs am I to know that the Ecclesiastical consecration is one whole unbroken chain, without a single heretical link? By what signs am I to know that the sacerdotal mystery is rightly given, that there is no spuriousness, no falsehood, and no forgery? Is every peasant, who hears a sermon from his Parson, to be in possession of that historic lore, which shall enable him to determine, by erudite tracing of age to age, that orthodox hands have been laid on orthodox heads, and that he to whom he commits the salvation of his soul has all the conditions of a true priesthood? Fourthly— Whence does the Church of England derive her succession?—That she derives it from the Church of Rome, all authentic ecclesiastical history confirms. The establishment of the English Church can be clearly traced no further than the mission of

Austin the Romish Monk; and it is well known, indeed, there is no attempt at denial, that all which have since been called papal errors, were then proclaimed and adopted. The preacher came with the pope's sanction, the English received the pope's religion, and acknowledged the pope's authority. It is vain beyond all vanity to argue for succession in the English Establishment, and assert its independence on the Church of Rome—its origin is from a Roman Missionary, it admits the validity of Roman ordination; its liturgies and rituals are but garbled or abridged translations from Roman formularies. Whence then is the independence? If unbroken succession be the absolute condition of ecclesiastical authority, then the English establishment must either admit the jurisdiction of the Church of Rome, or acknowledge itself guilty of rebellion, and confess that it is wanting in one of the prime essentials of a Christian Church. But our Establishment accuses the Romish system of all manner of errors and of evils, of idolatry, of tyranny, of persecution, of doing dishonour to the supremacy of God, and of undermining the merits of Christ,—of being an awful and fatal apostasy: surely then the parity of that descent may well be doubted, which comes from so corrupt a source. The Church of Rome is called by all our declamatory divines the "mother of harlots;" if that of England be one of her daughters, it is a hard task for a controversialist to defend the legitimacy of her birth or the parity of her character. Moreover, that is a queer kind of unbroken succession, which could in a few years reflect so many hues of doctrine, which turned from reign to reign like the weathercock before the wind, as royal caprice determined, from the bigoted half-papery of the Eighth Henry to the whole Protestantism of the Sixth Edward, from the violent Catholic Mary, to the equally violent reformed Elizabeth; from a Grammar to a Gardiner, and from a Gardiner to a Lamb. It is not, therefore, grateful or graceful to our Establishment to heap odium on her mother, her

from whom she must date her existence, to whom she traces her clergy, and from whom she has received her creed.

III. In disputing against creeds, and churches which are the creatures of creeds, I do not deny that religion most genuine and pure, may exist in many forms—and may be as fervent amongst the adherents of Establishments as amongst the most zealous of dissenting churches. Religion, I consider, a necessity of the human heart; it may grovel in the dust or aspire to the skies—it may appeal to our fears or to our hopes—it may create heinous terrors or rejoice in beautiful pictures; it may decorate the altar with flowers, or bathe it in blood; but still it belongs to us, us of us, and that of which we cannot, if we would, divest ourselves. While man has within his soul admiration of greatness and power, unsatisfied desires and perishing pleasures; while he has many griefs and many tears; while there are those living whom he loves, and those departed whom he mourns; while his existence is thus bound to the past and to the future; while he has speculations that seek but find no limit, in time, on his own and universal destiny, he must have religion to destroy these, and you destroy religion, but you also destroy humanity. If the strongest excitements and the deepest contrasts could fill and satisfy the human soul, our age and country supply them; whatever would fix us to the past and the present we have in all possible varieties, both in their glory and their greatness. If the spirit is to be seen anxious with poverty we have but a few steps to walk from rejoicing splendour to pining misery. Civilization is amongst us with all its luxuries and with all its woes. Thousands toil for daily bread, and thousands more languish for daily pleasures. Yet nobler things have we than these. Our science, our philosophy, and our literature, are rich beyond expression. Our mechanic is akin to magic, and our industry is like the regularity of nature; the stir of many interests is abroad, and the struggle of many principles. The

## 54      CHURCH AND KING OF HEAVENLY FAITH:

power of fresh life is in the social bust, and the courage of free speech upon the lips. The tide of thought and liberty moves onward with majestic swell, and no one can say "Hibernia shall thus come and no further, and here shall the proud waves be staid." Whatever there be in wealth, in power, in glory, in ambition, that desires triumphant way and accedes all it desires; whatever there be in speculation of boundless enterprise or capacity of gigantic achievement, our times may boast, yet they remove not the need of religion, but the religion which the heart demands is not what creeds or churches can give either to a nation or an individual.

Creeds are the allies of establishments, and establishments are the friends of the world. Their whole history and tendency are evidence of this. But, far be it from me to say that this has no qualification. All our institutions more or less knit themselves into popular religion, the religious as well as others. We cannot look back upon the church of our country, even in its Romish form, without some of the reverence with which our nature compels us to gaze on fallen greatness, and now that the milks is warm by other heads, and the crosses passed into other hands, now that its good deeds reveal themselves in the calm of the past, we can regard its evil ones more in sorrow than in anger. Zealots, who would eternalize the darkest creeds that superstition ever shaped, who would build up the throne of posdest priesthood, denounce against Popery in the most popish spirit; but while national feelings have any power, while a single venerable structure stands upon our soil in which we hear the voices of our ancestors, and from which a thousand years look down upon us, the Roman Church, with all its errors, is linked by sacred memories to our history. It laid the foundation of our civilized existence: it grew with our growth and it strengthened with our strength. When our country was yet divided amongst barbarian kings, the mark of Rome led up the cross of Christ, and the heart of the savage was sub-

dued to the Peace of Fear. It accompanied our national independence, it trained our fathers' spirits when living, and now they are dead it shelters their bones. Through all historic changes, and through most sanguinary struggles, it preserved alive the spirit of our common Christianity.

Within it arose many of our greatest men; it nurtured many of our purest and holiest characters; it reared the ideal at which an Anselm ministered and before which an Alfred prayed. But wealth commonly brings worldliness, and as it is with laymen, so is it with ecclesiastics. The church was fed and fostered by Saxon piety, and when the conquest gave the island new masters it suffered nothing by the change. The progress of aggrandizement went forward with a quicker pace and a more grasping hand. Spiritual authority allied itself more freely to temporal majesty; celestial vocation would have feudal titles; the soil would be transferred to the coronet, the humble robe to the princely purple; the voice of humility swelled into absolute command, monks took their places above barons, and the private sat only below the throne.

But under that pomp and ostentation, we say not that all was hollow: that claim was not made of general piety far beyond the reach of history. In the cells of these gorgeous abbeys there were many who did in reality leave the world and its wickedness behind them. There were some who wept and prayed in no feigned prostration, who worshipped, it may be with superstition, but still with sensibility and an upright conscience. In that stream of melody which peaked at solemn midnight through many a dome that now lies mouldering, there were some hallingays which reached the throne of God and mingled with the hymn of angels. The pavements over which we tread in many a secluded ruin may have been worn by kneeling penitents that now sleep in peace beneath them: within these massive buildings so gray and time-wrecked, how often might be found at the evening hour, when the

dim religious light melted through the painted windows, and the vesper song softened through the lofty vaults, scattered worshippers who were feeding their immortal life: how frequently with in those temples may the seer in faith and prayer have forgotten his bonds, and only remembered that he was the brother of Jesus, and the son of God. And amongst that priesthood so often stigmatized unjustly by indiscriminate bigotry, many were worthy of their office; they were the poor man's friends when poverty was hopeless; they were his brethren when to the worldly powers poverty was slavery; they were his supporters and consolers when he had many to oppress and few to cheer him; they were with him in joy and sorrow, in sickness and death, when his joy and sorrow, his sickness and death, were to the mass of his worldly superiors, a matter of contemptible indifference. In the times to which I refer, the Church was a most excellent antagonist against political assumption, a barrier against despotism, a shield for the people against the crown; but now it is an ally of the crown only when the crown is against the people: in either, the Crown and the Church struggle may have been only for supremacy, but whatever were their respective motives, the people were the gainers; the clergy might make them slaves for another world, but they saved them from being slaves in this. The power of the priest could curb the ambition of the ruler; and in the ruler himself, the will of the monarch was held in check by the conscience of the devotee. Ecclesiastical institutions were then not wholly ineffective, but now the religious and social interests of man are better secured than by any struggle between the superstitious fears of the Prince, and the spiritual threatenings of the Priest. From these ancient changes, Church Establishments outliving the slaveries which they elaborated, become inflictors of slavery in return, and hang as mill-stones and dead weights on every effort for freedom and advancement. But if we are to have authority on conscience

at all in the form of institutions, I would rather it should be absolute and unchangeable, uniform, solemn, and imposing; and if there is to be submission, I prefer it should be to that which is believed to be steadfast and infallible; for then, if we had not the freedom of thought, we might at least have the peace of piety; if we had not the independence of men, we might hope for the meekness of children.

We cannot say that the English Church in its Protestant state has lost all claims to traditional veneration. We may, however, safely assert, that in becoming protestant, it has not become less earthly, and that if transformed in anything, it is not from the spirit of the world. We see very clearly, that it is not in any way distinguished for free or progressive enlightenment, and amongst the Reformed of European churches it is most the creature of the world, most the lover of the world, most dependent on the world, both in its origin and its continuance.

On the continent it commenced with the ecclesiastical powers; in ours it commenced with the civil, and the church in this country adopted the new doctrine rather as a matter of command than as a matter of conscience. Whatever have been the theological vibrations of the Establishment, or whatever its theological inconsistencies, we deny not that it has had within it right noble spirits, and that it has them still, and while we condemn such systems, we do not so much condemn, as lament the fine natures which they have misdirected. Numbers we are aware are now in its ranks, who are the ornaments of life and to whom the world is in many ways indebted; and if it were not so, there are those gone by who would fully dignify her. Amongst her members we recognise many of the great lights both of our nation and our nature; a Jeremy Taylor of eloquence and rare sweetness of spirit; a Barrow with a mind as lofty as it was simple and an oratory as prodigal in thought as it was massive in language; a Chillingworth, the prince of reasoners, who never allowed

his palanquin to ruffle his meekness, to warp his candour, or to deaden his charity; a Berkeley, whose genius was only inferior to his sanctity, and whose subtle philosophy never disturbed the simplicity of his truly child-like nature; a Bede, who was humble and generous when it was the fashion to oppress, who though the bi-hop of a foreign faith in the midst of a people whom his odour had aggravated, made his way to their hearts, and was the object of their blessings; and in our own day there has been the good and sainted Hester, who combined piety with humanity, and who adorned practical virtue with all the beauty of the poet and the Christian.

Names like these might throw a lustre over any system: it is only to be regretted that any system has not here more faithful in their production. In any system, we cannot expect that such men should be abundant, but observation compels us to confess that the Church has taken more pride in the reputation of her heroes, than in resembling them. If we are to judge results by her possessions and opportunities compared with her moral or spiritual achievements, her works of selfishness far surpass her works of godliness. Her earthly means have been subordinated, but where are her heavenly trophies? She has nothing in comparison to her opportunities to produce in justification of her moral and national stewardship. Wealth she has had even to fulness. Her lands have fallen in pleasant places: hers have been the green pastures and hers the still waters, the tenth of the nation's produce has been reserved for her altars. Political power has likewise been hers. Her retired ministers are amongst the state's chief senators. Whether it be acutely or not, that preachers of the crucified should sit in courts of proud and worldly legislation, we here forbear to discuss; but once there, the spirit of the crucified, and of the citizen sanctified by that spirit, might have been nobly manifested; even there. Ministers of Christ might have done a glorious

work. Men whose lives had been disciplined by severe and various study; men of chastened passions and solemn meditation; men who had gone through the humanizing duties of pastoral graduation from the village pulpit to the episcopal throne, might be thought a happy counterpoise to the ivory worldliness or youthful rashness of mere temporal Peers; they would rebuke, we might suppose, the assumptions of aristocracy, and be as the voice of God for the rights of the poor. Men who proclaimed that gospel which is full of mercy and compassion, would resist oppression to the last, and denounce sanguinary laws with the whole force of their authority; men who were followers of peace would arrest the blood-hound of war, and quell with all gentle station the horrid spirit of destruction; men appointed to be teachers of the ignorant, and lights to the blind, would be the friends of universal instruction; men who were the Priests of that God before whom all are equal, the Apostles of that Jesus who lived and died for all, would be ever the friends of liberty and brotherhood. But, I may ask, when have the Bishops, as a body, not been against the people, and with the wealthy and the noble? When have they been the first to come forward to denounce long existing, tolerated, but oppressive, abuses? When have they raised their voice, as Ministers of God, against Ministers of the Crown, to avert the horrid curse of war? When have they given their influence for a free and generous education, which should be full and boundless as the heart of charity? When, rather, have they not thrown their most inveterate opposition against it? When is it that a single effort of national liberty or religious has met their cordial support? To the moment of despair they stand against the Catholic and the Dissenter, to the last hour they will also resist the Jew. The defender of the wronged, the pleader for the weak, the opponent of sanctified prejudices, the enthusiast for human reforms, the advocate for peace, the apostle of general education, have never in their most

hopeless hour raised their eyes towards the bench of Bishops with any expectations of support.

With wealth, with influence, with law, and with scholarship, the Church has done, and is doing no great spiritual work for her country, or for mankind, proportioned to her means. She makes a show of upholding her Creeds, but to many, even of her own members, they are but empty sounds or convenient mockeries. When we look for any permanent impression on the popular mind, we have yet to ask concerning the Church, what has she done? Has she Christianized any great tracts of Heathenism? The English Establishment, as a Church, has exhibited no missionary zeal, and can show no missionary triumphs. Individuals and bodies that belong to her communion, have undoubtedly been active in the great movements that distinguish modern times, but the impulse has been from outside the Church, and not from within it—from the zeal of the Sectaries, and not from the Creeds or Constitution of the Church. On the contrary, of those who never owned the Establishment, you might find proofs of Missionary zeal from India to the Pole, and from Andes to the Alps. But has she protestantized our own empire? Consult the writings of Doctor Baines, or those of Doctor Waceham; say, let the lamentations of Reformation Society itself, ever wailing over the increase of Popery, give the answer: look through the villages and the glens of England, where Roman Catholic Chapels are starting up as from the earth, and you will find the answer fully justified. Ask it in the cities and the mountains of Ireland, the shout of millions will proclaim what Established Protestantism has done with all her Creeds and Clergy after centuries of existence, and a countless expenditure. Three hundred years have nearly expired since the reformed standard has been planted on that soil, and after all the persecution and persecution to which the country has been subjected, after all the blood and sorrow that have been expended in

the work of compulsory proselytism, Popery has grown stronger, and Protestantism is expiring. The people pay with repugnance a profession in which they have not faith, but no power can force them to the worship in which they have no heart, and they prefer to be saved rather than be taught. They are repelled further and further from that system which commenced in a blunder, and has been continued by rapacity, which reverses the precepts of Christ, using the sword where he commands it to be sheathed—which reverses the course of the ancient Israelites finding a land of milk and honey, but leaving it a wilderness, having the pillar of fire always before, and the pillar of cloud ever behind; the one kept in flame by hatred and strife, and the other continually dank with maledictions and tears. But admitting the difficulties of proselytism, examine the moral state of those over whom the Church has had undivided control—those with whom there has been least of foreign interference, and I may appeal to her most strenuous defenders, whether she has not allowed thousands of human souls to grow up around her for whom she provided no shelter, whose hearts and wants she made no effort to reach: they lived without her teaching, they mourned without her solace, they sickened without her prayer, and until she received the fees for their burial, she was ignorant of their existence. Yet, after all, by many she has been called "*The poor man's Church.*" It is true that for some years past, and especially at present, there has been a species of excitement and activity in the church: but so far as these have moral life in them, so far as they concern the spiritual interests of the people, whence did they originate? Where were they before John Wesley and Whitfield raised their soul-piercing cries, and awoke the sense of immortality that was dormant in the minds of benighted multitudes? Did the church join with these men, or rather did it not persecute, calumniate, expel them—say and do all manner of evil against

them? What at the present hour is the activity of the church? Much, it may be, is sincere and conscientious, but greatly more an emulation with dissenters in which the praiseworthy elements are jealousy and fear. Much, it may be, of disinterested action for the souls of men, but more it is to be feared for the order and the church. Great exertion there is in the Establishment, but little of calm and healthful action—a mighty stir of polemics that make few converts, and of societies that heat the air. The church has neither union within, nor peace without. Her hand is against all, and the hands of all are against her. She holds forth creeds as the symbols of unity, and yet within her own courts are all sorts of divisions, a chaos of causes that make her the very Babel of theology; here is one preaching the grace of Pelagius, and there another that of Augustine; one arguing for the hell of Calvin, and another all but teaching the purgatory of the pope; one a Bonnerges for the Bible, and another an apostle for tradition; with one, Rome is the mother of abominations, and with another she is the mistress of churches. Amidst the din, then, of polemics, politics, and theological contradictions, of inward confusion and outward strife, how are we to catch the voice of moral power and of gospel truth? The truth must be told, there is no grand or concentrative energy of any sort in the church; neither faith nor freedom, neither bold speculation nor a mighty spiritual zeal; there is no room even for a gigantic fanaticism or a picturesque superstition; upon the whole the strife is of this world, and for it; a strife for wealth or place, in which the spiritual is swallowed by the earthly. With all her riches and honours; with all her show of dignities and grade of prelacy, she is yet poor in enlightened esteem, poorer still in general affection; without authority to sway the superstitious or liberality to attack the thinking, she has neither the submission of faith nor the approbation of reason. She has, considering her position and means, fulfilled no great Christian or Protestant mission; is she then

in a houghter sphere, the friend of general education? Passing over the Universities, which with a heavy hand she has hindered against dissenters, is she favourable to the instruction of the youthful poor? No, except in connection with her ecclesiastical supremacy. Until recently she had no zeal whatever in the matter; but other parties becoming active, under the broad gaze of public observation, both her fears and her interest were awakened. Whilst others were toiling, she for very shame could not act wholly idle, and she therefore adopted education, so far as it was an instrument to counteract her rivals or to preserve her authority. But to the last and to the death, she is the sworn enemy to any system of popular instruction which is comprehensive, liberal, and unsectarian. In this great country, where, thanks to law and not to creeds, each man may hold and speak his own opinion, she meets with defiance and resistance every movement towards a large and equal distribution of knowledge, for both of which the people are literally perishing. In a country like this, where sects are so many and so various, and where each has an equal claim on the blessings of civilized institutions, with a bigotry equalled only by its injustice, she would usurp the monopoly of national instruction. This is in the true spirit of creeds, and however repugnant to Christian equity is fully consistent with worldly policy.

When the church of England seceded from that of Rome, if she cut off some theological errors, she showed no such disposition respecting her earthly riches. It cannot be doubted that in the Reformed Establishment, a greed of mere remained as deep as was ever in the Romish, less ideal in its form, and more selfish in its spirit. In one time men abroad the interests of their church in the interests of themselves, in sudden times men lost themselves in the glory of their church; in that was centered every thing, even passion itself, as one great and mighty sentiment. From this it was arose the solemn structure of universal empire; from this sprung forth the

vision of a glory that was to fill the universe. It was this called up a power before which monarchs bowed, which turned itself with the terrors of hell and coursed itself with the stars of heaven. It was this which gave genius the sublimity of religious inspiration, and which has left for a colder age the forms of beauty to which faith gave life; it was this which could speak to the world as to single audience with an eloquence that must live while language has existence. It may be called fanaticism and mubility, but it is a fanaticism and an mubility that had something unworldly to dignify them. The reformed church had preserved the creeds of the ancient one, but not its creativeness; it has not given conscience freedom, but it has stripped faith of poetry. Even the ceremonies and forms which it has preserved are without energy and inspiration—the mere mimics of superstition unfringed with a single breath of its enthusiasm. Writings of no common eloquence have enlivened the cathedral service; it deserves all that can be said of it, and so do the temples themselves, no one can hear the one when it receives right expression without solemn emotion, and no one can behold the antique majesty of the other, but in silent veneration. The poetry of these things is beautiful, but what is the reality? A sad contrast—in general, a cold and fearless utterance of the service, unoccupied pews, a few listless hearers, feeble choirs, that seem rather to sing the requiem than the triumph of the church, ostentation without grandeur, and formality without grace. Here, as in every other department, we find the dominant spirit of worldliness. Though this service depends for much of its impression on ritual beauty, yet the higher clergy continually encroach on the revenues and means of sustaining it. "When we see," says Dr. Wiseman, "the cathedral service shrunk into the choir originally designed for the private daily worship of God's special ministers, or when we find the entire congregation crattered over a small portion of the repaired chancel, while the rest of the edifice is a majestic

ruin, as I but lately witnessed, assuredly one must be more prone to weep than to exult at the change which has taken place, since these stately fabrics were erected." I would not have the world sprung back into Popery; but if we are to have Romish creeds, rather than have them in repulsive nakedness, give them to us covered and adorned with the grace of Romish ceremonies, if we are to resign our liberty, give us at least grandeur and pageantry to amuse our slavery.

But creeds exist otherwise than in formal expression. A creed is the standard of a church, it may be the spirit of a sect. And from the antagonistic aspect which each sect bears to another, and the centralized organization which it has within itself, this spirit may have a fierce and powerful operation. The Church-creed is defined, the Sect-creed is vague, and may depend for interpretation on narrow and bitter prejudice: the Church-creed may possibly be dormant, but there is no escape from the watchful vigilance of a religious surveillance. What some sects do by enlarged and rigid co-operation, others effect by compact and separate unions. The smallness of the assemblies, or the gradations of dependency, put one individual within the immediate ken of another, and thus, if by chance a free thought should be born, there is little hope that it shall live. Take methodism as an illustration: so gigantic and yet so minute: with its band-meetings, its class-meetings, its district assemblies, and its general conference—leaving not a spot where a heretic could hide himself. In such a system there is nothing more nor a name for liberty, from the preacher who is under the brow of his conference to the member who lives in the eye of his class-leader. It is not that such a system creates a terror of expression, from the first it institutes a slavish intellect—and leads to all the vices of rancour, bigotry, hypocrisy, and subservency, to which such an intellect is allied.

It may be said that my own community is being also a sect, it open to similar accusations. I do not say that a



derivation of belief is essential to a sect, but it may possibly attach to it with all the despotism of the most formal creed. If a creed in spirit or expression be necessary to the constitution of a sect, those then are no sect with whom I would desire to hold communion. If all in my own belief or any other, which is great, good, pure, and eternal, inspired by the mind of God and blessed to the heart of man; if all which disseminates virtue: which justifies Providence, which emancipates and glorifies society, goes onward with undeviating pace, if the Kingdom of Jehovah extends, and the throne of Christ is reared, and the temple of righteousness is beautified, then, forgetting ourselves and forgetting our sect, we should rejoice with an honest and generous exaltation. We trust the day will come, when the spirit and the life of Christ, and not the formularies of men, will be the standards of true religion; when we shall have unity instead of divisions, when we shall have charity instead of creeds, when heretic and unbelief shall be lost in the common name of Christian.

## LECTURE XI.

## THE CHRISTIAN VIEW OF MORAL EVIL.

BY REV. JAMES MARTINEAU.

Woe unto them that say, ... LET THE COUNSEL OF THE HOLY ONE OF ISRAEL DRAW NIGH AND COME, THAT WE MAY KNOW IT; WHO HIDE THEM THAT CALL EVIL GOOD, AND GOOD EVIL; THAT PUT BARKNESS FOR SILVER, AND NIGHT FOR DARKNESS; THAT PUT BITTER FOR SWEET, AND SWEET FOR BITTER.—ISAIAH, 58-60.

THE Divine sentiments towards right and wrong every man naturally believes to be a reflection of whatever is most pure and solemn in his own. We cannot be so easily persuaded, that God looks with aversion on dispositions which we revere as good and noble; or that he regards with lax indifference the selfish and criminal passions which awaken our own disgust. We may well suppose, indeed, his scrutiny more searching, his estimate more severely one, his rebuking look more awful, than our self-examination and remorse can fitly represent; but we cannot doubt that our moral emotions, as far as they go, are in sympathy with his; that we know, by our own consciousness, the general direction of his approval and displeasure; and that, in proportion as our perceptions of Duty are rendered clear, our judgment more readily approaches the provision of the Omniscient award. Our own conscience is the window of heaven through which we gaze on God: and, as its colours perpetually change, his aspect changes too: if they are bright and fair, he dwells as in the warm light of a rejoicing love; if they are dark and twisted, he

hides himself in robes of cloud and storm. When you have lost your self-respect, you have never thought yourself an object of divine complacency. In moments fresh from sin, flushed with the shame of an insulted name, when you have broken another resolve, or turned your back upon a noble toil, or succumbed to a mean passion, or lapsed into the sickness of self-indulgence, could you ever turn a clear and open face to God, nor think it terrible to meet His eye? Could you imagine yourself in congeniality with him, when you gave yourself up to the voluble sophistry of self-excuse, and the loose hurry of forgetfulness? Or did you not discern him rather in your own accusing heart, and meet him in the silent anguish of full confession, and find in the recognition of your alienation the first hope of return? To all unperverted minds, the verdict of conscience sounds with a preternatural voice; it is not the humbly talk of their own poor judgment, not an oracle of the sanctuary. There is something of anticipation in our remorse, as well as of retrospect; and we feel that it is not the mere survey of a gloomy past with the slow lamp of our understanding, but a prophetic piercing of the future with the vivid lightning of the skies. Our moral nature, left to itself, intuitively believes that guilt is an estrangement from God,—an unqualified opposition to his will,—a literal service of the enemy; that he abhors it, and will give it no rest till it is driven from his presence, that is, into annihilation; that no part of our mind belongs to him but the pure, and just, and disinterested affections which he fosters; the faithful will which he strengthens; the virtue, often damped, whose smouldering flax he will not quench, and the good resolves, ever frail, whose braver steel he will not break; and that he has no relation but of displeasure, no contact but of resistance, with our selfishness and sin. In the simple faith of the conscience it is no figure of speech to say, that God "is angry with the wicked every day," and is "of purer eyes than to behold iniquity." So long as the natural religion of the

heart is undisturbed, to sin is, in the plainest and most punitive sense, to set up against Heaven, and frustrate its will.

Soon, however, the understanding disturbs the tranquillity of this belief, and constructs a rival creed. The primitive conception of God is acquired, I believe, without reasoning, and emerges from the affections; it is a transcript of our own emotions,—an investiture of them with external personality and infinite magnitude. But a vernacular idea of Deity arises in the intellect, from its reasonings about causation. Curiosity is felt respecting the origin of things; and the order, beauty, and mechanism of external nature, are too conspicuous not to force upon the observation the conviction of a great architect of the universe, from whose designing reason its forces and its laws systematically sprang. Hence the *intellectual conception of God the Creator*, which comes into inevitable collision with the *moral notion of God the holy watch of nature*. For if the system of creation is the production of his Omnipotence; if he has constituted human nature as it is, and placed it in the scene whereon it acts; if the arrangements by which happiness is allotted, and character is formed, are the continuance of his thought and the work of his hand, then the sufferings and the guilt of every being were objects of his original contemplation, and the productions of his own design. The deed of crime must, in this case, be as much an integral part of his Providence as the efforts and sacrifices of virtue; and the monsters of licentiousness and tyranny, whose images deform the scenery of history, are no less truly his appointed instruments than the martyr and the sage. And though we reason ourselves that he does not make choice of evil in his government, for its own sake, but only for ultimate ends worthy of his perfections, still we can no longer see how he can truly hate that which he employs for the production of good. That which is his chosen instrument cannot be sincerely regarded as his everlasting enemy; and only figuratively can he be said to

republicate a power which he continually wields. There must be *some stage* in which it appears, in the eye of Omniscience, to be eligible; some point of view at which its horrors vanish; and where the moral distinctions, which we feel ourselves impelled to venerate, disappear from the regards of God.

Hence, then, is a fearful contradiction between the religion of conscience and the religion of the understanding: the one pronouncing evil to be the antagonist, the other to be the agent, of the divine will. In every age has this difficulty had a heavy weight upon the human heart; in every age has it pointed the sarcasm of the blasphemer; mingled an occasional sadness with the hopes of benevolence; and tinged the devotion of the thoughtful with a somewhat melancholy trust. The whole history of speculative religion is one prolonged effort of the human mind to destroy this contradictory system after system has been born in the struggle to cast the oppression off; with what result, it will be my object at present to explain. The question which we have to consider is this: "How should a Christian think of the origin and existence of evil?" I propose to advert, first, to the speculative; secondly, to the scriptural; thirdly, to the moral relations of the subject; to inquire what relief we can obtain from philosophical schemes, from biblical doctrine, and from practical Christianity.

I. Notwithstanding the ingenuity of philosophers in varying the form and language of their systems, there can be but two solutions offered to the great problem respecting evil. The benevolence of the Creator may be vindicated, by denying that he is the author of evil; or, by pronouncing it his over-ruled, unavoidably introduced, far the production of greater good.

(I.) In Greece, the germs of whose people anticipated most of the great ideas which have since occupied the world, we find the first clear trace of the doctrine of two original

causes, one good, the other evil, of the order and disorder of the universe.\* Amid the almost universal pantheism, which gave the sanction of philosophy to a corrupting mythology, one or two great thinkers seized on the true conception of an intelligent, eternal, infinite Mind; not mixed up in indissoluble oneness with the universe, like the principle of life with an animal or vegetable organism, but wholly external to matter, capable of acting objectively upon it, of moulding it into form, of assigning to it laws, of disposing it into uniform arrangements, and subordinating it to the production of beauty, the reception of life and soul, and the ends of benevolence. With the absolute perfection, intellectual and moral, of the creative spirit, there was nothing to interfere: he called into existence only what is good,—light, life, happiness, wisdom, harmony, virtue. All else was to be ascribed to the imperfect materials from which the universe was constructed. Of these he was not supposed to be the author; no conception was entertained of creation out of nothing by the volition of the divine and solitary Spirit. Co-eternally with him, matter was thought to have existed, inert, and dark and formless,—the boundless and unworked quarry, whence the great Artist of earth and skies moulded the orbs of heaven, and furnished his mansions of space with magnificence and beauty. The materials thus provided to his hand, did not afford unlimited facilities for the execution of his good designs: they had the inherent and obstinate properties of all matter, of which skill might variously avail itself, but which Omnipotence could not utterly subdue. They for ever dragged down every being towards the passiveness and chaos of the primeval state, and established a universal gravitation towards nonentity. Hence a ceaseless tendency in all things to descend from the higher to the lower states of existence, and to slip from the divine into the inert: on the soul of man were forces impelling it into the grosser animal life; in

\* See Note A.

the animal life, a propensity towards disease and death; and, in lifeless organisms, a law of corruption and return to atoms. In this unconquerable sluggishness of matter, and not in the intention of the Creator, was to be found the source of all evil, natural and moral. The supreme Spirit had called into being whatever is fair and blessed and pure; and that there is no more good, was due to the resistance which his materials offered to his will, and which had made his execution finite, while his desires were infinite.

In this system, all faults and imperfections are attributed to the opposition of a passive and evil principle, co-existent with the First Cause, and restraining him within certain limits in working out the problem of creation. The essential idea of the scheme is, that the actual frame of the universe is the result of a struggle between two conflicting energies, both primitive and eternal, to the one of which is to be ascribed all that is good, to the other whatever is evil. Make then a slight and superficial change in this scheme; throw aside its abstract and philosophical dress, *personify* this impracticable material principle which stands in the way of the Creator's glorious designs, call it, instead of inert, obstinate; instead of the residence of death, the destroyer of life; instead of a weight on the Divinity, a force against him; in short, treat it, not as negative, but as positive, not as impetuous to light, but as the power of darkness, not as a physical obstruction, but as in real antipathy to God; and by such assumption of personality, this hostile energy becomes an active principle of evil, a malignant and antagonist God, busy in frustrating the purposes of Providential goodness, and spreading ruin, disorder, and guilt over the fair regions of nature and the soul.

This doctrine of a good and evil spirit, engaged in perpetual conflict on the theatre of the universe, is then only the popular and mystical form of the philosophical speculations on matter and Deity which I have described. It is commonly

known under the name of the Manichean heresy. It was from very early times the characteristic idea of the Persian theology; and thence, as I shall show, by admixture with Judaism, has given rise to the prevailing belief in a Devil.

To this scheme, considered as a metaphysical theory of the divine perfections, and a solution of the perplexities respecting natural and moral evil, objections of insurmountable force will occur to every one. It preserves the infinite benevolence by sacrificing the omnipotence of God. It sets up a rival to his government, from whose malignity he can only imperfectly protect us; so that his Providence becomes precarious, and we feel ourselves the sport of a conflict the most awful, beset by pure, unmitigated, indestructible evils, which, however beaten off in the end, must win against us many a dreadful success. A believer in this doctrine may indeed presume, that a Being, omniscient and benign as God, would never have called a world into existence unless assured, by his foreknowledge, that he could prevailingly protect it from the powers which obstructed him, and render life to every creature as it a blessing on the whole. Under any other conditions, his goodness would have restrained him from the act of creation. Still the blessed Ruler wags his works under constant check; and all limitations on his power must be proportionate deductions from our peace. This theory, then, fails to afford us the desired relief. It does not recognize the God of our conscience with the God of our understanding: it simply adheres to the former, and rejects the latter; assuring us that, as our secret hearts had said, the great Father hates evil as his enemy; not, as our logic had insinuated, weds it as his instrument.

(2.) We turn, then, to the second attempt to extricate our thoughts from this perplexity, which is found, in a consistent form, only in the system of philosophical necessity. This scheme assumes the absolute, unlimited monarchy of God; represents him as originally alone, and without either

universe or materials for its construction; teaches that he willed all things into existence; conceiving the plan, speaking the word, beholding the birth, sustaining the order, decreeing the means, ordaining the end. The compass of his design is all-embracing; all causes and effects, all enjoyment and misery, all excellence and guilt, lie within its circuit; nor can "there be evil in a city," or in a world, "and the Lord hath not done it." We are assured, that in fact it is impossible to distribute to separate nations the blessing and the curse which appear to mingle in creation; for the same law which brings the one introduces the other; the tempest which blasts the field and flock purifies the air of pestilence; the necessities of the body are the incentives of labour and the stimulants of the mind; and industry and art, commerce and wealth, the whole structure even of society and civilization, rest on the ultimate basis of hunger. Nor is it possible to separate suffering, even in conception, from a scene in which great virtues are to be born, and the diviner forms of character to be trained. Evil is *the resistance*, by its conquest over which moral force can alone be measured and manifested; without which, conscience and fidelity would have no field of victory, benevolence no place for glorious toil, faith and wisdom no consciousness of power. In the sickly selections of pleasure, are seen the health and simplicity of holiness; and the temptations of selfishness, we discern and venerate the spirit of self-oblivious love; beneath the arena of tyranny, and amid examples of hypocrisy, we learn how calm the front of uprightness, and how noble the magnanimity of truth. Pain is never *the whole* of suffering; which spreads its moral influence beyond itself and its hour, and administers some of our noblest discipline. The anguish of one human being is usually the prey of many; even the guilt of one may be the forbearance, the warning, the affectionate and healing grief, of many. Scarcely can any ill be found that is not so linked with visible benefits, so entangled with arrangements in which

we recognize indisputable blessings, that one only author can be assigned to all; if he has had foresight of any thing, he must have had fore-sight of all; if he has devised a part, he must have devised the whole. Even such free-will as the human mind possesses is a power of his own deliberate bestowal; and the whole extent of its disastrous mistakes, its deluded estimates, its degrading preferences, its faithless abuse of liberty, must be considered as ordained and introduced by him for some ultimate and transcendent good. At present, and for a long future yet, the sufferings are great which sin must entail upon all who come within its range; but even its saddest victim is yet a child of God, and must at last (benevolence requires no less) be enabled to pronounce his existence a boon. And hence we must believe the penalties of guilt to be remedial: subduing the stubborn soul, and leading it back to seek its peace in God; working out their own remission, because their victim's restoration; till the wall of despair shall be softened into the sob of repentance, and this into the sigh of self-distrustful hope; falling into the silence of deep resolve; leading to the energy of a new fidelity, warmed by the refreshment of a returning love, and bursting at length into grateful chorus with the song of the redeemed.

The essential idea of this system evidently is, that evil is a result of God's will, his temporary instrument for everlasting ends. This characteristic remaining, it is wholly unimportant whether he is regarded as producing it immediately or mediately; distributively or collectively; by detailed volitions of his own, or by the agency of a being commissioned to this department of his government. As the blessings, scattered by the activity of good minds of every order in the universe, are no less his, than if there were no creature but himself to shed them forth, so the woes, which any dependent spirits of evil may diffuse, belong as truly to his providence, as if they were the personal inflictions of his will. Hence

the doctrine of wicked angels, and of a created Prince of darkness, is the very same with the system which I have just described; simply, its popular and mythological form, gathering up the abstract conception of evil into a person; but still representing it, in this living dress, as a creature intentionally formed by the Omniscient and predetermining God. I regard the belief in the existence of Satan, not as opposed to the prevailing Unitarian views of Providence, but, *so far as it is consistently held*, as in all essential particulars, identical with them. Its relation to the character of God is the same; and the sole difference between the two is in the question of personality; a question of great consequence, when the existence of a *divine* person, as the Holy Spirit, is suspended on the decision; but of small moment when, as in this case, a mere *creature* more or less is to be given to the invisible world. What does it matter to us whether there be any, or a myriad, of interposing agents between the ills that touch us and our God? Surely it is with the *effects*, with the evils themselves,—that our practice and duty are concerned, and about their *original cause* that our faith is anxious; and, on both these points, the Necessarian and the Satanic schemes seem to be agreed. Both refer our thoughts back to a time when no evil existed, and say that none could have come into existence, had the creative activity of God never been exercised. Both make the same estimate of the actual sins and sorrows and temptations which are in contact with our life; and whichever view be adopted, these are neither increased nor diminished, their complexion is neither brightened nor darkened, their imminence and their treatment continue the same. They come out of the dark upon us; and no more concern us till they strike upon our experience, than a line of light affects us, till its end impinges on our eye. Hence I cannot feel much interest in the mere question respecting the existence of a Devil; and must be excused for treating it as only an insignificant part of a subject vast and terrible.

Does, then, this second system resolve our difficulties, and altogether harmonize the perfections of God? Alas! the success is no greater than before. Why this vicarious method of producing a happy universe? Evil is called into being, as an instrument of good, in this world; and then is annihilated, by the addition of more evil, in another. If it be the great object of Providence to get rid of suffering and sin, if his government be an educative discipline for purifying the guilt, illuminating the ignorance, and destroying the misery of souls, must we not ask, why then were these things created? If God's providence be thus *against* them, why was it *ever* for them? And how are we to think of those agencies, as the work of his own hands, on which his whole administration is said to be aggressive? No answer can be given, except that the temporary operation of natural and moral evil was unavoidable,—the essential and only means of accomplishing results which all admit to be beneficent, especially the development and progress of mind, and the probationary discipline of character. It may be so; but, in this explanation, the benignity of God is again saved at the expense of his Omnipotence. If no other means were open to him than those which he has actually employed, his range of possibilities was mysteriously limited, his choice incomprehensibly narrowed; and he solved the problem of Creation under some restraining conditions. And on theory, which leaves this shadow of necessity lingering behind the throne of God, justifies its pretensions as the vindicator of his Power.

Scarcely does this system seem to be reconcilable with the Holiness of God. I confess myself unable to understand how a Being, who is held to be the prime cause of all the moral evil which the universe contains, can be regarded as morally perfect; or to imagine, if this be consistent with infinite purity, what phenomena would be inconsistent. It is not enough to say, that the evil is produced, by no means for its

own sake, but for ultimate good. Often, at least, does a human being do wrong on no other pretext; and the very plea admits, that God subordinates moral distinctions to some other good, and esteems some foreign benefit worth purchasing by the deed of sin. Is it urged, that the foreknowledge and infallible certainty of the Divine mind justify this, and that it is only because man wants the requisite discernment, that he is forbidden in his blindness to do evil, that good may come? Then it would seem that moral distinctions are intended only for the ignorant; and are, to an immeasurable extent, delusions of intellectual infancy, designed to vanish, or undergo unimaginable transformations, as our mental vision is enlarged. And if this be so, none of our ideas of obligation are applicable to God, and he passes beyond the range of our moral apprehension, reverence, and love. No; the language of pity becomes unmeaning, and the sanctity of religion is in danger of utter ruin, unless the divine sentiments of right and wrong are perceived to be akin to our own, recognising the same immutable differences, and spontaneously observing the same laws. Not even can we admit, that he has created, and could change, the relations of right and wrong; that his will is the source of obligations, and by a command could make into a binding duty that which in itself is sin. Moral excellence is an creature of mere power, which he has created; for he is, and ever was, excellent himself, rendered venerable by intrinsic and unoriginated perfections; by holy sentiments, whose outward action, indeed, must be dated from the beginning of created things, but whose consciousness has been from everlasting. I dare not think, that the Providence of God largely consists in doing that, which would be guilt in man.

From this scheme then, not less than from the former, we fail to obtain satisfaction. It does not reconcile the facts of the conscience with the faith of the understanding; but simply prefers the latter, to the injury of the former, compromising

God's abhorrence of evil; and, for the sake of maintaining his sovereignty, making it his instrument. In fine, philosophy must make confession of its ignorance, and talk no more so exceedingly proudly. This question of ages is too much for all its subtlety. Let us pass on to the doctrinal search of Scripture. Does it either reveal any new view of our subject, or determine our choice to either of the schemes we have reviewed?

II. Trinitarian theologians maintain, that the Bible reveals to us the existence of a created spirit of evil, with a host of subordinate associates in guilt; who seduced our first parents, and so introduced both the spiritual depravity and the mortality of our race; who has since tormented the bodies of men with divers diseases, afflicted their minds with some species of insanity, and corrupted their conscience with every variety of horrible and guilty thought; and who especially assailed the person, and withstood the kingdom of Christ, knowing that the Messiah's power would finally overthrow his own. In opposition to this statement, I submit, that in neither the Messianic nor the Christian dispensation have we any revelation of the existence of such a being, or any doctrinal solution of the problem respecting the origin of evil. Let me not, however, be supposed to say, that no such beings as Satan, the fallen Angels, and demons, are named in Scripture. I do not pretend to fritter all these away into personifications and figures of speech. I have no doubt that some of the sacred authors believed in the real existence and agency of such beings; I have just as little doubt that others did not; and that the Hebrew conceptions on this subject underwent a regular development in the course of their history, no part of them having any origin in supernatural revelation, but the whole being either the result of natural speculation or a gift from foreign tribes. This will be thought very shocking by those who, mistaking the plenary inspiration of the Bible, cannot imagine that it contains any traces

of the notions and sentiments of its various times; and cannot think of admitting even an accidental allusion that is not an infallible oracle. But until it can be shown, that a person inspired is unable to form an opinion of his own; that he has no ideas from education and position, no prepossessions in common with his age; that, from Moses to the John of Patmos, every scriptural author is an unerring authority, not merely in faith and morals, but in cosmogony and physics, in geology and astronomy, in natural history, physiology, metaphysics and medicine; we may venture to maintain, on the ground of historical evidence, that the belief in witchcraft and charms, in snakes and devils with Chaldee names, in demoniacal possession and Satanic indications, may be no result of revelation, but one of the natural traces of time and locality with which the Scriptures abound. There prevails, however, great misapprehension respecting the ideas of the Scripture writers on these subjects; and especially, the conception of a Devil is thought to pervade the whole Bible in one unvarying form. With a view to rectify this mistake, I will briefly notice the chief passages of the Hebrew and Greek Scriptures relating to this topic, advertent, in succession, to the history of the fall; to the growth of the belief both in Satan and exorcism, and to the temptation of Christ.

(1.) It is impossible to conceive of a greater outrage upon an author's meaning, than is the common representation of the Fall, on the account of that event in the Book of Genesis. Not a trace, even of the faintest kind, does the original narrative contain of all that theologians tell us respecting the tempter, the curse, the recovery. The tempter was not an evil spirit, but a serpent, to whose natural and instinctive cunning, and not to any diabolical instigation, the seducing thought is attributed: for "The serpent," it is said, "was more subtle than all the beasts of the field."\* The writer,

\* Gen. iii. 1.

wisely, had not apparently any idea of such a being as Satan; for, throughout his five books, there is not a word in allusion to such a personage, though he records, I believe, more temptations, more trials of faith and duty, which it is thought the office of the evil one to administer, than all the rest of the Scriptures together. It is nothing to the purpose to say that, without preternatural possession, it is absurd to suppose that the serpent could speak, and become an agent in the transaction at all; for, on any view of the passage, the author ascribes to the creature the power both of speech and of walking: and to imagine that the Devil would betray himself by assuming so improbable a vehicle, and making a dumb reptile talk, is surely little consonant with the character of so subtle a diplomatist. The record affirms that, by way of punishment, the serpent was reduced to the reptile state, and compelled to crawl instead of walk;† and an author, whose imagination had recoiled itself to this correction, would feel no additional improbability in supposing the same occasion to have condemned the animal to silence. This has always been the interpretation of those Hebrew writers, who have received the account as literal history. Josephus, a man of learning and a great statesman, states, that "all animals at that period partook of the gift of speech with man;" that "the serpent loved on familiar terms with Adam and his wife;" and "from a malicious intention of his own, persuaded the woman to taste of the tree of knowledge;" that, in consequence, "God deprived the creature of speech and of the use of his feet."‡ If the account be considered as historical, this is its plain meaning; and the insertion in it of a powerful malignant spirit, is a mere fiction of later times. §

\* Gen. iii. 1, 13.

† Lev. xvi. 15, 16.

‡ The history of this notable event is given in the Apocryphal book of the Wisdom of Solomon, li. 24, "Nevertheless, through envy at the Devil, came





God intended they should so understand them."\* If, then, this prophetic signification escaped the persons to whom the announcement was made, and the nation before whose eye it lay for ages, and the Christ himself of whom it spoke, and the Evangelists and Apostles who proclaimed him to the world, our doubt of its reality can scarcely be deemed unwarrantable.

But it is, I believe, a misconception of the author, to treat this passage as a piece of history. Neither Moses, nor any other scriptural writer, professes to have been miraculously instructed in the events of the antediluvian world; and if they make no such pretension themselves, it is altogether gratuitous in us to make it for them. The slightest consideration must convince us, that all *natural* sources of information respecting so primitive a period must have ceased to exist, at least in any reliable form; and the earliest portions of the book of Genesis have every characteristic of that beautiful mythical composition, which is the first fruit of the literary activity of every simple-hearted nation, and which mingles together in one texture, tradition, fact, speculation, poetical conception, and moral truth. In this instance, the writer seems to have been oppressed by the feeling, that human peace and tranquillity were disturbed by the restless aspirations and inquisitive ambition of the mind. If man could not be content to take the good which God has spread within his easy reach, and not permit himself to pry into the possibilities of having more, his life might be spent as in a garden of the Lord, in the warmth of sunny days, and the light sleep of unhampered nights. But he cannot repress his insatiable curiosity, his passion for the fruits of knowledge and dignity, of which Providence has given him the idea, but which have been set beyond his permitted reach, and

\* Dr. T. Stewart's *Ess. Discourses on Tragedy*, p. 26. As quoted in Mr. Witherspoon's *Paraphrase on the Genesis*.

his thirst of his nature he resolves at all hazards to indulge; this godlike aspiration, imprisoned in a frame to which it is unaccustomed, chafes against his quiet, and abbreviates his days. Hence proceed the struggle and the toil of life; the thistle and the thorn, which he gathers from a soil that might have yielded only flowers; hence, children are we all of care and sorrow; hence, by the sweat of the hardy brow we must live, and soon fret down existence into dust; not however, without our victory after all, for we subjugate the earth, and reign thereon.

Observe too, that Satan rules the woman; and the woman has a heel upon the serpent:—the last seduced is placed the highest, and the first corrupter sinks into a reptile. Our temptations are *below* us, and having once detected them, we are to rule them ever after. Once let the knowledge of good and evil be tasted, and the primitive equality of things, which put man and beast upon a level, is destroyed; all beings fall into the ranks of a moral gradation; and though none that have free will may escape a fall, he that is last to yield shall be the first to reign.

(2.) Neither then in the original account, nor in the scanty subsequent notices of the transgression in Eden, is there any disclosure of a Satanic existence. Let us rapidly follow down the course of Hebrew literature, and search in it for the first and successive indications of this belief. I have stated that the books of Moses are destitute of all trace of such a conception; nor can any thing at all corresponding to the popular idea of the Devil, be found in any part of the Old Testament. The name itself never once occurs; and it would be a great mistake to identify the Satan of the Hebrew Scriptures, with the Devil of the Greek.\* The Satan of the former has a very uncertain personality. The name

\* See Note B.

rather denotes an office, which any agent of Providence might be appointed to fill, than a definite individual being. Any person, performing the function of an accuser, or who prepares matter for accusation, by seducing men into evil,—any one acting the part of an adversary to another,—is called Satan. Thus David is called Satan to the Philistines; a certain captain named Rezon was Satan to Israel; the angel of Jehovah was Satan to Balaam; and, nay, even Paul uses this singular expression, "Hymeneus and Alexander, I have delivered to Satan" (for what purpose, do you suppose), "*that they may be taught not to blaspheme.*"<sup>†</sup> No doubt this idea, at first vague and indefinite, gradually became individualized, and that which had been an appellative, passed into a proper name, yet without ever wholly losing its generic character. At the commencement of the book of Job occurs its most distinct and definite use. It is there applied, not to a fallen Spirit, not to a repudiated subject of the celestial state, but to an angel near the throne, to a recognized minister of the Supreme Power, who appears in the courts above among "the Sons of God." He is represented as a general inspector and public prosecutor of the Divine government over

<sup>†</sup> 2 Tim. ii. 26.

<sup>‡</sup> Num. xx. 32.

<sup>§</sup> 1 Chron. xxi. 15.

<sup>¶</sup> 1 Tim. i. 20.

<sup>††</sup> [צד] is often used, in an equal Hebraic form, as in Job xxxv. 4; 2 Sam. xix. 22; 1 Reg. x. 4; xl. 14, ver. 23.—in equal, post-cantem; Baby-  
lonians, angelus militis, sive ducis, qui vocat (regis) Sathan vocatur. Ps. cv. 6;  
Zech. ii. 1, 2; 1 Chron. xxi. 15. (2) in a more proper sense, sicut in  
ceteris scripturis. Hebr. i. 6, v. 17.—24. *Scripturae Sacrae Lexicon*.

In Ps. lxxv. and Zach. iii. 1, 2, there is to be seen no reason to suppose that the word is used in a proper sense. The sense of the two passages is best rendered, "Let compass round at my right hand"—and an explanation of the latter, a strikingly handsome one, the following one from Dr. Hays:—"It appears in my mind probable, that by Satan, in the Apocrypha, is here meant the adversarial of the Jewish nation, as a body, or perhaps some living person among them, Symbolic to mean, who continually opposed the rebuilding of the temple, and of course the continuance of the service of the sanctuary, by the establishment of Jewish as the centre of the sacredness, &c.—See *Strabo's* *Major Prophets*, 141, 150.

man; going to and fro over the earth, by heavenly commission, to execute the probationary part of the great Ruler's will, and administer to mankind the severities which test their faith. In the earlier Hebrew writings, this office is said to be filled by no subordinate instrument: it is Jehovah himself who is represented as trying his servants,—as the personal cause of their afflictions, and author of their temptations. I recently heard the following passage from the first book of Chronicles adduced in proof of the agency of Satan in seducing men from their allegiance to God. "And Satan stood up against Israel, and provoked David to number Israel."<sup>†</sup> Now it so happens, that this same event is recorded also in the much more ancient books of Samuel, where it is thus introduced. "And again the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel, and He moved David against them to say, 'Go, number Israel and Judah!'"<sup>‡</sup> What can more clearly mark the natural progress of opinion on this point? As the ideas of God became more elevated and refined, it was felt to be scarcely compatible with his perfections to seduce his children into violation of the duties he himself required: and the imagination at least, if not the understanding, was relieved by assigning that office, of hardening the heart and tempting the will, (which originally had been left with Jehovah himself,) to some interposing being, who might separate between God and guilt.

When we open the Apocrypha of the Old Testament, we perceive a complete change in this class of ideas. Even the latest written of the canonical books introduce us to several angelic beings, unknown to the earlier Scriptures,—as the Michael and Gabriel of Daniel. But in addition to these, we find in the Jewish Apocrypha, for the first time, the matured conception of the Prince of evil; who is therefore

<sup>†</sup> 1 Chron. xxi. 1.

<sup>‡</sup> 2 Sam. xxi. 1.

<sup>§</sup> 2 Sam. vi. 20, 21, &c.

represented in the scarcely consistent relations of creature and enemy of the Most High; and it is in this form that the notion presents itself to us in the New Testament writings. Now what is the inference from these facts? In the books of the ancient dispensation, this malignant Spirit does not yet appear: in the writings of the new dispensation, he is mentioned,—not as a novelty of revelation, but as long familiar to the mind of every reader. The origin then of the belief in his existence, must be sought between the close of the Hebrew inspiration and the opening of the Christian. And what had happened in this interval? The Jewish people had been in long and intimate relation with Persia: connected with it by political ties, and united by the sympathies of manumissions. The characteristic features of the Persian religion were,—its doctrine of a Spirit of Evil in perpetual enmity to the Supreme Good;—and its representation of a heavenly hierarchy, whose spirits were ranged in ranks of angels and archangels, and received their separate names. These ideas then naturally passed into the Jewish mind, with little change; except that the Evil Spirit was reduced to a somewhat lower station, in obedience to the stern Mosiac principle, of the absolute Monarchy of God.\*

\* On reading the account of the Jews, it is difficult to meet with another change, in which some terms are to be found in all their subsequent writings, and which correspond to the various stages of the New Testament. It is then stated by Dr. H. P. Simon, "When these Jews who rejected the Persian religion as a wicked and ungodly worship passed into the Jewish faith, the character which was traditional to the Hebrew priesthood, which confined to the people as far as it might be good and worthy of humanity, and he was regarded as a more theocratical form of the same, and the God of Israel familiar. The notion of the Jewish angels existing was created in the period of the Messiah; it was natural that the Satan should be conceived of as the principal opponent of the Messiah." "Accordingly," adds this writer, "in the New Testament, the Jews, as the Messiah came, were treated that of Satan as the adversary of his person and work."<sup>1</sup> We may well object to the suggested

<sup>1</sup> Hist. Rel. Jew. Kilm. Soc. p. 111.

And as these notions became perfectly engrafted on the national faith of Israel, the founders of Christianity were educated to them: and they were permitted to appear by incidental allusion, and in conformity with the general sentiments of the country and the age, in the pages of history and correspondence, which the evangelists and apostles have left. Nor can I perceive, either how it can be proved, or why it should be desired, that God would annihilate from the understanding of his inspired servants, all the harmless ideas, foreign to their mission, which constituted the common stock of thought at the time, and gave them points of necessary sympathy and intellectual contact with the spirit of their generation. How slight the sanction which they give to some, at least, of these mythological imaginations, may be estimated by a single fact. The whole theory respecting fallen angels rests upon two verses,\* each in one of the most doubtful of the New Testament writings: indeed the texts can scarcely be regarded as constituting two independent authorities; for the latter is little else than a repetition of the former, occurring in a portion of the second epistle of Peter, which, strangely enough, contains the sentiments and even the language of a large part of the epistle of Jude. When such evidence as this is brought forward, as conclusive and infallible, I would respectfully ask our opponents, whether they seriously believe, on the authority of the same epistle, that Michael the archangel disputed with the Devil about the body of Moses? and as this is nowhere else mentioned, whether an express and personal revelation of the fact was imparted to St. Jude? If so, consistency would require them to maintain, that this

generalization competent to be put to work, and therefore in proof of the author's particular application of it: and especially we must regard as unaccountable an application by the theory of change to the fact of a similar application, which is not itself once stated, will wholly neglect the suggestion which the passage here gives.

\* Jude, 2 Pet. 2: 4.

is one of the essential doctrines of the Gospel: for how much soever our natural and corrupt reason might be tempted to think the circumstance trivial, if true, it cannot really be otherwise than fundamental, if privately and explicitly revealed.\*

From the foregoing remarks, the general principles, in conformity with which I would treat the question of demoniacal possessions, will be so evident, that it will be unnecessary to enter into any details. The precise relation to each other of the various orders of evil spirits in which the Jews believed, it is not possible to define. It is certain, however, that they made a distinction, which our common translation of the Scriptures has improperly obliterated, between demons and devils. The former were thought to be of only human rank, the souls of the wicked dead: and it was these only that were supposed to possess and afflict the bodies of the living. The latter were guilty angels, and had no agency assigned to them on earth, being kept in duress within the prisons of the unseen world. There was therefore the same difference between demons and devils, as with us between ghosts and fiends. Of the former, Beelzebub was considered as the chief; of the latter, Satan: and whether these beings were regarded as standing in any definite relation to each other, is uncertain; probably the Devil, as the Prince of darkness, was believed to be the ruler of all the powers of evil, whether human or angelic. Unlike his incarcerated companions, Satan was permitted to be at large, and to practise his arts against mankind: all gentile kingdoms being absolutely his; and even the chosen people not protected wholly from his malignity, at least until the Messiah's reign, which was to commence with his dejectionment. It may be observed by any careful reader of the gospels, that the evils of which he was

held to be the author, are not the same that are ascribed to Beelzebub and his demons. Satan, and he only, was the moral reducer: and the physical calamities proceeding from him were only natural and intelligible diseases, regular enough to fall under the cognizance of science. The demons had, on the contrary, no concern with the conscience; and concerned only the irregular and apparently preternatural maladies, which science deserted and left to the tender mercies of superstition;—of which epilepsy and insanity are the most remarkable examples.

Of this system of notions the evangelists were doubtless possessed. But that they held them on the tenure of unerring inspiration can by no means be shown. On the contrary, the natural causes which produced them can be so clearly detected in the prevalent sentiments of their age and country, that not the slightest pretext remains for referring them to express revelation. So far from requiring a miracle to evince these conceptions, we must admit, that nothing less than a miracle could have excluded them, familiar as they had been to the national mind from the time of its intercourse with Persia. Had the founders of Christianity never received any extraordinary mission, they would have entertained the conception of demoniacal possession; and its hold upon their thoughts must therefore be regarded as the result of natural prepossession, not of supernatural communication. A notion whose human origin can be distinctly traced, — which was shared by un-inspired persons, and existed in the authors of our religion in their un-inspired years, — has no claim to be considered as a part of Christianity, and is as open to doubt and examination as any other opinion of antiquity. To affirm that, were it not true, God must have blotted it from the mind of his messengers, is not only to overbear evidence with assertion, but to decide dogmatically on the obligations of Deity, and, with infinite presumption, to dictate the fit measure of his gifts. Till it can be shown,

\* See Note C.



less wrestling with conscience on its throne. Whenever therefore the seductive assaults of Satan are recorded, the real fact described is this; that internal moral conflicts have been going on, and deluding thoughts have been passing, like the shadow of a dark Spirit, across the pure soul. And in such case, the first and the only thing of which our consciousness can be aware, is, the occurrence of these thoughts. To their antecedent source, our testimony cannot reach; and whether they are precipitated on us by some enemy from without, or are of spontaneous origin within our own minds, is a point accessible indeed to speculation, but beyond the contact of experience. Till they enter our nature, and so become a part of our personality, they are nothing and nowhere: and when they enter and we feel their torment, they are ours and no other being's. No one ever sees, hears, or feels, the Devil: he *perceives* simply the intrusion of sinful ideas, and *supposes* them to be the result of diabolic power. He experiences the temptation in reality; and refers it to the tempter in idea. And were this not true of Christ, as of ourselves, it would be false to say, that he "was tempted in all points as we are." The temptation of our Lord then, stripped of the dress which the historians have thrown around the central facts, was the natural struggle, by which he exchanged the imperfect, and local, and ambitious conceptions of the Messiah, which his cottage training in Nazareth had imparted,—for that pure, and self-sacrificing, and comprehensive interpretation of the office, which broke upon his solitude so awfully. That he learned, at Mary's knees, to cherish the common hope of his nation, in the form under which it prevailed among the peasantry, appears as half-doubtful, as that he caught the language of his native fields. Yet it is certain that this early vision passed away; and that when he himself was called to fill the appointed office, he acted out a conception quite opposite to the dreams imparted to his childhood. Once he had moved on the widening glory

of Judas; but he ended with announcing the prospect of his fall. Once he had exulted in the dignity and power of the coming messenger, who should break the oppression of his people, and set forth anew the triumph of their ancient Providence: he declared himself at length the meek prophet of penury, and woe and sorrow. Once he had thought of what Jerusalem would be, when the temple should be the centre of the world's homage, and multitudes of all nations should throng its pavement, and its incense should rise in the pride of freedom, and its hymn spring upward on the wing of happy melody: but ere his work of life was finished, he taught a lowlier yet sublimer expectation, not of the compression of the world into the Hebrew worship,—but of the diffusion of that worship to cover the world; and revealed that secret shrine in every human heart, where emotions, purer than incense, may burn for ever, and tones sweeter than music be for ever breathed. This revolution of sentiment, this conflict, by which new thoughts of inspiration expelled the old ones inherited from education and reputed prophecy, constituted the temptation in the wilderness; nor was it possible that ideas the most divine, should thus burst the shell of custom and tradition, without a convulsion truly terrible. It would be easy, were it not irrelevant, to show how this hidden colloquy between the national prepossessions and the personal intuitions of our Lord's mind, would give rise to the separate scenes of which the temptation is said to have been composed. Possibly, however, the history, as it stands, is not the record of a single event, by which a fixed date can be assigned in his ministry: more probably, it gathers into one view a series of mental conflicts, distracted over his whole public life; the struggles between the accidental and the essential portions of his nature; between the national and the human; between an historical imagination trained amid the gorgeousness of pro-

piety, and a heavenly conscience dwelling with the simplicity of God; between the conventional and the spiritual, between, in short, the superinduced faith contracted from time and place, and the inherent faith of a soul divine and free.

In the preceding notions of Scripture, no sanction is given to the interpretations, if such there be, which resolve Satan into a personification, treat the temptation as a vision or an allegory, and identify the demonic phraseology with the common language of pathological description. I believe, indeed, that, wherever the Devil and his agency are named, the only *real fact* denoted is, the occurrence to some one of a moral temptation: and that, wherever demons are said to have been cast out, the only *historical event* described is, the cure of some physical or mental disease. But it appears to me absurd to deny, that the writers meant more than this; to doubt that they held the popular theory of such facts, and blended it naturally with their record; that they were sincerely under the influence of the existing system of demonology, and referred the seductions of sin to the personal activity of the malignant Spirit. Nowhere, however, do they pretend to set forth these ideas as gifts of preternatural revelation, but simply take them up as part of the common media of thought belonging to the age, and use them as the incidental colouring to their narrative of facts. In different parts of the Hebrew Scriptures, as we have seen, very different, and even inconsistent notions respecting the origin of evil prevail: the conception of a powerful diabolic agent underwent a regular and natural development: and the system of pneumatology apparent in the Greek Scriptures is traceable to a foreign origin in an unscriptural age. Hence we must conclude, that respecting the origin of evil, nothing doctrinal is specially revealed; that even in Palestine, the human mind has been left to grapple with this great problem

by its own natural forces; and that we rise from the page of Scripture, as from the speculations of wisdom and genius, with the difficulty yet unsolved.

By no means, then, can we attain to any theoretical certainty, or logical consistency of belief, on this great topic. Revelation is silent, and philosophy perplexed; and the controversy between the Religion of Conscience and the Religion of the Understanding, is undecided still. Let the framers of systems say what they will, the thing is deeper than our minds, and what can we know? Nothing remains, but to abandon hopelessly the speculative point of view, and treat the matter as an object, not of knowledge, but of trust; to regard it as a question to be decided by our hearings on duty, rather than its materials for debate. Whenever the means of attaining to objective truth do not exist we can but rest in those views of things which most entirely accord with our best nature. If we cannot tell what is true of God, we yet may judge what is fittest for ourselves, what state of mind, what modes of thought, prepare us best for the work of life; what mental representation of existence most nobly sustains those fundamental moral convictions, which it is the end of Christianity to fix in our inquiring faith and constant practice. To this arbitration we must submit our present doubts respecting the source of evil; and, while waiting to reach the realities of reason denied us now, accept, as our best truth, the conceptions which are most just to our moral nature and relations.

III. Let us then, for final decision, consult the practical spirit of Christianity, and ascertain to what view of the origin of sin it awards the preference. Is it well, for the consciences and characters of men, to consider God,—either directly or through his dependant Satan,—either by his general laws, or by vitiating the constitution of our first parents, as the primary source of moral evil? or, on the contrary, to regard it as, in no sense whatever, willed by the



Supreme Mind, and absolutely inimical to his Providence) Are we most in harmony with the characteristic spirit of the gospel, when we call sin his instrument, or when we call it his enemy? For myself, I can never sit at the feet of Jesus, and yield up a reverential heart to his great lessons, without casting myself on the persuasion, that God and evil are everlasting foes; that never, and for no end, did he create it; that his will is utterly against it, nor ever touches it, but with annihilating force. Any other view appears to be injurious to the characteristic sentiments, and at variance with the distinguishing genius, of Christian morality.

(1.) Christianity is distinguished by the profound sentiment of *individual responsibility* which pervades it. All the arbitrary forms, and sacerdotal interpositions, and hereditary rights, through which other systems seek the divine favour, are disowned by it. It is a religion eminently *personal*, establishing the most intimate and solitary dealings between God and every human soul. It is a religion eminently *natural*; evincing no ungenious affection of our mind, distorting no primitive moral sentiment; but simply consecrating the obligations proper to our nature, and taking up with a divine voice the whispers, scarce articulate before, of the conscience within us. In this deep harmony with our inmost consciousness of duty, resides the true power of our religion. It subdues and governs our hearts, as a wise conqueror rules the empire he has won; not by imposing a system of strange laws, but by arming with higher authority, and administering with more resolute precision, the laws already recognised and revered.

This sense of individual accountability,—notwithstanding the ingenuities of orthodox divines on the one hand, and necessarian philosophers on the other, is impaired by all reference of the evil that is in us to *any source beyond ourselves*. To look for a remoter cause than our own guilty wills,—to contemplate it as a Providential instrument, whe-

ther we trace it to Adam, to Satan, or directly to God, bewilkes the simple perceptions of conscience, and throws doubt on its distinct and solemn judgements. The injury may be different in character, according to the particular system we adopt: but *any* theory which provides the individual moral agent with participating causes of his guilt, offends and weakens some one of the feelings essential to the consciousness of responsibility.

There is no persuasion, for example, quite indispensable to this state of mind, and, consequently, no impression which Christianity more profoundly leaves upon the heart, than that of the *personal origin and personal identity of sin*,—its individual, incommunicable character. Our own secret souls, and that divine gospel which confirms all their sincere decisions, alike declare that *my sin cannot be your sin*; that by no compact, even by no miracle, can any exchange of responsibilities, or transfer of moral qualities, be effected. What indeed is guilt, in its very nature, but a violation of some venerated rule of action,—a contravention of our own sentiments of equity, truth, purity, or generosity? and what is the guilty mind, but a system or habit of desire, which successfully resists the control of reason and conscience? That mind which is the seat of the delinquent will,—which heeds the remonstrances of right, and heeds them not,—is the sole proprietor of the sin, deriving it from none, imparting it to none; its dwelling is in his violation; and unless that can cease to be his, the criminality can admit of no alienation. He may have accomplices indeed: but they are so many additional agents, each with his separate amount of guilt, and not partners among whom his one act of free-will is distributed. The trains of thought and emotion, the adjustment of tastes and affections, are different in every soul: each has its own moral complexion; each, its separate moral relations; each, its distinct responsibility in the sight of God. In no sense is the gift or transfer of character more

possible, than a barter of genius, or an interchange of sensation. God may call new life into existence, and determine what its consciousness shall be: he may annihilate life, and plunge its memory and experience into nothing: but to shift the feelings and aims which constitute the identity of one being into the personality of another, is no more possible, than to alter the properties of a circle, or to cancel departed time.

To trifle in any way with this plain and solemn principle, to invent terms of speech tending to conceal it, to apply to moral good and ill, language which assimilates them to physical objects and exchangeable property, implies frivolous and irreverent ideas of sin and excellence. The whole weight of this charge evidently falls on the scheme, which speaks of human guilt as an hereditary entail; a scheme which shocks and confounds our primary notion of right and wrong, and, by rendering them impersonal qualities, reduces them to empty names. No construction can be given to the system, which does not pass this insult on the conscience. In what sense do we share the guilt of our progenitor? His concession to temptation did not occur within our mind, or belong in any way to our history. And if, without participation in the *act of wrong*, we are to have its *penalties*,—crises in the planet Saturn may be expected to shower curses on the earth; for why may not justice go astray in space, as reasonably as in time? If nothing more be meant, than that from our first parents we inherit a constitution *liable* to intellectual error and moral transgression, still, it is evident, that, *until* this liability takes actual effect, no sin exists, but only its possibility; and *when* it takes effect, there is just so much guilt and no more, than might be committed by the individual's will: so that where there is *no volition*, as in infancy, cruelty only could inflict punishment; and where there is *free volition*, as in many a good passage of the foolest life, equity itself could not withhold approval.

In whatever way, then, you define this hypothesis, it directly denies the personal character and personal identity of sin, and thus enfeebles the most essential element comprised in the sentiment of responsibility. The practical result will inevitably be, a system of false views and fictitious feelings, with respect both to our own characters, and to those of our fellow-men. That which can be vicariously incurred, or vicariously removed, cannot be guilt; cannot therefore, be sincerely felt as such; can awaken no true shame and self-reproach, and draw forth no burning tears when we meet the eye of God. It is a shocking mockery to call sorrow for an ancestor's sin by the name of penitence, and to conform the perception (or, as it is termed, 'application') of Christ's holiness with the personal power of conscience: the one can be nothing else than moral disapprobation, attended by the sense of personal injury; the other, moral approval, attended by the sense of personal benefit: and mean and confused must be the sentiments of duty in a mind which can mistake these for the private griefs of contrition, and the serenity of a self-forgetful will. Only counterfeited emotions, and self-judgments half sincere, can consistently arise from a faith which mystifies the primitive ideas of moral excellence, and destroys all distinct perception of its nature. It is always with danger that we turn away from the *natural* hand-writing of God upon the conscience: from heedless eyes the divine symbols fade away; unless, indeed, in some preternatural awakening of our sight, they blaze forth once again, to tell us that the kingdom of God's greatness hath departed from us. Let each consider his own life as an indivisible part of responsibility, no less complete, no less free, no less invested with solemn and solitary power, than if he dwelt, and always had dwelt, in the universe alone with God. There is confided to him, the sole rule of a vast and immortal world within; whose order can be preserved or violated, whose

peace secured or sacrificed, by no foreign influence. We cannot, by ancestral or historical relations, renounce our own free-will, or escape one iota of its awful trusts. No faith which fails to keep this truth distinct and prominent, no faith which shuffles with the sinner's moral identity, contains the requisites of a "doctrine according to godliness." It must pervert, moreover, our estimates of others' characters, no less than of our own. If guilt can be hereditary,—guilt meriting infinite and indiscriminate punishment,—it must be universal: and whether we see it or not, we must believe it to exist, with no appreciable variation of degree, in every human heart. Thus it becomes a prime duty to regard every thing in life, except its wretchedness, every thing in human nature, except its displays of foulness and of ruin, as a delusion and a cheat. We strongly protest against this miserable distrust of our best and truest perceptions. We maintain the intelligible and appreciable character of all moral qualities, in opposition to all schemes which make distinction between natural and theological excellence, and which propose imaginary standards of right, different from those that recommend themselves to a discerning conscience. Sin is no mysterious thing, no physical poison, no taint in the blood, which may lurk venomously within us, giving no symptoms, and exciting no consciousness, of its presence. However insidious in its approaches, and subtle in its manifestations, vigilance only is needed to detect it: its stealthiness affords, indeed, a sound reason for circumspection; but not for superstitious horror at its possible existence, without discoverable trace, in ourselves or others. To look on the spectacle of vice, and not feel abhorrence, indicates a depraved state of sentiment:—to look on the spectacle of virtue, and believe it sin, to witness all the outward expressions of goodness and suspect interior corruption, to be invited by natural emotion to moral admiration, and, by theological stimulants, to galvanise the heart into loathing (or even "pity") instead, im-

plies a falsehood of conscience no less malignant. Let me not be told that, in thus speaking, we assign too high a value to mere external moralities, which are but treacherous indications of character, and may be the visible fruit of various and dubious motives. We never cease to teach, that no Epicurean respectabilities, no conformity with conventional rules of order, can satisfy the claims, or afford any of the peace of duty, unless they be the native growth of a perceptive, devout, and loving heart:—that it is not in the hand which executes, but in the soul which devises and aspires, in the secret will which makes sacrifice of self, in the conscience which grapples with temptations and overmasters fears, that true and immortal virtue dwells; since acts are evanescent, while the affections are eternal. But it is monstrous to infer from this superficial character of outward morality, that there is probably no substratum of genuine goodness. Nay, it is a mean and degrading scepticism which distrusts, without assignable cause, the reality of any of the symptoms of excellence; is tempted by theories of unity to insinuate that they are an empty semblance; and plies its pious ingenuity to blacken the great human heart. He that is pledged to make out a case against mankind at large, must find of difficult attainment that clarity that "hupeth all things and believeth all things." How blunted must be the delicacy of moral perception, where the gradations of excellence are swept away into the dark abyss of universal depravity; and to effect this reduction of all minds to the same level, what vehement distortion, what wretched sophistries, what devotional scandal and romance, must become habitual! How much less place for delusion and insinuation is there, when we maintain a reverential faith in the natural moral sentiments, repress no generous admiration, disbelieve no genuine expression of disinterestedness and integrity, and instead of whining over guilt, dare to bless God with a manly voice, for all varieties of noble virtue!

Thus does the habit of tracing sin beyond the individual will to a progenitor, spread confusion over the moral perceptions, by mystifying the nature of guilt, and destroying that feeling of its personal character and identity which belongs to the Christian sentiment of responsibility.

By a different and directer method the same tendency operates, when we refer our temptations to the agency of the Devil, rather than to our descent from Adam. An invisible power, foreign to ourselves, is held chargeable, to an undefined extent, with the evil of our own will; and the conscience can as ill bear the present distribution, as the past transmission of its guilt. It is said indeed, that man is not "less culpable, because Satan seduces him, and blinds his mind," since there is no power in earth or hell to *compel* him to transgress: that he is a willing captive, and no more to be excused than when a human accomplice entices him to crime, without (it is admitted) relieving him of any portion of his criminality.\* But the cases are obviously not parallel. Man stands up before his fellow man, equal with equal; his weapons are fairly measured against his danger, by the great Adverser himself; and therefore is he summoned to close with his temptations, and condemned as a traitor if he yields or lies. And should it ever be otherwise,—should the feeble-minded and inexperienced be misled by the cunning of the strong-headed and practised seducer, the instinctive justice of mankind mitigates its sentence, and commiserates the fall. With how much greater force, then, must this palliation be felt, when the Tempter is admitted to be "possessed of capacity and power immensely surpassing ours,"† — a "master-spirit" of majestic intellect, with whom we are as an infant in the giant's grasp! With such a being, the broken energy, the punished vigilance, of a fallen man, can hardly be expected to cope; at least they will be induced, in so plausible

a case, to *esteem themselves* unfairly matched against so exalted a competitor. While it were earnestly to be desired that the wretched conscience should be allowed no evasion, and for awhile no alleviation, under the condemning sentence of its memory and its God,—this doctrine calls up, inevitably and reasonably, the feeling of a divided criminality, of which the weaker nature has the smaller share.

These tendencies, so far as they have been truly stated, must continue to act, so long as we trace the evil that is in us to *any* foreign agent. Hence it appears impossible to defend the doctrine of Philosophical Necessity,—which presents God to us as the author of sin and suffering,—from the same charge of invading the sense of personal responsibility. Not that we are for a moment to sanction the vulgar error which confounds this scheme, in its theoretical structure and practical effects, with the system of fatalism; or to imagine, that an abolition of all free-will, and a total indifference to moral distinctions, would be its proper and consistent results. Though, however, it leaves room for individual pursuit, and motive to individual perfection, one of its chief and most vaunted features undoubtedly is, the encouragement which it affords to the *passive virtues*: and it will be found, I greatly fear, that it is their *passiveness*, more than their *virtuousness*, which puts them under the protection of this doctrine. Doubtless, he who can look on all men as the instruments of heaven, and recognize in their mutual injuries and crimes the chosen methods of the Divine government, must learn submission to many a triumph of wrong, and consider anger against the profligate and oppressor as insubordination against God. He who is haunted by the immutability of things, and feels himself locked in with the universal mechanism, will chafe himself with no rash spirit of resistance, nor vainly thrust his hand against the fly-wheel of nature. He who believes that all things are right, that absolute evil does not exist, that whatever men may be, and whatever they may

\* 1. *Suppl. to Leisler*, 8. 71.

† *Ibid.*, 8. 495.

do, nothing could possibly be better. must needs discover that his own wishes are no criterion of good, and look with a contented eye over the whole surface of the past, as well as a serene trust on the prospect of the future. Nor can there be any self-exaggeration in a mind conscious of possessing but an infinitesimal fraction of the universal power, — and even that little wielded and directed by an uncontrollable sovereignty, that tames the hearts of men whatsoever it pleases. Complacency with every lot, resignation to all events, forbearance under injury, an equal tenderness for all men, and the lowliest attitude before God, are the unquestionable results of this religious philosophy. But all this is attained by a process which, I would submit, the moralist is bound to regard as illegitimate; — by an appeal to external mechanical necessity, rendering any thing but these states of mind intellectually improper; not by any considerations of *duty*, or any perception of their *intrinsic obligation*. The whole efficacy of the system is negative, not positive. It penetrates and destroys the turbulent elements of our nature, and its quietude is the residue left by their exhaustion; it crumbles beneath us the heights of passion, and deposits us upon a placid level beneath the infinite expanse. Its characteristic dispositions are reached by the sacrifice of the feelings which are distinctively moral: — the feelings, that is, of which right and wrong acts and propensities are the appropriate objects; — the feelings of approbation and aversion, which recognize merit and demerit, and impel to praise and blame. The Necessarian sees, neither in himself nor others, any good or ill desert to justify such feelings: he regards natural and moral qualities in the same light, — contemplating benevolence as a species of health, and selfishness as akin to disease: if he utters censure or applause, it is not *from* an impulse to himself, but *for* an effect upon their object. In his love to men moral distinctions have no place: for as their sins justify no alienation, their virtues give no

claim to admiration: he loves them apart from the perceptions of conscience, — without veneration, — without praise, — by the mere force of the sympathies which take interest in sentient beings as capable of happiness and misery: — loves them, may we not say, because there is no cause for hate; resentment, impatience, disgust, being out of place towards creatures who are what they were meant to be, nothing remains but to include them in his complacency. Nor does the *humility* which this system inculcates, bear the true and Christian stamp. It is not the irrepressible aspiration after moral perfection, the pursuit of an image in the conscience infinitely beautiful and great, the devoted worship of the holy, good, and true, which draw forth tears of contrition for the past, and dwarf the attainments of the present, though reckoning their thousand victories; but it is rather a sense of physical and mental insignificance, which annihilates all worth except such as we may derive from sharing the regards of God: it is not a perception of want of merit in our character, but a consciousness of incapacity for it in our nature.

And who could fully realize the fundamental idea of this scheme, without losing all confidence in his own moral convictions, and constantly distrusting his best feelings as delusions? For does he not believe, that whatever is brought to pass is absolutely right and best, and that any different view of it is an illusion foreign to our human point of sight? The optimist casts his eye over the past, and can see no blot upon the retrospect: yet does it contain innumerable things, — woes and crises the most deplorable, — which, ere they happened, were repugnant to his warmest desires, and to be encountered by the most strenuous resistance of duty. Is he then to look at these objects, up to the last moment of the present, as utterly evil: and from the first moment of the past, as indisputably best? Is he to see up a two-faced sentiment, gazing with mutable and desecrating expres-

sion on things approaching, but with unvaried complacency on things departed? Is it possible, that actions and characters can change their complexion by mere migration in time? or was it altogether a mistake to think so ill of the iniquities which, having been summoned into existence, must always have appeared eligible in the view of God? These perplexities must perpetually arise to a mind which uses two standards of good, the *moral*, which approves the *right*; and the *realist*, which covers the *past*. The latter incessantly contradicts the former, and insinuates that it is a blind guide, aiming at that which the All-wise will refuse to achieve. And thus our theorist, *in so far as he is true to his principles*, would lapse into scepticism of his moral judgments, into a hesitating veneration for the oracles of duty; a suspicion that they may inculcate provisional superstitions, rather than eternal truths. It must be difficult to unite pious acquiescence in the guilt of others, with uncompromising resistance to our own.

In short, the contemplations presented by this doctrine do not appear to be favourable to *active* excellence: rising too far, and embracing too much, they quit the contact of this green earth, and lose sight of the interval between the quiet vales where virtue walks, and the giddy heights it may not tread. The soul, rendered conscious more of the immensity around it, than of the obligations upon it, lies still, without a passion, without a fear,—venturing an approach to the Deignty more than to the energy of God. Perhaps it is the tendency of all systems which most amply spread forth the Divine infinitude, to be less occupied with the conception of the Divine Holiness: perhaps the mind intensely occupied with the idea of one solitary Power, absorbing all subordinate agencies, and willing every change that renders space or time perceptible, has all its strongest impulses, both moral and sympathetic, suppressed in the abyss of mystery; and the distinction between different beings and different

reals appears, in so vast a view, too trivial to be worthy of deep emotion and resolute volitions. Certain it is, that the oriental religions which have encouraged this sublimity of devotion and self-annihilation in the Deity, have not been remarkable for the formation of a sound and vigorous type of moral character. Indeed we have seen that God himself, the supreme centre of reverence, no longer remains, under the Necessarian representation, a really *holy* object of thought. If we are to admit no possibility of resisting his will, and proclaiming him the Only Cause, to drown all other powers in his immensity, it becomes impossible to feel that he has any paramount regard to moral distinctions: he cannot share our feelings towards human guilt, for it is his work: he objects to no amount of vice, provided it issues in enjoyment: and not one libertine, or traitor, or murderer, could his purposes have spared. To reconcile us to this dreadful thought, we are reminded of his benevolence, which will bring all things to a glorious result. But how can we discern any sanctity in a benevolence so indiscriminating in its instruments? Must all our various apprehensions of God, the supremely good and supremely fair, shrink into this one, of ultimate-happiness Maker, by no means fastidious in his application of means, but secure of producing the end? Must the harmony of the Divine perfections lapse into this dull monotone? It can hardly be well for our conscience to worship a Being whom we could not imitate without guilt: or, if it be said, that we may imitate his ultimate aim, though not his intermediate methods,—what is this but to admit that our moral sympathies with him must be postponed to the end of time?

This system, then, like others which trace sin to causes beyond the individual will, does not appear to foster that deep reverence for moral distinctions, and sense of personal responsibility, which eminently characterize practical Christianity. It is favourable indeed to the passive virtues, which

occupy their due place in the morality of the Gospel: but in producing them, appeals to considerations discouraging to the active spirit of moral resistance and moral aggression.

To all this, however, an objector might urge the following reply:—"Human conduct is not influenced by such considerations as you have supposed. It matters little what men may think about the *origins* of their guilt, if they make no mistake about its *consequences*: let them only be sure that it will be punished in the end, and they may please themselves with speculating about its beginning. Every one will fly an inevitable suffering, whether self-incurred or induced by foreign causes: and if he clearly sees the penal sentence, he will shun the sin, just as much when he imagines that others have involved him in it, as when he conceives that he alone has brought it on himself. In short, the will neither is nor can be determined by anything but the prospect of pleasure or pain; and so long as consequences of this kind depend on his decisions, a man will feel himself accountable. The sense of responsibility can never be weakened by any system which, like those just noticed, retain the doctrine of future retribution."

This statement assumes that self-regarding motives, promises of happiness, and threats of misery, are the sole powers for operating on human character.

(2.) In reply, I submit as a second distinguishing feature of practical Christianity, that it makes no great certainly no exclusive, appeal to the *prudential feelings*, as instruments of duty: treats them as morally incapable of so sacred a work, and relies, chiefly and characteristically, on affections of the heart, which no motives of reward and punishment can have the smallest tendency to excite.

The Gospel, indeed, like all things divine, is unsystematic and unbound by technical distinctions, and makes no metaphysical separation between the will and the affections. It is too profoundly adapted to our nature, not to address itself

copiously to both. The doctrine of retribution being a solemn truth, appears with all its native force in the teachings of Christ, and tries many of his appeals with a persuasion just and terrible. But never was there a religion (containing these motives at all) so frugal in the use of them; so able, on fit occasions, to dispense with them: so rich in those inimitable touches of moral beauty, and tones that penetrate the conscience, and generous trust in the better sympathies, which distinguish a morality of the affections. In Christ himself, where is there a trace of the obedience of pious self-interest, computing its everlasting gains, and making out a case for compensation, by submitting to infinite wisdom? In his character, which is the impersonation of his religion, we surely have a perfect image of spontaneous goodness, unshaded by the idea of personal enjoyment, and, like that of God, unhidden but by the intuitions of conscience, and the impulses of love. And what teacher less *divine* ever made such high and bold demands on our disinterestedness? "To lend out our virtue upon interest,—to 'love them only who love us,' he pronounced to be the sinners' morality; nor was the feeling of duty ever reached, but by those who could 'do good, hoping for *nothing* again," except that greatest of rewards to a true and faithful heart, to be "the children of the Highest," who "is kind unto the unthankful and the evil." In the view of Jesus, all dealings between God and men were not of bargain, but of affection. We must surrender ourselves to him without terms; must be ashamed to doubt him who feeds the birds of the air, and, like the lily of the field, look up to him with a bright and loving eye; and he, for our much love, will pay and forgive us. In his own ministry, how much less did our Lord rely for disciples on the cogency of mere proof, and the inducements of hope and fear, than on the power of moral sympathy, by which every one that was of God naturally loved him and heard his words; by which the good shepherd

knew his sheep, and they listened to his voice, and followed him;\* and without which no man could come unto him, for no spirit of the Father drew him.† No condition of discipleship did Christ impose, save that of "faith in him;" absolute trust in the spirit of his mind; a desire of self-abandonment to a love and fidelity like his, without tampering with expediency, or hesitancy in peril, or shrinking from death.

There is, then, a wide variance between the genius of Christianity, and that philosophy which teaches, that all men must be brought over to the side of goodness and of God, by a prize suited to their particular forms of selfishness and appetite for pleasure. Our religion is remarkable for the large confidence it reposes on the disinterested affections, and the vast proportion of the work of life it consigns to them. And in thus seeking to subordinate and tranquilize the prudential feelings, Christ manifested how well he knew what was in man. He recognized the truth, which all experience declares, that in these emotions is nothing great, nothing loveable, nothing powerful; that their energy is perpetually found incapable of withstanding the impetuosity of passion; and that all transcendent virtues, all that brings us to trample or to kneel, all the enterprises and conflicts which dignify history, and have stamped any new feature on human life, have had their origin in the disinterested region of the mind; in affections, unconsciously entranced by some object sanctifying and divine. He knew, for it was his special mission to make all men feel, that it is the office of true religion to cleanse the sanctuary of the secret affections, and effect a regeneration of the heart. And this is a task which no direct aims of the will can possibly accomplish, and in which, therefore, all offers of reward and punishment, operating only on the will, are quite inapplicable. The single function of volition is to act; over the executive part of our nature it is supreme, over

the emotional it is powerless; and all the wrestlings of desire for self-cure and self-elevation, are like the struggles of a child to lift himself. He who is anxious to be a philanthropist, is admiring benevolence, instead of loving man; and whoever is labouring to warm his devotion, yearns after piety, not after God. The mind can by no spasmodic bound seize on a new height of emotion, or change the light in which objects appear before its view. Persuade the judgment, bribe the self-interests, terrify the expectations, as you will, you can neither dislodge a favourite, nor enthrone a stranger, in the heart. Show me a child that clings an affectionate arm around a parent, and lights up his eyes beneath her face, and I know that there have been no lectures there upon filial love; but that the mother, being loveable, has of necessity been loved; for to general axioms it is as impossible to withhold a pure affection, when its object is presented, as for the flower to wither within the mould, and clasp itself tight within the bud, when the gentle force of spring invites its petals to curl out into the warm light. As you reverence all good affections of our nature, and desire to awaken them, never call them duties, though they be so, for so doing, you address yourself to the will; and by hard trying no attachment ever entered the heart. Never preach on their great desirableness and propriety; for so doing, you risk the audience of the judgment; and by way of the understanding no glow of noble passion ever came. Never show all, reckon up their balance of good and ill; for so doing, you exhibit self-interest; and by that sordid way no true love will consent to pass. Nay, never talk of them, nor even gaze curiously at them; for if they be of any worth and delicacy, they will be instantly looked out of countenance and fly. Nothing worthy of human veneration will condescend to be embraced, but for its own sake: grasp it for its excellent results,—make but the faintest offer to use it as a tool, and it slips away at the very conception of such insult. The functions of a healthy body go on, not by knowledge of phy-

\* John x. 26, 27.

† John vi. 45.



siology, but by the instinctive vigour of nature; and you will no more brace the spiritual faculties to noble energy and true life, by study of the uses of every feeling, than you can learn an athlete for the race, by lectures on every muscle of every limb. The mind is not voluntarily active in the acquisition of any great idea, any new inspiration of faith; but passive, fixed on the object which has dawned upon it, and filled it with fresh light.

If this be true, and if it be the object of practical Christianity, not only to direct our hands aright, but to inspire our hearts; then can its ends never be achieved by the mere force of reward and punishment; then no system can prove its sufficiency, by showing that it retains the doctrine of retribution, and must even be held convicted of moral incompetency, if it trusts the conscience mainly to the prudential feelings, without due provision for enlisting the co-operation of many a disinterested affection.

To this objection must any scheme be liable, which represents the Creator as having made choice of the instrumentality of evil. I freely admit, that no one urges the *personal* motives to duty with more closeness and force than the Necessarian. Maintaining, with the utmost strictness, the connexion of moral cause and effect, teaching the alliance of happiness with excellence, and of misery with vice, by a law inexorable as fate, he convinces us, that every concession to temptation, every relaxation of conscientious effort, is an addition of wretchedness to our future lot; that when the evil volition has once passed, no fortuity can provide evasion, nor any mercy give us shelter; that on the decisions of our will is suspended whatever can make our everlasting destination blessed. But his doctrine goes on to assure us, that it is only to ourselves that our sins create any clear increase of suffering; they are a part of the best possible system, designed for the general good; and shown, by their occurrence, to be clear benefits to the world. No love of our fellow-man, then, can

be engaged in behalf of duty; let conscience say what it will, we hold no power, and incur no risk, of creating injury to others; and our sympathies with them cannot reasonably determine any moral choice. No love of God can tender help to our feeble virtue: for he is not "grieved in our sins;" and whether, in our conflicts, we succumb or conquer, the issue is well-pleasing in his sight. He appears to sustain a relation, not of concern, but of indifference, to our choice; and the idea of him, as spectator of the strife, inspires no courage, and brings no victory. If it be urged, that these considerations are of too high and abstract a kind to influence us in practice, and that to us our misconduct must always appear injurious to men, and offensive to God; what is this but to allow the utility of the doctrine to our minds, and to say, that it is harmless, in proportion as it remains unrealized: It is a poor plea for the value of a system to exclaim, "Never mind its threatened mischiefs, conscience is too strong for them." The point at which the present argument rests is this, that *in so far as the doctrine operates*, it dismisses all but the prudential feelings from the service of duty.

Our conclusion is evident. The spirit of practical Christianity gives a double suffrage against the scheme which makes moral evil the *instrument* of God, and bids us regard it as his *energy*. Revelation allies itself with the primitive religion of the conscience.

In this theoretic question, still urged by our wonder and *subtlety*, "But *wherefore* this?" it has been already said, that no answer can be given. All the ingenuities of logic and of language, leave it a mystery still, and it is better to stand within the darkness in the quietude of faith, than vainly to search for its margin in the restlessness of knowledge. Were we compelled, for relief of mind, to select *some* definite method of representing the case to our apprehensions, I know not any simpler or better conception than that of the ancient Platonists;—that the process of creation

consisted, not in the origination of matter itself out of nothing, but in the production of form, order, beauty, organization, life, sentience, out of matter, in making it the residence of mind, the receptacle of experience, and the servitor of souls: that the Divine hand has manifested illustrious skill, and the Divine love infinite versatility, in the use and application of the original material; but that, as it is the negative opposite to His positive perfections, its unsusceptibility of life and spirit has occasioned the portion of evil which deforms the universe, and which, however varied and reduced, and, in the higher gradations of being, attenuated to the verge of extinction, cannot be utterly annihilated. From the large proportion of visible evil, natural and moral, that is traceable to disorganization and its related changes, this view is easily apprehended, and may indeed be detected, in many common forms of thought and speech. If it be not true, no better substitute for the truth is within our reach. It limits the power of God no more than the rival scheme: for were we to say, that he became the author of evil, as the *unavoidable* means of ulterior benefits, we should admit, that *only on these terms* was the contemplated good producible, even by him whom, in relation to all our measures of force, we justly call Omnipotent. It is impossible to escape, and therefore better to confront, the idea of a *NECESSARY*, restricting the conditions within which the Divine goodness operates;—a necessity, mysterious, but not dreadful; not great enough to be subversive of faith, nor trivial enough to be reasoned out of sight. I know not why our thoughts should not find a residence for this necessity, rather in the materials awaiting the Creative hand, than in any immaterial laws, under the mystic title of "the *Nature of things*," or (in other words,) any dark Fate behind the throne. But in saying this, I only propose to *state the problem* in the most salutary form, and by no means to offer a solution: mere profession in ideas, where truly we have none, only excludes

us from the benefits (which are many) of our allotted portion of ignorance. I have no sympathy with the confident and dogmatic spirit, which exclaims, "Let the counsel of the Holy One draw nigh, that we may know it;" and would only protest against systems that "call evil good, and good evil," that "put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter."

So, then, in the sight of God and all good men, is to be esteemed an evil, absolutely and everlastingly. We may rally the *whole power* of our nature against it: for it destroys our personal security; it irremediably wounds our brother; and it puts us in dreary alienation from our Father and our Judge. We may let loose our aversion to all that offends the conscience, and without metaphysical hesitancy, visit it with uncompromising hate; for so doing, we are indignant with no instrument of Deity; nor do we fall into any sentiment at variance with his. We may yield, with entire self-precipitation, to the love of whatever things are pure and true and good; never fearing that our affections will become too exclusive for the enlightened children of the Highest. When we look into the darker chambers of our soul, and discern, asleep or awake, the powers of selfishness, malice, jealousy,—we see therein no nursery of discipline, where God presides to train us ultimately well; but the dreadful dwelling of our familiar bond who practices in proximity with God;—the palace of the penal tories that at once tempt and torture us, a place severed by a whole universe from Heaven;—the inner Hell of our immortal nature, so piteous to solitary agonies, that the addition of tubercular banes populous with tormented beings would only refresh us with pity for their woes. The fever of desire, the fires of revenge, the gnawing of remorse, still busy in our immortality; the shame of resuscitated memories; the passionate yearning after strength with the prostrate consciousness of weakness; the *stagnation* and desolation of empty minds and heated appetites carried to the assemblage of the

skies, and gazed on by the pitying eye of a Divine but alienated purity,—Oh! what flames can burn into tenderer seats of anguish than these? And so far from planning and willing the lapse of any into such guilt and suffering, the Great Ruler never ceases to resist to the last, all such delay of his benediction and frustration of his desire. He dwells absolutely apart from all creative contact with the evil which we are bound to abhor: he comes before us as a being unambiguously Ifely; not in any ultimate and secret intelligible way, but in our plain human sense. His name must be reserved as the exclusive receptacle of all the excellence and beauty, the majesty and tenderness, the purity and justice, of which our minds can gather together the ideas. It is no figure of speech, that there is *joy in heaven* over the sinner that repenteth; that part at least of heaven that dwells below and hides itself within our hearts, that portion of God that expresses itself through the sanctities of our nature, yields to our moral restoration not only a ready welcome, but a mysterious help. When fear has performed its proper and only function on a responsible being; which is, not to create holiness, but to arrest guilt; when it has summoned us, like the prodigal, to ourselves again; when it has brought the mad career to halt, and left us weeping, humbled, prostrate in the dust, crying, "Lord, help us, we perish,"—then the Divine Spirit dawns on the gloom of our self-abasement, and refreshes us with the delicious light of a new and purer love: instead of the vain strivings of an elevated will, the restless beating of mere pride against the iron bars of corrupt desire, the gates of the soul are burst silently open by some angel affection, and we are free! And shall we not, with most devout allegiance, follow our Divine Emancipator? The great work, which his holy energy is thus ready to carry on within us, he may be discerned conducting secure where without us. On the theatre of the universe he is himself engaged to grapple eternally with Evil,

and hurl it from the higher portions of his abode. And so, he waits, with his inspiring sympathy, to hail every victory of our free-will: and by all the final love we bear him, by the generous fear of estrangement from his spirit, by the hope of growth in his shadow, we are summoned to enter the field of moral conflict.—to stir up the noble courage of our hearts, and in the Lord's own might, do battle with the confederate fiends of guilt and war. There is not elsewhere a combat so glorious, or a trophy so divine.

## NOTES.

### A.

#### *Origin of the Doctrine of Two Principles.*

The prominent place which the doctrine of two principles occupies in the later theology of the Persians has procured for that people the reputation of being the first to apprehend it; and for Zoroaster the credit of assigning to it its due importance in the religious reformation which he accomplished. So much doubt, however, exists, respecting the age in which Zoroaster lived, the nature and extent of the change which he introduced, and even on the question whether he really taught the dualistic scheme at all, that he cannot justly deprive the Ionian philosophers of a claim to originality in their resort to it. If either before the Persian conquest of the Medes, or in the time of Darius Hystaspes, this doctrine had been entrusted to the Magi, as conservators of the national religion, it is difficult to account for the omission of so fundamental a tenet in the account which Herodotus gives of the Persian theology. The simple dualism which the Father of History describes, as asking the mountain-top to sacrifice, and calling the whole circle of the heavens God,\* can scarcely be the same with the elaborate system of dualism, attributed by Plutarch to Zoroaster and the Magi,† and the difference between the two accounts throws a doubt on the antiquity of the latter doctrine in the East. Yet, on the other hand, if we assign to it the most recent date of which the case admits, we must allow that it formed part of the popular belief in the fourth century before Christ; in which case, it must have existed, at least in its previous philosophical

\* Οὐδ' ἄν ποσειδάωνος ἀπὸ τῆς γῆς, καὶ τοῦ ἀπὸ τῆς οὐρανόθεν ἡμετέρας, καὶ τοῦ ἑλίου, καὶ τοῦ ἀέρος πάντα τοῦ ἀνατολῆναι αὐτὸν κελύεται. i. 131.

† De Iside et Osiride, § 46, 47.

form, in the fifth. A doctrine, however, which had not yet assumed a mythological character, or drawn to itself any external ceremonial, might easily escape the notice of Herodotus. The Indian books, which contain the same tenet, are thought by Friedrich von Schlegel to have borrowed it from Persia,\* and cannot therefore be adduced in separate proof of its high antiquity. On the whole, there appears to be no evidence of its propagation among any native Oriental people, before the brilliant period of art and philosophy in the Greek times of Asia Minor.

Even if it should be chronologically incorrect to affirm, that Ionian speculation "anticipated" the oriental religions in their theological and philosophical ideas, there is no sufficient reason to deny its independence and originality. Though the Greek schools did not arise till an opening intercourse with Egypt and the interior of Asia afforded to their teachers the opportunity of borrowing from foreign sources, it does not appear that they estimated this advantage highly enough to avail themselves of it. Only a truly indigenous philosophy could have left such distinct traces of a regular and progressive development, beginning with the practical cosmogonies of a purely mythological era, and growing, under the fostering care of successive teachers, into vast speculative systems, leaving a relation, continually more obscure and questionable, to the theology which gave them birth. Adverting to this natural process, Mr. Thirlwall says: "It can excite no surprise that in a period such as we are now reviewing, when thought and inquiry were stimulated in so many new directions, some active minds should have been attracted by the secrets of nature, and should have been led to grapple with some of the great questions which the contemplation of the visible universe suggests. There can therefore be no need of attempting to trace the impulse by which the Greeks were now carried toward such researches, to a foreign origin. But it is an opinion which has found many advocates, that they were indebted to their wandering intercourse with other nations, particularly with Egypt, Phœnicia, and the interior of Asia, for several of the views and doctrines which were fundamental or prominent parts of their earlier philosophical systems. The result, however, of the most diligent investigation, seems to show that there is no sufficient ground

\* See the *Ueberse.* Ueber die *Späthe und Weisheit der Indier*, an abstract of which, with a translation of the preface relating to the date of its origin, will be found in Dr. Prichard's *Analysis of the Egyptian Mythology*, Book III.

even for this conjecture." On the other hand, it is clear that the first philosophers were not wholly independent of the earlier intellectual efforts of their own countrymen, and that, perhaps unconsciously, they derived the form, if not, in part at least, the substance of their speculations, from the old theogonies and cosmogonies.†

The successive evolutions of the Pantheistic principle, and its final concentration by Anaxagoras, are thus succinctly described by Mr. Thirlwall: "Thales evolved his world out of a single simple substance, *freedom* to which he attributed the power of passing spontaneously through the various transformations necessary for the multiplicity of natural productions. But he does not seem to have attempted accurately to define the nature of these transformations. And so most of his successors, who set out from a similar hypothesis, contented themselves with some vague notions, or phrases, about the successive exposures or contractions of the original substance. But on the contemplation of natural life had led Anaximenes to adopt, as the basis of his system, a later philosopher, Diogenes of Apollonia, carried this analogy a step farther, and regarded the universe as issuing from an intelligent principle, by which it was at once vivified and ordered—a rational, as well as sensitive soul—still without recognizing any distinction between matter and mind. Much earlier, however, Anaximander of Miletus, who flourished not long after Thales, and is generally considered as his immediate disciple, seems to have been struck by the difficulty of accounting for the changes which a simple substance must be supposed to undergo, in order to produce an infinite variety of beings. He found it easier, in conformity with some of the notions of cosmogonists, to conceive the primitive state of the universe as a vast chaos, for which he had no other name than the infinite—containing all the elements out of which the world was to be constructed, by a process of separation and combination, which, however, he considered as the result of a motion, not impressed on it from without, but inherent in the mass. This hypothesis, which tended to give an entirely new direction to the speculations of the school, seems to have been treated with a neglect which it is difficult to explain, and which has raised a suspicion that some less celebrated names may have dropped out of the list of the Ionian philosophers.

† We allude to E. von Ge. *Ueber die Philosophen*, who (p. 159-162) has weighed all the arguments which have been alleged in behalf of this opinion, and is even harsh.

† Thirlwall's *History of Greece*, Vol. II, pp. 126-131.

But a century after Anaximander, Anaxagoras of Clazomenæ revised his doctrine with some very fanciful additions, and one very important change. He retained the principle of Anaximander with that of his contemporary, Democritus, and acknowledged a supreme mind, distinct from the chaos to which it imparted motion, form, and order. The Pantheistic systems of the Ionian school were only independent of the popular creed, and did not exclude it. The language of Thales and Heraclitus, who declared that the universe was full of gods, left room for all the fancies of the received mythology, and might even add new favour to the superstitions of the vulgar. But the system of Anaxagoras seems to have been felt to be almost incompatible with the prevailing opinions, and hence, as we shall find, drew upon him hatred and persecution.<sup>117</sup>

In confirmation of the opinions expressed towards the close of this Lecture, I cannot refrain from submitting the following moral estimate of the doctrine of two principles, it is from E. von Schlegel's Treatise, before alluded to, on the Language and Wisdom of the Indians: "Pantheism inevitably destroys the distinction between good and evil, however strenuously its advocates may contend in words against this reproach; the doctrine of emanation depresses the moral freedom of the will by the idea of an infinite degree of innate guilt, and the belief that every being is preordained to crime and misery; the system of two principles, and the warfare between good and evil, holds the middle place between these extremes; it becomes, itself, a powerful incentive to a similar contest, and a source of the purest morality."<sup>118</sup>

<sup>117</sup> See II. p. 161, 162.

<sup>118</sup> Dr. Pichard's Treatise, p. 241 p. 242, 243.

## B.

*Hebrew Names for the Evil Spirit.*

The mere fact, that no proper name for the Evil Spirit exist in the Hebrew language, except such as are of Apocryphal or Rabbinical creation, is in itself a sufficient proof of the late and unscriptural origin of the belief in his existence. A glance at an English concordance will make it evident, that the word "Devil," in the singular number, does not occur in our version translation of the Hebrew Scriptures. It is found in the plural in Lev. xvii. 7, 2 Chron. xi. 15, Psal. cxviii. 13, Ps. cxx. 25; and in none of these instances can it for a moment be supposed that the original word, if used in the singular, would represent any idea corresponding to the popular notion of the Devil; indeed, when the Rabbinical writers needed a name for the expression of this idea, they had recourse to other terms than those which are found in the verses just cited. In the two latter passages, the Hebrew word is אַרְמְלִים, literally, *mighty beings*, it clearly denotes *infernal gods*, and probably designates them by the title applied to them by the Egyptians, for the name is evidently not contemptuous, and is in fact radically the same which was applied by the Egyptians to *Belshazzar*, and receives in our version the translation *strongly*. In the two former passages, the word is אַרְמְלִים, literally, *poor*, and evidently denotes the heathen deities, typified under the name of that name; especially, we may suppose, the Egyptian Pan, worshipped in the Memphitic nome,<sup>119</sup> which rates the most shameful. In Isaiah xlii. 21, the common translation renders the name word *idols*.

Several names of evil spirits occur in the Talmudical writings; and among them two which are appropriated to the Satanical chief, viz. אַרְמְלִים, *Somars*; and אַרְמְלִים, *Asmodays*. The latter is the term by which the evil spirit is designated in Job. ii. 8, and it was the duty to show, by a multitude of passages, that the being to whom both these names were given corresponded to the "Devil" of modern theology, as far as correspondence can be ascribed to exist between any two creatures of the imagination. Thus we are told, in words which can show the use of the word *Satan* as a generic rather

<sup>119</sup> Herodotus's History, II. 2. p. 161, 162, 163. Herod. II. 46.

than a proper name. "The wicked angel Samael is prince of all the *Somers*." אַסְמַאֵל וְרֵשֶׁע רֵאשֵׁי כָל הַשְּׂמֹרִים הָאֵלֵּי. Again, Jehonah is represented as saying to him, under his title of Angel of Death שְׁוֹשִׁיטְלֵי אִתְּךָ "I have made thee Ruler of the world," (מְלַאךְ הַמָּוֶת) קוֹנְדִינְקְרַטוֹר. The same supremacy is attributed to this being under his other name. Thus it is said, that when Solomon became too much elated by his prosperity, there was sent to him "Asmodeus, the Prince of evil spirits," אַסְמֹדֵאָס מְלִכָּא דְּרֵשֵׁי לְמַלְאָךְ הַמָּוֶת. And with slight variation of phrase he is described as "the devil Asmodeus, the Prince of Spirits," שְׂדֵיָא אַסְמֹדֵאָס רֵבִיבָא. Buxtorf identifies Samael and Asmodeus, on the authority of H. Eliaz; he says, "Eundem esse Asmodeum, qui est nomen Rabbinis dicitur Samael." And Bartholdi again identifies this being with the enemy of the Gospel described in 2 Cor. iv. 4, as ἀδὲρ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου; and in John xiv. 30, as ἐχθρὸς ἡμεῶν. (Hebrew Scripture) after quoting these passages, he says "Apud Targumistas et Halldinos occurrit sub nomine אַסְמַאֵל Samael."<sup>4</sup>

The idea then of which we are in search is unquestionably of frequent occurrence among the Talmudists. In expressing it they have recourse to new names not found in the Canonical writings. Surely a strong presumption arises, that the Hebrew Scriptures did not furnish them with the means of designating the personage about whom they discoursed.

<sup>1</sup> Chet. Fiddlerum rabba, fo. 264. v. sup. B. L. Bartholdi's *Concordia in Judaicum* 2. p. 490. 2. compare note § 34.

<sup>2</sup> Y. k. rabba, fo. 131. col. 1. sup. Bartholdi, loc. cit.

<sup>3</sup> Targum in Ecc. i. 12. sup. Job. baruch. Lev. Chet. Job. & Rab. in a. תְּשִׁיבָה.

<sup>4</sup> *Archæol. Oriental.* sup. Bartholdi's *Hebr. and Talmud. Lexicon* in vol. no. Math. v. 20. See also in Luke vi. 36.

<sup>5</sup> See Chet. Fiddler.

<sup>6</sup> *Chrestologia*, loc. cit.

*The parallel Passages in the Epistles of Jude and 2 Peter.*

For the sake of those readers of the English Scriptures who may not have noticed the remarkable similarity between the Epistle of Jude, and the second chapter of the second Epistle of Peter, I subjoin a comparison of the two. A reference to the Greek Testament will make it evident, that the parallelism is fully exhibited in our common translation. My present purpose, at least, will be sufficiently answered by taking the citations thence.

2 Peter ii.	Jude.
1. . . . There shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.	3. For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.
2. And through their doings shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation abideth ever.	6. And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, be hath received in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day.
4. For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment;	7. Even as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.
5. And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes, condemned them with an overthrow, making them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly.	

## 2 Peter ii.

10. But chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despite government. Phœnixians are they, self-willed, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities.

11. Wherewith suggest, which are greater in power and might, being not in any accusation against them before the Lord.

12. But these, as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed, speak evil of the things that they understand not: and shall utterly perish in their own corruption.

13. . . . Spots they are and blemishes, sporting themselves with their own deceivings while they fast with you.

17. These are wells without water, clouds that are carried with a tempest: to whom the mist of darkness is reserved for ever.

18. For when they speak great swelling words of vanity, they allure through the lust of the flesh, through treachery, those that were clean separated from them, who live in error.

Very few readers, it is probable, will derive from the examination of this parallelism, without the persuasion, that the writings betraying it cannot be independent productions, and without amazement at the opinion of Lardner, that "the similitude of the subject might produce," in such a point, "a resemblance of style." The design, he

## Jude

8. Likewise also these filthy dreamers defile the flesh, despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities.

9. Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the Devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee.

10. But these speak evil of things which they know not: but what they know naturally, as brute beasts, in those things they corrupt themselves.

12. These are spots in your feasts of charity, when they feast with you, feeding themselves without fear.

13. Clouds they are without water, carried about of winds.

14. . . . Wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever.

16. These are murmurers, complainers, walking after their own lusts; and their mouth speaketh great swelling words, having men's persons in admiration because of advantage.

continued, "of St. Peter and St. Jude was to condemn some loose and erroneous Christians, and to caution others against the same." When speaking of the same sort of persons, their style and figure of speech would have a great agreement." \* Lardner appears to shrink from attributing to the inspired St. Jude (supposing him to be the later writer) either plagiarism or a needless repetition of instruction. But why should his inspiration deter him from such an act? It rather affords, as Michaelis observes, a conclusive reason for ascribing it to him. "For the Holy Ghost," this author suggests, "certainly knew, while he was dictating the Epistle to St. Jude, that an Epistle of St. Peter, of a like import, already existed. And if the Holy Ghost, notwithstanding this knowledge, still thought that an Epistle of St. Jude was not unnecessary, why shall we suppose that St. Jude himself would have been prevented from writing by the same knowledge?" † This argument of the learned German certainly renders it unnecessary to doubt, with the scrupulous Lardner, whether St. Jude would copy from a fellow-labourer's letter. But this, it also renders it unnecessary to believe that: for with the perfect familiarity with the *Holy Ghost* possessed ("while dictating") with the previous epistle of Peter, there was no occasion whatever for St. Jude to have the knowledge too. Indeed so completely might any degree of parallelism be explained in this way, that no conceivable phenomenon of agreement would furnish the slightest proof that the one writer had seen the production of the other.

For some insupportable reasons, however, all the ablest theologians seem to have declined this easy solution, by appeal to the memory of the Holy Ghost; and to have been convinced that some method, simply human, must be sought, to account for the accordance between these two epistles. Some have supposed, with Bishop Sherlock, that both authors drew their materials from a common source, the imagery and phraseology of which they freely used. But as Eschhorn has well observed, "This conjecture is an insufficient support for this supposition, in the absence of all trace of any document

\* Credibility of the Gospel History. Supplement, ch. xx.

† "It seems very unlikely that St. Jude should write so similar an epistle, if he had seen St. Peter's. In any case, St. Jude would not have thought it profitable for him to write a letter, if he had formed a design of writing, and had seen such an epistle of one of the apostles, very suitable to his own thoughts and intentions, I think he would not forbear to write it.—Cred. vol. ii.

‡ Michaelis's Dissert. on the N. T. ch. xx. sec. 2.



giving plausibility to the suggestion, by disclosing a source in common relation with the corresponding passages of the two epistles." " If this explanation be untenable, nothing remains but to conclude that one of the writers copied from the other; and thus, accordingly, has been the general opinion of theologians. This, however, is the only point on which critics are agreed: for when the question is proposed, whether St. Peter or St. Jude were the original writer, it is curious to observe the confidence with which each of the two answers may be returned, and the opposite views which may be taken of the considerations affecting the decision. In the absence of all external evidence, the intrinsic character of the two compositions must determine our reply: and the chief impression which results from a comparison of them is, that St. Jude has expressed his ideas with more succinctness and unity; St. Peter with more vagueness and amplification. Appealing to this circumstance, Dr. Hug says, "the critic cannot fail to perceive which was the original;" "it is evident that the passages of Peter are periphrases and amplifications;" "the simplicity of Jude is clear from the comparison of both authors, and especially from the language;" "From this, therefore, the Epistle of Jude bears him, and in his own manner applied it to his purposes." " Martinus, however, — he rejects the Epistle of Jude, and says that, "judging by its contents," we "have no inducement to believe it a sacred and divine work," — ventures on the following confident statements: "No doubt can be made that the second Epistle of St. Peter was, in respect to the Epistle of St. Jude, the original and not the copy;" "with respect to the date of this (Jude's) Epistle, all that I am able to assert is, that it was written after the second Epistle of St. Peter;" "this appears from a comparison of the two, which are so similar to each other both in sentiments and in expressions, as no two epistles could well be, unless the author of the one had read the epistle of the other: it is evident, therefore, that St. Jude borrowed from St. Peter both expressions and arguments, to which he himself has made some few additions."\*

After reading these positive statements on either side, we are struck with the justice of the following remark of Eusebius's — referring to the differences between the two epistles in respect to their

\* *Deheri's Eusebii in duos Tomos, vol. 2.*

\* *De. 2. c. 11. p. 13. Introduction to the New Testament, translated by Dr. West, vol. 165, 17.*

† *Martin's Bibliotheca, tom. 1. p. 11. ch. xxiv. par. 2. 2.*

style, he says: "These phenomena admit of a twofold explanation. Peter might be regarded as the original and Jude as the copy, inasmuch as, in the process of revision, a writing may become more perfect in the expression and disposition of the ideas; the superfluous will naturally be retracted, the march of the thoughts become quicker, the diction more choice, the copyist having the matter all before him, and being able to direct his attention exclusively to the form which it shall assume. But with just as much truth we might turn round and say, — Jude was the original, when Peter illustrated, amplified, and paraphrased. In the process, the style lost its unity, its compactness, its clear outline: the paraphrast interrupted the succession of thoughts with several foreign ideas, and the exposition of the subject thus became more obscure, prolix, and disorderly. Who can decide between these two possibilities?"

This acute author does not, however, consider the problem of impossible solution. The response in which its difficulty holds us, confesses, he observes, "only so long as we confine ourselves merely to a mutual comparison of the parallel passages. If we look at them in their relation to the whole of St. Peter's second epistle, we find a reason for concluding that Jude is original, Peter the copyist. The author of the second chapter of Peter does not stand, as a writer, on his own ground: if he did, his mode of writing would be the same as in the first and third chapters, which, however, is not the case. It is clear that we cannot apply to Jude this test of originality, derived from consistency of style; for we possess no other composition of his, with which to compare his epistle. Yet there is a compactness and unity in his writing, from which its independent character may be inferred. Whoever is content to take up the thoughts of others, yet yet without introducing something of his own, is easily drawn aside by accessory ideas; by which the definite outline of a composition is lost. This is by no means the case in the epistle of Jude."

It is generally admitted, then, that these two productions, as far as their topics coincide, constitute but one authority; and we shall follow, I think, the most judicious criticism, if we assign that authority, whatever it may be, to the epistle of Jude. Whence, then, did he derive his knowledge of such circumstances as those which are mentioned in the sixth and ninth verses, respecting "the angels

which kept not their first estate," and "Michael the archangel contending with the Devil" "about the body of Moses." There are but three supposable sources, immediate personal inspiration, the Hebrew Scriptures, or some non-canonical and non-literative work.

The first of these suppositions I do not find to be maintained by any credible theological writer; and it may be dismissed with the following remarks of Michaelis:—"The dispute between Michael and the Devil about the body of Moses, has by no means the appearance of a true history, and the author of our epistle has not even hinted that he knew it to be true by the aid of Divine inspiration, or that he distinguished it from other Jewish traditions. On the contrary, he has introduced it as part of a story, with which his readers were already acquainted: he does not appear to have had any other authority for it, than they themselves had: nor does the part which he has quoted at all imply, either that he himself doubted, or that he wished his readers should doubt, of the other parts of it."<sup>1</sup>

The second supposition, that the writer makes no allusion, on these points of celestial history, to any thing beyond the Old Testament, is so universally regarded as untenable, that even Lardner's great authority will hardly avail to procure it any farther attention. To what part of the Hebrew Scriptures St. Jude obtained his information respecting the fallen angels, Lardner, while deploring a like omission on the part of his predecessors, has neglected to explain. And when, in order to connect the story of Michael and the Devil with *Zech. iii.* 1-2, he is obliged to construe "the body of Moses" into *the Jewish people*, it surely becomes evident that the consideration of this passage never fully engaged his incomparable judgment. Happily, Lardner's is a reputation of which there is no need to be economical, and even theological opponents cannot apply to him the description which, with some truth and more severity, they have given of Mr. Wakefield, as a "scholar, who was great among Unitarians, but not among scholars."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Quoniam biederget herum non esse in se, et idea Indigne quodque, et beo dicitur: Memerit.*

There remains, then, but the third supposition, that St. Jude de-

<sup>2</sup> *Martha's Miscellany*, 2<sup>d</sup> ed. vol. 2. p. 4.

<sup>3</sup> For a different interpretation of Lardner's interpretation, see the following account: *Martha's Miscellany*.

veal these notices of the supernatural world from some apocryphal and traditional work. And we need the less scruple to admit this, as he himself intimates the fact, in the fourteenth verse, where he refers to the *Book of Enoch*. This work professes to be extant in the *Aethiopic* language; and the copies of it contain the passage cited by St. Jude; and whatever doubts may attach to Bishop Lawrence's opinion, that we have it substantially as it was originally written shortly before the time of Christ, the citations from the "Book of Enoch," by Synesius, and the references to it by both Greek and Latin Fathers, are too numerous and ancient, to leave it questionable that such a work existed, and was in use not long after the Christian era, and probably before. Hug gives this account of it:—"The Book of Enoch, in Lat. was full of Jewish, Theurgical, and Magical reveries, as indeed the character of the person, to whom this writing was ascribed, required it to be. According to Eusebius, he is said to have been the inventor of Astrology, or rather a scholar of the Arabs in this science, who initiated him into the mysteries of it, for he had at one time obtained a vision of the Angels, on which occasion he probably received their instruction. But it did not suffice, that he was acquainted with the course of the planets, the position of the Elements, and their signification; but he likewise, as the Jews and other Easterns transmitted, learned in addition from the heavenly powers, the art of prognostication, divinations, offerings, purifications, instructions, and other things of this description, which he imparted to mankind. According to these ideas, which were entertained of him far and wide among Jews, Arabians, and others, we can easily determine, to what sort of literature his writings must belong. The remains of it, which we find in the Church-Fathers also, do not deceive this expectation."<sup>3</sup>

Though this is the only Apocryphal production to which St. Jude refers by name, Origen informs us, in a passage already cited, that the adventure between Michael and the Devil was taken from a work entitled *Asdrago* or *Asdrago's Memoirs*. "From a comparison of the reading in this work with St. Jude's quotation," says Michaelis, "he was thoroughly persuaded, that it was the book from which St. Jude quoted. This he asserts without the least hesitation, and in consequence of this persuasion, he himself has quoted the Assumption of Moses, as a work of authority, in proof of the tempta-

<sup>3</sup> Hug's Introduction, see 123.

tion of Adam and Eve by the Devil. But as he has quoted it merely for this purpose, he has given us only an imperfect account of what this book contained, relative to the dispute about the body of Moses. One circumstance, however, he has mentioned which is not found in the epistle of St. Jude, namely, that Michael reproached the Devil with having possessed the serpent which seduced Eve. In what manner this circumstance is connected with the dispute about the body of Moses will appear from the following consideration. The Jews imagined the person of Moses was so holy, that God could find no reason for permitting him to die; and that nothing but the sin committed by Adam and Eve in paradise, which brought death into the world, was the cause why Moses did not live for ever. The same notions they entertained of some other very holy persons, for instance of Enoch, who, they say, was delivered to the angels of death, merely on account of the sins of our first parents, though he himself did not deserve to die. Now in the dispute between Michael and the Devil about Moses, the Devil was the accuser, and denounced the death of Moses. Michael therefore replied to him, that he himself was the cause of that sin, which alone could occasion the death of Moses. How very little such notions as these agree, either with the Christian theology, or with Moses' own writings, it is unnecessary for me to declare.\*

The direct testimony of Origen should be taken in conjunction with the well-known fact, that this story of Michael and the Devil is one of the standing traditions of the Jewish people; the invention of a remote antiquity; and repeated ever since by a multitude of Rabbinical writers. A specimen of the legend may be found by the curious in the section of Michaela, from which I have quoted the foregoing passage. With respect to the remark which we must now go to seek an alleged fact, the same author observes: "It lies without the circle of human experience, and therefore it cannot be attested by any man, unless he has either divine inspiration, or has intercourse with beings of a superior order. Consequently, whoever was the author of the apocryphal book, from which the quotation was made, his account cannot possibly command assent."† This remark evidently applies, not only to the story of Michael, but to the tradition of the Fallen Angels, which, there is every reason to be-

\* Mason's *Moses*, p. 161, 162, 173, 174.  
† Mason's *Moses*, p. 173.

lieve, must have been derived from a like apocryphal source, especially as we have the express assurance of Tertullian, that the Book of Enoch treated of the nature, office, and fate of fallen beings."

This author, then, has unprofessionally "made use of Jewish traditions, which have no existence but in apocryphal books,"† and therefore no claim on our belief. "I know of no other method of violating the quotation," says Michaelis, "than by supposing that St. Jude considered the whole story, not as a real fact, which either he himself believed, or which he required his readers to believe, but merely as an instructive fable, which served to illustrate the doctrine which he himself inculcated, that we ought not to speak evil of dignities."‡ Hug resorts to an explanation of this kind; and conceives that St. Jude employs apocryphal weapons of persuasion, as best adapted to confound the Heretics whom he assailed: "It may be said: but if his illustrations and examples from the supernatural world be thus destitute of intrinsic authority and truth, and we must be sceptics before we can feel their force, what becomes of the orthodox doctrine of fallen Angels?"

\* De Iohanne, c. 1, s. 3. De Iohanne, c. 2, s. 13. De calcinatione, c. 16, as cited by Hug, loc. cit.

† Freytag's *Lex.* viii. 4, § 296.

‡ *Id.* c. 2. Michaelis adds a note, which may perhaps be still appropriate in England at this Century: "To the Jews, which St. Jude mentions by the quotation, that we ought not to speak evil of dignities, was even of the fallen angels, but that we should leave judgment to God, I have no objection. And I really think, that they transgress the bounds of propriety, who make it their business, that in the pursuit of their writings, to represent the Devil as an object of detestation; and, notwithstanding his fall, he is still a being of a superior order. This is an instance of a certain ornament, which Metastaseus put upon in the neighbourhood of the river Zala, in Hungary, and which, for the same reason as that which I have just mentioned, will not suffer any one to speak evil of the Devil."

§ *Id.* c. 10.

## LECTURE XII.

### THE CHRISTIAN VIEW OF RETRIBUTION HEREAFTER

BY REV. HENRY GILES

AND HE SAID TO ANANIAS, WHAT THOU WILT TO BE ABOVE DID THE LORDS AND HE SAID, I DO WILL TO BE ABOVE, BEEN UNTO DEATH. THEN SAID THE LORD, THOU HAST CITY ON THE GROUND FOR WHICH THOU HAST NOT LAOURED, NEITHER MADEST IT GROW, WHICH CAME UP IN A NIGHT AND PERISHED IN A NIGHT, AND SHOULD NOT ESCAPE NINETEEN, THAT GREAT CITY, WHEREIN ARE MORE THAN SIX SCORE THOUSAND PERSONS THAT CANNOT DIFFER BETWEEN THEIR RIGHT HAND AND THEIR LEFT? JOH. 19. 12, 13.

PAIN affects us, as it can be near to us. The war of France, or any other calamity that affects a nation afar off, is but a vague report or a distant rumour; it may not pass unheard, but comparatively it is not felt. It requires that grief shall touch and sting us in our selfishness; that we may know fully and truly what it inflicts on others. And it is thus that God at once rebukes and cures our insensibility, by bringing loss and sorrow home to our own souls: the wretched guard wrong tears from the early and unamiable prophet, but the prospect of Nineveh with her mighty population in ashes had nothing with which to touch the feelings of his sorrow.

Admitting as I thus do that there is much of selfishness in our nature, yet persuaded that there is also much of sympathy and mercy in it, taking rather the character of God, or that of man as a criterion, I have long regarded the belief of eternal punishment as one of these moral paradoxes which you cannot deny, and for which you cannot account. Most of

human creatures, so far as they accord with their humanity, shrink from inflicting or beholding pain, and when they can inflict it wantonly, or behold it without compassion, we can pronounce on them no sentence of deeper reprobation than to call them *inhuman*. We tread not knowingly on the crawling worm; we hear not insensibly the inarticulate wail of the sick and dumb animal; and yet many of us who would not look onered on the last species of an expiring dog, can believe that God regards with ruthless sternness the eternal tortures of numberless eternal spirits. We cannot gaze without compassion on the tear in the infant's speechless eye, and yet some of us can believe that God has created such beings to look up through all eternity from hopeless torture. We cannot think on the racks by which tyrant-man has tortured his brother-man, - on the dungeons in which he has imprisoned him, and shot out from him the sun of Heaven and the breath of nature, without a feeling of repugnance and a sentiment of indignation, and yet Christians can believe that God, whom they call "the good, the merciful," has constructed for his creatures means of unending anguish and dungeons of boundless darkness, where the smile of hope never gleams, where the light of mercy never comes. We lament war, and yet, if orthodox, we believe that God maintains in his dominions regions of everlasting warfare; we lament the madness and abuse of passion, and yet, if orthodox, we must believe that God allows that madness and abuse to be eternalized in all their extreme malignity. We lament physical and mental suffering; except on the visitation of mercy none of us would desire to go through the lazar house, where despair and anguish lie low together, where the head is heavy and the pulse is fevered; or through those asylums which give refuge to humanity in its last calamity, and its worst; and yet, if orthodox, we can believe that God perpetuates through-out everlasting ages the worst evils of the body, the dirtiest passions, and the most awful madness of the soul. And yet

this great, this glorious universe is his - as his responsibility - it came not up in a night, it is not to perish in a night - the earth is long to be green, and the heavens are to be bright. Throughout the space that has no limit, throughout the time that has no end, the stars are to shine, and systems are to move onward in their unmeasured and their trackless glory. And yet, if orthodox, we must believe there is an endless hell whose number of torment must ascend for ever against their brightness. These, the works of God's hands, are marred - the majesty of His power defaced - Paradise is made a wilderness, and hell is made populous. If we think of the world with any degree of realizing truth, we shall feel this result to be most tremendous, and we shall wonder that God with infinite power should have created such a lovely universe to be defaced; that he should have peopled it with such capacities for good, to be exercised for ever only in the production of evil; that he should have given them immense and eternal capacities only to be immense and eternal capacities for misery. Thus, if true, is the greatest miracle and the greatest mystery unquestionably in the divine government.

This subject committed to my charge I feel to be truly solemn and awful. Next to the idea of a God, that of a future state is the most important. The character we ascribe to God operates on our own, or is created by it; and so our conceptions of the future life reacts on human conduct, and human sentiments. We may see this plainly in the exaggerations and abuses with which harsh views of the future life have clouded the Christian church, and poisoned the heart of Christendom. These gloomy sentiments from many robbed religions of solace, and the happiness of peace. I have seen hearts saddened and convulsed by visions of Calvinism. I have heard them long for revolution as a consummation most desirable - not in the reverse of yet, but in the tortures of superstition. I have seen them look forward with

placata to the church-yard turf under which they were to rest for ever from their troubles, and sleep in peace their "eternal sleep." This somnolent belief has at once desolated and darkened earths. Faith it has turned to a boundless fear: the dread of the future it makes the bitterness of the present, and is equally the parent of stern self-infliction, or of remorseless intolerance. It was this that in older days drove the ascetic to the desert; that made nature and the face of his fellow hateful to him; that filled his ferocious solitude with uncertainly terrors; that trained, instead of a saint, a theological savage: it was this which aroused religious wars; which infused into these wars a spirit of fury; that demonised humanity; that made a most merciful nature a stranger to mercy. It was this which brought man in nearest resemblance to that vile and wicked being whose his worst and blackest passions had formed: it was this belief that tore out the heart of flesh and put in its place the heart of stone—a heart which no appeal could soften, and which no appeal could move. It was not until there was a hell without hope, that there was a heart without mercy. I believe it to be quite capable of proof, that no more worldly wickedness has ever cursed mankind with so many sufferings as the belief of this doctrine; that has ever heaped on them so many cruelties, and made them agents of cruelties in return. Why have wars for religion ever been the worst? The reason is obvious: the soldiers of religion are not soldiers of flesh; the soldiers of religion enter into no earthly service; they enlist under the god of battles and of vengeance. It is against the hated, and the vile, and the accursed, and the lost, they carry destruction, they are but the executioners of the righteous decrees of God, and theirs are the championship of piety, and the eulogy of heaven. When the weak contend with the weak, mutual need begets mutual mercy: but when the natural ferocity of passion assumes the authority of God, and clothes itself with the armour of the skies, the gulf in which

all charity is buried, is broad and unfathomable as time which is commonly placed between heaven and hell. This belief was one of the main causes of the most horrible religious persecutions. It was not until the generous and gentle sensibility of the religious nature was debased by coarse picturings of physical tortures and of endless miseries, that the sacerdotal arm became terrible as death, and the sacerdotal spirit was drenched in wrath as fire and unceasing as that which they fashioned beyond the grave. Before priestly and popular imaginations God became an awful punisher. They created in heaven a throne of inexorable judgment, and from that throne the word of fate went forth which could but once be spoken, and cut off hope for ever. They freed themselves from human computations, and emulated the stern despotism which they preached or believed. Fear is the parent of cruelty—and in religion, as in character, the slavish spirit is ever the most unfeeling. The truth is, that whether in idea or in act, familiarity with torture stupifies the heart and indurates the senses. That frequent contemplation of pain destroys sympathy, and that pain, when once it can be carelessly seen, can be easily inflicted, are facts which observation has placed beyond the need of argument, and experience beyond the reach of contradiction.

In this Lecture I propose two objects:—First, to state my views on moral retribution, which in essentials I apprehend are those of Unitarians in general: Secondly, to examine the arguments which are advanced in favour of eternal torture, and to state my reasons for not believing them. I shall try to the utmost of my power to condense what I have to say, but I hope for your indulgence in return, if on a subject of such compass—on which so many volumes have been written—there should be some omissions. The end of this or any other lecture can never be to expound an important topic in all its completeness, so much as to suggest and excite inquiry concerning it.

I shall, in the first place, enter on the positive section of my lecture; and on this point, I am sorry to say that the frequent re-assertion of mistakes regarding our doctrines will put me to the painful necessity of much repetition.

1.—I commence with a few remarks on the nature of sin. One essential characteristic on which we have insisted—and we believe what we have asserted—is, that sin is a deep spiritual injury. The source of it is in the soul; it is the dark corruption of an evil heart. This I take to be one of the greatest and profoundest revelations of Christ, one which places him infinitely above all other moral teachers, and which makes Christianity the highest scheme of moral duty. False religions and false philosophies have been all at variance with this inward sense of duty. They have contrived unnumbered inventions as substitutes for it, or devised most ingenious means to nullify it. Priesthoods, with most imposing authority and mystical influence, have offered all sorts of spiritual panaceas to ease the wounded conscience. Ceremonies, with all graceful gestures and solemn import, have presented their beauty to the senses, and their spell to the fancies of superstition. Sacrifices without number—from the turtle-dove to the hecatomb, from the scape-goat driven to the desert, to the human being slaughtered to God; from the blood of life swelling round a thousand altars of vengeance, to the flowers and the fruits that were heaped upon the altars of mercy—all these have been tried to make religion for the senses, to make religion a flattery and delusion: but all were not sufficient; conscience is stronger than rituals, and to that conscience, to that spirit of God in the soul of man, Christ came; to that he was the Apostle and to that he preached. Christ went at once into the soul; he pierced the veil of sophistries and deceptions by which men are ingenious to discover excuses to cover their selfishness and their wrong doings; he went to the seat of the evil, and struck at once to the root of bitterness. Others baptized with water, cleansing merely the out-

side, but he baptized with fire and the holy spirit, going to the innermost thoughts of the heart and the veins;—others preached on the keeping of feast-days and fast-days, but he taught of that God who is not the Lord of times or seasons, but the God of life in every hour—the God of the whole universe in every motion;—others called men to go to the temple, Christ called them to go into their closets and commune with their hearts;—others told them to wash their hands, Christ exhorted them rather to cleanse their spirits;—others told them to fear men who could kill the body, Christ warned them not to fear men who could only kill the body, but to fear God who could kill the soul as well as the body. He was truly the prophet of eternity—the preacher for eternity. He was truly the preacher of the invisible, and the herald of it—He needed not that any should testify of man, for he knew what was in man—he required no testimony, for he had the knowledge of humanity in his own nature deep and true, but guiltless—and he spake out of the fullness of his own full heart: it was therefore that he spake as never man spake: it was therefore that the common people heard him gladly—for his words had power to those thoughts and affections which are native to bosoms of all men, it was therefore that he spake with authority, and not as the scribes: for they discoursed on the traditions of the fathers, but he appealed to the inspirations of God—they spake of what had been written on tables of stones, but he spoke of what had been written on the fleshy tables of the heart. Others made sin to consist in resistance to the priest or to the king—but Christ showed it to be an alienation of the soul from God, the apostacy of the conscience from its own sense of duty. It is that which is within, he taught, that defiles the man, a man may wash his hands seven times a-day, but not once cleanse his heart; he may often wash his hands, and yet never in innocency. He showed that sepulchres might be beautified outside, and inside be only rottenness and corruption.—His

apostles learned of him this most profound, most divine philosophy, and so they preached it to the world. To be carnally minded, says Paul, is death; to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Whosoever, says the same apostle, a man sows, that shall he also reap; he that sows to the flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption, but he that sows to the spirit, shall of the spirit reap everlasting life. Last, (for evil desire,) saith Saint James, when it hath conceived, bringeth forth sin, and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death. Thus is the gospel doctrine of the inwardness and spirituality of sin; and we preach no other gospel, and we teach no other doctrine. A solemn consequence attaches to our view, which is also powerfully enforced in the New Testament scriptures, but which the vicarious scheme tends directly to subvert — I mean the personal nature of transgression. Sin we hold to be no transferable quality; and this was most lucidly proved here by one of my brother lecturers. With the sinner himself lies the guilt, with him who contracts it it must lie; it cannot be acquired by imputation, nor can it be punished by imputation. If one doctrine be more clearly taught in scripture than another, it is this, that the offender shall be answerable only for his own sins; and for these, as surely as there are a conscience, a future world, and a God, he must be answerable.—Every man, our Saviour declares, shall be judged according to his own works. Every one of us, the Apostle Paul asserts, shall give an account of himself to God. But no, saith orthodoxy, you must also be answerable for Adam, and upon your head must be a guilt that darkened the very dawn of creation; and so upon this principle guilt should descend from sire to son; the later we are in existence, the more tremendous should be this growing mountain of imputation, until the last man should sink under the burden of all the crime which had been from the first man to himself.—We are told that Unitarians are in the light of sin. But, I ask, what does orthodoxy make of justice? And I further

ask, what does it make of scripture? If there were a judge on earth who decided as orthodoxy decides, he would be scouted as a monster; if there were a code of laws which contained such a standard, the common moral sense of mankind would reject it; nay, there is not a tribe of savages in the habitable world so blind to the idea of justice as not to repel the dogma of imputed and eternal punishment. And yet we are gravely told that God thus acts, and that the Bible thus teaches; we are constantly rebuked as wanting in faith and humility, because we can find no such principles in either providence or the Bible. The plain declaration of the prophet Ezekiel contains the spirit of both. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father; neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son; the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him." As certainly as we have a moral sense, as surely as we can discern between right and wrong, we are compelled to acknowledge the one and utterly to repudiate the other. Give but the conscience justice, let common sense have but the slightest voice in the decision, and you might as easily attempt to gain a man's assent to the broadest of contradictions, even to the admission that a part is equal to the whole, or that two and two are five, as to feel guilty for another man's crime, to feel remorse for another man's wrong-doing, to be penitent or humble for that in which we had no participation, or to confess the justice of punishment by a sentence which made him criminal before his existence. On the moral injuries of thus forcing men to contradict the first dictates of their nature, of destroying the personality of virtue on the one side by an imputed righteousness, and the personality of sin on the other by an imputed guilt, I intend not here to enlarge; but our evil I will just allude to; I mean the wrong it does to truth of sentiment. Feelings in the moral existence, which are most excellent and most beautiful, it distorts and falsifies. There are no



virtues on earth that bring men nearer to heaven than humility and repentance. To be humble with a true humility is to be in the likeness of Christ; to be penitent with a true repentance is to be an object of rejoicing even to the angels of heaven; but when we hear it said that we are to be of lowly mind on account of inherited corruption, and penitent for imputed sin; when we try to force ourselves into emotions which are not native to the soul, unconsciously we undermine its simplicity and sincerity, and instead of virtues which must be of spontaneous growth, or not exist at all, we have sickly abortions of sentiment that are false, because unnatural, strained efforts that are at eternal war with experience; and high-sounding phrases that are as empty as echo and as cold as the frozen blast. Perverasions like these are almost worse than vices, for vices, though they mar the life, may leave the moral judgment its integrity. Where there is true conviction there may be amendment, but when the inward sense is itself diseased, the case is all but hopeless. Whatever be the evil of sin, whatever be its punishment; whether the evil be infinite or limited, whether the punishment be eternal or temporal, let us at least beware of weakening that sentiment on which all morality is founded, the deep sense of personal responsibility. Unitarian views are often described as being unfavourable to spirituality; but if by spirituality I am to understand the inward life of man, the activity of his mental and moral energies, then I think these views eminently spiritual. The spirit of man is their great subject, and the spirit of God in the human, their great agency of salvation. Within the soul itself they place moral salvation or moral destruction, and within the soul itself they place the elements which constitute one or the other, the sense of guilt which makes its hell, the conscious holiness which makes its heaven. This inward power of conscience is the true distinction of spiritual life; and the righteous submission to it in our own hearts, we maintain, is the faith which justifies: a faith which

is an indwelling vitality which consists not in forming propositions about God and Christ, and in enforcing them or submitting to them, but in making God and Christ realities in our secret thoughts; an confidence in the worth of goodness, in allegiance to duty, and in trust in the power and immortality of truth.

2. Next I affirm that sin is evil, and that sin is punishable; and our doctrines make not light of the evil, or disguise the usefulness of the punishment. Sin is evil: we deny not that: how could we? It is an eternal truth written on the heart and life of man, proved with unequivocal and glowing evidence in the whole history of the world. Sin is evil to the individual; evil in the sufferings it prepares for him, and a still greater evil when it hardens him beyond suffering. Each one of us will judge this question for himself according to his degree of moral sensibility, and according to the circumstances of his moral history; but whatever be that sensibility, or whatever be that history, our moments of most profound anguish have ever been those in which we have felt the shameful consciousness of wrong thoughts or wrong actions. Not, it is true, when the evil passions or evil deeds hold their tyrannical sway over us, but when the spell was gone, when the mind's eye grew clear, and the hour of reflection came with sorrow, and the sad pale light spread over the hand-writing on the wall, from which conscience might shrink but could not fail to read. The worst, the most hardened, the most degraded of human creatures, these whom the world may think has hidden farewell to conscience, have moments in the dark silence of thought when the sword of remorse with all its poisonous furies sinks into their wounded bosoms. And in such hours, it is not outward loss, or outward suffering, but inward agony that afflicts them most; it is not that they have sunk into the dregs of poverty; it is not that they have been reduced to dependence and exposed to insult; it is not that pain passes them with cold and wither-

ing scorn; it is not that pity and hope seem banished from their path; that all appear to brown upon them; that externally for them there is no longer peace on earth or light in heaven—it is, that the brightness and the fervency of their own hearts are gone; that sacred affections are a waste; that conscience, when not silenced into apathy, is enraged into an accuser; that their own respect is lost beyond recovery, and no delusion, however self-deceiving, can again restore it. The heart-consuming grief, the wrath and tribulation treasured up in a life of sin, the righteous judge of the earth alone can know. And these are all the more bitter if that life had ever been blessed with holier associations. There is a courage which can repel the scowl of others; there is a pride, a modesty, if you will, which can despise their opinions, or feel independent of their esteem; there is a fortitude which can endure physical suffering to its last infliction; but there is nothing in time, in place, or in circumstance, which can fortify us against our own thoughts, against our own feelings, and especially the feelings of the divinity within us. That struggle to the last for empire over evil: that come ever and ever to tell us of what we had of good or might have had, that haunt us with reproof and sorrow when we have become traitors to our better nature. Not to speak of conscience with its stinging sense of violated conviction; not to speak of wasted time, ruined power, and a wreck of hopes; to say nothing of alienation from God, and the fear of a future world, I can conceive of memory dwelling on spots, which once were spots of light, becoming the tormentor of a fallen soul, the vindicator of duty and of God. I can conceive of one looking back from the bare desolateness of sin to a youth that once had been pure, full of joy and full of virtue, to homes that had been glad with every affection that sweetens life, to sabbaths that had repose for the stainless spirit, and prayer for unpolluted lips; gazing with breaking hearts and weeping eyes over a part marked with vice and misery, that had been a future

glorious with promise: all this I can conceive in connection with even the felon in his cell, or with some wretch whose count, like a knoll of despair, awakens the midnight silence of the street, whose latest pang is spent in some hidden retreat of sigh and sorrow, of sin and lostness.

I need not say that sin is a great social evil. The fact is urged upon us with too painful a pressure, both from history and observation. Take the history of governments and nations; wars and bloodshed stain the record over its whole extent. And whence are these, but from the struggle and rivalry of selfish and sinful passions? From whence, says the apostle James, come wars and fightings among you; come they not hence, even of your lusts? From these we have had the oppression of strength against right. From these we have had the tyrannies and cruelties with which they surrounded their thrones of iron despotism; with which they made the glory of self the affliction of millions; with which so far as their power extended, they have been the scourges and the curses of mankind. From these we had the hatred one nation against another, one army against each other to hew each other down, doing all iniquities, when interest or ambition called for them, enslaving one another, and selling one another, unmindful of all the claims of fraternity in the dar of faction, and losing the sense of their common humanity in the difference of climate or the colour of the skin. Take the history of laws. I shall not allege those of the criminal code which not very recently made even Christian and enlightened countries vast arenas of legalised assassination, which spread a reign of terror over the face of empires, making the scaffold and the gibbet their principal symbols of civilization, and multiplying to enormous extent the very crimes, which, pretending to punish, they only publicly authorized and exemplified. I speak here more particularly of the spirit of partiality, injustice, selfishness, and rapacity in which much of legislation has been conceived and executed:

classes of men turning the laws to their own purposes and leaving those unprotected who most required protection; commonly preying most on those who least could bear it. Except where the general sentiment of human right has been too strong for narrow passions, we may see in the long course of ages, principle sacrificed to personal interests, the good of masses betrayed or despised, the poor scattered, the ignorant neglected, the privileged orders belted about with all sorts of protection, the classification of crime and criminals most unfairly adjusted, the distribution of penalties most unrighteously allotted; this I ascribe to selfish and evil passions. Once more, take the history of religion, and you have all the anger of faction made more stern with the reality of Creeds; the ambition of earthly dominion more aspiring by the addition of spiritual rule also; the powers of this world made more fearful by the powers of the world to come; both the visible and invisible existence subjected to priestly empire, and made tributary to priestly aggrandizement; the sword of the civil magistrate which had been sharp enough with one edge to deal the vengeance of man, receiving another edge from ecclesiastical authority, to vindicate the judgments of God. Thus we are compelled to read history, and thus in all its departments we are compelled to witness the dark traces which sin has left upon its pages. When we turn to the world around us, these evils are not the less glaring. Many sufferings, no doubt, are to be ascribed to our natural wants and weakness, but they scarcely deserve to be called evils, when we compare them with those which spring from moral derangements. Poverty is not so great an affliction as an all-devouring love for gain, sickness is not so great a misfortune as an insatiate desire for pleasure, and the ills of poverty and pain together, are not as fatal as the irritable wish for distinction which rules so widely in the world, with its fierce blood of turbulent passions. To these there are to be ascribed the worst woe-worms that grieve the best

hearts, and to remove or ameliorate which the finest spirits have ever directed their labours. To these we are to ascribe the covetousness which closes the hand of bounty, and shuts up the bowels of compassion, which becomes insensible both to justice and mercy; to these we are to ascribe all forms of sensuality, and all the diseases of passion; to these we are to ascribe all vices, material or malignant—and who, though he had the capacious mind of an archangel, can count the miseries which in all shapes spread contagion through society? Independently of those evils which no human eye can reach, those which present themselves on the very surface of observation are sufficiently extensive and fearful, intemperance, ignorance, grossness, hatred, stripes, with all their gloomy appendages; of unhappy homes; of loud and laughing and blushing infamy; of mad licentiousness, and late despair; of lost health, lost honesty, lost reason, which respectively close their career in the hospital, the prison, or the lunatic asylum.

3. As to evidence, then, for the existence of guilt, as to its extent and its evil, I think I can go as far as any Calvinist. I see the fact, and I have no wish to disguise it; it startles, but it does not subvert my faith. I grant sin to be evil—evil in the inward spirit—evil on the outward life—evil to the individual—evil to the species—evil in this world—evil in the next. In a certain sense, I am not prepared to deny that it leaves injurious consequences, which may be eternal; that the loss of innocence, that subversion of moral tastes, may implant habits which, for aught I know, shall be an everlasting injury to the soul, not actually to destroy its happiness, or stop its progression, but to deprive it of advantages and advancement which a purer moral state would have given it. The evils of sin I hold to be terrible; the penalty of sin I hold to be inevitable—to be removed by no sacrifice, to be washed out by no expiation—to be escaped only in the criminals rising out of the corrup-

tion by experience and wisdom, to a purer moral state. The punishment of sin I believe to be not only inevitable, but also enduring, enduring in proportion to indulgence and malignity. Thoughts, I admit, which have wrought themselves into the very texture of the intellectual nature: feelings which have rooted themselves into the heart; habits that have grown into instinct, are not speedily to be destroyed. Moral punishment, in any idea, is identical with moral discipline, and moral discipline I consider to be such an arrangement of circumstances in the providence of God as shall lead us to self-correction; such a process of spiritual training as leave us the consciousness of our own liberty, but yet accomplish God's wise ends by God's boundless power. In building, then, the structure of our character, our Creator works not by miracle, but by experience, and this experience may be slow and painful. I believe most sincerely and profoundly in a future punishment: not vindictive, but corrective—for all wise punishment is, and must be, corrective. That the dispensations of God are not completed in this life, I think all the moral aspects of things here below make most manifest, and all analogies intimate, if Scripture had not expressly declared, that after death there is to be a more distinct exhibition of the divine government. That the results of character formed in the present life are to be carried into the future, and to influence it, I conceive our whole nature argues. Our existence, as spiritual beings, is properly connected and continuous; one state prognosticates another; and no two are absolutely distinct and separate. Our spiritual life consists of thought united to thought, and feeling to feeling, one operating on the other, or producing it, of a mysterious chain of consciousness, bound from link to link by successive memories, preserving unbroken the identity of our existence. Manhood is the growth of our youth, and immortality is the growth of our manhood; and the impressions of character pass from one stage to another, along the line of succession and

sequence. There are no extremes, except to our outward observation. Looking at one stage of life, and then, after a long interval, seeing in the same person the apparently opposite characteristics, we take those things to be antagonists which are bound together by the inevitable connexion of cause and effect. The dreamer of youth becomes, perhaps, the misanthropist of age; the prodigal of youth, it may be, grows into the miser of age; the principle of action may in each case be the same—vanity or self-love; the passion is identical in principle, and changed only in form, from a change in circumstances. If we should meet an honest rustic in his peaceful fields, innocent and contented; if we should afterwards, by accident behold him on a scaffold, it would be to us a seeming and terrible incongruity. But why? The two events are in our minds in naked contrast: could we, however, pierce the Spirit and trace the life of that unfortunate—watch it from the first intrusive evil thought successively dwell on; from actions slightly wrong, unceasingly reiterated and darkening with every repetition, until the last deadly violation, and the last awful deed, we should have an analysis of soul consistency and of profound interest. There is something sublime in the reflection, that every human creature who treads the earth and breathes the air, has an inward history, a history unread by every eye but God's; a history of solemn import, that has definite impression on the concerns of the universe, and is to live for ever in the annals of eternity.

In ordinary phraseology, we speak of our existence as if death made a chasm in it; but temporal and eternal are but distinctions of imagination; our eternal life commences, and our earthly is but the first stage, the infancy of that awful and endless existence. If I see in our nature that which can survive change, I see that also in it which can take materials of joy and sorrow along with it. The faculties that make our life here must be those which shall make that which is to come. Memory then will be there, which is but the re-

urrection of our by-gone experience; and whether for good or evil, it will call up the spirits of buried deeds, and as the life has been, will be an angel of heaven or a minister of hell,—imagination, which may have been the nurse of piety or the slave of passion,—intellect, which may have had the glow of the seraph or the nature of the demon: accordingly, then, as these powers have been properly directed or abused, every instinct of our moral nature tells us must be the joy of a righteous soul, or the agony of an evil heart. What treasure will the good man find he has laid up for his immortal life, when the past rises to him in the lustre of a new world: the consciousness of good thoughts and good actions, the peace of assimilation with God, and of union with the best of men: the immortal love of those with whom he had companioned in his earthly journey, the gratitude of many from whose eyes he had hoarded tears, and from whose bosoms he had plucked out despair: who has been true to the claims of his nature, and accomplished the work of a disciple of Christ, and a child of God, and a brother of man. On the other side, what are to be his feelings, who awakens in eternity with emotions of isolation and repulsion, condemned in his own conscience, who now discovers he has all to learn, which can fit him for the society of noble spirits, whose expanded faculties blush shame and sorrow on his guilty soul, and show him that his whole course was folly: the sensualist, who stultified his reason and profaned his affections: the hypocrite, that tailed but for the outward, betrayed his convictions, and was a living and incarnate lie: before his fellow, a visited sepulchre; before his God, a corrupted mass of falsehood: the profane man, on whose lips prayerfully dwelt, but to whom cursing and bitterness were familiar: the persecutor, who finds at last that he has hated or tormented others for a falsehood, or a sound: the man of wild ambition, who, despising the true glory which comes from God, and consists in doing right, spreads terror around him, in pursuing a phantom—the workling, whose spirit was en-

slaved to those treasures for which he wasted life, and which he has left behind him in the dust. The sense of right and wrong is powerful and eternal; and when bad men resist it, it may be safely trusted to effect its own work, both of re-education and of punishment.

II. I shall here review some of the arguments pleaded for the eternal misery of the wicked, and state briefly the grounds on which I reject it.

When we consider the mild and merciful spirit of the Gospel,—when we reflect on it as a revelation of divine love made manifest in the most perfect form of human love,—we are at first sight astonished that so tremendous an idea as that of an infinite and eternal hell could ever have been connected with it, or so wretched a one as a selfishness, and comparatively all but an unpeopled heaven. And truly this could have never been, had the doctrine of immortal life been apprehended in the full spirit of Christianity. But the fact of man's immortality made manifest in the Gospel has not generally been so apprehended, it has had from the first to contend against darkening and perverting influences. Converts to the faith of Christ brought with them many of the prejudices and errors of their former training, and what in the early ages of the church was the result of ignorance, in later ones became sacrificed into the testimony of faith. Those who came from heathen superstitions to the religion of Christ, brought with them minds filled with material images, their worship or their age left no means for any others; and their belief in a future existence of necessity became shaped by these associations. A sacrificial worship symbolized their gods of wrath, and what they had attributed to many, they were unable to dissociate from one; physical pains and pleasures comprehended their whole notion of retribution and reward, and these their Christianity made eternal. Their hell and their heaven were therefore fashioned from the rude conceptions of their previous superstitions, and from the symbolic language of the Gospel

crudely understood. The everlasting hell which thence grew out of the mistakes of the vulgar, and the speculations of the learned, it was too much the interest of priests to maintain, not to receive the sanction of the church with an earnest and zealous promulgation. Connected with other doctrines, what immense power was thus placed in the hands of ecclesiastics! With what deep and gloomy awe it shrouded the character of the priest! Once in the place of his ministry, he stood there not as the simple teacher of his brethren, and his equals, not as the mere expounder of his master's gospel, but as the commissioned delegate of heaven, authorized by God to denounce his everlasting wrath on the guilty, to wield the thunder of an eternal vengeance. We cannot estimate the power with which such a doctrine would invest the hierarchy, and we are not therefore surprised that it is the last which any orthodox priesthood would be willing to resign,—one of those prime doctrines, to deny which has ever been stamped as heresy, from Origen to Servetus. If even in these times, when protestantism and other causes have done so much to take away the reverence with which the ministry was once surrounded, highly-wrought pictures of endless misery give men not deemed to have any supernatural authority such influence over the minds of their hearers, such despotism over their feelings and their consciences, what must it have been when separation bent down the votaries before the church in prostrate submission, when the servants of her altar were regarded as the direct messengers of God,—as those ordained to stand between hell and heaven, with the key of both; to announce glad tidings, or empty the vials of indignation; to distribute God's grace, or to proclaim his malediction. Many causes have been assigned for the growth of ecclesiastical supremacy, but this doctrine I am persuaded was the greatest of all; the pivot on which, which raised its ambition to the stars, was greased around by the lightning and tempests of eternal terrors. The doctrine of eternal torments derives much strength from ecclesiastical

interest; and it is further sustained by all the logic of theological subtlety. Many writers on divinity seem to find a strange and morbid pleasure in describing the tortures of the wicked, both in nature and duration, exhausting all analogies to illustrate the incomprehensible, and all modes of thought and expression to explain the infinite. On this doctrine the transition from Romanism to Protestantism has impressed no change. If the Reformation broke some bonds that enslaved the freedom of religion, it removed no cloud which obscured its heaven: the fierce teachings of Augustine were only made more complete and systematic by the still fiercer doctrines of Calvin; and the dark spectra of eternal reprobation drawn in its outlines by the Carthaginian monk, received its last touches from the Geneva master: what in the olden church was broached only in the curious reasonings of the schools, has in Protestantism been made the staple material of theological declaration.

These doctrines have not only done much to obscure men's minds as to the condition of the wicked in a future state, but also to mislead them in an equal degree on that of the righteous. This we observe in many of the popular notions of heaven. To millions, heaven seems to be for the soul what the grave is for the body—a place of mere repose. If something more than this, an *elysium* for indolence, a kind of region of complacent idealism, where the faithful and elect are to enjoy ecstasies and prayer, musing and meditations, which the coarse struggles of earth forbade, in which the cares of the world left no time to engage,—the clear skies and still waters of paradise, the golden harps, the incense, and the music of angels, to relieve from weariness, strife, and pain, toil-worn and time-worn spirits. Nor is such a view of heaven ungrateful, tried as we are here with sin and tired as we are with labour; but this must not exhaust our thoughts of future bliss. Our highest happiness, even in heaven, must consist in highest action: no other happi-

ness can exist for a moral and intellectual being than that which calls his faculties into energy, and supplies both with materials and objects on which to engage them. Our ideas in general of heaven are too much those of negation or contrast. We are here in sojourn, we think only of home there; we are here in conflict, we think only of peace there; we are here in labour, and there we only picture our rest; we forget that all these are worth nothing but as means to higher purposes, unsuitable as final conditions to creatures who bear within them the life that is henceforth to go on with that of the All-creative God.

I may just observe here, and it is pleasant to be able to do so, that the opinion against which this Lecture is directed, is an illustration of the fact that heresies die out practically before they are renounced theoretically. It is well known to all who have recent orthodox preaching, or who read recent orthodox works on practical piety, how little compared with former times is the space now occupied in them by Satan and damnation. The imagination is not tortured as it once was, with all horrible and hideous representations of human suffering, which taste and devotion alike reject. Why, even in the Lecture of my reverend and respected opponent, though directly on the subject, all the repulsive features are lost in a most moderate and temperate exposition. Such errors let alone will gradually of themselves expire.

1. In support of the doctrine of eternal torments, it is in the first place pleaded that Scripture expressly declares it. This conclusion is founded principally on the words and phrases correspondent to our "ever," "everlasting," "for ever and ever," &c. That in numerous passages they imply duration without end or limit, we readily admit. It is needless to point them out. We are then told that this must be their invariable meaning, except some evident fragility in the object to which they are applied implies the contrary. To assert that they have the highest force when connected with

future punishment, is to assume what is to be proved; for the nature of the object is the very question in dispute. If we can show that the words have not unvarying literal application, then the subject is at least open to discussion; but if it be asserted they must mean endless duration, because future punishment is in its nature endless, the point is dogmatically decided, and there is no further possibility of argument. If every phrase of Scripture is to be taken as a rigid definition, then we are to believe that Christ held himself in his own hands when he said, "this is my body." Now the instances in the Bible, in all parts of it to which phrases disputed between us and our opponents indicated limited duration, and only that, are numerous beyond counting.—sometimes, not longer than a man's life, as when after certain conditions of compact, the slave is said to serve his master for ever. In other cases it is more extended, but still temporary; as when the land of Judea is called an everlasting possession; the law an everlasting covenant; the nation a people established for ever; the hierarchy an everlasting priesthood. As to the last, the writer to the Hebrews tells us, that "the priesthood being changed there is made a necessity of change also of the law; for there is verily a disannulling of the commandment going before for the weakness and unprofitableness of it."

*Aion* (the principal word in the Greek original), Mr. Simpson in his Essay on the duration of future rewards and punishments (p. 17) asserts, occurs about a hundred times in the New Testament, in seventy of which at least it is clearly used for limited duration. In the Septuagint translation of the Old Testament it is even repeated, and several times it is repeated twice, and in two instances signifies no longer a period than the life of one man only. "It is," says the same critic, "an observation of the utmost importance, that when

\* See Ex. xx. 1, 6. Lev. x. 4. 1 Cor. xv. 14. Gal. iii. 5, 13, 12. Num. xxx. 10.

עוֹנֵם OF עוֹנֵם, are applied to the future punishment of the wicked, they are never joined to life, immortality, incorruptibility, but are always connected with fire, or with that punishment, pain, or second death, which is effected by means of fire. Now since fire, which consumes or decomposes other perishable bodies, is itself of a dissoluble or perishable nature, this intimates a limitation of the period of time." The phrase, "everlasting fire," is plainly a metaphor, a metaphor which the Jews would be at no loss to understand: the associations which they derived from the fire in the valley of Hinnom would render it sufficiently intelligible.

The phraseology was familiar in the Old Testament. Fire unquenchable, fire not to be quenched, is used in many places in which it cannot be literal. Thus Jeremiah (xv. 7.) threatens the Jews, in the name of God, for their breach of the sabbath, "then will I kindle a fire in the gates (of Jerusalem,) and it shall devour the palaces thereof, and it shall not be quenched." So Isaiah (lxviii. 9, &c.), speaking of Idumea, "and the streams thereof shall be turned into pitch, and the dust thereof into brimstone, and the land thereof shall become burning pitch. It shall not be quenched night nor day: the smoke thereof shall go up for ever."—While on this part of the subject, I shall just allude to a remark made on Mr. Grundy's view of the text in which it is said of the wicked that their worm dieth not, and their fire is not quenched. After quoting a passage from Mr. Grundy's Discourse, and making some comment on it, the lecturer went on to assert, "In a note moreover, we are informed that the foregoing criticism is founded on the assumption of the passage really referring to future punishment, which, however, the preacher affirms it does not. For, he adds, we have before shewn, the worm has been long since dead, and for ages has the fire been quenched." The impression which this use of Mr. Grundy's language had a tendency to leave, is one wholly

foreign to his meaning; for it would seem to imply that Mr. Grundy asserted the extension already of retributive penalty in the future life. The plain import is, that our Lord used a metaphor taken from perishable things, which have, in fact, perished—and thence it cannot be proved that he referred to an eternal state of suffering. The allusion, as is well known, is taken from the close of Isaiah, where, of the worshippers going to Jerusalem, it is said, they shall look upon the carcases of the men that have transgressed, for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched. It is plain that here it means not eternity, and though applied by Christ to future punishment, it does not follow from the language that he means to imply unending punishment. Archbishop Newcome's language is as strong as Mr. Grundy's; for he also says, "in the valley of Hinnom, the worm died when its food failed—and the pile on which human sacrifices were burnt to Moloch was often extinguished." To the writer of the lectures which have been referred to, we are all deeply indebted for an example set us in times and under circumstances of which we can but little now estimate the difficulty, we owe him the tribute of our respect for an honest and fearless advocacy of truth, of mental and religious freedom, at the expense of painful and personal sacrifices.

Thus, while none of these passages that I have referred to prove this doctrine, there are many scriptures at utter variance with it. God is again and again called the father that created us. We are taught that he is good, and that his tender mercies are over all his works. God is love. He will not always chide, we are told, neither will he keep his anger for ever; that he will not cast off for ever; that he hath not shut up his tender mercies in anger. Finally, almost in the close of the sacred volume, we are informed that there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, neither crying, neither shall they suffer any more pain; for the former things are passed away. Both these cannot be true. It is a moral contradiction to conceive a



generous and merciful God, creating beings with immortal life, and then rendering them eternally wretched: we have but one alternative, either we must renounce our faith in these declarations, or we renounce it in the benevolence of God. There are but two texts, one in Daniel, and the other in Matthew, in which there is any reasonable force. In these it is said that the wicked go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal, and on these two phrases the tremendous doctrine is built up. The duration of both are urged to be equal, and we are told, that if we deny eternal damnation, we deny eternal life. No such thing. Reason, feeling, nature, justice, moral sentiment, the belief of a perfect God, and the force of scriptural evidence, coincide with the one and are repugnant to the other. There is not a single proof which can be urged in favour of a future life, which is not an irrefutable argument against future perdition. If you deduce the idea from the goodness of God, from his truth, from his wisdom, it is essentially subversive of this dark dogma. If you deduce the idea from the nature of man, it comes to the same purpose; if you conclude he is to live for ever, because of his infinite and progressive faculties of reason and of conscience, you must by the same argument infer that he is to live to a better end than to be cast eternally into hell. If he was worth creation, he is worth preserving; if he is worth preserving, he is worth being made good and happy. If a great multitude of immortals are to endure infinite pain, so far as they are concerned, the existence of a soul and the being of a God are infinite evils.

The spirit and the letter of Scripture is in favour of this glorious doctrine. Every Scripture which proves that God is good and not malignant is in favour of it; every Scripture which proves that God is a restorer and not a destroyer is in favour of it; every Scripture which proves that God has more the desire to pardon than to punish proves it. To this effect I might quote passages to greater extent than the whole of this

lecture occupies; the selection must therefore be limited, not by the want of matter but by the want of space. "God is love: and he so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life: for God sent not his son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved."\* "Jehovah is full of compassion, slow to anger and of great mercy. Jehovah is good to all: and his tender mercies are over all his works. All thy works do praise thee, O Jehovah: and thy saints shall bless thee." We are exhorted to "taste and see that the Lord is good." "The goodness of God," we are told, "endureth continually." "The Lord God," we are assured, "is merciful and gracious, long suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin." "The Lord your God is gracious and merciful, and will not turn away his face from you if ye turn to him." "The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and plenteous in mercy: he hath not dealt with us after our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities: for as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy towards them that fear him; as far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us: Like as a father pitieth his children, so hath the Lord compassion on them that fear him: for he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust." And from our earliest prayer to our dying hour, we are taught in the simplest and sublimest of all supplications to open our address to God thus; "Our Father who art in heaven." We read evermore in Scripture that God's is not an everlasting anger: as such passages as the following testify: "His anger endureth but for a moment." "He will not always chide, neither will he keep his anger for ever." "Hath God forgotten to be gracious; hath

he in anger shut up his tender mercies?" "I will not contend for ever, neither will I be always wrath: for the spirit should fail before me, and the souls which I have made." Correspondent with the doctrine of these expressions, and with the spirit of the whole Gospel, is a passage that I quote from a book which Protestants in general declare not to be canonical. "Thou hast mercy upon all; for thou canst do all things, and wakest at the sins of men, because they should amend. For thou lovest all things that are, and abhorrest nothing which thou hast made: for never wouldest thou have made any thing if thou hadst hated it. And how could any thing have endured, if it had not been thy will, or been preserved, if not called by thee? But thou sparest thine, for they are thine, O Lord, thou lover of souls. For thine incorruptible spirit is in all things; therefore chastenest thou them, by little and little, that offend, and warnest them by putting them in remembrance wherein they have offended, that leaving their wickedness, they may believe on thee, O Lord. For thy power is the beginning of righteousness; and because thou art the Lord of all, it maketh thee to be gracious unto all. But thou, O God, art gracious and true: long suffering, and in mercy ordering all things: for if we sin, we are thine, knowing thy power; but we will not sin, knowing that we are accounted thine."<sup>4</sup>

Once more, whatever theoretical view we may happen to hold on the redemption of man by Christ, the end and glory of that redemption requires as the only consistent consummation, the ultimate happiness and virtue of mankind. To this purpose I shall adduce one passage of Scripture and quote a commentary. The passage is Rom. v. 12—21, and the commentary is by Dr. S. Smith. "As by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and thus death hath passed

upon all men, inasmuch as all have sinned: (for until the law sin was in the world, but sin is not unputed, where there is no law: nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgressions, who is a figure (a type) of him that was to come: yet the free gift likewise is not so, as was the offence: for if through the offence of one, many have died, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many. Neither is the gift so, as it was by one that sinned; for judgment was of one offence to condemnation, but the free gift is of many offences unto justification. For if, by the offence of one, death reigned by one, much more those who receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, even Jesus Christ;) so then as by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation; so likewise by the righteousness of one the free gift hath come upon all men to justification of life. For as by the disobedience of one many were made sinners, so likewise, by the obedience of one, many shall be made righteous. Moreover, the law entered that sin might abound: but where sin abounded, grace did much more abound. That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ, our Lord."

"In this passage all men are said to have been made mortal by the offence of Adam, and here the phrase 'all men' must necessarily be understood to signify every individual of the human race. Though the style of the apostle in this passage is remarkably intricate and perplexed, yet his meaning is clear, and scarcely to be misunderstood. He affirms that death entered into the world by Adam, and that in consequence of his offence, death passed upon all men, or all men became mortal. Thus many were made sinful or mortal by one. In this sense Adam was a type of Jesus Christ: for us all mankind became subject

<sup>4</sup> Ps. cxx. 5, 9, 16. Ps. cxviii. 8. Ps. lxxv. 3. Ps. cxviii. 6, 7. 2 Chron. xxx. 9. Ps. cxviii. 4, 10; Matt. vi. 9; Ps. cxviii. 2. Ps. cxviii. 2. Ps. lxxviii. 7; Job. xxxi. 14; Wisdom of Solomon, xi. 22—24.

to great privation or suffering in consequence of the offence of one, namely Adam, so the greatest privileges and blessings are bestowed on all mankind in consequence of the obedience of one, namely, Jesus Christ. But it is only in this single circumstance that all suffer and all are benefited by one, that there is any analogy between them: for in every other respect there is the greatest possible difference between Adam and Christ. The act entailing such important consequences upon the whole human race, was, on the part of Adam, an act of transgression, on the part of Christ an act of obedience. And there is a still further disparity between them; for the calamities resulting from the act of transgression were the legal punishment of the offence; but the blessings accruing from the act of obedience were not such as could be claimed by law, but were the free, unrepaid and unmerited gift of God. And the consequences of the act of transgression and the act of obedience may be placed in still more striking contrast: for the act of transgression was but one, and yet death, with all the calamities connected with it, passed upon the whole human race; while the act of obedience provides justification for many offences: nor is this all; for the blessings procured for all mankind by the obedience of Christ are unspeakably greater than the calamities brought upon them by the offence of Adam.\*

"This is undoubtedly the argument of the Apostle. Notwithstanding all the obscurity and perplexity of his language, whoever reads the passage with attention, must perceive these were the ideas which were in his mind. And in the whole compass of Christian truth, there is no doctrine more important or more glorious than that which is thus disclosed. It is a direct and positive declaration, that the blessings provided by the obedience of Christ, shall, in number of persons who partake them, be co-extensive with the calamities produced by the offence of Adam, and in their magnitude and value greatly exceed them. This is sufficient; this is decisive; these ideas

were in the mind of the apostle; this is the doctrine which he plainly and indisputably teaches, and nothing more is necessary. For, even though it should be proved that he illustrates his doctrine by a fanciful allusion to what was itself only an allegory; that his reasoning is not in every respect complete, and even, that he did not himself fully comprehend all the glorious consequences of the sublime truth he disclosed, that truth would be neither the less important nor the less certain. The great fact itself, the fact which it was his object and his office to teach, and in which he could not be mistaken, was, that the blessings produced by the obedience of Christ shall be as extensive as the evils occasioned by the offence of Adam, that all who suffer from the one shall partake of the benefits of the other, while these benefits themselves shall infinitely exceed and overbalance the calamities entailed on mankind by the first transgression. The conclusion is inevitable, that the whole human race shall ultimately be restored to virtue and happiness. By one passage of Scripture then, at least, the doctrine which it is the object of this work to establish, is positively and expressly affirmed; and this is decisive." †

To sustain this doctrine we hear analogy also pleaded. Pain, it is said, has no tendency to correct. This is not true. Pain often does correct—and many are led back to virtue by means of a sad experience. Pain physically and morally is the great instrument of warning. But, though it were fully granted that pure pain were not a corrective agency, it may, in connection with other influences, bring healing to the soul. We never see it unmixed in this world, and we have no just ground to conclude it will be so in another. How often is it the means of drawing forth a mercy and a grace from others that softens the stony heart of the transgressor. How often, when the sinner is laid low—yea, and by the very

\* Dr. Scott's *Word Book*, on the *Evangelical* Generation.

effect of crimes, will a kind look or word, an instance of forbearance or forgiveness, work a regeneration on his nature. How often will the son who plucked his parents' life, and whitened their hair with sorrow, when driven by misery to seek again the shelter of a home, be sweetened into meekness by a mother's love, and be raised again to dignity by a father's generosity. If pain then, by making us feel the goodness of others, will so frequently incite us to deserve it, are we to conceive that an experience, with clearer knowledge of God's love, shall be entirely ineffectual? It is said, that men grow more hardened in sin the longer they continue in it. I allow it was a generous truth: and yet the thought of a moment—the visit of one pure memory, may suffice to change a life of crime. But our argument is, that men will not continue in sin; and it will not be asserted, that if reformation is at all possible, God will refuse the means, and make crime eternal. It is further stated that the wicked, by force of numbers and society with each other, grow increasingly worse: (as to be proved, which it is not and cannot, that in a future existence there is any such distribution either local or moral. This doctrine is not only unfounded in analogy, but contradicted by it—there must be either destruction or renovation: so it is in the natural world, and so it is in the moral. Nothing can sustain continual existence in a state of extreme disorganization; a certain amount of consistency and harmony is an essential condition of every being—without this, there must be dissolution and destruction. Sin being then confusion in the soul and in society, an eternal state of progressive sin is inconceivable. Pain, being in like manner disorganization in body or mind, an eternity of growing pain is equally inconceivable. Continued and extreme pain therefore must either destroy its subject or destroy itself; and then on this argument alone we perceive that eternal torture is a theological figment; a novelty and impossibility.

The belief is further pressed upon us on grounds of moral

influence. This is but an additional argument against it, for it either has no effect or a bad one. It has no effect, from its vagueness and its incomprehensibility. It does not fasten on the moral feelings—it sinks dead by its own ponderousness. It has no effect from its inconsistency with human nature; there is no affinity between a finite being and boundless torture; and thence from the want of truth there is also a want of power. It has no effect, because there is an instinctive abhorrence in the heart against it; and there is an instinctive justice which repels it; the imagination reels before it—the mind retreats from it, and finds that it is too odious even to be looked at. That it has no effect may be seen to a vast extent: millions in all countries profess to believe it, and among these have been, and are, many of the most abandoned that ever brought shame upon their nature; and yet a faith in hell gave them no fear of vice. So far as it has influence it is of a bad kind; because it familiarizes the mind with coarse images; because it breathes both obedience a spirit of slavish fear; because it makes terror an instrument of religion; because it throws darkness on the ways of providence; because it undermines filial confidence in God, and puts a limit either to his power or his love. The doctrine of ultimate and universal salvation lowers the sanctions of righteousness. But what is the true motive to goodness, what is the spirit of it—that which unites us most to God? Love, not fear; not fear of hell; and in the sense of terror not even fear of God himself. Fear is mere submission to force, not the willing service of heart-felt appreciation; the crouching of a slave in outward show to the despot whom in his soul he thoroughly detests. Now as we cannot love by constraint, what ideas of God are most likely to move our affections, and consequently produce in us the true spirit of obedience? Evidently his benevolence, his purity, his disinterested goodness, his fatherly nature—to be drawn to him with the cords

of our hearts, we see him in the clear light of his moral beauty. It is rather paradoxical that these doctrines on the power of fear, the righteousness of vindictive punishment, and the limits of moral reformation, should be propagated in our times, when all the practical tendencies of society are in contradiction. The influence of conviction and not of force, the influence of mind and not pain, is the growing spirit of the time, and a faith, which puts no bound to hope; for the love of man is a native deepening ever in the great social heart. This is the blessing of our day,—it has enlightened education, and softened the rigour of instruction: it is coupling the gentleness of mercy with the austerity of punishment; it is working to restore the criminal and not to destroy, tempering discipline with wisdom, believing that corrective amelioration is most useful and most just; in the same believing spirit it is sending a vast spiritual agency into every realm of vice while thus philosophy and philanthropy labour in the trust they shall leave men better than they found them, exploding the errors which had been the greatest curses to mankind, these are the very errors which theology sanctifies, which it is heresy to deny. What a moral and meritorious civilization is exerted to exalt man, theology continues to deface the image of God; the one scattering beauty on mortality, and the other spreading darkness on eternity; the one removing pain, and the other preaching it.

The doctrine we oppose is further defended on the ground that sin is an infinite offence, that man is therefore an infinite offender; and that an infinite offender deserves unending punishment. The assertion, that man can be an infinite offender, is wholly inconsistent with the views which the orthodox themselves present of man. To be a transgressor in any degree, implies the possession of a noble nature, much less to be an infinite transgressor; but with the miserable and contemptible creature which Calvinism describes as man, it is impossible to associate any idea that is either noble or in-

quite, for good or for evil. We may assume another mode of reasoning. The obedience of the law is righteousness, the transgression of the law is sin. These are correspondent definitions. By every rule, therefore, of logical deduction, if a single act of sin is an infinite evil, a single act of obedience is an infinite good; and on the same grounds of justice by which one man is doomed to an everlasting hell, the other merits an eternal heaven.

But to speak of man at all as an infinite offender, is to set common sense at defiance. Whence can be the infinitude of his offence? Not in its origin, not in its effects, not in its duration: not in its origin, for it is produced in limited faculties: not in its effects, for the errors of a created nature, counteracted by an uncreated omnipotence, can never be infinite, can never be irremediable; not in its duration, for the life of one man, the lives of all men to the end of human generations, are but a point in the universe and government of God. Sin is either a state of mind or a state of action; but whether as one or the other, it must of necessity be limited. Were the career of man extended to that of Methuselah, and his powers as expansive as his years were many; were the whole of that existence a succession of crime, uncheered by a solitary virtue; were the energy of the mightiest intellect devoted to contrive guilt, and the efforts of the most ingenious dishonesty given to its execution, were every emotion of fancy a vision of impurity, every instinct an impulse to cruelty, every emotion a movement of malignity, yet even thus horrible, we could not with truth call man an infinite offender. Neither in desire nor in action can he be such. Not in desire, for there is no man that wishes, there never has been the man that wished, absolute, unmingled, endless evil: not in action, for there is no man, whatever the malignity of his intention, has unlimited power of execution. If sin is an infinite offence, then all sins are equal, for infinity has no degrees; if sinners are infinite transgressors, then

criminals have no distinctions; transgression has no gradations, and the whole moral space is annihilated between him who stands on the very margin of heaven, and him who is already plunged into hell; the same impassable gulf which exists between these conditions, exists also between their characters.

Man is not an infinite offender, nor yet is he an incorrigible one. There is nothing in his nature or history which justifies the conclusion. There is no point of total baseness so low that we can mark it as a hopeless condition. He is not immutable; and as change is possible, changes for the better may be looked for, as well as changes for the worse. Such changes have been: the painful experience of evil and wrong doing, however slow and vacillating, always drives towards them; all observation, therefore, is in favour of our expectation. We look not on the deepest, the deadliest, and the worst instance of inhuman depravity, as beyond correction, beyond improvement, beyond the power of Almighty God; we look upon no ignorance that may not be enlightened; upon no vice that may not be removed; upon no human countenance so scarred with the traces of depravity, as to leave nothing visible but the hand-writing of reprobation; God forbid that we should behold any human being with humanity's capacities, destined, beyond amendment, to hopeless corruption and to incorrigible misery. I deny not the existence and the delusion of vice. I deny not the abuse of the noblest faculties, or the perversion of the best affections, but I do deny that the human soul is ever so wrecked or lost as to become utterly hopeless. The man of pleasure may turn from joy to joy, and collect nothing for his home but weariness and disgust; the man of ambition may sacrifice health and repose, honour and probity; the careless man may, during a long life, drudge away days of labour, and toss through nights of care, to die in the possession of what he never enjoyed; the indolent and the prodigal may live as if there were

no *transgression*, the vicious and profane may reel on, reckless of a future existence and a future judgment. We have all seen every human passion making havoc upon virtue; but we have also seen the passions, carrying with them their own sting and their own punishment, and in that sting and punishment, to a certain extent at least, they have contained their own amelioration and amendment. That human beings have been raised from their lowest debasement, that they have been emancipated from the worst of moral bondage, that they have been purified from the deepest of pollutions, we have many consistent evidences. In every nation of earth that now enjoys the blessings of religion, of liberty, of arts, of moral and social refinement, we have proofs, that by gradual and progressive improvement, these human beings may be delivered from the very worst estate of ignorance, vice, destitution, and brutality. For what are the nations that we now glory to acknowledge, but instances the most undeniable, that man is not only an imperishable, but also an improvable creature? I have seen beings in their thoughtlessness, the victims of their own vanity, sink miserable and despairing into the terror which they had prepared for themselves: but must I say, that they shall never throughout eternity discover the littleness of the objects they desired, nor abstain from chasing the phantoms that misled them? I have seen men insanely and foolishly toil for all that makes life a trifle, or the less of all that makes it a glory; I have read in history, and I can recal by memory, the experiment of those who spent all they had of energy or misused all they had of goodness to obtain that which at last they felt their venture; I have seen the turbulent nature soften into peace, the thoughtless awakened into wisdom and action, the profane elevated into reverence, the impious bending to pray, the angry subdued into meekness, the proud converted to the wisdom of humility, the hard-hearted melted to the goodness of mercy.

Should it be said that this argument is too narrow, and

appeals only to immediate feeling, let us then take a wider sphere, and try the principle by a larger test. Call to your attention the varieties of mankind, of their present and past condition, of their present and past circumstances. Many millions exist on the wide surface of the globe, among whom the elements of moral redemption have never had operation, on whose benighted souls a ray of Christian light has never dawned, hearts which have never felt the bliss of holy liberty, and bosoms that have never burned with heavenly fire. Take up a map of the world; cast your eye over its boundaries and divisions, from pole to pole, and from meridian to meridian; conceive the myriads of rational beings who swarm along that surface; reflect on the wonderful diversities in their conditions and their training; pass over the dreary frosts of one country, and the deadening heat of others; wherever you turn, humanity meets you under different forms, and in various circumstances — with habits more or less corrupted, with morals more or less pure, with religion more or less enlightened or absurd; let me then ask any enlightened thinker, any one who has studied human nature, whether all these are to be arranged under one general classification. Consider the tribes around the Arctic, buried in darkness; pierce into the unexplored regions of Africa; go over the deserts of Arabia; walk among the tents of its predatory and pastoral populations, traverse Persia, India, Tartary, the islands that dimly gleam through the Southern Ocean, and wherever you go, mankind are in various moral positions, and consequently under various terms of moral probation. Shall then that all-seeing Creator, to whom every heart is open, place all these wretched tribes under one system of judgment? It cannot be. Shall beings born in regions of darkness be condemned for want of light — beings who had never breathed out of iniquity, for not being sanctified — beings bred amidst idols, for being idolatrous? Taking thus into view the populations of the earth, we have be-

fore us an infinity of moral conditions; and yet the differences are not greater between the extremes of them than those we might select in a single country or a single city; than those, in fact, which we know to exist. Respecting the terms of probation, a New Zealander is not at a greater distance from an Englishman, than some Englishmen are from others. When we think then how many are ignorant and suffering by the very necessity of destiny, and by the same fate vicious and depraved, if the passage of a breath end all hope of amendment, our faith must rise in divine justice, as well as divine wisdom, and our perplexity be turned to despair.

We look on man, not as a member of a sect, but as a child of God: and once more, we ask, if he is not an infinite offender, nor yet incurrible, is he not worth the correction? If his purity and happiness be within the bounds of possibility, if his eternal misery by any degree of energy can be averted, are we to believe that a God who has infinite benevolence will perish; are we to believe that a God who has infinite power will exert none of it to save the most glorious of his works from utter destruction? Can we suppose that God, omnipotent and most wise, would reverse eternally such capacities for goodness and happiness, and instead of training them to be instruments of boundless utility, would condemn them to be agents of eternal evil? Will not God rather choose to sow the field of everlasting life with seeds of holiness and bliss, than to scatter it to a ruin and a wilderness? I would not strip the future of its awe; no terror can be equal to the truth; it is the most solemn anticipation that can ever come upon the mind, and I maintain that nothing the most fearful imagination conceived in its wildest apprehensions ever equalled the reality; but, for God's universe and for God's creatures, there is always hope; in God's power and wisdom there are limitless means, and at last there will be universal peace and universal consanguinity. If creatures are not ultimately and universally happy, it must be either from the

want of ability in God, or the want of inclination, and this difficulty pressing itself on the mind of a powerful and pious orthodox writer, he chose, in accounting for the loss of souls, to suppose that theologians had mistaken in their theories the nature of divine omnipotence; that love and power have distinct offices; but if he were to circumscribe either attribute in God, it would be power and not love. On the ground of an eternal position, such attribute as a *total* omnipotence can truly be ascribed to God. The able writer to whom I have alluded has seen to the bottom of the difficulty, and believing as he does most sincerely in eternal suffering, believing also as he does with equal sincerity in the infinite love of God, he is compelled so far as the human will is concerned to circumscribe the sphere and action of divine omnipotence, or rather to deny it altogether. "The truth is," he says, "that the only rational conclusion we can arrive at in the matter, is that in the nature of things no such attribute can exist. And until the cloud, which its supposed existence throws on every procedure of divine providence, is dissipated, we must either not think at all, or think amiss on that subject in comparison of which all other subjects are unimportant, namely the character of God: I know that many way, at first sight, he startled at the assertion that the power of God can in any sense be limited. In this, as in various instances, they will object to the same truth as a distinct proposition which they will freely assume and take for granted in all their reasonings. These very persons will speak of Providence as devising means and moving by gradual advancement to the accomplishment of an end. If asked, why not decree the end without the means? they answer, because it could not be attained, at least so well, without them. If then, the term *could not*, be at all admitted, (and how freely is this term applied to God in Scripture?) no such thing as unrestricted omnipotence exists. It is not that there is any limit in God. God forbid that I should dare to say so. It

is, that power in its own nature is limited. It can act only on possibilities. . . . Even power itself is but a vague and unintelligible notion, unless displayed to us as triumphing over difficulties, and rising superior to obstacles. A sweeping omnipotence, which could by one sovereign act of will, decree that in the nature of things neither impediment nor resistance should exist, leaves no field even for power itself to act on. Omnipotence such as this, at least supplies no materials for man to comprehend or adore. No; we are constituted otherwise. Our faculties are so framed as to correspond with the truth and reality of things. The power that fills the soul with wonder and with praise is that which the Scripture of truth exhibits; that power in which God arises that his enemies may be scattered; that omnipotence by which he produces good out of evil, and subdues the most unyielding substances and stubborn elements unto himself. But still more, as it respects the wisdom of God, as it necessary to disperse the notion of an absolute omnipotence before the former attribute can shine forth in its true glory. For surely, according to our conceptions, it would be more wise to arrive at once, if that were possible, at all that means, and contrivances, and processes can accomplish, than to prefer elaborate and circuitous courses, merely for the sake of going round about to do what could be done as well in the twinkling of an eye. And yet in what does the divine wisdom as apprehensible by us consist? What are the views and discoveries which lead us, with the apostle, to exclaim, 'Oh, the depths of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God?' Is it not in those very procedures which if unbounded power existed would be folly and not wisdom, that all the treasures of the infinite mind are manifested? in adapting means to ends, in pursuing the path of light amidst surrounding darkness, in harmonising discordant principles, and bringing order out of confusion?"

After a few other remarks, the author proceeds to maintain



his position by the testimony of Scripture.—“To quote Scripture,” he observes, “as fully as I might upon this subject, would be, in a measure, to transcribe the Bible. I shall content myself with producing three passages, which, though out of the director’s hand, bear, I think, irresistibly on the point. The first is Ezek. xxxiii. 11. ‘As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye, from all your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?’ The second is Isa. v. 3, 4. ‘And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem, and men of Judah, judge, I pray you, betwixt me and my vineyard. What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it? Wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes.’ The last which I shall quote is Matt. xxiii. 37, 38. ‘O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets and stonest them that are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate.’” “Is this, then, I would ask any fair and candid person, who looks as if the All-gracious being who employs it, had any relief in reserve or remedy on hand for those who wilfully reject the mercies he has freely offered them? Are these like the expressions of one who could bestow salvation in any other way, or any other terms? Do they not resemble rather the tender complaints and anxious warnings of a parent who had done all he could do, and proposed all that he had to propose, to rescue his child from ruin, and who must at last, with agonising reluctance, give up that child, if he would still pursue those courses whose end is inevitable destruction? And if such be the characters in which God has been pleased to reveal himself; if such be the words which he has actually spoken, are we to be wise above what is written? Is it honouring God to say he uses a language to work upon our

feelings, which language is in reality a misrepresentation of the truth; a misrepresentation, nevertheless, so ill conceived, that, after all, it does not deceive us? Or is it exalting his great name, to magnify the mere natural attribute of his power, above those moral attributes in which consist as once his essence and his glory? No. If it be indeed reverence to God, to dismiss him altogether from our minds, then all such considerations are set at rest for ever. But if it be our duty, not only to think of him, but to hear him in all our thoughts, then in all around us we see this truth inscribed, that there is a limit in power or a limit in love. In which shall we place it?—In power? Then we place it not in God, but in his lowest attributes. In love? Then indeed we place the limit in God himself—“God is love.”\*

The reasoning of this passage is most cogent, the dilemma is inevitable. If there be eternal sin and eternal perdition; if there be not ultimate and universal regeneration, limit there must be in love or in power: but holding as we do the doctrine of progressive discipline, we place limit in neither, and we glory both. Strange it is, that while thus magnifying God in the highest of his attributes, in the harmony and perfection of his nature, while thus trusting him with the souls of children, notwithstanding many things in his providence mysterious and inexplicable, in despite of the sin and misery that surround us, filling the human mind and human destiny with painful and perplexing problems, we believe him to be all-powerful as he is all-good; yet in thus believing we are set down by Trinitarians as rebels against heaven, and blasphemers of our Creator. If reverence to God demand us to believe that the smoke of eternal torment from the depths of an unfathomable hell is an incense well pleasing in his sight, or an evil which he must endure but has no power to remove, then that is an honour we do

\* *Levins, &c.*, by the Rev. Henry Woodworth, Editor of the *Christianian*, 1837.

not and we cannot give: that is not the God we worship; that is not the God we can love; and if to believe in God be to think him such as Calvin and others have pictured him, then at once take not only the name of Christians from us, but in addition stigmatize us with that of atheists.

III. To limit the power of God in order to justify his love, is the struggle of a humane and benignant nature against a dark and stern theology; but writers in orthodox divinity, whom it would be too tedious to catalogue, have not scrupled to go the whole length along the line of fearful consequences to which their system led them. They have not hesitated to plead for the eternity of hell's torments *the glory of God*; strange idea *videlicet* of the glory of God, to contemplate him as the author of everlasting pain and everlasting sin. We think that every attribute of God, in every manifestation, is directly against this doctrine. His omniscience is against it. He must have known from all eternity the destiny of the lost; and with this knowledge, on the orthodox theory, he made creatures with the direct foresight of their everlasting misery and everlasting destruction. His omnipotence is against it. I have shown by the long extract I have before quoted, that the profound and consistent theological reasoner who believes in eternal perdition can not believe in a moral omnipotence. An all-powerful Being must be either infinitely malignant or infinitely benevolent. If God were the one, he could find delight only in the suffering of his creatures; and he wouid not to relieve them, because he does not will them to be happy. But this idea is utterly repugnant to the first principles of religion. If God be, as we believe he is, the other, he can have no motive to make his children, the work of his own hands, endlessly wretched; and having the power, he has also the will to redeem them. A progressive universe is, therefore, the only true solution to God's providence, and God's providence. Divine justice, it is said, demands it. What, then, is divine justice? Is this divine justice identical

with vengeance? Is it divine justice, to make the everlasting torture of a race—for the saved are but the gleanings—a sacrifice to boundless self-glorification? Is it divine justice to array all the force of infinite attributes against a limited, a weak, and erring creature? Is it divine justice to meet the offence of ephemeral mortality with the agony of deathless torture and of resistless wrath? If this be *divine* justice, we have reason to rejoice that it is not *human* justice. Such justice is but naked malignity; and this view of it is the more firmly established when we further consider that, by the orthodox theology, all is the result of a foregone conclusion, the last term of a dark progression, the execution of a course uttered in the black words of eternity, for which the wretches are prepared by the inheritance of a corrupt nature in a corrupt world, and lest all natural causes should be insufficient, by an exposure to the unseen snares of a Satan profound in cunning, mighty in numbers, and, by himself and his agents, all but omnipotent and omnipresent. This argument from divine justice is urged so frequently and earnestly, that I shall here traverse by a few remarks from a writer who has treated the subject with equal force of logic and fervour of eloquence. "Justice and goodness," he observes, "are the same. Justice requires an more punishment for sin than goodness; goodness requires the same as justice, but the manner in which benevolence manifests itself under the form of goodness and of justice is different, and, therefore, requires a different appellation. A person who forgives an offence upon repentance and reformation is good: this is one modification of goodness, which, by way of eminence, is often called goodness itself, or more strictly mercy: the person who visits an offence which is neither repented of, nor amended with a proper degree of pain, is also good: this is another modification of goodness to which the term justice is applied. Mercy and justice, therefore, do not differ from each other in their nature, since they equally arise from be-

mercies, and they differ in aspect only according to the moral condition of the being with regard to whom they are exercised. This account of divine justice explains, in the most satisfactory manner, the principle on which Deity rewards and punishes mankind. Did men never violate the laws of rectitude, he would make them invariably and completely happy. But there is no person who is free from fault: the moral state of every individual is, in some respect or at some period, such as it ought not to be. Every bad disposition, and every improper habit, must be rectified before happiness can be enjoyed. It is necessary, therefore, that the moral governor of the world should vary his conduct according to the character of the person whom he has to treat; that he should visit the good with favour, and manifest his disapprobation of the wicked; for, if he were to make happiness compatible with sin, it could not be corrected. The effect of pain is to make us dislike and avoid that which causes it. It is for this reason pain is annexed to sin. Sin is an evil which it is necessary to remove; pain is employed as the instrument of its destruction; and that principle by which Deity has established this construction of things, by which he so regulates events as invariably to secure the ultimate reward of goodness, and the punishment of wickedness, is distinguished by the term justice. . . . Were it necessary to add any thing more to show that divine justice is not inconsistent with the attribute of goodness, but a part of it, the consideration of the design of its inflictions would afford further evidence of this truth. Every violation of the law of God involves the transgressor, sooner or later, in suffering; and of this constitution of things, by which pain is inseparably connected with deviation from rectitude, the Supreme Being is the author. Why did he appoint it? Why did he so dispose the whole tendency of his moral government as to ensure this consequence? Why does he, who is a being of un-

ering wisdom and infinite benevolence, never suffer any offence which is repented of to escape punishment? Since his very nature is love, and since he created all his intelligent offspring in order to make them happy, it can be no gratification to him to involve them in suffering. Their groans can be no music to his ear. If he afflict them, it must be, not for his own gratification, but for their benefit. . . . Viewing then the attribute of justice, which has been supposed to require the endless misery of the greater part of the human race, as that very principle which is designed to prevent this terrible consequence, (a man) feels himself capable of relying with implicit confidence on the decisions of his judge, both with regard to himself and all mankind. He is satisfied that he will treat even the most criminal with perfect equity; that he will place them in circumstances the best adapted to their unhappy condition; that his discipline will ultimately accomplish its end, and extirpate sin and misery from the creation.\* If the doctrine of eternal torment be contradictory to God's justice, much more is it to his wisdom. For surely it is not wise to create only to destroy;—in perpetuate endless moral conflict—not only to destroy and confuse, but to destroy and confuse the best and wisest of his works—to inflict undying anguish on capacities suited for undying happiness, to ruin every faculty and to blast every hope. Nor is the doctrine less opposed to his holiness than to his wisdom. Improved ideas on the philosophy of our spiritual nature, and on the real purpose of moral retribution, with the penalties of sin, imply the non-existence of sin. A material hell or a material heaven by the thinking portion of all sorts is in general exploded. Sin carries with it and creates its own punishments: if sin then be eternal and progressive in its sufferings, it must also be eternal in its existence and its evils. Hell is not merely a region of unutterable horror, where wretches writhe in eter-

\* *Attributes of the Divine Government*, by T. Southwell, 3-4th.

nal torture, but also a region of boundless sin, of malignant wickedness, of hopeless corruption, of vilest affections, of basest passions. What shall we then say of an infinite kindness, enlightened by infinite wisdom, armed with infinite power, allowing this condition to exist? If the doctrine of eternal torment be true, no such attribute as divine mercy can have being; if this doctrine be true, a God of goodness is a fiction of imagination, the creation of a brain-sick enthusiasm, the dream of amiable but unfounded hopes. It is of no purpose to qualify in these things: there is no room in the same universe for a good God and an eternal hell: if this doctrine be true, the past is a wreck, and the future a curse. To such a condition of existence annihilation were a preferable alternative. It were better the brain should at once moulder with the thoughtless sod, than be tortured with the wanderings of everlasting contradictions; it were better the affections should perish with the last earthly sigh than throbb through an eternity of agonized or selfish existence. On the orthodox supposition, either man must lose his identity and go to heaven without remembering whom he knew and loved in life, or he must lose his sympathy, become apostate to all his better feelings, and see without pain or pity many given over to despair with whom on earth he walked in dearest friendships. Instead of the big tear which would have burst from his eye in the years of mortality at the thought even of a partial separation; instead of the affectionate and instinctive anguish which would have torn his breast, as he saw the last vision in the sun, and the last flutter in the breeze of the sail which was wafting his friend to another clime, he must approve the sentence, nay, some maintain, he must see its execution with triumph, which may consign his nearest and dearest to endless damnation.—If the belief could be habitually and practically realized, that human souls were every minute over the wide earth dropping into hell, that amongst the sighs of death with which the world is

filled, the greater number are the knells of infinite perdition, that the graves on which the mourners weep, which to us all, at one time or other, make earth a vale of tears, are so many monuments of irreparable woe, the silent witnesses of God's anger and man's despair; if any one, I repeat, could constantly, and in very truth, believe that souls were thus quitting the present scene, souls with enlarged capacities, but enlarged for eternal sorrow, and ever smile again, he might wear the form of his species, but he should have the heart of a fiend. Faith in such a doctrine should kill at once the life of joy; every sound should be funeral, brightness or beauty there should be none. Each of us, like Job, should curse the day of his birth, but with a more terrible earnestness; the exclamation of Jeremiah would be in every mouth an appropriate utterance, "Oh that my head were waters, and my eyes were fountains of tears!" Is there the human being that could feel joy in the midst of an hospital, could laugh in a city of the plague, while death went from couch to couch, while wirth was banished from each hearth, and the grass of desolation growing in the streets? But how much more should all delight be banished from the soul, if in the Creator's universe there be a dark and measureless region, filled with hideous abominations and unexpiring torments! If thus it be, let there, I repeat, be no look of happiness, let there be no voice of sweetness, let garment of praise be changed for the spirit of heaviness; let all heads be bent in grief, and all eyes dim with weeping, in lamentation for the sorrows of the universe. But let it not so—leave us at least a gleam of light from heaven.

" Chase every joy to grieve me in my mind,  
But leave, oh! leave, the light of life behind."

Oh no! God has no pleasure in the death of a sinner, no glory in the pain or punishment of his creatures: it is the progress towards universal blessedness, and its final consummation.

mation, that truly shows forth the glory of God, and manifests the grandeur of his name and nature—more sweetly than the earth, more majestic than the heavens. It shows forth his justice: he punishes, terribly, it may be, but not cruelly; he pardons; he punishes, but he pardons; he chastises, but he purifies. It shows forth his wisdom: for universal holiness and universal happiness are the noblest objects which infinite wisdom could select, the highest purposes in which infinite wisdom could be manifested: It shows forth his power, not in a blasting reprobation, but in a creative and all-dispensing love; not in the thunder of destruction, but in the hand of a Father full of gifts and full of blessings:—subduing evil, distributing happiness, drawing out of apparent confusion order and harmony, more fair and beautiful than the worlds he has called out of darkness; “*no more upon the face of many a stormy wave, and blending into calm what seemed only the chaos of contending elements.*”

It is marvellous that we can think seriously on existence or on providence, that we can reflect on human nature or survey human life, without feeling the need as well as the truth of the doctrine of the full mercy of God, and of his universally benignant designs for all his children. True, creation is fair, and much of existence is happy; but still there are evils and obstacles which ever perplex us for solution. If the view of God's government which we receive, does not solve all the difficulties, at the very least it softens them, if there are inevitable things in the providence of God which it cannot explain, there are atrocities ascribed by other systems to this character which it does not involve. We may mourn over the wrongs, sufferings, and sins, which exist with fatal abundance in our present state; we may wonder and think why they exist at all; but to what an extent of profanity and pain are we driven, if we are to believe that all these evils are to be for ever, and to have no re-

medy. When I see those who bear woe and sorrow through busy and heavy years, I rejoice that there is at last a home and refuge for them in their father's kingdom where they who were poor shall be made rich; where those who mourned shall be comforted. when I hear the sigh of pain, when I behold the power of death; when I know, as all must, in how many human dwellings grief sits lonely on the hearth. I am saved from a fearful and dangerous distrust by the belief, that in times to come, and in regions which we know not of, there is a balm for every grief and a remedy for every sin. None are aware of the physical and the moral evils that hang over and around this existence, and both from the felt experience of our own hearts, and the recorded experience of many others, we can judge the infinite complexity of moral struggle, the subtleties of sin, and the miserable consequences of evil designs; and we cannot think that a good, a holy, a just, and merciful God can ordain such a state to be perpetual and eternal. We know, moreover, how many are in the thick darkness of materialism, each having within a universe of infinite and improvable capacities; we know what millions are in the dens of indigence, of crime, and ignorance, for whom earth is heaven and life a burden; and in what thoughts are we to take comfort, in what sentiments are we to find hope, if we believe not there is a God who does not forget his orphan children in their worst estate; that as here they have received their evil things, there is a heaven where they have their goal? And when we observe in this life so much of antagonist passions; so much war and strife; so much of bitter and hopeless alienation, our tired spirits wish for a retreat of peace, and with the Psalmist we long for the wings of a dove that we might flee away and lie at rest, for a calm sky after a heated atmosphere, for a union of heart and charity which no mistakes could again divide. We have no need to fear that our high aspirations for the future shall make us proud or presumptuous; for we have

all enough in our present lot to keep us humble. When we look within, we find a melancholy strife between our nobler and our higher existence, which we can never entirely overcome: when we cast our gaze over the face of the world, and the inequalities of life, and there in the strong-holds of sin and selfishness are so many causes of wickedness and pain, which the most believing and the most hoping can never hope entirely to overcome; when we regard our feeble powers and our short existence; our desires ever growing and wanes ever deepening, and our passions ever craving; when we think of the knowledge we longed for, and could not have, the visions we dreamed of that never came, the good we resolved on and never did, the felicity we sought and never found, the wishes that were as empty as the echo in the desert, the ideas, the plans, the aspirations, and the purposes that vainly struggled for life, but found in our breasts their prison and their grave; we shall be in no danger of thinking of ourselves more highly than we ought to think.

Blessed and beautiful doctrine is this, of universal redemption and restoration, which pours such a radiance over our groping obscurity, which gives our troubled hearts such peace, which softens grief and glorifies affection, which corrects the perverse and dignifies the lowly, which nourishes whatever in our nature is great or god-like, renders religion transcendent and lovely, and opens before the rejoicing eye of faith the grandeur of a renovated and an emancipated universe.

## LECTURE XIII.

### CHRISTIANITY WITHOUT PRIEST, AND WITHOUT RITUAL.

BY WILLIAM BRADEN BAKER.

TO SHOW HOWIN, AS UNDER A FAVORABLE DISAFFECTION FROM OF MEN, THE CAUSE OF GOD AND PROPHET, WE MAY AS DIRECTLY STAND AND OPERATE A SPIRITUAL POWER, AND WISELY TO OFFER UP SPIRITUAL SACRIFICES ACCEPTABLE TO GOD BY JESUS CHRIST.

The formation of human society, and the institution of priesthood, must be referred to the same cause and the same date. The earliest communities of the world appear to have had their origin and their cement, not in any gregarious instinct, nor in mere social affections, much less in any practical regard to the advantages of co-operation, but in a binding religious sentiment, submitting to the same guidance, and expressing itself in the same worship. As to be can be more strong, so is none more primitive, than this agreement respecting what is holy and divine. In simple and patriarchal ages indeed, when the feelings of veneration had not been set aside by analysis into a little corner of the character, but spread themselves over the whole of life, and mixed it up with daily wonder, this bond comprised all the factors that can suppress the selfish and disorganizing passions, and compact a multitude of men together. It was not, as at present, to have simply the same opinions (things of quite modern growth, the brood of skepticism); nor to have the same Fathers, the same Traditions, the same Speech, the same Land, the same Foes,

the same Priest, the same God. Nothing did man fear, or trust, or love, or desire, that did not belong, by some affinity, to his faith. Nor had he any book to keep the precious deposit for him; and if he had, he would never have thought of so feeble a vehicle for so great a treasure. It was more natural to put it into structures hollowed in the fast mountain, or built of transplanted rocks which only a giant age could stir; and to tenant these with mighty hierarchies, who should guard their sanctity, and, by an undying memory, make their mysteries eternal. Hence, the first humanizer of men was their worship; the first leaders of nations, the sacerdotal caste; the first triumph of art, the colossal temple; the first effort to preserve an idea, produced a record of something sacred, and the first civilization was, as the last will be, the birth of religion.

The primitive aim of worship undoubtedly was, to set upon the sentiments of God; at first, by such natural and intelligible means, as produce favourable impressions on the mind of a fellow man;—by presents and persuasion, and whatever is expressive of grateful and reverential affections. Abel, the first shepherd, offered the produce of his flock; Cain, the first farmer, the fruits of his land; and while devotion was so simple in its modes, every one would be his own pontiff, and have his own altar. But soon, the parent would inevitably officiate for his family; the patriarch, for his tribe. With the natural forms dictated by present feelings, traditional methods would mingle their contributions from the past; postures and times, gestures and localities, more indifferent, would become consecrated by venerable habits; and so long as their origin was forgotten, they would add to the significance, while they lessened the simplicity of worship. Custom, however, being the growth of time, tends to a tyrannous and bewildering complexity: forms, originally natural, then symbolical, and so being arbitrary; suggestive of nothing, except to the initiated; yet, if connected with

religion, so sanctified by the association, that it appears sacrilege to desist from their employment, and when their meaning is lost, they assume their place, not among empty gesticulations, but among the mystical signs by which earth communicates with heaven. The vivid picture-writing of the early worship, filled with living attitudes, and sketched in the freshest colours of emotion, exploded itself to every eye, and was open to every hand. To this succeeded a piety, which expressed itself in symbolical figures, veiling it utterly from strangers, but intelligible and impressive still to the soul of national tradition. This, however, passed again into a language of arbitrary characters, in which the herd of men saw sacredness without meaning; and the use of which must be confined to a class separated for its study. Hence the origin of the priest and his profession, the consecrator of a worship no longer natural, but legendary and mystical; skilful executor of rites that spoke with silent gesticulation to the heavens; interpreter of the wants of men into the divine language of the gods. Not till the powers above had ceased to hold familiar converse with the earth, and in their distance had become deaf and dumb to the common tongue of men, did the mediating priest arise:—enabled them to conduct the finger-speech of ceremony, whereby the desire of the creature took shape before the eye of the Creator.

Observe then the true idea of Priest and Rite at. The Priest is the representative of men before God; commissioned on behalf of human nature to intercede with the divine. He bears a message *upwards*, from earth to heaven; his people being below, his influence above. He takes the fears of the weak, and the cries of the perishing, and sets them with availing supplication before him that is able to help. He takes the sins and remorse of the guilty, and leaves them with expiating tribute at the feet of the eternal Deity. He guards the avenues that lead from the mortal to the immortal, and without his interposition the creature is cut off from his



Creator. Without his mediation, no transaction between them can take place, and the spirit of a man must live as an outlaw from the world invisible and holy. There are means of propitiation which he alone has authority to employ: powers of persuasion conceded to no other; a mystic access to the springs of divine benignity, by outward rites which his manipulation must emanate, or forms of speech which his lips must commend. These ceremonies are the implements of his office, and the sources of his power; the *magic* by which he is thought to gain admission to the will above, and readily wins rule over human senses below. As they are supposed to change the relation of God to man, not by visible or natural operation, but (for example) by suggestion of new thoughts, and excitement of new dispositions in the worshippers, but by secret and mysterious agencies, they are simply *spells* of a dignified order. Were we then to speak with severe exactitude, we should say, a Ritual is a system of consecrated charms, and the Priest, the great magician who dispense them.

So long as any idea is retained, of mystically efficacious rites, consigned solely and authoritatively to certain hands, this definition cannot be escaped. The ceremonies may have rational instruction and natural worship appended to them; and these additional elements may give them a title to true respect. The order of men appointed to administer them, may have other offices and nobler duties to perform, rendering them, if faithful, worthy of a just and reverential attachment. But *in so far as*, by an exclusive and unnatural efficacy, they bring about a changed relation between God and man, the Ritual is an invention, and the Priest is an enchanter.

To this sacerdotal devotion, there necessarily attach certain characteristic sentiments, both moral and religious, which give it a distinctive influence on human character, and adapt it to particular stages of civilization. It clearly severs

the worshippers by one remove from God. He is a Being, external to them, distant from them, personally unapproachable by them; their thought must *strive* to reach the Almighty; they must look  *afar* for the Most Holy; they dwell themselves within the finite, and must ask a foreign introduction to the Infinite. He is not with them as a private guide, but in the remote watch-towers of creation, as the public inspector of their life; not present for perpetual communion, but to be visited in absence by stated messages of form and prayer. And that God dwells in this cold and royal separation, induces the feeling, that man is too mean to touch him; that a consecrated intervention is required, in order to part Deity from the defiling contact of humanity. Why else am I restricted from unlimited personal access to my Creator, and driven to another in my transactions with him? And so, in this system, our nature appears in contrast, not in alliance, with the divine, and those views of it are favoured which make the opposition strong; its puny dimensions, its swift decadence, its poor self-flatteries, its degenerate virtues, its giant guilt, become familiar to the thought and lips; and life, cut off from sympathy with the godlike, falls towards the level of melancholy, or the sink of epteurism, or the abjectness of vicarious reliance on the priest. Worship, too, must have for its chief aim, to throw off the load of all; to rid the mind of sin and shame, and the lot of hardship and sorrow; far principally to these disburthening offices do priests and rituals profess themselves adapted.—and who, indeed, could pour forth the privacy of love, and peace, and trust, through the cumbersome of ceremonies, and the pompousness of a sacred officer? The piety of such a religion is thus a refuge for the weakness, not an outpouring of the strength of the soul: it takes away the incubus of darkness, without shedding the light of heaven; lifts off the nightmare horrors of earth and hell, without opening the vision of angels and of God. Nay, for the spiritual bonds which connect men with

the Father above, it substitutes material ties, a genealogy of sacred fires, a succession of hallowed buildings, or of priests having consecration by pedigree or by manual transmission; so that qualities belonging to the soul alone, are likened to forces mechanical or chemical; sanctity becomes a physical property; divine acceptance comes by bodily catenation; regeneration is degraded into a species of electric shock, which one only method of experiment, and the links of but one conductor, can convey. And, in fine, a priestly system ever abjures all aim at any higher perfection; boasts of being immutable and unimprovable; encourages no ambition, breathes no desire. It holds the appointed methods of influencing heaven, on which none may presume to innovate; and its functions are ever the same, to employ and preserve the ancient forms and legendary spells committed to its trust. Hence all its generation is antiquarian, not sympathetic or prospective; it turns its back upon the living, and looks straight into departed ages, bowing the head and bending the knee; as if all objects of love and devotion were *there*, not here; in history, not in life; as if its God were dead, or otherwise imprisoned in the Past, and had bequeathed to its keeping such relics as might yield a perpetual benediction. Thus does the administration of religion, in proportion as it possesses a sacerdotal character, involve a distant Deity, a mean humanity, a servile worship, a physical sanctity, and a retrospective reverence.

Let no one, however, imagine, that there is no other idea of administration of religion than this; that the priest is the only person among men, to whom it is given to stand between heaven and earth. Even the Hebrew Scriptures introduce us to another class of quite different order; to whom, indeed, those Scriptures owe their own truth and power, and perpetuity of beauty; I mean the Prophets: whom we shall very imperfectly understand, if we suppose them mere historians, for whom God had turned tune round the other way, so that

they spoke of things future as if past, and grew so dizzy in their use of tenses, as greatly to accommodate learned grammarians; or if we treat their writings as serap-books of Providence, with miscellaneous contributions from various parts of duration, sketches taken indifferently from any point of view within eternity, and put together at random and without mark, on adjacent pages, for theological memories to identify; first, a picture of an Assyrian battle, next, a holy family; now of the captives sitting by Euphrates, then, of Paul preaching to the Gentiles; here, a fight of devouring locusts, and there, the escape of the Christians from the destruction of Jerusalem, a portent of Ezekiah, and a view of Calvary; a march through the desert, and Joan the Baptist by the Jordan; the day of Pentecost, and the French Revolution; Nebuchadnezzar and Mahomet; Caligula and the Pope,—following each other with picturesque neglect of every relation of time and place. No, the Prophet and his work always indeed belong to the future; but far otherwise than this. Meanwhile, let us notice how, in Israel, as elsewhere, he takes his natural station above the priest. It was Moses the prophet who even *made* Aaron the priest. And who cares now for the sacerdotal books of the Old Testament, compared with the rest? Who, having the strains of David, would pore over Leviticus, or would weary himself with Chronicles, when he might catch the inspiration of Isaiah? It was no priest that wrote, "Thou desirest not sacrifice, else would I give it, thou delightest not in burnt offering: the sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise!"\* It was an pontifical spirit that exclaimed, "Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination to me; the new moons and sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with; it is iniquity, even the solemn meeting: your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth; they are a trouble

unto me; I am weary to bear them." "Wash you, make you clean."\* Whatever, in these venerable scriptures, awes us by its grandeur, and pierces us by its truth, comes of the prophets, not the priests; and from that part of their writings too, in which they are not concerned with historical prediction, but with some utterance deeper and greater. I do not deny them this gift of occasional intellectual foresight of events. And doubtless it was an honour, to be permitted to speak thus to a portion of the future, and of local occurrences unrevealed to seers less privileged. But it is a glory far higher, to speak that which belongs to all time, and finds its interpreters in every place; to penetrate to the everlasting realities of things; to disclose, not when this or that man will appear, but how and wherefore all men appear and quickly disappear; to make it felt, not in what mode of duration such an incident will happen, but from what all-embracing eternity the images of history emerge and are swallowed up. In this highest faculty, the Hebrew seers belong to a class, scattered over every nation and every period; which Providence keeps ever extant for human good, and especially to furnish an administration of religion quite anti-sacerdotal. This class we must proceed to characterize.

The Prophet is the representative of God before men, commissioned from the Divine nature to sanctify the human. He bears a message *downwards*, from heaven to earth; his inspirer being above, his influence below. He takes of the holiness of God, enters with it into the souls of men, and heals therewith the wounds, and purifies the taint, of sin. He is charged with the peace of God, and gives from it rest to the weariness, and solace to the griefs of men. Instead of carrying the foulness of life to be cleansed in Heaven, he brings the purity of Heaven to make life divine. Instead of interposing himself and his mediation between humanity and Deity, he destroys the whole distance between them; and

\* Is. i. 16, 17.

only fulfil his mission, when he brings the finite mind and the infinite into immediate and thrilling contact, and leaves the creature consciously alone with the Creator. He is one to whom the primitive and everlasting relations between God and man have revealed themselves, stripped of every disguise, and bared of all that is conventional; who is possessed by their simplicity, mastered by their solemnity; who has found the secret of meeting the Holy Spirit within, rather than without, and knows, but cannot tell, how in the strife of genuine duty, or in moments of true meditation, the divine immensity and love have touched and filled his naked soul; and taught him by what fathomless Godhead he is folded round, and on what adamantine manhood he must take his stand. So far from separating others from the heavenly communion vouchsafed to himself, he necessarily believes that all may have the same godlike consciousness; longs to impart it to them; and by the vivid light of his own faith, spiritaly creates it in those who feel his influence; drawing out and fleshing the faded colours of the divine image in their souls, till they too become visibly the seers and the sons of God. His instruments, like the objects of his mission, are human; not mysteries, and mummeries, and such arbitrary things, by which others may pretend to be talking with the skies; but the natural language which interprets itself at once in every genuine man, and goes direct to the living point of every heart. An earnest speech, a brave and holy life, truth of sympathy, severity of conscience, freshness and loftiness of faith,—these natural sanctities are his implements of power; and if heaven be pleased to add any other gifts, still are they weapons all,—not the mere tinsel of tradition and custom,—but forged in the inner workshop of our nature, where the fire glows beneath the breath of God, framing things of ethereal temper. Thus armed, he lays undoubling siege to the world's conscience; tears down every outwork of pretence; forces its strongholds of delusion; humbles the vanities at its centre, and proclaims it the citadel of God. The

true prophet of every age is no believer in the temple, but in the temple's Deity; trusts, not rites and institutions, but the hearts and souls that fill or ought to fill them; if they speak the truth, no one so reveres them; if a lie, they meet with no contempt like his. He sees no indestructible sanctuary but the mind itself, wherein the Divine Spirit ever loves to dwell; and whence it will be sure to go forth and build such outward temple as may suit the season of Providence. He is conscious that there is no devotion like that which comes spontaneously from the secret places of our humanity, no omens so true as those which rise from the common platform of our life. He desires only to throw himself in faith on the natural piety of the heart. Give him but that; and he will find for man an everlasting worship, and raise for God a cathedral worthy of his infinitude.

It is evident that one thoroughly possessed with this spirit could never be, and could never make, a priest: nor frame a ritual for priests already made. He is destitute of the ideas, out of which alone these things can be created. His mission is in the opposite direction: he interprets and reveals God to men, instead of interceding for men with God. In this office sacerdotal rites have no function and no place. I do not say that he must necessarily disapprove and abjure them, or deny that he may thence sanction them. If he does however, it is not in his capacity of prophet, but in conformity with feelings which his proper office has left untouched. His tendency will be against ceremonialism: and on his age and position will depend the extent to which this tendency takes effect. Usually, he will construct nothing ritual, will destroy much, and leave behind great and growing ideas, destructive of much more. But ere we quit our general conception of a prophet, let us notice some characteristic sentiments, moral and religious, which naturally connect themselves with his faith; comparing them with those which belong to the sacerdotal influence.

In this faith, God is separated by nothing from his mor-

abappers. He is not simply in contact with forms, but truly in the interior of their nature: so that they may not only meet him in the outward providences of life, but bear his spirit with them, when they go to trial and conflict, and find it still, when they sit alone to think and pray. He is not the far observer, but the very present help, of the faithful will. No structure made with hands, nay, not even his own architecture of the heaven of heavens, contains and confines his presence: were there any dark recess whence these were hid, the blessed access would be without hindrance still; and the soul would discern him near as its own identity. No vain and ignoble conception can be entertained of a mind, which is thus the residence of Deity; the shrine of the Infinite must have somewhat that is infinite itself. Thus, in this system, does our nature appear in alliance with the Divine, not in contrast with it; inspired with a portion of its holiness, and free to help forward the best issues of its Providence. Human life, blessed by this spirit, becomes a miniature of the work of the great Ruler: its responsibilities, its difficulties, its temptations, become dignified as the glorious theatre whereon we strive, by and with the good Spirit of God, for the mastery over evil. Worship, issuing from a nature and existence thus consecrated, is not the casting off of guilt and terror, but the glad unburthening of love, and trust, and aspiration, the simple speaking forth, as duty is the acting forth, of the divine within us; not the prostration of the slave, but the embrace of the child; not the plaint of the abject, but the anthem of the free. Is it not private, individual? And may it not by silence say what it will, and intimate the precise thing, and that only, which is at heart?—whence there grows unensibly that firm root of excellence, truth with one's own self. The priestly fancy of an hereditary or lineal sacredness can have no place here. The soul and God stand directly related, mind with mind, spirit with spirit: from our moral fidelity to this relation, from the jealousy with

which we guard it from insult or neglect, does the only sanctity arise; and herein there is none to help us, or give a vicarious consecration. And finally, the spirit of God's true prophet is earnestly prospective; more filled with the conception of what the Creator *will* make his world, than of what he *has* already made it: detecting great capacities, it glows with great hopes; knowing that God lives, and will live, it turns from the past, venerable as that may be, and reverences rather the promise of the present, and the glories of the future. It esteems nothing unimprovable, is replete with vast desires; and amid the shadows and across the wilds of existence glazes, not vainly, a bright image of perfection. The golden age, which priests with their tradition put into the past, the prophet, with his faith and truth, transfers into the future: and while the former pines and mopes, the latter toils and prays. Thus does the administration of religion, in proportion as it partakes of the prophetic or anti-sacerdotal character, involve the ideas of an interior Deity, a noble humanity, a loving worship, an individual holiness, and a prospective veneration.

We have found, then, two opposite views of religion; that of the Priest with his Ritual; and that of the Prophet with his Faith. I propose to show that the Church of England, in its doctrine of sacraments, coincides with the former of these, and sanctions all its objectionable sentiments: and that Christianity, in every relation, even with respect to its reputed rites, coincides with the latter.

The general conformity of the Church of England with the ritual conception of religion, will not be denied by her own members. Their denial will be limited to one point: they will protest that her formulas of doctrine do not ascribe a *charmed efficacy*, or any operation upon God, to the two sacraments. To avoid verbal disputes, let us consider what we are to understand by a spell or charm. The name, I apprehend, denotes any material object or outward act: the pos-

session or use of which is thought to confer safety or blessing, not by natural operation, but by occult virtues, inherent in it, or mystical effects appended to it. A mere commemorative sign, therefore, is not a charm, nor need there be any superstition in its employment: it simply stands for certain ideas and memories in our minds; re-excites and freshens them, not otherwise than speech audibly records them, except that it summons them before us by sight and touch, instead of sound. The effect, whatever it may be, is purely natural, by sequence of thought no thought, till the complexion of the mind is changed, and haply suffused with a noble glow. But in truth it is not fit to speak of commemorations, as things having efficacy at all; as desirable observances, under whose action we should put ourselves, in order to get up certain good dispositions in the heart. As soon as we see them acquiesced in, with this dutiful submission to a kind of spiritual operation, we may be sure they are already empty and dead. An *expedient* commemoration, deliberately maintained on utilitarian principles, for the sake of warming cold affections by artificial heat, is one of the foolish conceptions of this mechanical and sceptical age. It is quite true, that such influence is found to belong to rites of remembrance; but only so long as it is not privately looked into, or greedily contemplated by the staring eye of prudence, but simply and unconsciously received. No; commemorations must be the spontaneous fruit and outburst of a love already kindled in the soul, not the factitious contrivance for forcing it into existence. They are not the lighted match applied to the fuel on an altar cold; but the shapes in which the living flame aspires, or the fretted lights thrown by that central love on the dark temple-walls of this material life.

It is not pretended that the sacraments are mere commemorative rites. And nothing, I submit, remains, but that they should be pronounced charms. It is of little purpose

to urge, in denial of this, that the Church insists upon the necessity of faith on the part of the recipient, without which no benefit, but rather peril, will accrue. This only limits the use of the charm to a certain class, and establishes a pre-requisite to its proper efficacy. It simply conjoins the outward form with a certain state of mind, and gives to each of these a participation in the effect. If the faith be insufficient without the ceremony, then some efficacy is due to the rite: and this, being neither the natural operation of the material elements, nor a simple suggestion of ideas and feelings to the mind, but mystical and preternatural, is no other than a charmed efficacy.

Nor will the statement, that the effect is not upon God, but upon man, bear examination. It is very true, that the *ultimate* benefit of these rites is a result reputed to fall upon the worshipper;—regeneration, in the case of baptism; participation in the atonement, in the case of the Lord's Supper. But by what steps do these blessings descend? Not by those of visible or perceived causation; but through an express and extraordinary volition of God, induced by the ceremonial form, or taking occasion from it. The sacerdotal economy, therefore, is so arranged, that whenever the priest dispenses the water at the font, the Holy Spirit follows, as in instantaneous compliance with a suggestion; and whenever he spreads his hands over the elements at the communion, God immediately establishes a preternatural relation, not subsisting the moment before, between the substances on the table and the souls of the faithful communicants: so that every partaker receives, either directly or through supernatural increase of faith, some new share in the merits of the cross. Whatever substitutes of language then may be employed, it is evidently conceived that the first consequence of these forms takes place in heaven; and that on this depends whatever benediction they may bring: nor can a plain understanding frame any other idea of them than this; first,

they not upwards, and suggest something to the mind of God; who then sends down an influence on the mind of the believer. From this conception no figures of speech, no ingenious analogies, can deliver us. Do you call the sacraments "pledges of grace?" A pledge means a promise: and how a voluntary act of ours, or the priest's, can be a promise made to us by the Divine Being, it is not easy to understand. Do you call them "seals of God's covenant,"—the instrument by which he engages to make over its blessings to the Christian, like the signature and completion of a deed conveying an estate? It still perplexes us to think of a service of our own as an assurance received by us from Heaven. And one would imagine that the Divine promise, once given, were enough, without this incessant binding by periodical legalities. If it be said, "the renewal of the obligation is needful for us, and not for him;" then call the rites at once and simply, our service of self-dedication, the solemn memorial of our vows. And in spite of all metaphors, the question recurs; does the covenant stand without these seals, or are they essential to give possession of the privileges conveyed? Are they, by means preternatural, procurers of salvation? Have they a mystical action towards this end? If so, we return to the same point; they have a charmed efficacy on the human soul.

In order to establish this, nothing more is requisite than a brief reference to the language of the Articles and Liturgical services of the Church respecting Baptism and the Communion.

Baptism is regarded, throughout the Book of Common Prayer, as the instrument of regeneration: not simply as its sign, of which the actual descent of the Holy Spirit is independent; but as itself and essentially the means or indispensable occasion of the washing away of sin. That this is regarded as a mystical and magical, not a natural and spiritual effect, is evident from the alleged fact of its occurrence

in infants, to whom the rite can suggest nothing, and on whom, in the course of nature, it can leave no impression. Yet is it declared of the infant, after the use of the water, "Seeing now, dearly beloved brethren, that *this child is regenerate,*" &c.: at the commencement of the service its aim is said to be that God may "grant to this child that thing which by nature he cannot have;" "we would wash him and sanctify him with the Holy Ghost," that he may be "delivered from God's wrath." Nothing, indeed, is so striking in this office of the national church, as its audacious trifling with solemn names, denoting qualities of the soul and will; the ascription of spiritual and moral attributes, not only to the child in whom they can yet have no development, but even to material substances; the familiarity with which engagements with God are made by deputy, and without the consent or even existence of the engaging will. Water is said to possess *sanctity*, for "the mystical washing away of sin." Infants, destitute of any idea of duty or obligation to be resisted or obeyed, are said to obtain "*remission of their sins;*"— "to renounce the devil and all his works, the vain pomp and glory of the world?" "*steadfastly to believe*" in the Apostles' creed, and to be desirous of "*baptism into this faith.*" Repel, desire, resolve, are acts of some one's mind: the language of this service attributes them to the personality of the infant *I renounce, I believe, I desire,* yet there they cannot possibly exist. If they are to be understood as affirmed by the godfathers and godmothers of themselves, the case is not improved: for how can one person's state of faith and conscience be made the condition of the regeneration of another? What intelligible meaning can be attached to these phrases of sanctity applied to an age not responsible? In what sense, and by what indication, are these children holier than others? And with what reason, of all this be Christianity, can we blame the Pope for sprinkling holy water on the horses? The service appears little better than a profane

sacerdotal jugglery, by which material things are impregnated with divine virtues, moral and spiritual qualities of the mind are spoiled with, the holy spirit of God is turned into a physical mystery, and the solemnity of personal responsibility is insulted.

That a superstitious value is attributed to the details of the baptismal form, in the Church of England, appears from certain parts of the service for the private ministrations of the rite. If a child has been baptized by any other lawful minister than the minister of the parish, strict inquiries are to be instituted by the latter respecting the correctness with which the ceremony has been performed: and should the prescribed rules have been neglected, the baptism is invalid, and must be repeated. Yet great solicitude is manifested, lest danger should be incurred by an unnecessary repetition of the sacrament: to guard against which, the minister is to give the following conditional invitation to the Holy Spirit: saying, in his address to the child, "*If thou art not already baptized, I baptize thee;*" &c. It is worthy of remark, that the Church mentions as one of the *essentials* of the service, the omission of which necessitates its repetition, the use of the formula, "*In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.*" By this rule, every one of the apostolic baptisms recorded in Scripture must be pronounced invalid; and the Church of England, were it possible, would perform them again: for in no instance does it appear that the apostles employed either this or even any equivalent form of words.

That this sacrament is regarded as an indispensable channel of grace, and positively necessary to salvation, is clear from the provision of a short and private form, to be used in cases of extreme danger. The prayers, and faith, and obedience, and patient love, of parents and friends,—the dedication and heartfelt surrender of their child to God, the profound application of their anxieties and grief to their conscience and in-

ward life,—all this, we are told, will be of no avail, without the water and the priest. Archbishop Laud says, "That Baptism is necessary to the salvation of infants (in the ordinary way of the church, without hindring God to the use and means of that sacrament, to which he hath bound us) is expressed in St. John iii. 'Except a man be born of water,' &c. So, no baptism, no entrance: nor can infants creep in, any other ordinary way."\* Bishop Bramhall says, "Wifed neglect of baptism we acknowledge to be a damnable sin; and, without repentance and God's extraordinary mercy, to exclude a man from all hope of salvation. But yet, if such a person, before his death, shall repent and deplore his neglect of the means of grace, from his heart, and desire with all his soul to be baptized, but is debarred from it invincibly, we do not, we dare not, pass sentence of condemnation upon him; not yet the Roman Catholics themselves. The question then is, whether the want of baptism, upon ownable necessity, do evermore infallibly exclude from heaven."† Singular struggle here, between the merciless ritual of the priest, and the relenting spirit of the man!

The office of Communion contains even stronger marks of the same sacerdotal superstitions: and notwithstanding the Protestant horror entertained of the mass, approaches it so nearly, that no ingenuity can exhibit them in contrast. Near doctrines, however, like near neighbours, are known to quarrel most.

The idea of a physical sanctity, residing in solid and liquid substances, is encouraged by this service. The priest consecrates the elements, by laying his hand upon all the bread, and upon every flagon containing the wine about to be dispensed. If an additional quantity is required, this too must be consecrated before its distribution. And the sacredness

thus imparted is represented as surviving the celebration of the Supper, and residing in the substances as a permanent quality: for in the disposal of the bread and wine that may remain at the close of the sacramental feast, a distinction is made between the consecrated and the unconsecrated portions of the elements; the former is not permitted to quit the altar, but is to be reverently consumed by the priest and the communicants; the latter is given to the curate. What the particular charge may be, which the prayer and manipulation of the minister are thought to induce, it is by no means easy to determine, nor would the discovery, perhaps, reward our pains. It is certainly conceived, that they cease to be any longer mere bread and wine, and that with them thenceforth co-exist, really and substantially, the body and blood of Christ. Respecting this *Real Presence* with the elements, there is no dispute between the Romish and the English church; both unequivocally maintain it, and the only question is, respecting the *Real Absence* of the original and ordinary bread and wine: the Roman Catholic believing that these substantially vanish, and are replaced by the body and blood of Christ; the English Protestant conceiving that they remain, but are united with the latter. The Lutheran, no less than the British Reformed church, has clung tenaciously to the doctrine of the real presence in the Eucharist. Luther himself declares, "I would rather retain with the Romanists, *only* the body and blood, than adopt, with the Swiss, the bread and wine, *without* the real body and blood of Christ."‡ The catechism of our church admits, that "the body and blood of Christ are *verily and indeed* taken and received by the faithful in the Lord's Supper." And this was not intended to be figuratively understood, of the spiritual use and appropriation to which the faith and piety of the receiver would mentally convert the elements: for although here the body of Christ is only said to be "*taken*" (making it the *act of the communicant*), yet one of the Articles speaks of it as

\* Conference with Feltz, § 35; quoted in *Tracts for the Times*, No. 55. *Clerical Directory*, No. 11, p. 15.

† *Of Persons dying wifed Baptism*, p. 919. *quoted in Act. of* pp. 19, 20.



"given" (making it the *act of the officiating priest*), and implying the real presence *before participation*. However anxious indeed the clergy of the "Evangelical" school may be to disguise the fact, it cannot be doubted that their church has always maintained a supernatural change in the elements themselves, as well as in the mind of the receiver. Crain, Bishop of Durham, says, "We own the union between the body and blood of Christ, and the elements, whose use and office we hold to be changed from what it was before;" "we confess the necessity of a supernatural and heavenly change, and that the signs cannot become sacraments but by the infinite power of God."\*

In consistency with this preparatory change, a charmed efficacy is attributed to the subsequent participation in the elements. Even the *body* of the communicant is said to be under their influence: "Grant us to eat the flesh of thy dear Son, and drink his blood, that our sinful *bodies* may be made clean through his body, and our *souls* washed through his most precious blood;" and the unworthy recipients are said "to provoke God to plague them with divers diseases and sundry kinds of death." Lest the worshipper, by presenting himself in an unqualified state, should "do nothing else than increase his damnation," the unquiet conscience is directed to resort to the priest, and receive the benefit of absolution before communicating. Can we deny to the Oxford divines the merit (whatever it may be) of consistency with the theology of their church, when they applaud and recommend, as they do, the administration of the eucharist to infants, and to persons dying and insensible? Indeed, it is difficult to discover, why infant Communion should be thought more irrational than infant Baptism. If, as I have endeavoured to show, the primary action of these ceremonies is conceived to be on God, and on the mind of their object,

\* History of Popish Transubstantiation, printed in the *Notes for the Times*, No. 27, by G. L.

why should not the Divine blessing be induced upon the young and the unconscious, as well as on the mature and capable soul? And were any further evidence required, than I have hitherto adduced, to shew to whom the Communion is conceived to operate in the first instance, it would surely be afforded by this clause in the Service; by not partaking, "Consider how great an injury ye do unto God!"

The only thing wanted to complete this sacerdotal system, is to obtain for a certain class of men the corporate possession, and exclusive administration, of these essential and holy mysteries. This our Church accomplishes by its doctrine of Apostolical Succession, claiming for its ministers a literal *official descent* from the Apostles, which invests them and their alone with this rank, with divine authority to pronounce absolution or excommunication, and to administer the Sacraments. They are thus the sole guardians of the channels of the Divine Spirit and its grace, and interpose themselves between a nation and its God. "Receive the Holy Ghost," says the Service for Ordination of Priests, "for the office and work of a priest in the Church of God, now committed unto thee by the imposition of hands. Whose sins thou dost forgive, they are forgiven; and whose sins thou dost retain, they are retained." "They only," says the present Bishop of Exeter, "can claim to rule over the Land's household, whom he has himself placed over it; they only are able to minister the means of grace,—above all, to present the great commemorative *sacrifice*,—whom Christ has appointed, and whom he has in all generations appointed in unbroken succession from Caice, and through those, whom he first ordained. 'Ambassadors from Christ' must, by the very force of the term, receive credentials from Christ: 'stewards of the mysteries of God' must be entrusted with those mysteries by him. Remind your people, that in the Church only is the promise of forgiveness of sins, and though, to all who truly repent, and sincerely believe, Christ mercifully grants forgiveness; yet he has, in an especial manner,

empowered his ministers to declare and pronounce to his people the absolution and remission of their sins: 'whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained.' This was the awful authority given to his first ministers, and in them, and through them, to all their successors. This is the awful authority we have received, and that we must never be ashamed nor afraid to tell the people that we have received.

"Having shewn to the people your commission, shew to them how our own Church has framed its services in accordance with that commission. Show this to them not only in the Ordinal, but also in the Collects, in the Communion Service, in the Office of the Visitation of the Sick; show it, especially, in that which continually presents itself to their notice, but is commonly little regarded by them; show it in the very commencement of Morning and Evening Prayer, and make them understand the full blessedness of that service, in which the Church thus calls on them to join. Let them see that there the minister authoritatively pronounces God's pardon and absolution to all them that truly repent, and unfeignedly believe Christ's holy gospel; that he does this, even as the Apostles did, with the authority and by the appointment of our Lord himself, who, in commissioning his Apostles, gave this to be the never-failing assurance of his co-operation in their ministry, 'Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world;' a promise which, of its very nature, was not to be fulfilled to the persons of those whom he addressed, but to their office, to their successors therefore in that office, 'even unto the end of the world.' Lastly, remind and warn them of the awful sanction with which our Lord accompanied his mission, even of the sacred order of the ministers whom he appointed; 'He that heareth you, heareth me; and he that despiseth you, despiseth me; and he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me.'" That this high dignity may be clearly understood to belong in this country only to the Church of England, the Bishop proposes the question,

"What, then, becomes of those who are not, or continue not, members of that (visible) Church?" and replies to it by saying, that though he "judges not them that are without," yet "he who wilfully and in despite of due warning, or through recklessness and worldly-mindedness, sets at nought its ordinances, and despises its ministers, has no right to promise to himself any share in the grace which they are appointed to convey." "Why," says one of the Oxford divines, who here undeniably speaks the genuine doctrine of his Church, "Why should we talk so much of an *Establishment*, and so little of an *ANASTROPHIC SECESSION*? Why should we not seriously endeavour to impress our people with this plain truth, that by separating themselves from our communion, they separate themselves not only from a decent, orderly, useful society, but from THE ONLY CHURCH IN THIS GREAT NATION HAS A RIGHT TO BE QUITE SURE THAT SHE HAS THE LORD'S BODY TO GIVE TO HIS PEOPLE?"†

Of course this Divine authority has been received through the Church of Rome, so abominable in the eyes of all Evangelical clergymen; and through many an unworthy link in the unbroken chain. The Holy Spirit, it is acknowledged, has *passed through many*, on whom, apparently, it was not pleased to *rest*; and the right to forgive sins been conferred by those who seemed themselves to need forgiveness. A writer in the Oxford Tracts observes, "Nor even though we may admit that many of those who formed the connecting links of this holy chain were themselves unworthy of the high charge reposed on them, can this furnish us with any solid ground for doubting or denying their power to exercise that legitimate authority with which they were duly invested, of transmitting the sacred gift to worthier followers."‡

† Bishop of Exeter's Charge, delivered at the Town Hall, Exeter, on August 25, 1834, and reprinted, 1835, p. 14-17.

‡ Tracts for the Times, No. 4, p. 3.

§ Ibid. No. 1, pp. 7, 10.

In its doctrine of Sacraments, then, and in that of Ecclesiastical authority and succession, the Church of England is thoroughly imbued with the sacerdotal character. It doubtless contains far better elements and nobler conceptions than those which it has been my duty to exhibit now; and solemnly insists on faith of heart, and truth of conscience, and Christian devotedness of life, as well as on the observance of its ritual; with the external it unites the internal condition of sanctification. But insisting on the theory of a mystic efficacy in the Christian rites, it necessarily fails to reconcile these with each other: and hence the opposite parties within its pale; the one magnifying faith and personal spirituality, the other exalting the sacraments and ecclesiastical communion. They represent respectively the two constituent and clashing powers, which met at the formation of the English Church, and of which it effected the mere compromise, not the reconciliation: I mean, the priestliness of Rome, and the prophetic spirit of the Reformers. Never, since apostolic days, did heaven bless us with truer prophet than Martin Luther. It was his mission (no modern man had ever greater) to substitute the idea of *personal faith* for that of *sacerdotal reliance*. And gloriously, with bravery and truth of soul amid a thousand hindrances, did he achieve it. But though, ever since, the priests have been down, and faith has been up, yet did the hierarchy unavoidably remain, and insisted that *something* should be made of it, and at least some colourable terms proposed. Hence, every reformed Church exhibits a coalition between the new and the old ideas: and combined views of religion, which must ultimately prove incompatible with each other; the formal with the spiritual; the idea of worship as a means of propitiating God, with the conception of it as an expression of love in man; the notion of Church authority with that of individual freedom; the admission of a licence to think, with a prohibition of thinking wrong. In our national Church, the old spirit was ascendant over the new,

though long forced into quiescence by the temper of modern times. Now it is attempting to re-assert its power, not without strenuous resistance. Indeed, the present age seems destined to end the compromise between the two principles, from the union of which Protestantism assumed its established form. The truce seems everywhere breaking up: a general disintegration of churches is visible; tradition is renouncing the past for claims and dignities, and canvassing present validity for fresh authority, to withstand the wild forces born at the Reformation, and hurrying us fast into an unknown future.

Let us now turn to the primitive Christianity; which, I submit, is throughout wholly anti-sacerdotal.

Surely it must be admitted that the general spirit of our Lord's personal life and ministry was that of the Prophet, not of the Priest, tending directly to the disparagement of whatever priesthood existed in his country, without visibly preparing the substitution of anything at all analogous to it. The sacerdotal order felt it so; and with the inflexible instinct of self-preservation, they watched, they hated, they seized, they murdered him. The priest in every age has a natural antipathy to the prophet, drags him as long as dread revolution, and is the first to desert his existence. The solemn moment and the graceful words, of Christ's first preaching in Nazareth, struck with fate the temple in Jerusalem. To the old men of the village, to the neighbours who knew his childhood, and companions who had shared its rambles and its sports, he said, with the quiet blush of inspiration; "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor: he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind; to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord."\* The

\* Luke iv. 18, 19

Spirit of the Lord in Galilee! speaking with the peasantry, dwelling in villages, and wandering house and where it listeth among the hills! This would never do, thought the white-robed Levites of the Holy City; it would be as a train of wild-fire in the Temple. And were they not right? When it was revealed that sanctity is no thing of place and time, that a way is open from earth to heaven, from every field or mountain trail by human feet, and through every roof that shelters a human head; that amid the crowd and crush of life, each soul is in personal solitude with God, and by speech or silence (be they but true and loving) may tell its cares and find its peace; that a divine allegiance might *cost nothing*, but the strife of a dutiful will and the patience of a filial heart; how could any priesthood hope to stand? See how Jesus himself, when the Temple was close at hand, and the sunshine dressed it in its splendour, yet withdrew his prayers to the midnight of Mount Olvet. He entered those courts to teach, rather than to worship; and when there, he is felt to take no consecration, but to give it; to bring with him the living spirit of God, and spread it throughout all the place. When evening closes his teachings, and he returns late over the Mount to Bethany, did he not feel that there was more of God in the night-breeze on his brow, and the heaven above him, and the sad love within him, than in the place called "Holy" which he had left? And when he had knocked at the gate of Lazarus the risen and become his guest; when, after the labours of the day, he unburthened his spirit to the affections of that family, and spake of things divine to the sisters listening at his feet; did they not feel, as they retired at length, that the whole house was full of God, and that there is no sanctuary like the shrine, not made with hands, within us all? In childhood, he had once preferred the temple and its teachings to his parents' house; now, to his deeper experience, the temple has lost its truth; while the cottage and the walks of Nazareth, the daily voices and constant duties of this life,

seem covered with the purest consecration. True, he vindicated the sanctity of the temple, when he heard within its enclosure the hum of traffic and the clink of gain, and would not have the house of prayer turned into a place of merchandise; because in this there was imposture and a lie, and Mammon and the Lord must ever dwell apart. In nothing must there be mockery and falsehood; and while the temple stands, it must be a temple true.

Our Lord's whole ministry then (to which we may add that of his apostles) was conceived in a spirit quite opposite to that of priesthood. A missionary life, without fixed locality, without form, without rites; with teaching free, occasional and various, with sympathies ever with the people, and a strain of speech never marked by invective, except against the ruling sacerdotal influence; all these characters proclaim him, purely and emphatically, the Prophet of the Lord. It deserves notice that, unless as the name of his enemies, the word "PRIEST" (*hiere*) never occurs in either the historical or epistolary writings of the New Testament, except in the Epistle to the Hebrews. And there its application is not a little remarkable. It is applied to Christ alone: it is declared to belong to him, only after his ascension: it is said that, while on earth, he neither was, nor could be, a priest: and if it is admitted that he holds the office in heaven, this is only to satisfy the demand of the Hebrew Christians for some sacerdotal ideas in their religion, and to reconcile them to having no priest on earth. The writer acknowledges one great pontiff in the world above, that the whole race may be superseded in the world below; and banishes priesthood into invisibility, that men may never see its shadow more. All the terms of office which are given to the first preachers of the gospel and superintendents of churches—as Deacon, Elder or Presbyter, Overseer or Bishop, are *lay-terms*, belonging previously, not to ecclesiastical, but to civil life; an indication, surely, that no analogy was thought to exist between the

Apostolic and the Sacerdotal relations.\* I shall, no doubt, be reminded of the words, in which our Lord is supposed to have given their commission to his first representatives; "Whosoever ye bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever ye loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven;"† and shall be asked whether this does not convey to them and their successors an official authority to forgive sins, and dispense the decrees of the unseen world. I reply briefly:

1st, That the power here granted does not relate to the dispensations of the future life, but solely to what would be termed, in modern language, the election of *church-membership*. The previous verse proves this, furnishing as it does a particular case of the general authority here assigned. It directs the apostles under what circumstances they are to remove an offender from a Christian society, and treat him as an unconverted man, as a heathen man and a publican. Having given them their rule, he freely trusts the application of it to them: and being about to retire ere long, from personal intervention in the affairs of his kingdom, he assures them that their decisions shall be his, and that he may be considered as adopting in heaven their determinations upon earth. He simply consigns to his apostles discretionary power to direct the affairs of his church, and superintend the diffusion of the glad tidings: they may bind and loose, that is, open and shut the door of admission to their community,

\* Archbishop Whately, speaking of the word *legis* and its meaning, says: "This is an off-<sup>er</sup> designed to none under the preposition, except the one great High Priest, of whom the Jewish Priests were types." Of the preposition, this is quite true. At the Council of Trent's declaration, it is not. There has been the Dupuch's Greek version of the Prayer-Book and Office of the Anglican Church, and referring to the Canon on Sacraments, I find no offering except the called *legis* throughout. The absence of this word from the records of the primitive Gospel, and its presence in the Prayer-Book, is perfectly expressive of the difference in the spirit of the two systems;—the difference between the Church with, and the "Christianity without a Priest."

† Matt. xviii. 18.

\* Elements of Logic. Appendix. Note on the word "Priest."

as their judgment may determine; employing or rejecting applicants for the missionary office; dissociating from their assemblies obstinate delinquents; receiving with openness, or dismissing with suspicion, each candidate for instruction, according to their estimate of his qualifications and motives."‡

2dly, It is to be observed, that there is no appearance of any one being in the contemplation of our Lord, beyond the persons immediately addressed. Not a word is said of any official successor or any distant age. No indication is afforded, that any idea of futurity was present to the mind of Jesus: and a title of perpetual office, an instrument creating and endowing an endless priesthood, ought, it will be admitted, to be somewhat more explicit than this. But where the power has been successfully claimed, the title is seldom difficult to prove.

The alleged *rites* of Christianity, consisting of the sacraments of Baptism and the Communion, will be found no less destitute of sanction from the Scriptures. The former we shall see reason to regard as simply an initiatory form, applicable only to Christian converts, and limited therefore to adults, the latter as purely a commemoration: neither therefore having any sacramental or mystical efficacy.

For baptism it is impossible to establish any supernatural origin. It is admitted to have existed before the Christian era; and to have been employed by the Jews on the admission of proselytes to their religion. It is certain that it is not an enjoined rite in the Mosiac dispensation; and though prevalent before the period of the New Testament, is nowhere enforced or recognised in the writings of the Old. It arose therefore in the interval between the only two systems which Christians acknowledged to be supernatural: and must be considered as of natural and human origin, invested, thus far, with an higher authority than its own appropriateness may confer. There seem to have been two modes of construing the symbol: the one founded on the cleansing effect of the water on the person of the baptized himself; the other, on

the appearance of his immersion (which was complete) to the eye of a spectator. The former was an image of the Heathen convert's purification from a foul idolatry, and his transition to a stainless condition under a divine and justifying law. The latter represented him, when he vanished in the stream, as interred in this world, sunk utterly from its sight; and when he re-appeared, as emerging or born again to a better state: the "old man" was "buried in baptism," and when he "rose again," he had altogether "become new."\* The ceremony then was appropriately used in any case of transition from a depressed and corrupt state of existence to a hopeful and blessed one; from a false or imperfect religion to one true and heavenly.

But it will be said, whatever the origin of Baptism, it was employed and sanctioned by our Lord, who commissioned his apostles to go and baptize all nations. True; but is there no difference between the adoption of a practice already extant,—of a practice which was as much the mere institutional dress of the apostles' nation, as the sandals whose dust they were to shake off against the faithless, were the customary clothing of the apostles' feet,—and the authoritative appointment of a Sacrament? They were going forth to make converts: and why should they not have recourse to the form familiarly associated with the act? Familiar association recommended its adoption in that age and clime; and the absence of such association elsewhere and in other times may be thought to justify its disuse. At all events, a ceremony

\* See Rom. vi. 2-4. "How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer there? Know ye not, that as many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him, by baptism into death: that, like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." Mr. Locke observes of "St. Paul's argument," that it "is to show into what state of life we ought to be raised out of baptism, in gratitude and conformity to the state of life Christ was raised into from the grave." See also Col. ii. 12. "Ye are . . . buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead." The force of the image clearly depends on the sinking or being in the water.

thus taken up must be presumed to retain its required sense and its established extent of application: and if so, baptism must be strictly limited to the admission of proselytes from other faiths. This accords with the known practice of the apostles, who cannot be shown to have baptized any but those whom they had personally, or by their missionaries, persuaded to become Christians. Not a single case of the use of the rite with children can be adduced from Scripture: and the only argument by which such employment of it is ever justified is this; that a *household* is said to have been baptized, and *all nations* were to receive the offer of it; and that the household *may*, the nations *must*, have contained children. It is evident that such reasoning could never have been propounded, unless the practice had existed first, and the defence had been found afterwards.

With the system of infant baptism, vanish almost all the ideas which the prevalent theology has put into the rite; and it becomes as intelligible and expressive to one who believes in the good capacities of human nature, as to those who esteem it originally depraved. 'How unmeaning,' say our orthodox opponents, 'is the ceremony in Unitarian hands; denying, as they do, the doctrines which it represents! of what regeneration can they possibly suppose it the symbol, if not of the washing away of that *hereditary sin*, which they refuse to acknowledge? for when the infant is brought to the font, he can as yet have no other guilt than this.' I reply, the objection has no force except against the use of *infant* baptism in our churches,—which I am not anxious to defend: but of course those Unitarians who employ it, conceive it to be the token, not of any sentiments which they reject, but of truths and feelings which they hold dear. For myself, I believe, with our opponents, that the *doctrine* of original sin and the *practice* of infant baptism *do* belong to each other, and must stand or fall together: and therefore deem it a fact very significant of the apostles' theology, that an infant can

be shown ever to have been "brought to the font" by these first true missionaries of Christianity. And as to the *new-birth* which baptism (i. e. repent and genuine discipleship to Jesus) may give to the *moderately-converted* Christian, he must have a great deal to learn, not only of the Hebrew conceptions and language in relation to the Messiah, but of the spirituality of the gospel, and of the fresh creations of character which it calls up, who can be much puzzled about its meaning.

In Christian baptism, then, we have no sacrament with mystic power; but an initiatory form, possibly of customary obligation only; but if enjoined, applicable exclusively to proselytes, and misemployed in the case of infants; a sign of conversion, not a means of salvation; confined to no sacerdotal order, but open to every man fitted to give it an appropriate use.

I turn to the Lord's Supper; with design to show, what it is not, and what it is. It is not a mystery; or a sacrament, any more than it is an expiatory sacrifice. To persuade us that it has a ritual character, we are first assured that it is clearly the successor in the Gospel to the Passover under the Law. Well,—even if it were so, it would still be simply commemorative, and without any other efficacy than a festival, filled with great remembrances, and inspired with religious joy. Such was the Paschal Feast in Jerusalem; the annual gathering of families and kindred, a sacred carnival under the spring sky and in sight of unreaped fields, when the memory was recalled of national deliverance, and the tale was told of traditional glories, and the thoughts brought back of bondage reversed, of the desert pilgrimage ended, of the promised land possessed. The Jewish festival was no more than this; unless, with Archbishop Magee and others, we erroneously conceive it to be a proper sacrifice.\* So that those who would interpret the Lord's Supper by the Pass-

\* See Note

over have their choice between two views: that it is a simple commemoration; or that it is an expiatory sacrifice: in the former case, they quit the Church of England; in the latter, they fall into the Church of Rome.

But, in truth, there is no propriety in applying the name 'Christian passover' to the Communion. The nation rests entirely on this circumstance; that the first three Evangelists describe the last Supper as the Paschal Supper. But the *institutional* part of that meal was over before the cup was distributed, and the repetition of the act enjoined. Nor is there the slightest trace, either in the subsequent scriptures, or in the earliest history of the Church, that the Communion was thought to bear relation to the passover. The time, the frequency, the mode, of the two were altogether different. Indeed, when we observe that not one of these particulars is prescribed and determined by our Lord at all, when we notice the slight and transient manner in which he drops his wish that they would "do this in remembrance of" him, when we compare these features of the account with the elaborate precision of Moses respecting times, and materials, and dates, and places, and modes in the establishment of the Hebrew festivals, it is scarcely possible to avoid the impression, that we are reading narrative, not law; an utterance of personal affection, rather than the legislative enactment of an everlasting institution.† However this may be, no importance can be attached to the reported coincidence in the time of that meal with the day of passover: for the apostle John, who gives by far the fullest account of what happened at that table (yet never mentions the institution of the supper), states that this was not the paschal meal at all, which did not occur, he says, till the following day of crucifixion.‡

† Compare Matt. xxvi. 26-28; Mark xvi. 21-23; Luke xvi. 19, 20, with Exod. xii. 1-11, 24, 25, 27, 43-49. Lev. xxiii. 2, Num. ix. 10-14, xviii. 10; Luke xvi. 1, 4-7.

‡ Compare Matt. xxvi. 17-21; Mark xvi. 12-17; Luke xvi. 21-27, with John xvi. 2, seq.; John 24. xvi. 19, 28, 32. See also The Lecture, pp. 55, 59.

'But,' it will be said, 'the gospels are not the only parts of Scripture, whence the nature of the eucharist may be learned. Language is employed by St. Paul in reference to it, which cannot be understood of a mere memorial, and implies that awful consequences hang on the worthy or unworthy participation in the rite. Does he not even say, that a man may "eat and drink damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body?"'

The passage whence these words are cited certainly throws great light on the institution of which we treat: but there must be a total disregard to the whole context and the general course of the apostle's reasoning before it can be made to yield any argument for the mystical character of the rite.\* It would appear that the Corinthian church was in the habit of celebrating the Lord's Supper in a way which, even if it had never been disgraced by any indecorum, must have struck a modern Christian with wonder at its singularity. The members met together in one room or church, each bringing his own supper, of such quantity and quality as his opulence or poverty might allow. To this the apostle does not object, but apparently considers it a part of the established arrangement. But these Christians were divided into factions, and had not learned the true uniting spirit of their faith: nor do they seem to have acquired that sobriety of habit and sobriety of mind, which their profession ought to have induced. When they entered the place of meeting, they broke up into groups and parties, class apart from class, and rich deserting poor: each set began its separate meal, some indulging in luxury and excess, others with scarce the means of keeping the commemoration at all; and, infamous to tell, the blessed supper of the Lord was sunk into a tavern meal. So gross and habitual had the abuse become, that the excesses had affected the health and life of these guilty and unworthy par-

takers. They had made no distinction between the Communion and an ordinary repast, had lost all perception of the memorial significance of their meeting, had not discriminated or "discerned the Lord's body:" and so they had eaten and drunk judgment (improperly rendered "*damnation*" in the English Version) to themselves; and many were weak and sickly among them, and many even slept. Well would it be, if they would look on this as a chastening of the Lord: in which case they might take warning, and escape being cast out of the church, and driven to take their chance with the unbelieving and heathen world. "When we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world."

In order to remedy all this corruption, St. Paul reminds them, that to eat and drink under the same roof, in the church, does not constitute proper Communion: that, to this end, they must not break up into sections, and retain their property in the food, but all participate seriously together. He directs that an absolute separation shall be made between the necessities for satisfying hunger and thirst, and those for observing this commemorative rite, discriminating carefully the memorial of the Lord's body from every thing else. He refers them all to the original mode of the institution, the parting meal of Christ, before his betrayal, and by this example, as a criterion, he would have every man examine himself, and after that pattern eat of the bread and drink of the cup. Hence it appears,

That the unworthy partaker was the riotous Corinthian, who made no distinction between the sacred Communion and a vulgar meal:

That the judgment or damnation which such brought on themselves, was sickness, weakness, and premature but incurable death:

That the self-examination which the apostle recommends

\* See 1 Cor. x. 17-21.



to the communicant is, a comparison of his mode of keeping the rite, with the original model of the Last Supper :

That in the Corinthian Church there was no Priest, no officiating dispenser of the elements ; and that St. Paul did not contemplate or recommend the appointment of any such person.

The Lord's Supper, then, I conclude, was and is a simple communion. Am I asked, *of what?* Why, according to Lutheran views, the death on the cross merits the memorial, more than the remaining features of our Lord's history;—more even than the death of many a noble martyr, who has sealed his testimony to truth by like self-sacrifice? The answer will be found at length in the Lecture on the Atonement, where the Scriptural conceptions of Christ's death are expounded in detail. Meanwhile, it is sufficient to recall an idea, which has more than once been thrown out during this course: that if Jesus had taken up his Messianic power without death, he would have remained a Hebrew, and been limited to the people amid whom he was born. He quitted his mortal personality, he left this fleshly tabernacle of existence, and became immortal, that his nationality might be destroyed, and all men drawn in as subjects of his reign. It was the cross that opened to the nations the blessed ways of life, and put us all in relations not of law, but of love, to him and God. Hence the memorial of his death celebrates the universality and spirituality of the gospel, declares the brotherhood of men, the fatherhood of providence, the personal affinity of every soul with God. That is no empty rite, which overflows with these conceptions.

Christianity, then, I maintain, is without Priest, and without Ritual. It altogether repudiates the prophetic idea of religion, and repudiates the sacerdotal. Christ himself was transcendently man-Priesthood. He brought down God

to this our life, and left his spirit abroad its scenes. The Apostles were prophets; they carried that spirit abroad;—reaching everywhere to men the sanctity of their nature, and the proximity of their heaven. Nor am I even now bringing about an Apostolic succession, never yet extinct, and therefore more to be extinguished. But then it is by no means a regular regiment of incessant priests; but a broken, scattered, yet glorious race of prophets; the genealogy of great and Christian souls, through whom the primitive conceptions of Jesus have propagated themselves from age to age:—which producing mind, courage giving birth to courage, truth developing truth, and love ever nurturing love, so long as one good and noble spirit shall act upon another. Luther surely was the child of Paul; and what a noble offspring has since to manhood from Luther's soul; whom to enumerate, were to tell the best triumphs of the modern world. These are Christ's true ambassadors; and never did he mean any follower of his to be called a priest. He has his genuine messenger, wherever, in the Church or in the world, there toils any one of the real prophets of our race; any one who can create the good and great in other souls, whether by truth of word or deed, by the inspiration of genuine speech, or the better power of a life merciful and holy.

And here, my friends, with my subject might say I return close; were it not that we are assembled now to terminate this controversy; and that a few remarks in reference to its whole course and spirit seem to be required.

That the recent aggression upon the principles of Lutheran Christianity, was prompted by an unworthy motive, individual or political, but by a zeal, Christian so far as its spirit is disinterested, and unchristian only so far as its influence, has never been doubted or denied by my hearers, ministers or myself. That much personal consideration and courtesy have been evinced towards us during the past

it is so grateful to us to acknowledge, that we must only regret the theological obstructions in the way of that actual knowledge, which softens the prejudices, and corrects the errors of the closet. From such errors, the lot of our fallible nature, we are deeply aware that we cannot be exempt, and profoundly wish that, by others' aid or by our own, we could discover them. Meanwhile, we do not feel that our opponents have been successful in the offer which they have made, of help towards this end. They are too little acquainted with our history and character, and have far too great a horror of us, to succeed in a design, demanding rather the benevolence of sympathy and trust, than that of antipathy and fear. Hence have arisen certain complaints and charges against our system and its tendencies, which, having been reiterated again and again in the Christ Church Lectures, and scarcely noticed in our own, claim a concluding observation or two now.

1. We are said to be infidels in disguise, and our system to be drifting fast towards utter unbelief. At all events, it is said we make great advances that way.

It is by no means unusual to discuss this charge on a whirlwind of declamation, designed to send it and the infidel to the greatest possible distance. My friend who delivered the first Lecture, noted it in a far different spirit; and in a discussion where truth and wisdom had any chance, his reply would have prevented any recurrence to the statement. Let me try to imitate him in the testimony which I desire to add upon this point.

Every one, I presume, who disbelieves *any thing*, is, with respect to that thing, *an infidel*. Departure from any prevalent and established ideas, is inevitably an approach to infidelity; the extent of the departure, not the reasonableness or propriety of it, is the sole measure of the nearness of that approach; which, however wise and sober, when estimated by a true and independent criterion, will appear, to persons

strongly possessed by the ascendant notions, nothing less than alarming, amazing, awful. In short, the average popular creed of the day, is the mental standard, from which the stadia are measured off towards that invisible, remote, nay, even imaginary place, lodged somewhere within clouds, called utter unbelief. Christianity at first was blank infidelity: and disciples, being of course the adherents of their day, were thought a fit prey for the wild beasts of the amphitheatre. Every rejection of tradition, again, is unbelief with respect to it; and to those who hold its authority, it is the denial of an essential. It is too evident to need proof, that the average popular belief cannot be assumed, by any considerate person, as a standard of truth. To make it an objection against any class of men, that they depart from it, is to prove no error against them; and no one, who is not willing to call in the passions of the multitude in suffrage on the controversies of the few, will condescend to enforce the charge.

But only observe here, in the present instance, the matter stands. In the popular religion we discern, mixed up together, two constituent portions; certain *peculiar* doctrines which characterise the common orthodoxy; and certain *universal* Christian truths remaining, when these are subtracted. The infidel throws away both of these; we throw away the former only: and thus far, no doubt, we partially agree with him. But *on what grounds* do we severally justify this rejection? In answer to this question, compare the views, with respect both to the *authority* and to the *interpretation* of Scripture, held by the three parties, the Trinitarian, the Unbeliever, the Unitarian. The Unbeliever does not usually find fault with the orthodox *interpretation* of the Bible, but allows it to pass, as probably the real meaning of the book, only he altogether denies the divine character and authority of the whole religion; he therefore *agrees* with the Trinitarian respecting interpretation, disagrees with him respecting *authority*. The Unitarian, again, admits the divine character

of Christianity, but understands it differently from the Trinitarian, he therefore reverses the former case, agrees with the orthodox on the authority, *disagrees* respecting interpretation. It follows, that with the unbeliever he agrees in *nothing*, and is therefore farther from him than his Trinitarian neighbour.

I have given this explanation, from regard simply to logical truth. I have no desire to join to the outcry against even the deliberate unbeliever in the Gospel, as if he must necessarily be a fiend. Profoundly living and trusting Christianity myself, I yet feel indignant at the persecution which theology, policy, and law inflict on the many who, with undeniable exercise of conscientiousness and patience of research, are yet unable to satisfy themselves respecting its evidence. The very word '*infidel*,' implying not simply an intellectual judgment, but bad moral qualities, conveys an unmerited insult, and ought to be repudiated by every generous disputant. The more deeply we trust Christianity, the more should we protest against its being defended by a body-guard of passions, willing to do for it precisely the services which they might equally render to the vilest imposture.

2. We were recently accused, and acknowledgments of our *honesty*, with want of *anxiety* about spiritual truth; and the following justification of the charge was offered: "The Word of God has informed us, that they who seek the truth shall find it; that they who ask for holy wisdom shall receive it; but it must be a *really anxious inquiry*—a heart-felt desire for the blessing. 'If thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures, then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God.'<sup>1</sup> Such promises are express,—they cannot be broken,—God will give the blessing to the *sincere, anxious* inquirer. But the two qualities must go together. A man may be *mere* in his ignorance and spiritual torpor; but let the full

<sup>1</sup> Prov. 2, 3, 4.

desire for God's favour, his pardoning mercy, and his enlightening grace spring up in the heart, and we may rest assured that the desire will soon be accomplished. Admitting, then, the sincerity of Unitarians, we doubt their anxiety, for we are well persuaded from God's promises, that if they possessed both, they would be delivered from their miserable system, and be brought to the knowledge of the truth."<sup>2</sup>

The praise of our "*sincerity*," conveyed in these bland sentences, we are anxious to decline: not that we undervalue the quality: but because we find, on near inspection, that it has all been emptied out of the word before its presentation, and the term comes to us hollow and worthless. It affords a specimen of the mode in which almost our opponents appear able to give any credit to heretics: many phrases of approbation they freely apply to us; but they take care to draw off the whole meaning first. We must reject these "Greek presents;" and we are concerned that any Christian divine can so torture and desecrate the names of virtue, as to make them instruments of disparagement and injury. This play with words, which every conscience should hold sacred, and every lip pronounce with reverence, this careless and unmeaning application of them in discourse,—indicates a loose adhesion to the mind of the ideas denoted by them, which we regard with unfeigned astonishment and grief. What, let me ask, can be the "*sincerity*" of an inquirer, who is not "*anxious*" about the truth? How can he be "*sincerely*" persuaded that he sees, who voluntarily shuts his eyes? Unless this word is to be degraded into a synonyme for a dilatory and self-complacency, no professed seeker of truth must have the praise of sincerity, who does not abandon all worship of his own state of mind as already perfect, who is not ready to listen to every calm doubt as to the voice of heaven, to un-

<sup>2</sup> See B. and F. Edition of the Letters of Thomas Wesley and F. A. Schlegel, p. 169.

undertake with gratitude the labour of reaching new knowledge,—to maintain his faith and his profession in scrupulous accordance with his perception of evidence; and, at any moment of awakening, to spring from his most brilliant dreams into God's own morning light, with a matin hymn upon his lips for his new-birth from darkness and from sleep. The earnestness implied in this state of mind is perhaps not precisely the same, as that with which our Trinitarian opponents seem to be familiar. The "anxiety" which they appear to feel for themselves is, to keep their existing state of belief: the "anxiety" which they feel for us is, that we should have it. We are to hold ourselves ready for a change; they are not to be expected to desire it. If a doubt of *our opinions* should occur to us, we are to foster it carefully, and follow it out as a beckoning of the Holy Spirit: if a doubt of *their sentiments* should occur to them, they are to crush it on the spot, as a reptile-thought sent of Satan to tempt them. "Our aim," says the concluding Lecturer again, "has been to beget a deep spirit of inquiry;"\* and so has ours, I would reply: only you and we have severally prosecuted this aim in different ways. We have personally listened, and personally inquired, and earnestly recommended all whom our influence could reach, to do the same: and few indeed will be the Unitarian libraries containing one of these series of lectures, that will not exhibit the other by its side. You have entered this controversy, evidently strange to our literature and history; and any deficiency in such reading before, has not been compensated by anxiety to listen now. Your people have been warned against us, and are taught to regard the study of our publications as blasphemy at second-hand: and were they really so simple as to act upon your avowed wish "to beget a deep spirit of inquiry," and plunge into the investigation of Unitarian authors, and judge for themselves of Unitarian worship, they would speedily hear the

\* Mr. Dixon's Lecture, p. 260.

word of recal, and discover that they were practically disappointing the whole object of this controversy.

Having said thus much respecting the unbecoming use of language in the Lecturer's disparaging estimate of Unitarian "anxiety," we may profitably direct a moment's attention to the reasoning which it involves. It presents us with the startling fallacy of intolerance, which is sufficiently rebuked by being simply exhibited. Our opponents reason thus:

God will not permit the really anxious fatally to err:

The Unitarians do fatally err.

Therefore, The Unitarians are not really anxious.

Now it is clear that we must conceive our opponents to be no less mistaken than they suppose us to be. They are as far from us, as we from them; and from either point, taken as a standard, the measure of error must be the same. Moreover, we cannot but eagerly assent to the principle of the Lecturer's first premise, that God will never let the truly anxious fatally miss their way. So that there is nothing, in the nature of the case, to prevent our turning this same syllogism, with a change in the names of the parties, against our opponents. Yet we should shrink, with severe self-reproach, from drawing any such unfavourable conclusion respecting them, as they deduct of us. Accordingly, we manage our reasoning thus:

God will not permit the really anxious fatally to err:

The Trinitarians show themselves to be really anxious:

Therefore, The Trinitarians do not fatally err.

Our opponents are more sure that their judgment is in the right, than that their neighbours' conscience is in earnest. They sacrifice other men's characters to their own self-con-

vidence: we would rather distrust our self-confidence, and rely on the visible signs of a good and careful mind. We honour other men's hearts, rather than our own heads. How can it be just, to make the agreement between an opponent's opinion and our own, the criterion of his proper conduct of the inquiry? Every man feels the injury, the commonest the rule is turned against himself: and every good man should be ashamed to direct it against his brother.

3. Our reverend opponents affect to have laboured under a great disadvantage, from the absence of any recognized standard of Unitarian belief. 'We give you,' they say, 'our Articles and Creeds, which we unanimously undertake to defend, and which expose a definite object to all heretical attacks. In return, you can furnish us with no authorized exposition of your system; but leave us to gather our knowledge of it from individual writers, for whose opinions you refuse to be responsible, and whose reasonings, when refuted by us, you can conveniently disown.'

Plausible as this complaint may appear, I venture to affirm, that it is vastly easier to ascertain the common belief of Unitarians, than that of the members of the Established Church: and for this plain reason, that with us there really is such a thing as a common faith, though derived to no confession; in the Anglican Church there is not, though articles and creeds profess it. The characteristic tenets of Unitarian Christianity are so simple and unambiguous, that little scope exists for variety in their interpretation: to the propositions expressing them all their professors attach *distinct and the same ideas*,—so far, at least, as such accordance is possible in relation to subjects accessible both to demonstration and to experience. But the Trinitarian hypothesis, venturing with presumptuous analysis far into the Divine psychology, presents us with ideas confessedly *inapprehensible*, propounded in language which, if used in its ordinary sense, is self-contradictory, and if not, is meaningless, and ready in its emptiness to be filled

by any arbitrary interpretation; and actually understood so variously by those who subscribe to them, that the Calvinist and the Arminian, the Trinitarian and the Sabellian, unite to praise them. Indeed, in the history of the English Church, so visible is the sweep of the centre of orthodoxy over the whole space from the confines of Romanism to the verge of Unitarianism, that our ecclesiastical chronology is measured by its oscillations. Our respected opponents know full well, that it is not necessary to search beyond the clergy of this town, or even beyond the morning and afternoon preaching in one and the same church, in order to encounter greater contrasts in theology, than could be found in a whole library of Unitarian divinity. What mockery then to refer us to these articles as expositions of clerical belief, when the moment we pass beyond the words, and address ourselves to the sense, every shade of contrariety appears: and no one definite conception can be adopted of such a doctrine as that of the Trinity, without some church expositor or other starting up to rebuke it as a misrepresentation! How pure the pride of uniformity, which contents itself with lip-service to the symbol, in the midst of heart-burnings about the reality!

In order to test the force of the objection to which I am referring, let us advert, in detail, to the topics which exhibit the Unitarian and Trinitarian theology in most direct opposition. It will appear that the advantage of unity lies, in this instance, on the side of heresy; and that if uniformity be a prime characteristic of error, there is a wide difference between orthodoxy and truth. There are four great subjects comprised in the controversy between the church and ourselves: the nature of God, of Christ, of sin, of punishment. On these several points (which, considered as involving an *mutual denial* of previous ideas, may be regarded as containing the *negative* elements of our belief) all our modern writers, without material variation or exception, maintain the following doctrines:

UNITARIAN DOCTRINES, *opposed to* CHURCH DOCTRINES.

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| (1.) The Personal Unity of God.               | (1.) The Trinity in Unity.                                 |
| (2.) The Simplicity of Nature in Christ.      | (2.) Two distinct Natures in Christ.                       |
| (3.) The Personal Origin and Identity of Sin. | (3.) The Transferable Nature and Vicarious Removal of Sin. |
| (1.) The Finite Duration of Future Suffering. | (4.) The Eternity of Hell Torments.                        |

Now no one at all familiar with polemical literature can deny, that the nodes and anfractuities of doctrine comprised in this Trinitarian list, are more numerous than can be detected in the parallel "heresies." I am willing indeed to admit an exception in respect to the last of the topics, and to allow that the belief in the finite duration of future punishment has opposed itself, in two forms, to the single doctrine of everlasting torments. But when the systems are compared at their other corresponding points, the hoar of orthodox uniformity instantly vanishes. Since the primitive jealousy between the Jewish and Gentile Christianity, the rivalry between the "Monarchy" and the "Economy," the believers in the personal Unity of God, though often severed by ages from each other, have held that majestic truth in one unvaried form. Never was there an idea so often lost and recovered, yet so absolutely unchanged—a sublime, but occasional visitant of the human mind, assuring us of the perpetuity of our own nature, as well as the Divine. We can point to no unbroken continuity of our great doctrine: and if we could, we should appeal with no confidence to the evidence of so dubious a phenomenon: for if a system of ideas once gains possession of society, and attracts to itself complicated interests and feelings, many causes may suffice to ensure its indefinite preservation. But we can point to a

greater phenomenon; to the long and repeated extinction of our favourite belief, to its submergence beneath a dark and restless fanaticism; and its invariable resurrection, like a necessary intuition of the soul, in times of purer light, with its features still the same, stamped with imperishable identity of truth, and, like him to whom it refers, without variability or shadow of a turning. Meanwhile, who will undertake to enumerate and define the succession of Trinities by which this doctrine has been bewildered and banished? Passing by the Aristotelian, the Platonic, the Ciceronian, the Cartesian Trinity,—quitting the stormy disputes, and contradictory decisions of the early councils, shall we find among even the modern fathers of our national church, any approach to unanimity? Am I to be content with the doctrine of Bishop Bull, and subordinate the Son to the Father as the sole fountain of divinity? Or must I rise to the Trithemism of Waterland and Sherlock? or, accepting the famous decision of the University of Oxford, descend with Archbishop Whately, to the modal Trinity of South and Wallis? Are we to understand the phrase, three persons, to mean three beings united by "perichoresis," three "mutual inexistences," three "modes," three "differences," three "contemplations," or three "somewhats;" or, being told that this is but a vain prying into a mystery, shall we be satisfied to leave the phrase without idea at all? It is to the last degree astonishing to hear from Trinitarian divines, the praises of uniformity of belief; seeing that it is one of the chief labours of ecclesiastical history to record the incessant effort, even to the present day, to give some stability of meaning to the fundamental doctrines of their faith.

The same remark applies, with little modification, to the opposite views respecting the person of the Saviour. It is true that Unitarians, agreed respecting the singleness of nature in Christ, differ respecting the natural rank of that nature, whether his soul were human or angelic. But, for

this solitary variety among these heretics, how many doctrines of the Logos and the Incarnation does orthodox literature contain? Can any one affirm, that when the council of Ephesus had arbitrated between the Eutychian doctrine of absorption, and the Nestorian doctrine of separation, all doubt and ambiguity was removed by the wight phrase "Hypostatic union?" Since the monophysite contest was at its height, has the Virgin Mary been left in undisputed possession of her title as "Mother of God?" Has the Eternal Generation of the Son encountered no orthodox suspicions, and the Indwelling scheme received no orthodox support? And if we ask these questions: "What respectively happened to the two natures on the cross? what has become of Christ's human soul now? is it separate from the Godhead like any other immortal spirit, or is it added to the Deity, so as to introduce into his nature a new and fourth element?" shall we receive from the many voices of the church but one accordant answer? Nay, do the authors of this controversy suppose that, during its short continuance, they have been able to maintain their unanimity? If they do, I believe that any reader who thinks it worth while to register the varieties of error, would be able to undeceive them. If the diversities of doctrine cannot easily and often be shown to amount to palpable inconsistencies, this must be ascribed, I believe, to the mystic and technical phraseology, the substitute rather than the expression for precise ideas, - which has become the vernacular dialect of orthodox divinity. The jargon of theology affords a field too barren, to bear so vigorous a weed as an undisputed contradiction.

It is needless to dwell on the numerous forms under which the doctrine of atonement has been held by those who subscribe the articles of our national church: while its Unitarian opponents have taken their fixed station on the personal character and untransferable nature of sin. One writer tells us that only the human nature perished on the cross; another

that God himself expired: some say, that Christ suffered no more intensely, but only more "meritoriously," than many a martyr; others, that he endured the whole quantity of torment due to the wicked whom he redeemed: some, that it is the spotlessness of his manhood that is imputed to believers, others, that it is the holiness of his Deity. From the high doctrine of satisfaction to the very verge of Unitarian heresy, every variety of interpretation has been given to the language of the established formularies respecting Christian redemption. Nor is it yet determined whether, in the lottery of opinion, the name of Owen, Sykes, or Magan, shall be drawn for the prize of orthodoxy.

And if from those parts of our belief, to which the accidents of their historical origin have given a *negative* character, we turn to those which are *positive*, not the slightest reason will appear for charging them with uncertainty and fluctuation. All Unitarian writers maintain the Moral Perfection and Fatherly Providence of the Infinite Ruler; the Messiahship of Jesus Christ, in whose person and spirit there is a Revelation of God and a Sanctification for Man; the Responsibility and Retributive Immortality of men; and the need of a pure and devout heart of Faith, as the source of all outward goodness and inward communion with God. These great and self-luminous points, bound together by natural affinity, constitute the fixed centre of our religion. And on subjects beyond this centre, we have no wider divergences than are found among those who attach themselves to an opposite system. For example, the relations between Scripture and Reason, as evidences and guides in questions of doctrine, are not more unsettled among us, than are the relations between Scripture and Tradition in the Church. Nor is the perpetual authority of the "Christian rites" so much in debate among our ministers, as the efficacy of the Sacraments among the clergy. In truth, our diversities of sentiment affect far less *what* we believe, than the question *why* we believe it. Dif-

ferent modes of reasoning, and different results of interpretation, are no doubt to be found among our several authors. We all make our appeal to the records of Christianity: but we have voted no particular commentator into the seat of authority. And is not this equally true of our opponents' church? Their articles and creeds furnish no textual expositions of Scripture, but only results and deductions from its study. And so variously have these results been elicited from the sacred writings, that scarcely a text can be adduced in defence of the Trinitarian scheme, which some witness unexceptionably orthodox may not be summoned to prove inapplicable. In fine, we have no greater variety of critical and exegetical opinion than the divines from whom we dissent: while the system of Christianity in which our Scriptural labours have issued, has its leading characteristics better determined and more apprehensible, than the scheme which the articles and creeds have vainly laboured to define.

The refusal to embody our sentiments in any authoritative formula appears to strike observers as a whimsical exception to the general practice of churches. The peculiarity has had its origin in hereditary and historical associations: but it has its defence in the noblest principles of religious freedom and Christian communion. At present, it must suffice to say, that our Societies are dedicated, not to theological opinions, but to religious worship: that they have maintained the unity of the spirit, without insisting on any unity of doctrine: that Christian liberty, love, and piety are their essentials in perpetuity, but their Unitarianism an accident of a few or many generations;—which has arisen, and might vanish, without the loss of their identity. We believe in the mutability of religious systems, but the impersurable character of the religious affections;—in the progressiveness of opinion within, as well as without, the limits of Christianity. Our forefathers cherished the same conviction: and so, not having been born intellectual bondsmen, we desire to leave

our successors free. Convinced that uniformity of doctrine can never prevail, we seek to attain its only good,—peace on earth and communion with heaven,—without it. We aim to make a true Christendom,—a commonwealth of the faithful,—by the binding force, not of ecclesiastical creeds, but of spiritual wants, and Christian sympathies: and indulge the vision of a Church that “in the latter days shall arise,” like “the mountain of the Lord,” bearing on its ascent the blossoms of thought proper to every intellectual clime, and withal massively rooted in the deep places of our humanity, and gladly rising to meet the sunshine from on high.

And now, friends and brethren, let us say a glad farewell to the fretfulness of controversy, and retreat again, with thanksgiving, into the interior of our own venerated truth. Having come forth, at the severer call of duty, to do battle for it, with such force as God vouchsafes to the sincere, let us go in to live and worship beneath its shelter. They tell you, it is not the true faith. Perhaps not: but then, you think it so; and that is enough to make your duty clear, and to draw from it, as from nothing else, the very peace of God. May he, we are on our way to something better, unexistent and unseen as yet; which may penetrate our souls with nobler affection, and give a fresh spontaneity of love to God and all immortal things. Perhaps there cannot be the truest life of faith, except in scattered individuals, till this age of conflicting doubt and dogmatism shall have passed away. Dark and leaden clouds of materialism hide the heaven from us: red gleams of fanaticism pierce through, vainly striving to reveal it; and not till the weight is heaved from off the air, and the mountains roll down the horizon, will the serene light of God flow upon us, and the blue infinite embrace us again. Meanwhile, we must reverently love the faith we have: to quit it for one that we have not, were to lose the breath of life, and die.



## NOTE.

### *The Jewish Passover not a proper Sacrifice*

In an essay on "the one great end of the life and death of Christ," Dr. Priestley makes the following observations on the words (occurring in 1 Cor. v. 7.) "*Christ, our passover, is sacrificed for us.*" "The allusion to the paschal lamb makes it also probable, that the death of Christ is called a sacrifice only by way of figure, because there two (viz., sacrifice and the paschal lamb) are quite different and inconsistent ideas. The paschal lamb is never so much as termed a sacrifice in the Old Testament, except once, Exodus vii. 27, where it is called "*the sacrifice of the Lord's passover.*" However, it could only be called a sacrifice in this place, in some secondary and partial sense, and not in the proper and primary sense of the word; for there was no priest employed upon the occasion, no altar made use of, no burning, no any part offered to the Lord; all which circumstances were essential to every proper sacrifice. The blood indeed was sprinkled upon the door-post, but this was originally nothing more than a token to the destroying angel to pass by that house; for there is no propitiation or atonement said to be made by it: and the paschal lamb is very far from having been ever called a *sin-offering*, or said to be killed on account of sin."<sup>\*</sup>

Every reader, I apprehend, understands this description of the manner of celebrating the passover, to refer to the particular "occasion" spoken of "in this place" (Exod. vi. 27). "The writer of this verse," argues Dr. Priestley, "could not use the word *sacrifice* in its strictest sense; for his own narrative of the very celebration to which it is applied, describes it as destitute of all the essentials of a proper sacrifice." The allusion to the blood sprinkled upon the

<sup>\*</sup> Theological Repository, vol. i. p. 215, and Priestley's Works, by him, vol. vii. ep. 243, 244.

door-ways, as "a token to the destroying angel to pass by that house," immediately connects Dr. Priestley's assertions with the Egyptian passover. By cutting out this allusion, and otherwise breaking up the passage in quotation, Archbishop Magee has contrived to conceal its character as an historical description of a single occasion, and to give it the air of a general account of the Jewish paschal ceremony in all ages. Having accomplished this, and obtained for himself the liberty of travelling for a reply over the whole Hebrew history and traditions, he says: "Now in answer to these several assertions, I am obliged to state the direct contradiction of each, for, 1st, the passage in Exodus xii 27, is not the only one, in which the paschal lamb is termed זבח, a sacrifice, it being expressly so called in no less than four passages in Deuteronomy (xvi. 2, 4, 5, 6), and also in Exodus xxvii. 25, and its parallel passage xxiii. 18—2. A priest was employed. — 3. An altar was made use of. — 4. There was a burning, and a part offered to the Lord: the incense being burnt upon the altar, and the blood poured out at the foot thereof." \* The *last three* of these "direct contradictions" establish nothing but this Prelate's habit (not adopted, we may presume, without urgent necessity) of misrepresenting his opponents in order to confute them: for it is quite needless to observe that, in the Egyptian passover, of which alone Dr. Priestley speaks, there was neither priest, altar, nor burning; and though the Archbishop should be able to detect all these elements in a festival of King Josiah's time, he will have proved no error against the passage which he criticizes. In his *first* contradiction, he would have gained an advantage over his opponent, had not his eagerness induced him to strain his evidence so far. A more modest disputant would have thought it sufficient to recite *three* verses (Deut. xvi. 4, 5, 6) in which the same phrase is simply repeated, as a single instead of a triple authority; the other citation from the same passage is not to the point, as will presently be shown; and in one of the verses quoted from Exodus (xxvii. 18) the word זבח does not occur at all in relation to the passover. So that Dr. Priestley having discovered two passages *pro se*, the Prelate makes compensation by discovering two passages *pro me*.

Having said thus much in reference to Archbishop Magee's answers to his opponent, I will add a few remarks on the reasonings by which he supports his general position, that the passover was a

proper sacrifice. It adduces two arguments from words, and three from facts. 1. The word זבח, sacrifice, is applied to the passover. — 2. The word קרבן, *Carben*, a *sacred offering*, is applied to it — 3. The slaying of the lamb took place at the tabernacle or temple. — 4. The blood was offered at the foot of the altar. — 5. The fat and entrails were burnt as an offering on the altar fire.

(1.) It has been already stated, that Archbishop Magee has improperly adduced *two* passages, as applying the word *sacrifice* to the passover. The first of these is Exod. xxi. 18, where it is said: "Thou shalt not offer the blood of my sacrifice with leavened bread; neither shall the fat of my sacrifice remain till morning." The second clause here undoubtedly refers to the paschal lamb; but the term "sacrifice" occurring in it is not the proper translation of the original; nor is the Hebrew word the same that is correctly so rendered in the first clause. The passages being not the same, but discriminated, in the two parts of the verse, the less reason exists for supposing that both allude to the passover. More probably, the reference in the former is to the sacrifices appropriate to the *feast of unleavened bread*, which being contiguous to the passover in time, is naturally conjoined with it in the participes of this verse.

The second irrelevant passage is Deut. xvi. 2: "Thou shalt therefore sacrifice the passover unto the Lord thy God, of the flock and of the herd." Since the paschal lamb could not be taken "from the herd," it is evident that the word "passover," is used here in a wider sense,\* to denote the *joint night days' festival*, including that of *unleavened bread*, when *heifers* were offered "from the herd." This more comprehensive meaning of the term is frequent, not merely with Josephus and the later Jewish writers, but in the Hebrew Scriptures themselves; and renders inconclusive most of the arguments by which the passover is made to assume the appearance of a proper sacrifice. An example occurs in the very next verse: "Seven days thou shalt eat unleavened bread therewith," that is, with the passover, and in 2 Chron. xxx. 9. "Conamah also (and other persons) gave unto the priests for the passover offerings, 2,000 small cattle, and 300 asses."

\* This is admitted by a learned writer, with whose work on *sacrifices* Archbishop Magee was familiar, and who had anticipated most of his arguments on the subject of the passover: "Cum ad Paschale mensuratum vituli pecudesque venirent totas in septem diebus imperato legibus, non denegante illi victimis, quæ זבח proprie appellatur, sed etiam quædam sacrificia etiam victimis adjuvante." — *Quæstio de Sacrificiis*, lib. i. c. 1. art. [10].

\* Magee on the Apostles, vol. i. pp. 291, 292, 319, &c.

In the remaining places, however, this feast is undoubtedly called a sacrifice. But then it is clear that the Hebrew word  $\text{זָבַח}$  is used with a latitude, which renders it impossible to draw from it any inference as to the character of the ceremony to which it is applied. It denotes *slaying of animals for food, without any necessary reference to a sacred use*.\* Thus, 1 Sam. xxviii. 24. "And the woman had a fat calf in the house, and she hastened and killed it," (*sacrificed it*,  $\text{זָבַח}$ ), also 1 Kings, xix. 21. "And he took a yoke of oxen, and slew them ( $\text{זָבַח}$ ), and boiled their flesh with the instruments of the oxen, and gave unto the people, and they did eat." And the substance occurs thus in Prov. xvi. 1. "Better is a dry morsel, and quietness therewith, than a house full of sacrifices (evidently meats,—the luxury of animal food) with strife."

(2.) The passover is called  $\text{זָבַח פֶּסַח}$ , *Corban*, a *sacred offering*, in Num. ix. 2, 13. Certain men who had been detiled by performing funeral rites, present themselves to Moses, and say, "Wherefore are we kept back, that we may not offer the offering of the Lord in his appointed season among the children of Israel?" And then follows the law which Moses takes occasion from this incident to pronounce; that persons disqualified by absence on a journey, or by uncleanness, from joining in the celebration at the appointed time, may observe it at the corresponding period of the next month. Such disqualifications, if existing at all, would have excluded from the whole eight days' festival, including the feast of unleavened bread, and held the parties away till the following month: "the offering of the Lord," therefore, which they were kept back from presenting, comprised all the sacrifices proper to the "season;" and the word "offering" is comprehensively applied to the whole set, from its particular propriety in reference to the most numerous portion of them, the sacrifices at the feast of unleavened bread. The paschal lamb, by itself, is never, I believe, designated by this term.

In treating of the actual details of the paschal ceremony, it is necessary to distinguish between those which were of legal obligation, and those which were merely customary or occasional. Nothing can justly be pronounced an essential of the celebration, which is not enjoined in the statute appointing it: and should other cir-

\* Simeon describes the verb  $\text{זָבַח}$  as meaning (1) in general, *sacrifice*; (2) in specific, *ritual or ceremonial*; and (3) when, as proper, it denotes, in ceremony (4) *any maintenance or sustenance*; (5) *an offering*—See *Heb. et Eth. Id. Lex. Heb.*, 100.

cumstances present themselves in the historical instances of the commemoration which we possess, they cannot be received as authoritative illustrations of its intended character, but as accessories appended by convenience, tradition, or sacerdotal influence. With this remark I proceed to the next argument.

(3.) The slaying of the paschal lamb is said to have been restricted to the tabernacle or temple.

The only passage from the law adduced to prove this, is Deut. xvi. 2, 5, 6, where it is said, "Thou mayest not sacrifice the passover within any of thy gates, which the Lord thy God giveth thee, but at the place which the Lord thy God shall choose to place his name in, there shalt thou sacrifice the passover at even." The reader might naturally suppose that *Jerusalem* was here denoted by the phrase, "the place which the Lord thy God shall choose," in contradistinction from the provincial cities described as "any of thy gates," but Archbishop Magee sets aside this interpretation, by referring us to this very same expression in Deut. xii. 5, 6, 11, 13, where it evidently means the tabernacle or temple, not the city, for a multitude of rites are there enumerated, to be performed, "in the place that the Lord shall choose," which could be celebrated only at the sanctuary. It so happens, however, that in this enumeration, the *Passover* is precisely the one thing which is not mentioned; from which we might fairly infer, that it was not among the ceremonies limited to the sanctuary, and further, that in addition to the vague description of place common to both passages, there occurs exclusively in the latter, the additional one, "there shall ye eat, among you, Lord your God," which is well known to be the usual mode of designating the tabernacle. And that in the passover-law, the locality intended was the city, and not the sanctuary, is evident from a verse which Archbishop Magee has not thought it necessary to quote, though it is the immediate sequel of his citation; "and thou shalt roast and eat it (the paschal lamb) in the place which the

\* The following passages constitute the whole paschal text: Exod. xii. 5—11, 13, 14—27, 33—48. Lev. xxiii. 5. Num. ix. 20—14; xxvii. 36. Deut. xvi. 1, 4—7. We have here the original statutes provided for the permanent regulation of the rite, and in any discussion respecting its character, the latter should be in force alone. The advocates for its ritual nature must be aware that this rule would destroy their whole case.

† See also a list of the passages relating to the feast of unleavened bread: Exod. xii. 15—20; xiii. 4—10; xxiii. 18, first clause; xxvii. 23, first clause; Lev. xxiii. 6—14. Num. xxviii. 13—25. Deut. xvi. 2—4, 8.

land thy God shall choose." Whatever doubt may exist about the *staying*, the *roasting* and *eating* could not take place at the tabernacle.

The law, then, nowhere prescribes the slaying of the paschal lamb at the sanctuary. But neither does it forbid this; and therefore we are not surprised that the act should take place there on any particular occasion rendering such arrangement obviously convenient, or as a general practice, in concession to any strong interests tending to draw it thither. When, therefore, a long period of idolatry and political confusion had obliterated from the minds of the Israelites the very memory of their religious rites; when new modes of worship had become habitual, and the annual festival had grown strange; when, to induce them to come up to the passover at all, their monarch was obliged to provide for them the whole number of their victims, and the officiating Levites needed to study again the appointed ceremonies of the season, it is no wonder that king Josiah thought it expedient to collect "the whole congregation" at the temple, and there to let them witness the form of slaying, by well-trained bands, and receive instruction how to complete the celebration of their feast. Such was the solemn passover described in 2 Chron. xxxv. and that in the reign of Hezekiah, mentioned in the thirtieth chapter of the same book; the circumstances of both which were too peculiar to afford evidence of a general practice, much less of a legal enactment.

That in later times it was the custom to slay the paschal lambs in the Temple courts, there can be no doubt. The system of ecclesiastical police, and the operation of sacerdotal interests created the practice. It was the business of the priests to see to the execution of the festival-law, to ascertain who incurred the penalty due to neglect of the prescribed rite; to register the numbers of those who observed it; and to take care that neither too many nor too few should partake at the same table. All this required that the heads of families should present themselves, and report their intended arrangements to the authorities at the temple. The priests moreover, being the judges of the qualifications of the animals for the paschal table, availed themselves of this power, to become graziers and provision-dealers. As the lambs must be presented for their inspection, and were liable to be turned back if pronounced imperfect, it became more convenient to buy the victim at once at the Temple courts; and on the spot where the purchase was made, the slaying would naturally follow. Lightfoot,

speaking of the law which originally required the lamb to be chosen four days before it was killed, says, "It is not to be doubted but every one in after times took up their own lambs as they did in Egypt, but it is somewhat doubtful whether they did it in the same manner. It is exceedingly probable, that as the priests took up the lambs for the daily sacrifice four days before they were to be offered, as we have observed elsewhere, so also that they provided lambs for the people at the passover, taking them up in the market four days before, and picking and culling out those that were fit, and agreeable to the command. For whereas the law was so punctual that they should be without blemish, and their traditions had runned up so large a sum of blemishes, as that they reckon seventy-three, it could not be but the law and their traditions which they prized above the law should be endlessly broken, if every man took up his own lamb in the market at Jerusalem at adventure. The priests had brought a market of sheep and oxen against such times as those it is to the temple, (for if it had not been their doing, they must not have come there,) where they having before-hand picked out in the market such lambs and bullocks as were fit for sacrifice or passover, they sold them to the temple at a dearer rate, and so served the people's turn and their own profit: for which, amongst other of their backbitings, our Saviour saith, they had made the house of prayer a den of thieves."<sup>2</sup>

(4) The blood is said to have been poured out as an offering at the foot of the altar.

The only legal evidence adduced to prove this, will be found in the parallel passages, Exod. xxiii. 16, and xxxiv. 25. "Thou shalt not offer the blood of my sacrifice with leaven." I have already shown that this command probably refers, not to the paschal lamb, but to the sacrifices at the feast of unleavened bread. There is therefore no evidence, throughout the law, in favour of the alleged regulation. Yet in cases of undoubted sacrifice, Moses is usually very explicit in his directions respecting the sprinkling of the blood upon the altar: as may be seen from Lev. i. 5, 11, 15; iii. 2, 8, 13; v. 5—7, 16—18, vii. 2.

The only *historical* evidence adduced from Scripture on the point before us, is from the accounts of Hezekiah's and Josiah's solemn passovers before mentioned 2 Chron. xxx. 13, 16, xxxv. 11. In both these instances, it is merely said, that the priests "sprinkled (or poured out) the blood," receiving it from the hands of the Levites,

<sup>2</sup> Lightfoot's Temple Service, ch. vi. § 100.

who were employed, for reasons already assigned, to slay the lamb on these two occasions, instead of the heads of families, on whom that office properly devolved. The altar is not named; but as the blood must be disposed of somewhere, and as there was a drain for that purpose at the foot of the altar, no doubt it was there that the priests sprinkled or poured it away. The act was simply an act of cleanliness,—in plain speech, a resort to the sink,—from which theology can extract nothing profitable. The priests were the parties to perform the office because no other persons could approach the altar under penalty of death. In later times, when the sacerdotal influence had made the temple the scene of the paschal slaughter, each head of a family killed his own lamb in the court; the blood, received in a basin, was hauled to the feet of a row of priests reaching to the foot of the altar, where it was poured away at the usual place\*. In this there is nothing of the nature of an offering or proper sacrifice.

(5.) But it is said that the fat and entrails were placed on the altar fire and burned.

Archbishop Magee says, that this may be collected from the account given of the ceremony of the passover in the passages already referred to.† It appears perhaps that able controversialists's peculiar mode of "managing passages" (to use a favourite phrase of his own) to elicit this from the authorities named: at least, I am unable, after careful examination of them, to conjecture what he means. The passages however are before my readers, and I must leave the assertion to their judgment. Meanwhile, I must conclude, that there is absolutely no trace in Scripture of such a practice as is here pronounced to be one of the essentials of the passover.

I am aware that there is Talmudical authority for considering this "burning" as a part of the process connected, in later times, with the killing of the paschal lamb.‡ It was probably one of the modifications of the rite, introduced by the priests on its transference from the private homes of the people to the temple. The original law required, that the lamb should be roasted whole, not even the entrails

\* See Lightfoot's Temple Service, ch. xii. sec. 3. — The Mishna says, "Matter finished, and the entrails scattered."—The Treatise Pesachim, in Sederim, p. 157.

† P. 294.

‡ See Lightfoot's Temple Service, ch. 5, and the Treatise Pesachim, Sederim, p. 157.

being removed. It was enjoined, that whatever was left should be immediately burned with fire, and every trace of it destroyed before morning. The private burning was clearly an religious and sacrificial act, though, perhaps, a provision against any superstitious use of the remnants: and it is easy to perceive, that the parts thus destroyed would be the same, which subsequently it was the custom of the priests to consume on the altar fire. When the killing became a collective act, and the temple the scene of it, doubtless both people and priests thought it more cleanly and agreeable to burn the parts which were sure to be left, before hand on the public fire, than afterwards on the hearth of their private dwellings: and it would require a very liberal interpreter to pronounce this a violation of the original law, the spirit of which it certainly observed. This view, which treats the burning on the altar as simply a mode of consumption, substituted for the destruction of the same worthless parts at home, is less insulting to the Jewish religion than the opinion which discerns here an act of worship. The Jews were certainly a very coarse people, and offered many disagreeable things to God: but really, such a gift as this is without any parallel. They always,—in obedience to their law,—presented something valuable (sometimes the whole animal, sometimes the breast and right shoulder), either to Jehovah on the altar, or to his ministers the priests; and the pious Jew would have indignantly resented the idea of gutting the temple courts with the whole value of his sacrifice on his shoulder, and only the refuse remaining in the sanctuary.

By law, then, there was nothing of the paschal lamb burned on the altar: and by custom there was no part offered to Jehovah or given to the priests: and without these circumstances, there is no proper sacrifice.

Archbishop Magee admits, that the ceremony of laying the hand on the head of the victim, which was observed in the undoubted sacrifice, did not take place in the rite under consideration: and he notices the statement of Philo, that the animal was slain, not by the priest, but by the individual presenting it. He considers Philo to have been mistaken, however, in his assertion that this insolation by private hand was peculiar to the passover: and cites the language of

\* Philo, ch. 2, § 13. "The slaughter of the paschal lamb, being done by the offeror, means that it is to be done by the offeror."

† See Lev. 1, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100.

† Pp. 295, 296.

Lev. 1, 5; iii 2; iv 24, to show that the burnt offering, the peace-offering, the sin-offering, might all be slain by the offerer. Certainly these passages appear to leave such permission open to the Jewish worshipper: but it seems more likely that the sacrifices here enumerated were intended to be made by the hands of the priest: nor would it be easy to reconcile the liberty of private sacrifice with the sacerdotal duties and privileges defined in Num. xviii. 1—7. As to the actual practice, it cannot be reasonably doubted that Philo was correct—and his expressions seem to imply that, in the paschal rite, the priest might be altogether dispensed with, and his intervention required for no religious act. He says: "On the fourteenth day of this month, at the coming of the full moon, is celebrated the public festival of the passover, called in the Chaldee language the Pascha: when, instead of the private citizen presenting his victim at the altar to be slain by the priest, the whole nation officiates in sacred things, every one in turn bringing and immolating his own victim with his own hands. The whole people is festive and joyous, every one being entitled to the dignity of priesthood."\* He uses similar expressions in his treatise on the decalogue: The festival, "which the Hebrews in their language call the Pascha," is a time "when each and all of them slay their victim, without waiting for the services of their priests: the law, on an appointed day of every year, conferring to the whole people the sacerdotal functions, to the extent of permitting them to officiate for themselves at a sacrifice."† This language evidently implies, that every essential part of the passover rites, every act necessary to constitute and complete its character as a religious celebration, was performed by private hand: so that the auxiliary operations of the priests,—the pouring out of the blood and burning the inwards,—must be regarded as non-essentials and accessories: mere contributions to the main act, and in the performance of which, therefore, the usual law, forbidding to the non-official Jew all approach to the altar, came into effect again. Had the paschal celebration required, as an indispensable ingredient in it, any transactions at the altar, the private Israelite, being temporarily invested with whatever sacerdotal privileges were needful for the rite, would have gone himself to make his offering. Philo indeed obviously conceived of the subsequent part of the ceremony, in which the temple and the priest had to share,—the domestic meal which took place in

\* De vita Mosi, p. 334. E.

† De decalogo, p. 266. D.

the several houses of the people,—as its peculiarly sacred element—"Each house," he says, "at that time put on the form and sanctity of a temple, the victim that has been slain being made ready for a suitable meal."\* Fond as this writer is of types, it is impossible to express the retrospective and commemorative character of the passover more emphatically than in his words. *επιμνησθησθε τὴν προίτην ἀναίτην τῶν ἡμετέρων καὶ ὑποστάσεων.*

In one passage of his note on the Passover, Archbishop Magee appears to admit that the paschal lamb was not a "sacrifice for sin," and affirms that he "would not dispute with Dr. Priestley any conclusion he might draw from so productive a premise."† Yet, a few pages farther on, he quotes with apparent approbation the arguments by which Cadworth sought to prove the rite to be an expiatory sacrifice; ‡ I cannot pretend to reconcile these two portions of his Essay. But if the passover cannot be shown to be an expiatory sacrifice, I do not see what the advocates of the doctrine of atonement gain by proving it a sacrifice at all. If the paschal lamb was not a *sin-offering*, to what class did it belong? It must have been either of the eucharistic kind, or else unique and simply commemorative, and so far as the death of Christ was analogous to any such offering, it was destitute of expiatory efficacy: and either was an expression of thanksgiving, (which seems absurd) or, like the blood of the lamb sprinkled on the hotel, a mere sign of some deliverance which it was not instrumental in effecting, but which, simultaneously perhaps, yet independently occurred. Those, therefore, who are disposed to strain the resemblance between the passover and the cross, must either maintain the expiatory nature of the Jewish rite, or admit the Lord's Supper to be, not even the celebration of a real deliverance, but the mere commemoration of a sign.

\* De sept. et Oct. p. 1190. B.

† See, *ibid.* After the remarks which have been made on the word ΠΑΣΧΑ in my edition of the passover, it is hardly necessary to notice the application to the same rite of the word *ἀναίτη* by Philo and Josephus. It must be clear to any one who will open Trommius or Biel at the word, that it will not bear the stress laid upon it by Archbishop Magee. No one denies that the paschal lamb was slain and eaten, in observance of a religious celebration, an observance a religious law, and in respect of religious feelings; and this surely is enough to attract to the word *ἀναίτη*. In itself, however, the term, according to Biel, does not necessarily denote even so much as this. He defines it *ἀναίτη*, *congruam*, et *ut optinetur* et *profundum memoriam*: and he paraphrases this latter meaning by reference to Judg. xi. 18. Bial's Thesaurus, Ed. Schleusner in v.

‡ P. 133.

§ Ps. 249, 192.

## POSTSCRIPT.

In the notes to the Sixth Lecture of this series (p. 89—92,) I have adduced an example of Archbishop Magee's misrepresentation of Mr. Belsham, and stated that the Preface had quoted his opponent falsely. In composing the two volumes, I employed the latest editions of both their works; not being able to procure a copy of the first edition of the *Calva Enquiry*, which has been out of print for twenty-two years. At the same time, I thought it only just to insert the following note:—"There is a possibility, which I think it right to suggest, of a difference between the two editions of Mr. B.'s work: as, however, the accusation is still found in the newest edition of the Archbishop's book, I conclude that this is not the case. Indeed, even if the Preface's quotation had been verbatim true, it would in *spirit* have been no less false, for, at all events, Mr. B. cites the Vulgate, to give evidence as to the *text*, not the *translation*, and had he used the word *readers*, it would only have been because the term naturally occurs when a *version* is adduced to determine a *sensum*."

I have since obtained a copy of the first edition of the *Calva Enquiry*, and I hasten to acknowledge that the Archbishop's quotation is "*verbatim* true," as far as it goes. But I regret to say that this makes only a formal difference in his favour, for by stopping short in his citation, he accomplished the very same object, of leaving an absolutely false impression, which I had supposed him to have effected, in this as in other instances, by direct falsification of his author. He wishes to make it appear, that Mr. Belsham (purposely mistranslating for the occasion) appeals to a certain verse in the Vulgate in evidence, not of a *negativo*, but of a *affirmativo*; and so he cites three words from the *Calva Enquiry*: "The Vulgate renders the text, the first man was of the earth, earthy; the second man was from heaven, heavenly;" but he leaves out the very next words, in which *the point intended to be proved* by this testimony of the Vulgate is cited, "This is not improbably the *text* examined." Doubtless it was one of Mr. Belsham's *inveives* that he did not attend to his italics in his first edition; but the charge of intentional mistranslation is simply injurious, except indeed, that it is also absurd, seeing that Mr. Belsham has put the Latin of his mistranslated passage at the bottom of the page; a policy which this heresiarch could scarcely have thought safe, unless he had taken his Unitarian readers to be either more "dishonest critics," or more "defective scholars," than even our learned opponents are prepared to think them.

## INDEX OF TEXTS

## EXPLAINED OR REFERRED TO IN LECTURES II V VI XI XIII.

General	Lect.	Page.	General	Lect.	Page.
ii. 17 . . . . .	VI	17	v. 15—18 . . . . .	XIII.	63
iii. 1 . . . . .	XI	26	26 . . . . .	—	—
11—29 . . . . .	—	37	32 . . . . .	—	—
15 . . . . .	—	19	vii. 2 . . . . .	—	61
xxx. 1, 2 . . . . .	V.	18	3 . . . . .	—	63
22 . . . . .	—	—	C. 10 . . . . .	—	—
xxx. 30 . . . . .	—	—	14, 15 . . . . .	—	—
15 . . . . .	—	—	30—36 . . . . .	—	—
Exodus.			vii. 1, 5 . . . . .	VI	57
xii. 3—11 . . . . .	XIII.	35, 59	xv. . . . .	—	—
14 . . . . .	—	—	xvi. . . . .	—	53
15—20 . . . . .	—	59	xv. 23, 26 . . . . .	—	57
24—27 . . . . .	—	35, 59	xxiv. 5 . . . . .	XIII.	55, 59
27 . . . . .	—	55	—6—14 . . . . .	—	59
43, 49 . . . . .	—	55, 59	26, 32 . . . . .	—	55
xiii. 6, 10 . . . . .	—	59	Numbers.		
xxix. 46 . . . . .	—	56, 57, 59, 63	v. 9—12 . . . . .	VI.	57
xxx. 10 . . . . .	VI.	55	ix. 7 . . . . .	XIII.	55
xxxiv. 25 . . . . .	XIII.	59, 59, 61	—10—14 . . . . .	—	55, 59
Leviticus.			—17 . . . . .	—	55
i. 5 . . . . .	XIII.	61	xv. 19, 20 . . . . .	VI.	53
5 . . . . .	—	63	xxv. 1—7 . . . . .	XIII.	64
13 . . . . .	—	61	xxx. 11—20 . . . . .	VI.	57
15 . . . . .	—	43	xxii. 22 . . . . .	XI.	21
18 . . . . .	—	61	xxxv. 1—6 . . . . .	XIII.	59
17 . . . . .	—	63	—17—25 . . . . .	—	—
ii. 2 . . . . .	—	61	xxxv. 7—11 . . . . .	VI.	53
8 . . . . .	—	—	Deuteronomy.		
18 . . . . .	—	—	iii. 5, 6 . . . . .	XIII.	59
iv. 5—7 . . . . .	—	—	—11 . . . . .	—	—
16—18 . . . . .	—	—	14 . . . . .	—	—
v. 11—19 . . . . .	VI.	57	xvi. 1 . . . . .	—	55, 59

	Lect.	Page
<b>Deuteronomy.</b>		
xvi. 2 . . . .	XIII.	56, 57, 59
— 4—7 . . . .	—	55, 59
— 3, 6 . . . .	—	59
— 8 . . . .	—	—
xxv. 1—6 . . .	VI.	16
— 2—6 . . . .	V.	18
<b>Judges.</b>		
vi. 19 . . . .	XIII.	53
<b>1 Samuel.</b>		
xxix. 24 . . .	—	53
xxix. 4 . . . .	XI.	21
<b>2 Samuel.</b>		
xxv. 1 . . . .	—	23
<b>1 Kings.</b>		
xi. 25 . . . .	XI.	21
xxvi. 23 . . .	V.	77
xxv. 21 . . . .	XIII.	58
<b>2 Kings.</b>		
xx. 29 . . . .	V.	25
xx. 21 . . . .	—	67
<b>1 Chronicles.</b>		
v. 26 . . . .	—	28
xxi. 1 . . . .	XI.	23
<b>2 Chronicles.</b>		
xxx. . . . .	XIII.	60
— 15, 16 . . . .	—	61
xxxv. . . . .	—	60
— 9 . . . . .	—	57
— 11 . . . . .	—	61
<b>Job.</b>		
i. 6—12 . . . .	XI.	22
ii. 1—7 . . . .	—	—
<b>Psalms.</b>		
xlvi. . . . .	V.	37
li. 16, 17 . . .	VI.	25
— . . . . .	XIII.	9
cxix. 6 . . . .	XI.	22
<b>Proverbs.</b>		
viii. 22 . . . .	V.	73
— 30 . . . . .	—	—
xxv. 1 . . . .	XIII.	58
<b>Leviticus.</b>		
i. 12, 14 . . .	XIII.	10

	Lect.	Page.
<b>Isaiah.</b>		
i. 16 . . . . .	XIII.	10
— 16—18 . . .	VI.	25
v. 18—20 . . .	XI.	3
vi. 14—10 . . .	V.	25
— . . . . .	—	60
viii. 23 . . . .	—	68
— . . . . .	IX.	4
viii. 8 . . . .	V.	67
— 18 . . . . .	—	—
ix. 5, 8 . . . .	—	28
— 6 . . . . .	—	48
xxiii. 14 . . .	—	67
<b>Jeremiah.</b>		
xiv. 17 . . . .	V.	27
xxv. 4 . . . .	—	65
— 13 . . . . .	—	67
<b>Lamentations.</b>		
i. 15 . . . . .	V.	67
<b>Ezekiel.</b>		
xxviii. 14—16	VI.	25
<b>Amos.</b>		
v. 2 . . . . .	V.	27
<b>Josiah.</b>		
iii. 5—10 . . .	VI.	27, 28
iv. 10, 11 . . .	—	24
<b>Micah.</b>		
ix. 8, 9 . . . .	V.	27
<b>Zachariah.</b>		
iii. 1, 2 . . . .	XI.	23
<b>Matthew.</b>		
v. 23 . . . . .	V.	24
ii. 15 . . . . .	II.	55
— 25 . . . . .	—	—
— . . . . .	V.	68
ix. 1—11 . . .	XI.	27
— 13—22 . . .	II.	36
xi. 3 . . . . .	—	29
xii. 59 . . . .	—	25
xx. 24 . . . .	VI.	36
xxiii. 18 . . .	XIII.	30
xxv. 16—21 . .	VI.	25
xxvi. 17—21 .	XIII.	35
— 26—28 . . .	—	—

	Lect.	Page.
<b>Matthew.</b>		
xxv. 24 . . . .	VI.	40
— 60 seqq. . .	II.	37
xxvii. 32 . . .	—	—
— 37 . . . . .	—	—
— 44 . . . . .	—	—
xxviii. 19 . . .	V.	50
— . . . . .	VI.	16
<b>Mark.</b>		
v. 12, 13 . . . .	XI.	27
— 16—20 . . .	II.	36
v. 45 . . . . .	VI.	40
viii. 32 . . . .	V.	50
xiv. 12—17 . .	XIII.	35
— 22—24 . . .	—	—
xv. 26 . . . . .	II.	37
— 32 . . . . .	—	—
<b>Luke.</b>		
i. 2 . . . . .	II.	28
— 15 . . . . .	—	—
ix. 1—13 . . .	XI.	27
— 18, 19 . . .	XIII.	28
v. 10, 11 . . .	II.	36
vii. 47 . . . .	VI.	36
x. 17 . . . . .	II.	26
xxii. 7—17 . .	XIII.	35
— 19, 20 . . .	—	—
— 56—62 . . .	II.	37
xxiii. 26 . . .	—	—
— 38 . . . . .	—	—
— 39—43 . . .	—	—
<b>John.</b>		
i. 1—14 . . . .	V.	28, 60
— 12 . . . . .	VI.	71
— 29 . . . . .	—	40
— 35—51 . . .	II.	36
iii. 18 . . . . .	V.	51
iv. 23, 24 . . .	—	48
— 48 . . . . .	II.	25
v. 19 . . . . .	V.	49
— 29, 30 . . .	—	53
— 30 . . . . .	—	49
— 36 . . . . .	—	—
vi. 44 . . . . .	II.	8
— . . . . .	XI.	17

	Lect.	Page.
<b>John.</b>		
vi. 57 . . . . .	V.	49
— 62 . . . . .	—	51
vii. 17 . . . . .	II.	9
viii. 32 . . . .	XI.	46
— 47 . . . . .	—	—
x. 11 . . . . .	—	47
— 16, 17 . . . .	VI.	36
— 18 . . . . .	V.	53
— 27 . . . . .	II.	9
— . . . . .	XI.	47
x. 29 . . . . .	V.	49
— 32 . . . . .	II.	25
— 37 . . . . .	—	0, 25
xi. 23, 24 . . .	VI.	35
— 32 . . . . .	—	—
xxi. 1 seqq. . .	XIII.	35
xiv. 10 . . . .	V.	49
— 16, 17 . . . .	II.	20
— 20 . . . . .	—	7
— 26 . . . . .	—	30
xv. 3 . . . . .	V.	47
— 5 . . . . .	—	51
xxiii. 15—25 .	II.	37
— 29 . . . . .	XIII.	35
— 37 . . . . .	II.	9, 25
xix. 14 . . . .	XIII.	35
— 17 . . . . .	II.	37
— 19 . . . . .	—	—
— 31 . . . . .	XIII.	35
— 85 . . . . .	II.	29
— 92 . . . . .	XIII.	35
xxi. 24 . . . .	II.	23
<b>Acts.</b>		
ii. 1—4 . . . .	II.	27, 28
— 24 . . . . .	VI.	27
— 52 . . . . .	V.	52
iii. 19 . . . . .	VI.	27
— 19—21 . . . .	V.	39
ix. 3 . . . . .	VI.	27
— 10 . . . . .	—	—
— 12 . . . . .	—	35
v. 30 . . . . .	—	27
vi. 1—4 . . . .	II.	28
x. 34—44 . . .	VI.	26



Text.	Lect.	Page.	Text.	Lect.	Page.
Act.			1 Corinthians.		
iii. 30 . . . .	VI.	25	vi. 17-34 . . .	XIII.	36
— 30-34 . . . .	V.	40	xv. 8, 10 . . .	II.	28
— 33-37 . . . .	—	39	xv. 4, 5 . . . .	—	—
xiv. 15 . . . .	—	44	— 13 . . . . .	—	—
xv. 19 . . . .	VI.	28	— 19 . . . . .	—	—
— 31 . . . . .	V.	40, 53	— 21 . . . . .	—	—
— — . . . . .	VI.	29	xv. 21, 22 . . .	XI.	18
xv. 26 . . . . .	—	40, 51	— 24 . . . . .	V.	45
xvi. 20 . . . .	II.	52	— 47 . . . . .	VI.	59
xxiv. 21 . . . .	VI.	27	— — . . . . .	XIII.	66
xxvi. 6, 8 . . .	V.	30	— 51 . . . . .	V.	15
— 20 . . . . .	II.	6	2 Corinthians.		
Romans.			iii. 17 . . . . .	V.	77
i. 4 . . . . .	V.	40	v. 15-18 . . . .	VI.	36
— 16 . . . . .	XI.	13	— 17 . . . . .	V.	44
iv. 25 . . . . .	VI.	49	— 21 . . . . .	VI.	43
— 29 . . . . .	XI.	13	viii. 3 . . . . .	V.	41
iii. 8-29 . . . .	—	—	Galatians.		
— 22-26 . . . .	VI.	45	i. 1 . . . . .	V.	52
— 28 . . . . .	—	29	v. 15 . . . . .	VI.	37
vi. 21, 25 . . . .	—	—	iii. 13 . . . . .	—	59
v. 6 . . . . .	—	37	— 24 . . . . .	II.	4
— 10 . . . . .	—	53	vi. 47 . . . . .	VI.	28
— 11 . . . . .	—	—	Ephesians.		
— 13-20 . . . .	XI.	13	i. 3-5 . . . . .	VI.	28
vi. 2 . . . . .	XIII.	32	— 7 . . . . .	—	—
vii. 1-4 . . . .	VI.	37	— 10 . . . . .	—	—
viii. 6 . . . . .	V.	45	— 10-23 . . . .	V.	43
— 19 . . . . .	—	—	v. 11-19 . . . .	VI.	49
— 23 . . . . .	—	—	vii. 19 . . . . .	V.	41
— 34 . . . . .	VI.	28	v. 13 . . . . .	VI.	71
ix. 4 . . . . .	VI.	38	v. 16 . . . . .	—	51
— 29, 32 . . . .	—	51	Philippians.		
x. 9 . . . . .	—	28	i. 5-8 . . . . .	V.	51
xiii. 11, 12 . .	V.	40	— 6 . . . . .	—	78
1 Corinthians.			— 9-11 . . . . .	—	43
v. 7 . . . . .	VI.	44	— 10 . . . . .	—	13
— — . . . . .	XIII.	53	iii. 15 . . . . .	VI.	51
vii. 29 . . . . .	—	51	iv. 5 . . . . .	V.	39
viii. 5, 6 . . . .	V.	4	— — . . . . .	VI.	51
— 6 . . . . .	—	47	Colossians.		
x. 31 . . . . .	—	30	v. 15-19 . . . .	V.	44
xi. 5 . . . . .	—	77	— 19 . . . . .	VI.	38

Text.	Lect.	Page.	Text.	Lect.	Page.
Colossians.			Hebrews.		
ii. 12 . . . . .	XIII.	32	ix. 15 . . . . .	VI.	60
— 13 . . . . .	XI.	38	— 23, 24 . . . .	—	59
iii. 3 . . . . .	—	—	— 25-27 . . . .	—	60
vi. 5 . . . . .	—	51	x. 3, 4 . . . . .	—	—
1 Thessalonians.			— 12-14 . . . .	—	—
iv. 14 . . . . .	V.	45	— 16 . . . . .	—	63
— 17 . . . . .	—	—	— 19, 20 . . . .	—	—
v. 10 . . . . .	—	—	— 24 . . . . .	—	—
2 Thessalonians.			xii. 28 . . . . .	V.	55
v. 7-10 . . . . .	VI.	50	James.		
— 9 . . . . .	V.	45	v. 3 . . . . .	V.	39
— 2 . . . . .	—	39	— 7, 8 . . . . .	—	—
1 Timothy.			— 8 . . . . .	—	51
v. 20 . . . . .	XI.	21	1 Peter.		
v. 1-8 . . . . .	VI.	40	i. 3 . . . . .	V.	45
— 14 . . . . .	XI.	18	— 18, 19 . . . .	VI.	61
iii. 16 . . . . .	V.	35	ii. 4, 5 . . . . .	XIII.	3
iv. 1 . . . . .	—	38	— 23-25 . . . .	VI.	41
2 Timothy.			iii. 17 . . . . .	—	42
ii. 12 . . . . .	V.	45	— 20-22 . . . .	—	61
iii. 16 . . . . .	II.	31	— 26 . . . . .	V.	39
Titus.			iv. 1 . . . . .	VI.	42
ii. 13, 19 . . . .	V.	39	— 7 . . . . .	—	61
Hebrews.			2 Peter.		
i. 1-9 . . . . .	V.	36	i. 21 . . . . .	II.	31
— 11 . . . . .	—	49	ii. 1-18 . . . .	XI.	65, 68
— 5 . . . . .	—	—	— 4 . . . . .	XI.	24
— 6 . . . . .	—	45	— 5 . . . . .	VI.	51
ii. 5 . . . . .	—	39	iii. 9 . . . . .	V.	40
— 17 . . . . .	VI.	53	— — . . . . .	VI.	52
iii. 10 . . . . .	—	59	— 13 . . . . .	V.	39
— 17 . . . . .	—	61	1 John.		
— 24-28 . . . .	—	—	i. 7 . . . . .	VI.	43
— 28 . . . . .	—	60	— 8 . . . . .	—	48
iv. 1 . . . . .	—	53	ii. 1, 2 . . . . .	—	—
— 2, 3 . . . . .	—	—	— 18 . . . . .	—	51
— 5 . . . . .	—	—	iii. 4 . . . . .	V.	77
ix. 1 . . . . .	VI.	59	— 16 . . . . .	VI.	54
— 7 . . . . .	—	60	iv. 2 . . . . .	—	47
— 8 . . . . .	—	61	— 2, 10 . . . . .	—	48
— 12 . . . . .	—	60	v. 6 . . . . .	V.	77
— 13, 14 . . . .	—	62	— 20 . . . . .	—	41

## INDEX OF TEXTS.

	Lect.	Page.		Lect.	Page.
1 John			Jude		
v 21 . . . . .	V7	49	G . . . . .	—	24
2 John.			Revelations		
7 . . . . .	V.	41	v. 9, 10 . . . . .	V1	40
Jude.					
4-10 . . . . .	X1.	63, 64			