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Complete works of Rev.  
Thomas Smyth, D. D











# Complete Works

OF

Rev. Thomas <sup>✓</sup>Smyth, D. D.

EDITED BY

REV. PROF. J. WM. FLINN, D. D.

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WITH BRIEF NOTES AND PREFACES

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## EDITORIAL NOTE.

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The Editor's work has been confined mainly to proof reading and to occasional recensions of the printed text. The works are re-issued not for the general book-market, but for donation to public libraries.

J. WM. FLINN



# Articles on the Trinity.

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BY REV. THOMAS SMYTH, D. D.

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The Southern Presbyterian Review.*



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## ARTICLE I.

### THE NECESSITY AND IMPORTANCE OF CONTROVERSY.

THE capacity, extent, and province of reason, in reference to religious truths,—the design and authority of the Word of God, as the standard of doctrine,—the nature, character and purposes of God,—the trinity of persons in the one eternal Godhead,—the deity, offices and work of the Lord Jesus Christ,—the Divinity and work of the Holy Ghost,—the nature and necessity of the atonement,—these are subjects, which lie at the very foundation of all religion: the pillars and ground of all religious truth. The view we take of these doctrines makes us deists or believers,—rationalists or christians,—the only true worshippers of the “true God, and our Saviour,” or blasphemous idolaters. These truths underlie the very “first principles” of all piety, namely, the relation in which man stands to God, and God to man, the independence or absolute helplessness of the creature, the way of salvation, and the whole manner and matter of acceptable worship. They lead to two systems of belief, separated by a chasm of impassable depth, and “contrary, the one to the other.”

And yet both exist, and both claim the name, the authority, and the sanctions of christianity. Both are found among us. Both have their ministry, their ordinances, and their worshippers, and both hold forth their claims to the allegiance of ourselves and our children.

What course, then, are we to pursue? Both cannot be true. One or the other must be false, and if false, dangerous, delusive, and destructive. What are we to do? Above all things, says the world, do not controvert, do not quarrel. Peace is more important than opinion.

For modes of faith, let graceless zealots fight,  
He can't be wrong whose life is in the right.

Just similar was the condition in which the primitive believers were placed when the Apostle Jude wrote to them his epistle.

The object of God, in this epistle, was to warn christians of the existence of false and heretical teachers, from whose cunning guile they were in imminent danger,—to assure them of the Divine judgments to which such teachers, and ail who gave heed to their seducing errors, were exposed,—and to urge upon them the duty of strenuously maintaining and defending the truth and purity of the Gospel. The design of the epistle is practical. It proceeded from the love cherished towards those

who professed to be the disciples of Christ. Their spiritual welfare deeply affected the Apostle's heart. *Their* salvation, and that salvation which was "the common" ground of hope and joy to all believers, was at stake. For the Gospel is the power of God to salvation only when it is understood in its purity, and received in its simplicity, and in Godly sincerity. He felt, therefore, under a pressing necessity to write unto them, because others were using efforts to pervert them. "For," says he, "there are certain men, crept in unawares, who were of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God unto lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ."

The Apostle, therefore, at once, and with earnest importunity, calls upon those endangered believers to realize the imminent peril of their condition. All error is pernicious in its effects. But it is destructive in proportion as it affects those doctrines which relate to the Author and the way of salvation. And when men represent God as *so* gracious that they may continue to indulge the lusts of the eyes, and the pride of life,—and when they deny the essential Deity, and omnipotent, omnipresent power, and vicarious atonement of "the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ,"—then, as the Apostle Peter declares, they introduce "damnable heresies,"—"pernicious ways,"—and bring upon themselves swift destruction.—(2 Pet. 2: 1.) This is what the Apostle Paul also taught, when he calls upon the Roman christians to "mark them who caused heresies among them, contrary to the doctrine which they had learned."—(Rom. 16, 17.) The Apostle John goes still further. He makes the acknowledgment of the coming of Christ, as implying an antecedent divinity, and an assumed humanity the criterion of one who "is of God." "Every one professing to expound the Gospel, (says the Apostle,) who does not teach that Jesus was a man,—not, however, as was affirmed by the Docetæ, in *appearance only*, but in *reality*, and yet, that he was *not merely* a man, united, as the Corinthians alleged, to some super-angelic being,—is not of God, but is that spirit of anti-christ whereof ye have heard that it should come, and even now already is it in the world.—John, 4: 3. That teacher only, therefore, is of God, who confesses that He 'who was in the beginning with God,' and who 'was God,' 'was made flesh,' and became the word of God incarnate, 'God manifest in the flesh.'"\*

The Apostle, therefore, under the guidance of inspiration, felt that any departure from "the truth as it is in Jesus," and,

\*See Horsley's Tracts.



especially as it concerned the person, character, and work of Christ, endangered the salvation of immortal souls.

They knew, also, that all religious error is traceable, ultimately, to the malign influence of that seducing spirit, who is denominated "the father of lies."—Matt. 13: 41.\* To him the Apostle Peter expressly ascribes the fraud and hypocrisy of Ananias.—Acts, 5: 3. The Apostle Paul warns the Corinthians that "the serpent who beguiled Eve, through his subtilty, would also corrupt their minds from the simplicity that is in Christ, by transforming himself into an angel of light, and in the character of a minister of Christ," preaching another Jesus whom he had not preached, and another gospel which had not been originally proclaimed.—2 Cor. 11: 3, 4; Eph. 6: 11. And Christ himself warns the church of Thyatira against false doctrines, which he denominates "the depths of Satan."—Rev. 2: 24.

But how does Satan accomplish these hellish purposes? Not singly, but by instigating "false Christs," "false prophets," and "false teachers," "false apostles," "deceitful workers," to transform themselves into the ministers of righteousness. Such being the case,—such being the sleight and cunning craftiness with which false teachers, under a pretence of liberty, with feigned words make merchandize of souls, the Apostle calls upon believers to be on their guard. Not merely human eloquence and sophistry, and philosophy, he in effect tells them,—not merely apparent zeal for God, and for the dignity and happiness of man, are employed to pervert, and, if possible, to deceive the very elect,—but principalities and powers, and spiritual wickedness in high places, are also leagued for the seduction and overthrow of believers. And it is only by taking to themselves the whole armour of God, and fighting the good fight of faith, that christians can hope to stand firm and true against the wiles of the devil.

The Apostle knew also that there is in every one of us an evil heart of unbelief leading us to depart from the living God, to hold the truth in unrighteousness, and to build upon the foundation of God's word, the hay, wood and stubble of man's teaching. There is, in the very best of men, a corrupt principle which, unrestrained by the grace of God, will lead to error in judgment, and impiety in practice. And when error is flattering to human pride, complaint to human infirmity, and tolerant to human opinions, practices, and fashions, and when it promises heaven and happiness without holiness, self-denial, regeneration and zeal for good works, it is far *more* congenial than that truth which teaches that "except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God,"—that "without holiness no

\*Matt. 13: 19. Mark, 4: 15. Luke, 8: 12.

man shall see the Lord,"—that if any man will come after Christ, he must deny himself, take up his cross and follow him,"—come out from the world and be separated,—and that, "denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, he must live soberly, righteously and Godly, in this present evil world, looking for the coming of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ."

Believers, therefore, are vehemently and with great earnestness, exhorted to remember these things,—to consider their danger, corruption within, temptation without,—and to cleave with full purpose of heart unto the Lord, and to the word of His testimony. The great trust committed to every christian is the truth—"THE FAITH," as it is here called,—the faith which has God for its author, Christ for its object, sanctification for its evidence, and salvation for its end. It is by the hearing of the Gospel, this faith is produced. It is by the truth we are sanctified. And this Gospel, when accompanied by God's spirit, is "the power of God unto salvation." This faith God has delivered to believers in his word by holy men of God, who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. God's word alone can tell us what God is—what God wills—what God requires of man to believe, and to do, in order to salvation. All other lights are false lights, which lead only to precipices and to perdition. This alone is the true light shining in a dark place, to which we do well that we take heed. The world by wisdom knew not God, and it never entered into the heart of man to conceive the things now revealed, the mystery hid for ages.

And as Christ, the sum and substance of this faith, was "offered once to bear the sins of many," (Heb. 9: 28,) so this faith has been "once" for all, that is, *fully, finally and authoritatively*, "delivered" in the *Scriptures*. It endureth for ever. It is the everlasting Gospel. It has been delivered once, and no more. It is the same yesterday, to-day and forever. No other foundation for our faith and hope can any man lay, than that which is laid. As a *testament*, the Gospel contains the whole will of Christ. As a *rule*, it contains the whole law of Christ. As a *creed*, it contains the whole doctrine of Christ. As a *guide*, it is able to make wise unto salvation. And as *the means* of salvation, it is perfect, converting the soul.

This, then, was the common salvation,—"the faith,"—about which the Apostle gave all diligence to write, and earnestly and vehemently to exhort. And as this was the faith once and always delivered unto the saints, in divers manners, and in divers measures, from Adam until Christ, so it is the faith, the only faith, and the whole faith, now delivered unto the saints. And as in the Apostles' days, and from the days of *Cain unti then*, this faith was assailed and corrupted and derided, and

another gospel, which was not another, was, with cunning and persuasive craftiness, urged upon man's acceptance, so also is it, in these last days, and so will it be.

What then, we again ask, are we to do?

We appeal to common sense. If the faith is that in which our hope for everlasting life is founded,—if it is by the truth, as it is in Jesus, we are made free,—if it is through God's truth we are sanctified,—if it is the truth which purifies the heart,—if the truth is the source and motive to godliness,—if the truth is a part of the christian armour, by which every christian is to stand,—if this truth is to be believed, to be obeyed, to be manifested, and to dwell in the saints for ever,—if we are bound to love the truth, to speak the truth, to judge according to the truth, to rejoice in the truth, to deal in the truth, to buy the truth and sell it not, to abide in the truth, and to contend earnestly for it,—if the church is to be the pillar and ground of the truth, and has received a banner that she may be the preserver, the defender, and the propagator of the truth,—if God is the author of the truth, and the truth is the truth of God,—if Christ is the truth, and the truth is the truth as it is in Jesus,—if the Holy Ghost is the inspirer of truth—if He guides only into truth, and along the way of truth,—if He sanctifies and saves only by the truth, and is emphatically the Spirit of Truth,—if the Gospel is truth, and nothing but the Gospel is truth,—if it is as the truth, and only as the truth, the Gospel is the power of God to the salvation of them that believe,—if it is the great end and aim, and commission of the church, and of every individual member of that church, to endeavour to convert those who err from the truth, and to bring them into the way of truth,—and, not to multiply these statements, which are all in the language of Scripture, if the enemies of Christ are represented as they who are devoid of the truth, who sell the truth, who speak not the truth, who love it not, and obey it not, who resist the truth, turn away from it, hold the truth in unrighteousness, change it into a lie, preach another gospel, and confess not that Christ is the sovereign Lord and Jehovah, God manifest in the flesh,—if I say these things are so, then what else can any lover of the truth do, than contend earnestly for it, whenever, wherever, and by whomsoever it is gainsayed.

We appeal to the common experience and conduct of men in regard to every other kind of truth than religious truth, and in reference to every other privilege and blessing, which they hold dear. Let the truth of civil and religious freedom, as involving the right of free inquiry, freedom of speech, freedom of action, and freedom of religious worship, be assailed,—let the constitutional rights and privileges secured by the charter of our

national government to every member of the confederacy, be endangered or denied,—let the rights and privileges of any citizen, or any class of citizens, in any one of our communities be infringed upon, by our municipal authorities,—or in any other way, let personal and social rights be interfered with,—and how sharp, and long, and loud, and earnest, and costly, and if needs be, even unto blood, will be the controversy, the disputes, the appeal to public opinion, to judicial investigation, and to the true interpretation of our constitution. In regard to civil liberty, temporal rights, and all personal and social blessings, no man would hesitate to contend *earnestly* and *as often*, and *as long*, as necessity might demand. This freedom of debate and controversy is the mainspring and essential conservator and guardian of free constitutions, repaying for its many incidental evils by activity, energy, knowledge and personal interest in the common weal, awakened by it in every bosom. And just as surely, just as necessarily, and just as profitably will the momentous truths and blessings of the Gospel appear of unspeakable value to every believer, agitate their understandings, inflame their spirits, enkindle their devotion, and when assailed, and denied, excite to controversy and earnest contention.

From the very nature of the case, we conclude that this must be so. What man *loves*, he clings to and defends; for where the treasure is, there will the heart be also. What is worth proclaiming, is worth preserving, and what we feel it our duty to believe, we feel it our duty to defend. What we value we will maintain and earnestly contend for, against all who would defraud us of it. Things must become the subjects of contention in proportion to their importance, and religion and religious truth being unspeakably the most important things in the world, no man can be either seriously or sincerely a christian, who will not contend earnestly for his faith, and hope, against all opposers. The cause of such contention is not in religion, any more than it is in science or liberty, or social rights. The fault, in every case of controversy, is in the different understandings, tempers, interests, passions, and prejudices of mankind, incited by the great enemy of all peace. As long as these lead to opinions and practices contrary to the truth in science, liberty, or religion, there must be, as the Apostles say, divisions, and contendings and defendings. So long as, on whatever plea, the citadel of truth is assailed, the sentinel must give warning, the garrison must appear under arms, and that citadel must be defended; and he that acts otherwise will and must be a traitor to science, to his country, and to his God.

We appeal to the very nature of the Gospel itself. What is the Gospel? It is the revelation of God's plan of mercy and salvation to guilty, sinful and perishing man. In reference to God, it discloses God's everlasting purpose and plan for blessing us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ,—the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, who for our sakes became poor, that we, through his poverty, his blood, his righteousness, might become rich,—the love and condescension of the ever blessed Spirit, who saves us by the washing of regeneration, and by His renewing, sanctifying and comforting influences. Into the name, that is, the belief, worship and service of the Father, Son, and the Holy Ghost, every one is to be disciplined, and in all that pertains to their divinity, offices and services, all are to be indoctrinated. In reference to MAN, the Gospel reveals to us that he is "born in sin," "an heir of wrath," "desperately wicked," "dead in trespasses and sins," "already condemned," and incapable, without being born again, of entering the kingdom of God.

In reference to THE WORLD, the Gospel reveals that the whole world lieth in wickedness, being led captive by Satan, who is the god of this world,—that all that is in the world, is not of the Father,—that the whole world is guilty before God, under his wrath and curse, and in the broad way that leadeth to destruction,—that it is commanded to repent and believe the Gospel, in the assurance that he that believeth shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned.

The Gospel, therefore, in its doctrines and duties, its mysteries and its threatenings, is a scandal to some, and foolishness to others. It is everywhere spoken against, and in every way opposed, or else modified and moulded into conformity to the views and wishes of man's darkened understanding and depraved heart. "I came not" therefore says Christ, "to bring peace on earth, but a sword." In itself, the Gospel is the tidings of peace and good will to man. But as it throws light into the dark *heart*, and dark and evil *ways* of sinful men, men will oppose, resist and contemn it, and thus make that Gospel to be, as it is called, God's sword, which, in itself, is God's embassy of love. The alternative, therefore, is the Gospel *with* controversy, or no gospel at all. The Gospel is itself a standing controversy, with the cavils, the objections, the doubts, and the blasphemies of men. There is not a truth in the Gospel, nor in the Bible, nor even in natural religion, that is not controverted by the sceptical, unbelieving, proud, and self-conceited wisdom of foolish man. The Atheist denies the very being of God,—the Pantheist his personality,—the Deist his word,—the sceptic his providence,—the errorist his moral government, his holiness, justice and severity,—and multitudes deny the authority, the

claims, the obligations, and the unspeakable worth of the salvation and sanctification to which the Gospel calls. Let us, then, attempt to limit the doctrines to be enforced from the pulpit to *those* truths which are *undisputed*, and we are at once brought, not to the abandonment of the Gospel merely, with all its high mysteries, but to everlasting silence upon every truth, natural or Divine.

So it has ever been, and so it will ever be. Truth, in this world, and among the men of this world, is like Ishmael among his enemies. Its hand is against every man, because every man's hand is against it. It must either conquer opposition or die. It is a testimony for God and his truth, against man and his lies; against the devil and his wiles. From the very beginning of man's apostacy, until now, there has been enmity between the serpent and the woman, between the sons of God and the sons of men, between righteous Abel and a Christ-denying Cain, between the church and the world, between the word of God, and the traditions and philosophy and wisdom of men. The whole of religion is styled repeatedly "Jehovah's controversy."—Hos. 4: 1; Micah, 6: 2; Jer. 25, 31. The Scriptures are controversial writings. The whole book of Job is a controversy. The prophets were witnesses for God, and his truth, and contenders for the faith. John the Baptist was a firm and vehement and bold contender and martyr for the truth. The ministry of our blessed Lord was a perpetual controversy, and the Gospels a record of it. The Apostles were left to arrive at truth in many things by "much disputing among themselves," (Acts, 15: 7,) and they convinced Jews and Gentiles by much disputing with both.

The early christians contended against the Jews, Pagans and heresiarchs, of their day, and it was only against the power of the sword, in the face of infamy and death, and with the sacrifice of millions of human lives from age to age, that the truth prevailed and conquered. When the whole power of the Roman empire and of Vandal fury were leagued to destroy and exterminate that very orthodoxy for which we now contend, it was only by controversy and patient endurance that the priceless truth, as it is in Jesus, was preserved and perpetuated, and heresy overthrown.

When the truth had again been perverted by the man of sin, it was by controversy and faithful contending, even unto blood, that Luther and Calvin, and our fathers in Scotland, and in Ireland, and in France rescued the truth, and again unfurled its banner to the breeze of Heaven. And it is only by controversy, and contending earnestly, that the truth, in all its purity and power, can ever be maintained and handed down to our pos-

terity, and disseminated throughout the world. The church will remain a living church, and the church of the living God, only so long as she remains the pillar and the ground of the truth,—the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.

But if these arguments are insufficient, let us further remind you that controversy and contending is made an imperative duty by God himself. Ministers must *defend* as well as *preach* the truth, and drive away the wolf, as well as protect the sheep. The mouths of deceivers are to be stopped, and gain-sayers must be convinced, who subvert whole houses. If there are damnable heresies, there may be a damnable silence, and a cursed patience, on the part of that watchman who giveth not warning. Woe is unto him, if he do not keep the truth and hold fast the faithful word, and speak the word which becometh sound doctrine. Nor is this woe limited in its effects to their own souls. For it is only when they have declared all the counsel of God that they can feel pure from the blood of other souls crying out for vengeance upon thir unfaithfulness. And it is in view of this fact that many corrupt the word of God, and handle it deceitfully, that all ministers are charged before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing, to reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long suffering and doctrine, seeing that the time will come when men will not endure sound doctrine, but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and be turned unto fables. Every minister, therefore, is set for the *defence* of the Gospel, and not merely for its *proclamation*.

Not only ministers, however, but *every christian* is a *warrior*, under the Captain of his salvation, and under obligation to contend earnestly for the faith, and not to sell it. They must hold it fast, and neither give it away nor suffer it to be taken from them. They must keep it in their *heads*, by being well established in the faith,—in their *hearts*, by being filled with the love of the truth,—and in their *hands*, by being ready to give a reason for it to every one that asketh. They must hold it fast, by persevering devotion to it, and by a zealous defence of it, lest, "being led away by the error of the wicked, they fall from their steadfastness, and at last lose their crown. For he that is content to be a looker-on, while his fellow christians contend earnestly for the faith, shall never be more than a looker-on when they are crowned with that diadem which is laid up for them who have "kept the faith."

Objections to religious controversy cannot therefore be religious. They are in evident contrariety to the principles of

common sense,—to the invariable conduct of mankind in reference to all other truth,—to the necessity of the case,—to the very nature and genius of the Gospel,—to the way in which the truth has, from the beginning until now, been professed and perpetuated,—to the nature and design of the church, and the ministry,—and to the plain and positive commands of God. From whatever motives such opposition to controversy arises, it involves, therefore, the spirit of disobedience, unfaithfulness, and that cowardly timidity and “fear of man which bringeth a snare.” For what is controversy? It is either an oral or written discussion of whatever is controverted as error. Now, to controvert or dispute a point, is only to agitate a question, and sift and weigh its evidence so as to obtain clear and satisfactory ideas of it. And can any man attain to a real personal and assured belief without controversy? It is impossible. Neither can any man *maintain* his belief, or *defend* it, but by continually controverting, discussing and weighing all that is presented to his mind, for and against his faith.

Aversion to controversy, when it is based upon a professed regard for the interests of religion, is founded upon misapprehension and mistake. It confounds controversy with contention, and contending with contentiousness, and disputation with a disputatious spirit. It does not distinguish between controversy and the temper in which it may be conducted. Religion demands and necessitates *controversy*, but it denounces a *controversial spirit*. The principles which are upheld, the purpose in which it originates, the object for which it is employed, and the spirit in which it is conducted, characterizes any particular controversy as good or evil. If it spring from a mere spirit of contention, from a desire of victory, or a love of display,—from personal animosity, and not from love of the truth, christianity will not acknowledge it as her own. If employed on questions unnecessary or unimportant,—if it is made the vehicle of personal malignity, and is carried on in a spirit that rends asunder the bonds of charity and peace, it is equally unchristian. But these evils flow not from the *use*, but from the *abuse*, of controversy,—not from the truth, but from the evil heart of its defenders,—and are not therefore inseparable from it, nor a prohibition of its use. And these evils, however great, are not worthy to be compared to the evil and guilt of allowing the truth to be lost through indifference, or endangered through our pusillanimity. And all that the Apostle enjoins, is not that spirit of contentiousness, “but that open, manly, unflinching, continuous effort, towards the furtherance



of the truth, in all circumstances, and in the face of all opposition, which the truth demands at the hands of those who have honestly received it; and which it will undoubtedly *receive*, from every man who is deeply and thoroughly convinced that it is the truth, and that all else is but vanity,—yea, worse than vanity,—delusion; delusion and a lie.”

But while many, through *misapprehension* and *mistake*, are opposed to religious controversy, many, it is to be feared, are opposed to it because they are indifferent to, or opposed to the truth itself. They condemn the contending earnestly for the faith, because they condemn the faith itself. Some artfully deny controversy, and hold up its abuses and its incidental evils, in order to destroy free inquiry, which would endanger their established errors, and their blinded votaries. Others are so inflated with the idea of their own infallibility, that their insufferable arrogance cannot bear to have oracular declarations, which of course are the voice of God, called in question. Others, again, oppose controversy, but it is only controversy for, and in defence of, the truth; while they are to be freely permitted to controvert *against* the truth. Laziness, pride, intolerance, impiety, indifference to all religious truth, and above all, a secret feeling that the stirring of the waters of controversy may arouse their slumbering but uneasy consciences: these, it is to be feared, constitute the prevailing motives with too many of those who, under the pretence of peace and charity, and the glory of God and the good of souls, cry out against all controversy, unless it be about the paltry questions of some municipal election, or the beggarly elements of mere earthly things.

And when some even good and pious people affirm that controversy is of no use, we would reply, in the language of Dr. Beecher, “It is nearer the truth to say, that no great advance has ever been made in science, religion or politics, without controversy. And certain it is, that no era of powerful theological discussion has ever past away, without an abiding effect in favour of truth. The discussions of Augustine, of Luther, and of Calvin, are felt to this day; and the controversial writings of Edwards, have been to error, what the mounds and dykes of Holland have been to the sea.”

Contending earnestly for the faith, is, therefore, an *imperative* and *all-important* christian duty. “Stand fast in one spirit with one mind, striving together (wrestling together) for the

faith of the Gospel, and in nothing terrified by your adversaries." "Why halt ye between two opinions?" When God's truth is at stake, neutrality must be criminal, and indifference to the truth is, of all others, the enemy most to be dreaded.

Only let our zeal for the truth be combined with charity for the persons of all who oppose it. This discrimination between *our* accountability for holding and defending the truth, and the accountability of every man only to God, and not to man, for his religious opinions, is the true secret by which we may "speak the truth in love," and so defend it as to maintain peace and charity, even towards its assailants. This will enable us to honour the truth, without dishonouring ourselves,—to be firm and calm,—and with a warm heart to preserve a cool head, and a graceful tongue.

## ARTICLE II.

### THE PROVINCE OF REASON, ESPECIALLY IN MATTERS OF RELIGION.

1 *Thess. V*: 21.—1 *Peter, III*: 15.—*Matthæw, VI*: 23.—*Luke, XI*: 34.—*Rom. I*: 22.

In the first of these passages of Scripture, we are taught not to receive *implicitly* as the true doctrines of God, what may be inculcated even by the ministers of God. We are to listen to them with reverence, but not with unthinking acquiescence. We are, ourselves, to search the Scriptures, to become familiar with their truths; and having thus proved that what is taught is scriptural, and therefore true, we are to hold it fast as "good," to lay it up in our hearts, and to practise it in our lives. In accordance with this general precept, our Saviour, on more than one occasion, called upon his hearers to judge,—not of the truth or reasonableness of what he taught,—(for how *could* they believe in heavenly things whose nature transcended their finite capacities,)—but to judge of the evidences which he gave, that He was an infallible teacher, and that all, therefore, that he said, was indubitable truth.\* The Apostles, also, in enforcing any duty, do not hesitate to appeal to the reason and conscience of men, and to characterize the whole of piety, both as it is "the obedience of faith," and as it is the obedience of the life, a "reasonable service."†

In the second passage we have quoted, christians are exhorted, in view of the opposition and hatred to which they and their holy religion are exposed, to see that their knowledge of God is an experimental, saving and sanctifying knowledge, that they may be ever ready to give to every one that asketh it, a reason of the glorious hope that is in them, both as it regards the irresistible strength of the external evidences of the gospel, and of the unspeakable peace and power of its internal working to the salvation of all who believe.

In the third passage, our Saviour compares the reason of man to the eye. If the eye is prevented from a clear and perfect vision by any film or impediment, or by want of sufficient light, then, just as surely as we attempt to use it, will it mislead and injure us. But, if the eye be in itself sound, and

\*John v: 31; and x: 37, 38; and xxi: 25. 1 John, iv: 1.

†1 Cor x: 15. Rom. xii: 1.

the light by which it sees be pure, then will its perceptions be correct, and our steps well ordered. In like manner, reason may be vitiated,—or its present light may be obscure,—or it may be wholly incapable of judging of the truth before it, by reason of its spiritual and supernatural grandeur; and if, in such circumstances, it is made the judge and standard of truth, it will, and must, lead us into error. But, when reason is in itself perfect, and the evidence before it is sufficient and capable of being fully appreciated and understood, then it will lead us to right and proper conclusions, both as to truth and duty.

In the last passage quoted, we are informed that such is the present *vitiated* and *perverted* state of human reason, that even those who have made the most pompous professions of their love of wisdom, and have claimed to be wise above all others, have proved themselves to be vain and foolish,—have darkened their own hearts, and the hearts of others,—have obscured the knowledge of God, and of duty, preserved to them by primitive traditionary revelation,—and, not liking to retain this knowledge of God, have been involved in inextricable doubts and difficulties, both as it regards God and the chief good, and everlasting life. “Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance that was in them, because of the blindness of their hearts.”

We are thus brought to the subject of the present discourse, namely, the province of reason in matters of religion. It has been asserted, and is still maintained, *theoretically* by Deists, and Unitarians, and by thousands *practically*, that reason is a sufficient, and the only necessary guide in matters of religion, and that revelation is either unnecessary and useless, and therefore untrue, or that, being to some extent, and for some purposes, necessary, reason is the standard by which its doctrines and its duties are to be judged. “Whatever opinion agrees not with reason, (says Smalcius, one of the fathers of modern Unitarianism,) is inadmissible in theology, and to admit such doctrines, we neither can, nor ought to, be induced, even by the express words of the Spirit of God himself.”\* According to Dr. Beard, one of the most recent and very learned defenders of Unitarianism,† “The fundamental peculiarity of the anti-trinitarian movement is the deference paid to human intelli-

\*See his words quoted at length in Smith's Testimony to the Messiah, vol. i., pp. 75, 76.

†Historical and Artistic Illust. of the Trinity, by J. R. Beard, D. D. London, 1846: p. 196.

gence as the *judge*, though not the *source* of religious truth." The same author says,\* "As *witnesses*, the Apostles and primitive christians are invaluable; as *authorities*, they are revolutionary." "We may be excused, (he continues,) if we think that these expounders of christianity did not always rigidly adhere to its sole and perfect type, as found in the mind of the Lord Jesus himself."† He also adds, "Let it not be supposed that, therefore, the writer holds every part of Scripture to be of equal authority. Such an idea is a gross and pernicious error. All Scripture is in some way profitable, but all is not alike valid."

Similar affirmations we might adduce from various acknowledged writers of this denomination of "rational believers," as they proudly call themselves. But this is needless, as it has been affirmed among ourselves that "the religious element in man received a new stimulus and direction at the coming of the Son of Man, and the promulgation of his holy religion. Yet its chief and most potent manifestations are still characterized by much that is arbitrary, wayward, contradictory and inconsistent." "God, in the mean time," it is added, "gives us REASON to examine, to defend, to CORRECT, to IMPROVE, or to FORSAKE these accompanying errors." *Reason*, therefore, and not any written revelation, it is affirmed, is the source, or at least the arbiter and judge of religious truth. Is it so? This question, it may be perceived, lies at the foundation of all inquiries into religious doctrine, and determines at once, whether GOD, in His WORD, or REASON in EACH INDIVIDUAL HEART, is to be the standard and judge of religious truth.

To come to a proper conclusion on this subject, we must, in the first place, understand what reason is, and secondly, what are its capacity, limits, and present condition, and this will at once point out its province in matters of religion.

What, then, is reason? Reason, derived from the Latin verb to think, is the power or faculty of thinking. "It is (says Locke,) that faculty in man whereby he is supposed to be distinguished from the beasts, and wherein it is evident he much surpasses them." "It denotes that power by which we distinguish truth from falsehood, and right from wrong, and by which we are enabled to combine means for the attainment of particular ends," and "to deduce (adds Webster,) inferences

\*Hist. and Art. Ilust. of the Trinity, p. 7.

†Ditto, p. 7.

from facts or propositions." "Reason (says Isaac Taylor,) is the mind acting upon its own ideas."\* "It is distinguished from instinct by the knowledge of relations,—or cause and effect."† To have reason is, therefore, to be rational, moral, and accountable being, that is, to be a man. But while all men are thus *rational*, it must be remembered that he only is *reasonable* who acts according to the principles of right reason.

Reason, then, is that sublime spiritual or intellectual nature, by which man is enabled to know truth, and to obey it,—to examine the validity of the testimony brought before it,—to separate the false from the true,—give assent according to the evidence, and thus arrive at the certainty of *knowledge* when the evidence for truth is unexceptionable,—at *probability* when the evidence for the truth outweighs objections or difficulties,—and at *conviction of falsehood* when there is a plain and positive disagreement.

To receive nothing as truth but what is thus made certain by sufficient evidence, to judge and act only upon such rational grounds, to believe and do nothing but what he is convinced by the proper use of his reason, and the full, candid and impartial examination of evidence, he ought to believe and to do, is to act as a *rational* being, and to be, in fact, a *reasonable* being.

Man is commonly spoken of as made up of distinct and separate faculties, each independent in its power of action from the rest. But while such a division may be necessary and important for general purposes, it is most delusive, regarded as any thing more than an abstract classification of the various exercises, attributes, faculties and powers,—call them what we may,—of THE ONE rational mind. With a capacity to discern relations, causes, and effects, to deduce conclusions, to act from motives drawn from the past, the present, and the future, and to arrive at convictions of the existence and reality of invisible, spiritual and everlasting things,—this REASON or MIND of man, is just that intelligent, moral and accountable nature which God has given him. And, although common language ascribes a variety of faculties to the soul, imputing one action to the blindness of passion, another to the evil of our tempers, another to the heat of imagination, and another to the calmness of our reason, yet, in reality, THE SOUL IS ONE, and every thing that is done, is done by man under the active and

\*See Elements of Thought, by Isaac Taylor, p. 134, and Brown Philosophy, p. 313, 1 vol. ed.

†Ditto, p. 102.

controlling power of this rational and responsible nature.—The body, with its animal spirits, desires, and propensities, and its nervous and physical energy, is made to be subject to the soul, to be its servant and helper, to co-operate in the furtherance of every good word and work, and to be restrained from every thing that is evil in thought, word and deed. The body, except for the preservation of animal life, cannot act except as it is acted upon. Passion is *passive* until it receives power from the will, and permission from the reason. Emotions can only *suggest*, they can not *determine* our conduct. The impulses of our nature can only be gratified when the soul, the mind, the reason of the intelligent man concurs in allowing their indulgence, and in securing the means necessary for it. They are intended to be as absolutely under the controul of reason as are the hand, the feet, the eyes, and the other senses.

It is on this account that man is capable of vice and virtue, morality and immorality, purity and impurity, sin and holiness. *He* possesses, and the *brutes* do not, a knowledge of God, of God's law, God's will, and of his own duty, and of all that is required and prohibited under the penalty of God's wrath and curse. But all this knowledge man possesses by his reason, which is, we have seen, that intelligent nature which distinguishes him *from* the brutes. The same actions which in brutes have no moral character, in man become morally right or wrong. It follows, therefore, that since the actions of men are only regarded as right or wrong, blamable or commendable, when they proceed from one who is considered to be in the full possession of his reason,—that every thing that is imprudence, baseness, villany or sin, in man, however it may require the co-operation of the body, must be the act of his rational nature, otherwise it would have no moral character whatever.

I do not mean to condemn the language which speaks of the several faculties and passions of the soul as if they were as distinct and independent as the governor, officers and citizens of a commonwealth. These distinctions are necessary for mental analysis and general comprehension,—give life and beauty to all language and discourses,—and indicate the particular motive and medium by which, in every action, the intelligent nature of man is induced to judge and to act as it does.

Considered, however, in this light,—that is, as a faculty of thinking and judging,—reason has no moral character. It is neither good nor evil, proud nor humble, presumptuous nor

vain. It is merely a faculty or power, and only becomes moral when regarded as under the direction of the intelligent moral nature of man, actuated by motives, arriving at certain ends, subject to the moral law of God, and guided by certain principles. Morally speaking, reason is just what man is. Man is under authority to God's *law* as the rule of duty,—to God's *will* as the supreme and final judge,—to God's *testimony*,—in whatever way imparted,—as the ultimate, final, and infallible evidence of what is true or false, good or evil. Reason, therefore, becomes morally good or evil, holy or unholy, humble or proud, presumptuous or vain, just as it is employed in faithfully ascertaining God's law, God's testimony, and God's will, and in implicitly obeying them,—or, on the other hand, as it follows the desires and devices of a wicked heart, and under its influences will not come to the light, lest its deeds should be reproved.

We proceed to remark that this rational nature, and of course this faculty or power of judging, is limited. All men, in distinction from the brutes, are by nature intelligent and rational beings, by *which*, and not by *instinct*, they discover what is right or wrong, good and evil.

Not that all men are alike in their intellectual, any more than in their physical, nature. There is, in both respects, perfect individuality and endless variety, and yet, at the same time, one and the same general nature.

This intelligent and rational nature of man, however exalted it may be in its highest manifestations, it is nevertheless inferior to that of *angels*, both in its capacity of thought, and in the extent of its knowledge, and it is infinitely inferior to the reason and knowledge of *God*. Man is endowed with that degree of reason, and that capacity of knowledge, which was proper and necessary for his condition here and hereafter. His glory, therefore, must be to act in accordance with the order and perfection of his being. And to sink *below* it, and prostitute his powers to earthly, sensual, or devilish pursuits,—or, on the other hand, to attempt to *exceed* the powers bestowed upon him,—is equally irrational and sinful. The one is self-destruction, the other presumption, folly and rebellion. There is a line which no created understanding can pass, and that line is fixed to every class of beings according to their own order, even as there is one glory of the sun, and another of the moon, and another of the stars.



And, as there are doubtless many beings superior to ourselves, who are able to discover more truths than we can do, so it is reserved for God alone, to have a perfect and universal comprehension of all possible truths.

“When, therefore, reason refuses to submit to God’s guidance, or assent to what has all the inward and external marks of God’s infallible testimony;—when it will deny, only because it cannot comprehend and fathom the depths of God with its own short line,—or, when it attempts to give reasons, and account for things which God has not thought fitting to explain,—then it transgresses the bound of duty, and, instead of a guide, becomes a deceiver and destroyer of those who follow its directions.” It is the light of a candle employed to discover that which is irradiated by the light of the sun. It is arrogant profaneness, a wanton encroachment upon the prerogatives of Heaven, and an impious challenge to our Maker, why he has made us as he has. Reason, in such a case, is the *ignis fatuus* which leads its bewildered followers into fatal paths; or, it is like the lightning flash to the lost traveller, which only discovers the immensity of the trackless waste before him.

But further, human reason is as certainly limited in its *field of observation*, as in its capacity to judge. We inhabit but a spot in the creation of God. By our connection with the body, and the subjection of our reason to the senses as the inlets of all our original perceptions, the mind cannot go beyond the conclusions drawn from what it is capable of observing.

Reason, in its popular acceptation, is nothing but a faculty. It is not knowledge, but only the capacity or power of obtaining it. When observation, instruction and education are denied, this power lies dormant. When that observation and instruction are erroneous, reason only confirms us in ignorance and error. Reason, in and of itself, is therefore insufficient to discover and practise what is necessary for the ordinary duties even of the present life.

As our Saviour has taught us, reason or understanding is, spiritually, what the eye is physically. The one is capable of seeing, and the other of knowing. But the eye cannot see without light, nor reason without instruction. Reason is not the light, but the organ which acts by the light imparted to it. Even in reference to the world around it, reason knows infinitely less than it is ignorant of; and the little it does know, is

known as the result of close observation, diligent study, and ages of experience and discovery.

The relations and dependencies of the system of our globe, not to speak of our planetary system, and that of the visible universe, are almost entirely beyond our observation and knowledge. So are all the essences of things. How much more certainly and necessarily, therefore, must this be the case, in reference to every thing that is beyond the visible world,—all that is invisible and incapable of observation,—all that is supernatural and infinitely removed from the sphere and capacity of our finite and limited reason.

Whatever we can know by the use of our faculties of *observation and understanding*, is properly within the bounds of reason. Whatever objects are *beyond these*, must either remain unknown, or become known only by clear and sufficient testimony, in which case they reasonably claim and secure the approbation of our reason. In reference to such objects, the testimony must be supernatural, and the evidence must be Divine, in order to be infallible. Reason perceives the truth and certainty of the testimony, in whatever way it is revealed, just as it perceives God's testimony to what is true in all the phenomena of nature,—and knowing that God will not deceive and cannot lie, it regards the evidence as infallible, and arrives at a most rational assurance of the truth. This is FAITH, that is, knowledge founded, not upon observation or intuition, but upon testimony.

The things which are objects of this knowledge, that is, which are above and beyond reason, were by the ancients included under that part of knowledge termed *metaphysical*, that is, after or above what is physical.

"In this case, Plato ranges the contemplation of all Divine things; such as, the first being or cause,—the origin of things,—the wonders of providence,—the worship of God,—the mysteries of religion,—the immortality of the soul,—and a future state. He never pretended one of these to be discoverable by reason, but always ingenuously confesses them to be learned by traditions brought from the Barbarians, viz: the Jews, &c. They were frequently termed wonderful things, as being neither discoverable nor demonstrable by reason."

Such is the nature and limits of human reason, considered apart from any moral obliquity that may attach to it,—clear, and upright, and ever ready to approve and follow that which

is good. But such is not its present character. Man was, indeed, "made upright," but he has become "corrupt." As men are now, "they have no understanding." They have "corrupt minds." Their "foolish heart is darkened." "Having the understanding darkened through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart." Man's reason, therefore, is now clouded as well as limited. It is debased by servitude to the lusts of the flesh and the lusts of the eyes. It is enfeebled by moral disease. It is manacled by prejudices. The eye of reason is vitiated. It cannot bear the light. It loveth darkness rather than light, and because it will not come to the light and receive the truth in the love of it, it stumbleth, even at noon-day. Such is the testimony of "the Father of our spirits,"—"the Light who enlighteneth every man that cometh into the world," and who "knoweth what is in man."

And such, also, is the testimony of observation and experience. Even in reference to purely intellectual and philosophical pursuits, the father of philosophy found it necessary to caution against the idols of the mind. The art of reasoning is but the science of exposing and guarding against the weakness, perversity and sophistry of the human mind. Imperfection, contradiction, change have characterized all the efforts of genius. No theory has been too absurd to find advocates and disciples, while rival sects,—from those who believe every thing, to those who believe nothing, however true,—have filled up the history of philosophy. There is no single truth, from the existence of an external world to the existence of an eternal God, which has not been denied and darkened. Reason has, in all ages, rendered man shamefully unreasonable. Philosophy has been the guide to all the errors under the sun. What right reason itself is,—what the chief good is,—what right and wrong are,—what is the nature, ground, and authority of morality,—what man is,—what the soul is,—what God is,—what man's destiny is,—human reason never has discovered or determined, with any fixed or authoritative certainty. There have been as many opinions as philosophers in the world, and among them, there have been *opinions* merely, but no *certain knowledge*. When in the right, they disputed themselves wrong, and left every thing in confusion and doubt. Socrates, the wisest of men, professed to know only one thing with certainty, and that was his ignorance of every thing, and the ignorance of all who pretended to know any more. Plato, again and again,

reminded his hearers that he could give them probability, and not proof, for what he taught. Both Socrates and Plato rebuked the pride and ignorance of philosophers as the fruitful source of every error.\* Aristotle condemned all his predecessors as foolish and vain-glorious, and in regard to all things Divine, *said* little, and *believed* less. And, not to name the skeptics who doubted and disputed every thing, the opinion of Tully may be given as that of all who have ever earnestly inquired after truth, without the light of revelation, namely, "that all things are surrounded and concealed by so thick a darkness, that no strength of mind can penetrate them."†

But man was made to *practise* as well as to *know*; and *reason* was intended to guide into right *actions* as well as into right *opinions*. To know and choose to do what is good is moral goodness, and to know and choose to do what is contrary to

\*Plato brings in Socrates in his Alcibiades, thus philosophizing: "Thou knowest that errors in practice come from this ignorance, that men think they know, what they do not." Then he adds, When men are conscious of their own ignorance, they are willing to be taught by others. Again, Believe me and the famous Delphic oracle, Know thyself. This Plato, in his Charmides, speaks, Many have erred from their scope by trusting to their own opinion without judgment. Again, It is a great piece of temperance for a man to know himself. It would be a great advantage if none would act beyond their knowledge and strength. We seem to know all things, but indeed we are ignorant of every thing. It is an absurd thing to philosophize of things we know not; when any attempts a thing above his strength, he greatly errs. Thus Plato, out of what he had learnt from his master, Socrates. So, again, in Legib. 5, Plato discoursing of self-love: From this, says he, proceeds this great error, that all men esteem their ignorance to be wisdom, whence, knowing nothing, we think we know all things. Thence, not permitting ourselves to be taught what we are ignorant of, we fall into great errors. We have, indeed, a great saying in his Epinom. p. 980, shewing that we can get no true knowledge of God, but by dependence on, and prayer to him. His words are, Trusting in the Gods, pray unto them, that thou mayest have right notions of the Gods. Thus it shall be, if God as a Guide, shall shew us the way; only help thou with thy prayers.

Lastly, Plato, Legib. 4, tells us, That he who is humble and modest will adhere to Divine justice. But he that is lifted up in his own proud confidences, as though he wanted no Guide or Governor, he is deserted by God; and being deserted, disturbs others; and, although he may for awhile seem some body, yet at last he is sufficiently punished by Divine justice.—See the original, given in Gales Court of the Gentiles, vol. 3, pp. 15, 16.

†The early fathers who had been disciples of Plato, and the other philosophers, speak very strongly of their weakness and folly.

You will adduce, says Justin Martyr to the Greeks, the wise men and the philosophers, for, to these, as to a strong-hold, you are wont to make your escape, whenever, concerning the Gods, any one twits you with the opinion of the poets. Wherefore, since it is fitting to begin with the first and the most ancient, commencing with them I will shew: that the speculation of each philosopher is still more ridiculous, than even the theology of the poets. (1)

He then proceeds in regular succession, through the several opinions of Thales, Anaximander, Anaximenes, Heraclitus, Anaxagoras, Archelaus,

(1) Justin ad Græc. Cohort. Oper. p. 3.

right, is moral evil. What, then, is the character of human reason, as seen in human conduct? All that we commonly call the weakness, blindness and disorder of our passions, is, in reality, the weakness, disorder and blindness of our reason, to whom those passions are in subjection, and without whose sanction they could neither desire, will, nor act. All the tempers and passions of the heart, all the prejudices and idols of the mind, all the numerous faculties of the soul, are, as we have said, but the various acts and operations of one and the same rational principle which, in its union with the physical nature, constitutes man, and they only receive different names, according to the object on which this reason is employed, and the manner in which it acts. Reason, therefore, as it is the only principle of virtue, so it is the only cause of all that is base,

Pythagoras, Epicurus, Empedocles, Plato, and Aristotle, or the purpose of convicting them all of manifest and indisputable folly. With respect to *Plato*, in particular, nothing can be more contemptuous than Justin's sneer at him.

Plato, forsooth, is as sure that the Supreme Deity exists in a fiery substance, as if he had come down from above, and had accurately learned and seen all things that are in Heaven. (1)

Since, continues he to the Greeks, it is impossible to learn from your teachers any thing true respecting piety towards God, inasmuch as their very difference of opinion is a plain proof of their ignorance; I deem it an obvious consequence, that we should return to our own forefathers; who are of much higher antiquity than any of your teachers; who have taught us nothing from their own mere phantasy; who, among themselves, have no discrepancies; and who attempt not mutually to the opinion of each other, but who, without wrangling and disputation, communicate to us that knowledge which they have received from God. For, neither by nature nor by human intellect, is it possible for men to attain the knowledge of such great and Divine matters; but only by the gift which descends from above upon holy men, who needed not the arts of eloquence or the faculty of subtle disputation, but who judged it solely necessary to preserve themselves pure for the efficacious energy of the Divine Spirit.

For the authors of our theology, says he, we have the Apostles of the Lord: who not even themselves arbitrarily chose what they would introduce; but who faithfully delivered to the nations that discipline which they had received from Christ. FINALLY HERESIES THEMSELVES ARE SUBORNED FROM PHILOSOPHY. Thence spring those fables and endless genealogies and unfruitful questions and discourses, creeping like a gangrene: from which the Apostles would rein us back, by charging us, even in so many words, to beware of philosophy. What, then, is there in common between Athens and Jerusalem, between the Academy and the Church, between Heretics and Christians? Our institution is from the porch of Solomon: who himself has admonished us to seek the Lord in simplicity of heart. Let those persons see to it, who have brought forward a Stoical, or a PLATONIC, or a Dialectic christianity.

From the Prophets and from Christ we are instructed in regard to God. NOT from the Philosophers or from Epicurus.

God hath chosen the foolish things of the world that he might confound the wise. Through this simplicity of the truth, DIRECTLY CONTRARY to subtiloquence and philosophy, we can savour nothing perverse. (2)

(1) Justin. Cohort. Oper., p. 4.

(2) See also Tertullian to the same effect, adv. hæc. § 2. 3; and adv. Marcion lib. ii., § 13, and lib. v. § 40.

horrid and shameful in human nature. Reason alone can discern truth, and reason alone can lead into the grossest errors, both in speculation and in practice, and hence men are held accountable for all the evil they do, because they do it knowingly, and willingly, that is, in the exercise of reason.

Such, then, as is human nature, such is human reason. And as human nature is every where, and in all ages and places mistrusted, deceitful, and desperately wicked in its unrestrained developments, it follows that though all men *are rational*, they are not *reasonable*; since reason itself is darkened by sin, "so that the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, either as to doctrine, spirit or duty, for they are foolishness unto him, because they are spiritually discerned."

Reason, in man's present condition, is not what it originally was. That light, therefore, which at first was sufficient to preserve man from falling, and to lead him in the way of truth, is not sufficient to restore him, now that he has fallen, and to bring him back to God. "Not (says the Apostle,) that we are sufficient of ourselves, to think anything as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God," who alone can "give us an understanding that we may know Him that is true, and be guided into all truth, and be preserved from all error."

This brings us once more, therefore, to the main question before us, namely, whether reason,—the reason of every individual man, or the collective reason of all men, or the particular opinions each man has happened to take up, with or without examination,—whether this reason is the standard and judge of truth. It is not a question now in dispute, whether all men have the *right* and are under a solemn *obligation*, to judge and act according to their own reason. This is as clear to our mind as that every man has a right to see, and can see only with his own eyes, and hear with his own ears. This is a matter of duty and of necessity, since man, as a rational being, can only act from reason, and can only really believe what his own reason has assured him is proved by sufficient evidence. To act from the principle of reason and choice, or will, is as necessary to man as his being what he is. This is not the privilege of the philosopher, but is as essential to human nature as self-consciousness, personal identity and conscience are.

In this controversy, we maintain, therefore, the absolute necessity of reason to every opinion which man holds, and to every action man performs. This we do against fanatics on

the one hand, and Romanists on the other. Both these classes of errorists agree in denying the use of reason. The fanatic "substitutes in place of the sober deductions of reason, the extravagant fancies of a disordered imagination, and considers these fancies as the immediate illumination of the Spirit of God." He puts out the light, and then follows the vagaries of his own bewildered imagination, forgetting that God never commands, but he convinces also; that men cannot obey without believing, nor believe without sufficient evidence of the truth or duty. They who deny, therefore, the use of reason, in order to the belief of any doctrine or duty, destroy the only means God has given us to convince of the reasonableness and obligation of truth and duty, and instead of a rational worship, have fallen into all the delusions of madness and superstition.

The Romanist allows religion to be a reasonable service only so far as it enables the enquirer to discover that the Romish Church is the infallible testifier, in God's stead, to all that is truth, and to all that is duty. Having done this, its office ceases, except so far as to hear what she inculcates, and obey what she commands. In other words, man, in becoming a Romanist, ceases to be a rational being, and to hold any direct relation or responsibility to God. He believes and does what the church enforces, and this is the sum and substance of the Romish religion. It is not belief in God, in Christ, in a Holy Spirit, or in any one or all of the doctrines of the Gospel. It is belief in the Church of Rome, not in the Bible, not in our own senses, reason, or faculties. This, however, is as contrary to the necessity of our being, as it is to the word of God, which requires us to search the Scriptures, whether what the church teaches be true, to prove all her teachings by that word, and to be always ready, in reference to every doctrine and duty, to give a reason to every one that asketh.

The question, then, now before us, is not as to the use of reason, in reference to all testimony, and all evidence, and its absolute necessity to all belief, but whether every man's reason is to guide him in his inquiries after truth, and in his reception of the truth by its own light *merely*, by the amount of its present knowledge *merely*, or by that it conceives to be the general opinion of mankind *merely*, or whether in all matters that relate to God and things spiritual and divine, it is to be guided by the light which God has been pleased to impart in his word.

Here we encounter the *abuse* of reason, and contend against Deists, Rationalists and Unitarians, for the insufficiency of reason, as a guide or judge in matters of religion,—for its true nature, office and function,—and for the necessity, both of the Divine Word, and the Divine Spirit, as a standard, and as a guide to truth. And from what we have said, this controversy may, we think, be summarily ended.

Reason, we have seen, is finite, limited, and imperfect, and in reference to all Spiritual and Divine things, weakened and darkened. Reason, too, is only a faculty, a capacity of knowledge. It is not knowledge. Whatever man knows, he knows by observation, experience, instruction, through the processes of his own reason, his intuitive beliefs, his original suggestions, his sense of right and wrong, with all other attributes and powers which together constitute his reason, and make him an intelligent, moral and accountable being. Now, what the reason of a child is, compared with the reason of an educated man, the reason of the most highly gifted and informed mind is to that of angels; and the reason and knowledge of angels is no more than a single ray of light compared to the noontide brilliance of the sun, when contrasted with the infinite reason and perfect comprehension of Him that knoweth all things past, present and future,—whether material or immaterial, natural or divine. And since it is the very nature and irresistible tendency of reason to obtain whatever assistance, guidance and instruction, it has the means and opportunity of securing, in order to develop its powers and enlarge its sphere of knowledge;—since, without such light and guidance, it would know nothing, even of things on earth, it is at once evident that human reason only acts rationally when in reference to all things divine, and which are, by their very nature, beyond its observation and comprehension, it submits itself implicitly to the teaching and guidance of revelation. Revelation, that is, the testimony and instruction of God, in reference to the nature of things *spiritual*, supernatural, and divine, is to reason just what nature, observation and instruction, the testimony provided by God, is in reference to things *natural*. Deists, and Rationalists, and Unitarians, might just as reasonably reject all use of these means of obtaining and judging of the truth and certainty and real nature of *natural* things, as to reject the light and guidance of revelation in things supernatural. God can give his testimony as to what is true in regard to things divine



by revelation, as well as give it as to things natural by his works, and by the senses, faculties, observation and experience of men. And it is the same exercise of reason when it employs itself in finding out what God's testimony *is*, and believing what God testifies to be *true*, in regard to what God makes known by revelation, and what he makes known by observation, experience and argument. Christians, therefore, no more submit their reason to authority and to subjection, in receiving implicitly as true, without comprehending it, what God testifies in his word, than in receiving implicitly what God testifies in his works. In both cases, God's testimony is the ground of our belief. In both cases, we reply upon the infallibility of those powers of knowing that it is his testimony which God, who will not, and cannot deceive, has given us.—In both cases we gladly avail ourselves of all the light and knowledge God is pleased to impart to us.—In both cases, we comprehend nothing at all of the real essence of things, but only what God is pleased to manifest concerning them.—And in both cases, when we ascertain with certainty what God has *made*, what God has *done*, and what God has said, we ascertain what is the truth, and all that we can know of the truth. Reason, therefore, has precisely the same office, and the same province, in regard to all truth. The only difference is in regard to the nature of the evidence by which truth is testified, and thus brought before it. In things natural, the *testimony* is found in nature, and the *evidence* of what that nature in *fact is*, is brought before it by the observation of the senses, by the perceptions of the mind, by education and information, conveying to it upon testimony the experience of others. It is in this way reason acts, and acquires all it knows, all it can know, of natural things. On the other hand, in things supernatural, that is, in things beyond the reach of our senses, this *testimony* is found in the revelation of God, and what God *docs* reveal, is brought before the mind by the evidence of prophecy, of miracles, and all the other external, internal, and experimental evidences by which what *claims* to be God's word, is *proved* to be indeed such. By education and instruction, the mind becomes acquainted with these evidences. By its intuitions and inferences, the mind is led to the conviction of the truth and inspiration of the Bible. And being thus assured that *all* Scripture is given by inspiration, and was written by holy men of God as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, reason receives what the Bible contains as infallible truth.

although, of necessity, all that it reveals is above its comprehension, and can only be known so far as it has pleased God to reveal it. For reason to judge of the *truth* of doctrines thus certainly revealed, is as absurd and irrational, as for reason to judge of the *truth* of the facts revealed in nature. All that reason can do in either case is to ascertain what *are facts*, and then to believe in them, however incomprehensible, and however apparently contrary to other facts, and to its own preconceived opinions, they may be, and in point of fact are, in regard to much of our natural knowledge. Reason is unreasonable whenever it attempts more than this, since to refuse to believe on sufficient evidence what is incomprehensible or contrary to preconceived opinions, is a direct violation of all reason. The truth and comprehension of a fact in nature, or of a doctrine in revelation, is not the province of reason, but only the ascertaining of the testimony and the determination of the evidence by which they are proved to be facts in nature or doctrines of revelation.

Let us, then, learn the true nature and condition of man. Let us be humble. Reason is exalted when it is abased, when it is teachable, conscious of its weakness, imperfection and liability to mistakes. The greatest minds have been the humblest, and the most extensive knowledge has ever been the result of the most docile and patient research. And what we object to in Deists and Rationalistic christians is, not that they *reason*, but that they *reason ill*,—not that they claim a right to form and to hold fast their *own* opinions, but that they claim the right to hold *wrong* opinions, which is self-contradictory,—not that they thus investigate by reason the evidence of what is true, but that they attempt, by the finite line of reason, to fathom the depth of what is infinitely *below*, to measure the height of what is infinitely *above*, and to comprehend the nature of what is infinitely *beyond* their reason.

“Matters of pure revelation are immediately from the instruction of God, therefore most reasonable to be believed, because most certainly true; but cannot be believed, otherwise than He has proposed them, either in manner or degree. From the insufficiency of reason to guide us in all matters relating to our final good, appears the necessity of revelation against the cavils of those who would so exalt nature as to render it altogether needless. And the evidence of its coming from God, manifests the obligation we are under to receive and obey it,

against the atheistical objections of those who would" attempt by reason to judge, to comprehend and to reject it, "represent it as a superstitious contrivance or invention of men. When, therefore, reason refuses to submit to God's guidance, or assent to what has all the inward and external marks of truth and infallible testimony; when it will deny, only because it cannot comprehend and fathom the depths of God with its own short line; or attempts to give reasons, and accounts for things which God has not thought fitting to explain; then it transgresses the bounds of duty, and instead of a guide becomes a deceiver and destroyer of those who follow its directions."

It is this arrogance, self-sufficiency, and exalting reason to an independency upon God, that has been the source of all fatal error and impiety, and tempted men to revolt from religion and from God. Such oracles of vain reasoning have all the doubters and disputers against religion been, since the world began. The more men have depended upon reason for the measure of Divine things, the further always have they erred from the truth. And what this is owing to, we may learn from the confession of a noble author, Lord Shaftesbury, in the first class among the despisers of revelation. "There is (says he) a certain perverse humanity in us, which inwardly resists the Divine commission, though ever so plainly revealed."

### ARTICLE III.

#### THE BIBLE, AND NOT REASON, THE ONLY CERTAIN AND AUTHORITATIVE SOURCE OF OUR KNOWLEDGE, EVEN OF THE EXISTENCE OF GOD.

The existence of God as an infinite Spirit would we suppose in a natural and unvitiated condition of the soul, be a primary, intuitive, and necessary belief, not founded on reason, or induction, or rationally demonstrated, but assumed and taken for granted as true. But it is different with man now. His relation to God is the very one sin has most directly affected, and God the very subject of which he is most "willingly ignorant." The idea of an infinite personal God exists throughout christendom, it exists as an admitted axiomatic fact, not based upon rational demonstration, but as a truth taken for granted, and lying at the foundation of all other truths. This belief is strengthened and confirmed by observation and experience both of the inner and outer world. This we believe is the true position of the idea of an infinite and personal God. It is an axiomatic principle, the fundamental belief, capable of infinite conformation, but not of origination, by reason, demonstration, or proof. This is the position to which the Bible refers this idea. It is there also assumed—taken for granted—authoritatively enforced—but not proved. The heavens and the earth declare but they do not deliver it. They shew forth and proclaim, but they do not originate it. The Bible unites with these in giving evidence of God's existence and working, but it appeals to man's nature as adapted to, and requiring the belief of God as an axiomatic principle. But it is not with this as with other axiomatic scientific principles. Man as now blinded by sin and not liking to retain God in his knowledge, does not act as intuitively in regard to the idea of God, as in reference to other primary beliefs. He does not intuitively and without any instruction originate it. The denial of it does involve, as the denial of other primary beliefs does, absurdity, and impossibility, and contradiction, many even reject the idea, and deny the object, that is God as an infinite and personal moral being. The question then is whether *in man's present condition*, he is capable without instruction of originating the idea of an infinite and personal God. We affirm he is not, and my object is to shew so far as human reason from being able to *prove* any

thing about God which would demonstrate the absurdity of the doctrine that God in the unity of an eternal Godhead exists in a trinity of subsisting, relative personalities, it cannot originate the idea of an infinite God, much less determine his nature. I wish to bring this subject of God's trinity in unity to the teaching of the Bible, free from any a priori improbabilities supposed to be credited by a priori reasoning. The existence of God is believed to be an axiomatic principle, and that God is one, we believe to be an equally fundamental principle. But these leave the question of God's triune existence in that unity to be decided by proper, that is by supernatural evidence. Nay more, in his present condition, man cannot untaught, even originate the idea of an infinite personal God and can therefore tell neither less nor more about the Trinity of that God. All thoughts of God, at present found in the world we believe therefore to be consequent upon human instruction, based either upon a present revelation or upon the traditions of an original revelation. This position may be established 1, by showing that the subject is one on which the human mind cannot prove by reason; 2, by showing that it never has done so; 3, that as a matter of fact when left to itself, it never does do so, and 4, that even now the existence of God is considered by philosophy to be the insoluble problem, and one to which whenever reasoning is applied must be involved in scepticism and doubt.

"We have also," says the Apostle Peter, "a more sure word of prophecy, whereunto ye do well that ye take heed as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day-star arise in your hearts." Without entering into the discussion of the various shades of interpretation to which this passage of Scripture has given rise, I would present what appears to be implied as true in them all. The Apostle had adduced the miracle of the transfiguration, of which he was an eye-witness, as an irrefragable proof of the divinity and glory of Christ and his gospel, and of the assurance of future and everlasting blessedness. Of all this, the glory with which Christ was transfigured,—the testimony given to him by Moses and Elias,—and the voice of God openly declaring him to be his Son, and authoritatively requiring all men implicitly to receive and obey his teachings,—are irresistible proofs. But, adds the Apostle, strong as is *this* testimony, and infallible as is this evidence of the truth and certainty of the things in which

we have believed, we have the very word of God conveyed to us through the instrumentality of holy men of God in every age of the Church, in those Scriptures which are filled with prophetic and inspired truths. The allusion is therefore to the entire Scriptures, both of the old and new Testaments. These Scriptures were "ALL GIVEN BY INSPIRATION," as is attested by miraculous and prophetic evidences, that is, by a supernatural power, and a supernatural wisdom and foreknowledge, which imply omniscience, and omnipotence, and omnipresence. They are not, therefore, the result of private or uninspired disclosure, impulse or discovery. They did not originate from the intuitive or rational powers of the human mind. The Prophets were, as Bishop Horsley states it, necessary agents, acting under the irresistible influence of the omniscient Spirit, who made the faculties and the organs of those holy men the instruments for conveying to mankind some portion of the treasures of his own knowledge." All the information, both as to doctrine and duty, contained in the Scriptures, is the result of supernatural or divine influence, and is, therefore, as indisputably the Word of God, as the voice from "the excellent glory heard upon the holy mount."

To those Scriptures, therefore, we are required to "take heed," as being all "profitable for" the infallible communication of "doctrine" and knowledge of duty. In the midst of that obscurity and darkness which envelope the limited range of human reason, and the ignorance and inability to comprehend divine things, even when revealed, in which sin has involved the understandings of men, revelation shines as a light in a dark place, to instruct and guide, and is completely fitted to direct into all truth and all duty, the otherwise bewildered inquirer. While he who trusts to his *own*, or to *human* reason, is like the mariner without chart, compass or anchor, driven about by every wind of doctrine, and "never in one stay," he who takes heed to this divine light, possesses both a divine compass, chart and anchor, which are "sure and steadfast," and by which he is made "wise unto salvation."

And what is more: the evidences by which the Scriptures are found to be the only and infallible rule of faith and practice, bright, and burning as they *now* are, are ever increasing. Events which, at the time the Scriptures were in their several parts written, were in the womb of time, have many of them come forth, and many more shall yet be brought into existence,

giving by their testimony increasing magnitude and effulgence to this radiant light of Divine truth. Monuments silent for ages, and ruins buried for thousands of years from the notice of mankind, are now vocal, and coming forth from the tomb of their supposed oblivion, are proclaiming, as with the united voices of all past generations, the truth, and certainty, and inspiration of the Scriptures. Even now, the day has but *begun* to dawn, and the day-star to *arise* upon our hearts, and this evidence and attestation to the Scriptures, as the word of God, shall shine more and more, until the unclouded blaze of perfect conviction shines with noon-tide brilliance on every darkened mind of man.

It is thus that the Psalmist also, describes the word of God, —fully developed in the gospel of his Son,—as being the true light imaged by the light of the natural sun. Like the sun, it is intended for all men, adapted to all, and to be communicated to all. It is the only source of real, certain, and infallible truth, on all subjects superhuman and divine. There is no speech nor language, where its voice is not, or is not to be heard. In its light alone, we see light, and destitute of it, millions “sit as in the region and shadow of death,” and “perish for lack of knowledge.” This word of God is, and it *alone* is, perfect to restore the soul from error to truth, from sin to righteousness, from doubt to certainty. It alone convinces of sin, holds forth a Saviour, is the means of grace, a rule of conduct, a standard of faith, a source of wisdom, unveiling to the darkened vision of reason the wonderful nature, and works, and ways, and will, and worship, and purposes, and mercy, of God, and thus enlightening the eyes.

To be a christian, then, is to believe that Moses and the prophets, Christ and his Apostles, *were endued with divine* authority to teach all that they taught, and enforce all that they enjoined, and that God will verify in this world, and in the world to come, all that they have foretold,—it is, in short, cordially and with our hearts, to believe and act upon the truth that the Scriptures are the only rule of our faith and practice, of our hopes and fears, and that to add to, or take from, to modify or exchange any of their truths, is to endanger the only “foundation which God has laid in Zion.”

In what relation, then, does reason stand to Scripture and Scripture to reason? To perceive this with clearness, let us remember what has been determined concerning reason. Rea-

son is that intelligent nature by which man is capable of thinking,—of discerning the relation of cause and effect,—of receiving and distinguishing testimony,—of weighing evidence,—of forming opinions,—of attaining knowledge,—of becoming acquainted with what is duty,—and of acting upon it under a sense of deep and solemn responsibility. This reason, we have seen, is limited in its *capacity*, by its own finite nature, and in its *field of observation* and experience by the senses, to which, as inlets of sensation and organs of perception, it is at present allied. What is beyond this sphere, reason can only know by testimony, or remain ignorant of altogether, as is the case in reference to a *great part* of the things by which it is surrounded, and *universally*, as it regards their essences. Of course, this must be much more evidently and necessarily the case, as it relates to all things spiritual, supernatural and divine. This is an unknown region, which, like the terra incognita of earth, can only be surmised and conjectured, but of which we can have certain knowledge only so far as our actual observation and discovery in the one case, and actual testimony in the other, really extend. Both may be, to a certain extent, comprehensible by reason, when the means of judging of their existence and attributes is brought within its reach. In both, there will be much to be *believed*, as, for instance, the essence of things, which, with its present capacity, it never can *comprehend*. The belief, in regard to both, of all that is proved to be true, is most reasonable, and the attempt to explain or to dogmatize upon what is not proved or revealed, or comprehensible, is most unreasonable and absurd, yea, most sinful and impious.

But reason is not only limited. It is imperfect. It is not infallible. It is not omniscient, nor are its bodily organs absolutely perfect. It is, therefore, liable to misapprehension, perversion and mistake. To err is human. Infallibility is the prerogative only of Divinity. This imperfect and limited nature characterizes man as a creature "made a little lower than the angels," and not merely as a fallen and sinful creature. Adam, in Paradise, needed, and received, and rejoiced in, the instruction, guidance and holiness, imparted to him by his all-gracious and merciful Creator.

But now, man is a fallen and sinful, as well as a limited and imperfect being, and the Divine communion, holiness, and guidance, originally imparted to him, are, by his own sin, withdrawn. As it was in God's light man's reason saw perfectly,



holily and wisely, so, when that light is withheld, reason is left to its own feeble imperfection, and sees but dimly. A disordered heart ever enveloping it in a misty haze, it is seduced into error, mistakes truth for falsehood and falsehood for truth, regards evidence with attention or inattention, and investigates it thoroughly or imperfectly, according to the wishes of the heart. The understanding is itself darkened, and it will not come unto the light.

## Thought

Precedes the will to think, and error lives  
 Ere reason can be born. Reason, the power  
 To guess at right and wrong, the twinkling lamp  
 Of wand'ring life, that winks and wakes by turns  
 Fooling the follower betwixt shade and shining.

While this limited, imperfect and perverted character of human reason has been manifested in every department of knowledge, it has been most lamentably exhibited in all inquiries into things divine. This was to be expected. These things lie beyond the field of sensible observation, experience and proof. We know not what life is, or what the soul is, or what spirit is, or how these act upon matter. And if thus ignorant concerning ourselves, and of what is within us, and constitutes ourselves, how can we know or comprehend that great Spirit who is infinite, eternal, omniscient, omnipresent, and omnipotent! How God, thus infinite, can be good, and yet man evil,—how God can be gracious, and yet man miserable,—how man can be free, and yet absolutely dependent,—how all things past, present and to come, can be present to God's knowledge, power, wisdom, and government, and yet the liberty of second causes remain unhindered,—these are difficulties, arising, not from revelation, but from the nature of things as they exist, and which, independently of revelation, reason has found to be incomprehensible, and the source of endless speculations and contradictory theories.

In thoughts more elevate sages have reasoned high  
 Of Providence, foreknowledge, will, of fate,—  
 Fixed fate, free will, foreknowledge absolute;  
 And found no end in wandering mazes lost.

Whether human reason *by its own unaided powers* could ever have attained to the knowledge of God's being, attributes, or providence, or of man's future destiny in a world to come, or of the true origin of man's present contrarieties of feeling, character and judgment, or of the way in which the fears of death, and of evil after death, and of evil during life from

some invisible and unknown powers, could be appeased or removed,—this I say is a question which cannot possibly be determined in the affirmative, and must, I would think, be decided in the negative. It cannot be proved that human reason *unassisted*, could discover the truth on these points, and for this simple reason, that human reason never has been without assistance. In the beginning it had the instruction given by God, actual communion with God, and knowledge of Him, of itself, and of its relations to Him. From the first moment of man's fall, reason was assisted and instructed by the remembrance of what was already known, and by a present and permanent revelation of God's purposes and plans for man's redemption,—the necessity and nature of divine worship,—a coming Saviour, and of the salvation and everlasting life to be obtained through Him. And at sundry times and in divers manners, God has replenished and renewed, and increased the light and knowledge thus originally, and always enjoyed. The traditionary rays of this light shining amid the darkness of human ignorance ever increasing as sin obscured what existed, have been preserved by every nation and kindred, and tongue, and tribe, and people, under the whole heavens. To many there was superadded the direct or indirect light of a positive and present revelation. And to *all* there were "the invisible things of God clearly understood by the things that are made," when—with the knowledge of God and the disposition to know of God—these were carefully examined. It was with all this light and assistance, and with more or less knowledge of the Hebrew Scriptures that the ancient philosophers and sages wrote and spoke what they did on these points. In all that was dark, contradictory and obscure, we see the imperfections, vanity, and perversions of human reason, and in all, in them that was accordant to the truth, we see the reflected light of an existing, or of a traditionary revelation.

Any true, certain and assured knowledge on these subjects, the world by all its wisdom never has attained. What God is, was the question which, the longer "the wisdom of this world" took to answer, the more impossible the answer became. All that philosophers could discover with certainty was what Socrates, the wisest of them, avouched as the great attainment of human wisdom, that God was incomprehensible and that man knew nothing. They all confessed and lamented their ignorance of these things. Plato was sensible of the depravity

of human nature, acknowledged the want of a divine guide and earnestly desired such assistance to lead him to the truth. He compared the present condition of the soul to the statue of the sea-god Glaucus, which was partly broken with the waves, and almost covered with shells and stones and weeds. The mind at present, he says, "knows things but as in a dream, and in reality is ignorant of every thing;" and he affirms that he never met with a man who knew what virtue was. The ancients, too, referred all their original knowledge of divine things to the Gods, and to a primitive revelation from them. And when the Athenians inquired of Apollo, as Cicero informs us, what religion they should profess and hold, the oracle answered, "That of their forefathers." And since these were contradictory and various, they inquired again, which, and were answered, "The best." Even when Thales, Plato, and others, imported among them the purer ideas they had derived from their intercourse with nations in contact with the Jews, reason could not even receive, understand and conform to them. It heard the words, but attached to them no clear and certain ideas. Even Plato, therefore, represents himself as wandering upon the sea of truth, having no certain port to which to steer, no pilot to guide him, and ever tossed about like the waves. And thus we find even in the days of the Apostles, when Paul visited Athens, one of the most prominent objects was a statue "to the unknown God."

"The whole voice of antiquity agrees in this, that the knowledge of the first cause is a gift of the gods to men." Even Celsus concluded "That a divine Spirit descended to acquaint the ancient sages with those divine truths they taught the world." And Jamblichus asserts, "That our weak and frail nature possesses nothing of this knowledge as natural to it."

This one thing is certain, that the *carlier* we go in our inquiries into the notions of a God among any nation, the *clearer* they are found, because nearer, we believe, to the original light and purer reflection of revelation. The invariable effect of philosophy and human reason therefore, has been to confuse these ideas to bring men into a state of practical atheism, or at least of scepticism.

Even the more profound thinkers of the Alexandrian school frankly acknowledged the impossibility of a proper proof of the existence of God.\*

\*See Hagenbach's *Hist. of Doctr.* vol. i. p. 90, and *Clem. of Alex., Strom.* v. 12, p. 695; *ib.* in *calce et.* 696; *Strom.* iv. 25, p. 635; Likewise Origen

Such was the result to which human reason among the most intellectual and refined nation of the ancient world, and aided too, by all that genius, philosophy, the traditions of primitive revelation and scintillations from existing revelation, could attain. "The world by all its wisdom knew not God."

If from the *ancient* we turn to the *modern* world, we find, just as surely as philosophers discard the light of divine revelation,—though their minds are brightened by its influence and their moral code is deduced from its pages,—that nevertheless they run into all the vagaries of rationalism, of transcendentalism, of pantheism, of the worship of genius, or on the other hand, into the depths of superstition.†

Even as to the EXISTENCE of God, it is a question of great doubt, whether reason, *entirely unassisted*, could demonstrate

contra als. viii, 42; (opp. T. J. p. 725,) maintains, in reference to the saying of Plato, that it is difficult to find God. Even the notions of the heathen, concerning the immortality of the soul, were founded on tradition and corrupted by philosophy, as may be seen in Leland's *Necessity of Divine Rev.* vol. ii, pt. 2, ch. 7, p. 107.

†Dr. Marehold, the celebrated antagonist of Strauss, in his treatise on Vaticination, § 4, remarks, after enumerating the various points in which all religions coincide with one another and with revelation,—“I say, we are constrained, without reverence to the holy volume, to adopt the sentiment that the supposition, prevalent for better than a century, of a natural religion, so called, is utterly false, and that all religions have proceeded from a common fountain, viz: ‘from the name of the Lord,’ which, when forgotten, righteous Abraham proclaimed again, and therefore as the human race manifests such harmonious doctrines, sages, and customs, as we have shown above, it likewise follows that, whenever in these doctrines sages and customs appear irrational to subjective reason, when torn from mediate experience, has to be acknowledged as rational, because there exists no function in the human mind capable of producing from itself the same religious representations and figures in all ages, all localities, and among all nations. The great minds among the heathen have, at least in part, felt, and humbly laid hold of this truth, that all the talk of subjective reason leads to no result. They therefore adhered to tradition, i. e. to what had been given them, though it had become ever so dim and imperfect. Hence Socrates says, in the *Gorgias* of Plato, that he did believe the sages of a spiritual world from tradition alone; and in Cicero's work, *D natura Deorum*, lib. 3d cap. 17, Cotta answers another philosopher, who had undertaken to demonstrate to him the existence of the gods by arguments drawn from reason: “This single argument suffices me that our ancestors have delivered to us the faith in the immortal gods.

Thus the individual idea, “God,” which we meet with among most nations of the earth, does not yet permit us to prove the real existence of God, and to infer hence the rationality of the idea, as the ancient philosophers, an Aristotle, a Plato, a Cicero, and others, believed; but this historical proof of the existence of God, derived from the unanimous assent of all nations, has in later times been almost unanimously rejected, since we have become better acquainted with the earth and its inhabitants than the ancients were. In this article we agree with our modern philosophers, inasmuch as the idea of God was very indefinite in antiquity, and only admitted the adoption of something higher than man. But the view changes materially, if we consider this general belief of nations as some original revelation, which we shall have to do, so soon as we reflect on the further connecton of their other religious traditions and views with our biblical revelation.—*Whitaker's Southern Magazine*, Aug. 1852, p. 122.

this great truth with any certainty. We see, it is true, in all the works of God, evidences of order, wisdom, and design, from which, by an intuitive principle or power of mind, we infer that there must be a wise and intelligent Being who ordered and designed them all. The events of life, the providence and protection manifested towards all creatures, also lead the mind to the contemplation of a Being "distinct from nature, who conducts and determines what seems to us accidental," and who is a GOVERNOR as well as an ARCHITECT. The consciousness of a something within us, which thinks, feels, reasons, plans, desires, and loves, leads us still further to believe that there must be a CONSCIOUS, PERSONAL, benevolent, and all-wise GOD. The sense in man of right and wrong, of the evil of the one and the propriety of the other, of their desert of approbation or disapprobation, rewards or punishments, and the consequent emotions of self-condemnation, or approval, of hope, and fear, joy or sorrow, these feelings in our nature also lead us, irresistibly, to believe in a God who is the Governor and Judge of men, and who, as He has the *power*, has also the will to punish or reward, according to the actions of His creatures.

Such are the sources from which human reason, guided by all the light which science, education and revelation, can throw around it, derives its proofs of the EXISTENCE of God. And undoubtedly, the premises are sound, and the conclusions most rational. But at the same time, it must be admitted, that these arguments require for their appreciation, a very close and rigid analysis, a very candid and impartial inquiry, and a perfect freedom from prejudice and disinclination to the truth.

There are also, it must be admitted, many difficulties, doubts and objections, which present themselves to every one of these conclusions,—“doubts and perplexities which,” it is admitted, by one of the ablest reasoners upon the subject,\* “the mind *must* entertain but which it feels that it *cannot solve*.” “When,” he adds, “the mind is fixed on any one of these groups of arguments, to the exclusion of the others, the conception becomes limited, partial, and so far, erroneous.”†

Beliefs which invariably exist, are those which both rationally and of necessity, we must adopt as primary and fundamental facts, and when it is impossible for us to conceive the

\*Dr. McCosh on the Div. Govt., p. 12.

†Do. Do.

negative of such beliefs, we have the highest evidence that they do, and must invariably, exist.‡ Such truths we must regard as the necessary result of the operation of the human mind in its relation to the external world, and to all impressions made upon it from whatever source.§

Now, if, as we may assume, this is the only certain criterion of a belief which is universal and necessary to the human mind, then it will follow that the existence of a God is not such. It is not universal, since nations have been found so sunk in barbaric ignorance as not to possess it; since it is only found to prevail in so far as a good degree of general intelligence and traditional knowledge are found to exist; and since when it is found to exist it is not manifested in any uniform belief, as is the reality of the existence of an external world, but in many various modes. And as we can easily conceive of the negation of such a belief, and many philosophers have rejected, and do now reject this belief, we have the most assured evidence that this belief is not universal, or one which the human mind must logically, or of necessity, admit, by any inherent and unconstructed power within itself. In other words, the belief in the existence of a God is not found upon a priori, but upon a posteriori, evidence.

It is further to be remarked, that the predominating character of the present philosophy in France and Germany, and, to some extent, in all ages and countries, *is* and *has* been atheistical, either resolving itself into Pantheism, that is, making nature God and God nature, or denying God altogether, and reducing all events to fate, or to unalterable mechanical laws.

In Germany philosophy has either utterly scouted revelation, or it has rejected as a mere form, the text of Scripture, and aimed at *creating* a new christianity, a new religion, by its own power. In it, therefore, we see what the human mind is capable of when left to itself, even under the guidance of genius. "What had they been doing for twenty years? They had attacked with a sort of phrenzy all the principles on which rest religion, morality, the family, the State, the civil law. Not

‡If there be, as Mr. Mill holds, certain absolute uniformities in nature: if these uniformities produce, as they must, absolute uniformities in our experience: and if, as he shows, these absolute uniformities in our experience disable us from conceiving the negations of them; then answering to each absolute uniformity in nature which we can cognize, there must exist in us a belief of which the negation is inconceivable, and which is absolutely true.

§See Art. on the Universal Postulate, in the Westminster Review, Oct. 1853.

only had they abandoned christianity in their audacious theories, they had denied the existence of the living God, man's liberty and responsibility, the immortality of the soul, and preached the most hideous pantheism with all its consequences." Even now, the prevailing philosophy is a pantheistic perversion of the terms of christianity.

It is, therefore, very doubtful, whether human reason, if left entirely unassisted, could ever have arrived at any definite, fixed, or certain knowledge even, of the EXISTENCE of God.

The existence of atheism, says John Randolph, in his celebrated letters to H. St. G. Tucker, Esq., published in the Washington Union, by Septimus Tustin, has been denied, but I was an honest atheist. Hume began, and Hobbes finished me. I read Spinoza and all the tribe. Surely I fell by no ignoble hand. And the very man (—) who gave me Hume's "Essay upon Nature" to read, administered "Beattie upon Truth," as the antidote—Venice treacle against arsenic and the essential oil of bitter almonds—bread and milk poultice for the "bite of the cobra capello."

Had I remained a successful political leader, I might never have been a christian. But it pleased God that my pride should be mortified; that by death and desertion I should lose my friends; that, except in the veins of a maniac, and he too, possessed "of a child by a deaf and dumb spirit," there should not run one drop of my father's blood in any living creature besides myself. The death of Tudor finished my humiliation. I had tried all things but the refuge to Christ, and to that, with parental stripes, was I driven. Often did I cry out with the father of that wretched boy, "Lord! I believe—help thou mine unbelief;" and the gracious mercy of our Lord to this wavering faith, staggering under the force of the hard heart of unbelief, I humbly hoped would, in his good time, be extended to me also.—St. Mark, vii: 17-29.

"Throw Revelation aside, and I can drive any man by irresistible induction to atheism. John Marshall could not resist me. When I say any man, I mean a man capable of logical and consequential reasoning. Deism is the refuge of those that startle at atheism, and can't believe Revelation: and my —, (may God have forgiven us both,) and myself used, with Diderot & Co., to laugh at the deistical bigots who must have milk, not being able to digest meat. All theism is derived from Revelation—that of the laws confessedly. Our own is from

the same source—so is the false revelation of Mahomet; and I can't much blame the Turks for considering the Franks and Greeks to be idolators. Every other idea of *one* God that floats in the world is derived from the tradition of the sons of Noah handed down to their posterity.”\*

So much for the question of the EXISTENCE of God, a truth which, while it is most agreeable to human reason, requires the light of revelation to present it clear and evident to the eye of reason, and to enable that eye to see the invisible things of God. “even his eternal power and God-head, by the things that are made.”

Nature, and time, and earth, and skies,  
God's heavenly skill proclaim;  
What shall we do to make us wise  
But learn to read thy name!

To fear thy power, to trust thy grace,  
Is our divinest skill;  
And he's the wisest of our race  
That best obeys thy will.

But we may bring this question to the test of experiment. As all the knowledge of God found among men may be accounted for by an original divine teaching and communicated knowledge, to which even language itself must, in all probability, be ascribed, this knowledge is no certain proof of what unassisted human reason can attain.

But there are and have been human beings who, by the want of the powers of speech and hearing, have been cut off from the instruction of their fellow men, and left to the powers of their own natural understanding. What, then, I ask, is the fact in relation to them?

We will present an account sent by Mr. Fellebien to the Academy of Sciences at Paris, and printed in their Memoirs, by which is fully evinced the absolute incapacity of man, uninstructed, for making or thinking of any religion.† The son of a tradesman in Chartres, who had been deaf from his birth, and consequently dumb, when he was about twenty-three or twenty-four years of age, began on a sudden to speak, without its being known that he had ever heard. This event drew the attention

\*Mr. Charles Rosenkrantz, a distinguished disciple of Hegel, has published two books, one entitled “The System of Science,” and the other “My Reform of Hegel's Philosophy.” He admits that the opinions of his master, interpreted by ignorant or rash scholars, have favoured the materialist tendencies of our age. He avows, also, that Hegel errs in trying to form an idea of the mere force of human intelligence, of the Infinite and the finite, God, man and the universe.

†See The Scholar Armed, vol. i: p. 180, 181.



of every one, and many believed it to be miraculous. The young man, however, gave a plain and rational account, by which it appeared to proceed from natural causes. He said, that about four months before, he was surprised by a new and pleasing sensation, which he afterwards discovered to arise from a ring of bells: that as yet, he heard only with one ear, but afterwards a kind of water came from his left ear, and then he could hear distinctly with both; that from this time he listened, with the utmost curiosity and attention, to the sounds which accompany those motions of the lips, which he had before remarked to convey ideas from one person to another. In short, he was able to understand them, by noting the things to which they related, and the action they produced. And after repeated attempts to imitate them when alone, at the end of four months he thought himself able to talk. He therefore, without having intimated what had happened, began at once to speak, and affected to join in conversation, though with much more imperfection than he was aware of.

Many Divines immediately visited him, and questioned him about God, and the soul, moral good and evil, and many other subjects of the same kind; but of all this, they found him totally ignorant, though he had been used to go to mass, and had been instructed in all the externals of devotion, and making the sign of the cross, looking upwards, kneeling at proper seasons, and using gestures of penitence and prayer. Of death itself, which may be considered as a sensible object, he had very confused and imperfect ideas, nor did it appear that he had ever reflected upon it. His life was little more than animal and sensitive. He seemed to be content with the simple perception of such objects as he could perceive, and did not compare his ideas with each other, nor draw inferences, as might have been expected from him. It appeared, however, that his understanding was vigorous, and his apprehension quick; so that his intellectual defects must have been caused, not by the barrenness of the soil, but merely by the want of necessary cultivation.

The case of this young man was not peculiar. What was true of him is true of every human being born in his circumstances. An individual who is cut off by total deafness and speechlessness from all instruction, is destitute of the knowledge of God, and incapable, by any exercise of his own reason, even with all the phenomena of the heavens and the earth

before him, of finding out God. His mind is a blank, in reference to all things supernatural and divine. The power of consciousness, the principle of causation, and the faculty of judgment, fail to lead him up from "the things that are made," to "the invisible things, even the eternal power and God-head" of Him that made them. It is only when, by the wonderful genius of modern philanthropy, he is brought into communication with other minds, with the fact of the existence of God, and with the evidences by which that fact is proved, that his mind is aroused to the deep and powerful conviction of this truth. Such is the invariable and universal fact.\*

Here then is a test, and the only test, we believe, of the real intuitive, unaided, and uninstructed ability of human reason, to arrive at the certain knowledge of the existence of God. The inference from it, therefore, is, that while this truth commends itself to the intuitive powers of human reason, when brought, with its evidence before them, that, nevertheless, reason alone, unaided and uninstructed, is incapable of arriving at the sublime truth, that there is a God, who is a Spirit, infinite, eternal and unchangeable in his being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth.

Nay, more. We may venture to bring this question to the standard of reason, even in christian lands. For, in the very bosom of Christendom, how many are there, in the lanes and alleys of our cities, in our woods and forests, in mines and cellars, and among the young, ignorant and vicious every where, who are "without God," and "atheists in the world." "Talk," says Locke, "but with the country people, almost of any age,

\*The following communication is from Dr. Howe, the celebrated Teacher of Laura Bridgman, the deaf, dumb and blind mute, written in reply to my inquiries on this subject:

"Boston, Feb. 26, 1853.

Dear Sir,—I send you such of our Reports as I can find which mention the case of Laura Bridgman. You know it was laid down by Blackstone, and generally received as true, that a person born deaf and blind must necessarily be an idiot. Laura Bridgman was the first person who found her way out of the dreary isolation into the light of knowledge, and into communion with her fellows. By the way she came, others have followed; but it may safely be said that deaf and blind children would remain in idiocy, and of course in ignorance of the existence and attributes of God, unless their faculties are developed by special instruction. Laura's case proved very clearly the innateness of the *capacity* for religious ideas: for, without such capacity deeply seated in the moral nature, our instructions might have as well been given to a dog.

You will find some remarks germane to the subject of your inquiry, in some of the accompanying Reports.

If I can be of the slightest use to you in any way, please count upon my readiness. Faithfully yours,

S. G. HOWE.

REV. DR. SMYTH."

and with young people, almost of any condition, and you shall find that though the name of God be frequently in their mouths, yet the notions they apply this name to, are so odd, low and pitiful, that no body can imagine they were taught by a rational man.\* Man, with all his searching, cannot find out his own spirit which is in him: and how then can he find out the Great Spirit, who is infinitely above and beyond, in His invisible and unapproachable greatness! He needs that one should teach him wherein be the first principles of the oracles of God. He is a babe, and has need of milk. His reason, therefore, should be employed,—not in the vain attempts to penetrate the clouds and darkness which are round about the Deity, but, renouncing all imaginations of his own, in following that light which has shone forth from God's shrouded glory, and which alone reveals any part of His ways.

Such has, we may venture to say, been the prevailing doctrine among the ablest writers in the christian church. These have ever maintained that the great principles of what is called natural religion, could never have been represented to the human mind, nor known by man, if God himself had not first taught them, and if they had not been preserved by a traditional, or an existing written revelation. This is perfectly consistent with the fact, which they also believed, that reason is an innate, natural faculty, for knowing the truth, and distinguishing truth from error, when that truth and its evidences are fairly and fully brought before it. The existence of God, like all other truths of natural religion, when thus represented to the human mind, is rationally demonstrable and intuitively believed, and can be proved to the intellect and become a part of its intuitive inherent beliefs. But, until thus represented to the mind, we only maintain the approved sentiment of Christendom, in maintaining that man has not and cannot find out for, and by himself, any truth which respects things supernatural and divine. And if any parties should object to this conclusion, it ought not to be the Unitarians, since it was held by the fathers of their theology. Socinus says, "that to man naturally and by his own reason or mind, there is no rooted, settled, or self-originated opinion of the Deity." Ostodorus, his fellow believer, says also, "what men know of God they do not derive from nature, neither from the consideration of the creation, but from

\*Essay L. 1; c. 4: § 16.

instruction, since from the beginning God communicated the knowledge of himself to men.”\*

The question then recurs, what is the relation of human reason to the Scriptures? In this controversy, it is not my business to prove the *inspiration* and *authority* of the Scriptures. I have said enough to show the necessity of revelation to the discovery and knowledge of divine things. But, as I am arguing with professed christians, I may, at present, assume that the Bible is proved by the evidence of miracles, of prophecy, of history, and of traditions, by its own nature and claims, and by its own self-commending power for the salvation of every one that believeth, to be the testimony of God, that is, *INSPIRED TRUTH*.

To perceive then, at once, what I apprehended to be the office of reason in reference to the Scriptures, I will introduce the following parable:†

A king sends one of his officers to a province, with authority to govern it in his name. After a time, this Governor allows himself to be ensnared and perverted by a faction. Hence the affairs of the province are very badly administered, and all things are thrown into confusion. The sovereign being well apprised of all that had happened, and perceiving that the governor had not the wisdom and firmness, the exertion and authority requisite for remedying the disorders of the province and restoring it to peace, sends a deputy extraordinary, and gives orders to the governor to submit himself entirely, to this deputy, and to take no measures without his direction. The governor's first duty is to ascertain whether the superior minister be really sent by the king; for, unless he have satisfactory evidence of this, he would be guilty of treason in yielding to the *stranger* the authority which his sovereign had committed to *him*. But when he sees the sign manual, and the other unquestionable attestations of the royal commission, he immediately delivers up all his *own powers* to the *deputy*, and submits, in *all* respects, to *his* arrangements and decisions. Now, if I should ask, from whom does the deputy hold his authority over the premises? From the king, who sent him, and whose commission, signed and sealed, he has in his hand, or from the governor, who, on the production of those documents, received him with due honor and acknowledgment? Every man of

\*Socinus Prælect. c. 2; Ostodorus Instit. pp. 1 and 10, quoted on De Gols' Vindec. p. 361.

†From Werenfels, a German writer, in Smith's Messiah, vol. i: p. 83.

common sense will say, from the king, surely; for, to suppose the other would be absurd.

The application of this parable is plain. The gracious and almighty God has given reason to man for the guide of his conduct through life. But reason has submitted to be corrupted by sin, and man, therefore, is fallen into a state of extreme misery. God, of his infinite goodness, has had mercy upon man, and, seeing the insufficiency of reason to restore him from his fallen state, and to deliver him from his misery, has sent revelation, and has given orders to reason to yield obedience, and to take no part in directing the conduct of man, except what revelation may assign. What then, has reason to do in this case? First of all, she must examine whether this, which claims to be a revelation from God, is, indeed, such; for, if she have not satisfactory evidence of this, she cannot, without criminal rashness, surrender her own authority, which the Creator had invested her with for the government and guidance of man. But, as soon as she is satisfied, from indubitable proofs, that this is, indeed, a divine revelation, she yields without delay, and if reason be indeed, *rational*, submits herself entirely, to the *Word of God*.

Against Fanatics, Romanists and Deists, we contend therefore, for the full and proper use of reason, in reference to all revealed, just as necessarily as in regard to all unrevealed, truth. The right and duty of judging for one's self is far more important and imperative in religion, than in anything besides. All the life, and power, and personal benefit of religion, consist in that inward conviction, and full persuasion of mind, which can arise only from examination and the blessing of God, sought and obtained by prayer. It is to the understanding of every man the Bible addresses its proofs. Faith in the Word of God, is the assent of the understanding to the testimony of God upon the ground of His veracity, and wrought in us by the assistance of His holy Spirit, whose office it is to guide into all that is truth. Faith, therefore, is more certain than every other kind of belief, because the testimony of God in Scripture, is more certainly true than the conclusions of imperfect reason, founded upon the fallible evidence of our own observation, or the equally fallible testimony of man. Faith and the convictions of mere reason, are not, therefore, opposite, but the same, the one being produced by the infallible testimony of God brought home to the mind by the

infallible Spirit of God, and the other being produced by the testimony of our own senses and the observation of our fellow-men, brought home to the mind by its own exertion, or by instructions from others. Faith, therefore, as it is the highest reason, is also the highest duty, because, as submission to the testimony of God in his WORD, is as reasonable as submission to the testimony of God in his WORKS, and as God never requires faith without sufficient evidence that the testimony on which it is to rest is really his, unbelief is inexcusable impiety, since it makes God a liar, and his word untrue

Whatever God says is, and must be, true: this is the principle of faith, and this is the principle of all reason. No reason can make us doubt God's veracity, whether we find him leading us to the knowledge of what is true by the senses he has given by the reason he has implanted in us, by the intuitive and necessary beliefs to which that reason impels us, by the things he has placed around us, or by things he has been pleased to reveal to us. The office of reason, therefore, is to call to its aid all the powers of mind, and all the evidences within its reach, and thus to assure itself that God speaks, and to understand what God has spoken. Being satisfied by those evidences of miracles, prophecy, and the power of its truth, that the Bible, and that every part of the Bible, is the testimony of God, conveying to us, by whatsoever way inspired, HIS TRUTH, then reason is called upon to apply to that human language, in which God has spoken the laws of interpretation applied to all other human language, and by their honest and faithful application to interpret the Bible. In this way reason discovers what the sacred writers really meant to declare as true. Reason having the evidence before her of what is really the truth God testifies, is bound by her own necessary and intuitive belief to acquiesce in that testimony, and to receive that truth, without presuming to call in question the propriety of the words in which it is delivered.

Here the office of reason ends, except so far as to explain, illustrate, vindicate, and contend earnestly for the truth. Reason is, therefore, THE INTERPRETER, and not the legislator or judge of the Bible, as she is of all truth. She *is*, indeed, a judge, so far as to know what the evidence proves to be testified as true, but not further. This would be intolerable temerity, since whatever is from God must be certainly true,

and whatever God commands must be infallibly right, and our duty. This surely, is the true office, use, and dignity of reason.

Is not this all that reason does, or can do, in regard to the truth of God, in nature? It is but few of the facts or truths in nature, whose operation it can comprehend. What it does comprehend is the qualities or attributes by which things are distinguished and arranged.

Innumerable things are, however, believed in as true and real, which are, in their nature, purpose, and laws, altogether incomprehensible. The fixed principles and classifications of science, are constantly modified by new discoveries, which prove the fallaciousness of pre-existent theories. Many things also, which are exceptions to general laws, and therefore, apparently, in contrariety to what is true, are, nevertheless, believed to be true. And thus, even in mathematical science, the same principles of reasoning require us to believe that two lines not parallel must, ultimately, form an angle, and yet, that in the curve called the asymptote, its lines are ever approximating, and yet, will never meet. Incomprehensibility, therefore, and apparent contrariety to other truths, or to what may be regarded by us as truths, is no test of what is really true.

How much more must this be the case in the whole region of things supernatural, in all that relates to God, and the relations between God and man, time and eternity? God himself, is the most incomprehensible of all things. His being and nature, are as high above our possible comprehension as are the heavens above the earth. God's providence and procedure being founded upon his own omniscient and eternal knowledge of all things, and of all that would follow from every kind of creation, every kind of providence, and every action of every creature, including the free agency of men, is founded, evidently, upon reasons infinitely beyond our possible comprehension. These things are not only unknown, but they are beyond the possibility of being known by us. They imply for their knowledge the same eternity, omniscience, omnipresence, and infinite almightiness, which can order and direct them. In all his dealings with man, God must also, of necessity, have regard to the whole duration of human things, the whole race of mankind, the whole order of human changes and events, the whole combination of all the causes of human tempers, all the actions of free agents, and all the consequences of his own action upon all

the interests of every portion of the universe, in all the eternity that is to come.

A child, therefore, might as reasonably attempt to grasp the knowledge, and perform the functions of an arch-angel, as for finite reason to discover, comprehend, or judge the truth or reasonableness of anything that pertains to the nature, character, or doings of the infinite and omniscient reason. And that man, who, without God's revelation, would endeavor by searching, to find out God, or determine the propriety of God's course of procedure, or who, having a revelation, endeavours by the rush-light of his glimmering reason, to mould and fashion its teaching into conformity to what he thinks reasonable and proper, and true, is as great a visionary as the man who, without the organs of sense, and without any instruction from others, should undertake to discourse of the true nature of the external, visible creation. In a moral point of view, such conduct can only be likened to the daring impiety of the Titans attempting to scale the heavens, or of the angels in that rebellion which sunk them to perdition, or to the pride and arrogance, and impiety of our first progenitors in attempting to become "*wise as God.*" The very object of revelation is to make known what could not be known at all, except so far as it is revealed. In the more common Scripture sense of the word, all that is contained in revelation is mystery, inasmuch as it was before hidden and unknown, and it all remains, and must remain mystery, except so far as it is now made known and unveiled. To do any thing else than receive this revelation gratefully and humbly, to interpret it conscientiously, candidly, and according to the established principles of all rational interpretation, and then, in implicit reverence and submission, to believe and obey its truths and precepts, is *virtually*, even when it is not openly and avowedly, to reject that revelation. To add to, or take *from* the Scriptures by tradition on the one hand, or by vain philosophy and rationalistic pride on the other, is to incur the curse and the woe with which God, in his book, threatens every such impious audacity.

Does reason then, affect to be self-sufficient. she is an impotent usurper; but if she act in a state of dependence she is a valuable servant. Does she pretend to be our light in matters of a spiritual and heavenly nature? She is then a despicable dotard, or an *ignis fatuus*. Does she kindle her torch at the fire of revelation? She may then be a discerner of doctrines,



and we will call her "The candle of the Lord." Submitting to her divine author and learning at the feet of omniscience, she is reason in her senses, presuming to be equal with the All-wise; undertaking to comprehend his words, or daring to dispute his word, she is reason run mad. In this quality we disclaim and cashier her; in the other, we cherish and employ her." "The prerogative of God, (says Lord Bacon,) comprehends the whole man; and is extended as well to the *reason*, as to the *will* of man: that is, that man renounce himself wholly, and draw near to God. Wherefore, as we are to obey his law, though we find a reluctance in our *will*; so we are to believe His word, though we find a reluction in our *reason*: for, if we believe only that which is agreeable to our reason, we give assent to the *matter*, not to the *author*, which is no more than we would do towards a *suspected* and *discredited* witness. Theology is grounded on, and must be deduced from, the oracles of God; and not from the light of nature, or the dictates of reason."

We only add the testimony of Locke. "Revelation, where God has been pleased to give it, must carry it against the probable conjectures of reason, because the mind, not being certain of the truth of that it does not evidently know, but only yielding to the probability that appears in it, is bound to give up its assent to such a testimony, which it is satisfied comes from one who can not err, and will not deceive."

"There is nothing more required of a christian, but that he receive all the parts of Divine revelation with a docility and disposition prepared to embrace and assent to all truths coming from God, and submit his mind to whatsoever shall appear to him to bear that character."

But it will be said that this conclusion is inconsistent with some plain declarations of Scripture, which teach that the knowledge of God may be and is known by the sole existence of human reason.

There are, we admit, a few pages in the Bible, which taken alone and imperfectly understood, seem to favour this position. It is said in the epistle to the Romans (1: 20) that "the invisible things of him (i. e., God) from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse." Paul in his discourse to the people of Athens also declares (Acts, 17, 23, 34.) "for as I passed by and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription to the unknown

God. Whom, therefore, ye ignorantly worship him declare I unto you." Again (in Ps. 19: 1) it is said, "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handy work," and (in Ps. 53: 1) it is said, "The fool hath said in his heart there is no God."

Now in reference to these passages we would remark that there are many other texts in which it is taught, both as a fact and as a principle, that man unenlightened by divine revelation, does not and cannot know God. God is pre-eminently the one omnipotent Creator of heaven and earth, and of all things that exist. But the heathen even among their wisest philosophers, never so much as imagined the doctrine of Creation, or of a Creating God.\* For, says the Psalmist (Ps. 96: 5) "all the Gods of the nations are idols. But the Lord made the heavens, and therefore it is declared, "The Gods that have not made the heavens and the earth, even they shall perish from the earth, and from under these heavens. The Idolatrizing Israelites are said to have sacrificed to Devils, not to God, to Gods whom they knew not." "They have served Gods whom they knew not, neither they nor their fathers." The heathen are spoken of as they who have not known God." The Prophets teach the same truth. Indeed, of such declarations, the Bible is full, both in the Old and New Testaments. "Therefore," says the Apostle, "the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice unto devils not to God," and it is for this reason the Apostle Paul so often asserts that they were without God in the world, in a state of atheism, in being ignorant of the true God, and thinking even such things as had no existence to be God. In his epistle to the Galatians, speaking of the heathen, he says: "When ye knew not God, ye did service unto them which by nature are not God's, but now after ye have known God, &c." Thus also he warns the Thessalonians, not to walk in unnatural crimes, "as the Gentiles did which knew not God."

The Scriptures, however, not only teach, that as a fact, the heathen knew not God, but, that, as a principle they could not, by natural reason alone, attain to the knowledge of God. Every where in the Bible, the condition of the heathen is described as "darkness and the shadow of death. They are represented as the blind "feeling after God if haply they might find him," and "how," asks the Apostle, "shall they call on him, in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe

\*See abundant proof in Ellis's Knowl. of Div. Things, pp. 368-370.

in him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? (Rom. 10: 14.) Again (1 Cor. 1: 20, 21): "Where is the wise? Where is the Scribe? Where is the disputer of this world? Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For, after that in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe."

The Scriptures further represent this ignorance of God, on the part of the heathen, as the loss of a knowledge of him which had been originally communicated, and lost through their perversity and "philosophy falsely so-called." The natural man therefore, it is said, receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." This then was the condition of the heathen world when the gospel was first preached. God had originally manifested himself to them, and they might through a proper contemplation of his works, have been fully convinced of his invisible perfections. But no sooner had they begun to speculate about nature, and account for things by their own reason, than they departed from true wisdom, grew vain in their imagination, were supremely engrossed by visible objects, and gradually lost the knowledge of their maker till at last, while "professing themselves to be very wise they became fools." Yea so stupid and brutal as to worship the creature more than Creator. They corrupted the noblest truths, after the tradition of men," debased themselves with their own inventions, converted what they did not thoroughly understand into fable and mythology; and thus "turned the truth of God into so complicated a lie" that all the labours and study of their wisest men could never unravel it or restore the truth.

The heathen, therefore, are without excuse, "because, that when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imagination, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Professing themselves wise they became fools, and even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind." And hence notwithstanding all the displays of his wisdom made by God in the works of Creation and providence, "the world by wisdom knew not God." "Philosophic men, studiers of nature could not read those legible characters of the divine attributes; nor attain any true notion of God, nor bring them-

selves to any serious, reverential acknowledgment of him. This was an evident demonstration of the folly of their wisdom, since it was not able to reach its first principle or last end, notwithstanding the various manifestations of God, they only grasped about nature, (as Seneca's blind fool did about his house, complaining the rooms were dark) without being able to find the author of it." But still further the Scriptures every where represent God as in his nature and perfections invisible, incomprehensible and undiscoverable."\*

The texts, therefore which seem to teach that man is capable of his own powers of reason to find out God, require such an explanation, as shall be consistent with the general spirit and testimony of Scripture. And such an interpretation is we believe the true, and the only true, one.

Thus in the passage in Romans 1: 21, the Apostle evidently assumes in his whole argument, the former possession, and the voluntary loss, of the knowledge of the true God. It is upon this very ground, the Apostle accuses the heathen of inexcusable folly, impiety and guilt, and upon which he justifies the righteousness of God in giving them up to a reprobate mind. That the world once truly knew the true God, no one does or can deny. He was unquestionably made known to Adam, and his sons, to Enoch and his generation, to Noah and his posterity, to Job in the East, to Abraham in all his wanderings, to Lot, to Moses and through him to the Egyptians, and afterwards in various ways to various nations of the earth.

How marvellously did God reveal himself in the deluge, in the wonderful preservation of his church, in the destruction of his enemies, in his many appearances, miracles, and interpositions in the affairs of mankind: in all of which there was a sensible demonstration of his omniscience and omnipotence, even of that eternal power and Godhead, which alone could effect such wonderful and supernatural results. But the heathen nations forgot God (Ps. 91: 17.) They "did not like to RETAIN God in their knowledge," and this they did while "the things that are made," the visible Creation had "from the very beginning of the world most clearly manifested to them" the reasonableness and certainty of that knowledge of God which they originally possessed. Their conduct, therefore, was an open apostacy, against which God in many ways manifested his wrath. The heathen therefore were, and are, without

\*Ellis, p. 403.

excuse, "because that which may be known of God," that is as much as was necessary and sufficient for their present circumstances, concerning his essence attributes, or will, "is manifested in them or among them," not however as the result of their own unassisted reason, "for, says the Apostle, GOD hath shewed it UNTO THEM (*ἐφανερώτε*). The word here used expressly denotes a positive act of God, who brought to light made manifest and evident that which was dark, obscure and unknown before, at sundry times and by divers manners." "For," continues the Apostle, "the invisible things of God," his eternal power and Godhead, as afterwards explained,—"FROM" (not *ἐκ*, but *ἀπὸ*) that is ever since the creation of the world, when they were fully communicated by revelation "are clearly seen." After a declaration has been made of God's nature and existence the divine attributes are plainly evinced, "being understood," or made plain to the understanding "by the things that are made." They are thus understood however not only by the *works* of God, but also by the things which he has done.

Notwithstanding however all this light and all these means of knowledge God, the heathen by their vain speculations, their false philosophy, and their ungodliness, "changed the truth of God into a lie," converted all originally revealed truths into fables, deified those very works which testified of their Maker, and plunged into every wickedness. They "became vain in their imaginations and their foolish heart was darkened."

This charge against the heathen is so true, that even Porphyry testifies that the heathen never once dreamed of any incorporeal nature, or invisible powers, as the cause, or the causes of the world, and that the early Egyptians, Doenicians and Greeks had no other gods but heaven and the heavenly bodies, Plato, Diodorus, Siculus, and Plutarch abundantly testify.

Nor is this mode of reason peculiar to the epistle to the Romans. The same method of argumentation appears in all the Apostle Paul's discourses with the Gentiles. He does not attempt to prove the existence of a Deity. He assumes this as an admitted truth. He therefore, does not tell them, that they might come to the knowledge of God by considering the greatness of God's works, or by any other method. He constantly implies that by these means they who believe in and acknowledge the existence of God might have learned to worship him as the true God, and "to be thankful." He does undoubtedly

affirm that the heavens and the earth, the variety of seasons and the numberless blessings we enjoy are clear testimonies to the majesty, wisdom, power, and goodness of God; that no other Being in the universe can be the proper object of religious adoration; and that to give that adoration to any other being is ingratitude and idolatry. But this is all. The substance of the apostle's preaching was, that the heathen "should turn from these vanities," that is from giving divine honors to these creatures, "unto the living God." In the opinion of the Apostle, therefore, the book of nature did not of itself reveal God to man. It is a noble testimony to the truth of God's nature and existence *when once revealed*. It makes evident the necessity of those divine perfections, which characterize God, and of which, because otherwise invisible, God had been pleased to make a revelation. But as rain falling on the desert, does not render it fruitful, no more did these glorious phenomena though constantly presented to the view of man, either suggest, secure, or restore to mankind the knowledge of God's existence, attributes, and will. In confirmation of this view of the apostolic teaching it will be borne in mind that they did know of the existence of the Gods, was taught them by nature. Plato always ascribed it to a divine communication and affirmed that it "is the gift of the gods to men." And in his *Theages*, he declares that "the gods give this knowledge to none but such as are their friends, and therefore not indiscriminately to all who behold the heavens. More than once he also draws an analogy and similitude, betwixt the light of the sun and the knowledge of God. As the eye cannot contemplate the sun but by its own light, so neither can the mind contemplate the *τὸ ὄν*, i. e., God, without some idea or beam of this chiefest good, "which (he adds) is the cause of all truth." The comparison is just as correct, as it is beautiful: since the mind knows intellectual things, as the eye does visible ones, by the interposition of a proper organ and sufficient light. While therefore the sun is neither the sight nor the eye, and yet is the means whereby the eye sees even the sun itself, and thus God is neither the human mind, reason or understanding; and yet he is the immediate and sole cause of all spiritual knowledge to man; that ineffable light, which alone can open man's mind to contemplate the invisible glories of the divine nature, and hence also if the sun could not be perceived but by the light which he himself affords, much less could God, to whom the glory of the

heavenly orbs is no more to be compared than a glow-worm, or spark of fire be known or understood but by His own revelation of himself to man. Now there are but two revelations given to mortals, by which the mind is enabled to comprehend invisible things, and those are nature and grace, the works and word of God. God is revealed in them both. But God is not understood in both. Indeed, neither can he be perfectly understood by the natural reason. This cannot comprehend God, "because he is spiritually discerned." Nature explains, declares and illustrates, but cannot reveal or disclose her Creator. She cannot enlighten the intellectual eye. The word and spirit of God, are the only light that can open the eyes of the blind, and lead them to a full and perfect acknowledgment of the truth. God is and must be his own revealer. Matter and motion can only declare his being, as the herald does a king by proclaiming his august titles. When his existence and perfections are already manifested then indeed the works of nature attest the truth of the one and the exceeding greatness of the other. When the foundation is laid sure and firm that there is a God, and his will the cause of all things, and that nothing is made but by his special appointment and command, then the works of nature will fill men's minds with a due sense of the divine majesty and will exalt the mind to juster conceptions of what is in itself incomprehensible and invisible. Every thing around us, or that has any relation to us will then become helps to the better discernment of "things not seen."\*

By tradition and intercourse with other nations among whom the Jewish people were scattered, Plato and Socrates and other ancient philosophers attained to some knowledge of a God. But so far was this from being the results of their own reason, that their utmost reason could not clearly or tenaciously retain the idea. God was still to them "the unknown God." "When we speak," says Plato, "of the nature of God, and the creation of the universe, we ought to be content, if what we offer be but probable; for more than that is not to be required; for it must be remembered that, I who speak, and you who are hearers, are but men, and if we can only attain some probable fable or tradition of these things, we may not enquire further about them." "If," says Shuckford, "the knowledge of God and his nature were discoverable by reason, and brought to light by a due course of thinking, and then related to their children; what

\*Ellis's *Divin. Things*, p. 404 and 406.

were the traces of this reasoning? where to be found? or, how were they lost? 'Tis strange these things should be so obvious at first, that an early attempt should discover so much truth, and that all the wit and learning that came after, for five or six thousand years, should instead of improving it, only puzzle and confound it. If Adam, or some other person of extraordinary learning, had by a chain of reasoning brought these truths into the world, some hints or other of the argument would have remained, as well as the truths produced by it; or some succeeding author would, at one time or other, have reasoned as fortunately as his predecessor; but nothing of this sort happened, instead of it we find that the early ages had a great stock of truth, which they were so far from having learning enough to invent or discover, that they could not so much as give a good account of the true meaning of many of them. A due consideration of which must lead us to believe, that God at first revealed these things unto men, acquainted them of what he had done in the creation of the world, which they communicated to their children's children. "It cannot be accounted for any other way, this is what ancient history and the state of knowledge, obliges us to believe."

While therefore the wiser of the Grecians, it must be admitted, knew there was a God, nevertheless who or what God was they never knew. They did not know where to find, nor what to make of God. What he really is, was to them a profound mystery. With all their natural and acquired wisdom they could not therefore, attain any right idea or notion of God, either as to his existence or his nature. They were in a state of ignorance. The TRUE GOD was unknown to them. They rendered an ignorant worship to an unknown God, and the only real worship they paid was to Demons.\* Thus as the Apostle says in his epistle to the Galatians (4: 8, 9,) "When they knew not God, they did service unto them which by nature are no Gods."

The declaration of the Psalmist that "the heavens declare the glory of God" cannot mean that they actually convey the true knowledge of the true God to every beholder. This would be in plain contradiction to the fact that then, and always, among the heathen these very heavens were regarded as eternal, and that the very idea of a creation and a Creator was unknown to

\*This was the practice of Socrates, whose last act was to offer a sacrifice to Æsculapius.



their philosophy.\* They attributed creation to chance, matter combination of atoms, laws of motion, in short, to every thing, and to any thing, or to nothing, rather than to God. These few words "in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth" contain more true wisdom than all the volumes of ancient philosophy. To the mind which has been enlightened with the knowledge of God, and by such only was the psalm intended to be used, the heavens declare his glory and the firmament his handy work. But far different is the case with the unbelieving and ignorant minds. To these as well as believers, the heavens shine and the firmament displays its wonders. "For them" also, as the apostle declares, quoting the words of this very Psalm, "their sound has gone unto all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the earth." But of every unenlightened human being, the apostle also declares (Rom. 10: 14, 15), "How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed, and how shall they believe on him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? and how shall they preach except they be sent?" The heavenly bodies had an effect quite contrary to that, which they are supposed by some, necessarily to produce, on the ancient philosophers. These very heavens instead of leading them to the knowledge of God, led them away from God, and led them to make Gods of the sun, moon, and stars. This was perhaps the earliest and most prevalent form of ancient idolatry. And even now the study of nature without the guidance of divine revelation, and the divine spirit, leads only to a rationalistic Pantheistic, and dreamy sentimentality, and poetic religion.

The Psalmist speaks, therefore, of the intended, and not of the actual effect of the heavens, and the firmament. He speaks of their influence upon religious minds and as a means of strengthening and awakening sentiments of devotion in every believing heart. The Spirit of God also expressly declares that, "through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God." Reason, therefore, could never so much as have known that the worlds were created, had not God communicated it, and there cannot be a greater absurdity than to say that man can find out God by the works of creation. Yet cannot find that creation is the work of God.

\*See on this page an able discourse by Dr. Willat on the Religion of Nature and Idol. in the Schol. Arm., vol. 1, p. 174; also Dr. Ellis's Knowl. of Div. Things, p. 302.

We may therefore, conclude in the words of the book of wisdom, "Surely vain are all men by nature, who are ignorant of God and could not out of the good things that are seen know him that is neither by considering the work did they acknowledge the workmaster, but deemed either fire, &c., or the light of heaven to be the gods which govern the world." Nor did the heathen ever imagine that what they knew of the existence of the Gods and taught them by nature.\*

\*See also 2 Peter 3 and 5; and Ps. 33: 6.

#### ARTICLE IV.

### THE BIBLE, AND NOT REASON, THE ONLY AUTHORITATIVE SOURCE AND STANDARD OF OUR KNOWLEDGE OF THE NATURE OF GOD—WHAT IT TEACHES CONCERNING THE UNITY OF GOD.

In the teaching of God's infallible word we have an emphatic corroboration of all that we have previously taught,\* as to the nature, powers, and province of human reason in reference to God and things divine. "It is a perilous mistake," says a leading Unitarian Divine, "to call reason a proud faculty in human nature." The mistake, however, is with him who would make reason a faculty, independent in its character and action of that intelligent and moral nature of which it is only a manifestation or power. This writer compares reason to the eye. Now we often speak of a fierce, loving, lustful, envious, jealous, or proud eye, by which we mean, not that the eye is any one of these, but that the eye expresses these several states or dispositions of the mind, and gives character to the individual. And just so it is that we attribute to reason, when considered as the faculty of reasoning, pride, presumption, weakness, impiety, and unreasonableness, by which we mean, not that the faculty is any of these, but that the mind which uses it in any of these ways, and thus perverts and abuses it, is so. Strictly and properly speaking, the intelligent and moral being man, thinks, perceives, judges, examines, believes, and feels in doing so, either proud or humble, presumptuous or teachable, impious or pious, and in the present state of human nature we affirm that the natural man, unrenewed and unenlightened by the Spirit of God, is "compassed about with pride,"—that "through pride he will not seek after God," and "will not come to the light," and that on this account he "errs from the truth."† This is the case in reference to *all* truth so far as it comes in conflict with the wishes and desires, and selfish sensual interests of the heart.

A man convinced against his will  
Is of the same opinion still.

\*See on the Province of Reason and Knowledge of God's Existence, in Nos. 1 and 2 of this volume.

†On the effect of pride in corrupting human philosophy and primitive truth, see full account in Gale's *Court of the Gentiles*, vol. 3, pp. 9-12. See also, the rebuke of Socrates and Plato, in *ibid.*, p. 15.

But pre-eminently is this the case in reference to God and all that pertains to God. "For vain man would be wise, though man is born like a wild ass's colt." Their "foolish heart is blinded," their "understanding is darkened," their "wisdom is foolishness with God," and "by all their wisdom they know not God."—(Job xi, 4-12.)

Man—human nature—human reason—is here as it is *often* elsewhere in the Bible, called "vain" or empty. It is empty of that with which it should be filled, and filled with that of which it should be empty. It is empty of all that is humble, holy and heavenly. This empty and vain human reason, "would be wise," not for the sake of "getting wisdom which is the best thing," but for the sake of being thought wiser than others; not in things comprehensible by it and profitable for it, but in things above and beyond its capacity and its limits, and in things which only engender "foolish questions" and "damnable heresies." Yea, *so* vain and empty is human reason, that it seeks after what is false, forbidden, and irrational, seven times more earnestly because it is so. By this very proud and presumptuous desire to attain to improper and forbidden knowledge, sin entered into our world, and by sin death, and all our woes. It was not wisdom to know God nor "the wisdom of God," but the desire to be as knowing as God, which the devil promised and apostate man impiously desired. So it has ever been with human reason, and so it is now. Vain man would still be "wise above that which is written," and instead of "searching what is commanded, and thinking thereon with reverence, would search the things that are above his strength."—(Eccl. iii: 21.) There is a drunkenness of the understanding as well as of the body, and we are therefore exhorted to "be wise unto sobriety."—(Rom. xii: 3.)

Thus has human reason become "more brutish than a man and lower than the understanding of a (*perfect and unfallen*) man."—(Prov. xxx: 2.) \*—"So foolish and ignorant is it that it is as a beast before God," (Psalm lxxiii: 22,) even "as the horse and the mule which have no understanding." Man's "understanding is like the beasts that perish," yea, like the "wild ass's colt," the most beastly of beasts.

\*Literally, the words would read:

Surely more ignorant I am than a man,  
I neither possess the understanding of a man,  
Nor have I learned wisdom,  
And the knowledge of THE HOLY ONES I should know.

And what is the illustration and proof given of this proud and presumptuous ignorance of vain and empty man in the passage quoted from the book of Job? It is the attempt made from the beginning until now "by searching to find out God," and thus to make God's nature, character, purposes and word, square with the reason, the opinions, and the wishes of the human heart. God, and his word, and his worship, and his truth, and his requirements, must be that, and only that, which human reason can approve and sanction, and to which human passion and human fashion will submit, else vain man "will not have God to reign over him."

The world by its wisdom, its reason, its philosophy, its science, and its literature, has searched and thought, and written much on the subject of God, but it has only like the dove, surveyed an ocean of angry and discordant elements, one theory and one superstition dashing against another in endless confusion. The being of God, the manner of his being, the attributes of his being, these by all its wisdom and searching, human reason never knew and never can know, until it can compass infinity, comprehend eternity, fill immensity, and attain unto omniscience, omnipresence, and omnipotence. "Canst thou by searching find out God? Canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection? It is as high as Heaven; what canst thou do? deeper than hell; what canst thou know? The measure thereof is longer than the earth and broader than the sea."

Almighty Former of this wondrous plan,  
Faintly reflected in thine image, man—  
Holy and just—the Greatness of whose name  
Fills and supports this universal frame,  
Diffus'd throughout th' infinitude of space,  
Who art thyself thine own vast dwelling place;  
Soul of our soul, whom yet no sense of ours  
Discerns, eluding our most active pow'rs;  
Encircling shades attend thine awful throne,  
That veil thy face, and keep thee still unknown;  
Unknown, though dwelling in our inmost part  
Lord of the thoughts, and Sov'reign of the heart!

*Madame Guyon.*

When Hiero asked the philosopher of his day, what is God, he asked time to reflect. When urged to an answer, he requested from time to time, still further delay, and at last confessed his ignorant inability to answer. And well he might, for when holy Augustine pondered by the sea-side the same absorbing question, he heard a voice calling upon him to empty the ocean into a cockle shell. An ignorant man might imagine

that were he possessed of the towering height and power of genius, he could find out God, even as he might think that from the top of earth's loftiest peak, he could reach the Heavens, but he would find that even there, the unscalable heights, and unfathomable depths of this unsearchable subject were still above and beyond him.

We cannot by all our vain searching find out God. This is "a thing too high" for human reason, since "God is higher than the Heavens, whom the Heaven of Heavens cannot contain," and whom "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man conceived." "Oh! the depths of the wisdom of God. How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out."

O God, thou bottomless abyss,  
Thee to perfection who can know?  
O height immense! what words suffice  
Thy countless attributes to show!

But while we cannot by all *our searching* find out God, God may be found by his own revelation of himself to us.

We have but faith; we cannot know;  
For knowledge is of things we see;  
And yet we trust it comes from thee,  
A beam in darkness: let it grow.  
Let knowledge grow from more to more,  
But more of reverence in us dwell;  
That mind and soul, according well,  
May make one music, as before.

The knowledge of God cometh down from God. We know him only when he makes himself known to us. There are but two in the universe who know God by their own unaided knowledge. "THE SPIRIT searcheth all things, even the deep things of God," and "no man knoweth the Father but THE SON, and he to whom THE SON shall reveal him." Would we then be made to know him in knowledge of whom standeth eternal life? "If any man lack wisdom let him ask of God who giveth liberally and upbraideth not," and then shall "he be able to comprehend with all saints what is the length and breadth, and height, and depth of the love of God as it is in Christ Jesus."

When reason fails with all her powers,  
Then faith prevails and love adores.

The foundation on which all religion rests is the existence, character, attributes, and government of an infinitely wise and perfect God. The word religious emphatically expresses our bond or obligation, as created beings, to God as our creator,

preserver, governor and judge. It implies in the very term—a *religando*\*—the rupture of this bond by sin, and our return to God by penitence, faith, and obedience,—by godliness or piety towards Him,—by receiving, believing and obeying his word,—by observing his worship and fulfilling all his commands,—by seeking and serving him only in the way of his own appointment,—by looking forward to a state of rewards and punishments in the life to come,—and by recognizing our duties and obligations to each other as fellow creatures of the same God.

Our ideas of God therefore determine our ideas of religion, and the whole character of our religion.

What then do we know of God besides what he makes us know of himself in his word?

Before answering this question we would remark that there is an essential and important difference between *receiving* and *holding* certain opinions as both true and reasonable, and the ability of reason to *discover* them by its own unaided light. Almost the entire body of every man's knowledge which he believes and holds as reasonable and true, is what he has acquired by education, and the information and instruction of others. The amount of knowledge which has been *discovered* by the greatest genius is as a drop of water to the ocean, or a grain of sand to the sea-shore.

It is also to be borne in mind that the amount of truth or knowledge which may be acquired by man is immeasurably greater than the compass of reason, and our powers of comprehension. The most exalted of human intellects know as little as the feeblest,—that is, they comprehend *nothing at all*, of the essence, cause, and operations even of natural things,—nothing whatever of immaterial things—nothing of the infinite relations of the boundless universe. The existence of innumerable things as facts, and the invariable antecedence and consequence of causes and effects we do know, but of their nature and mode of operation we *do* and *can* know nothing.

\*It is a controversy of long standing, whether the word *religio* comes from *religere*, to *reconsider*, or from *religare*, to *rebind*. Cicero is the patron of the former; Lactantius advocates the latter. Linguistically, Cicero's derivation is the preferable; by no known process of etymology can *religio* be deduced from *religare*. As respects the *meaning*, both are correct, religion is the re-consideration of our obligations to God, and our re-union to him. But may not the true etymon after all be *re-eligere*, thus making *religio* equivalent to *re-cligio*, a re-choice? Religion is so in point of fact; objectively, God's re-choice of us; subjectively, our re-choice of God. I may observe, that this etymology has the merit of accounting for the *re* in *religio* being long; a fact which has been strangely overlooked by writers on this matter.—*Alexander's Connex. O. and N. Test.*

We are, therefore, very careful to distinguish between the *existence* of God, and the *nature* and *character* of God. The one is a simple fact, the other is an essence and being. And as we have just seen that the essence, being, and mode of operation of any one phenomenon *in nature*, is incomprehensible to us, and beyond the range of our intellects, this must be infinitely more the case as it regards him who is a Spirit invisible, illimitable, and "past finding out."

This we have seen to be true, even as it regards the EXISTENCE of God. Beyond revelation there never has been any fixed, clear, certain, or authoritative belief in the existence of a personal and infinite God. The ideas which have been found to prevail on this point may all be referred to an original, primitive revelation, or to the reflected and honoured light of an existing revelation. These ideas have, also, been speculative, confused, contradictory, atheistic, pantheistic, or sceptical, in proportion as we recede from primitive revelation, and philosophy and barbarism usurp its place.

When we proceed from the existence of God to inquire into the NATURE of God, including his unity of being, and his essential attributes, taking unenlightened and unassisted human reason as our guide, we are plunged into the very midst of a sea of uncertainty, and driven about with every possible wind of wild and wayward conjecture. Here more emphatically than in reference to the existence of God, the wisdom of man was foolishness. What was originally known as true was not retained. Philosophers were the great corrupters of the ancient traditionary belief in one true God.\* Polytheism and idolatry universally prevailed where atheistic scepticism and doubt had not utterly expelled all faith in God. "The world by wisdom knew not God," and the wisdom of the world was finally led, under the teachings of a better guide, to conclude, in the language attributed to Tertullian that "of God all that is comprehensible is that he is incomprehensible." "We have, says Plotinus, "no knowledge nor understanding of God." "We speak of God," says Parmenides and Dionysius, "only by negatives and relations." The Pythagoreans denominated the Deity "darkness" and a "subterranean profundity."† The Egyptians employed the terms "thrice unknown darkness," in

\*See Leland's *Necessity of Div. Revel.* vol. 1, ch. xii, p. 247, and ch. xx. On their Polytheism, see do. chs. xiv, xv, xvi.

†Taylor's *Plato*, vol. 3, p. 25. 4 to.



their most mystical invocations of the first God.\* Proclus says of God, that he is more ineffable than all silence.† Damascus says "God is truly an incomprehensible and inaccessible light,‡ upon which, the more attentively you look the more you will be darkened and blinded."

"When we speak," says Plato, in his *Timæus*, "of the nature of God, and the creation of the universe, we ought to be content if what we offer be but probable; for more than that is not to be required; for it must be remembered that I who speak and you who are hearers, are but men, and if we can only attain some probable fable or tradition of these things we may not inquire farther about them."

A Plato's mind, ere Christ appeared in flesh  
By nature's and tradition's fitful blaze,  
Faint though it be, saw something of God.  
But who believed him?  
Yes, nature's light is darkness, and deprived  
Of Heaven's irradiating beams, man roved  
From shade to deeper shade, until he lost  
All knowledge of Jehovah; and bow'd down  
To stocks and stones, and things of carved work,  
Form'd after fancy's portraiture; or paid  
Blind homage to the sun or starry host.  
And though at times a philosophic mind  
O'er the dark welkin shed a meteor blaze,  
'Twas *but* a meteor blaze, too weak to last,  
Too weak to light him in the search of God.

Our understanding of God was compared by the ancient philosophers, to the eyes of an owl, as contrasted with the light of the sun. And in the days of Jamblichus, the last age of the ancient philosophy, it was generally admitted that "human nature can neither reason nor speak of God, nor perform any divine works without God."§ This is exactly in accordance with the whole spirit and teaching of the Scriptures. Such was the doctrine of revelation in the days of Job as has been proved. Such it was in the time of Moses, who desired to become acquainted with the properties and perfections of God and was told "my presence thou canst not see, no living man can see me." The apostle Paul lays it down, therefore, as a fundamental position which we need not confirm by numerous

\*Taylor's *Plato*, p. 26.

†*Ib.*, p. 2.

‡*Ib.*, p. 28.

§It will be a reproach to us, says Howe, "if we shall need to be taught reverence of God by pagans;" or that such a document should need to be given us for our admonition, as that very ancient inscription in one of the Egyptian temples, "I am whatsoever was, is, or shall be, and who is he that shall draw aside my veil?" (1)

(1) *The Temple of Isis*. See *Plutarch de Iside*, 59.

other passages, that God is absolutely "invisible," that is, that no finite being can ever attain to an intuitive knowledge of Him.

Nor is reason *now* any stronger, nor any the less limited in its capacity and its sphere of knowledge. *We* are, it has been said, but a few steps more advanced than the primitive world. All that even we can possibly know of God is by analogy, that is, by ascribing to God, properties resembling those found in ourselves. The whole system of natural religion rests on analogy. What God is in Himself we can neither know, nor define, nor describe. What, or what kind, the nature of God is, in itself, we have no possible means of determining. What God's attributes are, in themselves, we know not. How God exists in, and of himself, none can tell. To do this would require an immediate participation of his own infinite nature. God dwelleth in light inaccessible. Him none of men hath beheld or can behold." God can only reveal himself, and be understood by us, through the medium of language, which is, however, adapted only to our own nature. What God is in himself, must be, therefore, infinitely remote from what human language could describe, or finite comprehension grasp. It must be literally among "the unutterable things which it is not possible for man to utter,"—"the secret things which God hath reserved unto himself."

Who shall sing Thee fully? Thou art high  
Above all height, exalted far above  
All praise and blessing of created things.  
Who shall declare Thee fully? Thou art low,  
Beneath all depth; beneath the utmost hell;  
In whose dark howling caverns too, Thou reign'st,  
Although thy smiling presence is not there,  
To cheer the dismal horrors of their gloom.  
Who shall declare thee fully? Thou art wide  
Beyond all width; beyond the universe,  
Beyond the stretch of thought, unlimited,  
Infinite,—not the tongue of finite things;  
Not man; not angels; not ten thousand worlds;  
For they but see a little part of Thee,  
Which little part they sing,—the all they know,  
The all they *can* know. Ineffable! Incomprehensible.—*Ragg.*

God's nature—God's mode of existence—and every attribute of God, are unfathomable mysteries to us. All that we know is that he exists, and that he *is*, and *will* be, all that the Scriptures reveal as necessary for our everlasting welfare, and that he must be infinitely different from ourselves, and infinitely above and beyond our present comprehension.

Even now, therefore, human reason is unable to *demonstrate* from any premises which are intuitive or self-originated, the existence, and much less the unity of God. These truths human reason can know and distinguish from error, when the premises from which it is to reason are given to it. But it cannot discover, or by its own powers, demonstrate them. The great, and the only argument upon which THE UNITY OF GOD is based by human reason, is the unity of design found throughout the works of nature.\* But were we not enlightened by revelation and thus enabled to obviate all difficulties, it would be easy to reply that after all it is but a small part of the universe we are acquainted with, and that that part may be under the separate dominion of one presiding Deity, but that were we able to investigate the whole, we might find its various regions under the dominion of various Deities. It might be replied secondly, that even in that part of the universe which we are able to examine, unity of design, as even Paley, the great reasoner on Natural Theology admits, goes no further than to prove a unity of *counsel*† and not of being, since there might be unity of counsel among many perfect beings as well as with one. And *thirdly*, it might be replied, that there are even in this world, mixtures of good and evil, misery and happiness, goodness and severity, apparent contrarieties, interruptions and breakings up of what would seem to be wise and good plans and operations, such as to have forced upon the mind of a large portion of our race, the belief in two or more distinct eternal and opposing beings to whose sway all sublunary things were subjected. And thus it will be perceived how that even in this advanced and enlightened period of humanity, it would be impossible, on principles of human reason *alone*, to establish any CERTAIN, AUTHORITATIVE and ABIDING CONVICTIONS respecting the NATURE, and especially, the UNITY of God.

If Hume be cleared from the charge of Atheism, it is only to fall under another scarcely less creditable—in some respects, considering his circumstances, more odious—the charge of Polytheism. In the face of all probability and evidence, he defends Polytheism as the most ancient faith, and professes that the belief in the Divine unity was an after-thought of the

\*"We maintain that man has not found out (*invente*) for himself what he ought to believe, and what he ought to do. *These two points granted, we leave to Reason all its powers, all its prerogations.*"—M. Bonnetti *Universite Catholique*.

†Nat. Theol. ch. 25.

vulgar. He argues, that under Polytheism the worshipper has the advantage of feeling more at his ease, and that to believe that the gods are but a little way removed from us, is therefore more favourable to devotion. His friend, Diderot, held the same opinion, and considered Polytheism more consistent with modern philosophy than the belief in one God! One would be ready to doubt whether men claiming the possession of reason, not to speak of philosophy, could be in earnest in such professed belief; but an anecdote recorded of Hume seems to establish his Polytheistic leaning. Revising the lectures of the late Mr. Bruce, Professor of Logic in the University of Edinburgh—when he came to the division of the course headed “Proof of the Unity of the Deity,” Hume is said to have exclaimed, “Stop, John, who told you whether there were one or more?”

Vain man would be wise, but by all his searchings he cannot find out God unto perfection. “The things of God knoweth no man but the Spirit of God.” And as all Scripture was given by holy men of God who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, “we are brought to the law and to the testimony to know, as far as man can know, which is but as in a glass darkly, what God’s nature and unity really are.”

Beneath a sable veil and shadows deep  
 Of inaccessible and dimming light,  
 In silence ebon clouds more black than night,  
 The world’s great Mind his secrets hid doth keep  
 Through those thick mists when any mortal wight  
 Aspires, with halting pace, and eyes that weep  
 To pry, and in his mysteries to creep,  
 With thunders he, and lightnings, blasts their sight.  
 O Sun invisible, that dost abide  
 Within thy bright abysmes, most fair, most dark,  
 Where with thy proper rays, thou dost thee hide,  
 O ever shining, never full seen mark,  
 To guide me in life’s night, thy light me shew;  
 The more I search of thee the less I know.—*Drummond.*

What, saith the Scriptures, is, therefore, our inquiry, and to any “cavils of reason we must say, be dumb and open not your mouth,” for “what canst thou know.”

The only people who, in ancient times, possessed any certain knowledge of the nature and unity of God, were the Jews and their patriarchal ancestors,—a people antecedent to the very existence of any other nation whose records have reached us, and by whom, as is attested by their Scriptures, this knowledge was attributed exclusively to a divine and supernatural communication. Now what that communication was, and what it

taught in reference to the unity of God, is in no way affected by the *present* opinion of the Jewish people. We have in our hands, all the means of ascertaining the real truth of the Old Testament Scriptures, and the opinions of the earliest Jewish commentators and writers, which they have. Many most learned men among christians, and among the Jews who have become christians, have devoted themselves to an examination of these writings.

From this examination, as we shall see, there is ample reason to conclude that believing Jews among the ancient people of God,—that the writers of the Apocryphal books,—that Philo in the Apostolic days,—that the early Targumists and Commentators,—that the Cabbalists,—the Yohantes,—that the Zaruschites and others,—have more or less clearly believed and taught the plurality and tri-unity of the one ever blessed God-head. Such also, is the testimony of the many learned converted Jews, who have from age to age become christians, and of the ten thousand such, now in the christian church, and who are, to a man, Trinitarians.

And as it regards any alleged moral disposition of the Jews now to examine into the truth, and to receive what is truth in the love of it, we know that even in Christ's day they had destroyed the Scriptures by their traditions—that they would not come to the light—that they were cut off because of their unbelief—and that there is now a veil of darkening prejudice before their eyes until the time of their restoration shall be brought about. The rejection of the doctrine of the Trinity by the Jews, is therefore, a presumption in favour of the Scriptural character of this doctrine and not against it.

That the Scriptures both of the Old and New Testament, undoubtedly teach that there is a sense, and a most important sense, in which God is ONE—ONLY ONE—and THE ONLY GOD, we strenuously maintain. In opposition to all idolatrous and polytheistic systems of religion introduced by the proud, perverted, and corrupt reason of man, GOD IS ONE. In every sense in which unity is a perfection, God is one. But in every sense in which it is not a perfection, God is not one. God is not one as man spiritually is one. We say *spiritually*, for in fact, man as a compound being is a tri-unity, being composed of a body, soul, and spirit, a physical, an animal, and a spiritual nature, and yet all united so as to form one person. God is not one as any finite being is one, because the nature and essence

of God must be infinitely above, and beyond, and different from, what finite natures are, or finite minds even comprehend, or human languages can express.

To make our nature God's measure, and our idea of God the limit of what he is, is to make "God such an one as ourselves." It is "by our vain searching, to find out the Almighty to perfection." It is in the earnest language of Scriptural rebuke, to "collect the winds in the hollow of our hands—to bind the waters in a garment—to ascend into the Heavens and descend into hell. What is His name and what is the name of His son. For knowest thou?"—Prov. xxx: 4.\* Such a unity

\*It is to do that which is absolutely impossible to our present capacity of reason, and therefore, the inspired writer, after having in v. 3, alluded to "the knowledge of THE HOLY ONES," in order to bring man's capacity to the test, asks "what is the name of his Son if thou know."—Prov. xxx: 1-5. (1)

(1) On this passage, as understood by the Jews themselves, as referring to God, see Dr. McCaul, on the Eternal Sonship of the Messiah. —London, 1838, p. 3, and pp. 30-55, from which, we make the following extracts:

Aben Ezra, by "Holy Ones," understood God, as he translates it by God; and he conceived the general sense of the passage to be, "The knowledge of God is unattainable by the efforts of unassisted human wisdom—to know God we must search in the Word of God alone, and beware of adding anything to it." "In this," says Dr. McCaul, "I agree with him, and shall, therefore, offer some observations in confirmation of this interpretation."

"The scope of the passage evidently is, that there is a certain knowledge not attainable by unassisted human reason, but which is revealed in the Word of God; the question then is, what knowledge is that? What is the great subject of the Divine Word? Is it not the revelation of the NATURE and WILL of God!"

\* \* \* \* \*

"Having ascertained the general sense, the next question is, what is the sense of the questions, "Who hath ascended into Heaven? who hath gathered?" &c. For what purpose are these questions put, and of whom do they speak? Aben Ezra and the Berlin Commentator, take these questions as a proof of man's incapacity, and as forming the nexus between the confession of ignorance, and the direction to the Word of God as the only source of information. Agur first states the thing to be proved, "I cannot attain to the knowledge of the Holy Ones;" then he gives his proof, "who hath ascended up into Heaven?" &c.: and then draws his corollary. "If so, then we must betake ourselves to the Word of God."

"The whole passage may be thus paraphrased: With my limited understanding I cannot attain the knowledge of God: for to know God is to know him who is omnipresent, filling heaven and earth: it is to know him who is omnipotent, ruling over the winds and the waters, the most unstable of all elements: it is to know him who created all things; it is to know his name, and the name of his Son. But this knowledge can be attained only by revelation; and he that would attain to it, even from revelation, must not pass over any one word as insignificant, for every word is purified like silver; neither must he add to Divine revelation, or he will be sure to go astray."

\* \* \* \* \*

"Having interpreted Agur's assertion and his proof taken from God's name, there remains but one inquiry, and that is, who is intended by his Son? The Yalkut, in the passage already referred to, answers with the words, "Israel is my first born." But this answer does not agree with the context. Agur is speaking, not of Israel, but of the knowledge of God. The name of Israel is no part of that knowledge. The Son of God

therefore, as God hath not claimed, such as is arbitrarily ascribed to him by our bold and adventurous intruders into the deep and most profound arcana of the Divine nature; such as can never be proved to belong to him, or to be any real perfection; such as would prove an imperfection and a blemish, would render the divine nature less intelligible, more impossible to be so far conceived as requisite; or such as is manifestly unreconcilable with his plain affirmations concerning himself; "we ought not," says Howe, "to impose it upon ourselves, or be so far imposed upon, as to ascribe to him such simplicity."

The system of Unitarianism, as it is miscalled, for they only are *truly* Unitarian, who believe in the *revealed* doctrine of God's Unity—this system is based upon two assumptions, both of which are unfounded, *first*, that they who believe that God's Unity is a Tri-Unity, believe, and must believe, in three Gods;—and *secondly*, that to be truly one or a Unity, God must be absolutely one person. As to the *first* point, however, it is manifest that the very term trinity, itself demonstrates that we believe God to be *so* revealed as to be a Trinity in Unity, and a Unity in Trinity—ONE in such a sense as to be THREE, and

here intended must be a being, whose name can be ascertained only by revelation, and a knowledge of whose name constitutes a part of the knowledge of God. He must, therefore, be a Divine person, himself one of the Holy Ones, of whom Agur had been speaking. The old Testament teaches that a knowledge of God's name is an essential part of the knowledge of God. Agur teaches that a knowledge of the name of THE SON OF GOD is an essential part of the knowledge of God, so that both the general analogy of scripture and the particular scope of the passage under consideration, compel us to concede that the Son here spoken of, is a Divine person, that is, the passage teaches us that God has a Son, and that this Son is very God."

\* \* \* \* \*

"The Old Testament, therefore, speaks of a Being who is, in a peculiar sense, the Son of God. Thus, in the Book of Proverbs, Agur, the Son of Jakeh, asks, "Who hath ascended up into heaven, or descended? Who hath gathered the wind in his fists? Who hath bound the waters in a garment? Who hath established all the ends of the earth? What is his name, and what is his Son's name?" There can be no doubt that God is he who bound the waters in a garment, and who established all the ends of the earth. From this passage, then, we learn that there is a Being who stands to God in the relation of a Son, and that the knowledge of this Son's name is as great a mystery as the knowledge of God himself, and cannot be learned, except by immediate revelation. Agur had complained, in the preceding verses, that he did not possess human knowledge, and from this ignorance argues, how then, should I have knowledge of the Holy Ones; that is, how should I have the knowledge of God? You will observe that, instead of the usual word of God, he employs a plural adjective, The Holy Ones, and then shows in what sense he understood this plurality, by speaking of God, and of his Son. Agur, then, considered the knowledge of God's Son as a part of the knowledge of God, and thereby manifests his belief in the existence and Deity of the Son of God."—*Dr. McCaul on the Eternal Sonship of the Messiah, see pp. 3, 38, 39, 41, 42, 46, 55.*

THREE in such a sense as to be ONE. And as to the *second* point, we believe that Scripture nowhere, or in any manner, teaches that God is absolutely one person, but that in the eternal Godhead there are three, to each of whom belong all the attributes and perfections of the one divine essence.

Every term employed on this subject is necessarily human, and therefore analagous, imperfect, and only suggestive of the fact that the Unity of the divine nature admits of, and requires for, its own perfect and inexpressible beatitude, three hypotheses, subjects, persons, or distinctions which we therefore call a Trinity. God's UNITY is, therefore, a TRINITY OF PERSONS IN ONE GODHEAD.

If God is spoken of in Scripture as *one* he also speaks of himself in Scripture in plural terms as more than one, and he emphatically attributes every quality, attribute and work by which his Deity can be distinguished, not only to the Godhead, which is in essence one, but also, to the Father, to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, who are personally distinct. Hear O Israel Jehovah our Gods (*the Hebrew term is in the plural and not as might have been in the singular,*) is one God."—(Deut. vi: 4.) "The Gods," (*the same plural noun elohim.*) "The Gods said unto Moses, I am that which I am."

Unity and plurality are here, and as we shall hereafter show, in many other passages, asserted of God—not an absolute and personal UNITY, nor an absolute plurality, but a plurality of persons in the essential Unity of the infinite and incomprehensible Jehovah. And thus we find that in one of the very few passages in the Bible in which the Unity of God is pointedly enforced the Son is united with the Father. "Thus saith the Lord the King of Israel, and his Redeemer the Lord of Hosts; I am the first and I am the last, and beside me there is no God."—(Mal. ii: 10.) And thus, when the Apostle declares that to us "there is one God the Father from whom are all things," in contra distinction to "the Gods many and Lords many" of the heathen, he *immediately* adds, "and ONE LORD" (*a most emphatic designation among these heathen of their greatest Gods,*) "Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and we through him," thus attributing to the Son as Lord or Jehovah,\* the identical unity and dominion over all things attributed to the Father.—(1 Cor. viii: 16.) †

\*See Smith's Messiah, vol. 3, p. 131.

†Lord is the rendering of the Septuagint for the term Jehovah.



What we affirm therefore, is, that the Scriptures nowhere teach, either in the Old or New Testament, that God is metaphysically, absolutely or personally one. The Unity of God is taught, and only taught, in order to show that our God is the true and only real God, in opposition to the variety of imaginary Gods worshipped by the heathen. And whereas, Unitarians would lead us to believe that the Scriptures are full of passages inculcating the doctrine of the absolute Divine unity in the clearest manner, the fact is that the passages which lean directly on the unity of God are very few, and far fewer than those in which the plurality of God, and the Deity of the Son, and the Deity of the Holy Ghost are taught,—and of this fact any reader of the Bible can at once satisfy himself by taking any one of the passages and referring to all the texts alluded to as proofs in the margin. It will thus be seen, that all the passages which declare God's unity, do so only as that unity is opposed to the many Gods of heathenism.—but that in the very words themselves, and in several other passages of Scripture, as found in the original Hebrew, God, in calling himself one, speaks of himself as being also a plurality.\* And in the forms of benediction as found, both in the Old and New Testament—in the threefold forms of language—used in application to God,—in the initiatory sacrament of baptism in which all who become disciples of christianity, are baptized into the belief, worship, and service of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost—in these we say, and in the Scriptural proofs of the Supreme Deity of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, God limits this incomprehensible plurality of his one Godhead to three persons, each having ascribed to it the divine attributes, and all inhering in one and the same essence.

The Divine unity, therefore, as taught in Scripture, has no relation to number, or to any kind of unity that is comprehensible by the human mind, as even Jewish writers have taught,† but is exclusively employed in opposition to all human notions of a plurality of independent and separate Gods.

This oneness, to use the language of Owen,‡ this oneness can respect nothing but the nature, being, substance, or essence of God. God is one in this respect. Some of these words are not, indeed, used in the Scripture; but whereas, they are of the

\*See Owen's Works, vol. 10, p. 474, 22 vol. ed.

†See quoted in Oxlee's Christian Doctrines of the Trinity, and in vol. 1, pp. 109-13.

‡Owen's Works, vol. 10, p. 504, 22 vol. ed.

same importance and signification, and none of them include anything of imperfection, they are properly used in the declaration of the unity of the Godhead. There is mention in the Scripture of the Godhead of God.—Rom. i: 20. “His eternal power and Godhead.” And of his nature, by excluding them from being objects of our worship, who are not Gods by nature.—Gal. iv: 8. Now this natural Godhead of God, is, his substance or essence with all the holy divine excellencies which naturally and necessarily appertain thereunto. Such are eternity, immensity, omnipotency, life, infinite holiness, goodness, and the like. This one nature, substance, or essence, being the nature, substance, or essence of God, as God is the nature, essence, and substance of the Father, Son, and Spirit, one and the same absolutely in and unto each one of them. For none can be God as they are revealed to be, but by virtue of this divine nature or being. Herein consists the unity of the Godhead.

This unity in Trinity is, undoubtedly, mysterious and incomprehensible. But it is not unreasonable. It is above and beyond the capacity and limits of reason to discover or comprehend. But so is all that relates to God and things supernatural and divine. Reason, we have seen, by all its searching can know nothing of the nature and essence of any material object or of the human soul, much less of God. It never could, and never did, prove the absolute unity of God. This, as may be seen in Plato's *Parmenides*, was the bottomless and fathomless gulf to human reason. Reason has proved as it thought, and practised upon the belief of a plurality of Gods, and by a corruption of primitive revelation human reason has believed in a trinity of Supreme Gods. Reason therefore, now humbly and gladly receives that teaching which Socrates and Plato sought and even expected, and rejoices to believe that there are three persons in the adorable Godhead, and that these three are one.\*

“Ye lofty minds, whose maxims some e'en now  
Pretend to follow, true philosophers,  
Who sought whatever ye could find of God,  
How would *your* hearts have bounded to the voice  
Of God in flesh made manifest! whom they

\*Among the Fathers, says Hagenbach, in his *History of Doctrines*, vol. 1, pp. 93-7, “The more profound thinkers, however, were well aware that it is not sufficient to demonstrate the mere numerical unity of the Divine Being, and accordingly placed the transcendental unity far above the mathematical monas.

The idea of a revealed religion implied that so much of the nature of God should be made manifest to man as would be necessary to the knowl-

Who follow up your systems hold in scorn :  
 And tuning o'er the first part of the strain  
 Of angels, which, as though from Heaven t'were caught  
 By inspiration, ye divinely sang,  
 The closing numbers jarring discords deem  
 But ye were witnesses of darker times ;  
 And shall in judgment 'gainst your followers  
 Of these bright days of revelation rise,  
 As well as those who in your twilight hour  
 Denied or hated the fair truths ye taught."—*Ragg.*

That the Scriptures are the word of God is, in this controversy, assumed. But if they are, then we know as assuredly that they would be so worded as to guard *in every way* against that idolatry which they everywhere and in all its forms, condemn. The plain, obvious, and necessary teaching of Scripture that God is in one sense one, and in another sense three, and that while there is but one divine Godhead there are three persons, to each of whom, Scripture attributes this Godhead with all divine honour and prerogatives pertaining to it, makes the doctrine of the TRI-UNITY or Trinity of the divine nature the teaching of God himself, concerning his own ineffable nature. And surely, to use the language of Robert Hall, this is the true way of contemplating the doctrines peculiar to revelation, "to consider them as *facts*, believed on the authority of the Supreme Being, not to be proved by reason; since their

edge of salvation. The Church, therefore, has ever cultivated the *λογος περὶ Θεου* (theology.) On the other hand, the insufficiency of human ideas was always acknowledged, (in opposition to the pride of speculation,) and the character of the Divine Being was admitted to be past finding out; some even entertained doubts about the propriety of giving God any name. Much of what the Church designated by the term mystery (sacrament,) is founded partly on a sense of the insufficiency of our ideas and the inaptitude of our language, and partly on the necessity of employing certain ideas and expressions to communicate our religious thoughts and opinions.

When the martyr Attalus, in the persecution of the Gallican christians, under Marcus Aurelius, was asked by his judges what the name of God was, he replied "*ο θεος ονμα ουκ εχει ως ανθρωπος.*" Euseb., v. i. (edit. Heinen. T. ii, p. 29, comp. the note.) Such was also, the opinion of Justin M. Apology, ii. 6; whatever name may be given to God, he who has given a name to a thing must always be anterior to it. He therefore draws a distinction between appellatives and names. The predicates *πατηρ, θεος, κυριος, δεσποτης,* are only appellatives. God is not only above all names, but also above all existence. Minuc. Fel. c. 18. Hic (Deus) nec videri potest, visu clarior est, nec comprehendi, tactu purior est, nec aestimari, sensibus major est, infinitus, imensus et soli sibi tantus quantus est, notus, nobis vero ad intellectum pectus angustum est, et ideo sic cum digne aestimamus, dum inestimabilem dicimus. Eloquar, quemadmodum sentio: magnitudinem Dei, qui se putat nosse minit, qui non vult minere, non novit, nec nomen Deo quaeras: DEUS nomen est. Illic vocabulis opus est, quum per singulos propriis appellationem insignibus multitudo dirimenda est. Deo qui solus est, Dei vocabulum totum est. Quem si patrem dixerō, terrenum opineris: si regem, carnalem suspiceris, si dominus, intelles utique mortalem, aufer additamenta nominum, et perspicies ejus claritatem.

truth does not result from any perceptible relations in our ideas, but they owe their existence entirely to the will and counsel of the Almighty Potentate. Let the fair grammatical import of Scripture language be investigated, and whatever propositions are, by an easy and natural interpretation, deducible from thence, let them be received as the dictates of Infinite Wisdom, whatever aspect they bear, or, whatever difficulties they present. Repugnant to reason they can never be, because they spring from the Author of it; but superior to reason, whose limits they infinitely surpass, we must expect to find them. The facts which we have become acquainted with in the natural world, would appear stupendous were they communicated merely on the evidence of testimony; they fail to astonish us, chiefly because they have been arrived at step by step, by means of their analogy to some preceding one. We have climbed the eminence by a slow progression, and our prospect has insensibly widened as we advanced, instead of being transported thither instantaneously by a supreme power. Revelation conducts us to the path at once, without previous training, without any intellectual process preceding, without condescending to afford other proof than what results from the veracity and wisdom of the Creator; and when we consider that this truth respects much sublimer relations and concerns than those which subsist in the material world, that it regards the existence and nature of an infinite and incomprehensible God, the ways and counsels of God respecting man's eternal destiny, is it surprising that it should embrace what greatly surpassed our previous conjectures, and even transcends our perfect comprehension?"

To question or deny this doctrine of the TRI-UNITY of God, although admitted to be taught by the language of Scripture, plainly and naturally interpreted, because it is incomprehensible, is to destroy all certain assurance that the Scriptures are the word of God, or that there is one God, or indeed, as we have seen, a God at all. To disprove the doctrine of Scripture, that while the divine essence, nature, or Godhead, is numerically one, there is a real distinction between the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, to whom this essence and all divine attributes are severally and equally applied, we must be able to prove from our actual knowledge of God's nature that such distinctions cannot possibly exist in the divine nature, and which is, we have seen, an impossibility. Apart from what

God reveals concerning himself, no finite reason can tell what is God's nature, what is proper or impossible to that nature, what the unity of this nature is, or what a personal distinction in that nature is. "It is a clear point, I think," says Prof. Stuart,\* "that the unity of God cannot be proved without revelation. It may, perhaps, be rendered faintly probable. Then you depend upon Scripture proof, for the establishment of this doctrine. But have the Scriptures anywhere, told us what the *divine unity is*? Will you produce the passage? The *oneness* of God they assert. But this they assert always *in opposition to the idols of the heathen*, the *polytheism* of the gentiles—the Gods superior and inferior, which they worshipped. In no other sense have the Scriptures defined the ONENESS of the Deity. What then is *oneness*, in the uncreated, infinite, eternal Being? In created and finite objects, we have a distinct perception of what we mean by it; but can *created* objects be just and adequate representatives of the *uncreated ONE*? Familiar as the assertion is, in your conversations and in your sermons, that God is ONE, can you give me any definition of this *oneness*, except a negative one? That is, you deny the plurality of it; you say God is but one, and not two, or more. Still, in what, I ask, does the divine unity consist? Has not God different and various faculties, and powers? Is he not almighty, omniscient, omnipresent, holy, just, and good? Does he not act differently, *i. e.*, variously, in the natural and in the moral world? Does his union consist, then, appropriately in his essence? But what is the essence of God? And how can you assert that his unity consists appropriately in this, unless you know what his essence is, and whether oneness can be any better predicated of this, than of his attributes?

Your answer to all this is, the nature of God is beyond my reach; I cannot define it, I approach to a definition of the divine unity, only by negatives. That is, you deny the negative plurality of God; or you say there are not two or more essences, omnisciences, omnipotencies, &c. But here all investigation is at an end. Is it possible to show what constitutes the *internal nature* of the divine essence, or attributes; or how they are related to each other; or what internal distinctions exist? About all this, revelation says not one word; certainly the book of nature gives no instruction concerning it. The assertion then, that God is *one*, can never be fully understood

\*Letters to Dr. Channing, pp. 45-6.

as meaning anything more than that he is *numerically one*; *i. e.*, it simply denies polytheism, and can never reach beyond this. But how does this prove, or how can it prove, that there may not be, or that there are not distinctions in the Godhead, either in regard to attributes, or essence, the nature of which is unknown to us, and the existence of which is to be proved by the authorities of the Scriptures only?"

When Unitarians, therefore, inquire what that distinction in the Godhead is, in which we believe, we answer that we do not profess to understand *what* it is; we do not undertake to define *affirmatively*. We can approximate to a definition of it, only by negatives. We deny that the Father is in *all* respects, the same as the Son; and that the Holy Spirit is in *all* respects, the same as either the Father or the Son. We rest the *fact*, that a distinction exists, solely upon the basis of Revelation.

In principle then, what more difficulty lies in the way of believing in a threefold distinction of the Godhead than in believing in the divine unity?

The unity of the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, is, indeed, a mystery, a fact clearly revealed, yet suggesting questions which no analogy of consciousness, no walk of human experience, enables us to solve. "Doth this offend" us? Shall we deny the fact? Shall we, in our pride of intellect, assume the one God must be as one man—his unity shall be as one of our unities—that he cannot contain, in his own essential nature, the element of love, the object of love, and the manifestation of love; that the human definition of God must be the true definition; that if the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost be God, there must be three Gods, and not one, even though the Scriptures teach us that God as revealed in the Scriptures—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—is "the only living and true God?" Rather let us acknowledge, for assuredly it well becomes us, that as "no man knoweth the things of a man but the spirit of man which is in him, even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. For the whole subject is at an infinite distance from us, and wholly foreign to us, nor is it revealed to us, for it even surpasses the apprehension of angels.\*

Concerning this most excellent and holy Trinity, we cannot find any suitable words in which we might speak of it, and yet we must express this supernatural incomprehensible Trinity

\*Stowell on the Works of the Spirit, pp. 81, 406.

in words. If we therefore, attempt to speak of it, it is as impossible to do it properly as to reach the sky with one's head. For all that we can say or think of it is a thousand times less proportionate to it than the point of a needle is to heaven and earth, yea, a hundred thousand times less. We might talk to a wonderful amount, and yet we could neither express nor understand how the distinction of the persons can exist in the supernatural unity.

O thou Eternal ONE! whose presence bright  
 All space doth occupy, all motion guide;  
 Unchanged through time's all-devastating flight;  
 Thou only God! There is no God beside.  
 BEING above all beings! THREE IN ONE!  
 Whom none can comprehend, and none explore,  
 Who fill'st existence with THYSELF alone,  
 Embracing all, supporting, ruling o'er,  
 BEING whom we call God and know no more.  
 As far beyond the starry walls of Heaven,  
 As is the loftiest of the planets seven,  
 Sequestered from this earth in purest light  
 Out-shining ours, as ours doth sable night,  
 Thou all-sufficient, omnipotent,  
 Thou Ever Glorious, Most Excellent  
 God, various in names, in essence one,  
 High art installed on golden throne,  
 Out-stretching Heaven's wide-bespangled vault.  
 Transcending all the circles of our thought;  
 With diamantine sceptre in thy hand,  
 There thou giv'st laws, and dost this world command.

*Drummond.*

But on this subject of the unity of God, as an objection to the Scriptural proof of the Trinity, we propose to make some further observations in a future number.

## ARTICLE V.

### ON THE TRINITY.

#### *The Objections of Unreasonableness, Contradiction, and the Human Origin of the Word Trinity.*

The object of our previous articles\* has been to determine the true nature, office, capacity, limits and condition of human reason, especially in reference to God's unity and nature. Our views will be found admirably sustained in a discourse by Bishop Butler,—the immortal author of the *Analogy of Natural and Revealed Religion*.—upon the ignorance of man.

After illustrating the position that "the wisest and most knowing" cannot, any more than the most ignorant, comprehend the nature of any causes, or any essences of things, and much less the Being, attributes or ways of God, he shews that difficulties in speculation, and limitations to our knowledge, are as much a part of our present state of probation and discipline as difficulties in practice. He goes on to remark, that "to expect a distinct comprehensive view of the whole subject of religion, and especially of God, clear of difficulties and objections, is to forget our nature and condition, neither of which admit of such knowledge, with respect to any science whatever. And to inquire with this expectation, is not to inquire as a man, but as one of another order of creatures."

"Knowledge," adds this deep master of human thought, "is not our proper happiness. Men of deep research and curious inquiry, should just be put in mind, not to mistake what they are doing. For it is evident that here is another mark set up for us to aim at;—another end appointed us to direct our lives to;—another end which the most knowing may fail of, and the most ignorant arrive at. The secret things belong unto the Lord our God; but those things which are revealed, belong unto us, and to our children, forever, that we may do all the words of this law, which reflection of Moses, put in general terms, is, that the only knowledge, which is of any avail to us, is that which teaches us our duty, or assists us in the discharge of it."

All morals, however,—and all duty,—have reference to law, to a law giver, and to the sanctions by which his laws are enforced. "To know the true God" truly, and the way of

\*On the Province of Reason, and its incapacity to determine the nature and mode of existence of God.



salvation He has devised and declared—this “is eternal life.” And as it has been most clearly shewn, that by all our searchings we can find out nothing certainly of God’s nature or will, “in the deepest humility, let us prostrate our souls before the word of His testimony, that we may implicitly hear, believe, and obey, all that the Lord our God shall say unto us.”

The Scriptures, we have affirmed, do not teach what some men would now call the only reasonable doctrine of God’s nature, namely, that He is absolutely, personally, and metaphysically, ONE, so as to be incapable of being in any sense THREE, AND YET ONE. On the contrary, they teach, as we affirm, that as the nature of God must be infinitely different and distinct, from what our finite capacities can comprehend, or our human language and analogies express, that the Divine essence or nature is common to the Father, Son and Spirit, who are, nevertheless, relatively distinct, and distinguished from each other. These three are one Being, in such a sense that they are all included in the idea of God, so that it is impious to say there are three Gods. These three persons, however, are distinct, not only in *name*, but in incommunicable *properties*, so that it is equally impious to say that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost are not each, and equally, God. In reference to each other there are internal, as well as economical differences, founded upon their personal relations, offices and distinctions, but these differences consist only in personal properties, and not in their substances, or Godhead, which is one.

The sum of what is revealed in Scripture on this subject is, that God is one; that this one God, is Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; that the Father is the father of the Son; and the Son, the son of the Father; and the Holy Ghost, the spirit of the Father and the Son; and that, in respect of this, their mutual relation, they are distinct from each other.

“Moreover,” says Dr. Owen, “whatever is so revealed in the Scripture, is no less true and Divine, as to whatever necessarily followeth thereon, than it is, as unto that which is principally revealed and directly expressed. Hence it follows, that when the Scripture revealeth the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, to be one God, seeing it necessarily and unavoidably follows thereon that they are one in essence, wherein alone it is possible they can be one; and three in their distinct subsistences, wherein alone

it is possible they can be three; this is no less of Divine Revelation, than the first principle from whence these things follow."\*

This doctrine is pronounced so contrary to reason as not to be credible, "even if it were not once, nor twice, but very frequently and most expressly written in the Scripture."† But from what we have seen, it is most unreasonable for human reason to say what is credible in reference to God's nature, which is infinitely above and beyond its comprehension, and of whose mode of existence we can know and express as little as we can about how and why he began to exist at all.

Let it be granted, then, that the doctrine of the Trinity is, by its very nature, inconceivable by the human mind. Is it therefore to be rejected? Mr. Mill lays it down as logically true, that "it is absurd to reject a proposition as impossible on no other ground than its inconceivableness."

"I cannot but wonder that so much stress should be laid on the circumstances of inconceivableness, when there is ample experience to show that our capacity or incapacity of conceiving a thing has very little to do with the possibility of the thing in itself; but is, in truth, very much an affair of accident, and depends on the past history and habits of our own minds. \* \* \* When we have often seen and thought of two things together, and have never, in any one instance, either seen or thought of them separately, there is, by the primary law of association, an increasing difficulty, which may, in the end, become insuperable, if conceiving the two things apart. \* \* \* There are remarkable instances of this in the history of science: instances in which the most instructed men rejected as impossible, because inconceivable, things which their posterity, by earlier practice and longer perseverance in the attempt, found it quite easy to conceive, and which everybody now knows to be true."‡

We must consider an inference, logically drawn from established and admitted premises, to be true, even though the things thus proved true be inconceivable. For, what is to be understood by the terms inconceivable and conceivable, impos-

\*Owen's Works, vol. x: pp. 469, 471, 472.

†See Smalcius in Abaddie, p. 254. The writers whom Stillingfleet opposed in his work on the Trinity say: "We deny the Articles of the new Christianity, or the Athanasian religion, not because they are mysterious, or because we do not comprehend them; we deny them because we *do* comprehend them; we have a clear and distinct perception, that they are not mysterious, but contradictions, impossibilities, and pure nonsense.—We have our reason in vain, and all science and certainty would be destroyed, if we could not distinguish between mysteries and contradictions."—See Stillingfleet on the Trinity, page 7, &c.

‡System of Logic, pp. 265, 266.

sible and possible? If all our knowledge is originally derived from experience, then are these notions derived from our experience. The one class means things at variance with our experience, and the other, things not at variance with our experience. Clearly, unless we possess fundamental ideas, or can gain a knowledge of things in themselves, no logical process can give to the notion, *impossible*, any larger meaning than this. But if, at any time, the inability of men to conceive the negation of a given proposition simply proves that their experience, up to that time, has, without exception, confirmed such proposition; then, when they assert that its untruth is impossible, they really assert no more than when they assert that its negation is inconceivable. If, subsequently, it turn out that the proposition *is* untrue; and if it be therefore argued that men should not have held its untruth impossible because inconceivable, we reply, that to say this, is to condemn the use of the word impossible altogether. If the inconceivability of a thing be considered insufficient warrant for asserting its impossibility, it is implied that there can exist a sufficient warrant; but such warrant, whatever its kind, must be originally derived from experience; and if further experience may invalidate the warrant of inconceivableness, further experience may invalidate *any* warrant on which we assert impossibility. Therefore, we should call nothing impossible.

In this sense, therefore, the inconceivableness of any theory which is above and beyond our present possible experience, is no test of its truth. In respect to all things beyond the measure of our faculties and consequent range of experience, inconceivableness must ever remain, as Sir William Hamilton affirms, an inapplicable test.\*

We might also ask, whose reason is thus offended? Not that of Bishop Butler, or of Lord Bacon, or of the great mass of christians,—(not to name classic and heathen minds, including Plato,)—from the beginning until now. These have all contended that this was a doctrine in itself considered, neither reasonable nor unreasonable, nor one on which reason can pronounce any judgment whatever. The subject of the proposition is beyond the comprehension of reason. And yet the only terms in which we can speak of God, are drawn from finite beings, finite relations, and finite modes of existence. And

\*See Art. on the Universal Postulate, in Westminster Rev., Oct. 1858, p. 276.

hence reason has no premises from which it can deduce a positive conclusion. The whole matter is infinitely above and beyond reason. It is not true, therefore, that this doctrine of the Trinity is contrary to reason, if we understand by this term the general reason of men, for we shall find that the doctrine, in some form, has entered into all the ancient religions of mankind.

Neither is this objection true, if we are to judge of what is reasonable by the reason of christians, since this doctrine has from the beginning been almost universally believed by every branch of the christian Church. Neither is it true, that this doctrine is contrary to the reason of modern christians since the Reformed Churches, with entire unanimity, introduced this doctrine into their creeds, and thousands of the most acute and able minds have found the doctrine in no way, *contrary* to reason, but a doctrine of which reason can know and judge nothing beyond the testimony brought before it in the revelation of God. In other words, this subject can only be known and determined by positive revelation.\*

On all subjects on which it alone can give evidence, the testimony of God is the highest reason, and outweighs all possible

\*In truth, says Mr. Faber, nothing can be more childishly unphilosophical and illogical, than the too common anti-trinitarian practice, of starting abstract objections to the bare nature of the doctrine itself, and of pretending to decide, by the wholly inapplicable argument *a priori*, the pure historical question of FACT, *whether the doctrine of the Trinity is or is not a doctrine of christianity?* This is the fatal paralogism which runs for instance, through Dr. Channing's Discourse on *The Superior tendency of Unitarianism to form an elevated religious character.*

He reasons abstractedly, against the truth of the doctrine of the Trinity, from his own distorted arbitrary statement of its alleged moral and intellectual tendency: and from a rapid view of this caricatured portrait, he determines, through the dangerous *argumentum a priori*, and in language which I have absolutely shuddered to read; that such a doctrine *cannot* form a part of sincere christianity.

Now, even to omit the gross sophism of arguing from a gratuitous statement of *his own* which would offensively exhibit Trinitarianism as alike *absurd* and *immoral*; what can be a greater paralogism, than the PRINCIPLE upon which the whole of Dr. Channing's discourse is constructed?

1. The question is a simple historical question of FACT; the question, namely: *Whether the doctrine of the Trinity, with the dependent doctrine of Christ's essential deity, was taught by the Apostles, and is propounded in Scripture.*

2. Yet this palpably *mere* question of FACT, which, like all other similar questions, can only be determined by *evidence*, Dr. Channing actually professes to determine by the *application of abstract a priori reasoning.*

3. Thus, in *former* days, did misplaced ingenuity determine in the negative the question of *fact*; whether the Copernican system be true, and whether men exist in the supposed paradoxical condition of antipodes: and thus, in the *present* day, does a more eloquent, than logical, American Divine, similarly determine in the negative, the question of FACT; Whether the doctrine of the Trinity, with the dependent doctrine of Christ's true Godhead, was taught by the Apostles and is propounded in Scripture.—*On the Apost. of Trinitarianism, vol. 1, pp. 229, 289.*

objection and cavil, since these are all based upon the absurdity that finite can comprehend that which is infinite and infinitely incomprehensible and beyond our capacity to understand. Because in a finite nature such as ours, the same spirit cannot be three and yet one, therefore, it is argued God's nature, which is infinitely above, beyond, and different from, and cannot be one, and yet in sound sense three. Such reasoning is absurd, foolish and contradictory. This doctrine is, indeed, like many others, above reason, but not contrary to it, since upon it reason can determine nothing.

Such is plainly the teaching of Scripture. "The Scripture\* tells us indeed, that the 'spirit of a man which is in him knows the things of a man.' A man's spirit, by natural reason may judge of natural things. 'But the things of God knoweth no man, but the spirit of God.'—1 Cor. ii: 11. So that what we know of these things, we must receive upon the revelation of the Spirit of God merely, if the Apostle may be believed. And it is *given* unto men to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God. To some, and not to others; and unless it be so given them, they cannot know them. In particular, none can know the Father, unless the Son reveal him. Nor will, or doth, or can, flesh and blood reveal, or understand Jesus Christ to be the Son of the living God, unless the Father reveal him and instruct us in the truth of it.—Matt. 16: 18. The way to come to the acknowledgment of these things, is that described by the Apostle.—Eph. iii: 14-19. 'For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in Heaven and earth is named, that he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints,' &c. As also, (Col. ii: 2, 3,) 'That ye might come unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgment of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ; in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. It is by faith and prayer, and through the revelation of God, that we may come to the acknowledgment of these things; and not by the carnal reasonings of men of corrupt minds.'

\*Owen's Works, vol. 10, pp. 509, 510.

Shall foolish, weak, short-sighted man  
 Beyond the angels go,  
 The great Almighty God explain,  
 Or to perfection know?

His attributes divinely soar  
 Above the creature's sight,  
 And prostrate seraphim adore  
 The glorious Infinite.

Jehovah's everlasting days!  
 They cannot numbered be;  
 Incomprehensible the space  
 Of thine immensity!

Thy wisdom's depths by reason's line  
 In vain we strive to sound,  
 Or stretch our labouring thought t'assign  
 Omnipotence a bound.

The brightness of thy glory leaves  
 Description far below;  
 Nor man's nor angel's heart conceives  
 How deep thy mercies flow.

But it is further said, that the doctrine of the Trinity is, in itself, *contradictory*, and therefore, to be rejected, since to say that three are one and one is three is absurd. This however, is just what is not said. The word trinity from two Latin words, signifies a unity that is three-fold in its unity—a three that are one in their trinity, that is, a TRI-UNITY. It defines not three disunited persons united in one *name*, or in community of *counsel*, but the union of three persons in one essence, so as to be really and truly one, and yet, in a manner incomprehensible, to us, truly and really three. Mr. Locke says, “in my whole essay there is not anything like an objection against the Trinity.”\* There is manifestly no contradiction in the term trinity, because it does not affirm that three are one and that one is three, but that in the infinite and incomprehensible Jehovah there is a unity so inconceivably different and distinct from the union of finite human natures,—of which alone we know anything,—as to admit of three persons, hypostases or modes of subsistence, in the one ever-blessed Godhead. The very term trinity therefore, which means a TRI-UNITY, obviates the objection made against the doctrine, that it is contradictory, since it does not imply that God is one in the same sense in which he is three, or three in the same sense in which he is one, but three in a sense different from, and reconcilable with, that in which he is one, and one in a sense different from, and reconcilable with that in which he is three. WHAT that sense

\*See on the alleged Unitarianism of Locke, &c., Note A, at end of the article.

is, or HOW God is what he is thus said to be, the doctrine does not affirm, nor does any man dare to explain. And that it implies any contradiction in the essential nature of the Divine being, no man can dare to affirm without presumption and impiety, since this would imply an actual knowledge of what that nature in its essence and mode of existence is.

When the late Daniel Webster, (whose capacity to determine what is and is not contradictory to reason no one will call in question,) was told by a friend coming out of church, that he did not know how any reasonable man could believe in the Trinity, therefore, that three is one and one three, "Ah, sir," replied Mr. Webster, "we do not understand the arithmetic of Heaven." This great mind was moved also to record his name at the foot of a dying declaration that while he could not in the flesh see God or understand the arithmetic of Heaven, he nevertheless, understood the fact attested of himself by God, and that he believed therefore, on "God the Father, Son and Holy Ghost," and now we would hope his faith is turned into knowledge, and he unites in ascribing glory and honour unto God the Father, Son and Holy Ghost.

Mr. Boswell once said to Dr. Johnson, "Would not the same objection lie against the Trinity as against transubstantiation?" "Yes," said he, "if you take three and one in the same sense. If you do so, to be sure you cannot believe it. But the three persons *in* the Godhead are three in one sense and one in another; [three in person or hypostases and one in nature, one in the unity of the spirit,] we cannot tell how, and that is the mystery."\*

The apparent verbal contradictions in the language employed to express the personal distinctiveness, and the Divine unity of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, arise from the inapplicableness of words denoting human thoughts, to that which transcends all human thought. There is nothing in man's perceptions, consciousness, or formal logical definitions, to supply him with intelligible terms that can ever be more than an approximation towards the exact and full truth of the unity of God. For this reason, theology cannot become a strictly logical science; language is too imperfect, too low a vehicle, to become the exponent of its higher truths.†

\*Johnson's tour to the Hebrides, by Boswell, p. 90.

†Augustine strongly felt, as he has majestically expressed, the ineffableness of this great mystery cum ergo quaeritur quid tria, vel quid tres, conferimus nos ad inveniendum aliquod speciale vel generale nomen quo

This, in reality, is the foundation on which philosophical objections to the doctrine of the Trinity, are founded. Thus Dr. Dewey asserts the impossibility of conceiving of the persons of the Trinity as any other than three distinct beings. And why? "When," says he, "we speak of unity in a being, we mean that he is self-conscious." He thus frames to himself a definition of what constitutes a being which suits his own purpose, omitting what is most essential to our idea of being, namely, that *substance* or essence, and those properties by which it is known and distinguished by us, and then bases his objection to a Scriptural fact upon his own defective theory.†

While, however, it is impossible, as has been said, to give any positive exposition of what is implied in the doctrine of a trinity of the Divine nature, the human mind is capable of showing that the doctrine is not inconsistent with our present experience and knowledge, however immeasurably it may be above them.

But not only is this doctrine not unreasonable, absurd or contradictory, it might be argued that it is most reasonable.

"There appear to be," says Dr. Pye Smith, "very reasonable grounds for supposing that this doctrine, or some other resembling it, would be a necessary deduction from the fact of the ABSOLUTE PERFECTION of the Divine nature. The notion of Supreme and Infinite Perfection cannot but include EVERY POSSIBLE excellency, or, in other words, every attribute of being which is not of the nature of defect. It must be premised that creation had a beginning. At whatever point that beginning may have been, whatever multiples of ages, imagination or hypothesis can fix upon to carry that point backwards, the point will stand somewhere. *Before* that position, therefore, a *duration without beginning* must have elapsed. Through that period, infinite on one part, it is incontrovertible that nothing can have existed except the Glorious Deity. But, if the unity of the Divine nature be such a property as excludes every kind of plurality, the properties of *active life*, *tendency to diffusion*, and reciprocity of intellectual and moral enjoyment, (which are perfections of being,) must have been through that duration, in the state of *absolute quiescence*. It seems to follow that

complectamur hæc tria, neque occurrit animo, quia excedit, supereminentia divinitatis usitati eloquii facultatem. Verius enim cogitatur Deus quam dicitur, et verius est quam cogitatur.—*Storvell on the Work of the Spirit.*

†See the New Englander for 1848, pp. 673-5.



from eternity down to a certain point in duration, some perfections were wanting in the Deity. The Divine Mind stood in an immense solitariness. The infinitely active life, which is a necessary property of the Supreme Spirit, was from eternity inactive. No species of communication existed. There was no development of intellectual and moral good, though in a subject in which that good has been necessarily, infinitely, and from eternity inherent. I feel the awful ground on which I have advanced, in putting these suppositions; and I would humbly beseech the Divine Majesty to pity and pardon me, if I am guilty of any presumption. I am, also, fully attentive to the attribute of ALL-SUFFICIENCY as a necessary property of the Blessed and Adorable Nature. But when I have given every consideration of which I am capable to this most profound of subjects, I cannot but perceive it as a strong, and even invincible deduction of reason, that the denial of such a plurality in the Infinite Essence as shall admit of a development from eternity of the ever active life and a communion from eternity in infinite good, is a denial to the Supreme Nature of something which is *essential* to absolute and Infinite Perfection.

I add, therefore, that, whatever improper use may have been made of the terms by impious familiarity, and whatever ridicule may have been cast upon them by profane opposition, the venerable confessions of antiquity appear to me to be entirely accordant with careful reasoning and with Scriptural authority;—that *the one Lord Jesus Christ is the only Begotten of the Father, before all ages; and that the Holy Spirit proceeded from the Father, equal to the Father and the Son in eternity, majesty, glory, and all perfection.*”\*

“Own, then, man  
The image of his Maker—grant that God  
Possesses all perfection he has given,  
And in the Deity there needs must be  
Some glorious attributes, that correspond  
With those peculiar faculties in us,  
Call’d social ones; I speak not of the bonds  
Of finite passion,—but the inherent power  
To make a promise, a command express,  
And witness bear.

That God this power possesses  
We need not wander far for evidence.  
Let nature be our witness. He who form’d  
The eye must see; and He whose mandate call’d  
Creation forth, most surely can command;

\*See his Testimony to the Messiah, vol. 3, pp. 420, 421. See also Howe's Works, vol. 4, pp. 320, 321, where, in his calm inquiry on the subject of the Trinity, he has these observations.—See Note B., at the end of this article.

Or all the beauties that our eyes behold,  
 When turning fondly on the earth's fair face,—  
 Or piercing far into immensity,  
 To gaze delighted on its spangling orbs,—  
 Nay, we ourselves, had no existence known.  
 But if on naught except created things  
 Those great perfections can be exercised,  
 They cannot be eternal or immense;  
 And as, before creation's natal hour,  
 They never could be exercised at all,  
 Not only are those attributes themselves  
 Contingent, but the Godhead must possess  
 Peculiar powers which once he did not hold;  
 And the firm grasp of mutability  
 Thus seems to enclose the Uncreated One,  
 The great, Unchang'd, Immutable, Supreme.  
 But, turn we to the converse side and own  
 That, like the rest of His inherences,  
 These too are infinite—we then are led  
 (To find them an unbounded exercise)  
 To some unlimited created thing,  
 Another independent Deity,  
 Or a distinctness of hypostases  
 In the great Essence incarnate;—(the first  
 And second of which three hypotheses

We have before exploded;) and behold  
 The Trinity in Unity again  
 Stand forth in glory to the enquiring eye.  
 Nor does the Deity's perfection yield  
 An evidence less sure. For this seems plain,—  
 (And here with deepest reverence I speak,)  
 If God exists in Unity alone,  
 According to the wandering sceptic's dreams,  
 He cannot in perfection know himself;  
 He cannot fully exercise his power,  
 His wisdom, goodness, purity, or love,  
 According to their nature; nor can hold  
 Those social faculties he gave mankind.  
 Nor is perfection of existence found  
 In him, for that, undoubtedly, must rest  
 (Since nought beside can grasp its every mode.)  
 In union and distinctness. Wherefore, then,  
 Sons of a blind philosophy maintain  
 This perilous position? Wherefore shackle  
 God's active, energetic attributes  
 In all their operations, till as well  
 We might suppose a paralyz'd old man,  
 Whose limbs had long forgot their native use,  
 Complete in power, or deem an idiot sane,  
 As think perfection can in *him* inhere—  
 When Trinity in Unity displays  
 Perfection's beauty; reconciles in full  
 Whate'er appeared to jar, and Nature's voice  
 With that of Revelation sweetly joins  
 In one harmonious song of lasting praise.”  
 “But to return \* \* \* If in operation  
 Of moral excellence alone are found  
 (Where hope is banish'd by fruition full.)  
 The fruits of happiness; and Deity  
 Be to himself a fountain—spring of bliss,  
 Ineffable, eternal, underiv'd;  
 Where then does fond enquiry lead the mind?  
 Oh! talk not of presumption! tell me not  
 It is but limiting the Deity  
 To say that bliss, as it inheres in him,

Must flow from sources consonant with ours,  
 While Revelation's voice attests the truth  
 Which Reason here would urge. 'Thou loved'st me,'  
 Hear the Redeemer's sacred lips exclaim,  
 'Before the world's foundations.' Here he points  
 To God's eternal source of happiness,  
 And shews it was not mere inactive rest.  
 And well may Reason, with a voice like His  
 Corroborating its conclusions, say,  
 'As happiness is only to be found  
 (Where hope's bright visions can no entrance gain,)  
 In exercise of moral excellence—  
 And no plurality of Gods can be—  
 Then either God exists in modes distinct,  
 Or was, before an object yet was formed  
 On whom to exercise his attributes,  
 Eternally devoid of perfect bliss,'  
 "As then the happiness of God must be  
 Complete, above all height, beneath all depth,  
 Immense, eternal, and immutable,  
 He needs must have some object, infinite,  
 Co-equal, co-eternal, with Himself,  
 United, yet distinct, on whom to pour  
 The o'erflowing fulness of his attributes ;  
 Which leads us to the same eternal truth  
 We now so long have been contending for."

A very short and able letter on this subject, will be found also, in the posthumous works of the celebrated John Wallis, D. D., Savilian Professor of Geometry, in Oxford, and Chaplain to King Charles II., who undertakes to show from mathematical as well as other sciences, that there is no inconsistency or impossibility that what in our regard is three may in another regard be one." and that though these illustrations "even from finite beings, do not adequately agree with this of the sacred Trinity, yet there is enough in them to show that there is no such inconsistency as is pretended, in believing that the three persons may truly be so distinguished as that one be not the other, and yet all but one God."\*

"It is true," he added, † "that not any, nor all of these instances, nor any of those given by other learned men, do adequately express the distinction and unity of the *Persons* in the *sacred Trinity*; for neither hath God distinctly declared it unto us, nor are we able fully to comprehend it, nor is it necessary for us to know. Shall we, therefore, say, things *cannot be*, when God says they *are*, only because we know not *how*? If God say, "The Word was God," and "the Word was made Flesh," shall we say, Not so, only because we cannot tell *how*? It is safer to say, *IT IS*; WHEN GOD SAYS IT IS, though we know not how it is: especially when there are so many instances in

\*Sermons and Memoirs, London, 1791.

†Ib.

nature, to show it not to be impossible or inconsistent with reason. The thing is sufficiently revealed to those who are willing to be taught and receive the truth in the love of it."

Others however, have dared to go even further than the *removal* of any objections to the possibility or reasonableness of the doctrine of the Trinity, and have conceived that by a chain of abstract *a priori* reasoning similar to Dr. Clarke's celebrated demonstration of the being and attributes of God, they can even demonstrate its truth and necessity. Such is the work of the Rev. Jas. Kidd, Professor of Oriental Languages in the University of Aberdeen, entitled "An Essay on the Doctrine of the Trinity, attempting to prove it by Reason and Demonstration founded upon duration and space, and upon some of the Divine perfections, some of the powers of the human soul, the language of Scripture and tradition among all nations."

Of the success of Mr. Kidd's argument, several eminent men have expressed favourable opinions, and it was listened to in lectures by Mr. Belsham and Mr. Broadbent with frankness and great candour, though both Unitarians. The argument, however, is too severely metaphysical ever to be popular, and while such discourses may *strengthen* conviction, they never can *originate* our belief in a doctrine which nothing but Revelation can authoritatively teach and command.\*

The learned and judicious Stillingfleet has written a very able work in vindication of the Trinity, especially against the objections of its unreasonableness,† from which we make a quotation.

\*See also, for some ingenious reasoning, "The Great Physician," by John Gardner, M. D., of London. London, 1843. The arguments of Professor Kidd have been presented to some extent, in a poetical form, in a Poem of very considerable ability and poetic spirit,—an elaborate philosophical poem, indeed, "The Deity," a Poem, in Twelve Books, by Thos. Ragg, with an introduction by Isaac Taylor. 2d Edition, London, 1834.

"Thy nature now, Almighty One, I sing!  
And as thou dost exist would thee portray.  
In confutation of deistic dreams,  
Shewing by Reason's light thou art TRI-UNE.  
Come, then, celestial Spirit Increate!  
Shed thine own self upon me, as ere while  
Thou, like a flood of love, cam'st rushing down  
And fill'dst the chosen ones in Palestine,  
And thou, my harp, resume thy sweetest tones;  
That Poesy may spread o'er Reason's page  
A loveliness it elsewhere could not gain,  
Pleasing the fancy as it feeds the mind,  
While TRINITY IN UNITY, display'd  
Without the aid of Scripture plainly shews  
The God of Scripture is the Living God."

†London, 1697.

“It is strange boldness in men,” says Bishop Stillingfleet, “to talk of contradictions in things above their reach. Hath God not revealed to us that he created all things; and is it not reasonable for us to believe this, unless we are able to comprehend the manner of doing it? Hath not God plainly revealed that there shall be a resurrection from the dead? And must we think it unreasonable to believe it, till we are able to comprehend all the changes of the particles of matter from the creation to the general resurrection? If nothing is to be believed but what may be comprehended, the very being of God must be rejected, and all his unsearchable perfections. If we believe the attributes of God to be infinite how can we comprehend them? We are strangely puzzled in plain ordinary finite things; but it is madness to pretend to comprehend what is infinite; and yet, if the perfections of God be not infinite, they cannot belong to him.

“Let those who presume to say that there is a contradiction in the Trinity, try their imaginations about God’s eternity, not merely how he should be from himself, but how God should co-exist with all the differences of times, and yet there be no succession in his own being; and they will, perhaps, concur with me in thinking that there is no greater difficulty in the conception of the Trinity than there is of eternity. For three to be one is a contradiction in numbers; but whether an infinite nature can communicate itself to three different substances, without such a division as is among created beings, must not be determined by bare numbers, but by the absolute perfections of the Divine nature: which must be owned to be above our comprehension.”

The justly celebrated and admired John Howe has, among his works, a short treatise on this subject, entitled “A Calm Discourse of the Trinity in the Godhead,” in which there is a very lucid and satisfactory exposition of the perfect consistency of this doctrine with the conceptions of the human mind, and of the impossibility of finding in it anything either absurd or contradictory\* to our reason, and to the constitution of our compound nature, or to our present knowledge of what is possible, though beyond our comprehension.

Another work has not long since been published on the doc-

\*The reader will do well to consult this Treatise, particularly § ii.-xii., pp. 307-11.

trine of Triads,† of which it has been said, “This is decidedly the most original work which has appeared for some time.” The design of the author is to illustrate the doctrine of a Divine Trinity, by tracing a triplicity of character, not only in Scripture, but in every part of the natural and moral world. The mass of evidence which he has gathered together is truly astonishing, and exhibits, not only vast labour, pursued with untiring patience, but likewise a familiar acquaintance with the languages and literature, both of ancient and modern times. His great aim, throughout the whole of his remarkable work, has been the discovery and advancement of truth, of which he feels himself the influence and value. All is subservient to this; and therefore while he displays great ingenuity and much keenness of perception, he never suffers himself to be influenced by mere fancy. He demonstrates the existence of a triform impression on the human mind, as exemplified in the singular frequency of the tertian form of expression in speaking and writing, and in our ideas of superstition, law, majesty and dominion; he shows the same impression as prevailing in the physical world, in the theology of the heathen, and throughout the Scripture, as well in its facts as in its mode of expression.

From what has been advanced, it will be seen that the doctrine of the Trinity is, not only not contradictory to reason and to the invisible things of God, which are clearly seen in all his works and ways, but that it is in consonance with the eternal power and Godhead as manifested in our own wonderful constitution,‡ and as displayed in all his works and ways.

But it is further objected that the very term Trinity, is of human origin, and is not Scriptural, and that, therefore, the doctrine itself, is unwarranted by the Word of God. But this objection comes with a very ill grace indeed, from those who claim so much for the office and power of reason. For all that is proper and competent to reason, and essential to the progress and improvement of knowledge we earnestly contend, since it is both our *right* and *duty* to know all that we have the means of knowing, as well as to be willing to be ignorant where knowledge is withheld. Now, the analogy between Natural

†In the Albion, which contained large extracts from it, many others have supposed that traces of this doctrine are imprinted on all the works of God.—Baxter’s Works, vol. 2, pp. 14, 15, Fol. Ed. Cheyne’s Phil. Princ. of Revealed Religion, pp. 99, 113. Owen’s Works, vol. 10.

‡See Howe, as above.

and Revealed Religion, which is found to exist in so many essential particulars, is equally striking, as it regards the form in which truth is placed before the human mind in each of these departments of knowledge. Revelation, like nature, presents a vast collection of particular facts, not arranged scientifically, but apparently without any order, symmetry, or system. As in nature every fact or object is single, and found, as it would seem to the ignorant and uninformed, in apparent isolation or disunion; so have the inspired writers delivered their sublimest doctrines in popular language in an incidental isolated form, or in connection with some history or precept, and "have abstained,—as much as it was possible to abstain,—from a philosophical or metaphysical phraseology." In nature, and in Revelation also, it is found that the earliest formations were the most simple, and adapted to a lower condition in the one case of animal, and in the other of mental and spiritual development, until both were at length, brought to that finished state which was best adapted to the whole of man's earthly history and necessities. This being the case, reason has the same office and duty to discharge in reference, both to nature and revelation. *First*, the facts or truths as they actually and certainly exist must be discovered, and then they must be arranged, classified, and systematized, in order that from them may be deduced general truths and comprehensive systems of knowledge. Otherwise, the human mind would know nothing of the natural world but particular facts, and as it regards revelation, instead of being, as the Apostle says, "perfect," that is, able to comprehend the more recondite and spiritual mysteries of the christian faith, we should still be but "babes in Christ," acquainted only with the first, or elementary principles of religion, and never able to arrive at the full measure of the stature of perfect men in Christ Jesus."

In both nature and revelation, therefore, the facts or truths being known with sufficient certainty, "the processes of comparison, deduction, analysis, and combination, by which alone, we can form comprehensive systems of knowledge, cannot be carried on with convenience and perspicuity, without the use of general terms."\*

The propriety, therefore, of using such general terms to express our knowledge of the particular facts or truths of Scripture, which we have classified and arranged, "rests upon

\*Smith, iii, p. 421.

the same foundation as the use of general terms in all scientific investigations, namely, that they are abbreviations of language, and serve as instruments of thought." "The proper consideration is, whether the objects and facts for which they are used as a compendious notation, are not asserted and implied in the Scriptures."†

If, therefore, we find not the *word* TRINITY in Scripture, yet, if we do find in Scripture what amounts to a clear proof of the TRUTH that word expresses;—if it is proved by Scripture that God is in essence, that is, nature or Godhead, only ONE, and that he will not give his glory to another,—and if the Son as begotten, and the Spirit as proceeding,—are, nevertheless, both declared to be really and truly God,—then it follows by the inevitable necessity of intuitive reason, that these three persons are severally God, and yet that God is one,—that is, that GOD IS A TRINITY. The facts being found in Scripture, the human reason must stultify itself, refuse to follow out its own intuitive and necessary conclusion from the premises;—and contrary to its right, office, and duty, in reference to all other truth, and especially as we have seen in reference to revealed truth, refuse to employ a general term for its own convenience, as an instrument of thought, and as a medium of instruction.‡

And who are they who would dethrone and silence reason, in this her legitimate and proper office? The very persons who would insist upon our adopting the term *Unity*, which is not Scriptural, and not only the *term* unity, but this *term* with a metaphysical explanation of the meaning, requiring us to believe that the infinite Jehovah, the ever existing and uncreated source of all being, is such an one as his own finite creatures, and that he, therefore, is, and can be only an absolute and personal unity; and all this, as we maintain and believe, in plain and palpable contrariety to the facts found in revelation? How many other terms also, such as omniscience, omnipotence, omnipresence, do they and we employ in presenting in what is believed a convenient and general form, the individual, isolated, and unsystematized statements of Scripture, in reference to God and man, time and eternity, doctrine and duty.

It would, therefore, be just and proper to deny the doctrine of the divine ubiquity or omnipresence, and many other truths, because the terms by which they are described are not found in

†Ib.

‡See Owen's Works, vol. 10, pp. 471, 472, 503, 504, and 511.



Scripture, as to deny that of the Trinity because the *term* Trinity, is not found in Scripture. If this doctrine is not directly, positively, and in explicit definition declared in Scripture, this is equally true of other fundamental articles of religion, admitted by Jew and christian, such as the being of God, the existence of angels, the resurrection of the dead, and future retribution, which, though evidently derived from the inspired penmen, and now invariably received among the professors of Judaism, do not, in the volumes of holy writ, appear in the form of plain propositions, as, that God is, that angels exist, that the dead shall be raised again, and, that men shall be rewarded according to their actions; but being frequently intimated and assumed, posterity is satisfied, that, with the ancient Hebrews, they formed a very essential and prominent part of their theological system.\*

We have no zeal for the *term* Trinity any more than for the terms person, unity of God, omnipresence, &c., if any other can as well, or better, express the ideas of which these are the conventional signs. We contend, not for *terms*, but for the doctrines expressed by the terms, and which are, in each case, no more than conclusions drawn by the irresistible power of human reason from the premises found in Scripture. But the opposition, it would seem, is not to this necessary, not to say, legitimate employment of human reason, in generalizing for its own use the particular facts contained in Scripture. The whole outcry is against any party doing this but they who reject as impossible and contradictory the doctrine of the Trinity, and therefore, oppose the term by which it is propounded. The facts from which this doctrine is deduced may be indisputably found in Scripture, and the term does nothing more than state in one word, what these facts do in many words. *It*, however, must not employ the word, however simply expressive of the facts. But *they* are at perfect liberty to employ the term unity, which is not found in Scripture, and to attach to it a meaning contrary to that of tri-unity, and which is not warranted but opposed by Scripture, which even as speaking of God's unity employs language which necessarily implies a plurality in the one Divine nature or Godhead. And just so it is, that they condemn also, all controversy on our part, for the truth, and all criticism that would maintain and support it,

\*See Oxlee's Christian Doctrines, Explained on Jewish Dunc., vol. i, pp. 33, 34, on the objection to the term God-man, or theanthropes. See Burgess' Tracts, pp. lxiv.-lxvi.

while they are to be permitted to controvert AGAINST the truth, and to force constructions upon the Bible which will make it mean anything they wish it to, only that which they or their pride of reason think it ought to mean.\*\*

The discoveries of revelation remained in the church in statements very near to their original simplicity, and free from any metaphysical distinctions until,†† “by the perpetual cavils of gainsayers, and the difficulties which they have raised, later teachers, in the assertion of the same doctrines, have been reduced to the unpleasing necessity of availing themselves of the greater precision of a less familiar language.”

“As to their (the Arians,) complaints, says Athanasius,\* the great champion of orthodoxy in the fourth century, and who suffered the loss of all things for his bold fidelity to the truth, “It was they who began with their impious expressions, *το ουχ ουτων* and *το ην ωστε οτε ουχ ην*,† which are not Scripture; and now they make it a charge, that they are detected by means of non-scriptural terms, which have been reverently adopted.” The last remark, says Mr. Newman, is important; for until the time of Arius, even those traditional statements of the Catholic doctrine, which were more explicit than Scripture, had not taken the shape of formulæ. It was the Arian defined propositions of the *εξ, ουχ ουτων*, made out of nothing, and the like, which called for their imposition.‡

The term Trinity is found in the Greek language *τριας*, in the Latin *trinitas*, and as it is admitted in Oriental languages.§ And if this word is not found in the Hebrew language we have seen, and shall further see, that in stating the doctrine of the Unity of God, the Hebrew writers on many occasions, and from the very opening of the Bible, use plural

\*\*See Paul's Refutation of Arianism, pp. 19 and 41.

††Horsley's Tracts, p. 358.

\*Athanas. Ep. ad Afros. 5, 6.

†“That which was made of things not existing,” and “that which once was not.”

‡See Newman's History of the Arians of the 4th Century, p. 252, London, 1833. It would appear from Aulus Gellius, that *trias* in Greek, as *ternio* in Latin, signified the number three; and if we speak of the cube or square, or any other power of three, we should not say *trion*, but *tes triados*. The word is also, frequently used by Philo Judæus, in his work on the creation, where he speculates upon the number of days in a manner very similar to that followed by Theophilus. The passage in A. Gellius might lead us to think, that Phythagoras had made use of the term *trias*, and his peculiar theory concerning numbers led him to pay particular regard to the number three. The word, also, occurs in one of those spurious oracles, which have been ascribed to Zoroaster and the Persian Magi.—(Burton, p. 35.)

§Dr. Beard's Artistic and Hist. Ill. of the Trinity, pp. 59-61.

and triple forms of language which, necessarily, imply in their very statement, a tri-unity or trinity.

The assertion of Dr. Beard and others, that the term trinity was not used by the early christians, is contrary to existing proof. The word *trias*, in Greek, or *Trinity*, in Latin, was, originally employed, not to signify the number three absolutely and simply, but the things thus described as being in one aspect of it, a trinity, and in another aspect, a unity. This distinction was found in the very form of christian baptism, in the doxology and benediction, and in several triple forms of Scriptural expression, and in the whole teaching of the Old and New Testaments, respecting the supreme deity of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and at the same time, concerning the unity of the Divine nature. The belief in these three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, as one God, was made a primary article in the earliest creeds, embodied in what is called the Apostles' creed, and in all the creeds of the Eastern Churches. The true doctrine of the primitive Church may also be learned from published apologies for the christian faith, viz: those of Justin Martyr, Athenagoras and Tertullian, which have been handed down to our time in a perfect state. The doctrine held by the primitive Church may be learned also, from other writings of the second century, viz: the genuine production of Justin Martyr, Irenæus, Theophilus of Antioch, Tatian, Clemens Alexandrinus, and Tertullian; also from the fragments of Dionysius, Bishop of Corinth, of Melito, Bishop of Sardis, and of Hegesippus, in Eusebius; from the epistle of Polycarp of Smyrna, to the Phillipians; from the supposed epistle of Barnabas; from the writings ascribed to Ignatius, and also from Pliny's letter to Trajan, and from the Philotrapis of Lucian.\*

The result of long and laboured controversy, and of the most elaborate and critical examination of these writings cannot, we think, leave any impartial reader in doubt, as to the belief of the *doctrine* of the Trinity by the primitive christians. The *term* trinity, however, was not at first employed because, as has been said, controversy had not required its introduction.

Justin Martyr, who was born according to different computations from the year A. D. 89 to A. D. 103, and was beheaded at Rome, A. D. 165, in a Confession of Faith, found among his

\* Φιλοτραπισ.

works,—a work whose genuineness is doubted, indeed, by many, but admitted by all to be of his age or near it,† uses the term trinity, (*τριας*) very clearly.

Theophilus, A. D. 180, undoubtedly employs the term trinity *τριας*, in the following passage:\* “In like manner also, the three days, which preceded the luminaries, are types of the Trinity, of God and his Word, and his Wisdom.” It is not necessary to attempt to explain this typical allusion; and the reader is, perhaps aware, that the term wisdom was applied by the fathers to the second and third persons of the Trinity, though more frequently to the second.

It is plain, that in the present instance the term wisdom is applied to the Holy Ghost, as Bishop Bull has shown it to have been by Irenæus, Origen, and others.

This much, at least, is 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: and who would venture in any sense, to speak of a trinity of beings, if one of the three was God, and the other two were created.

The next writer, who uses the word in the ecclesiastical sense, is Clement of Alexandria, who flourished a few years later than Theophilus. Like many of the fathers, he supposed Plato to have had a Trinity in view, when he wrote that obscure passage in his second letter to Dionysius. Upon which Clement observes, “I understand this in no other way, than as containing mention of the blessed Trinity: for the third thing is the Holy Ghost, and the Son is the Second.” Hippolytus, in a fragment of one of his works, speaks of “the knowledge of the blessed Trinity;” and in another, after reciting the form of words used at baptism, he adds, “For by this Trinity the Father is glorified.” Origen also, very frequently made use of the term.

Methodius, in his Symposium, made use of the word *τριας*, *trinity*, and though we may condemn him for seeing an illusion to the Trinity in the sacrifice offered by Abraham, (Gen. xv: 9,) it is plain from the passage, that the word was in general use in his day. But there is another passage in the same work, which shows still more clearly, that, not only the name, but the doctrine of the Trinity was well understood in those days.

†See an article in the Biblical Repertory for January, 1853.

\*Ad Autolyicum, lib. 2, c. 15, in Dr. Burton's Testim. to the Trinity, p. 34.

Having compared the stars, which are mentioned in Rev. ii: 4, to the heretics, he adds in the same allegorical strain which was then too common, "Hence they are called a third part of the stars, as being in error concerning one of the numbers of the Trinity; at one time, concerning that of the Father, as Sabellius, who said that the Omnipotent himself suffered; at another time, concerning that of the Son, as Artemas, and they who say that he existed in appearance only; and at another time concerning that of the Spirit, as the Ebionites, who contend that the prophets spoke of their own impulse."\*

Tertullian, A. D. 200, frequently uses the term trinity, and also, the term *person*, in their modern theological sense. This he did, both before and after adopting the opinions of Montanus, which, however, did not affect this doctrine.† Cyprian, and Novatian also, employs the term trinity, and Origen very frequently.‡

Lucian, a heathen writer, who was a contemporary of Athénagoras, has a remarkable passage in his dialogue called *Philopatris*.

The speakers in this dialogue are Critias and Triephon, the former an heathen, the latter a christian, and when Critias has offered to swear by different heathen deities, each of which, is objected to by Triephon, he asks, "By whom then shall I swear?" to which Triephon makes the following reply, the first words of which are a quotation from Homer:

"By the great God, immortal, in the Heavens;"

The Son of the Father, the Spirit proceeding from the Father, one out of three and three out of one, [*unum*, one substance; not *unus*, one person:]

"Consider these thy Jove, be this thy God."

Critias then ridicules this arithmetical oath, and says, "I cannot tell what you mean by saying that one is three, and three are one."

There can be no doubt, that when this dialogue was written, it was commonly known to the heathen, that the christians believed the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, though in one sense three, in another sense to be one: and if the dialogue was written by Lucian, who lived in the latter part of the second cen-

\*Dr. Burton's *Anti Nicene Testim.* to the Trinity, p. 351.

†See numerous passages with the original, given by Dr. Burton, pp. 60-84, 82, 83.

‡See Do.

tury, it would be one of the strongest testimonies remaining to the doctrine of the Trinity. This was acknowledged by Socinus, who says in one of his works, "that he had never read anything which gave greater proof of a worship of the Trinity being then received among christians, than the passage which is brought from the dialogue entitled *Philopatris*, and which is reckoned among the works of *Lucian*.\*

The two following fragments are preserved by *Basil*. In the first of them it is necessary to remember that the term *υποστασις* hypostasis, was sometimes used for the nature or essence of the Deity; sometimes for a person, *i. e.*, for the substantial individuality of the three persons in the Godhead. The Sabellians declined saying in the latter sense of the term, that there were three hypostases; and wished to argue, that such an expression implied three distinct unconnected Beings. *Dionysius* observes, "Though they may say, that the hypostases, by being three, are divided, still they are three, though it may not suit these persons to say so; or else let them altogether deny the Divine Trinity." We may infer from this remark, that the word Trinity was in common use before the Sabellian controversy began; and *Dionysius* assumes it as an undisputed point, that in some sense or other there was a Trinity in the Godhead. The Sabellians probably denied, that the word *τριάς* implied three *υποστασεις* or distinctly existing persons; but the history of *Dionysius* and his writings, leaves no doubt as to the body of believers maintaining this opinion.†

In the liturgy ascribed to *St. James* and used in the Church of Antioch, it is distinctly affirmed *τριάς εις Θεος the Trinity is one God*, and it speaks also, of "the holy, adorable, and co-essential Trinity." The term Trinity was employed in the Synod of Alexandria, A. D. 317, and from that time came into common and familiar use, and is described, by *Zacharias*, Bishop of Mitylene, as "the uncreated, eternal, and consubstantial Trinity, the first and blessed nature and fountain of all things, itself the true ens" or source of all being. In the council of Ephesus it is described as "the Trinity consubstantial above all substance, invisible, incomprehensible, inseparable, immutable, simple and undivided, and uncompounded, without

\*Bishop Bull believed it to be genuine, and *Fabricius* was inclined to do the same. Some have ascribed it to a writer older than the time of *Lucian*; others to one of the same age; and others to much later periods. I need only refer the reader to discussions of the subject by *Dodwell*, *Blondell*, *Lardner*, &c.

†Burton, p. 124.

dimension, eternal, incorporeal, without quality, without quantity, whose is honor and glory, and Deity infinitely good.”\*

I will only farther remark, in connection with this objection, in the words of Calvin,† “If they call every word exotic, which cannot be found in the Scriptures in so many syllables, they impose on us a law which is very unreasonable, and which condemns all interpretation, but what is composed of detached texts of Scripture connected together.”

The fathers often accuse themselves and blame the enemies of the truth for making it necessary to use terms liable to perversion. Thus‡ “Hilary accuses the heretics of a great crime, in constraining him, by their wickedness, to expose to the danger of human language those things which ought to be confined within the religion of the mind; plainly avowing, that this is to do things unlawful, to express things inexpressible, to assume things not conceded. A little after, he largely excuses himself for his boldness in bringing forward new terms; for when he has used the names Father, Son, and Spirit; he immediately adds, that whatever is sought farther, is beyond the signification of language, beyond the reach of our senses, beyond the conception of our understanding. And in another place, he pronounces, that happy were the Bishops of Gaul, who had neither composed, nor received, nor even known, any other confession but that ancient and very simple one, which had been received in all the churches from the days of the Apostles. Very simple is the excuse of Augustine, that this word, trinity, was extorted by necessity, on account of the poverty of human language on so great a subject, not for the sake of expressing what God is, but to avoid passing it over in total silence, that the Father, Son, and Spirit are three.”

“If, then, the words have not been rashly invented, we should beware lest we be convicted of fastidious temerity in rejecting them. I could wish them indeed, to be buried in oblivion, provided this faith were universally received, that the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, are the one God; and that, nevertheless, the Son is not the Father, nor the Spirit the Son, but that they are distinguished from each other by some peculiar property. “I am not so rigidly precise as to be fond of contending for mere words.” “Let us also learn, however, to beware, since

\*See Suiceri Thesaurus sat nomine *τριάς*.

†Institutes, Book i, ch. 13, § 3, &c.

‡Calvin's Institutes, p. 99.

we have to oppose the Arians on one side, and the Sabellians on the other, lest while they take offence at both these parties being deprived of all opportunity of evasion, they cause some suspicion that they are themselves the disciples either of Arius, or of Sabellius. Arius confesses, "that Christ is God," but maintains also, "that he was created and had a beginning." He acknowledges that Christ is "one with the Father," but secretly whispers in the ears of his disciples, that he is "united to him," like the rest of the faithful, though by a singular privilege." Say that he is consubstantial, you tear off the mask from the hypocrite, and yet you add nothing to the Scriptures. Sabellius asserts, "that the names Father, Son, and Spirit, are expressive of no distinction in the Godhead." Say that they are three, and he will exclaim, that you are talking of "three Gods." Say "that in the one essence of God there is a trinity of Persons," and you will, at once, express what the Scriptures declare, and will restrain such frivolous loquacity." Calvin adds, "But I have found, by long and frequent experience, that those who pertinaciously contend about words, cherish some latent poison."

Let us, then, recognize the necessity and importance of the term, trinity. Names are things. And so long therefore, as the doctrine taught by this word is assailed and denied, we have no alternative. Nor could the facts, proved, as we shall show, from Scripture, be probably expressed in a simpler form than in saying, that the God who is one and who is yet God as Father, as Son, and as Holy Ghost, is a TRINITY.

"Ineffable, all-powerful God, all free,  
 Thou only liv'st, and each thing lives by thee;  
 No joy, no, nor perfection to thee came  
 By the contriving of this world's great fame:  
 Ere sun, moon, stars, began their restless race,  
 Ere painted was with light Heaven's pure face,  
 Ere air had clouds, ere clouds wept down their show'rs,  
 Ere sea embraced earth, ere earth bare flow'rs,  
 Thou happy liv'dst, world nought to thee supply'd,  
 All in thyself, thyself thou satisfy'd;  
 Of good no splendor shadow doth appear,  
 No age-worn track, which shin'd in thee most clear  
 Perfection's sum, prime cause of every cause,  
 Midst, end, beginning where all good doth pause.  
 Hence of thy substance, differing in nought,  
 Thou in eternity thy Son forth brought;  
 The only birth of thy unchanging mind,  
 Thine image, pattern-like that ever shin'd;  
 Light out of light, begotten not by will,  
 But nature, all and that same essence still  
 Which thou thyself, for thou dost nought possess  
 Which he hath not, in aught nor is he less  
 Than he his great begetter; of this light.



Eternal, double kindled was thy spright  
 Eternally, who is with thee, the same  
 All-holy gift, Ambassador, knot, Flame;  
 Most sacred Triad, O most holy One!  
 Unprocreate Father, ever procreate Son,  
 Ghost breath'd from both, you were, are still, shall be,  
 (Most blessed) Three in One, and One in Three,  
 Incomprehensible by reachless height,  
 And unperceived by excessive light.  
 So in our souls three and yet one are still,  
 The understanding, memory and will;  
 So (though unlike) the planet of the days,  
 So soon as he was made, begat his rays,  
 Which are his offspring, and from both was hurl'd  
 The rosy light which consoles the world,  
 And none prevent another: so the spring,  
 The well head, and the stream which they forth bring  
 Are but one self same essence, nor in aught  
 Do differ, save in order; and our thought  
 No chime of time discerns in them to fall  
 But three distinctly 'bide one essence all.  
 But these express not thee: who can declare  
 Thy being? men and angels dazzled are.  
 Who would this Eden force with wit or sense,  
 A cherubim shall find to bar him thence.  
 O! King, whose greatness none can comprehend,  
 Whose boundless goodness doth to all extend;  
 Light of all beauty, Ocean without ground,  
 That standing, flowest; giving dost abound;  
 Rich Palace, and In-dweller, ever blest,  
 Never not working, ever yet in rest:  
 What wit cannot conceive, words say of thee,  
 Here, where we, but as in a mirror see,  
 Shadows of shadows, atoms of thy might,  
 Still only-eyed when staring on thy light;  
 Grant, that, released from this earthly jail,  
 And freed from clouds, which here our knowledge veil,  
 In Heaven's high temples where thy praises ring,  
 In sweeter notes I may hear angels sing.

[Drummond of Hawthornden. Hymn to the Fairest Faire.

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NOTE A.

*The alleged Unitarianism of Locke, Newton, Milton, Clarke, Watts, and Grotius.*

Although Unitarians claim pre-eminent honour because they base their opinions on reason alone, yet none are more anxious than they to sustain and patronize them by the authority of great names.

Mr. Locke's Essay was believed by some to lead inferentially to the rejection of the doctrine of the Trinity: and therefore, say Unitarians, Mr. Locke was a Unitarian. But in his elaborate and extended letters to Bishop Stillingfleet, Mr. Locke repudiates the charge, and proves that, as no such consequence was intended by him to be deduced from his Philosophy, so, in fact, no such consequence does, or can fairly be considered to follow from it. In his vindication of himself, Mr. Locke occupies nearly as much room as his entire essay, and as he was a bold and open expounder of his views, we may conclude that he had not adopted sentiments contrary to the orthodox doctrine of the Trinity. That he held such views, he solemnly denied, in *words*, and by his subscription to the Articles of the Church of England and communion at her altars. He acknowledged the doctrine of Christ's satisfaction for sins, and in his last moments he thanked God "for the love shewn to man in justifying him by faith in Jesus Christ,

and in particular for having called him to the knowledge of that Divine Saviour."‡

Sir Isaac Newton, in a letter to James Pearce, says, "Your letter a little surprised me, to find myself supposed to be a Socinian or Unitarian. I never was, nor am now, under the least temptation of such doctrines." "I hope you will do me the favor to be one of the examiners of my papers: till which time, you will do kindly to stop so false a report."\*

In his work against the genuineness of the passage in 1 John, Sir Isaac remarks,†—"It is no article of Faith, no point of discipline, nothing but a criticism concerning a text of Scripture, that I am going to write about." But he says, clearly enough, that he was not a Socinian. For, speaking of the passage in Cyprian's works, in which he asserts the doctrine of the Trinity in Unity, he says, "The Socinians here deal too injuriously with Cyprian, while they would have this place corrupted,—these places being, in my opinion, genuine." The two passages of Cyprian are the following: "Si templum Dei factus est, quaere ejus Dei? Si Creatoris; non potuit, quia in eum non credidit: Si Christi; nec ejus fieri potuit templum, qui negat Dominum Christum; Si Spiritus Sancti; quum tres unum sint, quomodo placatus ei esse potuit, qui ant Patris aut Filii inimicus est? Dicit Dominus Ego et Pater unum sumus; et iterum de Patre et Filio et Spiritu Sancto scriptum est: Et Hi Tres Unum Sunt." No one can doubt Cyprian's belief of the doctrine of the Trinity. And when we connect Newton's censure of the Socinians, with his conviction of the genuineness of these Trinitarian passages of Cyprian,—with the absence of all objection to the doctrine of the Trinity in his letter to Le Clerc,—and his adherence to the Church of England,—what can be reasonably inferred, but that he was not only a decided Anti-Socinian, but a believer of the established doctrines of the Church? There is one passage in his Letter to LeClerc, which strongly marks the mind of a believer in the Trinity. "In the Eastern nations, and for a long time in the Western, *The Faith* subsisted without this verse, (1 John v: 7,) and it is rather dangerous to Religion to make it now lean on a bruised reed." *The Faith*, he says, once subsisted without this verse; that is the faith, of which this verse now makes, or is supposed to make, a part or evidence; namely, Faith in the Holy Trinity. This Faith, he says, was prior to, and independent of, the verse. Faith, then, in the Holy Trinity, is called by *The Faith*, or the primitive Christian Faith. Again, he says, "It is rather a danger to Religion to make it lean on a bruised reed." By religion (the Christian Religion,) here also must be meant Faith in the Holy Trinity; for the general truth of Christianity cannot be said to lean on this verse; nor any other doctrine, but the doctrine of the Holy Trinity. The language, therefore, of this passage, evidently comes from one, who considered the Christian Religion, the Faith, and Faith in the Holy Trinity, as synonymous terms.

Dr. Clarke is another authority claimed by Unitarians. But, while inclined to modify the doctrine of the Trinity, Dr. Clarke believed that "with this first and supreme cause, or Father of all things, there has existed from the beginning, a second divine Person, which is the Word or Son."

"With the Father and the Son there has existed, from the beginning, a third Divine Person, which is the Spirit of the Father and the Son."

‡See the statement of his literary friend, who lived with him until death, in Works, vol. ix: p. 173, 8vo ed. See also numerous passages in proof of his anti-Socinian views in Hales on the Trinity, in vol. i: p. 275, 276, and in Bishop Burges's Tracts on the Divinity of Christ, p. 211, &c.

Giving a reason why Christ was not a mortal man, Locke uses this language: "Being the Son of God, he was immortal, like God, his Father." Now, to be immortal, with respect only to the future, is to be immortal like the angels, or the human soul; but to be immortal like God, his Father, is "to have neither beginning of days nor end of life," as St. Paul says of the Son of God, that is to be eternal and uncreated. To be immortal, then, like God, his Father, is to be immortal through his divine Sonship, that is, because he is of the same nature with his Father, or by consubstantiality of nature.

\*This letter is quoted by Mr. Belsham in his *Calm Inquiry*, p. 474.

†See Burges's Tracts, pp. 197-222.

By existing from the beginning, Dr. Clarke does not mean, as the Unitarians do, from the beginning of the Gospel dispensation, but speaking of the Son existing "before all worlds," and "without any limitation of time," that is, from eternity; and so of the Holy Spirit.

"After the accomplishing of man's redemption, by his sufferings and death on the Cross, for the sins of the world, our Lord (says Dr. Clarke,) is described in Scripture as invested with distinct worship in his own person, and receiving prayers (adoration, in the 3d edition,) and thanksgiving from his Church." As proofs of such worship, Dr. Clarke refers to a variety of texts, which mention his disciples worshipping him, honouring him as well as the Father, baptizing in his name, angels worshipping him, every knee bowing at his name, calling upon his name, invoking him in prayer, and praying for grace, peace, blessing, direction, assistance and comfort from him.

The Chevalier De Ramsay, who was witness to the last sentiments of Dr. Clarke, assures us that he very much repented having published his work on the Trinity.—[See Whitaker's Origin of Arianism, pp. 456-470.] And in a paper presented to the Upper House, he formally and solemnly declared his opinion to be, "that the Son of God was eternally begotten, by the eternally incomprehensible power and will of the Father; and that the Holy Spirit was likewise eternally derived from the Father, by and through the Son, according to the eternal, incomprehensible power and will of the Father."

Another eminent man, claimed as an Unitarian, is Grotius. Grotius has, however, given indisputable proof of his anti-Socinianism. This we might establish by showing that he admits the words of Thomas, "My Lord, and my God," to be an acknowledgment of Christ's Divinity; that he follows the usual interpretation of John i: 1-14, making Christ the incarnate Word, and the Creator of the World, &c.

In the year 1617, he published his *Defensio Fidei Catholice de Satisfactione Christi adversus Faustum Socinum*. The friendly correspondence which he afterwards carried on with Crellius, excited some doubts of his orthodoxy. To repel these doubts, he prefixed to an edition of his tract *De Satisfactione Christi*, in 1638, (one and twenty years after its first publication,) a Letter to G. J. Vossius, in which he confirms his former sentiments on the subject of Atonement, by an appeal to his Annotations on the Bible, and to his tract *De Jure Belli et Pacis*; and asserts his belief in the Trinity. In his treatise *De Veritate Religionis Christiane* L. V., he vindicates christians from the charge of worshipping three Gods against the Jews on their own principles, and from their own writings: to which treatise he refers in his Letter to Vossius: *Triados probationem in eo libro directe aggressus non sum, memor ejus quod a viro magno socero tuo andiverem, peccasse Resseum, &c. Illud addam, si quis meam de summa Trinitate sententiam scire cupiat, reperturum quod satis sit in Poematis nuper editis. Amplior explicatio in notis reservanda est.* Poetry is the natural language of religion, Sacer interpresque Deorum.

Another name most unwarrantably claimed as in his last days favouring Unitarianism, is Dr. Watts. For this bold and daring sacrilege and profanation of a good man's name, there is, as I have shewn elsewhere, no manner of proof.\*

The great Milton is another authority on which Unitarianism delights to rest with confidence. Milton, during his life, held communion as far as he did commune, only with those who believed in the doctrine of the Trinity. He has published the boldest prayer to the Triune God in the English language. He was universally regarded as a Trinitarian during life, and since his death, until the year 1823, when the posthumous work on christian doctrine attributed to him, was discovered. Of the authenticity of this work, very serious doubts may be entertained, both on the ground of its internal style, which is in perfect contrast to Milton's prose works, and of deficient external evidence. The very fact that Milton, who was a martyr to his free and bold expression of opinion, and a leading controversialist, should not have published this treatise, but have left

\*In two Articles published in the different Periodicals. See also Milton's Life of Watts.

it to the chances of destruction, is, in itself, strong proof against its authenticity.

But granting that this work is Milton's production, it may have been, for all we can tell, the work of his yet unsettled and wayward youth, whose sentiments he lived afterwards to correct.

But it is, after all, only in one point, and to a certain extent, that this treatise opposes the views of Trinitarian Evangelical Christians. On the subjects of man's fall, depravity, guilt and ruin,—of the covenants, both of works and grace,—of original sin, and its imputation to all mankind,—of regeneration, repentance, justification, sanctification, adoption, perseverance, election, predestination, assurance, atonement, and the prophetic, sacerdotal and kingly offices of Christ,—in short, on all that enters into, defines, and constitutes the system of evangelical, orthodox Christianity, this treatise is evangelical, and in *direct antagonism* to the system of Unitarianism, from which it is as far removed as Heaven from earth.

Against Socinian views of the inspiration and authority of Scripture, and of the nature of Christ and the Holy Spirit, this treatise wages *open and avowed* conflict.

Equally opposed is the teaching of this work on the subject of the Trinity, to the views of any body of Unitarians now existing.

The author does not believe in a Tri-unity of three persons in one God-head, but in three distinct and separate beings, each of whom is God, and possessed of all divine attributes, prerogatives, powers and worship. The Son, however, was created or generated by the Father, and is inferior to Him, and the Spirit, who was also created, is inferior to both.

The Son received from the Father both "the name and nature of Deity," (vol. i., p. 126, Boston ed.)—"coequality with the Father," (p. 193.) In becoming man, therefore, the Son "emptied himself of that form of God in which he had previously existed,"—(p. 193.) The Father "imparts his glory to the Son,"—(p. 192.) The Son possesses self-existence, (p. 177.) omnipresence, (p. 178,) omniscience, (p. 179.) omnipotence, (p. 180.) though not absolutely, or independently, of the Father.

"When the Son is said to be the first born of every creature, and the beginning of the creation of God," nothing can be more evident than that God, of his own will, created, or generated, or produced, the Son before all things, endowed with the Divine nature, as in the fulness of time he miraculously begat him in his human nature of the Virgin Mary. The generation of the Divine nature is described by no one with more sublimity and copiousness than by the Apostle to the Hebrews, (i., 2, 3.) whom he appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, &c. It must be understood from this, that God imparted to the Son as much as he pleased of the Divine nature.—nay, of the Divine substance itself.

This point also appears certain, notwithstanding the arguments of some of the moderns to the contrary, that the Son existed in the beginning, under the name of the *logos*, or word, and was the first of the whole creation, by whom afterwards all other things were made, both in Heaven and earth. John i., 1-3, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God," &c.: xvii., 5, "And now, O Father, glorify me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was."—Col. i., 15, 18. Pages 112, 106.

These extracts are made from the chapter on the Son of God, which is published by Unitarians as a tract. But there is another full chapter "of Christ as a Redeemer," [ch. xiv.,] which Unitarians have not published in connexion with the other, and thus give to their readers a very imperfect and false view of the doctrines of this work. In this chapter Milton says [p. 383.] "Redemption is that act whereby Christ, being sent in the fulness of time, redeemed all believers at the price of his own blood, by his own voluntary act, conformably to the eternal counsel and grace of God, the Father."

Again, page 386: "Two points are to be considered in relation to Christ's character as Redeemer: his nature and office. His nature is two-fold—Divine and human."

Again, page 388: "With regard to Christ's Divine nature, the reader is referred to what was proved in a former chapter concerning the Son of

God; from whence it follows, that He, by whom all things were made, both in Heaven and earth, even the angels themselves,—He who in the beginning was the Word, and God with God, and although not supreme, yet the first born of every creature, must necessarily have existed previous to his incarnation, whatever subtleties may have been invented to evade this conclusion by those who contend for the merely human nature of Christ.

"This incarnation of Christ, whereby he, being God, took upon him the human nature, and was made flesh, without thereby ceasing to be numerically the same as before, is generally considered by theologians as next to the Trinity in Unity, the greatest mystery of our religion."

Again, pages 392-'3: "There is, then, in Christ, a mutual hypostatic union of two natures, that is to say, of two essences, of two substances, and consequently of two persons; nor does this union prevent the respective properties of each from remaining individually distinct. That the fact is so, is sufficiently certain; the mode of union is unknown to us; and it is best to be ignorant of what God wills should remain unknown."

"How much better is it [p. 393,] for us to know merely that the Son of God, our Mediator, was made flesh, that he is called both God and man, and is such in reality; which is expressed in Greek by the single and appropriate term, *Θεανθρωπος*."

Page 397: "It sometimes happens, on the other hand, that what properly belongs to the compound nature of Christ, is attributed to one of his natures only, [1 Tim. 2, 5.] one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." Now he is not mediator, inasmuch as he is man, but inasmuch as he is *Θεανθρωπος*."

The mediatorial office of Christ is that whereby, at the special appointment of God the Father, he voluntarily performed, and continues to perform, on behalf of man, whatever is requisite for obtaining reconciliation with God and eternal salvation.—Page 400.

"Christ's sacerdotal office is that whereby he once offered himself to God the Father as a sacrifice for sinners, and has always made, and still continues to make intercession for us."

"The humiliation of Christ is that state in which, under his character of God-man he voluntarily submitted himself to the Divine justice, as well in life as in death, for the purpose of undergoing all things requisite to accomplish our redemption."—Page 410.

The satisfaction of Christ is the complete reparation made by him in his two-fold capacity of God and man, by the fulfilment of the law, and payment of the required price for all mankind.—Page 417.

The effect of Christ's satisfaction is sufficient to produce the reconciliation of God the Father with man.—Page 426.

It will be now, we think, abundantly evident that, however much the work differs from the orthodox faith on the subject of the Trinity, it differs on the same subject quite as much, and indeed far more, from the Unitarian theory, while on all other points it coincides with the evangelical system, and is diametrically opposite to that of Unitarianism.

To the names mentioned as being claimed by Unitarians, as authorities in favour of their opinions, several others of less celebrity might be mentioned.\* Enough has been said to prove, 1. That Unitarianism is ever ready to avail itself of the authority of great names, however slender, or even suicidal may be the evidence. 2. That, like Popery, it waits for death to prevent the opportunity of immediate and direct denial in order to create and perpetuate rumours of an alleged change of opinions.

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#### NOTE B.

##### *Howe on the Social Nature of God.*

"Upon the whole, let such a union be conceived in the being of God, with such a distinction, and one would think (though the complexions of men's minds do strangely and unaccountably differ,) the absolute perfection of the Deity, and especially, the perfect felicity thereof, should

\*See Heber's Bampton Lectures, pp. 120, 121.

be much the more apprehensible with us. When we consider the most delicious society which would hence ensue, among the so entirely consentient Father, Son and Spirit, with whom there is so perfect rectitude, everlasting harmony, mutual complacency, unto highest delectation; according to our way of conceiving things, who are taught by our own nature, (which also, hath in it the Divine image,) to reckon no enjoyment pleasant, without the association of some other with us therein; we for our parts, cannot but hereby have in our minds, a more gustful idea of a blessed state, than we can conceive in mere eternal solitude.

God speaks to us as men, and will not blame us for conceiving things so infinitely above us, according to the capacity of our natures; provided, we do not assume to ourselves to be a measure for our own conceptions of him; further than as he is himself pleased to warrant and direct us herein. Some likeness we may (taught by himself,) apprehend between him and us, but with infinite (not inequality only, but) unlikeness. And for this case of delectation in society, we must suppose an immense difference between him an all-sufficient, self-sufficient Being, comprehending in himself the infinite fulness of whatsoever is most excellent and delectable and ourselves, who have in us, but a very minute portion of being, goodness, or felicity, and whom he hath made to stand much in need of one another, and most of all of him.

But, when looking into ourselves, we find there is in us a disposition, often upon no necessity, but sometimes, from some sort of benignity of temper, unto conversation with others; we have no reason, when other things concur, and do fairly induce, and lead our thoughts this way to apprehend any incongruity in supposing he may have some distinct object of the same sort of propension in his own most perfect being too, and therewith such a propension itself also.

As to what concerns ourselves, the observation is not altogether unapposite, what Cicero treating of friendship, discourses of perpetual solitude, "that the affectation of it must signify the worst of ill-humor, and the most savage nature in the world. And supposing one of so sour and morose a humor as to shun and hate the conversation of men, he would not endure it, to be without some one or other to whom he might disgorge the virulence of that his malignant humor. Or that supposing such a thing could happen, that God should take a man quite out of the society of men, and place him in absolute solitude, supplied with the abundance of whatsoever nature could covet besides; who, saith he, is so made of iron, as to endure that kind of life?" And he introduces Architas Tarentinus, reported to speak to this purpose, "that if one could ascend into Heaven, behold the frame of the world, and the beauty of every star, his admiration would be unpleasant to him alone, which would be most delicious, if he had some one to whom to express his sense of the whole."

We are not, I say, strictly to measure God by ourselves in this; further than as he himself prompts and leads us. But, if we so form our conception of Divine bliss, as not to exclude from it somewhat, whereof that delight in society, which we find in ourselves may be an imperfect, faint resemblance; it seems not altogether disagreeable to what the Scriptures also teach us to conceive concerning him, when they bring in the eternal wisdom, saying, as one distinct from the prime Author and Parent of all things, then was I by him, as one brought up with him, and daily his delight.—Prov. viii: 30.

For the same import are many passages of the Fathers; "If," says Athenagoras, "on account of your surpassing intellect, you wish to learn what the Son means; in a few words I will tell you. He is the first offspring of the Father, but not as anything created, for God is from the beginning, and being an eternal mind, he himself had within himself the Word, being eternally comprehensive of the Word. The Holy Spirit likewise, acting efficaciously in those who prophecy, we assert to be an emanation from God, flowing from him and returning to him, as a ray of the sun. Who then, might not well think it strange, that we, who declare God the Father, and God the Son, and the Holy Spirit, showing both their power in unity and their distinction in order, should yet be called Atheists.

The argument of Athenagoras is this, God's personal Word is the Reason of God. But God is eternally rational, or eternally comprehensive of Reason. Therefore, the Word or Reason of God is eternal also.

The play upon the terms *λογος* and *λογικος* in their Greek acceptation cannot be preserved in an English version.

There is a parallel passage of Athanasius, which may serve to elucidate this of Athenagoras. Athan. Orat. ii. Cont. Arian. Oper. vol. i. p. 154. Commel 1600.

The *αλογος* of Athanasius is evidently the opposite to the *λογικος* of Athenagoras.

Tertullian has imitated in Latin, the same form of phraseology and the same peculiar line of argument.

Ante omnia enim Deus erat solus, ipse sibi et mundus et locus et omnia: solus autem, quia nihil extrinsecus praeter illum. Caeterum ne tunc quidem solus: habitat enim secum, quam habet in semetipso, Rationem suam scilicet. Rationalis [Athenagoræ *λογικος*] enim Deus: et Ratio in ipso prius: et ita ab ipso omnia. Quæ Ratio sensus ipsius est, hanc Græci *λογον* dicunt. Tertul. adv. Prax. § 3. Oper. p. 497.

The whole argument is founded upon the double sense of the term *λογος* which imports either Verbum or Ratio. On this double sense, Athenagoras and others of the old Fathers delighted to play. As the Father is eternally *λογικος* his *λογος* they argued must be eternal also.

Tres dirigens, Patrem et Filium et spiritum sanctum: tres autem non statu, sed gradu; nec substantia, sed forma: nec potestate sed specie: unius autem substantiæ et unius status.\*

The same argument for, and view of, the Trinity, is embodied in one of the ancient hymns of the church, as found in the Thesaurus Hymnologicus Tom. i. p. 276.

In maiestatis solio,  
Tres sedent in triclinio,  
Nam non est consolatio  
Perfecta solitario.

Aeternæ mentis oculo,  
Quando pater inflectitur  
In lucis suæ speculo,  
Imago par exprimitur.

Imaginis consortium,  
Nativus præ exitus,  
Consorsque spirans gaudium  
Ingenitus et genitus,

Hoc gaudium est spiritus  
Quo patri natus jungitur,  
Et unum bonum funditus  
In his tribus concluditur.

In tribus est simplicitas,  
Quos non distinguit qualitas,  
Non obstat tribus unitas,  
Quos ampliat immensitas.

Per solam vim originis,  
Communio fit numinis,  
Nativo ductu germinis,  
Votivique spiraminis.

Ingenito et genito, etc.

\*Faber's Apost. of Trinit. vol. ii. pp. 249.

## ARTICLE VI.

### OBJECTIONS TO THE DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY FROM THE UNITY OF GOD, AS TAUGHT IN SCRIPTURE, ANSWERED.

The chief difficulty in the way of a candid examination and acceptance of the doctrine of the Trinity, arises from the prejudices with which the mind comes to the investigation,—its unwillingness to submit itself to the truth of God without being able to comprehend the nature of the truth believed,—and above all the enmity and aversion with which this doctrine is associated, because it is so humbling to the pride and self-righteous vanity of man.

The irrelevancy of the objections made against the doctrine of the Trinity on the ground of its alleged unreasonableness, contradictoriness, incomprehensibility, obscurity, and merely speculative and abstract character, we have, we think, satisfactorily proved to be untenable. The objections which arise from “an evil heart of unbelief” against the doctrine itself, and against the system of grace which it involves,—and which after all is the real hindrance to the more universal reception of this doctrine,—these can be removed only when “the natural heart” is transformed by the renewing and enlightening influences of the Holy Ghost, through whose teaching alone any man can call Jesus Lord, and worship Father, Son and Holy Ghost, as one God, “in spirit and in truth.” Of ALL the objections which can arise against the doctrine of the Trinity, it may be truly said that they are based upon the impious and absurd presumption that the Divine Being is more clearly and fully known to those who are so wise in their conceit, as to imagine they have “by searching found out the Almighty to perfection,” than he is to himself. Such persons therefore, imagine that they are better able to describe what God is, and what God is not, than God has thought fit to make known as the truth on these subjects in the sacred Scriptures, which “are all given by inspiration through Holy men who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.”

The only rational inquiry on this subject undoubtedly is, who or what God is, as he himself has been pleased to inform us, in his own selected language; and whether this God is only one simple, absolute, personal, uncompounded and solitary being; or whether in the Unity of the Divine Being there is a



Trinity, composed of three persons who are spoken of in Scripture as the FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST. The former of these opinions we affirm not to be the doctrine of Scripture; such a metaphysical unity can be held only by declaring God to be, what he himself has nowhere affirmed that he is, and by peremptorily denying God to be what he has led us to believe he is, from the whole tenor, and from many express declarations, of the sacred Scriptures. The Scriptures, we affirm, plainly teach that God is one,—that nevertheless, there are three persons bearing distinct names and offices who are called Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,—that to each of these three is attributed everything that is most peculiar and appropriate to the Divine nature without any difference;—that those things, which most clearly distinguish God from every created and derived being, do not distinguish these three persons from one another;—that all that is most distinctive of God is not appropriated to THE FATHER alone, nor to THE SON alone, nor to THE SPIRIT alone, but to each and every one of them;—and, therefore, that the only living and true God is a Tri-unity consisting of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; and not any one, or any two of these, alone. The Father alone, therefore, exclusive of the Son, and Holy Ghost, is not the one God, the only God, the one supreme cause of all things, or the sole origin of all being, power, wisdom and authority.

But it will be here vehemently urged that inasmuch as all believers in the Bible admit the unity of God to be clearly, and frequently, taught in the Holy Scriptures, all other passages which seem to teach an opposite doctrine must be interpreted in accordance with this.

Undoubtedly we admit, as fully as our opponents in this controversy do, that the Scriptures teach, as a fundamental truth, that there is but one living and true God, besides whom there is none else. About this point there is no dispute. But the question is, WHO is this one God, and WHAT is the Unity of this one God.

It is, as we before remarked, commonly imagined, that the Bible is full of texts in which the absolute and personal unity of the Father, as alone the true God, is taught. The truth, however, is, that such a unity of God is nowhere taught in Scripture,—that there are very few passages either in the Old or the New Testaments, which bear directly and dogmatically upon the unity of God,—and that they are by no means as

numerous as those in which the plurality of God, and the divinity of Christ and of the Holy Ghost, are taught. The frequent assertions with regard to this subject are very erroneous,—and are made at hazard, and without diligent and faithful comparison.\* There are, indeed, many passages which speak of God as “the true God,” and as one God in opposition to all other Gods. But the passages which *even seem* to teach that the Godhead is not a trinity but a simple uncompounded unity, are very few.

Let us turn to two of these passages, and these the strongest in the whole Bible; one from the Old, and the other from the New Testament.

In the book of Deuteronomy, Chap. vi: 4 and 5, we read these words, “Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God, is one Lord; and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, with all thy soul, with all thy might.”

This sentence was proclaimed as a kind of oracular *afflatum*, a solemn and authoritative principle, to the Israelites. By an express command in the oral law, the Jews believe that they are required twice a day to repeat this verse, which they call *Shemah*. The Talmud contains also a great many directions about the manner in which it should be pronounced, and its virtue when uttered in a dying hour. This was also one of the four passages which the Jews wrote upon their phylacteries and upon their door posts. And, as it is one form of what our Saviour calls the first and great commandment, it deserves very careful consideration.

In this passage we have a declaration, and an inference from it. The declaration, as it is in the original, is that “Jehovah, our Elohim, is one Jehovah,” and the inference from it is, that we ought to love this “Jehovah our Elohim,” with all our heart.

From this passage it is inferred, by modern Jews and Unitarians, that Jehovah, the God of Israel, is numerically and metaphysically one; and that he exists a solitary person, and not a trinity of persons. But the text makes no such affirmation. It does not say that Jehovah is one numerically, one metaphysically, or one in person. Had this been the design of the inspired penman, he would have said “Our Jehovah is only one,” or “Jehovah, our Elohim, is one Elohim,” and therefore, “thou shalt love him with all thy heart,” &c.

\*See Stuart's Letters to Channing, p. 47.

Had God meant to teach that he was *only* one, and in no sense three in one, he would have used also the term *yahid*, which is now employed by the Jews in stating this doctrine of the divine unity in their creed. This term *yahid*, means *only one*; as when God required Abraham to slay HIS ONLY SON Isaac, where the term is *yahid*. (See also, Gen. xii: 16, Jud. xi: 34.) God might thus have said that he was *Eloah yahid, only one God*. But he does not say this. He does not use *Eloah* in the singular, but *Elohim* in the plural; and he does not use *yahid, only one*, but the very indefinite word *ahad, one*; which concludes nothing as to his trinity of persons in one Godhead, nor as to the numerical or personal unity of God. The language of the text, as God has given it, therefore, affirms merely, "that Jehovah the God of Israel is one." And if the adjunct *one* is made to refer to number, then the passage would teach that the Jehovah of Israel was one Jehovah, but not necessarily that he was the only one. The inference would then be entirely inappropriate, and the duty it enjoins contrary to what would be the duty of every man if there were other Jehovahs equally divine; unless indeed, we adopt the opinion of some German scholars at the present time, that the God of Israel was only regarded and worshipped by them as a tutelary or national God, and not as the only God.\* Their love would in this case, be required merely on the ground of national obedience, an idea however, totally inconsistent with every portion of the Bible.

But the term *one*, cannot refer to number, so as to mean that God is numerically one; because further, a plural term is added, and interposed between the two Jehovahs, in order to qualify their import. The declaration which God here makes of himself is, that "Jehovah, Elohim, is one Jehovah," that is, in English, "JEHOVAH, OUR GODS, IS ONE JEHOVAH." "OUR GODS," who has been pleased to call himself by the name Jehovah, from the consideration that he is self-existent, he is the only Jehovah, that is, the only God that exists,—the only God who is Jehovah,—the self-existent and ever blessed God. The passage, therefore, plainly does not refer to unity of number, but to unity of essence, or of nature; and teaches, as the Jews in their books of prayers express it, that God is UNUS, ONE, not UNICUS, † ONLY ONE. On this account therefore,

\*De Wette, Bauer, Wegscheider.

†See Allix, pp. 121 and 268.

because Jehovah Elohim is the only living and true God, he alone, is to be loved with all our heart and soul, and strength, and mind. And hence it is added, in the 14th verse, "ye shall not go after other gods, of the gods of the people, which are round about you."

In like manner, the prophet Zachariah, in speaking of the times of Messiah says: "In that day, there shall be Jehovah one, and his name "one." And that this command was so understood by the Jews in our Saviour's time, is evident; for when he quoted this passage in reply to the inquiry, "which was the first and great commandment," the Scribe answered, "Well master thou hast said the truth, for there is one God, and there is none other but he."—(Mark xii: 28-34.) And thus also, the apostle Paul, the learned converted Jewish Rabbi, says, "There is none other God but one."—(1 Cor. viii: 4.) Such also, is the interpretation given by ancient Jewish writers. This has been proved by many both converted Jews and learned christians. Thus, in explaining the passage quoted from Zachariah, Rabbi David Kimchi interprets it as teaching that "the heathen will acknowledge that Jehovah is alone, that there is no God besides him, consequently there will be his name alone; as they will not make mention by name of any other God in the world; but will make mention of his name only." Indeed, so great is the sameness of this text, and that in Deut. vi: 4, that Rabbi Solomon has explained the one by the other, and has made the former, instead of a solemn attestation of the numerical unity of God, to be a prediction of the universal worship of Jehovah in the reign of Messiah. "He who is our God now, and not the God of the Gentiles, will hereafter be one common Jehovah." So also, Rabbi Abraham, another eminent Jewish Commentator, interprets Deut. vi: 4. "In other words," says he, "he, our God, is the foundation of our faith; and is likewise doubled, on being called one; meaning by himself, or alone; for that Jehovah is in this sense one, there are proofs without end." To the same effect might be quoted Rabbi Bechai Lipman and Rabbi Isaac Abarbinel.\* It is, therefore, very plain, both from the passage itself, from other similar passages, and from Jewish authorities themselves, that the term ONE in Deut. vi: 4, does not refer to a numerical, or

\*See given in the original in Oxlee's "Christian Doctrine of the Trinity maintained on the principles of Judaism."—Lon. 1815, 3 vols., vol. i, p. 334.

metaphysical unity of person in the Deity, but to a unity of Godhead.

The term Jehovah in Hebrew, like the term God in English, refers to the Divine nature, form, or essence, and is thus equivalent to our word Deity or Godhead, which is undoubtedly and invariably in Scripture, declared to be one. And thus this passage, in a most definite and expressive manner, conveys the idea that notwithstanding the real plurality which is intimated in the term Elohim, Jehovah is still one in his incomprehensible essence. Unity and plurality are, therefore, evidently united in the one God, who is alone Jehovah.

The propriety of the emphatic *one* is lost in the Greek (which employs the term *Lord* for *Elohim*,) and in the English also, which renders the passage, "the Lord our God is one Lord." To say that our Lord, or God, is *one*, is an unmeaning tautology in comparison with "our Elohim is one." The plurality of that term shows the necessity of the restriction, and is equivalent to saying, "Jehovah our Elohim, though three persons, is one Jehovah. As there is only one God, there can be only one true God; and therefore, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, are the only true God." For why else, we ask, does God in this passage, written "by holy men who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost," employ these three terms,—Jehovah, Elohim, Jehovah, in apposition to each other and one of them plural? The term *Elohim*, in Hebrew, has a singular form *Eloah* or *Eloh*, which is found as we have seen, above seventy times in the Old Testament, (as in Deut. xxxii: 15, 17.) Why then, is this word *most frequently* introduced in the plural form, signifying Gods; and that too, when the Deity himself is exclusively the subject, and authoritatively the speaker?\*

To this enquiry the Jews themselves admit the necessity of some reply, since Rabbi Huna remarks that had not God himself used this word, it would have been unlawful for man to do so.† The common people among the Jews, have also been prohibited from reading the history of the creation, lest they should be led into heresy,‡ and the Hebrew doctors have regarded this portion of Scripture as containing some latent mystery,—a mystery not to be revealed till the coming of the

\*The term Elohim is used by Moses alone, *thirty* times in the history of the creation; and *five hundred* times, in one form or other, in the five Books of the Pentateuch.

†See in Martini *Pugeo Fidei*, p. 488.

‡Allix, p. 132.

Messiah,§ and according to the Cabbala, the term Elohim is composed of the two words *El* and *Him*, that is, *they are God.*||

The only reply attempted to be given to this inquiry is an assumed idiom of the Hebrew language, by which it is said to be merely an honorary, or complimentary form of speech. But this is a complete begging of the question. The Hebrew is a sacred language—the language of that people whom God chose out of all others, to be the depository of his truth,—and the language in which for ages, that truth was revealed. It was imparted by God, as many have thought, as the original language, or when he gave the law at Sinai. At any rate, God had the choosing of the language in which to reveal his truth, and the particular form in which his truth should be revealed. The Hebrew language which God has employed, has singular forms, not only of the name Elohim, but also for the other names by which God is designated. And if God, in his person, had been numerically and only one, he would *always*, employ, as he has *sometimes*, employed the singular title; and thus have avoided a plural form, which, he must have foreknown, would be regarded as an evidence of plurality and not of Unity, in the one Divine nature. Why then, did God, by holy men, who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, employ these plural titles of God? Why did this so-called idiom originate with the sacred Scriptures, and with God's revelation of himself in his own word? Either the language of the Scriptures is the language of polytheism and idolatry, as some have blasphemously supposed, or else this appellation of the Deity in the plural number is employed to express a plurality of persons in that Godhead to which it is appropriated.\*

In order to meet this argument, modern Jews and Unitarians have instituted two general modes of interpretation; the first of which is, that this is the regal form of speaking, in which the plural is used for the singular; the other, that it refers to the Deity in conference with his angels in council. The former opinion has been maintained on the ground of a number of Scriptural texts, all which Rabbi Abraham, one of their own doctors, is pleased to call false allegations; and has not only shown their irrelevancy, but demonstrated, that the opinion itself, has no manner of foundation. Indeed, there is not the smallest authority for it in the composition of the Old Testa-

§This the Rabbi Ibba expressly affirms.

||Rabbi Bachai in Kidder's Demonstration of the Messiah, pt. 3, p. 81.

\*See Oxlee, vol. i., pp. 68-94.

ment; which, being penned with that simplicity peculiar to the early ages of the world, introduce all princely characters expressing themselves invariably in their own proper number, and with the strictest grammatical propriety; nor does it distinguish, in that respect, between the most potent of sovereigns and the very lowest of the human species.\*

And as it regards the second opinion: That angels should act as coadvisers and coadjutors in the administration of the affairs of the world, is not only repugnant to the very meaning of the term angel, itself; which denotes a being deputed on a mission from God; but is wholly unsanctioned by any declaration to that effect, either in Moses or in the Prophets. It is, indeed, difficult to determine, whether the absurdity or the impiety with which the Creator is thus supposed to consult with created beings on such highly important matters, deserves the greater execration, for, says Scripture, "Who hath known the mind of the Lord, or who hath been his counsellor."

John Xeres, a Jew, converted in England some years ago, published a sensible and affectionate address to his unbelieving brethren, in which he lays before them his reasons for leaving the Jewish religion and embracing the christian. "The christians," says he, "confess Jesus to be God; and it is this that makes us look upon the gospels as books that overturn the very principles of religion." Then, he undertakes to prove that the unity of God is not such as he once understood it to be, an unity of persons, but of essence, under which more persons than one are comprehended; and the first proof he offers is that of the name Elohim. "Why else," says he, "is that frequent mention of God by nouns of the plural number? as in Gen. i: 1, where the word Elohim, which is rendered God, is of the plural number, though annexed to a verb of the singular number; which demonstrates as evidently as may be, that there are several persons partaking of the same Divine nature and essence."

To what has been said, we will add the testimony of the celebrated Jewish work called Zohar,† a work esteemed by the orthodox Jews, and by all former Jews, as scarcely second in authority to the Bible, and believed by *them* to have been writ-

\*See also, the exposure of this objection in Smith's Messiah, vol. 1., pp. 486-488.

†See quoted in Kidder's Demonstration of the Messiah, pt. iii, p. 83. and Jameson's Reply to Priestly, vol. 1., pp. 75, 76.

ten before the Talmud, if not before the time of Christ.† The author of this work renders Deut. vi: 4, in this manner: "The Lord, (or Jehovah,) and our God, and the word, are one." In his exposition of the passage beginning with *Jehovah*, he says: "He is the beginning of all things, the ancient of ancients, the Garden of Roots, and the perfection of all things." The other, or *our God*, is the depth, and the Fountain of Sciences, which proceed from that Father. The other (or Lord,) is called the measure of the Voice. He is one; so that one concludes with the other, and unites them together. Neither can one be divided from the other. And, therefore, he saith, Hear, O Israel, that is, join these together and make him one substance. For whatsoever is in the one, is in the other. He hath been the whole, he is the whole, and he will be the whole.‡

To the above exposition we would add the following, taken from the work itself. "Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord: Israel unites the three hypostases, the Lord, our God, one Lord, to make all, to be but one."—(Zohar, vol. ii., fol. 160, col. 2.) The following passage is also found on the same page, viz: "The Lord, our God, Lord: this is the mystery of the unity in three hypostases.

†It certainly dates from the first to the eighth Century.

‡These words are also given by Rabbi Markante, which undoubtedly implies his approbation of them. Such is the remarkable exposition of this passage, as given by Dr. Jameson, in his reply to Dr. Priestley. (1) From other portions of this work these expressions are quoted, (2) *Jehovah*, *Elohenu*, *Jehovah*, (*i. e.* *Jehovah*, our God, *Jehovah*.) These are the three degrees with respect to this sublime mystery; "in the beginning God (*Elohim*,) created the heavens and the earth," and again, "*Jehovah*, *Elohenu*, *Jehovah*, they are one; the three forms (modes or things) which are one." Elsewhere it is observed, "there are two and one is joined to them, and they are three, and when the three are one, he says to (or of) them these are the two names that Israel heard, *Jehovah*, *Jehovah*, and *Elohenu* (our God) is joined to them; and it is the seal of the ring of truth, and when they are joined, they are one in unity. This is illustrated by the three names the soul of man is called by, the soul, spirit and breath. The great Phillippe de Marnay, (3) among other ancient authors, quotes the exposition of Rabbi Ibba of this text, to this purport, that the first *Jehovah*, which is the incommunicable name of God, is the Father; by *Elohim* is meant the Son, who is the fountain of all knowledge; and by the second, *Jehovah*, is meant the Holy Ghost proceeding from them, and he is called *Achad*, one, because God is one. Ibba adds, that this mystery was not to be revealed till the coming of the Messiah. The author of the *Zohar* applies the word *holy*, which is thrice repeated in the vision of Isaiah, (4) to the three persons in the Deity, whom he elsewhere calls three suns, or lights, three sovereigns,—without beginning and without end.

[1] See vol. i., p. 75, and the references.

[2] See Gill's Comment. in loco, and Univ. Hist. vol. iii., 11.

[3] Advertisement aux Juifs, see in Anct. Hist. vol. i., p. 11.

[4] Chapter vi., 3.



But it is not merely to the use of the plural term as that by which the Old Testament Scriptures usually designate the Deity, that we refer as a proof, that according to God's own revelation of what his nature is, it unites a plurality of persons in a unity of essence. Written at a time when polytheism abounded, and to a people ever prone to fall into idolatry, the use of this term by God in reference to himself, and that even when announcing his Unity, is, indeed, most powerful evidence. This conclusion is, however, confirmed by another remarkable anomaly in the language used by the Old Testament writers when speaking of God, viz: the combination of these plural appellatives with singular verbs, pronouns and adjectives. To this usage only a few exceptions are found in the Hebrew Scriptures, from among hundreds of cases in which the plural appellative is used,—a circumstance which, whilst it shows that this was the regular usage of the sacred writers, at the same time proves that it would have been equally consistent with the idiom of the language, to have followed the ordinary rule of grammar applying to such cases. "For this anomaly, the Trinitarian hypothesis suggests a natural and easy solution. Apart from this hypothesis, however, no explanation of this usage can be furnished; and it must remain as one of the most unaccountable and capricious departures from one of the fundamental laws of human speech, of which we have an instance in the literature of any nation."‡

We are thus brought to the conclusion, that in this first and great commandment, God makes known the unity of his Godhead, and yet, at the same time, the trinity of his persons, and that such was the interpretation given of it by the most ancient, the wisest, and the most authoritative Jewish Rabbis. And it is no small confirmation of this that when the Jews, long before the christian era,\* ceased to use the word Jehovah which they never utter, they employed instead of it, the word *Adonai*, which is another plural title for the Deity.

When, therefore, in this, and some four or five other passages in the Old Testament, God declares that "he is one God and there is none else,"† the question arises, who is the being

‡Smith's Messiah.

\*Our evidences are found in the Septuagent.

†Exod. xx: 2, 3, Is. xlv: 8, and xlv: 9, and xlv: 21, 22.

These remarks apply to the first and second commandment, in which the same combination of Jehovah and Elohim takes place, and we are required to have no other Gods but this one, who unites in his one Godhead three persons.

who is thus expressly declared to be the only true God? He is called the God of Israel, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. But who, we again ask, is the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob? Jacob and the prophet Hosea concur in declaring that he is a certain angel or messenger before whom they walked; who fed Jacob all his life long, who redeemed him from all evil, with whom he had power and prevailed, and who yet is Jehovah the God of hosts.‡ But to be an angel or messenger he must be sent. Who then, is the SENDER of this MESSENGER? This question is resolved by the prophets Zechariah and Malachi. They teach us that the messenger of the covenant, though himself Jehovah and the God of Israel, is nevertheless, SENT, in his quality of a messenger, by Jehovah.§ Here, most unequivocally, we have two distinct persons, a SENDER and a SENT; each of whom is declared to be Jehovah; and the latter of whom, or Jehovah the messenger, is declared by Jacob and Hosea to be the God of Israel. But further, according to Malachi and Haggai, he is a being who is characterized, as the desire of all nations, who is announced as about to come suddenly to his temple; and whose act of coming to his temple is chronologically limited to the days of the second temple, which is thence to exceed the first temple in glory, and which was finally destroyed by Titus and the Romans. But to such characteristics Christ alone will be found to answer. Whence, christians have, in all ages, most logically and Scripturally concluded that Christ, or the second person of the blessed Trinity, or in other words, that God the Son is that messenger Jehovah, who is declared to have been sent by Jehovah, and who is yet Jehovah, and who is also, equally declared to be the God of Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob.

But still further. In many passages of the Old Testament the phrase "The Spirit of God," or "Jehovah," occurs in conjunction with certain attributes, qualities and acts, which lead to the conclusion that by that phrase is designated a Divine person. These would seem to conduct to the inference, that by this "Spirit of Jehovah" was intended as by the phrase already examined, "Angel of Jehovah," a Divine person, in some sense distinct from, and yet in another sense, one with the invisible Jehovah.

‡Exod. iii: 15, Gen. xlviii: 15, 16, and xxxii: 24, 30, Hos. xii: 2, 15.  
§Zechariah ii: 6, 11, Malachi iii: 1.

In other passages again, these three persons are introduced together. Thus, in Isaiah, lxiii: 9, 10, it is said, "In all their afflictions he was afflicted, but the Angel of his presence saved them; in his love and grace he redeemed them, and bare them, and carried them from the beginning. But they rebelled and grieved his Holy Spirit, so that he was turned to be their enemy, and himself fought against them."

Another passage to the same effect occurs in Isaiah xlvi: 16. "Approach unto me, hear this; from the beginning have I not spoken occultly, from the time when it was I was there, and now THE LORD hath sent ME and his SPIRIT." The speaker here is the same who, in verse 12, calls himself "The First and the Last," and who, in verse 13, claims to himself the work of creation. The speaker therefore, must be regarded as Divine. But in the verse before us, this divine being speaks of HIMSELF as distinct from THE LORD GOD, and as sent by HIM. He describes himself also, as the author of communications to men from the first. Now, such a being can be none other than the second person in the Trinity, the revealer of God to man, at once the equal and the messenger of the Father; and so the passage has been viewed by the great body of interpreters, ancient and modern.

What then, was the design of God in all these revelations of himself, of which, we have only given an illustration? To use the language of Bishop Hinds, "It surely must have been designed to suggest to the minds of his people, and to habituate their minds to contemplate God as Three. Three different divine Persons appear as the agents and rulers, in a threefold dispensation; so different indeed, that if left to form our conjectures of the divine nature, from the facts of this progressive economy, all view of *one* God must have been discarded. The facts of Revelation represent God as a Trinity; and it is only by express and perpetual qualifications of a view so suggested, that we are assured of his Unity.

The doctrine of the Trinity in short, rests primarily on historical facts; the doctrine of the Unity on a series of declarations and other provisions made in reference to those facts. If we suppose the Bible stript of all those provisions which it contains for qualifying its historical representations of the Divine nature, it would exhibit three Gods; but with those provisions, that representation becomes a Trinity in Unity.\*

\*See *The Three Temples of the One True God Contrasted*.—Oxf. 1850.

Having thus disposed of the fundamental proof-text for the unity of God in contradistinction to all other pretended deities, as found in the Old Testament, let us now take one of the most striking declarations respecting the Unity of God in the New Testament. This is found in John xvii: 1-3. "These words spake Jesus and lifted up his eyes to Heaven and said, Father; the hour is come, glorify the Son, that thy Son may also glorify thee. As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. And this is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent."

The argument drawn from this passage by Unitarians is, that since THE FATHER is declared to be THE ONLY true God, our Saviour, and the Holy Ghost are not truly God. But, in this argument, there is a gross fallacy. The very precise, and cautiously chosen, words of Christ are misstated. What Christ does say is, that his Father is the only true God, but he does not say that his Father ONLY is the true God. He affirms that his Father, in contrast with all the other so-called Gods, is the only true God, but he does not say that the Father ONLY, to the exclusion of the Son and the Holy Ghost, is alone this true God. Between these declarations there is a radical and essential difference. Christ affirms that there is an only true God, and that his Father is this only true God, both of which propositions we believe to be true. But this leaves the question still to be answered, as in the case of the Jehovah of the Old Testament,—who, and what, is this ONE ONLY TRUE GOD? According to his own representation of himself, God we have seen, is not an absolute, and uncompounded person, but is a triplicity of persons in one Godhead. God is a necessary, self-existent, spiritual being, in whom Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, do necessarily co-exist, so as to constitute that one being. The Father is the only true God, not excluding the Son and the Holy Spirit. The Son is the only true God, not excluding the Father and the Holy Ghost. The Holy Spirit is God, the only true, not excluding the Father and the Son. When, therefore, it is said the Father is the only true God, since each of them participates in that one essence or Godhead which is the only true and real God, each and all unite to constitute this one Godhead. And as this Godhead is common to each and all, it may be attributed to each; and each, therefore, may be called the only true God. Such is, as we believe, the teaching of Scrip-

ture, as to the natural, necessary, and eternal union, in one Godhead, of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. And against this our Saviour affirms nothing; since he does not say thou Father ONLY, art the true God, but that the Father is THE ONLY true God, a declaration which is equally true of the Son and of the Holy Ghost.

The term Father, when applied to God, does not always in Scripture, refer to the person of the Father, as distinct from the Son, but is employed as a general title of the divine nature, and thus includes the three persons.\* When the term Father is applied to God personally, and not as to his Godhead or essence, it is either in reference to his paternal relation to his creatures, and especially to believers, or to Christ as his only begotten Son, "whose goings forth," or, as the words mean, "whose generation is from of old, from everlasting."†

Now, what our Saviour says, he says of "MY Father," *i. e.*, of God as that eternal Godhead with whom he was "in the beginning as God, the Son." Christ, therefore, says, that God as his Father, that is God in that infinite essence and Godhead in which as he elsewhere declares "he and the Father are one," is the only true God. The very selection, out of all possible titles of God, of the term Father necessarily implies, and has reference to, the Son of whom Scripture is full. We everywhere read also, of the Holy Ghost, the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of God, who is God. Now, the term Father implies that the person so described, in the order of internal relation between the persons of the trinity, is the source or fountain of the trinity and the first in authority and office. Of him, therefore, it may emphatically be said, that he is the true God, since he includes and implies in his own nature, the Son and Holy Ghost.

Besides, whatever of divine honour is here ascribed to the Father is also ascribed to the Son. For, it is not only necessary to eternal life to know the Father to be the only true God, but also, as our Saviour's words certainly imply, to know the Son also, as being also, the only true God as well as the Father. We are to know that and all that of the Son, which we are to know of the Father; that is, that he also, is the true God, and therefore, as elsewhere, God teaches us "we are to honour THE SON, EVEN AS WE HONOUR THE FATHER."

\*Deut. xxxii: 6: Is. lxiii: 16, and lxiv: 3; Matt. v: 16, 48, and vi: 4, and 7, 11; John viii: 41.

†Micah vi: 4. See Jonathan Edward's Works, vol. 9.

Both the Son and the Father, therefore, and not the Father alone, or the Son alone, are represented as being unitedly and equally the grand objects of spiritual, saving knowledge, a statement which never would have been made without infinite presumption and impiety by Christ were he not himself "God, blessed for ever."

The knowledge here made requisite is, it must be remembered, a spiritual and heartfelt reliance on the united object presented to our faith. It includes love to him, adoration of him, and obedience to his commands. And as this knowledge is to be directed to the Son as well as to the Father, in order to obtain eternal life, the Son is to be regarded as the only true God equally with the Father. And this is what we are elsewhere taught, when we are told that "God is IN CHRIST reconciling the world unto himself," Christ being "GOD MANIFEST IN THE FLESH."

But further, the Father is here said to be the only true God, because he only can give eternal life. But this eternal life is here and elsewhere, more frequently and emphatically, associated absolutely and entirely with the Son, who must, therefore, also be the only true God. And hence Christ is denominated frequently "the life." He is frequently said to give "everlasting life" and "eternal life."\* And the apostle John, as if in allusion to this passage, declares, "and 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, even IN HIS SON JESUS CHRIST. THIS IS THE TRUE GOD AND ETERNAL LIFE.

And that the Son is elsewhere called the true God in Scripture, is admitted by Socinus himself, the father of modern Socinians.† "It is very false," says Socinus, "that we should openly declare Jesus Christ is not true God. We profess to say the contrary, and declare that he is true God, in several of our writings, as well in the Latin as in the Polish language." "Jesus Christ," says Smalcus, another father of the Unitarians, "also may be called with a sovereign right our God, and the true God, and so he really is." Our Saviour therefore, in attributing to HIMSELF as well as to THE FATHER the title "only true God," speaks, as our opponents admit, in conformity with the other portions of Scripture; as when, in the Old Testament, that being, whom we have identified with Christ, is made to

\*John vi : 27, and x : 28; Matt. xix : 16, 21.

†See Ad. Wick., p. 49, in Abaddie, p. 275.

declare "I am Jehovah thy God; thou shalt have no other Gods before me." "Is there a God beside me? Yea, there is no God; I know not any;" and again: "There is no God else besides one, a just God and a Saviour; there is none besides me; for I am God, and there is none else;" and again, "I am God, and there is none else; I am God and there is none like unto me."

The expressions in this text manifestly allude to the multitude of Pagan divinities who falsely bare the name of Gods. The adjective *true* is opposed to false, and the adverb *only* is opposed to many. Christ was, evidently, speaking in opposition to the corrupt theology of the heathen, as if he had said, "The Gentiles perish, because they have no knowledge of any but false Gods; but it is life eternal to know thee, the only true God, in opposition to idols, including his co-equal and co-essential Son, who is Jesus the Christ."

Of exactly similar import is the declaration of the apostle in 1 Cor. viii: 4-6. "As concerning therefore, the eating of those things that are offered in sacrifice unto idols, we know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is none other God but one. For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, as there be gods many and lords many; 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." Here also God,—that is, the Godhead, or God considered in his essence, and as implying the Father and the Son, is said to be ONE in opposition to idols as in 1 Thess. i: 9. If we compare this with the expression of St. Thomas, "My Lord and my God," we have the following argument: "To us there is but one God the Father—but to us Jesus Christ is also Lord and God. The Gospel has, therefore, either preached two Gods, one distinct from the other, or that the "one God the Father" is here the name of a nature, under which Christ himself, as God, is also comprehended. The same conclusion may be also deduced from several other passages. Thus, in Matt. xxiii: v. 9, it is said, "Call no man your Father upon earth, for ONE IS YOUR FATHER, which is in heaven." But in verse 10, it is said, "Neither be ye called MASTERS, for ONE IS YOUR MASTER, EVEN CHRIST, (vide John iii: 13,) which is in Heaven. Now, if from the words, ONE IS YOUR FATHER, an argument is drawn for the exclusive divinity of the Father, the same argument would prove, *that one per-*

*son only is our master*, and that this person is Christ, which excludes the persons of the Father and the Spirit from the honour of that title, and therefore, reduces the argument to an absurdity. We are to conclude then, that as the phrase, "one master," cannot be meant to exclude the Father, so neither do other similar expressions applied to the Father, as "one good," or "one is your Father," exclude the person of Christ. The title of Father is, itself, ascribed to the second person of the Trinity; for Christ, the Alpha and the Omega, says of himself, "He that overcometh shall inherit all things, and I WILL BE HIS GOD, and he shall be MY SON."\* Isaiah expressly calls him the EVERLASTING FATHER. Again, it is written, "They are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection:" "but," says Christ, "I am the resurrection." Christ therefore, is God, and the believers are his children. The word Father, therefore, cannot always be a name that distinguishes the first person in the Godhead from the other persons of the Godhead, but is often to be understood as a term merely of relation, and as in this sense, applicable to the second person also.†

But Whitby so fairly meets, and so fully confutes the argument which Dr. Carpenter, and Unitarians generally, derive from this passage, that I shall here transcribe his comment. The passage is this: "To us there is but one God the Father, of whom are all things, and we in (or for) him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him." Hence, (says Whitby,) the Arians and Socinians argue against the Deity of Christ, as he who saith there is one Emperor, to wit, Cæsar, saith in effect, there is no other Emperor but Cæsar. So he that saith there is one God the Father, saith in effect, there is no other God besides the Father. Again, he who, having separately spoken of one God, proceeds distinctly to speak of one Lord, to wit: Jesus Christ doth, by that distinct title, sufficiently show Christ is not that God. Such is the argument of Unitarians. To this Whitby replies: "To the second argument the reply is obvious, by retorting the argument, as to the ancient Commentators, against this Arian objection, thus: That, as the apostle, by saying there is one Lord Jesus Christ, cannot be reasonably supposed to exclude the Father from being the Lord of christians, as he is often styled in the New Testament; so neither by saying, there is one God the Father, ought he to be supposed to exclude Jesus Christ

\*Revel. xxi: 7. Isaiah ix: 6. Luke xx: 36. John ii: 45.

†See Jones on Trinity.



from being also, the God of christians. So argue Origen and Novatian; especially if we consider, first, that he is here styled *that one Lord, by whom are all things, i. e.*, "by whom all things are created." Ephes. iii: 9. "All things which are in heaven or in earth." Coloss. i: 16. For "he that made all things is God." Heb. iii: 5. And "by the works of the Creation is the Godhead known." Rom. iii: 20. And this is elsewhere made the very description of God the Father, that it is he, by whom are all things. Rom. xi: 35, and Heb. xi. 10. And next, that all things were created not only by this Lord, but (*εις αυτου*) "for him" also. Col. i: 16. Now, this is the very thing which the apostle here ascribes to God the Father.

"Secondly, to the other argument I answer, that we and all the ancients assert, as truly as our opponents can do, the unity of the Godhead, and that Christ Jesus is not another God, but only another person from the Father; and that the application of the word God here to the Father, doth not necessarily exclude the Son from being God also, but only from being the fountain of the Deity, as the Father is. Thus, when these words, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last, (Revel. i: 17; ii: 8, and xxii: 13,) are by St. John, applied to Christ, it cannot be concluded hence, that the Father is not also Alpha and Omega, the first and the last, as he is often called in the Old Testament; and though our Saviour be the proper title of our Lord Jesus, as his very name informs us, yet is the Father in Scripture styled our Saviour, (1 Tim. i: 1, and ii: 3,) and the Saviour of all men, iv: 10. The primitive fathers considering God the Father as the fountain of the Deity, and Jesus Christ as God of God, frequently assert two things, which may illustrate this passage:

First, That christians acknowledge one God only, even the Father, and yet that Jesus Christ was truly God, of the substance of the Father.

Secondly, That God the Father was the Creator of all things, and yet that all things were created by the Word."

And here, also, in describing this God, as he exists tri-personally, the Son is associated with the Father by the term Lord, which is equivalent to Jehovah or Supreme Divinity, and by the attribution to him of the same universal, infinite and divine dominion. And so also, in the only other very distinct allusion to the unity of God in the New Testament in 1 Tim. ii: 3, 5. The apostle in verse 3, speaks of God our Saviour,

and attributes to our Saviour as God sovereign power and dominion, and then adds: "For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus," where with God, who in his essence is called one, Christ is again associated in the statement of the object of christian worship and adoration. The Apostle, in effect says, pray for all men; because all, without exception, are accountable to one supreme moral authority, and have only one way of hope and salvation. To all men, there is no other than one Saviour, the only Deliverer from the guilt of sin and the wrath to come.

Thus, it appears that even in affirming the unity of God, the New Testament, as well as the Old, never teaches the absolute and personal unity of God, but only the unity of his essence in contrast with all false Gods. So far from doing so, we have seen that even in declaring the unity of God the New Testament holds forth Christ as associated in the one Godhead, as "the true God and eternal life;" and in another passage, as "the blessed and ONLY potentate, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, who "ONLY hath immortality." Such is the union between the Father and the Son, that in respect of their essential glories, what is asserted of the one, is to be understood of the other. Jesus, therefore, not only says, "I and the Father are one;" but also affirms that "he who honours the Son, honours the Father also." And again, he says, "ALL that the Father hath, is mine,—his nature, essence, or Godhead. He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father also."

It will afterwards be shown that Scripture attributes to the Holy Spirit, as well as to the Son, everything which is ascribed to the Father, and that he therefore, is also, "the only true God." But, at present, it is enough to have proved this of the Son, and that too, from the very passages adduced to establish the absolute, personal, and metaphysical unity of God.

We thus perceive that, on the one hand, we are taught in Scripture, that there is one only true God. On the other hand, we are equally taught in Scripture, that the Father and the Son, and the Holy Ghost, are alike this one only true God. Hence, devoutly receiving the Bible as the divine word of inspiration, and presuming not to be wise either above what is written, or contrary to what is written, we conclude from these several declarations of Scripture, that there is one only true God, the maker of heaven and earth, but that this one only true God, mysteriously exists in three persons, or hypostases, as he

himself terms it, and that the Supreme Being is one, in regard to his substance or his proper divine nature; but that he is three, in regard to his component persons or hypostases.

A christian is bound therefore, to believe, that there is one only true God, and that the Almighty Father of heaven and earth is that God.

This tenet, at once separates him from those who worship the multifarious rabble of Pagan divinities; for, if he admit as the very foundation of his creed, the existence of one only true God, he must of necessity, reject from his creed a plurality of false gods.

But, as a christian is bound to believe, that there is one only true God; so is he likewise bound to believe, that the one only true God hath sent Jesus of Nazareth in the character of the promised Messiah; and that as such, HE is God manifest in the flesh, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the mighty God, the everlasting Father and the Prince of Peace,—the co-equal person, with the Father and the Holy Ghost in the ever-blessed triune Jehovah. This is the God to whom as a christian, every believer is dedicated, into whose name (or nature and glory,) he is baptized, in whom he is to believe, and whom he is to love, honour, worship and obey with all his heart, and soul, and strength, and mind.

The former article of his belief separates the christian from polytheistic Gentiles. The latter article of his belief separates him from the Jews; for though they have ever firmly expected the promised Messiah, they have generally, as pertinaciously denied that the Messiah has come in the person of Jesus of Nazareth,—that he is God,—that the Holy Ghost is God,—and that God is a triune Jehovah, consisting of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, in one essential nature.

We must never forget, however, that mere doctrinal knowledge, however essential, will stand us in little avail, unless it is manifested in our practice. That same Divine person, who declared the knowledge of God the Father and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to be eternal life, declared also, no less unequivocally, "Not every one, that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of Heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in Heaven."\*

Unitarians may say, that to know Jesus Christ, is to know the will of God, as delivered by Jesus Christ. But it is not

\*1 Peter, i: 5-7, and ix: 11.

knowing the will of God, but God himself as a Saviour, that will secure us eternal life. To know Jesus Christ is, therefore, to know him as he is represented in the Gospel, as God and man; and as having become such for our redemption; and to believe in, love, and obey him as such, and thus we perceive the plain, practical, and fundamental character of the doctrine of the trinity.

“This does God’s book declare in obvious phrase,  
 In most sincere and honest words, by God  
 Himself selected and arranged so clear,  
 So plain, so perfectly distinct, that none  
 Who read with humble wish to understand,  
 And ask the Spirit given to all who ask,  
 Can miss their meaning, blazed in heavenly light.

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The true One God, in Persons Three,  
 Great Father of eternity,  
 Swift with the sun departs the day,  
 Oh, shed on us a heavenly ray.

At morn and even to Thee we raise  
 The sigh of prayer, the song of praise,  
 Though poor the strain, its aim is high,—  
 God over all to glorify!

Father, for ever be adored  
 And Thou,—the Son,—our only Lord,  
 And Thou, true Consolation Giver,  
 Now, henceforth, and for ever!

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God the Father! with us be,  
 Shield us Thou from danger nigh,  
 From sin’s bondage set us free,  
 Help us happily to die!

God the Saviour! with us be,  
 Shield us Thou from danger nigh,  
 From sin’s bondage set us free,  
 Help us happily to die!

God the Spirit! with us be,  
 Shield us Thou from danger nigh,  
 From sin’s bondage set us free,  
 Help us happily to die!

Keep us in the heavenly faith,  
 From Satan us deliver;  
 Thine in life and thine in death,  
 Thine only and for ever!

God! with thy weapons arm us,  
 With all true Christians, shall we,—  
 Nor earth, nor hell, to harm us,—  
 Hallelujah sing to thee!”

*Hymns of Ancient Church.*

## ARTICLE VII.

### THE DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY, NOT THEORETICAL OR SPECULATIVE, BUT PRACTICAL IN ITS NATURE, AND FUNDAMENTAL IN ITS IMPORTANCE.

In our previous article on the doctrine of the Trinity, we laid it down that this was a question plainly above and beyond the capacity and limits of the human mind, and altogether incomprehensible, undiscoverable, and indeterminable, by the human reason. It is purely a question of revelation; and the only proper inquiry respecting it is, whether, how far, and for what purposes, it is revealed. To say it is impossible for God to exist as a Trinity in Unity, is, therefore, contrary to reason; which has no premises from whence to conclude one way or the other: and to say, that the doctrine of the Trinity is contradictory, is to contradict the very term Trinity itself, which affirms that in God there is a unity of such an infinite and unfathomable nature, as to admit and require a trinity, and a trinity which can only co-exist in a unity.

“When,” says Milton, whom Unitarians so proudly and yet so deceitfully appeal to as a Unitarian, in the posthumous work on Christian Doctrine attributed to him,\* “when we speak of knowing God, it must be understood with reference to the imperfect comprehension of man; for to know God as he really is, far transcends the powers of man’s thought, much more of his perception.” “Our safest way,” he adds,† “is to form in our minds such a conception of God, as shall correspond with his own delineation and representation of himself in the sacred writings. For, granting that both in the literal and figurative descriptions of God, he is exhibited, not as he really is, but in such a manner as may be in the scope of our comprehensions, yet we ought to entertain such a conception of him, as he, in condescending to accommodate himself to our capacities, has shown that he desires we should conceive. For it is on this very account that he has lowered himself to our level, lest in our flights above the reach of human understanding, and beyond the written word of Scripture, we should be tempted to indulge in vague cogitations and subtleties.”

\*Vol. i., page 19, Treatise on Christian Doctrine, supposing this to be Milton’s.

†Vol. i., p. 20.

“Solicit not thy thoughts with matters hid:  
 Leave them to God above; him serve and fear.  
 \* \* \* \* \* Heaven is for thee too high,  
 To know what passes there; so, lowly wise,  
 Think only, what concerns thee, and thy being;  
 Dream not of other worlds, what creatures there  
 Live, in what state, condition, or degree.”

“We may be sure,” adds Milton, “that sufficient care has been taken that the Holy Scriptures should *contain nothing* unsuitable to the character or dignity of God, and that God should say nothing of himself which could derogate from his own majesty.” “To speak summarily, God either is, or is not, such as he represents himself to be. If he be really such, why should we think otherwise of him? If he be not such, on what authority do we say what *God* has not said?”†

If then, the triune nature of the divine Unity of the Godhead is the doctrine of Scripture, the term Trinity is, undoubtedly, necessary to express it so long as there is opposition made to the doctrine itself. And if the doctrine is not found in Scripture, then both the doctrine and the term should be rejected. And hence we were led to expose the unreasonableness of objections levelled against the word “trinity,” a term which is only designated to express in *one* word, the doctrine which would otherwise, and that constantly, require many words for its expression.

But it is further objected that this doctrine, even if true, is not of practical importance,—that it is merely speculative, theoretical and theological,—and that it ought not therefore, to be represented as of fundamental importance, and its rejection as heretical and dangerous. This objection, if valid, would certainly be a clear justification of silence on our part, and of objection on the part of its opponents. But how are we to know what is practical, and fundamentally important in revealed religion? Not assuredly by our opinion of it, or by the opinion of any other man, or of any set of men, or of human reason in any form; and for this simple reason, that the system of revealed truth is revealed *only* because it is that about which *human* reason could discover, understand, and judge nothing, except so far as it is revealed. He who reveals the truth must therefore, reveal also, the relative importance of the truth in its bearing upon God’s glory and man’s salvation, the only ends for which a revelation was given at all.

The importance of any truth in the Bible must, then, be ascertained not by the opinion man forms of it, but from its

†Vol. i., p. 25.

own nature,—and from the place it holds in the chain of Scriptural principles, promises, precepts, worship and experience. The relation in which any truth stands to God as a Saviour, and to man as a sinner,—to Heaven as lost and to be regained, —to hell endangered,—and to death inevitable—this will stamp it as of primary, or as only of relative importance.

Now, it is very evident, that I may have little knowledge of any truth, or have erroneous conception of it, or misconceive its supreme importance, while another person may have full knowledge and adequate conception of it. And in such a case it is not only *lawful* for that individual, but it is surely his *duty*, to use all proper means to convince me and to convert me to the knowledge and enjoyment of a truth which he knows, by experience, to be very precious to his own soul. This is what we are required to do by the spirit of natural charity, and also, by Divine precept, which enjoins upon us that “in meekness we should instruct those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth.

Truths, which even Unitarians acknowledge to be of primary and fundamental importance, are, nevertheless, matters of controversy between christians and Jews, and between christians and infidels. The denial of these truths cannot, therefore, be attributed to any want of practical importance in them, nor to the want of sufficient evidence in the revelation made of them; but to a culpable condition of the minds of those who reject them, and who as the Scriptures declare, “are blinded through unbelief.”

Neither does the importance of a doctrine depend upon the degree of certainty with which, to our own mind, it may seem to be proved.

Whatever may be my individual opinion of any doctrine, either as to its certainty or its importance, affects not its reality. Its certainty depends on the fact that it is proved by sufficient evidence to be delivered in the word of God; and its importance, upon its own intrinsic character and the relation in which it stands to other doctrines, and to the duty which we owe to God and to ourselves; and hence it follows that a man through ignorance, or prejudice, or partial examination, may regard as doubtful or unimportant, a doctrine which is nevertheless taught clearly, and which is of the most vital importance.

To those, therefore, to whom the doctrine is thus clear and fundamental, its reception and advocacy assume a character of paramount necessity. It will be held by such with unyielding tenacity; and it will be urged by them upon others with a zeal and earnestness which are neither the result of vanity, pride, uncharitable contempt, or any disposition to intolerance, but which sprung solely from the very necessity of christian fidelity and love.

But, it is alleged, that a man who rejects as untrue, opinions which we consider both true and essential to salvation, and who does so in sincerity of heart, cannot be blameable. Now, undoubtedly, sincerity and personal conviction are both necessary to make even an opinion in itself right, to be right and valuable to me, since to use the words of Dryden:\*

"If others in the same glass better see,  
'Tis for themselves they look, but not for me,  
For my salvation must its doom receive,  
Not from what others, but what I believe."

Or, as another poet has expressed it,

"Who with another's eye can read,  
Or worship by another's creed?  
Trusting thy grace, we form our own,  
And bow to thy commands alone."

But, it is also true, that a man's perfect sincerity of heart in holding any opinion free from any sinful bias and prejudice of mind, is what he himself, from the very nature of the case, is incapable of avouching, and what no human being can determine for him. God alone can judge the real character and condition of a heart which is "deceitful above all things."

"All-seeing God! 'tis thine to know  
The springs whence wrong opinions flow:  
To judge, from principles within,  
When frailty errs, and when we sin."

And since it is common for all who hold dangerous errors to claim sincerity in doing so, it is only when we have the testimony of God's Word and Spirit, "witnessing with ours," that we can safely rejoice in "the testimony of a good conscience." In other words, our hearts must be judged by the Scriptures, and not the Scriptures by our hearts.

Besides, we may be *sincere* and yet ignorant, uninformed, and so blinded by prejudice as to be incapable of "receiving the truth in the love of it;" and while Christ as God, "knows how

\*Vol. i., p. 404.



to have compassion on the ignorant and those that are out of the way," yet our ignorance cannot make that truth unimportant, which is vital, nor that error venial which is "damnable."

Now, the doctrine of the Trinity must either be a "damnable heresy," or the wilful rejection of it must be so. It lies at the foundation of our religion. It shapes our conceptions of the God we are to worship, and the worship with which we are to approach him. It makes God absolutely and personally one, or necessarily Triune. It makes the Son and the Holy Ghost either attributes, or creatures, or, on the other hand, very God of very God, co-equal persons in a triune Jehovah. It makes these persons in the Godhead either finite or infinite, created or uncreated, necessary or contingent, supreme or subordinate, objects of present worship, or only objects of reverential regard for past services. If the Son and the Holy Ghost are not God in unity with the Father, it must be blasphemous and highly displeasing both to him and to them, to worship them as such. And if, on the other hand, they are really divine, and co-equal with the Father, then, whatever we may say of them, however in *words* we may exalt and praise them, if we withhold from them our prayers and worship as God, we rob them of their highest excellence and glory. The doctrine of the Trinity, therefore, determines the object of our worship. Abandon the doctrine of the Trinity, which presents as the object of our worship an infinite, eternal, omnipotent, and omnipresent Being, in existence, nature, or Godhead one, and yet subsisting (in a way unintelligible to finite minds and not necessary to be understood,) in three persons as Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and what is the object to be worshipped by us? Do Unitarians know any more than we what God is, or what God possibly can be? Can they define what is the unity of God? Can they possibly reconcile with their notions of the Divine unity the entire representation made in Scripture of God, and of Christ, and of the Holy Ghost? Or, have they any one theory of the supreme object of worship to present to our acceptance as that on which they are themselves agreed?\*

A large body of those ranked among Unitarians at the present time, rejecting the authority of Scripture as an infallible guide to our knowledge of God, abandon also any definite or personal object of worship. Others, again, regard Christ as a Divine being, as in some sense God, and as such to be wor-

\*See Note A, at end of the article.

shipped. And as the former party are pantheistic atheists, the latter are as certainly Dualists, since in reality they worship, not ONE God, but TWO Gods. Christ they regard as having been exalted to the honor and dignity of a God, not, indeed, so as to be either one with, or equal to the supreme God. But, still, he is *deus verus*, truly Divine and only second and subordinate to the Father, by whom he was created and from whom he received all that he possesses. Socinus therefore, regarded as a calumny the imputation of not believing Christ to be true God, and as such entitled to be worshipped with Divine honor. He denominates Christ *true God*, and other Unitarians of his day, speak of Christ as *deus eximius*, the *most exalted* or *eminent* God, and not to acknowledge him as a true God is, says Smalcus, to renounce the christian religion. Though not the supreme God, Christ, as Milton teaches, or the author of the Work on Christian Doctrine lately discovered and ascribed to him, is God by appointment, by office, by communicated Divine power, wisdom, goodness, and authority,—*deus factus non natus*.\* Such of the Unitarians as hold this opinion, which all the ancient Arians did, instead of believing in one God, believe, undoubtedly, in two Gods, and “one who is God by nature, and the other by grace, one supreme and another inferior, one greater and the other lesser, one elder and eternal, and the other junior and modern,” the one necessarily God and the other Divine only arbitrarily, contingently, and by the will of the other. According to this opinion, there might be a true God without the Godhead, a Divine person who is the object of worship, without a Divine nature,—all the attributes of Deity without that essence in which alone they can inhere,—a finite creature might become capable of infinite perfections, and what is *peculiar* to God may be made the property of a creature, who may receive what cannot be bestowed, and participate of what is incommunicable.

Such are the absurdities to which the rejection of the doctrine of the Trinity of persons in one supreme Godhead, has led many, in modern, as well as in ancient times. And where the Holy Spirit is regarded, as by the ancient Arians he was considered, as a Divine person equally, though in an inferior degree, with the Son, these absurdities are increased by the

\*See other authorities given by Dr. Edwards in his *Preservative Agt. Socinianism*, part 1, pp. 9, 10, and *Waterland*, vol. i., part 2, and Index to it.

multiplication of three Gods, a doctrine which some have even boldly avowed and defended.\*

"I do not pretend," says Waterland,† "that you Unitarians, are Tritheists, in every sense; but I do affirm that you are Tritheists in the same sense that the Pagans are called Polytheists, and in the Scripture sense of the word God, as explained and contended for by yourselves. One Divine person is, with you, equivalent to one God; and two, to two Gods, and three, to three Gods; the case is plain; the consequences unavoidable. For one supreme and two inferior Gods, is your avowed doctrine, and certainly, the asserting three Gods, whether co-ordinate or otherwise, is Tritheism; against the first commandment, and against the whole tenor of Scripture and the principles of the primitive church. It is, to me, an instance of the ill-effects of vain philosophy, and shows how the "disputer of this world" may get the better of the christian; when men appear so much afraid of an imaginary error that in any sense, even in Deity, there can be one nature and three subsistences in that nature, in metaphysics, and to avoid it, run into a real one, alike condemned by Scripture and antiquity."‡

But this theory of two, or three Gods, one supreme and the others created, is not only as has been seen, absurd. It is plainly idolatrous, since divine worship, according to Scripture, can be given to that one divine nature or Godhead, to which appertains all divine perfections, and not to a factitious, fictitious, and finite being. It might be further shown, that the abandonment of the doctrine of the Trinity, has led to the perversion of every attribute of God, as portrayed in Scripture, and that on this account also, the Trinitarian and the Unitarian systems conduct us to an object of worship essentially different and distinct. As Trinitarians interpret Scripture, God is infinite, while Unitarians say he is finite. Our God is omnipresent, theirs limited and confined to a certain place; our God is immutable, theirs is liable to change. Our God is naturally just, theirs contingently so: Our God is governor of the world, taking care, oversight of, and interest in, human affairs; theirs like the Deity of Epicurus, sits at ease in the enjoyment of his own happiness, leaving the world to the conduct of chance, and men to the guidance of that which is equally uncertain, their

\*See proof in Edwards, as above.

†Works, vol. i., pp. 238, 241, who also gives and writes against the advocates of this opinion.

‡See Note B, at end of this article.

own giddy and unstable passions; neither giving them laws for the regulation of their actions, nor assigning any punishment for the violation of his laws. Our God is omniscient, theirs ignorant of future and contingent events. Our God is without parts or passions, theirs compounded of the one, and liable to the other; even to those which argue the greatest weakness and infirmity, and which some even of the philosophers, thought inconsistent with the bravery and resolution of a wise and virtuous man. It will, therefore, appear, we think, very evident, that the object of their worship and ours is different, and this will as clearly prove that the Religions represented by\* the Trinitarian and Unitarian systems are also different.

But the doctrine of the Trinity affects also the *manner* of our worship,—whether it shall be through the intercession and merits of a Mediator, and by the guidance and assistance of a Holy Spirit helping our infirmities, or, directly and in our own name,—whether we shall approach God, looking for acceptance through the work and righteousness of a vicarious and Divine Redeemer, and a Divine Sanctifier, or through works of repentance, prayer and praise, which our own hands and hearts have wrought. This doctrine affects therefore, every duty comprised in our obedience to God, and every hope of finding salvation at the hands of a God infinitely holy to condemn sin, infinitely just to punish it, and who will render to every man according to the deeds done in the body, whether they have been good or evil. It comes home therefore, to “the business and bosom” of every man, and affects every inquiry pertaining to his everlasting welfare.

The triune God in covenant for man’s salvation is the basis and the only foundation laid in Zion for the restoration and re-union of fallen man with his offended God. And it is only through Christ any man can “have access by one Spirit unto the Father.”

The whole scheme of revelation centers on the interposition of Christ for the salvation of men. The law was but the preparation for the Gospel, “the school-master to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith.” The ceremonies and sacrifices of the law were typical of, and superseded by, the sacrifice of Christ, and the more spiritual and exalted system of christian faith and christian perfection. “The spirit

\*See Edwards on Socinianism, pp. 68, 69. See also, proof to the same effect in Smith’s Testimony to the Messiah, vol. i., pp. 140-146, given as Note B.

of prophecy was to bear testimony to Jesus." "God," says St. Paul, "who, at sundry times, and in divers manners, spake in times past unto the fathers by his prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also, he made the worlds, who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high."

The whole efficacy of redemption is also, ascribed to the eternal existence and intercession of the Redeemer: "Christ, says the Apostle, "is able to save them to the uttermost who come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." And again, "Now once in the end of the world, hath he, (even Christ,) appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." "As it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment, so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many, and to them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation."

Nor is this the teaching of the Apostle Paul, only; it is the teaching also, of the Apostles.\* Now, it is impossible to believe that this efficacy of redemption, and this universal and exclusive power over the salvation of man, should be ascribed to one who was, as many Unitarians teach, a mere man, who had no existence himself before his human birth, and as all Unitarians must believe, has no agency or influence on his followers, subsequent to the hours of his ascension. Neither is it conceivable that by the whole teaching of Scripture, our acceptance with God and salvation from his wrath and curse should be made to depend upon the agency of a being who was himself, a creature like ourselves. No: is only reconcilable with the idea of Christ being not ONLY MAN, BUT GOD; God manifest in the flesh, who, having formed man after his own image, when that image was defaced by sin, came to restore it; who, having created man for happiness and immortality, when that immortality and happiness were forfeited by disobedience, came to rescue the works of his own hands from hopeless misery and eternal death. This only can render such power, and glory, and dominion, as the Scriptures ascribe to Christ, consistent with the dictates of reason and the feelings of piety. This only can account for that great degree of gratitude and

\*See Acts iv. 9-12; John iv, 14; Jude, 18-21.

exultation, of confidence and obedience, which the Scriptures declare are due to the Redeemer; affections of which it is impossible to conceive any being should be the legitimate object in such a degree and to such an extent, except God himself. § With what earnestness of affection, and what assurance of his full power to relieve, does Christ encourage the contrite soul; "Come unto me all ye that are heavy laden, and I will give you rest:" and again, "The Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which is lost:" And above all, at his last solemn converse with his Apostles, to prepare them for his sufferings, with what confidence does he assure them of their final triumph and their eternal happiness; with what exuberance of affection and mercy does he provide for the salvation of every true believer in every climate and period of the globe?\* Thus do we find the Apostles and Evangelists regarding their Lord with gratitude so fervent, submission of the heart so profound, confidence so unbounded, obedience so prompt and universal, as prove they looked up to him AS God all-powerful, all-merciful, all-faithful, and all-wise. † Can any words express more strongly the Apostle's estimation of the supreme importance of the Redeemer's interposition, his total dependence for salvation upon faith in Christ, and his anxiety that every other human being should look for salvation only to the same source‡ than those contained in the eighth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans? And how triumphantly does he exult in the certain salvation of those who, being sanctified and purified by such faith, receive all the benefits which result from the redemption Christ has wrought: "What, (he asks,) shall we say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, shall he not with him also, freely give us all things? Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth; who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died; yea rather that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us."

The Apostle's mind, thus filled and exalted, by contemplating the blessings of redemption, and the character of our Redeemer, breaks forth into a strain of gratitude the most

§ John xiv: 1; Matt. xxiii: 9, 10; Matt. xi: 27; Luke xii: 8, 9; Matt. x: 15; Matt. xviii: 6; Matt. xxviii: 18 to 20; Mark xvi: 16; John xi: 25, 26; Luke iv: 18.

\* John, xiv: 2, 3, also 13, 14; xii: 32; John, xvi: 33; xvii: 20.

† Philippians, ii: 3 to 11; 2 Corin., viii: 8, 9; Philippians, iii: 7, 8, 9.

‡ Romans viii: 31 to 39.

fervent, and confidence the most joyful and triumphant, that ever glowed within the breast of man. §

With all the Apostles, "*Christ is, as it were, all in all.*" They long to quit the world, and be with Christ. Faith in him is their glory, his example their guide, his word their law, his favour their highest hope, his coming their perpetual theme, his sentence the determination of their eternal destiny. Through him, they look for acceptance of their prayers, justification before God, aid in trials, consolation in sorrow, support in death, acquittal in judgment, and bliss in Heaven, and to him their obedience is most total and unreserved: "casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringeth into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ."\* On a review of all the testimonies of Scripture let me ask, says Dr. Graves, is it conceivable, that the Apostles could have thus associated Christ with God, as united with him in being the object of such gratitude, such faith, such hope, such triumph; as being the agent united with God in this great work of redemption; and yet have believed, that this Christ was a mere man, "who had no existence before his human birth," "no influence after his death;" whose sufferings in the cause of truth, and whose labours in diffusing it, have been equalled by so many other men, even by some of the Apostles themselves? No, certainly; nothing could have existed or justified such feelings, if Christ had not been of Divine dignity; his sufferings unparalleled in their condescension and their efficacy, and, in a word, if he had not been the SON OF GOD, who was united with the Eternal Father, as Creator and Lord of the universe, the sole author and giver of everlasting life. On this supposition, all the Apostle's feelings are natural, just, and rational: on any other, they are visionary and extravagant; nay, even impious and idolatrous.

On the Socinian scheme, then, it appears, that the last and most perfect part of Divine revelation,—which, in every other view, refines and exalts our ideas of the Divinity; teaches us to worship him in spirit and in truth; trains men to the most pure and perfect virtue, and at once inculcates and exemplifies the most heartfelt and ennobling piety;—would, notwithstanding, *discover an opposite tendency in this leading point, the object*

§ Rom. viii: 31 to end, and see also, 2 James, i: 7, 8; 1 Peter, i: 7 to 12; 1 Peter iii: 22; 2 Peter iv: 14; 2 Peter i: 1 to 11; iii: 18; 1 John, v: iii: 1 to 6.

\* Discourse on the Trinity, from which, we have condensed the previous argument.

*of our religious affections*; would, as to these, altogether lower and debase the religious principle, and, in total repugnance to every former revelation, teach men to look up, as to the bestower of every important blessing, even redemption from eternal misery, not to the great and supreme eternal Father alone, but also to another being who is not God, (as is affirmed,) yet concerning whom we are taught, "that he is the only-begotten Son of God;" "by whom alone we can know God," "or come to God,"—the mediator and intercessor with God for man, by whom we obtain remission of our sins;—"that he is the way and the truth, the life and light of the world;" who is entitled to our most fervent gratitude, our perfect confidence, our unreserved submission;—by faith in whom "we are turned from darkness unto light, and from the power of Satan unto God;"—who is "to appear with the holy angels, on the throne of Divine glory, at the last great day of final judgment, to call from the grave the whole human race, to try the secrets of all hearts, and by his sentence fix the eternal doom of every human being."

On the contrary, the view of the incarnation and divinity of Christ, "at once truly God and truly man," the second person in the glorious Trinity, which the Trinitarian doctrine imparts, is most harmoniously connected with the statement which the apostolic writings exhibit of the grand scheme of redemption; of the feelings excited by the view of this scheme, of the affections with which believers should regard the Redeemer, and the honor which is due to him: For does it not instantly follow, that faith and obedience, gratitude and adoration, in the very highest degree, are his unquestionable right? If the penitent soul is certain that the same Jesus, who died for his sins, has also risen for his justification; if he is fully assured, that he is not only Man but God, this faith removes that intolerable burden which presses down the humbled sinner's soul, the load of irrevocable and unpardoned guilt, and calms that terror which would embitter to the heart every thought of the Divinity, the terror of unsatisfied justice, which ought not to remit punishment. Despondence is banished, hope revived, repentance encouraged, exertion animated, devotion kindled, and the heart drawn to God by the warmest gratitude, and the most attractive mercy.

Looking to Jesus, we behold in the Divine Lawgiver, our unalterable steady friend. In the Divine Judge we behold our



all-merciful Redeemer. As man we are sure of his sympathy, as God we are sure of his power; and from both united, we look for our eternal deliverance. The immense gulf, which appeared to divide the creature from his God, is closed, and we are assured of access to the throne of grace, where our Redeemer sits, to hold out the golden sceptre of mercy, that we may touch and live. We are assured our prayers will be heard, for he who is ever present and ever watchful, and "knoweth what we ought to pray for," will assist our prayers. Whatsoever "we ask of him, not doubting, we shall receive." "And wheresoever two or three are gathered together in his name, there is he in the midst of them."

Thus strip the Redeemer of his Divinity, and the whole Gospel scheme would be doubt and darkness, inconsistency and confusion. Admit him to be God and Man, and that Gospel exhibits an object of faith and gratitude, admirably adapted to all the affections and powers, all the wants and weaknesses of human nature; admirably promotive of our reformation and sanctification of our advancement in love to man and love to God, and of the improvement of all the means of grace, the accomplishment of all our hopes of glory.

The argument we have thus pursued in reference to Christ as the second person in the adorable Trinity, and as the meritorious ground and ever-living medium of our acceptance with God and of all spiritual and everlasting good, might also be developed, and with equal force, respecting the absolute necessity of the Holy Spirit in order to secure the regeneration, sanctification and comfort of believers.

The doctrine of the Trinity, therefore, affects every truth in the Bible which bears on man's salvation,—the nature, person and work of a Redeemer,—the necessity, nature and way of acceptance with God,—the nature of regeneration, repentance, justification, sanctification and redemption, the principle and motive of all acceptable obedience,—of holiness and hope in life,—of peace and comfort in death, and of everlasting life beyond the grave. It affects also, the nature and necessity of prayer, preaching, and the other means of grace, of the church and its ordinances, and of living, loving and experimental piety. In short, compared with the truths which the Bible understood, as Trinitarians interpret it, discloses, all other knowledge is vain and worthless; and compared with the hopes it inspires, all other hopes are cold and comfortless.

“The doctrine of the Trinity therefore, is, and must be, a truth of supreme and practical importance. The simple statement of it is—as Dr. Wardlaw remarks—enough to show that it must rank as a *first principle*;—an article of prime importance; a foundation stone in the temple of truth; a star of the very first magnitude in the hemisphere of christian doctrine. For my own part, I believe it to be even more than this; a kind of central Sun, around which the whole system of christianity, in all its glory, and in all its harmony, revolves.

“It is very obvious, therefore, that two systems, of which the sentiments, on subjects such as these, are in direct opposition, cannot, with any propriety, be confounded together under one common name. That both should be christianity is impossible; else christianity is a term which distinguishes nothing. Viewing the matter abstractly, and without affirming, for the present, what is truth and what is error, this, I think, I may with confidence affirm, that to call schemes so opposite in all their great leading articles by a common appellation, is more absurd, than it would be to confound together those two irreconcilable theories of astronomy, of which the one places the Earth, and the other the Sun, in the center of the planetary system.” They are, in truth, *essentially different religions*. For, if opposite views as to the *object of worship*, the *groundhope for cternity*, the *rule of faith and duty*, and the *principles and motives of true obedience*; if opposite views as to these do not constitute different religions, we may, without much difficulty, discover some principle of union and identity amongst all religions whatever; we may realize the doctrine of Pope’s universal prayer; and extend the right hand of fellowship to the worshippers at the Mosque, and to the votaries of Brama. “I unfeignedly account the doctrine of the ‘Trinity,’” says Richard Baxter, “the sum and kernel of the christian religion.”

What other conclusion can be drawn from that final, authoritative commission given by Christ as the Divine Head of the Church, when about to ascend to that glory which he had with the Father from before the foundation of the world? The evidences and effects of his Divine power had been everywhere displayed. As Head of the Church, ALL power in Heaven and Earth were given unto him. And in the exercise of that power we find Christ making an express profession of faith in the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, the doctrinal foundation of the Church of God which he had purchased with his own blood,

and the form of initiation into its membership.—(Matt. xxviii: 16.)

The very learned Bishop Bull,\* in his elaborate work on proof of the fact that the Church of God in the earliest ages considered it essential to believe in the doctrine of the Trinity, observes, that his antagonist Episcopius admitted, that the most ancient creed used in the administration of baptism, from the very times of the Apostles, was this—"I believe in God the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost;" according to the form prescribed by Jesus himself. Episcopius, it is true, wished to weaken the force of the inference from this form, but the "Bishop in answer, shows that in this creed, brief as it was, the true divinity of the Son and of the Holy Spirit is so distinctly asserted, that in so short a form of words, it was scarcely possible it could be more clearly expressed; for first, it is plain, that in this form, "I believe in God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit," the word God is referred in common to the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, a fact which is still more evident in the original Greek than in the translation. It is most certain that the ancients thus understood this brief confession.† For instance, Tertullian, expounding the common faith of christians, with respect to the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, affirms, "The Father is God, and the Son is God, and the Holy Spirit is God, and each is God." Cyprian also, in his epistle to Jubajanus, thus argues against the Baptism of Heretics: "If one can be baptized by Heretics, he can obtain the remission of sins; if the remission of sins, he is sanctified and become a temple of God. "I ask, of what God? if of the Creator, it cannot be, for he has not believed on him: if of Christ, how can he be the temple of Christ, who denies that Christ is God? if of the Holy Spirit, since the three are one, how can the Holy Spirit be propitious to him, who is the enemy either of the Father or the Son?" The attentive reader will here also observe, that Cyprian most expressly teaches, that a belief of the real Godhead of our Lord Christ was altogether necessary to salvation, since he declares that "he cannot become the temple of God;" which is the same thing as to say, he cannot be saved who denies that Christ is God. "And to me, continues this learned prelate, it appears, that in these few words, "I believe in God the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost," this great truth, even that the Son and Holy Spirit are one God

\*Judicium Eccl. Cath. Ch. iv.

†This we shall have occasion afterwards to prove.

with the Father, is more clearly expressed than in some more full creeds which were afterwards introduced, in which other additions being made to the words: "I believe in God the Father," and also after the mention of the Son, without repeating the word God in the clauses concerning the Son and the Holy Spirit, it might seem, and did seem to some, that the title God belonged to the Father alone, plainly contrary to the intention and opinion of those who formed these more enlarged creeds. Secondly, in this form, the Son, as well as the Holy Spirit, are united with the Father as partners of the dominion, and sharers of that faith, honor, worship, and obedience, which the person to be baptized vows and promises, and which he who believes can belong to a mere man, or to any creature. must be conceived totally ignorant of what it is which constitutes the horrible guilt of idolatry."

But, in addition to the truth of this great doctrine, this divine commission of our Saviour makes evident what is too often unattended to, and what we now wish to illustrate, the direct practical tendency of the doctrine of the Trinity, since it is connected by him with that scheme of instruction which "teaches men to observe and do all things whatsoever he had commanded." Beyond any reasonable doubt or controversy, the grand peculiar doctrine of the christian Revelation is here declared to be the existence of Three Persons in the Divine essence, forming together the one Godhead, the exclusive object of our adoration and obedience; and in the Divine dispensation towards man, and especially in the grand scheme of redemption, contributing each their distinct parts, which supply distinct grounds of gratitude and reverence to each of these divine persons. This great truth is, therefore, put forward by the founder of our holy religion, the author and finisher of our faith, not as an obscure and unconnected dogma, which may be rejected because mysterious, or disregarded as unessential, but as the great confession of faith, indispensably required from all who seek admission into his church on earth, or hope to be received as his followers in Heaven.

Is it not also evident, from the constant, affectionate, and fervent repetition of this promise in the form of a benediction by the Apostles, that this great truth of the divinity of our Redeemer, and his union with God the Father, is not merely a speculative dogma, necessary indeed, to our entrance into the Church of Christ, by baptism, but which may be afterwards neglected, or forgotten; but, that as with the holy apostle, so

with us, it should be ever uppermost in our recollection, as a source of faith and hope, of gratitude and love, and adoration to those divine persons, equally united in the Majesty of the Godhead, and also equally united in the work of our salvation? How awful then, is the danger of rejecting those peculiar doctrines of the gospel, which some men think unimportant, because, as they suppose, they have no necessary connexion with the truths or the duties of what they term the religion of reason and nature, and to which exclusively they would confine their regard.

Let no man, therefore, affirm, that the doctrine of the Trinity is merely an abstract dogma, a mode of faith, which has no bearing on practical religion. It is far more scriptural to believe that the practical knowledge and belief of this doctrine, and of the separate office of each person in the Godhead, is necessary for eternal life. "For," says the Apostle, "it is THROUGH CHRIST we both have access BY ONE SPIRIT UNTO THE FATHER." "Through Christ we are reconciled to God." "No man," says Christ, "cometh unto the Father but by me. I am the way." "There is but one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus." "And this is eternal life, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." But to know Christ as God manifest in the flesh; as a living, loving and all-sufficient Saviour,—to be united to him, as our vital Head, so that our life may be hid with Christ in God,—we must be assisted and taught by the Holy Ghost. "It is the Spirit who searcheth all things, even the deep things of God." It is he that worketh in us "to will and to do." The preparations of the heart are from him. "No man can call Jesus *Lord* but by the Holy Ghost," and it is "the Spirit, who helpeth our infirmities, for we know not what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings that cannot be uttered." And "as many as are thus led by the Spirit," through the Son unto the Father, "are the sons of God," for through Christ we have access by one Spirit unto the Father.

But some man may say, that after all, we cannot comprehend this doctrine, nor know anything with certainty about it. This objection, however, is founded upon the evident mistake of confounding the doctrine with that which the doctrine teaches—the *fact*, that there is a triune God with the comprehension of the essence and mode of existence of this trinity,—the abstract term by which we express what is revealed to us

of God, with the nature of that incomprehensible trinity, which exists in the one ever-blessed Godhead,—and the clear enunciation of the doctrine in Scripture with a clear understanding of all that it implies.\*

*How* God exists—what is God's nature—and how God can be three and yet one—*this* we cannot comprehend, because God's nature cannot possibly be revealed to us as it is in itself. In this respect, however, not only the tri-unity, but all that relates to God, is both ineffable and incomprehensible,—all that relates to the self-existence, eternity, omnipresence, omnipotence and omniscience of God, to his holiness, justice, goodness and mercy, and to all these in combination of harmony with each other. In this respect, also, all that is supernatural is high and inconceivable to us. And of the essence and mode of existence and operation of every object in nature, we are as really ignorant as we are of the Divine essence.

While, therefore, it is true of God, that his nature is incomprehensible, this is not any more true of the tri-unity of God, than it is of the existence and attributes of God. We know nothing of any of these as they are in their own nature. But we can, and do know certainly and infallibly all that is revealed to us by God, concerning himself in his word. We do know certainly, that God best understood how, and in what language, to convey us to that knowledge of himself as it relates to his nature and attributes, which was comprehensible by us, and which might become the proper foundation for our faith, humility, adoration and pious resignation. We do know assuredly, that God cannot mistake, and that he cannot deceive, or lead us into mistake. In causing "holy men of God, therefore, to speak as they were moved by the Holy Ghost," we must be, and we are, perfectly sure, that God caused the best language to be employed in speaking of himself, which could be done. And when we properly understand that language, and attach to it all the meaning, and only that meaning which it conveys to us, we are sure that our understanding of what is in his nature and perfections, is certainly and infallibly correct, although, of necessity, it is still very imperfect and far short of what God really is, and of what is understood of him by angels and by the spirits of just men made perfect, who now "see him as he is."

\*See Note A, at end of this article, from Waterland's Works, vol. v., pp. 13-17.

The manner of the existence of the Trinity is, then, we admit, a mystery; but that God is in nature only one, and in persons three, is a reality, a fact of whose certainty we are assured by God himself in his own word. The case is exactly the same with every attribute of God. "The manner of their existence is above comprehension," as is stated even by Dr. Clarke,\* and yet their existence and reality is, he allows, demonstrable. In like manner, again to use Dr. Clarke's illustration,\* "though the manner of the Son's derivation is above comprehension," the reality of it is strictly demonstrable. Omnipresence is a mystery, the modus, or manner of which, is beyond our comprehension, but which, as an actual attribute of the Deity, is certain. The incarnation of the Son of God, whatever may have been his previous dignity, is incomprehensible, and yet the fact is believed to be indisputable by all who regard Christ as having existed previous to his appearance upon earth. The simplicity, the self-existence, and the eternity of God are incomprehensible, and yet they are demonstrable facts.

It is, therefore, only in accordance with our invariable beliefs of supernatural truths, when we affirm, that while the existence of three persons, each God, and yet together, only one God, inasmuch as they have but one common essence or nature, is an incomprehensible mystery, the fact that God does thus exist is certain, clear and intelligible. And let it be again and again enforced upon our attention that in all such truths it is only THE FACT that is revealed, and only THE FACT that we are required to believe. Scripture neither gives, nor requires, any accurate philosophical notions of any one of God's attributes, or of any one supernatural truth. All such metaphysical difficulties are avoided and even repudiated by Scripture, as appertaining neither to what is taught, nor to what is to be believed, nor to what is to be done by us. The existence in one godhead of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, and their several relations to us in the work of salvation, is all that in Scripture we are taught or required to believe, and the reluctance of human pride to acquiesce in this simple teaching, and its vain attempt to bring the nature of God within our comprehension, is the fruitful source of Unitarianism, and of every other error on the subject of the Deity.

Let it then be borne in mind, that what, as creatures, we cannot comprehend is THE NATURE, ESSENCE and MODE of OPER-

\*Scripture Doctrine of the Trinity, p. 99.

ATION of all that is supernatural and divine; but that we can, and do know certainly and infallibly whatever God is pleased to reveal to us on those subjects, in his word. And if, therefore, the doctrine of the Trinity is taught in the Bible, then we can both know and understand this doctrine as clearly and as fully as any other doctrine in reference to any other supernatural and divine truth, and as clearly as we do the certain existence of eternal objects, of whose nature and essence we are, nevertheless, supremely ignorant.

This will show the very serious error of those who think that no advantage can arise from discussing and controverting objections to the doctrine of the Trinity. God has purposely arranged the Scriptures so as to make inquiry, discussion and controversy, necessary to come to the full and perfect knowledge of the truth. Rational and scriptural investigation are the appointed means, both for ascertaining, establishing and propagating, the truth; and the employment of those means in maintaining and defending the doctrine of the Trinity, God has often and in an especial manner, blessed and made effectual to the renewal of his church, the restoration of those who had fallen away from the truth, and the upbuilding and extension of his kingdom. This truth I might illustrate from every age of the church, and from every country, both in ancient and modern times. The life and energy, and spirituality of the church, have ever been found connected with the vital, practical belief of the doctrine of the Trinity and its kindred tenets, while coldness, worldliness and decay, have ever been found *leading to* the abandonment, or *following from* the abandonment, of these doctrines. This is true, also, of individual christians, as may be seen in the experience of Newton and Cowper, of Thomas Scott, and of Chalmers. This is equally true of churches, as may be seen in the history of the churches in England, in Scotland, in Ireland, and in New England; in all of which, the renewal of a living and active christianity is to be distinctly traced to the restoration, after much dissension and controversy, of the doctrines of the Trinity, and its associated evangelical Christianity. And it is only necessary for any church to allow these doctrines to be kept out of the pulpit, and to assume that they are already sufficiently and securely held, to give the enemy all the opportunity he desires to sow tares, which will ere long spring up and choke the good seed, and overspread the garden of the Lord with the weeds of putrefaction and decay.



The following hymns of the Ancient Church, will illustrate the practical nature of the doctrine of the Trinity:

## MATINS.

Thrice holy God, of wondrous might,  
O Trinity of love divine,  
To thee belongs unclouded light,  
And everlasting joys are thine.

About thy throne dark clouds abound,  
About thee shine such dazzling rays  
That angels, as they stand around  
Are fain to tremble as they gaze.

Thy new-born people, gracious Lord,  
Confess thee in thine own great name;  
By hope they taste the rich reward,  
Which faith already dares to claim.

Father, may we thy laws fulfil,  
Blest Son, may we thy precepts learn;  
And thou, blest Spirit, guide our will,  
Our feet unto thy pathway turn.

Yea, Father, may thy will be done,  
And may we thus thy name adore,  
Together with thy blessed Son,  
And Holy Ghost for evermore.

*Amen.*

## EVENSONG.

O Thou who dwellest bright on high,  
Thou ever-blessed Trinity!  
Thee we confess, in thee believe,  
To thee with pious heart we cleave.

O Father, by thy saints adored,  
O Son of God, our blessed Lord,  
O Holy Spirit who dost join,  
Father and Son with love divine.

We see the Father in the Son,  
And with the Father Christ is one:  
All three one blessed truth approve,  
All three compose one holy love.

To God the Father, God the Son,  
And Holy Ghost, be glory done;  
One God Almighty,—we adore,  
With heart and voice for evermore.\*

## MATINS.

Thou ever blessed triune light,  
And Thou, great God, the highest might,  
Now that the setting sun departs,  
Shed ye your light upon our hearts.

\*Hymns of Primitive Church, by Chandler, pp. 92-94.

To you, each morn our voices rise,  
 Each eve we praise, when daylight dies;  
 Oh! let such praises still ascend  
 Till time himself shall find an end.

Praise be to God, who is in Heaven!  
 Praise to his blessed Son be given!  
 Thee, Holy Spirit we implore!

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FROM THE EVENSONG.

Praise, honour, glory, worship, be  
 Unto the blest Almighty Three!  
 Praise to the Sire, who rules above,  
 Praise to the virgin-nurtur'd Son,

Who hath for us salvation won;  
 Praise to that Holy Spirit's love,  
 Through whose blest teaching we adore  
 The triune God, for evermore.†

Glory to God the Trinity,  
 Whose name has mysteries unknown;  
 In essence One, in persons Three;  
 A social nature, yet alone.

When all our noblest powers are joined  
 The honours of thy name to praise,  
 Thy glories overmatch our mind,  
 And angels faint beneath the praise.

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NOTE A.

Waterland (vol. 1, part 2., p. 157.) gives the following positions of some or other of the Arians in respect of the Son:

1. Not consubstantial with God the Father.
2. Not co-eternal, however begotten before all ages, or without any known limitation of time.
3. Of a distinct inferior nature, however otherwise perfectly like the Father.
4. Not strictly and essentially God, but partaking of the Father's Divinity.
5. A creature of the Father's, however unlike to the rest of the creatures, or superior to them.
6. Not like the Father, but in nature and substance like other creatures.
7. Made in time: there having been a time when he was not, made of nothing.
8. Far inferior to the Father in knowledge, power and perfections.
9. Mutable in his nature, as a creature, though unchangeable by decree.
10. Dependent on the good pleasure of the Father for his past, present, and future being.
11. Not knowing the Father perfectly, nor himself; his knowledge being that of a creature, and therefore, finite.
12. Made a little before the world was made: and for the sake of those that should be after him.

These are the Arian principles, brought down as low as they well can go. Arius, the author and founder of the sect, seems to have gone through all those steps at the first, and indeed, all of them, except the last, hang together, and are but the necessary consequences of each other. Those that stopped in the midway, or sooner, might be more pious and modest,

†From "Hymnarium Anglicanum," or, "Hymns of the Ancient Anglican Church," pp. 47, 50.

but less consistent men. . . . The nine last particulars were, for some time, and by the Arians in general, waived, dropped, not insisted on, (as being too gross to take,) or else artfully insinuated only, under specious and plausible expressions. The first they all owned and insisted the most upon, having many pretenses to urge against consubstantiality, either name or thing. The second and third they divided upon, as to the way of expression; some speaking their minds plainly, others with more reserve; not so much denying the co-eternity, as forbearing to affirm it. This was the method which the Arians took to propagate their heresy. We do not wonder if they were often forced to make use of collusions, equivocations, and double entendres; for, being obliged, for fear of offence, to use Catholic words, though without a Catholic meaning; and to maintain their main principle, without seeming to maintain its necessary consequences, (nay, seeming to deny and respect them,) it could not be otherwise. And not only the Catholics frequently complain of those smooth gentlemen, but some even of their own party, could not endure such shuffling; thinking it became honest and sincere men, either to speak out, or to say nothing. Of this kind were Aetius and Eunomius, with their followers, called Anomæans and Exoucontii, being indeed, no other, in respect to the Son's divinity, than such as Arius was at first; and speaking almost as plainly and bluntly as he did. After the disguises and softening, and colourings, had been carried on so long, till all men of sense saw plainly, that it was high time to leave off trifling, and to come from words to things; and that there was no medium, but either to settle into orthodoxy, or, to sit down with the pure Arians and Anomæans. (if they would determine anything, and be sincere and consistent men.) some choose the former and some the latter, according as they more inclined to one way or the other. There is certainly no medium betwixt orthodoxy and Arianism, (for \*Semi-Arianism, if so understood, is perfect nonsense and contradiction,) there being no medium between God and creature, between unmade and made. Men may conceal their sentiments, suppress consequences and speak their minds but by halves; and so one erring may be more cautious, or more artful than another; but, in truth and reality, every man that disowns the consubstantiality, rightly understood, is as much an Arian as Eunomius or Aetius, or any of the ancient Arians were, or, even as Arius himself, excepting only some few particulars, which were not his standing and settled opinions.

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NOTE B.

"The Son is supposed to be a creature of the Father's. Now, if his being of, or from, the Father, in this sense, makes him one God with the Father, it will follow that angels, or *men*, or, even things inanimate, are one God with the Father also. Indeed, to do you justice, you do not so much as pretend, that unity of principle, or anything else, can make him one God with the Father; which is enough to show how very widely you differ from the ancients, in the main point of all. They thought it necessary to assert that Father and Son were both, one God. So Irenæus, Athanasius, Tertullian, Clement of Alexandrinus, Origen, Hippolytus, Lactantius, and even Eusebius himself, after some debates upon it, as may appear from the testimonies before referred to; and of the Post-Nicene Catholic writers, in general, every body knows how they contended for it. The thought that the divinity of the Son could not be otherwise secured, and Polytheism at the same time avoided, than by asserting Father and Son to be one God; and they thought right. But what do you do? or how can you contrive to clear your scheme? We ask if the Son be God, as well as the Father? You say, yes. How, then, we ask, is there but one God? Your answer is, the Father is supreme, and, therefore, he, singly, is the one God. This is taking away what you gave us before, and retracting what you asserted of the Son. If supremacy only makes a

\*Semi-Arianus, et Semi-Deus, et Semi-creatura perinde monstra et portenta sunt, quæ sani et pii omnes merito exhorrent.—Bull D. F., p. 284.

person God, the Son is no God, upon your principles; or, if he is God notwithstanding, then Father and Son are two Gods. Turn this over as often as you please, you will find it impossible to extricate yourself from it. You can say only this: that you do not admit two supreme Gods. This is very true, no more did the Pagan Polytheists, nor the idolatrous Samaritans, nor others condemned in Scripture for Polytheism."

The allegations made by Unitarians therefore, that this doctrine is absurd and contradictory, is founded on ignorance and presumption. It is also suicidal, since all such objections apply with equal, if not greater, force to the Unitarian hypothesis. The existence of God as an omnipotent, omnipresent, and yet spiritual being, involves every difficulty and every apparent contradiction imputed to the doctrine of the Trinity, and is just as far beyond the utmost capacity of human reason. Difficulties insurmountable to human reason inhere in the very nature of the subject; and such difficulties therefore, must be one characteristic of a divine revelation and pre-eminently, as it relates to the nature of God and his mode of existence. Besides, to use the words of Bishop Horsley, "hath the Arian hypothesis no difficulty, when it ascribes both the first formation and the perpetual government of the universe, not to the Deity, but to an inferior being? Can any power or wisdom less than supreme, be a sufficient ground for the trust we are required to place in Providence? Make the wisdom and the power of our ruler what you please; still, upon the Arian principle, it is the wisdom and the power of the creature. Where then, will be the certainty that the evil which we find in the world, hath not crept in through some imperfections in the original contrivance, or in the present management? Since every intellect below the first, may be liable to error, and any power, short of the supreme, may be inadequate to purposes of a certain magnitude. But if evil may have thus crept in, what assurance can we have that it will ever be extirpated? In the Socinian scheme, is it no difficulty that the capacity of a mere man or of any created being, should contain that wisdom by which God made the universe? Whatever is meant by *the Word* in St. John's gospel, it is the same Word of which the Evangelist says, that "all things were made by it," and that it "was itself made flesh." If this Word be the divine attribute Wisdom, then that attribute, in the degree which was equal to the formation of the universe, in this view of the Scripture doctrine, was conveyed entire into the mind of a mere man, the son of a Jewish carpenter. A much greater difficulty, in my apprehension, than any that is to be found in the Catholic faith.

The Unitarian hypothesis implies also, that the Son was born before all times, yet is not eternal; not a creature, yet not God; of God's substance, yet not of the same substance; and his exact and perfect resemblance in all things, yet not a second Deity—a creed really involving those contradictions in terms of which the orthodox are wrongfully accused. It cannot escape from one of two conclusions—"either the establishment of a sort of polytheism or as the more practical alternative, that of the mere humanity of Christ; *i. e.* either the superstition of paganism, or the virtual atheism of philosophy. It confesses our Lord to be God, yet at the same time infinitely distant from the perfections of the One Eternal cause. Here, at once, a *ditheism* is acknowledged. But Athanasius pushes on the admission to that of an unlimited polytheism. "If," he says, "the Son were an object of worship for his transcendent glory, then every subordinate being is bound to worship his superior." But so repulsive is the notion of a secondary God, both to reason, and much more to christianity, that the real tendency of Arianism lay towards the sole remaining alternative, the humanitarian scheme.\*

The Arian creed, if considered in all its bearings and deductions, will, perhaps, appear much less rational and philosophical than has been sometimes asserted. It has been described as a simpler and less mystical

\*See Newman's History of Arians of the Fourth Century, pp. 220, 221, 246-248.

hypothesis than that of the Trinitarians, and yet it requires us to apply the same term, God, to two beings who differ as widely from each other as the Creator and his creature. It requires us to speak of Christ as the *begotten Son of God*, though he only differs from all other creatures by having preceded them in the order of time. It requires us to believe of this Created Being, that he was himself, employed in creating the world; and to invest him with every attribute of Deity, except that of having existed from all eternity. If we contrast these notions with the creed of the Trinitarians, they will be found to present still greater difficulties to our faculties of comprehension.\*

\*Burton's Testimonies of the Fathers to the Trinity, page 4.

## ARTICLE VIII.

### FURTHER OBJECTIONS TO THE DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY ANSWERED.

*A consideration of the Heathen Doctrine of the Trinity, the opinions of the ancient Jews, and the almost universal testimony of the christian world, both ancient and modern.*

We have now endeavoured to meet fairly, fully and candidly, the objections offered as presumptive arguments against the doctrine of the Trinity.

There is, however, one other objection that occurs to our minds, and which may deserve a passing notice. It has been said that if this doctrine of the Trinity is so essential, and so practically important as we allege, it would have been revealed as clearly in the Old Testament as in the New. To this objection we would reply, *first*, that the objection admits that the doctrine of the Trinity is taught clearly in the New Testament. But, if the doctrine of the Trinity is clearly revealed, as true, in the New Testament, then to all who receive it as containing the doctrine taught by Christ and his apostles, it becomes fundamental, and vitally essential, whatever may have been the degree in which it was revealed to believers under the Old Testament. But, in the *second* place, we reply, that the doctrines of a future life, of the resurrection of the dead, of the nature of everlasting life, of the mercy of God, the way of acceptance with him, and the principle of obedience, not to mention others, are, on all hands, admitted to be of fundamental and practical importance, and among "the first principles of the oracles of God," and yet these are far more clearly and fully revealed in the New than in the Old Testament. And it is therefore only in accordance with the progressive character of God's revelation that the doctrine of the Trinity should be more distinctly revealed in the New, than in the Old Testament. But, *thirdly*, we affirm that there is more in the Old Testament to lead to the belief of a plurality in the Divine Godhead, than there is to regard that Godhead as a simple and absolute personal unity; and as this plurality is limited to the mention of the invisible Jehovah,—the visible, Jehovah, the God of Israel—and the Holy Spirit, we have in the Old Testament a *sufficient* revelation of the doctrine of the Trinity.

We now proceed however, to remark, that in coming to the investigation of Scripture as to the doctrine of the Trinity, we are not only relieved from all presumptive objections against it, but are assisted by a presumptive argument in its favour, which, to our minds, has no small importance in rendering it probable that the Trinity is a doctrine of divine revelation.

It is admitted by both parties in this controversy, that the doctrine of the Trinity of the Godhead is infinitely above, and beyond, the *comprehension*, or the *discovery*, of reason. The very fact, therefore, that a doctrine so remote from the ordinary conception of reason should exist, and should have existed always in some form, is a presumption that the human mind was, originally, led to such a conception by a direct revelation from Heaven.

The UNIVERSALITY with which this belief, in some form has been held, is a powerful confirmation of the opinion that the origin of this doctrine must be referred to a primitive and common revelation, since, as is admitted, and even urgently advanced by our opponents, it is not a doctrine which could naturally suggest itself to the human mind. It would require a volume to contain the evidence of the actual existence of the doctrine of a Trinity, in some form or other, among almost every nation of the earth. Volumes *have* been written upon this subject containing proof of the belief in a Trinity—a triad of supreme and co-equal deities—in Hindostan—in Chaldea—in Persia—in Scythia, comprehending Thibet, Tartary, and Siberia,—in China—in Egypt—among the Greeks—among the Greek philosophers who had visited Chaldea, Persia, India, and Egypt, and who taught the doctrine of the Trinity after their return to Greece—among the Romans—among the Germans—and among the ancient Americans.

The truth of this fact it might be necessary to establish by full and explicit evidence, were it not fully admitted by Unitarian writers who base upon it, an argument for the heathen origin of the doctrine. A considerable portion, for instance, of Dr. Beard's recent work entitled *Historical Illustrations of the Trinity\** is occupied with the presentation of evidence that "a divine triplicity was common in the heathen world prior to the Gospel of Christ." He gives proof of its existence among the Babylonians, the Phœnicians, the Persians, and in India. Zoroaster, he quotes as declaring in so many words, that "the

\*Hist. and Artistic Ill. of the Trinity from Lond. 1846. The works of this writer are in great repute among American Unitarians.

paternal monad (or the Deity) generates too, and in the whole world shines the triad over which the monad rules." In the most ancient of all mythologies, that of Egypt, "as described by authors who lived before the christian era, and as set forth on the walls of the temples in which its ritual of worship was performed, it was taught to the initiated, and concealed from the vulgar, that God created all things at the first, by the primary emanation from himself, his first-born, who was the author and giver of all wisdom, and of all knowledge, in heaven and in earth, being at the same time the wisdom and the word of God. The birth of this great and all-powerful being, his manifestation as an infant, his nature and education through the succeeding periods of childhood and of boyhood, constituted the grand mystery of the entire system." The idea of a divine trinity, then, more or less distinctly outlined in other Eastern systems of religion, appears in that of Egypt fully and definitely formed, and may in consequence, says Dr. Beard, be legitimately considered as the immediate parent of the modern doctrine.†

Dr. Beard quotes as an ancient proverb the declaration "every THREE is perfect." Servius, in his Commentary on Virgil's 8th Eclogue says, "they assign the perfect number three to the highest God, from whom is the beginning, middle, and end." Triplicity was, therefore, found in those things which were held to be mirrors of the Divine essence. And Plutarch (de Iside 56,) expressly says, the better and diviner nature consists of the three."

Servius remarks that "the distinctive attributes of nearly all the gods are represented by the number three. The thunderbolt of Jupiter is cleft in three; the trident of Neptune is three-forked; Plato's dog is three-headed; so are the Furies. The Muses also, are three times three." Aurelius, according to Proclus, (in Tim. ii. 93,) says, "the Demiurge or *Creator* is triple, and the three intellects are the three kings,—he who exists, he who possesses, he who beholds. And these are different."\*

And we learn further, that there existed and was familiar to the heathen mind the idea of a *Θεανθρωπος*, *Theanthropos*, or GOD-MAN.‡

It follows from what is thus admitted by this learned Unitarian, *first*, that the absolute, metaphysical, or personal unity

†Dr. Beard, pp. 19, 20, 21. \*Dr. Beard, p. 4. ‡Dr. Beard, p. 27.



of God for which Unitarians contend, never was the doctrine of human reason, or of human religion; and *secondly*, that in ALL ancient religions we find the evidence of an original doctrine of a Trinity.

As to the Romans, "the joint worship of Jupiter, Juno, and Minerva,—the Triad of the Roman Capitol,—is, (says Bishop Horsley,) traced to that of the THREE MIGHTY ONES in Samothrace; which was established in that island, at what precise time it is impossible to determine, but earlier, if Eusebius may be credited, than the days of Abraham."‡ The notion, therefore, of a Trinity, more or less removed from the purity of the christian faith, is found to have been a leading principle in all the ancient schools of philosophy, and in the religions of almost all nations; and traces of an early popular belief of it, appear even in the abominable rites of idolatrous worship. In regard to Plato, it is well known that he largely discoursed of a divine Trinity; the three component members of which are, (says Bishop Horsley,\*) "more strictly speaking, one, than anything in nature, of which unity may be predicated. No one of them can be supposed without the other two. The second and third being, the first is necessarily supposed; and the first *αγαθον*, (*agathon*) being, the second and third, *νους*, (*nous*) and *ψυχη*, (*psyche*) must come forth. Concerning their equality, I will not say that the Platonists have spoken with the same accuracy which the christian Fathers use; but they include the three principles in the Divine nature, in the *το Θειον*, (*to theion*) and this notion implies the same equality which we maintain." "In the opinions of the Pagan Platonists, and other wise men," adds Bishop Horsley,† "we have in some degree an experimental proof, that this abstruse doctrine cannot be the absurdity, which it seems to those who misunderstand it. Would Plato, would Porphyry, would even Plotinus, have believed the miracles of Mahomet, or the doctrine of transubstantiation? But they all believed a doctrine which so far at least, resembles the Nicene, as to be loaded with the same, or greater objections."

"God is but One; who holds a Trinity,  
Believes in that which is not, cannot be,  
For Three in One's impossibility."  
Thus speaks the "Christian" of Socinus' brood.  
What said the very heathen? "There are Three  
Who are One God," quoth Plato, "th' only Good,

‡Horsley's Tracts, p. 49.

\*Tracts, p. 247.

†Horsley's Tracts, p. 77.

The Word, the Spirit." Nay, the Pagan rude  
 In Scythian wilds, less stormy than his mind,  
 Who hoped from foeman's skulls to quaff Heaven's mead,  
 Believed one God, from whom all things proceed,  
 And yet declared Three Gods had made mankind,  
 Each giving his own blessing. Shame, oh Shame!  
 That men should ape the christian's heavenly name,  
 And yet be darker than the heathen blind!

Such then, are THE FACTS in this case. What inference, then, are we to make from these admitted facts, proving, as they do, the universal belief of the doctrine of a Trinity. "If reason," says Bishop Horsley,‡ "was insufficient for this great discovery, what could be the means of information, but what the Platonists themselves assign." "A theology delivered from the gods," *i. e.*, a revelation. This is the account which Platonists, who were no christians, have given of the origin of their master's doctrine. But, from what revelation could *they* derive their information, who lived before the christian, and had no light from the Mosaic Scriptures? Their information could be only drawn from traditions founded upon earlier revelations; from scattered fragments of the ancient patriarchal creed; that creed which was universal before the defection of the first idolaters, which the corruptions of Idolatry, gross and enormous as they were, could never totally obliterate. Thus the doctrine of the Trinity is rather confirmed than discredited by the suffrage of the heathen sages; since the resemblance of the christian faith and the Pagan philosophy in this article, when fairly interpreted, appears to be nothing less than the consent of the latest and the earliest revelations."\*

That this universal belief in A Trinity is to be traced to an original revelation is, however, proved not only by the incapacity of reason to discover such a doctrine, and its reluctance to receive it when discovered, and by the equality universal reference of it to an original divine revelation, but also by the fact that it is only in the very earliest and purest traditions and theologies that this doctrine exists in any degree of clearness. As human reason was developed the doctrine became obscured, and was either hidden from public knowledge, or transformed into a mere intellectual refinement. Dr. Minchola in his Treatise on Vaccination § 4, speaking of the experiences of all nations as a proof of the rationality of even supra-rational doctrines says: "Here we meet, in the first place, the mysterious number "three," in all the religious systems of antiquity, and

‡Ib., p. 49.

\*Tracts, p. 50.

even where such systems are not, and were not, existing, the number of the highest gods have so frequently been found to coincide with "the number three," *c. g.*, the Laplanders, the Finns, the Germans, the South Sea Islanders, the ancient Mexicans, and others, that this phenomenon cannot be considered as an accidental one. The ancient philosophical systems were likewise based upon this mysterious number, *c. g.*, those of Orpheus, Pythagoras, Plato, the very ancient Chinese philosopher, Laodhoë, in later times, that of Aurelius, (*Suidas sub voce*,) of the Jew Philo, of the modern Platonists and the Cabbalists, so that we can only say that the mystery of the Divine Trinity has found its wonderful mystic harmony, from the beginning of the world, among all zones and nations. However, the fountain from which this mystery has flowed, can have been no other but "the Lord," *i. e.*, "the first revelations of God to man."

To use the language of a recent poet who has ably written on this subject:\*

Gross as was the darkness on man's mind,  
 And wild as were his hopeless wanderings,  
 Tradition, if 'tis fairly followed out  
 In every quarter of the world, will show  
 That man's progenitors in early times  
 Worshipp'd and own'd a triune Deity.  
 Chaldea, China, Egypt, India,  
 Greece, Persia, Scythia, Scandinavia, Rome,  
 Britain, and all those late discover'd realms,  
 Named from Americus, with one accord  
 [To all who trace their superstitions up  
 Unto the Fountain-head] proclaim aloud  
 That, through the darkness of the human mind,  
 Their polytheism was derived thence;  
 And every system of Idolatry  
 First rose from worship of the Living God,  
 When man, to fancy giving up the reins,  
 Began to substitute philosophy  
 For the plain lessons which his Maker gave;  
 And shew that all their best and wisest men  
 Beheld the great First-Cause as *three in one*.  
 When, at th' Eternal's high command, the floods  
 Subsided, and the earth, long drench'd in tears  
 Of penitence for sin, brighten'd once more  
 Her wave-wash'd features to a joyous smile,  
 The patriarch Noah unto all his race,  
 Whilst he abode a pilgrim on the earth,  
 Made known the nature of a Deity.  
 To China, Ham the knowledge carried forth,  
 [Himself the founder of that ancient state,  
 Where, till the days of the Confucius,  
 They, as a triune spirit worship'd God;  
 And in their sanctuaries hymn'd His praise,  
 Without an image or a symbol there.  
 Chaldea's region, chief abiding place  
 Of Shem, of all the post-diluvian world,

\*Ragg's Poem on the Deity, pp. 125-127.

Was probably the earliest peopled land,  
 Whence the surrounding nations all derived  
 Their knowledge of the arts and sciences ;  
 And her great Zoroaster, first of those  
 Who, from the hillock of philosophy,  
 Dar'd lift their eyes to the Eternal One,  
 To his disciples in plain terms declar'd  
 That "The Paternal Monad amplifies  
 Itself, and generates a Duality,  
 Which by the Monad sits, and shining forth  
 With intellectual beams, o'er all things rules,  
 For Deity in Triad shines throughout  
 The world, of which a Monad is the head ;"  
 Which Triad, Virtue, Wisdom, Truth, he styled.  
 Losing its clearness still, on either hand  
 Thence roll'd the stream of sacred doctrine forth  
 To Indostan and Persia ; varying oft  
 In breath and depth, but ever bearing signs  
 Of that all-glorious Fountain whence it flow'd ;  
 And Brahma, Visnu, and Siva here,  
 There Oromasdes, Mithra, Ahriman,  
 Shew forth corruptions of th' Eternal Three.  
 Through middle Asia, more or less corrupt,  
 With Shem's and Ham's remaining progeny  
 The doctrine spread ; and unto Egypt borne  
 By Taut, Phœnicia's early emigrant,  
 Upon the fertile banks of Nile, we view  
 The same great Triad in another form  
 (Not deeply darken'd yet, though not so clear)  
 As in His primal loveliness reveal'd  
 In persons of Osiris, Cneph, and Phtha."\*

Before leaving this presumptive argument, we will offer three remarks in confirmation of it :

In the *first* place, we would wish it to be distinctly understood that we do not by any means, concur with Dr. Beard and other Unitarian and infidel writers, in thinking that the heathen triads are *similar* to the christian Trinity, or could by any

\*For the testimonies of the heathen to the doctrines of a Trinity, see Professor Kidd's Essay on the Trinity: Maurice's Indian Antiquities, vol. iv., ch. 2, 3 and 4: Dr. Hales on the Trinity, vol. ii., pp. 266-285: Simpson's Plea for the Divinity of Jesus, p. 432-456: Kidder's Demonstration of the Messiah: Cudworth's Intellectual System: Pritchard's Egypt, p. 295: Faber's History of Idolatry, vol. iii., pp. 111, &c., 611, 616, 617: Work on Egypt, by London Tract Society, p. 136, &c. Newman's History of Arianism in the 4th Century, p. 100: Poole's Horæ Egyptiacæ, p. 204-206: Gale's Court of the Gentiles, vol. iv., p. 306, and vol. i., ch. 2, p. 68: Smith's Testimony to the Messiah, vol. iii., p. 420: Morris's Prose Essay on the Hindus, pp. 165, 365, and notes, p. 391: Spencer de Leg. Hebraeæ, Lib. iii., Diss. 5, ch. 3: Hutchinson's Trinity of the Gentiles and Moses, Linc. Hey's Lectures on Div., B. iv., Art. 1, § 1, vol. i., p. 486, 2 vol. ad. See however, particularly, Ancient Fragments, with an Introd. Dissert., and an Inq. into the Trinity of the Ancients, by Isaac Preston Cory, 2d Ed., Lond., Pickering, 1832, which contains all the evidence from which to form our opinion.

This argument is also pursued at length, by Chevalier Ramsay, in his Princ. of Nat. and Rev. Rel., ed. Glasgow, 1748, vol. i., p. 97, and vol. ii. See also, Vossines, Huct, Kurher, Thomassin, Stanley and Purchas. Ramsay regards all the Pagan triads as variations of one common original faith, and the Chinese and Egyptian triads as going beyond and being independent of the Mosaic records.

See also, note A, being an Analysis and Historical account of the Pagan Triads, p. 560, vol. viii, of So. Pres. Review.

force of imagination have been transmuted into it. Many learned and able writers, who have perceived in the heathen triads the corruption of a primitive revelation of the Trinity, have nevertheless pointed out their manifest and essential dissimilarity to it.\*

On this subject there is, therefore, a safe and middle way to be pursued. We are not, with Bishop Horsley, to attempt to construct out of the heathen triads a clear threefold personal distinction co-existing in one essential Godhead or nature, nor are we, on the other hand, to reject the manifest and indisputable *analogy* which they present to the doctrine of the Trinity. This analogy is as great in regard to this doctrine as it is to that of sacrifice and other firmly revealed and divinely authorized truths, and so great as to be altogether inexplicable, except upon the supposition, that like them, it is the corruption of a primitive revealed truth.†

Our object in the presentation of this presumptive argument in favour of the Trinity has, therefore, been twofold. First, to repel the *a priori* objection to this doctrine founded upon its alleged unreasonableness and contrariety to the general conceptions of mankind, and secondly, to prove that as the doctrine is one evidently above, and beyond, and contrary to, the natural conceptions of uninstructed reason, it must be traced to the source to which the Fathers and ancient philosophers them-

\*See Gale, vol. iv., p. 383: Cudworth, B. i., c. 4, § 34 and 35, and particularly Faber, as above, and in the pages following.

†“Much, (says Mr. Cory,) in his very learned work, (Anct. Fragments of the Phœnician, Chaldean, and other writers, with Dissert. and Inq. into the Trinity of the Ancients, Lond. 1832, Pickering,) as has been said upon the Platonic trinity, I must confess that I can find fewer traces of that doctrine in the writings of Plato, than of his less refined predecessors, the Mythologists. I have given such extracts as appear to me to relate to the subject, together with a fragment of Amelius, which expressly mentions the three kings of Plato as identical with the Orphic Trinity. Dr. Morgan, in his Essay upon the subject, satisfactorily refutes the notion, that Plato regarded the Logos as the second person of the Trinity; and upon this refutation he denies that Plato held the doctrine at all, more particularly, as from the time of Plato to that of Ammonius Saccas, in the third century, no disciple of his school seems to have been aware that such a doctrine was contained in his writings. Perhaps, however, we may trace some obscure allusions to it in the beginning of the second hypothesis of the Parmenides, and in the passage which I have given, (though in the latter the doctrines appear rather to refer to the Monad and Duad, than to the genuine Trinity of the ancients.) So far from any such doctrine being maintained by the Pythagoreans, or in the Academy, we find only such vague allusions as might be expected among philosophers who revered an ancient tradition, and were willing after they had lost the substance, to find something to which they might attach the shadow. “The Christian Trinity is not a Trinity of principles, like that of the Persian philosophers; it does not consist of mere logical notions, and inadequate conceptions of Deity, like that of Plato; but it is a Trinity of subsistences, or persons, joined by an indissoluble union.”

selves traced it, that is, to an originally divine revelation. "We may reasonably conclude," says Cudworth, "that which Proclus assented to of this Trinity, as it was contained in the Chaldaic Oracles to be true, that it was at first a Theology of divine tradition or revelation, or a divine Cabbala, viz: amongst the Hebrews first, and from them afterwards communicated to the Egyptians and other nations."\*

The understanding of man can never be more grossly insulted than when Infidelity labours to persuade us, that a truth so awfully sublime as that at present under consideration, could ever be the offspring of human invention: nor can history be more violated than when it traces the origin of this doctrine to the schools of Greece. Equally above the boldest flight of human genius to invent, as beyond the most extended limit of human intellect fully to comprehend, is the profound mystery of the ever blessed Trinity.†

We remark then, in the *second* place, that the very earliest manifestations of the Deity to unfallen, and to fallen man, give proof that God was then known, not as a personal unity but as a Trinity. God, we are everywhere taught in the Scriptures, is absolutely invisible to mortal eyes, and as a fact, never has been visible, "no man having seen," or being able to see "God at any time."‡ The Jehovah therefore, who is everywhere visible to men,—who appears to them and converses with them, cannot be Jehovah the Father, but must be Jehovah the son.

We find however, in addition to this primitive revelation of a visible Jehovah,—and of a plural deity who is also called Jehovah,—distinct mention made of "THE SPIRIT OF GOD moving on the face of the waters," which SPIRIT we are told, would "not always strive with the children of men."§ And thus we are led to the belief that a knowledge of a trinity of persons in the divine unity was the primitive revelation made of himself by God to man, and "that the universal traditionary beliefs in this doctrine are the fossil remains of that primitive revelation."

The *third* remark, on which we wish to dwell at some length before leaving this point is, that even should it be denied that this universal belief in the doctrine of a Trinity is the traditionary form of a primitive revelation, it does not follow that

\*B. i., c. 1, § 35, quoted by Gale in Court of Gentiles, vol. iii., p. 386, and see also, vol. i., p. 8, ch. 2.

†Maurice Ind. Antiq., vol. iv., pp. 39, 40.

‡See numerous passages to this effect.

§See numerous similar passages.

the christian doctrine originated as Dr. Beard and Unitarians generally,—following Voltaire, Volney, Gibbon, and other infidels,‡—affirm, in Pagan and idolatrous superstition. For, as we *have* already seen in part, and *will* further hereafter shew, there are sufficient grounds to believe that this doctrine of the Trinity is the doctrine of the Old as well as of the New Testament, and of the ancient Jews as well as of the primitive christians, and thus we are again brought to the conclusion that the doctrine of a Trinity is found to exist among all nations, must have been derived from the Hebrew Scriptures and people, or from a primitive and common revelation, and not from Pagan philosophy. And to suppose that mankind so universally, and in many cases so clearly, arrived at the separate and independent belief of some kind of Trinity in unity, is at once to abandon the whole foundation on which opposition to this doctrine rests, and to admit that instead of being irrational, contradictory, absurd, and incredible, the doctrine of the Trinity, and not the doctrine of a personal unity of the Godhead, is the result to which human reason has been universally brought by its own convictions. And if this is so, then that revelation should teach clearly, authoritatively and universally, what reason only taught obscurely, unauthoritatively and to the initiated and philosophic few, is in perfect accordance with the teachings of revelation, on the subjects of future life, immortality, and many other doctrines, such as the existence of angels.\*

The historical fact that the doctrine of a Trinity is found embodied in all the most ancient forms of religion the world over, must be explained in some way. The hypotheses by which this fact can possibly be explained, are, however, very few.

By collecting all the evidence that can be had, and examining separately, and excluding successively every hypothesis which shall be found inconsistent with the admitted and undeniable facts, we may contract the circle of conjecture till but one hypothesis is left; which one must be the truth, and is thus negatively rendered matter of demonstration.

Now, Mr. Faber, in his admirable work on the Pagan Idolatry, has collected and separately examined all the different systems of the Heathen Mythology; and has shown that there

‡See Voltaire's Works, vol. 24, 26, 27, and Gibbon Hist. of Decl. and Fall, vol. ii., 4 to p. 227.

\*See Horsley's Tracts, p. 45-50, and also Tholuck, as Note B.

is such a singular, minute and regular accordance among them, not only in what is *obvious* and *natural*, but also in what is *arbitrary* and *circumstantial*, both in *fanciful speculations* and in *artificial observances*, so as to render untenable every other hypothesis than this,—that they must all have arisen from some common source.

Having thus shewn their common origin, he enumerates three hypotheses, as the only three on which, he conceives, the common origination of the various systems of Paganism can be accounted for:

I. Either all nations agreed to borrow from one, subsequent to their several settlements:

II. Or all nations, subsequent to their several settlements, were compelled by arms to adopt the superstition of one:

III. Or all nations were once assembled together in a single place and in a single community, where they adopted a corrupt form of religion, which they afterwards respectively carried with them into the lands that they colonized.

After examining and shewing the utter impossibility of maintaining either the first or the second of these hypotheses, he concludes that the third only can be the truth.

May we not, therefore, as Dr. Cudworth remarks, adore the wonderful providence of God, who so ordered that this doctrine of a Trinity should have been generally retained in the heathen world, and received by their wisest philosophers. "Whereas," says the learned writer, bold and conceited wits, precipitantly condemning the doctrine of the Trinity for nonsense, absolute repugnancy to human faculties, and impossibility, have thereupon, some of them, quite shaken off christianity, and all revealed religion professing only Theism, others have frustrated the design thereof by paganizing it into creature worship or Idolatry; this ignorant and conceited confidence of both may be refunded and confuted from hence, because the most ingenious and acute of all the Pagan philosophers, the Platonists and Pythagoreans, who had no bias at all upon them, nor any Scripture, (which might seem to impose upon their faculties,) but followed the free sentiments and dictates of their own minds, did, notwithstanding, not only entertain this Trinity of divine hypostases eternal and uncreated, but were also fond of the hypothesis, and made it a main fundamental of their theology.\* The latter Platonists and unbelieving Jews

\*See also remarks to the same effect in Stillingfleet on the Trinity, pp. 216, 217. See also Note A.



were, therefore, led, as this author points out, to adulterate the Cabbala and the genuine doctrine of Plato, in order to weaken their evidence in favour of the reasonableness of the doctrine of the Trinity.

This conclusion however, that the Pagan doctrine of triads originated in a primitive revelation, though to our minds irresistably strong, is very far from being admitted by our opponents. There was a time when the policy pursued was to deny the existence of any other than an imaginary resemblance between the Pagan and christian triads. "Thus have I given," says Dr. Priestly, "the best view that I have been able to collect of every thing that can be supposed to constitute the Trinity of Plato, from his own writings: without finding in them any resemblance to the christian Trinity, or indeed to any proper personification of the Divine Logos, which has been made the second person in it."\*

The discovery however, has now been made, that the christian doctrine of the Trinity was first introduced into the christian system by certain of the early fathers, who, by their too great fondness for the philosophical learning of Gentilism, corrupted christianity, in respect to the tenets of Christ's godhead and the Trinity, Justin Martyr being commonly set down as the ringleader of the innovators. The other Fathers chiefly implicated in this serious charge, are Ireneus, Athenagoras, Tertullian, and Clement of Alexandria. The opportunity being thus afforded for imputing to the doctrine of the Trinity a Pagan origin and character, the heathen triads were henceforward acknowledged to be, not only essentially analogous to, but the very sources and origin of the christian doctrine.

Such is the hypothesis. Is there then, we would ask, any foundation for this assertion in the writings of these Fathers? If indebted for such important truth to the Gentile philosophers, to whose works they had been devotedly attached, we may expect to hear them speak of them with gratitude and praise. If, however, on the contrary, we find them in the face of all the shame, reproach and persecution to which their belief of this doctrine subjected them; if we find them treating these philosophers with contempt, and tracing up their views to the Hebrew

\*Hist. of Early Opin. Book i., ch. 6: Works, vol. 6, p. 164. "A similar statement occurs also, in Dr. Priestley's Letters to Bishop Horsley. As to the Trinity of Plato, (says he,) it was certainly a thing very unlike your Athanasian doctrine. For, it was never imagined that the three component members of the Trinity were, either equal to each other, or (strictly speaking) one."

Scriptures, as the only pure foundations of primitive revelation, then we may feel assured that this hypothesis is gratuitous; unwarranted by the facts, and framed only as a subterfuge from the overwhelming power of the universal belief of this doctrine by the Fathers, as a proof of the primitive revelation of the doctrine of the Trinity.

Let us, then, hear what Justin Martyr says, "You will adduce," says he to the Greeks, "the wise men and the philosophers: for to these, as to a strong hold, you are wont to make your escape, whenever concerning the Gods, any twits you with the opinion of the poets. Wherefore, since it is fitting to begin with the first and the most ancient, commencing with them I will shew: that the speculation of each philosopher is still more ridiculous than even the theology of the poets.\* He then proceeds in regular succession, through the several opinions of Thales, Anaximander, Anaximenes, Heraclitus, Anaxagorus, Archelaus, Pythagorus, Epicurus, Empedocles, *Plato* and Aristotle, for the purpose of convicting them of all manifest and indisputable folly. With respect to *Plato* in particular, nothing can be more contemptuous than Justin's sneer at him. "*Plato* forsooth, is as sure that the Supreme Deity exists in a fiery substance, as if he had come down from above, and had accurately learned and seen all the things that are in Heaven."†

"Since," continues he to the Greeks, "it is impossible to learn from your teachers anything true respecting piety towards God, inasmuch as their very difference of opinion is a plain proof of their ignorance; I deem it an obvious consequence, that we should return to our own forefathers, who are of much higher antiquity than any of your teachers, who have taught us nothing from their own mere phantasy; who among themselves have no discrepancies, and who attempt not mutually to overturn the opinion of each other, but who, without wrangling and disputation, communicate to us that knowledge which they have received from God. For, neither by nature, nor by human intellect, is it possible for men to attain the knowledge of such great and divine matters, but only by the gift which descends from above, upon holy men who needed not the arts of eloquence, or the faculty of subtle disputation, but who judged it solely necessary to preserve themselves pure by the efficacious energy of the Divine Spirit."‡

\*Justin ad Græc. Cohort, Oper. p. 3.

†Ibid. p. 4.

‡Justin Cohort, Oper. p. 67.

Equally vituperative is the language of Tertullian. "For the authors of our Theology," says he, "we have the apostles of the Lord; who, not even themselves, arbitrarily chose what they would introduce, but who faithfully delivered to the nations that discipline which they received from Christ. Finally, heresies themselves, are suborned from philosophy. Thence spring those fables and endless genealogies, and unfruitful questions and discourses, creeping like gangrene, from which the Apostle would rein us back by charging us, even in so many words, to beware of philosophy. What then is there in common between Athens and Jerusalem, between the Academy and the Church, between Heretics and christians? Our institution is from the porch of Solomon, who, himself, has admonished us to seek the Lord in simplicity of heart. Let those persons see to it, who have brought forward a stoical, or a Platonic, or a dialectic christianity."† "From the Prophets and from Christ, we are instructed in regard to God; not from the Philosophers nor Epicurus. God hath chosen the foolish things of the world, that he might confound the wise. Through this simplicity of the truth, directly contrary to subtilouquence and philosophy, we can savour nothing perverse."‡

†Tertull. Adv. Marcion, Lib. ii., § 13, Oper. p. 181.

‡Tertull. Adv. Marcion, Lib. v., § 40, Oper. p. 328. Stillingfleet, in his works on the Trinity, replies to this objection as follows: (p. 213-215.)

"But our Unitarians have an answer ready for these men, viz., that they came out of Plato's school with the tincture of his three principles; and they sadly complain, that Platonism had very early corrupted the christian faith as to these matters. In answer to which exception, I have only one postulatum to make, which is, that these were honest men, and knew their own minds best, and I shall make it appear, that none can more positively declare, than they do, that they did not take up these notions from Plato, but from the Holy Scriptures; Justin Martyr saith he took the foundation of his faith from thence, and that he could find no certainty as to God and religion anywhere else; that he thinks Plato took his three principles from Moses; and in his dialogue with Trypho, he at large, proves the eternity of the Son of God from the Scriptures, and said he would use no other arguments, for he pretended to no skill but in the Scriptures, which God had enabled him to understand.

Athenagoras declares, that where the philosophers agreed with them, their faith did not depend on them, but on the testimony of the Prophets, who were inspired by the Holy Ghost. To the same purpose speaks Theophilus, Bishop of Antioch, who asserts the co-eternity of the Son with the Father, from the beginning of St. John's Gospel, and saith their faith is built on the Scriptures.

Clemens, of Alexandria, owns, not only the essential attributes of God to belong to the Son, but that there is one Father of all, and one Word over all, and one Holy Ghost, who is everywhere, and he thinks Plato borrowed his three principles from Moses; that his second was the Son, and his third the Holy Spirit. Even Origen himself, highly commends Moses above Plato, in his most undoubted writings, and saith, that Numerius went beyond Plato, and that he borrowed out of the Scriptures; and so he saith, Plato did in other places; but he adds, that doctrines were better delivered in Scripture, than in his artificial dialogues. Can any one that hath the least reverence for writers of such authority and zeal

It is thus apparent that the very witnesses produced by the Unitarians to prove the Pagan origin of the doctrine of the Trinity, reject such imputation with scorn for its foolishness, and actually give their testimony in favour of its origin in a primitive Divine revelation. But this is not all. These witnesses go further and charge home upon those who had endeavoured to suborn and pervert their testimony, the introduction of their errors from that very Pagan philosophy to which they would daringly and blasphemously ascribe the origin of the christian Trinity.

To this purpose speaks the venerable Irenæus, who yet, by Dr. Priestly, has been accused in conjunction with Justin and sundry others, his contemporaries, of introducing the doctrine of the Logos from the schools of the philisophers into the system of christianity. "Heretics (says Irenæus,) are not only convicted of stealing from the comic writers, but they likewise collect together the sayings of all those who are ignorant of God, and who are called philosophers. Out of these numerous, vile, borrowed rags, they industriously patch up a sort of cento; and thus through the introduction of a new doctrine, they prepare themselves with subtle eloquence, a system superficially plausible."\*

Exactly similar also, are the repeated declarations of Tertullian. "Turning from the christians to the philosophers, from the Church to the Academy and the Portico, Hermogenes has thence borrowed from the Stoics the phantasy of conjoining matter with the Deity. For, matter, he contends, always existed; being neither born, nor made, nor having either beginning or end: and out of this God afterwards created all things."†

"In good truth, (adds Tertullian,) I grieve to say that Plato has become the universal seasoner of heretics. Since then, those matters, which heretics borrow, are insinuated by Plato, I shall sufficiently confute heretics, if I demolish the argument

for the christian doctrine, imagine that they wilfully corrupted it in one of the chief articles of it, and brought in new speculations against the sense of those books, which at the same time, they professed to be the only rule of their faith? Even where they speak most favourably of the Platonic trinity, they suppose it to be borrowed from Moses. And therefore Numenius said, that Moses and Plato did not differ about the first principles; and Theodoret mentions Numenius as one of those who said, Plato understood the Hebrew doctrine in Egypt; and during his thirteen years' stay there, it is hardly possible to suppose, he should be ignorant of the Hebrew doctrine, about the first principles, which he was so inquisitive after, especially among nations who pretended to antiquity."

\*Iren. Adv. Hær. Lib. ii., c. 19, sec. 2, p. 117.

†Tertull. Adv. Hermog. sec. 1, Oper. p. 335.

of Plato.‡ Philosophers are the patriarchs of heretics."||  
 "Finally, (adds he,) heresies themselves are suborned from philosophy."§

Cyril of Alexandria, makes similar remarks. "Porphyry, expounding the sentiment of Plato, sayeth, that the essence of God proceeds even to three hypostases, but that the Supreme God is "the Supreme Good," and that after him, the second is, the prime Opificer or Creator; moreover, that the third is, the mundane soul, (or universal spirit.) For, the Divinity extended itself to the soul of the universe. This Platonic trinity Cyril refutes, as that which is the spawn and seed to Arianism."

Athanasius also charged upon the Arians two things as Gnostic and Valentinian, which undoubtedly, are so: \*\* one was their bringing in, will, (1) between the Father and his *word*; another was their *creature* Creator. (2) Philastrius (3) farther charges them with having borrowed another principle from the infamous Apelles, (of the Marcionite tribe,) which was the making a *second* God, a *creature* and a *subject* of the *first*, not to mention that Bishop Bull had run up your doctrines to the old Gnostics, (4) long ago; and was never yet confuted, nor ever will be."

That Arianism originated in Pagan philosophy, was the opinion of Melancthon, who, says "Paulus Samosatenus—who adopted the blasphemy of Ebion and Cerinthus—was led to his errors in the following way: Plotinus the philosopher, who was a scholar to Ammonius, reading in the school of Alexandria, had mingled with his philosophy allegories touching the eternal Word, and in as much as there were many debates about these things from the writings of the ancients, Paulus Samosatenus drew thence his impostures, and maintained that Jesus Christ was only man, and that by *λογος*, *logos*, the word, (John i., 1,) we are not to understand any person subsistent, but the declaration and word of promise. These reveries were received with much praise by curious spirits, and particularly by Zenobia, Queen of Arabia and dame of Antioch, by whose means P. Samosatenus was defended for ten years. This heresy of Samosatenus, in denying the divinity of Christ, was

‡Oper. p. 659.

||Ibid. p. 339.

§Tertull. Adv. Hær. sec. 2, Oper. p. 97.

\*\*See Dr. Waterland's Second Defence, vol. iii., p. 289. (1) Athan, p. 608. (2) Athan Orat. ii., p. 489. (3) Philastrius Hæres, cap. 47.

(4) Bull, D. F., Sect. iii., Cap. 1.

received by Arius, and that from the very same foundation of Platonic philosophy, yea, in the very same school of Alexandria."

The same fact is stated by Aquinas.‡ "We find, (says he,) in the books of the Platonist, that in the beginning the Word was, by which Word, they understood not a person in the Trinity, but an Ideal Reason, by which God made all things—whence sprang the error of Origen and Arius, who followed the Platonists herein. So again, in what follows. Q. 34, A. 1. Aquinas assures us that Origen laid the foundation of Arianism, by affirming that the word in Divine matters, was to be interpreted only metaphysically, not properly. That Arius also, derived his opinion from the Platonists through this school of Alexandria, is evident, since Arius was a Presbyter in this Church, and student in this school, where the Pythagorean and Platonic philosophy was at this time wholly in request, Aristotle not having come into play till afterward."

Similar is the opinion of that great French reformer, Morelius.\* "It has been the custom (says he,) to use disputes in many places, whence many inconveniences may follow: for such disputes tend only to awaken and discover the spirit, whence follows much presumption and ostentation, and the starting of high and curious questions, which may afterwards trouble the church." The Arian heresy had its rise from the particular conferences of learned men in the city of Alexandria. Indeed, Constantine sharply reprehended these curious disputes, &c. The same may be applied to the Photinian heresy, which was the same with the Arian and Samosatenean.

Origen, therefore, introduced the Aristotelian philosophy in order to counteract the paganizing effects of the Platonic, and for the same purpose endeavoured to harmonize the Platonic and christian Trinities, and thus paved the way for greater errors.†

‡Sum. Part. i., Q. 32, A. 1.

\*Discipl. Liv. ii., chap. 4, pp. 87, 88.

†The error of identifying the Platonic and christian trinities, says Mr. Cory, (1) took its rise with a few of the writers in the second century. "They were led into the mistake by the word Logos, used by Plato and St. John, and made the Platonic Trinity to consist of God, the Logos and the Soul of the world, and this in spite of all the professed followers of Plato, who, however they might vary among themselves, uniformly insisted upon placing the Monad and Duad, or at least, a Monad above their Triad.

In the first century of the christian era, Philo, an Alexandrian Jew, had attempted to expound the Scriptures on Platonic principles; and after

(1) Ancient Fragments, p. 7, Introd.

We have thus, I think, demonstrated that so far from being true that the doctrine of the Trinity was derived by some of the early Fathers from the Pagan doctrine of Plato and other philosophers, these Fathers brand, repudiate and deny the charge, condemn those doctrines as erroneous and foolish, and attribute to them the heresies which are now advocated by Unitarians. But these Fathers go still further than this. These very Fathers attribute whatever is true or good, in these ancient philosophers, not to human reason, not to their genius, or original invention, but to the revelation of God. "Your philosophers," says Justin Martyr to the Greeks, "through the agency of the Divine Providence, have unwillingly been even themselves, compelled to speak on our side of the question: and now, especially those who sojourned in Egypt, and who are benefited by the theosophy of Moses and his ancestors. For those of you, who are acquainted with the history of Dio-

the promulgation of the Gospel, many of the fathers warmly adopted the same mode of exposition. The different sects of the Gnostics went far beyond the Grecian sage, and sought in the East the doctrines, to which they looked upon the writings of Plato merely as essays, introductory to the sublimer flights of the Oriental mysticism, and they treated his followers with that contempt, against which the vanity of a philosopher is seldom proof; and as long as these schools existed, a bitter enmity prevailed between them. The Gnostics gave at once a real existence to the *Ideal* world, and continuing the chain of being from the Supreme through numerous orders of Eons, personified abstract ideas, of which the second and third persons of the Trinity were the first and second Eons, and from thence to the lowest material species, founded that daring heresy which so long disturbed the tranquility of christendom, and with this spurious Platonism of the fathers of the Arian heresy, is likewise intimately connected.

But the internal heresies of the Church were not the only ill effects of which the misguided zeal of the fathers, in forcing upon Plato the doctrine of the Trinity, brought about. Though it is possible, that by pointing out some crude similarity of doctrine, they might have obtained some converts by rendering christianity less unpalatable to the philosophical world of that day, yet the weapon was skillfully turned against them, and with unerring effect, when the Pagans took upon them to assert that nothing new had been revealed in christianity; since, by the confessions of its very advocates, the system was previously contained in the writings of Plato.

In the third century Ammonius Saccas, universally acknowledged to have been a man of consummate ability, taught that every sect, Christian or Heretic, or Pagan, had received the truth, and retained it in their varied legends. He undertook therefore, to unfold it from them all, and to reconcile every creed. And from his exertions sprung the celebrated Eclectic School of the later Platonists, Plotinus, Amelius, Olympius, Porphyrius, Jamblicus, Syranus and Proclus, were among the celebrated Professors who succeeded Ammonius in the Platonic Chairs, and revived and kept alive the spirit of Paganism, with a bitter enmity to the Gospel, for near three hundred years. The Platonic Schools were at length closed by the edict of Justinian; and seven wise men, the last lights of Platonism, Diogenes, Hermias, Eulalius, Priscianus, Damascius, Isidorus and Simplicius, retired indignantly from the persecutions of Justinian, to realize the shadowy dreams of the Republic of Plato, under the Persian, despotism of Chosroes.

dorus, and with the productions of other similar writers, can scarcely, I think, be ignorant; that Orpheus and Homer, and Solon, and Pythagoras, and Plato, and several others, having sojourned in Egypt, and having been benefited by the history of Moses, afterward set forth matters directly contrary to their former indecorous speculations concerning the gods. Thus, for instance, Orpheus, though the first teacher of Polytheism among you, declared to his son, Museus, and to other sincere hearers, the unity of the Godhead. We find him also adjuring THE VOICE OF THE FATHER: by which expression, he means THE WORD OF GOD, through whom were produced the heavens and the earth, and the whole creation, as the divine prophecies of holy men teach us. For, becoming partially acquainted with those prophecies in Egypt, he thence learned that the whole creation was produced by the word of God. Pythagoras, likewise, who, through symbols, mystically declared the dogmata of his philosophy, learned just sentiments, concerning the unity of God, during his abode in Egypt. After a similar manner, Plato, as it seems, learned in Egypt the doctrine of Moses and the prophets respecting one only God. For, wishing to interpret to the ignorant what was mystically said concerning the eternity of God, he wrote as follows: "God, as the ancient discourse sets forth, has the beginning, and the end, and the middle of all things." Here, under the name of the ancient discourse, Plato clearly and openly alludes to the law of Moses: though through fear of Aconite he did not venture to mention the precise name of the Hebrew Legislator.\*

Here also, to the same effect, Clement of Alexandria. "Plato," says he, "remarks, God, as also the ancient discourse teaches, comprehends the beginning and the end, and the middle of all things. Whence, O Plato, did you thus darkly set forth the truth? The nations of the barbarians, says he, are wiser than those. Truly I will know your teachers, though you may wish to conceal them. From the Hebrews you have borrowed both all your good laws, and your opinions respecting the Deity."† "Pythagoras transferred largely from our Scriptures into his own system of dogmatic philosophy. For, Numenius, the Pythagorean philosopher, undisguisedly writes: what is Plato save Moses atticising?‡ Again, he says, "The philosophies of the Greeks without acknowledging their obli-

\*Justin Cohort, ad Græc. Oper. pp. 11, 12, 14, 18.

†Clem. Alex. Admon. ad Gent. Oper. pp. 45, 46.

‡Clem. Alex. Strom. Lib. 1, Oper, p. 342.



gations, borrowed the best of their dogmata from Moses and the prophets."\*

According to Justin Martyr, the three principles of the Greek philosopher were God, and Matter, and Form: to which he sometimes added a fourth, under the title of the soul of the universe.†

But, Prophecy exhibits Plato's second and third principles, as being active instead of passive: whence he sums up the entire three as the Highest Good, God, the Second Creative God, and the Soul of the World. And this last statement of the speculation seems to be favoured by the language of Plato himself: for, mentioning them altogether in his second epistle to Dionysius, he denominates his three divine principles, Essential Goodness, and Creative Intellect, and The Universal Mundane Soul. "Now, in the Triad of Plato, (says Faber,) some of the early Fathers wished to discover a real, though corrupted declaration of the three persons of the Trinity: and the theory upon which they proceeded was avowedly the following: The doctrine of the Trinity, they maintained, so far from being an invention of Plato, was, in truth, a *primitive patriarchal revelation* of the divine nature. This primitive revelation was, with a more ample development, confirmed under the Gospel. Plato, meanwhile, had corruptly borrowed its outline from the writings of Moses and the Prophets. Consequently, men need not wonder to have found a prominent dogma, both of the ancient and Hebrew Church, and of its successor the christian Church, in the works of a speculative Greek, who had been largely conversant with the Orientals.‡

Thus, it is made apparent that the Fathers, instead of lending any countenance to the Unitarian hypothesis, that they derived the doctrine of the Trinity from Plato and other Pagan philosophers, condemned their doctrine of triads as a corrupt perversion of the teaching of the Hebrew Scriptures, and of an original primitive revelation, from which they borrowed their ideas.

But, passing from the ancient world to the various portions of the christian Church, the fact that this doctrine of the Trinity has been the almost universal belief of that church in every

\*Justin Cohort, ad. Græc. Oper. p. 5.

†Justin Cohort, ad. Græc. Oper. p. 6.

‡Justin Apol. 1, Oper. pp. 72, 73. See Faber's Apost. of Trinitarianism, vol. ii., B. 2, ch. 3, from which we have taken our authorities and the argument. See also, do. ch. 6, p. 145-150. Gale's Court of Gentiles, vol. iv., p. 386.

country, and in every age,—the fact that the denial or modification of it led to the formation of the earliest creeds and the controversies of christians with those calling themselves Fellow-christians,—the fact that, with the exception of one period, when for reasons which can be stated, a modification of this doctrine called Trinitarianism prevailed,\* all who denied it were excommunicated as heretics, as abandoning the essential doctrine of the Gospel,—the fact that during that age referred to, christian men contended earnestly for this doctrine as “the faith once delivered to the saints,” “even unto blood,”†—the fact that from that time this doctrine has been received as a fundamental doctrine by the Western, Greek, Oriental, Syrian and Waldensian Churches;—the fact that at the reformation this doctrine was adopted by every church, and introduced into every confession of faith, without exception,‡—the fact that all denial and discussion of the doctrine has only convinced the almost unanimous mind of Christendom that this is the doctrine of the Bible, and that it is vital and fundamental;—these facts surely carry with them a very powerful presumption in favor of our opinion that this doctrine is clearly taught in the word of God.§

But the *character* of these witnesses is as striking as their number. In the *first place*, we have the testimony of the ancient Jews. This is fully established by the writings of Philo, who was contemporary with the Apostles, and by the Dialogue of Justin Martyr with the Jew Trypho, in the middle of the second century, as well as by the Jerusalem Targum, or Paraphrase, written about the fourth century, by the Targum or Paraphrase of the Pentateuch, as ascribed to Jonathan ben Uzziel, written in the sixth or seventh century, and also by other Jewish works of acknowledged antiquity. That the ancient Jews were led to the belief of a plurality—a trinity—in the divine nature, has been further illustrated from the Books in the Apocrypha, as well as from the works above mentioned. “To the man who is really conversant in the writings of the Targumists, Cabbalists and Daruschists, remarks Mr. Oxlee, who is himself to be guided by their direction and authority, the doctrine of the Trinity can offer no scruples. The Targumist certainly distinguishes between Jehovah—the word of

\*See Newman's History of Arianism in the 4th Century.

†See Note C., for the testimony of the early Fathers.

‡See Note D., for the testimony of the Reformers.

§Note on the views of the Fathers.

Jehovah—and the Habitation of Jehovah, by ascribing to each of them personal actions and properties, whilst he makes them all equally God, by assigning to them those effects of wisdom and power which are peculiar to the first cause; and yet he is not accused of having established three Gods, nor of having denied the unity. The Cabbalist distinguishes between the higher Numerations, Supreme Crown, Wisdom and Understanding; which he asserts to be no properties, as the name might import, but eternal subsistence of the Godhead; and yet he is not charged with having violated the unity of Jehovah, nor with having induced three Gods. Finally, the Daruscht vindicates the eternity and divinity of the Law and of the Throne of Grace, by demonstrating that they actually existed with Jehovah prior to the creation, and that on the authority of the inspired penman, they all denote one and the same thing, that is, one and the same God; and yet he is not condemned for having dissolved the unity by the number of his pre-existences. How then can the Professors of Judaism with any colour of propriety object to that tenet, which agrees in every essential point with the principles of their own church.\*

We do not allude to these writings of the Jews because we think they have any claim of authority over our judgment, or that they are entitled to any high regard for the soundness of their understanding, or the correctness of their principles of interpretation; but their testimony is valuable, as historical documents giving us relics of the better knowledge and the purer faith of their ancestors. Neither do we undertake to affirm that these ancient writings of the Jews as clearly teach the triune personal distinction in the Godhead as so many and so learned men have been led to believe they do. Their opinion is our own. But still, we do not offer the testimony of these writings as *in itself*, a *positive* proof of the divine authority and truth of the doctrine of the Trinity, but as a *presumptive* proof that it is so, because the ancestors of those who now oppose the doctrine so interpreted Scripture, and so contemplated the Divine Being as to conceive of a plurality in the one

\*On this point, the reader can examine the judgment of the Ancient Jewish Church against the Unitarians, by Alex. Simpson, Plea, pp. 407-431. Haleson on the Trinity. Maurice Jud. Antiq. vol. 4. ch. 11, pp. 113. Jamieson's Reply to Priestly, vol. i., pp. 48-117. Randolph's View of our Saviour's Ministry, vol. iii., pp. 343-354. Gill's Commentary on all the Passages. Lightfoot. Whitaker's Origin of Arianism. Kidder's Demonstration of the Messiah, Part iii., ch. 4, 5. Horsley's Tracts, pp. 242-244. McCaul's Old Paths. Stillingleet on the Trinity, pp. 203-206. For a full account of the Targum, see Prideaux Conect. of Old and New Test., Part ii, B. 8.

Eternal Godhead. Again the Jews, who regard these writings as authoritative, their testimony must undoubtedly be conclusive, and against all presumptive arguments of Unitarians, they are equally conclusive, since they prove that the doctrine of an absolute personal unity in the divine nature is a defection from the ancient faith of the Jews as well as of christians, and was never held either by believers in revelation, or by Gentiles without revelation.\*

It must be remembered also, that a great number of the early converts to christianity and to the belief of the Trinity were, like Paul and the other apostles, Jews, and some of them, like him, trained up in their schools and familiar with all their learning. And as a contradiction between the Old and New Testaments would be destructive to the inspired and authoritative claims of both, the adoption of christianity *with the doctrine of the Trinity as a vital principle*, by them, is an irrefragable proof to their belief in its perfect consistency with what they regarded as the teaching of God's word.†

A multitude of the early christians were, on the other hand, Greeks, or at least familiar with the Greek language, and with that dialect spoken in Palestine, and in which the Books of the New Testament were written. Many of them also, like Paul, had been learned in all the wisdom of the ancient philosophers, and some of them had been teachers of their systems, and enthusiastic admirers of their genius and eloquence.

But further, all the primitive and early disciples of christianity, had either been brought up Jews or Pagans. They were imbued therefore, with all the prejudices and bigotry of these nations, and their enmity even unto blood against christianity. To the unbelieving, who constituted the great majority of the Jewish nation, the doctrine of the deity of Christ and of the Trinity, was an opprobrious scandal, nay a God defying blasphemy, for the open avowal of which they condemned Jesus Christ to what, by their law, they considered a merited crucifixion. To the Greeks and Romans this doctrine was the uttermost folly, contradiction and absurdity. It was made the ground-work of opprobrious ridicule, as may be seen in the oath put by Lucian into the mouth of a christian, and by the

\*Note D., Testimony of Jews.

†The alleged Unitarianism of the early Hebrew Christians has been triumphantly overthrown by Bishop Horsley, in his Tracts against Priestley, and in Jamieson's Vindication in reply to the same writer in Whitaker's Origin of Arianism, and other works.

charge contained in the letter of Pliny to Prajan.\* By the philosophic few these doctrines were regarded as pure polytheism and the idolatrous worship of a mere man, while they rejected all faith in the Gods. To the multitude among them, on the contrary, they appeared as the impious substitution of a new system of polytheism for one already established, as the faith of their fathers.

That the early christians, both Jews and Gentiles, should have adopted christianity, and with it as a prime verity, this doctrine of the Trinity, is, therefore, overwhelming presumptive evidence, both that the doctrine is Scriptural, and that it is Divine.

It is a further evidence for this conclusion, and a new line of presumptive and corroborative proof, that some even of the ancient heretics, who separated themselves from the body of the church and were cut off by it, as fully retained the doctrine of a consubstantial trinity as the orthodox. This was the case with the Manichees† and the Montanists, Tertullian having written *some* of his strongest works in favour of the Trinity after joining this sect.

Such then, are the many various and antagonistic witnesses, who unite their testimony in favour of the doctrine of a trinity, as having been the doctrine originally, of a primitive divine revelation, and as being the undoubted doctrine taught in the Hebrew and christian Scriptures. The heathen world, the christian world, the various and conflicting denominations of christians, the ancient Jews, all converted Jews, Romanists and Greek, and all other oriental christians, the Syrian Church buried for ages on the coasts of Malabar, and the Waldenses equally concealed from the earliest times amid their inaccessible mountains, all unite in testifying to this glorious and divine truth.

Now, be it remembered, that fact thus testified to, is not the *truth* of this doctrine, but the simple, palpable, and easily understood **FACT**, of this doctrine having been handed down more or less, and purely from primitive and patriarchal revelation, and of its being at this moment, and ever since they were written, embodied and taught in the sacred Scriptures.

It must also be remembered, that the Greek and Roman Churches were early separated, and have ever since remained rival and antagonistic churches. The firm tenure of this doc-

\*See given in Note C., as one line of proof. See also, Lardner's Works.

†See Lardner, vol. iii., pp. 351, 330, 287.

trine therefore, by both churches, their mutual and earnest contending for it as the faith once delivered to the saints, and their undeviating preservation of it amid all their other changes and corruptions, gives undoubted strength to the force of their independent and yet concurrent testimony.

The undoubted fact of the early and established belief in the doctrine of the Trinity is, itself, a powerful presumption in favour of its apostolic origin. For, as it is itself, altogether remote from the conceptions of the human mind, had the primitive Jews and Jewish converts, and christian converts, been Unitarian, it is impossible to conceive how, or in what manner the doctrine could have been so firmly and finally established as the doctrine, both of the Old and New Testaments, and as fundamentally important.

To these considerations must be added, not only the almost universal testimony of Christendom, in the present and all modern times, to the doctrine of the Trinity,—but the amazing learning with which every point bearing upon this question has been discussed;—the erudition and research employed in the study and analysis of the Greek and Hebrew languages; and the definitive character now given to the proper and only legitimate interpretation of the sacred Scriptures.

The passages from which these various and independent witnesses deduced the propositions which constitute the elements of the doctrine of the Trinity, are all those which teach that God, while in his Godhead or nature, he is absolutely one, is, in some sense plural, and not absolutely or personally one, that this plurality is limited to the persons of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and that each of these are God. Now, these passages of Scripture are not few. They are exceedingly numerous and enter into the whole structure and phraseology of the Bible. And as it regards their qualities of clearness, plainness, and determinate signification, we appeal from the prejudiced dogmatism of an adversary to the judgment of the truly calm and sincere inquirer, and from the comparatively few who have attempted to sustain the Unitarian hypotheses, upon purely Scriptural testimony,—to the innumerable witnesses we have produced, who, against all the prejudice which stood in their way, have been constrained to receive the doctrine of the Trinity as the doctrine taught in the Holy Scriptures.

There is still another remark, which will strengthen this presumptive argument for the Scriptural authority of the doctrine

of the Trinity, and that is, that were it not plainly and indubitably taught by God himself, no sincere believer could ever have dared to promulgate it. For, if there is one point on which the Scriptures are more full, express and positive than any other, it is in their denunciations against all idolatry and false Gods. Of Christ, it is almost essential characteristic in the prophetic writings, that he should "utterly abolish idolatry." (Isa. ii., 18.) If therefore, the doctrine of the Trinity be not true, then believers in any age, have been almost universally idolaters. And hence, from anti-trinitarian principles, the blasphemous consequence follows,—that God himself has led his creatures into temptation,—temptation to that very sin, which, above all others, he hates and abhors,—temptation to idolatry! The Deity declares that he is a "jealous God;" that his glory he will not give to another, nor his praise "to graven images." He most pathetically expostulates upon this subject, (Jer. xlv., 3,) "Oh, do not this abominable thing that I hate." With what scrupulous care does the Supreme Being guard against all temptations to idolatry? Lest the Israelites should worship the relics of Moses, the Deity himself privately interred him, and no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day." The brazen serpent also, was destroyed, lest it should lead the Israelites into idolatry. But, if the Deity used such precaution to prevent men from worshipping the body of Moses and the brazen serpent, how can we believe that he would use no precaution where the temptation was infinitely greater. How can we imagine that he would use no precaution to prevent men from worshipping his Son and the Holy Ghost, if only creatures? Is not such a supposition in the highest degree, absurd and unreasonable, and impious? We find that, not only is there no precaution employed in the Scriptures to prevent men from such idolatry, but that everywhere and in every way the Scriptures teach and require men to worship, both the Redeemer and the Holy Spirit. The most glorious perfections of Deity are ascribed to them; the most glorious works of Deity are performed by them,—those very works by which the being and attributes of God are proved,—by which his eternal power and Godhead are manifested,—and by which he is distinguished from all false gods. They are, also, everywhere represented as the object of the prayers of men, and of the united praises and adorations of all intelligent beings. What temptations to idolatry if these persons are only creatures or

attributes. All the temptations that ever existed compared with these, were nothing, and less than nothing.\*

Finally, if, as it is said by Unitarians, we cannot and ought not to believe the doctrine of the Trinity, even though the Scriptures when interpreted, as all other books are, clearly teaches it,—then, since God has given us no other laws of interpretation by which to understand their meaning, it would follow that the Scriptures cannot be received as an authoritative and inspired standard of faith and practice, and we are thrown upon the wide sea of scepticism and human conjecture as to what is truth. By the great majority of those who have candidly studied the Bible, it has been regarded as teaching the doctrine of the TRINITY of persons in the ONE Godhead, and therefore, it follows that the great majority of those who believe the Bible to be the inspired word of God, must, also, believe the doctrine of the Trinity. They have no alternative between infidelity and Trinitarianism, and since they cannot adopt the latter they must adhere to the former.

From these consequences, therefore, which follow from the rejection of the doctrine of the Trinity, and from all the reasons which constitute our presumptive argument in its favour, we are brought to the conclusion that it is very probably true, that it will be found clearly taught in the Scriptures, and that its opponents therefore, are bound to prove that christianity distinctly and equivocally condemns and rejects this doctrine before they can offer any valid argument against it on the ground of antecedent impossibility, or in any degree tamper with the plain meaning of the words of Scripture. In coming therefore to Scripture to ascertain what God has revealed on the subject of his own nature, we are not only freed from any prejudices against the probability of finding there the doctrine of the Trinity, but are presumptively led confidently to expect that it will be clearly and distinctly taught in those Scriptures which “were given by inspiration of God and are profitable for doctrine,”—“the law and testimony,”—the rule and standard of all revealed truth.†

\*On the alleged idolatry of the doctrine of the Trinity, and the consequences it involves, and its futility, see Wynpersee on the Godhead of Christ, sec. 17, pp. 157-162.

†We would earnestly ask our readers to distinguish carefully between the doctrines proposed in Scripture to our belief, and the things themselves that are the matter and subject of them. The former may be known, and ground sufficient seen for receiving them; where our reason.



## ARTICLE IX.

### ON ELOHIM AS A TITLE OF GOD, AND AS IMPLYING A PLURALITY IN THE GODHEAD.\*

The names of the Deity in general and constant use in the Hebrew language are more numerous than in either of the beautiful languages of classical antiquity, or in the most cultivated tongues of modern Europe. There was no shadow of necessity, difficulty, or even inducement, for the adoption of a phraseology which, *on Unitarian principles*, every candid mind must confess, can with difficulty, if at all, be defended from the charge of pernicious example and very dangerous tendency.

Among these names, are the term ELOAH, a singular form of a word signifying the object of fear, reverence, or the principal and mighty, or the swearer, or one who enters into covenant by oath,—and ELOHIM, which is a regularly formed plural of the singular word, and having the same meaning, if regarded as derived from it. The etymology of this word, however, says Dr. Pye Smith, has been much contested; some making it a compound of *El*, and *Jah*, so as to signify “the Mighty *Jah*”; others deriving it from *Ala*, “to enter into an engagement by oath,” and thus signifying “the Being of sworn veracity and faithfulness.” The most reasonable and probable derivation, so far as I can judge, is that of Schultens, Reineccius, and a

at least in this its weak and impaired state, can't reach the full clear, and adequate understanding of the latter.

“Would not advantage be given to Deists and Anti-Scripturists, not to say Atheists, to scoff at the Bible, if after pretences of its truth and authority, and that its great end is to call off the world from idolatry and polytheism to the knowledge, worship and service of the one only true God, and of its plainness to such purposes, being for the use of all; yet even as to this main point, the setting forth of this one true God, distinguishing him from all other beings, it is allowed to be done in such a manner, that not only one, or a few, through carelessness or prejudices, or judicial blindness might mistake; but that the generality of christians, in all ages, have mistaken, under as good capacity to understand it, as good means and helps thereto, as much concern and diligence, impartiality and faithfulness in the study of it, as sincere and earnest prayer to God for his guidance, and as good ground to hope for it from him as any can pretend to? What use, may they say, can such a book be of, or what likelihood that it is from God? Could he not speak plainly of himself, where 'tis pretended he designed to do so? Is all there so delivered, that the world might, and almost all actually have erred, as to the very object of their faith, worship and obedience, and in whom their felicity is placed? Would not that book, instead of leading to life and salvation, be the most insnaring and dangerous one that can be? Of what tendency must those notions be from which any such consequences would justly follow?”

\*Intended to illustrate and confirm the argument from this name in the article on the objection to the Trinity, founded on the unity of God, in the January No. of this Review.

host of the most eminent orientalists, who make its primitive, *Ala*, which, though not occurring in the existing remains of the Hebrew, is preserved in the Arabic "*Alaha*," and denotes "to adore." Hence, the noun will signify "the object of adoration," or, as the illustrious Schultens well expresses it, "Numen Tremendum."\*

Much however, may be said, and we think, with great force, and no little Scriptural support, in favour of the first derivation. The word Eloah signifies a denouncing of a curse, a curse denounced either upon oneself or others, or both, and therefore, an oath taken or given, for what is an oath but a conditional curse or execration? It was so used by the ancients; and, to this manner of swearing our blessed Lord himself submitted. (See Matt. xxvi: 63, 64.) Hence, the word Elohim, which is a regularly formed masculine plural of Eloah, would naturally signify the denouncers of a conditional curse. So, we find Jehovah swearing to Adoni, (Psalm cx.,) on oath, certainly prior to the creation. See Prov. viii: 23, and seq., comp., John xvii: 5, 24. Accordingly, Jehovah is at the beginning of the creation called Elohim, which implies that the divine persons had sworn when they created. It was from this oath that the ever blessed Three were pleased to take that glorious and fearful name. (Deut. xxviii: 58.) Jehovah Elohim; glorious, in as much as the transaction, to which it refers, displays in the most glorious manner, the attributes of God to men and angels; and fearful, in as much as, by one part of the oath, eternal and infinite power, Jehovah himself, is engaged to make the enemies of Christ his foot-stool.—Psalm cx.

Let those who have any doubt whether Elohim, when meaning the true God, Jehovah, is plural or not, consult the following passages, where they will find it joined with adjectives, pronouns, and verbs plural, Gen. i: 26, iii: 22, xi: 7, xx: 13, xxxi: 53, xxxv: 7; Deut. iv: 7, v: 23, or 26; Josh. xxiv: 19; 1 Sam. iv: 8; 2 Sam. vii: 23; Ps. lviii: 12; Is. vi: 8; Jere. x: 10; xxiii: 36. So, chald. Elohin, Dan. iv: 5, 6, 15, or 8, 9, 18. See also Prov. ix: 10, xxx: 3; Psal. cxlix: 2; Eccles. v: 7, xii: 1; Job v: 8; Is. vi: 3, liv: 5; Hos. xi: 12, or xii: 1; Mal. i: 6; Dan. vii: 18, 22, 25. It is also to be observed, that the Greeks had, from this name Elohim, by a perverted tradition, their *Zeus ὄρκος* Jupiter, who presided over oaths. Hence, also, the corrupt tradition of Jupiter's oath which overruled even Fate

\*Smith's Messiah, vol. i., p. 465.

itself, that is, the fatal and necessary motions of the elements of this world.‡

The derivation here adduced, is very ably supported by Geddulph, in his *Theology of the Early Patriarchs*, vol. ii., pp. 1-27; and favourably regarded by Horsely in his *Biblical Criticism*.

This view was ably defended by Hutchinson, Calcott, Bates, Aboab, and others in their dissertations on this word. See also, Calasio's *Concordance*, London Edition.

But, passing from the derivation of this word, we remark that this term *Elohim*, is the most usual appellation of the Deity in the Old Testament, which is constantly translated God. The singular form *Eloah* occurs chiefly in the poetical books;—twice in the Hymn of Moses, (Deut. xxxii: 7,) several times in the Prophets, forty times in the book of Job, and in the other books sixteen times; but the plural *Elohim*, occurs about two thousand five hundred times. This plural appellative is generally put in agreement with singular verbs, pronouns, and adjectives, as in the first sentence of the Pentateuch, "*Elohim* created;—*creavit Dii*;—*les Dieux créa*." This is the ordinary construction through the whole Hebrew Bible. But sometimes the apposition is made with verbs, pronouns, and adjectives in the "plural" number likewise; and sometimes singulars and plurals are put together in the same agreement.

"For example, Gen. xx: 13. "*Elohim hithoo outhi*," "the Gods have caused me to wander."

Gen. xxxv: 7, "*Sham nighlo clau haclohim*," "there were revealed to him the Gods."

Josh. xxiv: 19, "*Laavod, eth Jehovah chi lo him kidoshim hoh*," "to serve Jehovah, for he are holy Gods."

Is. liv: 5, "*Chi boalaich oosaich*," "for thy husbands are thy makers."\* Nor is *Elohim* the only divine title used in the plural form. Drusius, Buxtorf, Heeser, Eichhorn, Gesenius, and other distinguished scholars, have maintained that "*Adonai* and *Shaddai*," are plurals of an obsolete form; and this very plural title is the word which the Jews of a very early age, certainly hundreds of years before Christ,† substituted for the use of the title *Jehovah*, which they never pronounce, and for

‡See Parkhurst's Heb. Lex., sub. nom. *elohim*.

\*See also, Deut. v: 23; (Engl. v: 26;) 1 Sam. xvii: 26; 2 Sam. vii: 23; Psal. lviii: 12, cxlix: 2; Prov. ix: 10; Jere. x: 10; Dan. vii: 18, 22, 25, 27; Hos. xii: 1; (Engl. v. xi: 11.)

†Since it is so used in the Septuagint.

which singular title of God they have always employed, and now always employ, the plural title "Adonai, my Lords."

This Ewald controverts, but he assigns no satisfactory reason, as apparent to me, in either case; and Gesenius remains unconvinced; whose opinion in a case of philology, especially, if at all favourable to a doctrine of revelation is really equal to an argument.

It is further to be observed, that the first person plural, is used in reference to the Divine Being.—Gen. i: 26. "And Elohim said, let us make man in our image, according to our likeness," chap. iii: 22. "And Jehovah Elohim said, behold the man is become as one of us," chap. xi: 7. "Come, we will go down, and there we will confound their language," Is. vi: 8. "And I heard the voice of the Lord (Adonai,) saying, whom shall I send, and who shall go for us?"

Such are the facts in regard to the employment of a plural title in connection with plural forms of speech, to designate the Deity. This use must be in accordance with a divine intention and direction, and not from any necessity in the case. It is evidently, the result of choice and design. In what then did this peculiarity of idiom originate?

The question is, why is the plural pronoun used, when the singular was required by the subject, and would have been, not only equally dramatic, but indeed, more terse, and vigorous, and striking? The question is not about the analogous, unrequent, and secondary application of the title to express Gods who were false, or God's agent as Moses. "It is, says Dr. Smith, about the proper, primary, and direct signification of the word." That Elohim is ever so applied to any other being than God, has been denied. But, granting that it is so, this will not prove that in its proper and primary meaning it is applied to God, and that too, with unquestionable design. For the same is true of all the titles of God, not even excepting Jehovah which, as Oxlee remarks, "Though generally regarded by the Jews as a noun appropriated to the individual subsistency of the Godhead, is also common to many persons, for being found in construction, and accompanied with adjuncts restraining its signification, it necessarily ceases to be proper. Thus, we read: "The Jehovah of hosts." And R. Abraham ben Ezra, confesses, that when thus placed in regimen with the term hosts, it partakes of the nature of a common appellation." But, besides being found in construction, and having other marks of a noun common, it is absolutely equivocal; angels

being called by this name, as well as the Deity. Nor is this any modern opinion of the Jews, on the contrary, it was the generally received notion of the ancient Jewish Fathers, as appears from what is recorded of R. Simeon ben Lakis, who was wont to maintain it on Scriptural authority. Finally, not only the angels, but even the Messias, the Saints, and the city of Jerusalem, are called by this title of Jehovah. The fact is thus attested by R. Moses Alsheah: "Behold our Rabbis of blessed memory, on the authority of R. Sannel Nachmanides, assert, that there are three things which are called by the name of Jehovah, the Saints, the Messias, and the city of Jerusalem."\*

Thus, adds Oxlee, the most sacred appellations of the divinity being proved to be common and equivocal, furnish an argument which tends strongly to establish the leading position, in that it makes for the pluri-personality of the Godhead, according to the Trinitarian hypothesis.

The question, therefore, we again say, is not about such secondary, derivative, analogous and metaphorical applications of this title of God, but about the proper, primary, and direct signification of the word *elohim*.

The fact which principally requires our attention, is the constant use of *Elohim* to designate the one and only God, and this in the language of the patriarchs and prophets, who "spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit." Is it not, we may well say, a little remarkable that, in the sacred books of Israel, books whose very words, in many cases at least, were selected and dictated by the inspiration of Jehovah, the ordinary name and style of the Only Living and True God, should be in a plural form? Did some strange and insuperable necessity lie in the way? Was the language so poor that it could furnish no other term? or, if so, could not the wisdom of inspiration have suggested a new appellative, and have forever abolished the hazardous word? None of these reasons existed. The language was rich and copious. The names of the Deity in general and constant use were, as we have already remarked, more numerous than in either of the beautiful languages of classical antiquity, or in the most cultivated tongues of modern Europe.

The ancient Israelites always affirmed that a plurality is indubitably understood in the Deity. This plainly appears from what Philo says on the terms "*τοῦ ποιησωμεν*," (*πλῆθος*

\*See in Oxlee, vol. i., pp. 74, 75-78, where quotations from Jewish authorities are given at length.

ἐμψαινοντος)—and “το ὡς εἰς ἡμῶν,” (οὐχ ἑνός, ἀλλ ἐπὶ πλειόνων, τίθεται). The expression, “Let us make,” manifests a plurality;—the expression, “As one of us,” is put to signify, not one, but many. Phiol. ed., Mangey, tom. i, pp. 430, 431. This and the like affirmations of truth, seem to have very greatly perplexed the Jews of the middle ages who were very hostile to christianity and christian doctrine. Their perplexities appear by their having been so hard pushed as to invent many a childish story. We will only quote one. “Rabbi Samuel bar Nachman said that Moses, when in writing the Law he was come to the place where he was by divine dictation to write. “Let us make man,” paused, and replied to God, “Lord of the world, why dost thou afford an occasion for error, with respect to thy most simple unity?” But that the Lord answered, “Moses, write thou so; and he that desires to err, let him err.” Bereshith Rabba, ap. M. ben Israelis Concil., in Gen. qu. vi.” That the Jews of the middle ages, do not stand alone in error on this most important point, appears very evident from the many theories invented, in order to explain this use of plural titles for the Deity. Some have gone so far as to say that the term was originally employed by polytheists and literally expressed a plurality of divine beings. But this is historically false, and it is also unsupposable that when the Israelites came to abominate Idolatry, and to treat it as high treason, they would employ as a frequent name of God, one which was polytheistic and pagan.

This notion was advanced by R. Judah Levita, and others spoken of by Abarbinel, who holds this notion as perfectly inadmissible; for, says he, it would follow of necessity, that the language of the Scriptures is the language of Idolatry, and that the worship of images was the primeval religion. His concluding remark upon this subject is worthy of attention. “This account of the Rabbi, says Abarbinel, is, in fact, more inexplicable and unintelligible, than that of any other writer, who has handled the subject, besides himself.”

The Rabbins, generally, explain this as an honourary and complimentary form of speech,—a plural of majesty. But this is a mere subterfuge. “For,” says Ewald, “it is a great error to suppose that the Hebrew language, as we find it, has any feeling for a so-called “pluralis majestaticus.” “The instances,” says Pye Smith, “from which this opinion is inferred, are extremely few, and they all refer to such kinds of ownership as are a burlesque on all ideas of dignity and majesty.” Every

candid mind examining the paucity and dubious character of the examples by which it is conceived to be sustained, and their feeble claim to the notion of "dominion or dignity;" the non-occurring of the same, in names and titles of honour which occur in the language, such as those which denote kings, princes, nobles, generals, priests and prophets, will certainly find not one instance of this pretended notation of dignity, since it can never be imagined that such an indication of majesty, exalted dignity, and most excellent honour, should be conferred upon the owner of an ass, and denied to the sovereign of a kingdom. The question, therefore, we again say, is why this form of speech in any case, and especially in the frequent title of God, should first originate with the ancient Hebrews? No reader, says Oxlee, who is tolerably conversant in the Hebrew Scriptures, will be so bold as to assert that this is an idiom of the inspired penmen. It is, indeed, a most unsatisfactory way of accounting for the plurals in question. So it did appear even to R. Abraham who, being hard pushed, was glad to subjoin another reason. His reason, however, was most ably confuted by Abarbinel, whose words are as follows: "But truly R. Abraham's statement respecting the term Elohim, that it is used in the plural form by way of honour, is, in my opinion, without the least colour of truth or probability; as we find it in the plural number predicated of things, which God expressly forbids to be honoured. Much less is it true, with regard to any language, in which it is customary to address a superior in the plural by way of reverence; as is the case in languages of Europe. For it happens only when they speak to a superior in the second person, that they apply to him the plural form, as though he were equal to many single ones in his stead. But, in subjects of the third person, should they chance to mention a superior, they do not speak of him in the plural number. Besides, if plurality of number in a name of the Deity were to add honour to that name, why do not we find it in some other of his names, as well as in Elohim? Moreover, with respect to the position, that God is called Elohim, in the plural, on account of his work having been performed by the instrumentality of angels, that likewise is destitute of all probabilities. For, from this it would follow of necessity, that the Elohim, which is used in the first verse of the book of Genesis, is meant of the angels, which would be in the highest degree erroneous, as the primary creation originated solely from the first cause, without any instrumentality, and not from the

angels, who were themselves, but a part of the general creation."

We may also add, that it is very absurd to think that God should borrow his way of speaking from a king, before a man was created upon the earth! And even granting this to be possible, yet the cases will not agree. For though a King or Governor may say *us* and *we*, there is certainly no figure of speech that will allow any single person to say *one of us*, when he speaks of *himself*. It is a phrase that can have no meaning, unless there be more persons than one to speak out of.

Such an opinion is also expressly contradicted by Scripture, since it is written, "who hath known the mind of the Lord, or who hath been his counsellor?" Rom. xi. 34; Is. xl. 13.

Many feeling the force of the prophet's declaration, were forced to invent other notions; for instance, R. Solomon, boldly affirms that the plural noun, by being associated with verbs and adjuncts in the singular number, is divested of its plural import. But such fallacy can be entitled to no regard. For, in Greek, a noun of the neuter plural is usually associated with a verb singular, and yet, no scholar would contend, that because the verb is of the singular number, the noun does not actually express a plurality of subsistencies. And, it is by no means the fact, that the plural term, Elohim, when used for the true God, is accompanied with verbs and other adjuncts always, in the singular number. The account which the patriarch gives of his being induced to leave home, the solemn attestation of Joshua in his address to the Israelites, the exclamation of the Philistines on beholding the ark of Jehovah, the solicitation of the children of Israel to supply the vacancy of Moses by the symbol of a calf, together with their subsequent declaration respecting its divinity, not to mention many other instances, do certify the contrary.

Again, R. M. Gerundensis, would have the term Elohim, deduced from *El*, God, and *hem*, they; supposing it to comprehend in its signification all spiritual powers and virtues, whatever, originating from the Deity, and has defined it, as if it were written,—*MeEl hem*,—they exist from God. Abarbinel's objection to this is so clear and strong, that I will quote it verbatim: "R. M. G. assigns no reason for the omission of the *Mem*, in the beginning, so necessary to the sense which is here affixed to it; nor why the *God*, contrary to all propriety, should be inserted in the middle, and still less reason, why in every case of affixation it should be treated as a plural." "This



notion, moreover, is repugnant to the authority of the Masorites, who, by placing the *Holem* point to direct the pronunciation, clearly manifest the opinion of antiquity, that Elohim was written defectively for Eloahim, the plural form of Eloaha, the Deity.

Abarbinel also, to avoid if possible, the belief of a plurality in the Deity, tries to say that the term Elohim, is a compound of *El* and *Jah*, signifying the God Jah; and so urges by way of recommending the hypothesis, that nothing will be found to have been created without the express mention and agency of this Jah. He instances Ephraim, Metsraim, Chilaim, and Chushim, as proofs that the termination, *im*, does not, necessarily, signify many, and regards the *Mem* as added, in the present case, to distinguish the absolute from the construct form. But, this is, indeed, a specimen of reasoning quite unworthy of the great Abarbinel. There is, in the first place, a strange and unprecedented transposition of the two letters, *He* and *Jod*; in order to form from *El, Jah*, the term Elohi; as the author proposes. Besides, the instances here adduced, are, by no means, in point; being all of them proper names, and never used either with an affix or an emphasis, like the noun Elohim. Neither has he assigned any reason, why this alone, of all the names of the Supreme Being, should be accompanied sometimes with verbs and adjectives in the plural number. The most evident cause of complaint, however, is, that contrary to the established usage of the language, he derives, by the addition of a *Mem*, a singular absolute from a singular construct form.

Indeed, the author himself appears to be dissatisfied with his own opinion; and, as though he foresaw that it would not carry conviction to the mind of the reader, has endeavoured to account for this plurality in another way, by comparing the Deity with the soul of man, in respect of the number and variety of its operations. But here the wonted perspicacity of the author has again deserted him. For though it be very true, that we observe resulting from the self same mind of man a variety of actions and operations, without ever calling in question the singularity of its number; yet does that add nothing to the support of his argument, because in no language with which we are acquainted, is the human mind ever expressed in the plural number on that account, and, therefore, affords no reason why the noun Elohim, should be so used, on account of the multiplicity and variety of its operations.

It remains, then, that we contemplate this appellation of the Deity as being actually in the plural number, agreeably to both grammar and analogy; and as expressing a number of persons in that Godhead, to which it is rightly and for the most part appropriated.

This opinion was unquestioned in the christian Church until the time of Calvin, when it was only partially, and for a short time, interrupted by the opposition of himself, Mercer, Pareus, Drusius, Bellarmine, &c., &c.

It is further observable that the Rabbinical writers, even while supporting their alleged rule, recognize a designed plurality in the name Elohim, and say that it is expressive of the manifold faculties or operations of the Deity. "*Elohim*: its explanation is *Possessor of all powers*: and for this reason he, (Moses,) does not say *El*, nor *Elohah*, but *Elohim*, in the plural number. So also, *He is the Holy God*, (Elohim Kedoshism,) because he perfectly comprises all holiness." This is the opinion also, of the ancient Jewish author of the book *Cosri*, quoted by Hengstenberg, vol. i., pp. 216, 217. To opposition, however, both of Calvin and others, to this view of the word, was made to the idea that the word Elohim, in and of itself, expressed the idea of the Trinity. But even these writers admit that it is itself plural, and that it indicates the plurality of the Divine Nature, and is absolutely inconsistent with the Unitarian and modern Jewish theory of God, being personally, metaphysically, and only one.

Thus to quote only the most learned Buxtorf who, though in his disquisition on this subject, takes great pains to support the negative opinion with Calvin and others, yet, at the close, he acknowledges nearly, if not altogether, the opinion here supported. His words are as follows: "Not that I think that this argument should be altogether rejected among christians, for, upon the same principle on which not a few of the Jews, as we have seen, refer this emphatical application of the plural number to a plurality of powers, or of influences, or of operations, that is, *ad extra*; why may not we refer it *ad intra*, to a plurality of persons, and to personal works? Yea, who certainly knows *what* that was which the ancient Jews understood by this plurality of powers and faculties?" Buxtorf, fil. Dissert. Philolog. Theolog. Diss. v., pp. 244. Philo has, also, expressed himself in full accordance with this view of the case. See Philo, ed., Mangey, tom. i., pp. 430, 431.

This word, says Ewald, "appears to have remained always in the plural even in prose, not so much on account of its resemblance to the idea of *Lord*, as because they conceived the Deity in ancient times as infinitely numerous, and yet as conjoined. "Ewald's Heb. Gram. by Nicholson, pp. 231. Neither is this inconsistent with the theory supported with so much learning by Hengstenberg and Havernick, that Elohim is used only to distinguish God in his fulness of power, without reference to his personality or moral qualities, to any special relation in which he stands to men, either as to the benefits he bestows, or to the requirements he makes, and that Jehovah is employed to denote God as personally revealed, manifested, and in covenant with man. For Hengstenberg admits that "the one God comprehends multiplicity in himself. Thus he can oppose to the "we will build," "we will make," of *men* who trust in their numbers and combination, *his own* "we will go down." "We will confound." The ancient Jews approached to a correct explanation of the plural? This view is very strongly supported by Theodoret, who advocates the allusion to the Trinity.

Even Hengstenberg, in reference to the views taken by Calvin, &c., on this subject, says, "It is not to be denied that this erroneous view involves a portion of truth. The plural form, as it indicates the infinite riches, the inexhaustible fulness of the Godhead, serves to combat the most dangerous enemy of the doctrine of the Trinity, that abstract monotheism of which Schelling, (*uber die Gottheiten von Samothrace*, pp. 87.) admirably says, "Mohammedanism may indeed be called monotheism, which only allows one personality or one simple power to the name of God. That this is not in the style of the New Testament, requires no proof; that this is not agreeable to the Old Testament, see Weltalter, Th. i., "Since Elohim is opposed to this view, which, in many respects, stands below polytheism, it contains certainly the germ of the doctrine of the Trinity."—Hengstenberg, vol. i., pp. 268, 269, note.

It is, indeed, affirmed as by Mr. Belsham, that "in all languages it is a common anomaly for words of a plural form to have a singular signification." But he has not produced any instance, and I apprehend that it would not be easy to find one that would prove unexceptionable. Mr. Belsham further says, that "the word Elohim is almost used uniformly in apposition with singular verbs." This is a part of the very case to be accounted for. "It is not so," says Dr. Smith, with the "words of a plural form," in other languages, which the author says

“have a singular signification;” they are always put in apposition with plural attributives. But, if we content ourselves with regarding the apposition of *Elohim* with singular verbs, adjectives, and pronouns, as a Hebrew idiom of which no other account can be given than that so we find it, what can we say upon the other part of the case, the construction with *plural* attributives? It is *this* which forms the great peculiarity of our question, it is *this*, upon which the chief stress of the argument is laid for an allusion or implication in favour of the doctrine of a Divine plurality, but upon *this* the writer was silent!”

Mr. Belsham further says, that “*Elohim* is not limited, like *Jehovah*, to express the Supreme Being alone.” “For that very reason, then, it became the more necessary to guard against possible and probable abuse. As the word was in ordinary use to designate the numerous false deities of the nations, it was the *more* likely, and even unavoidable, that the Hebrews would understand its perpetual occurrence in the plural form, as the designation of their own God, to be an express intimation that *plurality* in some sense belonged to *Him*; while, from other infallible testimonies, they were absolutely certain of his essential unity.”

Once more, Mr. Belsham affirms that, “though *Elohim* is in a plural form, it commonly expresses one object only.”

But, after carefully examining the examples brought by Mr. B. to support his assertion, we will only say with Dr. Pye Smith, that they are all irrelevant.

To bring this review to an end, we remark, in the words of Dr. Pye Smith, “We have thus endeavoured to present a faithful view of the whole evidence on both sides of this celebrated question. After the closest attention that I can give to all the parts of the case, the impression on my mind is favourable to the opinion that this peculiarity of idiom *originated* in a design to *intimate* a plurality in the nature of the one God; and that thus, in connexion with other circumstances calculated to suggest the same conception, it was intended to excite and prepare the minds of men for the more full declaration of this unsearchable mystery, which should in proper time be granted. This supposition implies, of course, a divine direction in the origin, or in the application of the term, and the intention which we suppose was merely to *intimate*, not to give an absolute declaration. Now, we know that the earlier dispensations of revealed knowledge were constructed upon the plan of a course

of *intimations*, (as it were involucra,) with regard to a variety of truths, the clear manifestation of which was reserved for the brightness of the Gospel day. Under such a system, it would be a necessary consequence that the design would be perceived, and the interior meaning apprehended, in various degrees, according to the piety, intelligence, and attention of different persons; and, in all probability, the careless majority would pay no attention at all to such subjects."

To this, we will only add the testimony of Gussetius, in his *Commentarii Linguæ Ebraicæ*. "From these considerations it follows, that the plural form of speech concerning God, is to be taken strictly and in its full force, if we would comply with the idiom of the Hebrew tongue; and that therefore, it ought to be acknowledged, that by this phraseology, plurality in Deity is most distinctly and strongly affirmed." In the same connexion, he also expresses himself in the following remarkable words: "But you will say, this plurality is inconsistent with the nature of God; I ask, in return, how do you know that? The declaration of God, *who knows*, is of more weight than your reasoning, *who do not know*. There are other causes, you retort, of a plural form of speech. I answer, its proper and natural cause is plurality in the things signified. It is from *this* that the plural form of a noun usually arises; nor could it have been indicated in a manner more effectual than by this description of phrase, at once elegant and consistent with use. Let every humble learner, therefore, of the word of God, settle in his mind, to receive, in sincerity and truth, whatever he (God) may dictate."

See a long note on the subject, in Wardlaw's *Socinian Controversy*, pp. 488, and note D, Gale's *Court of the Gentiles*, vol. 4, ch. 3, p. 237. Also, Amyraldus *Probatio Trinitatis ex V. T.* in *Wagenselii Telæ Ignæ Satanæ*, pp. 141, 165.

## ARTICLE X.

### THE NATURE AND ORIGIN OF THE PAGAN DOCTRINE OF TRIADS, OR A TRINITY.

The fact of the existence of a doctrine of a trinity of Supreme Gods, with more or less distinctness, in all the earlier forms of religious belief, is now universally admitted.

The degree in which any resemblance is found to the christian doctrine varies with the proximity and clearness of the traditions of a primitive theology.

It will be interesting to present an outline of these Triads from the sources within our reach and chiefly from an elaborate analysis included in a more general review some years since.

The Hindu Triad bears but little resemblance to the Scriptural doctrine of the Trinity, although it has been made use of by sceptical writers for the purpose of attempting to cast discredit on christianity. Still, it may seem strange that such a doctrine as that of the Triad should have been conceived by man; especially when to it is added the doctrine of Avatars, or Incarnations, which are part of the functions peculiar to Vishnu, the preserver, the second deity of the Hindu Triad.

And though the resemblance, in its mythological form, is greatly warped and marred, yet it cannot but strike any inquiring mind as very remarkable, that opinions so much above the conceptions of mere reason, and bearing apparently so much more resemblance to the doctrines of christianity than did the revelation given to the Jews, should have been held time immemorial by the Hindus. The surprise of the inquirer will certainly not be diminished, if he be led to ascertain that a similar doctrine prevailed in the earliest ages of every people in the world, whose national existence extends to a sufficiently remote antiquity, and whose ancient records have been at all preserved. A full elucidation of this ancient doctrine is not within either our power or our limits to give; but regarding it as the only key by which the secrets of ancient mythology can be unlocked,—regarding it as the lever by which all their delusions may be subverted and overthrown, we request the attention of our readers to so much of a disquisition concerning the recondite mythology of the ancient heathens, as may be requisite for enabling them to apprehend the bearing and force of our argument.

In the Hindu system of mythology the main elements are not properly and strictly a Trinity in Unity, but a Monad producing a Triad, and then retiring farther from action,—even from consciousness,—the Triads thenceforward remaining the deities and rulers of the universe. They must also, have perceived that this Triad was essentially of the character of materialism, and conveyed a mythic personification of the producing, preserving, and destroying powers of nature. Whether this mode of attempting to explain the mystery of the universe was within the reach of the unaided powers of human reason, we shall not at present inquire; but, let us, at least, show that it was not peculiar to the Hindus.

Partly from fragments of ancient records, and partly from recent hieroglyphic discoveries, we are enabled distinctly to perceive, that the Egyptians held the same doctrine of a Triad, and that, too, in such a degree of conformity with the Hindu system, as to show that they are essentially the same. The Egyptian Monad, or fountain of deity, is named Amon-Ra, or Eicton,—physically, Chaos,—and is identical with the Hindu Brahm. Phtha is the *creating* power,—Kneph, the *preserving* power,—and Khem, the *destroying* or reproducing power.

It is worthy of observation, however, that the Egyptians arranged their Triad somewhat differently from the Hindus, though the official attributes were the same, placing them thus,—Kneph, Phtha and Khem, in conformity with their strictly physical attributes, ether, light and heat. It must also, be added, that the names of Egyptian gods, better known to classic scholars, occupy the same positions, and claims the same characters, as those above mentioned;—as Chronus, Osiris, Horus and Typhon, the first being the Monad, the three latter the Triad. Indeed, there may be distinctly traced among the Egyptian gods three such Triads, as they may be termed, and regarded respectively as celestial, terrestrial and infernal deities.

The Phœnician mythology bears a very close resemblance to that of the Egyptians, although in a modified form, indicating a later period of formation or reception, when certain metaphysical theories had begun to refine the simplicity of the ancient, physical, or material creed. In this the Monad is Chaos; from the Chaos proceeds a dark windy Air, or Ether; from the embrace of these springs Pothos, or Love; and from these Metis, or Mût, Intellect or Counsel.

With this the Hermetic and Orphic systems are closely connected, and deserve attention as the intermediate link between the Egyptian, and the later or classic Greek. The Monad is here again Chaos, co-existent with which is Ether, sometimes termed Phanes. Thence spring Ericapæus, Pothos, and Metis; or, as other Orphic fragments arrange and name them, Ericapæus, Phanes or Apollo-Pythius, and Metis. The classic Greek, it is well known, implies also, a Monad, producing a triad,—the monad being Chronos or Saturn, the triad Zeus, Poseidon, or Neptune, and Pluto, manifestly a mythic mode of representing the three imaginary elemental principles of air, water, and darkness, or the unknown regions of nature.

The Syrian, Sidonian, and Tyrian, are nearly the same. In them the monad is Baalshilishi or Beel, and the triad are Ether Ulomus and Chosrus or Chronus, Pothos and Omichles, or water, Ilus and Heracles, or Chromes.

The Chaldæan has not reached us in its primitive form, except as may be gathered from what are termed the Chaldæan Oracles of Zoroaster. The fundamental tenet of these oracles is, that a Triad shines through the whole world, over which a Monad rules. This triad is termed Father, Power, Intellect; and one passage implies that it had been in the most ancient times Air, Fire, and the Sun.

The Persian is, evidently, a refined, or perhaps we might say, a partially reformed modification of the ancient Chaldæan. According to it, the monad is Zeronane, or Time unbounded; the triad consists of Ormuzd, Hithras, and Ahriman, exactly corresponding to the character and the arrangement of the Hindu triad,—the creating, preserving, and destroying powers, or the Good principle, the Mediator, and the Evil principle.

According to the Chinese, from Zao, the incorporeal reason, sprung a *duad*, from which proceeded a *triad*, by whom all things were created.

The simplest form of the Scandinavian mythology is, that which names the monad Bor, and the triad Odin, Hæmur, and Lodur; the powers respectively of Ether, Light, and Fire, or, as applied to man, life, reason, and blood.

The Druids specified no monad, and theirs was entirely of a metaphysical character,—Life, Knowledge, Power; from which it may be inferred, that the Druid system is not nearly so ancient as those already mentioned, and cannot belong to a more remote antiquity than one subsequent to the metaphysical refinement of the Pythagorian period.



It deserves to be mentioned, also, that among the Peruvians the same system of a monad producing a triad, formed the ancient creed.

The monad they called Viracocha, or Pachacamac, (soul of the world;) this primary being they regarded as symbolized in some measure by the Sun, who was, of course, the chief object of their worship; the triad they designated, Father-Sun; Son-Sun; and Brother-Sun.

From this necessarily very brief and imperfect outline of the most ancient systems of heathen mythology, we are irresistibly led to the conclusion, that all the nations of primitive antiquity worshipped a Triad of divine persons,—which Triad they believed to have been in some manner inherent in, or to have proceeded from, or to have been produced by, a Monad, who was recognized as the supreme source of deity.

The most ancient aspect of this system, which is also, the simplest, is purely of a material character, and is found in the Hindu and Egyptian mythologies. In them the correspondence is very close,—

Hindu, Egyptian, Physical nature,	<i>Monad,</i> <i>Monad,</i>	Brahm; Amon-Ra; Chaos;	<i>Triad,</i> <i>Triad,</i>	Vishnu, Kneph, Ether, Spirit, or Air,	Brahma, Phthah, Light,	Shiva, Khem, Fire, or Ocean.
The attributes are:	respectively	Preserving, power,	Creating, power,	Destroying, power.		
The colors sacred to these deities corresponding to their physical nature, are		Blue,	White,	Red.		
The Chaldæan ancient Triad is also,		Ether,	Light,	Fire.		

These are, beyond all question the most ancient mythological tenets of the most ancient of heathen nations; and, therefore, they present to us the nearest approach to the primitive opinions of the post-diluvian patriarchs, or rather, let us say, the first corruption of patriarchal religion.

Having thus begun to worship the elemental powers of nature, the next corruption was easy, and indeed, inevitable, namely, the worship of the heavenly bodies, and especially of the sun, sometimes as the monad, sometimes as the first person of the triad, the moon, and the earth, or the moon, and the ocean. The worship of the moon, of the ocean, and of the earth, as also, of the infernal or subterrene regions, were later additions to the worship of the sun, as that luminary was held to possess all the powers of the triad, creative, preserving, and destructive, and reproductive. He is the Baal or sun-god, of

the second corrupt system of heathen worship, which prevailed very extensively among the nations of central and western Asia; and, when combined with, and modified by the Hermetic and Orphic systems, (themselves partly derived from the Egyptian,) formed the intermediate and connecting links between the ancient system and the classic mythology of Greece and Rome.

Let it, however, be carefully noted, that there were two other systems of mythology prevalent among the ancients, both intimately connected with the system we have been considering,—one as a farther corruption, the other, as an attempt at reformation, or at least, a sort of explanatory refinement. The most ancient of these was the worship of deified human beings, leading directly to idolatry. The first and greatest of these herogods occupies the position of the monads of the earlier system. He is the sole king of the world. He is threatened with some fearful calamity, from which he escapes by taking refuge in a boat, a cavern, a coffer, or ark, the moon, or the hollow of a lotus leaf. He finally surmounts the danger, re-organizes the frame of nature, or becoming the parent of three sons, re-peoples the world. In this system the worship of the moon, the earth, the sea, the serpent, rainbow, and the dove, may be found under various symbols, more or less obscure, and more or less successfully combined with the more ancient (as we think.) and simpler system of the monad and triad,—the chaos and the elemental powers and attributes of nature. It is impossible not to recognize in this a confused mythological representation of the events of the deluge, and the history of Noah and his three sons,—together with a still more confused reference to the history of the fall, and of Adam and his three sons. This, which we may term for the present, the *patriarcho-idolatrous* system, appears to have sprung up, as we shall have occasion to show, shortly after that of the physical monad and triad theory, which we may term the *patriarcho-pantheistic* system. It may be possible to show, that these two systems were opposed to each other, their respective adherents contending with the most deadly animosity, in the remotest antiquity,—even in patriarchal times; while it must be evident to all, that their partial combination contributed to the formation of those transition stages ending, as already stated, in classic mythology.

What we have designated as an attempted reformation, or sort of explanatory refinement of these ancient systems, had its

origin in a much later period, and was of a metaphysical character. In it the monad is, The soul of the world. The triad is: Spirit, or Love, or Power, or Intellect, Truth, Justice. From this the Druid system, Life, Knowledge, Power, is evidently derived, from which some approximation to the period of its origin may be obtained,—as also, to the region whence it sprung.

The Persian system, as given in the Zendavesta, bears a close resemblance to this metaphysical system, with one peculiar characteristic of its own, highly deserving of attention. In it the monad is Time-unbounded, or eternity; the triad,—

Ormuzd,	Mithras,	Ahriman,
or The	or The	or the
Good principle,	Mediator,	Evil principle.

In this system, it will be observed that there appears, if not for the first time, at least more distinctly than in any of the more ancient, the idea of the two opposing principles of Good and Evil; and from this peculiarity men of less judgment than learning have attempted to account for the introduction of the Hebrew Scriptures of the same idea, in consequence of the intercourse of the Jews with the Persians, during the period of the captivity. We trust soon to prove, that the very opposite was the truth,—and that the Persians actually received it from the Jews.

Let us, briefly, recapitulate, for the purpose of presenting in the most succinct and intelligible form, the conclusions to which we have arrived. The most ancient system of heathen mythology is, that which regards as the chief object of worship one supreme source of all being, the universal self-existing monad, of which chaos is the material symbol, or which is itself, chaos; and a triad proceeding from, or produced by, the monad, of which air or ether, light, and fire, or sometimes the ocean, are the material symbols. This speedily degenerated into the worship of the heavenly bodies themselves, and became a kind of pantheistic materialism. Almost, if not entirely, contemporaneous with this, arose an opposing system, assuming as the chief objects of worship, not the symbolized powers of elemental nature, but the historic events and persons connected with the creation and deluge; thus endeavouring to avoid pantheism, but sinking into idolatry and hero worship. To trace the subsequent contentions, and blendings, and modifications of these systems, as the nations where they chiefly prevailed,

held hostile or friendly intercourse with each other, would be to give a complete history of heathen mythology,—and, with the key thus furnished, would be a task more of time than of difficulty. The next great modification of these original mythic systems was the metaphysical, which attempted to explain them in conformity with certain mental and moral abstractions, or rather ideas, derived partly from the contemplation of the nature of the human mind itself,—thus endeavouring to make the microcosm, or little world of man, the known element by which, reasoning analogically, they might explain the system of the universe.

We need not waste space in showing that the metaphysical system led inevitably to pantheism, if not to atheism,—extremes meeting in this as in all other cases, and every false system tending ultimately to destroy itself; and we merely suggest the idea, in passing, as we may have occasion to revert to it hereafter. But, having now arrived by an analytic process at the very essence of all heathen mythology, we must next attempt to point out its origin and progress, so far as our limits will permit, and to the extent required for the object we have in view.

We need not hesitate to say that the Bible must be our chief guide in the investigation which we are now commencing; but, at the same time, we shall produce such a mass of corroborating facts, dates, and arguments, as shall, we trust, convince every impartial inquirer, that it is not a mere hypothesis he is tracing, but the actual vestiges of long-unnoticed truth. Every person will admit that Noah and his sons were in possession of the whole amount of religious truths which had, at that time, been communicated to man. The history of the creation and the fall, would, necessarily form the basis of all true knowledge, both respecting the character and the works of God, and respecting the relation subsisting between God and man, together with those laws given to man for the regulation of his belief and his conduct. An outline of these truths, sacred and historical, is given in the first five chapters of the book of Genesis. The fundamental truths there stated, are, first, those which regard God; and then those which describe the creation. The sublime idea of one God, the creator of the heaven and the earth, is there revealed in the clear simplicity of its own unapproachable greatness; yet even in that, the farther idea of a plurality of powers in the Godhead, is suggested by the use of the plural noun Elohim. The next idea, is that of the elements

of nature, created at first in a chaotic state, while the vivifying Spirit of God brooded upon the liquid and formless mass. It must be evident to every thinking person, that in the perversion of these two distinct doctrines, and their combination, originated the heathen tenet of Brahm, Amun-Ra, the Chaos, and the Chaos, embracing the Ether, which appears as the monad of the respective systems of the most ancient nations; the sublime Scriptural doctrine of the ETERNAL UNITY OF BEINGS IN PLURALITY OF PERSONS, possessed of every possible attribute in infinite perfection, being lost in the dim notion of a chaotic monad, devoid of all attributes, mental and moral, and existing only as a crude mass whence the universe might be constructed.

The three next creative stages, in which the creation of light, the firmament of the heavens, and the separation of sea and land, and consequent production of vegetation, are related, seem also, to have given rise to the primitive triad, the elemental powers of nature, Light,—the Heavens or the Air,—and Fire or Ocean. In this, it may be observed, the Hindu system follows exactly the course of the days of creation, Brahma being the elemental light, Vishnu, the heavens, and Shiva, fire or ocean, the life-producer, destroyer, and re-producer; while the Egyptian transposes the two former of these powers, arranging them thus, Kneph, the heavens, Phthah, light, and Khem, fire or ocean. From this it ought to be inferred, that the Hindu system was somewhat more ancient than that of Egypt.

The three next stages of creation, together with the first great event in the history of man, appear to have been also seized upon by the mythologists of ancient times for the purpose of constructing a second system of a monad presiding over, or appearing in, a triad. In the Bible these three stages are, the creation of the sun and the moon, to be the measures of time, "for signs and for seasons," as well as lights in the firmament,—animal life,—and man; to which may be added the first great event in the history of man, the temptation by the serpent and the Fall. Upon this basis the mythologists have erected the system of a second monad, Chronus, or Sev, with the attribute Time, and the material symbol, the Sun; and a second triad, Osiris, Horus, and Typhon, among the Egyptians, with the attributes Life, the Good-principle, and the Evil-principle. With this the Persian, as reformed by Zoroaster at a much later period, almost exactly corresponds; as the monad Zeronane, or Time-unbounded, symbolized by the sun, and

sometimes called also, Mithras, and the triad Ormuzd, or Oromasdes, the good-principle, Mithras, the mediator or preserver, and Ahriman, or Arimanius, the evil principle. How much information was communicated to Adam and to Noah respecting the future Deliverer, the promised seed of the woman and the enemy of the serpent, we cannot know; but that they were acquainted with the doctrine of His divine nature and incarnation, we do not doubt; whence arose the Indian doctrine of Avatars, or Incarnation of Vishnu, the second person of their triad; and also, the doctrine of the good and evil principles of the Persian system.

Thus it appears, that the most ancient systems of heathen mythology arose from either the voluntary perversion, or ignorant misunderstanding and misapplication of the true history of the creation, as known traditionally to the patriarchs, and subsequently again revealed in its original purity to Moses. The opposite great corruption of patriarchal religion, as has been already stated, consisted in the worship of the first patriarchal family, which also, being composed of a father and his three sons, retained the idea, to a certain extent, of a monad producing a triad, and tended to confirm and perpetuate that primitive mythic system, even while introducing absolute idolatry. But, here let us remark, that although we are persuaded the above is the true origin of the heathen triad, as it appears in the most ancient mythological systems, we are far from holding that the true idea of a Trinity in Unity was unknown to the patriarchs. On the contrary, we fully believe that it was; and that a vain attempt to explain it, by the use of material symbols, in such a manner as to render it intelligible to the human mind, was the great cause of its corruption and abuse. And this is in exact conformity with all that experience, philosophy, and revelation teach us respecting the characteristic tendencies of man. Experience tells us, that men are almost irreclaimably prone to materialism,—few, very few, ever being able or willing to rise above the regions of the senses, and of mere physical existences. Philosophy tells us, that this is inevitable, in consequence of the continual and urgent demands made by our sensuous frames under the pressure of physical necessities, rendering the culture of our mental faculties not only more difficult than that of our physical, but even of comparatively inferior moment. And revelation informs us why these things are so,—whence the difficulty arose, and in what it chiefly consists. It tells us of the fall of man, and the conse-

quent loss of that spiritual faculty by which alone spiritual things can be adequately discovered. Hence it was, that the spiritual truths which Noah had to communicate to his descendants, were not, and could not be, by them spiritually received, except where any of them were favoured by express spiritual enlightenment; and, therefore, inevitably sunk during transmission into these forms of materialism which constitute the very essence of ancient heathen mythology. It thus appears, that the origin of all false systems of religion consists in the materializing perversion of the great doctrine of the unity of God. All mythology, therefore, and in particular, Hinduism, its most fully elaborated system, ought to be regarded as a complete demonstration, that as man cannot "by searching find out God," neither can he, when God has revealed himself retain the knowledge of him, without the constant indwelling aid of the Holy Spirit. Nor is this demonstration of less than the utmost importance even to christians. Even with the Bible in our hands, we are perpetually liable to entertain such notions of the infinite Jehovah as tend to represent him as "altogether such an one as ourselves." And this arises from the very same cause. Spiritual truths cannot enter into the depths of the mind and heart, however they may seem to be speculatively believed or admitted, except a man be spiritually taught; nor be retained, except by the constant internal operation of the same divine agent. Fallen man is the slave of his senses,—strives to reduce all infinite truths to finite forms,—in the sign petrifies and kills the thing signified,—and perverts the patriarchal into the heathen, the christian into the Popish, and both into infidelity.

Lest, however, our readers should consider this view as of a nature too hypothetical to command implicit assent, we shall trace it historically, by means of some very ancient fragments that have been transmitted to us from different sources, and through the lapse of many ages; and which have been put into a form accessible to all by the laborious researches of Mr. Cory, in his invaluable work, 'Ancient Fragments,' to which, and to his more recent 'Mythological inquiry into the Recondite Theology of the Heathen,' we take this opportunity of acknowledging ourselves greatly indebted.

There are two great events mentioned in the Bible,—the dividing of the earth among the descendants of Noah,—and the dispersion of the builders of Babel,—the dates of which, if they could be exactly ascertained, would serve to fix the chro-

nology of all ancient history. Not wishing to frame any hypothesis of our own, where that can be avoided, we may assume the date of Peleg's birth as that of the earth's divisions which is commonly stated as the year 2247 B. C. The close approximation to this date which is obtained from the most authentic annals of the chief nations of antiquity is very remarkable. Our space will not permit us to cite the authorities on which the following dates are given, but our readers may rely upon the utmost care having been taken in their compilation. The different eras of the origin of nations are those of the Chaldæan, 2233; the Chinese, 2207; the Indian, 2204; the Egyptian, 2188; and the Assyrian, 2185, B. C. Of these, the Chaldæan is the most ancient, and the best authenticated, as was to have been expected from the fact that Babylon was the seat of the first monarchy. The approximation is, at any rate, close enough to show the general truth of the whole, and the agreement between the Bible and the most ancient historic records.

From the account given in the Bible of the building of Babel, and the dispersion of those who were engaged in it, we may infer that Nimrod was the leader of a large body of men who had rebelled against the authority of the great patriarch Noah, and, in all probability, at the same time had introduced a corruption of the patriarchal religion.

Now, it is very remarkable, that in some ancient fragments preserved by Epiphanius, Cedrenus, and in the Paschal Chronicle, it is stated that the first form of religion was called Barbarism, which is said to have prevailed from Adam to Noah,—and which, therefore, must be the patriarchal form. The second is termed "Scuthism, which prevailed from the days of Noah, and thence downwards to the building of the tower of Babylon." This we believe to have been the gradual materializing process through which the patriarchal tenets passed, till by Nimrod, or perhaps his father, Cush, they were formed into the earliest monad and triad system already explained. The third is called Hellenism, or Ionism, which "originated in the days of Serug, with the introduction of idolatry. The Egyptians, and Babylonians, and Phrygians, and Phœnicians, were the first propagators of this superstition of making images, and of the mysteries." This second corruption is manifestly that which has been already described, as the worship of the Noachian family, which we have pointed out as the origin of absolute idolatry, and yet retaining somewhat of the original



monad and triad system. But, it is remarkable that this Ionism, the second corruption of patriarchal religion is said to have been begun by Serug;—we are also told in the Bible that Nahor and Terah, the immediate ancestors of Abraham, were worshippers of idols;—and ancient history informs us that the Dove (Ionah,) was the standard of the Assyrians. From all these we think the conclusion is inevitable, that Scuthism, and the mythic system of the elemental monad and triad, were identical, and that this was the first corruption of the patriarchal religion, and prevailed chiefly in the Hametic and Japhetic races of mankind: and also, that Ionism, or Hellenism, (the worship of the Dove, and of the Arkite or Noachim family, combined with the worship of fire, Elain, whence the term Hellenism,) was the second corruption, and was almost peculiar to the Shemitic race, of which the Assyrian was the chief nation, as the Egyptian and the Hindu were all the Hametic and the Japhetic races.

Even the dates of these corruptions may be very nearly ascertained. The foundation of the Babylonian monarchy by Nimrod, 2233 B. C., may be assumed as the origin of Scuthism, at least in its completed form. The æras of China, 2207, and of India, 2204, would seem to indicate that these nations had followed the direction of Noah, and gone to their respective territories without delay, and before any further corruption of religion had taken place. In them accordingly, we find the system of Scuthism in its greatest simplicity. The birth of Serug, and the æra of the Assyrian monarchy are almost exactly synchronous, and both are connected with the second corruption, Ionism, the date of which, therefore, we may assume to be 2185 B. C., or 48 years subsequent to the Scuthic heresy. It can scarcely be doubted that wars would very speedily ensue between the adherents of these hostile creeds, if, indeed, the very building of Babel itself was not the first act of hostility directed by the Scuthic leader, Nimrod, against the Patriarchs; and in this we might find the true history of what is known in classic mythology as “the war of the Titans,” waged against Chronus, or Noah, and his sons. The exact date of this event cannot, however, be fixed, except that it probably occurred between the periods of the building of Babel and the foundation of the Assyrian empire, within a range of 48 years.

The first Chaldæan, or rather Babylonian dynasty, founded by Nimrod, is stated by Syncellus to have lasted 225 years, and

to have been succeeded by an Arabian dynasty. The designation, Arabian, is manifestly erroneous, as there could have been no such nation at that time in existence. The overthrowers of the Nimrodean dynasty were more probably Assyrians, and to this war the classic fable of "the war of the giants" may most likely refer. Abydenus places Ninus, the founder of the Assyrian empire, sixth in descent from Belus, its nominal founder, and within eight years of the assumed Arabian dynasty of Babylon. This seems to confirm the conjecture that the new dynasty was, indeed, Assyrian in its origin, though Babylon may have been governed by satraps, while Nineveh remained the seat of empire. But what is most deserving of notice is, that this change of dynasty in Babylon, by the overthrow of Nimrod's successors, occurred in the year 2008 B. C.; and that the invasion of Egypt by the Hyksos occurred in 2002, as has been ascertained from the monuments.

The Egyptian records respecting the Hyksos are sufficiently confused, still we may learn from them that the invaders assailed them from the eastern shores of the Red Sea,—that they were hostile to image worship, and were in truth, worshippers of the sun, or of fire. In these respects they completely harmonize with the characteristics of the expelled followers of Nimrod, whose Scuthism had by this time, declined into Zabaism, or the worship of the heavenly bodies, and especially the sun, and his symbol, fire.

The period of six years from their expulsion out of Babylon till their arrival in Egypt, is not too much for them to have expended in traveling through Arabia, or rather round it, following the course of the sea-coast till they turned the point of the Red Sea, and seized upon the fertile regions of the Delta.

It may be added, that this expulsion of the first Babylonian dynasty synchronizes very nearly also, with the Hindu æra of the first Buddha, who introduced a more refined materialism into India, hostile to their original system, and leading to infidelity. This also agrees with the Egyptian accusation against the Hyksos, that they were "contemners of the gods."

We have thus obtained somewhat of an historical account of the rise and progress of the different perversions and corruptions of the patriarchal religion, with a series of dates which are at least, a close approximation to the truth; by the use of which we are persuaded that it is perfectly possible to lay hold on any system of heathen mythology, and trace it to its origin in the corruption and misconception of some still more ancient

and divinely revealed truth; by seizing upon which, and reversing the process, correcting the mythic legend at every step, the whole may be exploded, and the true system of divinely revealed religion established upon its ruins. The pure, patriarchal religion, as held by Noah, was corrupted into Scuthism, or the mythic theory of a monad producing a triad, themselves merely the elemental powers of the material universe, by Cush, or Nimrod, about 2233 B. C. This system was embraced chiefly by the Hametic and Japhetic races; the Hametic however, sinking towards a grosser materialism, and to idolatry, while the Japhetic pursued a more intellectual process, hovering between pantheism, or infidelity, and the worship of the sun, or of fire. The Shemetic race adopted a different perversion of patriarchal religion, termed Ionism, the characteristic tendency of which was hero worship, (at first that of the Noachian family,) and idolatry; the date of which cannot be later than 2185 B. C. The expulsion of the first Babylonian dynasty by the Assyrians caused an infusion of the purest Scuthism into Egypt with the Hyksos, and into India, where it was known as the earliest appearance of Buddhism. All the corruptions of the patriarchal, the true revealed religion, were thus thrown into such juxtaposition with each other, as to produce a universal idolatry, of which the forms were considerably different, but the leading tenets the same, and all having for their basis a confused notion of a monad producing a triad.

We have shown abundant proof of the universal belief in the doctrine of a Trinity, or at least of a Triad, with some obscure notions of an Avatar or Incarnation, among the Gentile nations, from the earliest times, long previous to the æra of the Mosaic dispensation, and therefore not derived from that source; this can be accounted for only by the supposition, that this doctrine, together with that of the Incarnation, formed the chief tenets of the ancient patriarchal religion, held and taught while mankind constituted but one family, or one community, and carried with the various branches as they separated from the parent stem. But we have traced, also, the very early corruptions of patriarchal religion, till it became wholly obscured by mythic fables, or perverted into gross idolatry. Let it be noted, that as successive migrations took place, and tribes wandered to a distance from the chief seat of the nation, they necessarily sunk into greater degrees of barbarism, and their religion became more and more corrupt. The simplest and purest forms, therefore, are to be found in the central seats of each main branch

of the human family in Persia, India, and Egypt. When these simplest forms are found in remote countries, the inference is, either that a considerable settlement must have taken place from the central seat, the latter opinion being rendered absolutely certain when the simpler tenets of antiquity are found to be superinduced upon a more degenerate system.

By attending to this view, much light would be thrown both upon the religious history of man, and upon the migrations of various races. Let it also be marked, that when the patriarchal religion had been thus corrupted, and the allwise God was pleased to communicate a new revelation to man, while the first chapters of the book of Genesis contained a re-statement of the history of the creation, as it had been known to the patriarchs, the law did not expressly contain a re-statement of the doctrine of the Trinity. This essential doctrine was, indeed, contained in the Mosaic dispensation, and the successive revelations which God made to his chosen people; but it was so concealed under types, and symbols, and in predictions, that the spiritually enlightened alone discerned it, and thus it was effectually preserved from being again corrupted by the materializing process natural to the darkened mind of fallen man. The sublime doctrine of the Unity of the only living and true God was thus maintained, the Jews kept from lapsing into idolatry, and the false worship of heathen nations kept in check, while reforming influences were from time to time infused into the heart and mind of the world, preparatory for the full and clear manifestation of Divine truth in the pure system of christianity, so far as to the weak and finite mind of man the infinitely mysterious, yet infinitely true doctrine of TRINITY IN UNITY AND UNITY IN TRINITY, can be manifested.

The names under which the Hyksos or Shepherd-King Dynasty in Egypt, says Mr. Poole, (*Horæ Aegyptiacæ*, pp. 204 and 206,) "as found on the monuments of Egypt, worshipped the sun, are 'Aten-ra,' or the solar disk, that is, the visible sun; 'Muce-ra,' the brightness, or rays, of the sun; and 'Ra,' the power supposed to reside in the sun. We find the names of their God enclosed in two royal rings, shewing that they ascribed to him a regal character. The names thus enclosed read 'Ra' of the two solar abodes, who rejoices in the solar abode in his name Muce-ra, who is in Aten-ra."

Zoroaster and his followers (I do not mean those holding the opinions of the Zend-Avesta,) generally speak of but one deity, though it is evident that they worshipped a triad or triads,

just as the sculptures of the sun-worshippers in Egypt uniformly represented but one object of adoration, although that people, also, evidently worshipped a kind of triad. It appears to me from the different names given to the god of the sun-worshippers that they adored one god whom they supposed to be resident in the sun, and operating through its rays, and yet that they worshipped this god through the medium of the sun and its rays. These evidently correspond to the fire, the sun, or light, and the Ether of the Zoroastrian triad originating from a monad. The only one of these correspondences that appears at first sight strained, is that of Ether in the Zoroastrian triad, with the god supposed to reside in the sun by the sun-worshippers in Egypt; but the objection is removed when we remember that the Ether of Zoroaster corresponds to the soul or spirit of the universe of some of the ancient theologians and some of the philosophers. How interesting is it to see in the earliest monuments of Asiatic nations of which the date is proved, the first records of that religion, which so widely prevailed in Asia, for so many ages, and which is not yet extinct.\*

"Nothing, perhaps," says Mr. Cory, in his very learned work, (*Ancient Fragments*, page 354,) "is more uniformly insisted on among the heathens, than that their Trinity was a Triad Subordinate to a Monad; which Monad was clearly one of those two independent principles, which were conceived to have existed before the formation of the world, and was the Ethereal Intellectual principle of the Universe, which was in a manner superseded by the Triad. The Triad is likewise maintained to be Phanes or Eros, the Sun, the Soul and Ruler of the World.

To ascertain the person of this triad, then, I shall merely place the most ancient speculations upon the subject under one another; but at the same time I would observe, that it is one of those questions, which, for want of sufficient evidence, is incapable of being brought to the test of absolute demonstration.

From the different Orphic fragments we find that the Orphic Trinity consisted of

Metis,	Phanes, or Eros,	Ericapæus.
Which are interpreted,		
Will or Counsel,	Light or Love,	Life or Life giver.
From Acusilaus,		
Metis,	Eros,	Ether.

\*See Voltaire's *Analysis of the Platonic Trinity* in Hey's *Lectures on Divinity*, vol. i., pp. 488, 2 vol., ed. W.

From Hesiod according to Damascius,		
Earth,	Eros,	Tartarus.
From Pherecydes Syrius,		
Fire,	Water,	Spirit or Air.
From the Sidonians,		
Cronus,	Love,	Cloudy Darkness
From the Phœnicians,		
Ulomus,	Chusorus,	The Egg.
From the Chaldæan and Persian Oracles of Zoroaster,		
Fire,	Sun,	Ether.
Fire,	Light,	Ether.
From the later Platonists,		
Power,	Intellect,	Father.
Power,	Intellect,	Soul or Spirit.

By the ancient Theologists, according to Macrobius, the Sun was invoked in the Mysteries as

Power of the world,	Light of the world,	Spirit of the world.
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To which may, perhaps, be added from Sanchoniatho the three sons of Genus,

Fire,	Light,	Flame.
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By omitting the earth, water, and other materials, which in the formation of the world, are elsewhere disposed of, and passing over the refinements of the Pythagoreans, who sometimes even deviated so far as to place the (*πράγαθον*) first cause, as the Monad, and the three concauses as the Triad, I think we may find in the above enumeration sufficient ground for maintaining the opinion that the persons of the Trinity of the Gentiles, viewed under a physical aspect, were regarded as the Fire, the Light, and the Spirit or Air, of the Etherial fluid substance of the heavens, which in a Metaphysical aspect were held to be no other than the Power or Will, the Intellect or Reason, and the Spirit or Affections of the Soul of the World; accordingly, as the prior Monad was contemplated in its Etherial or Intellectual substance. \* \* \*

\* \* \* The numerous passages in the Scriptures in which the Persons of the christian Trinity are shadowed forth by the same natural and mental powers which I suppose to constitute the original triad of the Gentiles, are too numerous to require to be specifically referred to. The Father is continually typified as a Fire accepting the sacrifices, consuming and punishing the guilty, as the Lord of all power and might, to whom all

prayers are commonly addressed;—the Son, as Light, as a Mediator, and a Teacher, enlightening the understanding, addressing himself more particularly to the Intellect, pointing out the distinctions between good and evil;—the Spirit, as Spirit or Air, a mighty rushing wind, opening upon the Affections, Feelings, or Emotions. We are commanded by the christian faith to look to the Son for knowledge, to obey his instructions, and to accept the conditions of salvation he has offered,—to the Spirit, for grace to influence us in all our feelings, wishes and intentions;—and to the Father, our prayers are to be directed for the power to act.

## ARTICLE XI.

### TESTIMONY OF THE EARLY FATHERS OF THE DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY.

We have assumed, in our whole discussion, the truth, the Divine inspiration, and the authority of the sacred Scriptures. From this it follows that the teaching of Scripture, in all questions of doctrine, when clearly ascertained, is the infallible rule and judge of what is to be believed as true.

Widely different interpretations, however, have been and are put, upon various passages of Scripture. It is therefore necessary, while every man must, for himself, search the Scriptures, and be fully persuaded in his own mind, that he should avail himself of all proper assistance in confirming himself in the correctness of his conclusions. This assistance is to be found, in the most eminent manner, in the promised influences of that Holy Spirit, who alone can infallibly guide into all truth. Next to this, however, is the confirmation given to our opinions by the judgment of others, whose ability and character render them capable judges of the true meaning of the sacred Scriptures.

Now, among those who must be regarded as, beyond controversy, most eminently capable of knowing what our Lord and his apostles really taught, orally, and in writing, the christians who lived contemporaneously and immediately after them, must be enrolled. If, therefore, we can ascertain those views which were held by the *primitive* church, on the subject of the Trinity, we have the highest assurance that these must have been delivered by Christ and his apostles, and must contain the real doctrine of the Holy Scriptures. And if we find that those views are not those of the Unitarians, but are, in all that is essential, those of Trinitarians, then we may safely conclude that the Trinitarian, and not the Unitarian doctrine, is that taught in the word of God. In a very important sense, Tertullian's declaration is correct, as it regards christian doctrine: "Whatever is first, is true,—whatever is later, is adulterate." And the rule of Vincentius will apply, that whatever christian doctrine was held by all, every where in the first age of christianity, must be true. The question is not one regarding the opinions of the early christians, but as to the simple fact of their holding certain opinions because they believed them to be



those taught in the word of God, and by Christ and his apostles. Christianity being undoubtedly a revelation from God, and this revelation being now contained in the sacred writings, what views on the subject of the Trinity did the primitive christians consider to be enforced in those writings, and to have been taught by Christ and his inspired apostles? We appeal to the primitive christians therefore, not as judges, but simply as credible and fully qualified witnesses of what was held and believed in the churches in their day, as the undoubted doctrine of christianity. We do not, therefore, constitute them either judges or interpreters of the faith; but most reliable witnesses of facts, and most capable translators of language, which, to many of them, was vernacular, who were also most likely to know the views and opinions of the inspired penmen.

At the period of the Reformation, as we shall afterwards prove, the doctrine of the Trinity was every where and by all the reformed churches, adopted as the undoubted teaching of Scripture, and as of primary and fundamental importance. This was done while the same judgment was delivered by the Romish church, from whose tenets and practices they would naturally have been disposed to recede, as far as Scripture warranted. Such also, was the doctrine held by the churches of Rome, of Britain, of the Greek and Oriental churches, with a very partial exception, and that under the pressure of very severe persecutions, up to the time of the Council of Nice, A. D. 325. To constitute this general council, or assembly of the representatives of the christian world, more than 300\* were present.

These ministers were representatives of the various churches of Spain, Italy, Egypt, the Thebais, Libya, Palestine, Phœnica, Cœlo-Syria, Lydia, Phrygia, Psididi, Lycia, Pamphylia, the Greek Islands, Caria, Isauria, Cyprus, Bithynia, Europa, Dacia, Mysia, Macedonia, Achaia, Thessaly, Calabria, Africa, Dardania, Dalmatia, Pannonia, the Gauls, Gothia, Bosphorus. It is thus made certain, as a matter of fact, that the Trinitarian doctrine was held by nearly all the clergy, when the controversy first began. Alexander mentions only three bishops, five presbyters, and six deacons, who supported the Arian heresy: and without supposing these persons to be actuated by improper motives, (a suspicion, which is more than insinuated against some of them.) it is only reasonable to decide, that the senti-

\*318 or 320, besides, as Eusebius says, "an infinite number" of other clergy and officers.

ments of so small a minority are not to be weighed against the deliberate declaration of the whole catholic church.

The creed adopted by this council was as follows :

We believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of all things visible and invisible : And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, begotten, only-begotten from the Father, that is, from the substance of the Father ; God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not created ; consubstantial with the Father : through whom were all things made, both things in heaven and things in earth ; who, on account of us men, and of our salvation, descended, and became incarnate, and was made man : suffered, was buried, and rose again on the third day : ascended into the heavens : is coming to judge the quick and the dead.

We believe also in the Holy Ghost.

But those who say there was a time when the Son existed not, and that he existed not before he was begotten, and that he was made out of things which are not, or who say that he was from any person or substance, or who teach that the Son of God was created, or was vertible, or was mutable ; these persons the apostolic and catholic church anathematizes.

This council was called on account of the views of the Trinity broached by Arius, a presbyter of Alexandria, which denied the absolute consubstantiality, coequality, and divinity of Father, Son and Holy Ghost, though he admitted the personality and divine nature of each.

The creed thus adopted was declared by these various representatives of churches in Asia, Africa and Europe, to be that which had invariably been the doctrine of the Catholic Church, from the very age, and by the very teaching of the Apostles themselves.

In his historical epistle to his own church of Cesarèa, Eusebius unequivocally states, that the Nicene Fathers avowedly proceeded in their definition of sound christian doctrine, on this principle : "As," says he, "we have received from the Bishops, our predecessors, both in our first catechumenical instruction, and, afterwards, at the time of our baptism ; and as we have learned from the Holy Scriptures ; and as, both in our Presbyterate, and in our Episcopate itself, we have both believed and taught, this also, now believing, we expound to your faith."\*

\*Eusebius introduced a creed, or confession of faith, to the Council assembled at Nice. The creed is as follows :

"I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, the Maker of all things visible and invisible, and in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Word of God, God

Concerning which things, we firmly pronounce, anathematizing every godless heresy, both that they thus are; and that we thus think; and, again, that we have always thus thought; and yet, additionally, that we will insist upon this faith, even until death. Furthermore, in the presence of God Almighty, and our Lord Jesus Christ, we testify, that ever since we knew ourselves, we have always, from our heart and from our soul, thus thought, respecting these matters; and that we now think the same; and that we speak truly. For, by sure demonstrations, we are able to show, and to persuade you, that in times past also, we thus believed and preached. This faith, accordingly, having been by us expounded, there was no room for contradiction."

Hence, the Nicene fathers alleged, *as a notorious fact*, that they propounded no doctrine, save what they themselves had learned in the course of their catechumenical institution; save what had been handed down to them from their predecessors; save what they had always taught to their several flocks during the times of their Presbyterate and their Episcopate. Into the more ancient creed, the single word *consubstantial* they acknowledge themselves to have introduced: and this addition they avowedly and openly made, for the purpose of effectually meeting the endless subterfuges of the Arians.

But, though the precise word *consubstantial* might not hitherto have appeared in any symbol formally adopted by the whole Catholic church, the doctrine set forth in that word was

of God, Light of Light, Life of Life, the only begotten Son, the first born of every creature, begotten of God the Father before all the worlds: by whom all things were made; who, for our salvation, was incarnate, and lived among men, and suffered and rose again the third day, and returned to the Father, and will come again in glory to judge the quick and dead. I believe also in one Holy Ghost, believing that each of these has a being and existence, the Father really the Father, the Son really the Son, and the Holy Ghost really the Holy Ghost. As our Lord, when he sent his disciples to preach, said, Go and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and the Holy Ghost: concerning whom I affirm, that I hold and think in this manner, and that *I long ago held thus*, and shall hold so until death, and perish in this faith, anathematizing every impious heresy. I declare in the presence of Almighty God, and our Lord Jesus Christ, that I have held all these sentiments from my heart and soul, from the time that I know myself; and that I now think and express them sincerely, being able to show by demonstration, and to persuade you, that my belief was thus, and my preaching likewise, in time past."

Eusebius was born about the year 270, so that a creed which he recited at his baptism would carry us back to at least ten years before the end of the third century; and though we are not bound to suppose that this creed was actually recited, word for word, by Eusebius, at the time of his baptism, we must at least believe that the doctrines contained in it were in accordance with those which every catechumen was expected to possess, at the end of the third century. The words of Eusebius might allow us to refer to a still earlier period.

distinctly propounded in the older universally recognized symbols. Accordingly, they themselves adduced one of those ancient symbols, as containing the theological system handed down to them from their predecessors.

Their assertion, as expressed in their own precise words, runs in manner following: "This is the apostolic and blameless faith of the church; which faith, ultimately derived from the Lord himself, through the apostles, and handed down from our forefathers to their predecessors, the church religiously preserves and maintains the same, both now and forever: inasmuch as the Lord said to the disciples—Go and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."\*

Thus, says Mr. Faber, in two several passages, we have the attestation of full three hundred responsible individuals, collected out of all parts of the world, little more than three centuries after the christian era, and little more than two centuries after the death of the apostle John, to a naked historical fact: the fact, namely, that the doctrines maintained in the first council of Nice, were the doctrines which they themselves had always taught, which, in the course of their catechumenical institution they had learned from predecessors, which they had openly professed at the time of their baptism, which, in the several lines of their respective churches, had invariably been handed from one spiritual generation to another, which had been received on the authority of the apostles, and which the apostles had ultimately derived from the Lord himself.

How more than three hundred men could have ventured to hazard such an assertion, unless the facts affirmed were almost universally admitted, and how otherwise such an assertion could have completely escaped contradiction, may be deemed extraordinary, and indeed impossible. It must, therefore, be regarded an established fact, that the Trinitarian doctrine was held by nearly all the churches, when the controversy respecting it first began. Alexander mentions only three bishops, five presbyters, and six deacons, who supported Arius in his heresy; and without supposing these persons to have been actuated by improper motives, (a suspicion which is more than insinuated against some of them,) it is only reasonable to decide, that the sentiments of so small a minority are not to be weighed against the deliberate declaration of the whole catholic church.

\*Gelas. Cyric. Hist. Council Nic. prim, lib. ii., c. 23. Labb. Council, vol. ii., p. 224.

This creed, it will also be remembered, was adopted after a long and careful inquiry and discussion. "All things," said the Emperor Constantine, in his circular epistle to the churches, "obtained a suitable examination."\* He makes the same assertion in his particular epistle to the Church of Alexandria. "All things which might seem to give any handle for dispute or dissension, were argued and accurately examined."† On this assertion of the Emperor, the remark of the historian Socrates runs as follows: "Constantine, indeed, wrote these things to the people of Alexandria, signifying that the definition of the faith was made, not lightly, nor at pure hazard; but they laid it down with much inquiry and examination; and not that some things were mentioned, while other things were suppressed; but that all things were agitated, whatsoever were meet to be spoken for the establishment of the dogma; and that the definition was not made lightly; but that it was preceded by an accurate discussion."‡ Here then is proof positive that in A. D. 325, the Trinitarian doctrine was, beyond the possibility of contradiction, the almost universal doctrine of the christian church, and declared to have been such from the beginning. In confirmation of this position, we may, however, present many strong and conclusive arguments.

1. It will here be proper, as our first line of argument, to introduce the testimony afforded by the heathen, as to the opinions at this period, and previously, entertained in the christian church. From the very nature of the objections constantly put forward by the heathen, it is evident that they regarded, and that the christians admitted, the worship of Christ, as God essentially with the Father, to be a fundamental part of the faith and practice of christians.

These objections, as given by Arnobius, A. D. 303, are thus stated: "The gods" as Arnobius represents the pagan enemies of the gospel as saying, "are not angry at you christians, because you worship the omnipotent God. But they are indignant: both because you contend that one who was born a man, and who was put to death by the ignominious punishment of crucifixion, is God; and because you believe him still to survive, and because you adore him with daily supplications."§ Now the answer made to this charge by Arnobius in part, after a

\*Euseb. de. vit. Constant. lib. ii., c. 17.

†Socrat. Hist. Eccles. lib. i., c. 9.

‡Ib.

§Arnob. adv. gent. lib. i., pp. 19, 20. Lugdum, Batar, 1651.

sarcastic allusion to the Gentile deities, is this: "You tell us that we worship one who was born a man, \* \* \* \* \*. Now, even if it were true that we did worship a mere man, yet, on account of all the blessings which we have derived from him, he might, on your own principles, well deserve to be styled a divinity. But, since he is God in reality, and without the slightest ambiguity or doubt, do you imagine us inclined ever to deny that he is worshipped by us in the highest possible degree, and that he is called the President of our community? \* \* \* \* \* Some one, maddened and enraged, will say: what then—is that Christ God? Yes, we answer, and God of the very innermost potency. We further profess, however it may irritate unbelievers, that for ends of the last importance, he was sent to us by the Supreme Sovereign. He was the high God; God radically and essentially. From unknown realms, by the Prince of the universe, he was sent, God, God the Saviour."

We find the same familiar allegation urged again and again, almost to absolute satiety, by the Epicurean Celsus, who flourished about the middle of the second century; and his testimony is peculiarly valuable, not only for its antiquity, but also because, like that of the Pagan in Arnobius, it unequivocally tends to show, that the christians of that period supposed their Lord to be God essentially.

"Well, therefore," says Origen, in his reply to Celsus and to his fictitious Jew, "do we censure the Jews for not deeming Him to be God, who is by the Prophets so often testified of, as being the great power and God, according to the God and Father of all things. For we assert, that, in the Mosaic cosmogony, the Father addressed to Him the command, Let there be light,—and Let there be a firmament,—and whatsoever other things God commanded to be made. He moreover said to him: Let us make man after our own image, and our likeness; and THE WORD, having these commands, did all the things the Father enjoined him. But we speak thus, not as separating the Son of God from the man Jesus; for, after the economy, the soul and the body of Jesus became most intimately one with the word of God."\*

"On the whole," says Origen, "since he (Celsus) objects to us, I know not how often, concerning Jesus; that from a mortal body we esteem him to be God, and that in doing so, we conceive to act piously; it were superfluous, so much having

\*Orig. Cont Cels, lib. i., p. 54.

already been said, to give him any further answer: yet, let these objectors know, that this person, whom, with full persuasion, we believe to be from the beginning, God and the Son of God, is the very Word, and the very Wisdom, and the very Truth; and we assert, that this mortal body, and the human soul in him, not only by fellowship, but likewise by absolute union and commixture, having participated of his divinity, have passed into the Deity."†

It will be observed, says Faber, that the allegations of Celsus, while they are throughout, constructed upon the express ground that Christ was believed to be strictly and properly the Supreme God, respect not only a few visionary individuals, but the whole collective body of the Church. *As such*, accordingly, they are understood and answered by Origen. Hence, whatever in the abstract we may think of the arguments on either side, we have the positive and admitted testimony of Celsus, to the evidently well-known and familiar circumstance,—that The Catholic Church, about the middle of the second century, or some fifty or sixty years after the death of St. John, held and maintained the essential divinity of Christ, viewed under the aspect of God the Word, the eternal Son of the Father, co-existent with him from the beginning, in the inseparable unity of the Godhead."

Similar proof of the Trinitarian views of the Church will be found in the similar objections of Trypho, the Jew, in his celebrated argument with Justin Martyr, some years earlier, *i. c.*, in the year 136; that is only thirty-six years after the death of the apostle John.

"With regard to what you assert," says Trypho, "that this Christ, in as much as he is God, pre-existed before all ages, and that he endured to be born a created man, and that he was not a mere man, born from man, in the ordinary course of nature; such an assertion, seems to me, not only a paradox, but even a downright absurdity." "To this," says Justin, "I replied: I know that my discourse is paradoxical, more especially to those of your race, who were never willing, either to understand or to perform the things of God. And Trypho said: You attempt to show a matter incredible and well nigh impossible,—that God endured to be born, and to become a man. My reply was: If I attempt to show this by mere human arguments, there were no need that you should bear with me;

†Cels. lib. iii., pp. 135, 136. See also lib. ii., p. 100: lib. vii., p. 368: lib. viii., p. 404.

but, if I bring my proofs from repeated Scriptural authorities, you will then be convinced of hard-heartedness in regard to understanding the mind and the will of God.”\*

The exactly concurring testimony of Pliny, regularly founded upon the strictness of legal depositions, will bring this testimony within three years after the death of the apostle John; and in the next instance, will carry it back, even seventeen years before his death. For St. John died in the year 100; and from the Bithynian Nicomedia, in the year 103, was written the well known letter of Pliny to Trajan.

“Some of the Asiatic christians affirmed before me,” says Pliny, in his official report to Trajan, “that the sum total of their fault or error was this: On a stated day, they were wont to assemble together before sunrise, and alternately to sing among themselves a hymn to Christ, as to God.” On this evidence, says Faber, it is important to remark, that the persecutor does not speak from vague hearsay. He officially reports to the Emperor the depositions of the prisoners themselves, regularly taken down from their own mouths, at a public examination. On the face of the depositions, therefore, it appears that in the age of Trajan, at the very beginning of the second century, and therefore, immediately after the death of St. John, the Catholic Church, in her ordinary stated assemblies, and through the medium of her familiar appointed ritual, was regularly accustomed to worship Christ as God. This divine adoration of Christ as God prevailed, it will be observed, not in some remote corner of the world which might have been less under the apostle’s superintendence, but in a province of Asia Minor, which may justly be deemed to have specially appertained to his own Patriarchate.

Nor yet, is even such the whole result of the evidence now under consideration. Pliny tells the Emperor, that of the persons who were brought before him, and who all made the deposition in question, some professed to have abjured Christ, or have ceased to be christians, three years; some more than three years; and some even twenty years, previous to their appearance at his tribunal.† Our evidence, therefore, now specifies, on the personal knowledge of the deponents, that full seventeen years before the death of St. John, no less than three years after it, the Catholic Church, in the apostle’s own immedi-

\*Justin, Dial. Cum. Trypho, Oper., p. 228.

†Plin. Epist., lib. x., epist. 97.



ate jurisdiction, was liturgically accustomed to worship Christ as God."

"How *numerous*, moreover," says Eusebius, "are the hymns and the songs of the brethren, written by the faithful, from the beginning, which celebrate Christ the Word of God, ascribing to him divinity."† Such hymns, as we learn from Origen, still continued to be used by the faithful, in the middle of the third century. "We recite hymns," says he, "to the alone God, who is over all, and to his only begotten Son, God the Word; and thus we hymn God and his only begotten."‡

The faith of the primitive church is also attested by the early apologies. In the composition of these works, some accredited champion of the common faith stepped forth: and appearing as the acknowledged representative of his brethren, described and vindicated, in the general name of the Church, those doctrines which, by common consent, were universally taught and believed. In the same class with the ancient Apology, may be fitly arranged all evidence of a kindred description.

According to this arrangement, let us now first hear Arnobius, who flourished about the year 303, and who has left us a controversial work in defence of christianity against Paganism. "If Christ were God, they object: why was he put to death after the manner of a man?" To this I reply: Could that Power, which is invisible, and which has no bodily substance, introduce itself into the world, and be present at the councils of men, in any other way, than by assuming some integument of more solid matter, which, even to the dullest eyesight, might be capable of visibility? He assumed, therefore, the form of man, and shut up his power under the similitude of our race, in order that he might be viewed and seen; in order that he might utter words and teach; in order that he might execute all these matters, for the sake of performing which he had come into the world, by the command and disposition of the highest Sovereign. "But they further object, that Christ was put to death after the manner of a man." \* \* \* \* \* Not in absolute strictness of speech, Christ himself, I reply: for that which is divine, cannot be liable to death; nor can that which possesses the attribute of perfect unity and simplicity, fall asunder by the dissolution of destruction. Who, then, was seen to hang upon the cross? Who was the person that died? Doubtless,

†Euseb. Hist. Eccles., lib. v., c. 28.

‡Orig. Cont. Cels., lib. viii., p. 422.

the human being, whom he had put on, and whom he himself bore in conjunction with his own proper self.”\*

We may next hear the official letter addressed to Paul of Samosata, by the fathers of the Council of Antioch, in the year 269.

“This, the begotten Son, the only begotten Son, who is the image of the invisible God; begotten before the whole creation; the Wisdom, and the Word, and the Power of God; who existed before the worlds; not by mere foreknowledge, but in substance and in person, God, the Son of God; him having known, both in the old and in the new covenant, we confess, and we preach,” &c.

From the public letter of the Antiochian Fathers, let us pass to the Elenchus and Apology of Dionysius of Alexandria, as we find some fragments of that work preserved by Athanasius, A. D. 260.

“There never was a time when God was not a Father.” \* \* \* \* \* “Christ, in as much as he is the Word, and the Wisdom, and the Power, always existed. For God did not at length beget a Son, as being originally ungenerative of these; but only the Son was not of himself; for he derives his being from out of the Father,” &c. “He, then, is the eternal Son of the eternal Father, in as much as he is light from light. For, since there is a Father, there is also a Son. But, if there were no Son, how, and of whom could the Father be a Father? Both, however, exist; and both exist eternally.”

Contemporary with Dionysius of Alexandria, was Dionysius of Rome. Part of a controversial work, written by this author against the patripassianising Sabellians, has been preserved by Athanasius. “I hear,” he says, “that there are among you some teachers of the Divine word, who run into an error diametrically opposite to that of Sabellius. For he blasphemously asserts the Son to be identical with the Father: but they, in a manner, set forth three Gods in three alien essences altogether separate from each; thus dividing the sacred unity. Now, the divine Word must inevitably be united with the God of all things; and the Holy Ghost must inevitably cohere and dwell in the Deity. Thus is it altogether necessary, that the divine Trinity should unite and coalesce in one, as it were in a certain head, namely, the Almighty God of the universe.”

\*Arnor. Adv. Gent., lib. i., pp. 37, 38. See also lib. i., p. 41.

Cyprian was elected bishop of Carthage, A. D. 248, and suffered martyrdom in 258. In the numerous writings put forth in this interval, he has much that bears on our subject. I only quote a few passages.

"The Lord says, I and the Father are one thing. And again, concerning the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost, it is written, And these three are one thing."\* "The Lord, after his resurrection, sending forth his disciples, instructed and taught them how they ought to baptize, saying: Go, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost. He insinuates the Trinity, in whose sacrament the nations should be baptized." "How, then," he asks, "do some assert, both without the Church and against the Church, that a Gentile, provided he be baptized anywhere, and any how, in the name of Christ, can obtain remission of sins; when Christ himself commanded that the nations should be baptized in the full and united Trinity?"†

Hippolytus, the pupil of Ireneus, who received his theology from the apostle John, through the medium of Polycarp, flourished about the year 220. He asks, "Why was the temple desolated? Because the Jews put to death the Son of the Benefactor: for he is co-eternal with the Father. This, then, is the Word, who was openly shown to us. Wherefore we behold the incarnate Word; we apprehend the Father through him: we believe in the Son: we adore the Holy Ghost."‡

"The Father," says this same writer, "is indeed one: but, there are two persons, because here is also the Son; and the third person is the Holy Spirit: for the Father commands; the Son obeys; the Holy Spirit teaches. The Father is over all; the Son is through all; the Holy Spirit is in all. We cannot understand the one God, otherwise than as we truly believe in the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit."

Tertullian, A. D. 200, composed, in the name of the suffering Church at large, a public Apology, addressed to the reigning Emperors. In this he says: "the Word, we say, was produced out of God; and, in his prolation, was generated from the unity of substance; therefore, he is called both God and The Son: for God is a Spirit, \* \* \* \* \*; what hath proceeded from God, is both God, and the Son of God; and they two are one God."

\*Cyprian, de Unit. Eccles. Oper., vol. i., p. 109.

†Cyprian, Epist. lxxiii.

‡Hippol. Cont. Noet. § xii., Oper. vol. ii., pp. 14, 15.

From the controversial works of this author, it were easy to produce testimonies to the same effect, enough to fill a volume. But these will suffice.

We now adduce the testimony of Clement, of Alexandria. This ancient Father professed to be a scholar of Pantoenus: who, by some of the early theologians, is said to have been a disciple of the apostles; and who, doubtless, conversed with the Fathers denominated Apostolical. Clement is thought to have died about the year 220; and those who had been taught by the apostles might have been alive in the year 150. "Because," he says, "the Word was from above, he both was and is the Divine principle of all things. This Word, the Christ, was both the cause of our original existence, for he was God; and also the cause of our well-existence, for this very Word hath now appeared unto men, he alone being both God and man." \* \* \* \* \* Believe, then, O, man, in him who is both man and God; believe, O, man, in the living God, who suffered and who is adored.\*

From the attestation of Clement of Alexandria, we may proceed to that of Ireneus, of Lyons, the scholar of Polycarp, the disciple of the apostle John. This, we shall find in the controversial work, which, with the approbation of the Catholic Church, that eminent writer, about the year 175, published against the existing heresies. "Man," he says, "was formed according to the likeness of God; and he was fashioned by his hands. That is to say, he was fashioned through his Son, and through his Spirit: to whom also he said, Let us make man."† "Therefore, in all, and through all, there is one God, the Father, and one Word, and one Son, and one Spirit, and one faith and salvation to all who believe in him."‡ "With him, *i. e.*, God, are ever present, his Word and his Wisdom, his Son and his Spirit, through whom, and in whom, he freely and spontaneously made all things; to whom, likewise, he spoke, when he said, Let us make man after our own image and likeness."§ "Man was made and fashioned after the image and likeness of God, who is uncreated: the Father approving: the Son ministering and forming: the Spirit nourishing and augmenting."\*\*

Let us now proceed still higher, in the list of primitive writers, and adduce the testimony of Athenagoras. This writer

\*Clem. Alex. Protreps. Oper. p. 66.

†Iren. Adv. haer., lib. iv., c. 8, p. 237.

‡Ib. c. 14, § 6, p. 242.

§Ib. c. 37, § 2, p. 266.

\*\*Iren. Adv. haer., lib. iv., c. 75, § 3, p. 310.

lived contemporaneously with Irenæus. His Apology or Legation is thought to have been addressed to the Emperors Marcus Antoninus and Lucius Aurelius Commodus.

“For by him, and through him, were all things made, the Father and the Son being one; since the Son is in the Father and the Father in the Son, through the unity and power of the Spirit. The Son of God is the Mind and the Word of the Father.”† In this he says, “That *we* are not Atheists, has been sufficiently demonstrated by me; inasmuch as *we* worship one unproduced and eternal and invisible and impassable Being, who, by the mind and reason alone, can be comprehended, and who, through the agency of his own Word, created and arranged and compacted the universe; for *we* receive also the Son of God.”

“Who, then,” says Athenagoras, “would not wonder that we should hear ourselves called Atheists, when we profess our belief in God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, shewing both their power in unity, and their distinction in order.‡ To this only do we strenuously apply ourselves, that we may know God and the Word, who is from him; what is the unity of the Son with the Father; what is the communion of the Father with the Son; what is the Spirit; what is the unity and the distinction of these who are such; inasmuch as the Spirit, and the Son, and the Father, are united.”§ “We say that there is a God, and the Son his Word, and the Holy Ghost, united in power; namely, the Father, the Son, the Spirit. For the Son is the Mind, the Word, the Wisdom, of the Father: and the Spirit is an emanation from him, as light flows from fire. But, if I thus accurately set forth *the doctrine which is received among us*, do not wonder. For lest you should be carried away by the silly, vulgar opinion which is entertained of *us*, and in order that you may be able to know the *real truth*, I thus carefully *study accuracy*.”

Our next witness is Melito, of Sardis, who lived about the year 170. Of his Apology, nothing remains save a fragment, but that fragment abundantly indicates the doctrine and practice of the Christians, his contemporaries. “We are worshippers,” says he, “not of insensible stones, but of the only God who is before all things, and above all things; and we are

†Ateenag. Legat. pro. Christian, c. ix., pp. 37, 38, Oxon. 1706.

‡Athen. Legat. c. x., p. 40.

§Athen. Legat. cxi., p. 46.

worshippers likewise of his Christ, truly God, the Word before the worlds.”\*

In the next year, 168, lived Theophilus, of Antioch, who will be our next witness. He wrote a defence of christianity, in three books, addressed to Antolycus; and from this work, we learn that the christian Church of that age maintained the doctrine of a Trinity of persons in the Deity. “The three days,” says he, “before the creation of the sun and moon, are types of the Trinity, God and his Word and his Wisdom.”† “In the person of God, the Son came into the garden, and conversed with Adam.”‡

Still earlier flourished Tatian, who lived about the year 165, and who, in his Oration against the Greeks, which was written before the death of Justin, says: “We do not speak foolishly, nor do we relate mere idle tales, when we affirm that God was born in the form of man.”§

From Tatian we pass to Justin Martyr, whose conversion occurred prior to the year 136, and whose Apologies, therefore, will exhibit the received doctrine of the Church, during the earliest part of the second century. “Him, the Father says; and his Son who came forth from him; and the prophetic Spirit; these we worship and we adore, honouring them in word and in truth, and, to every person who wishes to learn, ungrudgingly delivering them as *we ourselves* have been taught. Atheists, then, we are not, inasmuch as we worship the Creator of the universe; and having learned that Jesus Christ is the Son of him who is truly God, and holding him in the second place, we will shew that, in the third degree, we honour also the prophetic Spirit, in conjunction with the Word.\*\* For the Word, who is born from the unborn and ineffable God, we worship and we love, next in order after God the Father; since, also, on our account, he became man, in order that, being a joint partaker of our sufferings, he might also effect our healing.”††

Two Apologies by Quadratus and Aristides, addressed to the Emperor Adrian, in the year 125, are unfortunately lost. But they are spoken of, both by Eusebius and Jerome, as being “defences of the worship of God which prevails among,” and

\*Melit. Apol. See above, Book I., chap. 4, § x.

†Theoph. Ad. Autol., lib. ii., c. 15.

‡Ibid., c. 22.

§Tatian Orat. Cont. Graec., § xxxv., p. 77, Worth.

\*\*Justin Apol. 1, Oper. pp. 46, 47.

††Ibid., 11 Oper., p. 40.

“as conducted by, christians,” “as setting forth the right principles of our dogmatic theology,” and as being imitated by Justin Martyr.‡

Ignatius, who is our next witness, was a disciple of the apostle John, who died in the year 100, and he suffered martyrdom at Rome, either in the year 107, or (as some think,) in the year 116. “There is” he says, “one physician, fleshly and spiritual, made and not made. God became incarnate, true life in death, both from Mary and from God, first passible, and then impassible.” “Our God Jesus Christ was conceived by Mary according to the economy of God, from the seed indeed of David; but from the Holy Ghost.” “Permit me to be an imitator of the passion of my God. I glorify Jesus Christ, the God who has thus endued you with wisdom.” “Expect him who is beyond all time, the eternal, the invisible; even him who on our account became visible; him, who is intangible and impassible; who yet, on our account, suffered; who yet, on our account, endured after every manner.”§

The very short Epistle of Polycarp to the Philippians, which alone has survived him, is chiefly practical. Hence we cannot expect there to find any very precise doctrinal statement. Yet, even in this document, which appears to have been written almost immediately after the martyrdom of his friend and fellow disciple Ignatius, about the year 107, we may observe an incidental recognition of the divine nature of our Saviour. “May the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; and may he himself, the eternal High-priest, the Son of God, Jesus Christ; build you up in faith and truth, and grant unto you a lot and portion among his saints, and to us also along with you, and to all who are under heaven, and who hereafter shall believe in our Lord Jesus Christ and in his Father, who raised him up from the dead.”\*

We can as little expect, from the plan of their composition, any very copious and precise statement of doctrine in either of the two epistles to the Corinthians, written from 67 to 96, by the venerable Clement of Rome; yet, in both of them, do the recognised opinions of the early Church show themselves with abundantly sufficient distinctness, and by one to whom St. Paul himself bears testimony, as being one of his fellow-labourers, whose names are in the book of life. “Ye were all humble-

‡Euseb. B. IV., c. 3: B. I., c. 2, § 2. Heer. Script. Eccl., Ep. lxxxiv.

§Ignat. Epist. ad. Polyc., § iii., p. 40.

\*Polycarp. Epist. ad. Philipp., § xii. Cotel. Patr. Apost., vol. ii., p. 191.

minded, in no wise boastful, subject rather than subjecting, giving rather than receiving. Being satisfied with the supplies which God has furnished for your journey, and diligently attending to his words, you receive them into your very breast and bowels; and before your eyes were his sufferings. Thus was there given unto all, a deep and glorious peace, and an insatiable desire of doing good; and, over all, there was a full effusion of the Holy Ghost."† "For Christ is of the number of the humble-minded, not of those who exalt themselves above his flock. The sceptre of the majesty of God, our Lord Jesus Christ came not in the pride of pomp and circumstance, though he was able to have done so; but with humbleness of mind, as the Holy Ghost spake concerning him. Ye see, beloved, what an example has been given unto us. For, if the Lord bore himself thus humbly, what ought we to do, who have come under the yoke of his grace?"\*

Similar phraseology occurs in the very ancient Epistle, which is ascribed to the Apostle Barnabas, but which really seems to have been written by a Hebrew christian of that name, about the year 137. "When he chose his apostles," says this writer, "who were about to preach his gospel, then he manifested himself to be the Son of God. For, unless he had come in the flesh, how could we men, when looking upon him, have been saved? For they, who look even upon the perishable sun, which is the work of his hands, are unable to gaze upon its beams. Wherefore, the Son of God came in the flesh."§

The second Epistle of Clement opens with what is equivalent to a direct assertion of Christ's Godhead: "Brethren," says he, "we ought thus to think concerning Jesus Christ, as concerning God, as concerning the Judge of both the quick and the dead. And we ought not to think small things concerning our salvation: for, in thinking small things concerning him, we are hoping to receive small things."‡

We have thus been enabled, in the first place, by the testimony of the heathen, to establish the doctrine of the Trinity, as having been the doctrine of christians up to the very age of the Apostles.

A second line of argument, by which the Trinitarian views of the early christians has been established, is by the public

†Clem. Rom. Epist., 1, ad. Corinth., § ii., Patr. Cotel., vol. i., pp. 147, 148.

\*Clem. Rom. Epist. I., ad. Corinth., § xvi., Patr. Apost. Cotel. vol. i., pp. 156, 157.

§Barnab. Epist. Cathol., § v., Patr. Apost. Cotel. vol. v., pp. 15, 16.

‡Clem. Rom. Epist. ii., ad. Corinth., § i., p. 185.



apologies, epistles, and other documents published by them, in their name, and with their concurrence, during the same period.

A THIRD line of proof that the doctrine of the early christian church was Trinitarian, will be found in the creeds which remain.

These creeds were most familiarly known and received, as indeed their very name imports, by the whole assembly of the baptized, whether ministers or people. They formed also the basis of lectures to the catechumens, and were publicly recited at the time of baptism. Such being the case, as the creed of each church was communicated to every catechumen, and was received by every catechumen, and at the font, in answer to the interrogation of the Bishop, or Presbyter, was recited by every catechumen, if adult, or by the parents, if a child. It, of course, and by absolute necessity, expressed the faith of every baptized member of the christian church.

When any individual was suspected of holding doctrines contrary to the creed, he was called to account and if found guilty, was solemnly excommunicated. Thus, when Theodotus, at the close of the second century, attempted to propagate, at Rome, the doctrine that Christ was a mere man, and that there is no distinction of persons in the unity of the Godhead, he was called to account by Victor, the Bishop of that city, in order that he might have an opportunity of vindicating or explaining his conduct. This, however, he could not do; for he persisted in maintaining the scheme of doctrine which he had taken up; and the consequence was, that, having avowedly departed from the well-known faith of the church, he was, by excommunication, visibly separated from the society of the faithful.\*

But as we have examined these creeds, and presented their evidence in the chapter on the Baptismal Commission, we will not dwell on their invariable and concurrent testimony to the doctrine of the Trinity at this time.† We will only remark that Ireneus asserts the unity of the Catholic faith, as exhibited in its creeds, throughout the whole world; and the various symbols of the three first centuries, whether Latin or Greek, or African, fully bear him out in his assertion. For the most part, even their phraseology is the same; but, invariably, their arrangement and their doctrine are identical. Now, this is a mere naked fact, of which each individual may form a com-

\*Euseb. Hist. Eccles., lib. v., c. 28.

†See them fully collected, and historically presented, by Mr. Faber, vol. i., B. 1, chap. vi., pp. 156-193.

plete judgment. The doctrine taught in the Symbols, he may receive, or he may reject. But the bare fact itself will remain unaltered, whatever may be his own personal opinion, as to the abstract truth or falsehood of the doctrine in question, and must be considered an undeniable proof of the Trinitarianism of the church, up to the time when the earliest of these, "the creed of the Trinity," must be supposed to have existed, that is, the very age of the Apostles.

A FOURTH line of testimony in proof of the fact that the early christian Church believed the doctrine of the Trinity, is found in the earliest existing liturgies. As Bishop Bull well observes, all the ancient Liturgies extant, in whatever part of the world they may have been used, contain, under one modification or another, that solemn concluding Doxology to the Blessed Trinity, with which, in some form, every christian is so abundantly familiar: "Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost; both now and always, and to all eternity."\* This Doxology is evidently built upon that brief and most remotely ancient creed, which was familiarly denominated the Symbol of the Trinity: "I believe in God: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost." And the symbol of the Trinity again, is manifestly founded upon the formula of baptism enjoined and appointed by our Lord himself. Baptize them in, or into, the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.†

Now, although no liturgy was committed to writing until the fifth century, yet the primeval existence and public use of the Doxology has been fully determined by the concurrent attestation of the series of witnesses, all chronologically prior to the first Nicene Council. About the year 220, we may observe it employed by Hippolytus, as the most proper conclusion of his Treatise against Noetus.‡ About the year 200, Tertullian refers to it as a clear proof of the universal reception of the doctrine of Christ's divinity.|| About the year 194, we find it used by Clement of Alexandria.§ About the year 175, Ireneus incidentally remarks, that it was employed by the Catholic Church in the course of her ordinary thanksgivings. In the year 147, it was used at the stake by the venerable Polycarp, and at the same time it was attached by the collective members

\*Athanas. de. Virginit. Oper., vol. i., p. 829.

†Matt. xxviii: 19.

‡Cont. Noet., c. xviii., vol. 2, p. 20.

||De Spectat., p. 700.

§Clem. Alex. Poedag, lib. iii., c. 12, Oper. p. 266.

of the church of Smyrna, to the Epistle in which they communicated the account of his martyrdom.\* Finally, we have the direct attestation of Justin Martyr, that, in his days, the prayers and thanksgivings of the church invariably terminated with some one or other modification of it. "In all that we offer up," says he, "we bless the Creator of all things, through his Son Jesus Christ, and through the Holy Ghost."†

We now proceed to a FIFTH line of proof for the Trinitarianism of the primitive christian church. "Having observed," as Athanasius remarks, "the great wisdom of the Apostles, in not prematurely communicating the doctrine of Christ's divinity to those who were unprepared to receive it; the Church, from a very early period, adopted a mode of institution, reasonable and natural in itself, but singular on account of its attendant phraseology." During the first part of their theological education, therefore, to use the language of Faber, nothing more than the general truths of christianity were communicated to the catechumens; and so slowly was the divine light suffered to beam upon what Tertullian calls the preparatory schools of the auditors, that it was not until the very eve of their baptism, that its particular truths, viewed as universally depending upon one pre-eminent truth, were at length distinctly propounded. To their instruction in these particular truths, of which they had hitherto been kept, (so far as it was possible to keep them,) in a state of profound ignorance, were devoted the forty days which immediately preceded their baptism; and this studied concealment was rendered the more easy, because, in the primitive church, the sacrament of Baptism was administered only at the two great festivals of Easter and Whitsuntide.

"The institution of the Catechumens was spoken of as an initiation into the christian Mysteries; and the communication of what was deemed the pre-eminent, particular truth of Revelation, with its subordinate and dependent particular truths, was considered and technically mentioned as the final enunciation of the grand secret.

Mr. Faber adduces abundant evidence to prove that the secret of the mysteries was the doctrine of the Trinity, running into the doctrine of the Incarnation. To this secret, Ireneus, the scholar of Polycarp, the disciple of St. John, who wrote in the year 175, but who was born in the year 97, alludes: "This," says he, "is THE CHRIST, THE SON OF GOD. Such is the mys-

\*Epist. Eccles. Smyrna, § xiv., Patr. Apost. Cotel., vol. ii., p. 201.

†Justin Apol. i. Oper. p. 77.

tery, which Paul declares to have been manifested to him by revelation; namely, that he who suffered under Pontius Pilate, is the Lord and King, and God and Judge of all, receiving power from him who is God of all, since he became subject unto death, even the death of the cross."

To this testimony may be added that of the ancient author of the Epistle to Diognetus; whether he were Justin Martyr himself, or whether (according to his own descriptive statement of his character,) he were some apostolical man, a contemporary of Justin Martyr. In the course of a very long, and very fine passage, while this writer styles the christian worship of God the mystery which man can never discover, he teaches us, when largely treating of the nature and offices of Christ, that "the Word, though to-day called a Son, existed, nevertheless, eternally."

Such was the doctrine communicated from a very early period, to every catechumen, before he was admitted to the sacrament of Baptism,—certainly as early as the age of Justin and Ireneus.\*

A FIFTH line of testimony in proof of the fact that the early christians believed in the doctrine of the Trinity, is found in the unanimous primitive interpretation of those texts, the true import of which is now litigated between modern Trinitarians and modern Anti-Trinitarians.

If the primitive church, up to the Apostolic age, were Anti-Trinitarian, the system of Scriptural interpretation uniformly adopted by the Fathers of that church, must plainly have been Anti-Trinitarian likewise; and conversely, if the primitive church, up to the Apostolic age, were Trinitarian; the system of Scriptural interpretation uniformly adopted by the Fathers of that church, must also have been Trinitarian; since a church collectively cannot hold one set of doctrines, while all the leading teachers, and writers, and divines, and bishops, in direct and full communion with it, openly and avowedly maintain quite another set of doctrines. The unanimous system of exposition adopted by the Fathers of the three first centuries, is evidence as to what system of exposition was familiarly received in the church of the three first centuries, as setting forth the undoubted mind of Holy Scripture. For, though the insulated exposition of an insulated writer, might justly be deemed nothing more than the unauthoritative speculation of

\*See Faber, vol. i., B. I., ch. viii., pp. 206-230.

his own private judgment; it is morally impossible that all the writers of a church should be unanimous in their system of Scriptural interpretation; if, in point of systematic Scriptural interpretation, the church itself, collectively, differed from them utterly, and radically, and essentially.

“So far as my own reading and observation extend,” says Mr. Faber, “the early fathers invariably and unanimously interpret the texts now litigated between Trinitarians and Anti-Trinitarians, not after the mode recommended by the latter, but precisely after the mode adopted by the former. In no one instance, which, in the course of a tolerably wide investigation, I have been able to discover, do they ever interpret a single text, so as to bring out the result, that *that* text does not teach the doctrine of the Trinity, or the doctrine of Christ’s Godhead. If, among the Fathers of the three first centuries there be an exception, I can only say, that I have inadvertently overlooked it. To this general rule, I myself, at least, am unable to produce a single exception.”\* This argument acquires a tenfold force, when we consider that heretics, in order to get rid of these texts, rejected the Books of Scripture, in which they are found,† and also the strict harmony of the present line of evidence, with all the other lines of evidence which have now in review successively passed before us; and that force, so far as I can judge, becomes absolutely irresistible, when we bear in mind that the present position is established, not merely by a single testimony, or by a single class of testimonies, but by a concurrence of numerous distinct classes of testimonies, all vouching for the same fact, and all tending to the same purpose. As, in regard to Scripture, the early Doctors expounded, so, in point of fact, without any contradiction, on the part of christians, did the enemies of christianity allege; so, from generation to generation, did the primitive christians worship; so, with one mouth, to be the universally received doctrine of the Church

\*See Faber, 1 B. I., ch. ix., pp. 231-244, and App. I., pp. 299-377, where these texts and the explanations are given at length.

†Instead of the litigated texts being read by these religionists, without suggesting to them any such notions of the divinity or the pre-existence of Christ, as are now supposed to be clearly contained in them, the truth is, that they allowed to those texts no voice whatever in the decision of the question, whether Christ was a mere man, or whether he is very God, mysteriously united to very man; for they cut the matter short by the compendious process of utterly rejecting the whole of St. Paul’s writings, and all the Gospels, save that of St. Matthew, or rather what they pleased to call that of St. Matthew. So incorrigible, indeed, were the Ebionites, in their error, and so completely did they proceed upon the plan of total rejection, rather than on the plan of perverse misinterpretation, that they actually disregarded even Apostolical authority itself.

Catholic, did the ancient apologists profess; so, with rare and striking concord, did all the early creeds or symbols propound; so were all the ancient liturgies constructed; so were all the catechumens instituted. If the church of the first ages had been Anti-Trinitarian, this accordance, in so many different points, could never have existed. By all the laws of evidence, therefore, the inevitable result from it is, that the primitive church, up to the age of the Apostles, held and taught, as vitally essential truths, the doctrines of the Trinity and of the Godhead of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

A SIXTH line of testimony, in corroboration of the first that the early christians were believers in the doctrine of the Trinity, is found in the argument from prescription and universality, as this was urged by them. About the year 175, when the then aged Ireneus wrote; and about the year 200, when Tertullian flourished; that is to say, about 75 years, and about 100 years after the death of St. John, when, through chronological necessity, and agreeably to positive attestation, no particular church could have been separated from the Apostolic age, by more than two intervening steps of communication; ALL the then existing churches mutually in communion with each other, though variously deriving their succession from twelve different apostles, held precisely the same system of doctrine respecting the nature of the Deity, or respecting the mode in which the Deity exists; and, on this point, their harmony was such, that not a single church could be found which held any other system than what is now called Trinitarian. That is to say, it was a system which asserted the existence of the one Deity in three persons; and which maintained that the second of these three persons became incarnate, and appeared upon earth, as the man Christ Jesus. Such, however, is not the whole amount of the fact publicly appealed to by Ireneus and Tertullian. While, without a single exception, they all concurred in holding that peculiar doctrine, which is briefly denominated the doctrine of the Trinity; they all, moreover, without a single exception, concurred in declaring, that, through one, or at the most, through two intermediate channels, they had received this doctrine from some one or other of the twelve Apostles, up to whom they severally carried their ecclesiastical succession; that, the Rule of Faith, which propounded this doctrine, was ultimately derived from Christ himself, and that, as it was universal in point of reception, throughout all the provincial churches in mutual communion with each other, so it was questioned by

none save heretics, who, in parties of scattered individuals, had gone out from the great, and more ancient body of the Church Catholic.\*

Mr. Faber quotes, in confirmation of this position, Ireneus, Tertullian, Hegesippus, and urges in confirmation, all the previous lines of proof, and the fact that it never was denied, by the ancient heretics,† “and hence, all heretics, says Ireneus, are much later than the Bishops, to whom the Apostles delivered the churches.” “Whatever is first,” says Tertullian, “is true; whatever is later, is spurious.”

Now, when this argument was originally used, the fundamental fact, it will be observed, required no historical establishment. Without an effort, it was palpable and obvious to every individual throughout the entire world of christianity. Each person was himself an eyewitness. In the days of Ireneus and Tertullian, the fact of the universal Trinitarianism of the whole Catholic Church in all its mutually symbolizing and mutually communicating branches, no more demanded the formality of a grave historic demonstration, than the fact of the universal Trinitarianism of the entire reformed Church would now demand such a substantiation. Those two early Fathers appealed to what was then familiarly known to every christian; and upon the notorious fact, thus appealed to, they framed their celebrated argument, from universality and prescription.

A SEVENTH line of proof of the Trinitarianism of the early christians, is the certain connection which can be proved to subsist between that system of doctrine and the Apostles, as its first promulgators. Ireneus of Lyons, was born in the year 97; and he wrote or published his work against the Heresies of the Age, in the year 175. While a young man, as he himself teaches us, he was a pupil of Polycarp; which Polycarp was himself the disciple of the Apostles, and eminently so of their last survivor, the apostle St. John. Hence, though he actually wrote or published, not earlier than the year 175; yet his strictly proper evidence is, in truth, much more ancient; for, it may justly be deemed the personal evidence of his youth; that is to say, the personal evidence of a witness, who was living, and learning, and observing, about the year 120, or only about twenty years after St. John's departure. And hence, on the principle already laid down, the church of Lyons, over which

\*See *Iren. Adv. haer.*, lib. i., c. 2, pp. 34-36; lib. iii., c. 4, § 2, p. 172. *Tertul. de praescript. ad. haer.*, § 4, *Oper.*, p. 100.

†See vol. i., B. I., ch. x., pp. 245-271.

he presided as Bishop, stood, through his instrumentality, though toward the latter end of the second century, separated only by a single descent, from the Apostles themselves.

Let us again consider one of the several statements of doctrine made by Ireneus. Speaking of this doctrine of the Trinity, and its kindred topics, he says: "The Church, though dispersed through the whole world to the ends of the earth, hath received this Faith from the Apostles and their disciples. She believes in one God, the Father Almighty; who hath made the heavens and the earth, and the seas, and all things in them: And in one Jesus Christ, the Son of God; who became incarnate for our salvation: And in the Holy Ghost; who, through the prophets, preached the dispensations, and the advents, and the birth from the virgin, and the passion, and the resurrection from the dead, and the incarnate ascension to heaven of our beloved Lord Jesus Christ; and his coming from heaven in the glory of the Father, to recapitulate all things, and to raise up all flesh of all mankind, in order that to Jesus Christ, our Lord and God, and Saviour, and King, according to the good pleasure of the invisible Father, every knee may bow, of things in heaven and things on earth, and things under the earth: and in order that he may in all things execute just judgment." "Having," he adds, "received this declaration and this faith, the church, though scattered throughout the whole world, diligently guards it, as if inhabiting only a single house; and, in like manner, she believes these matters, as having one soul and the same heart; and she harmoniously preaches and declares and believes them, as possessing only one mouth. For through the world, there are indeed dissimilar languages; but the force of this tradition is one and the same. And neither do the churches, which are founded in Germany, believe otherwise, or deliver otherwise; nor do those, which are founded in the Iberias, or among the Celts, or in the East, or in Egypt, or in Libya, or in the central regions of the earth. But as God's creatures, the sun is one and the same in the whole world; so, likewise the preaching of the truth everywhere shines, and enlightens all men who are willing to come to the knowledge of the truth."\*

Such is the testimony of Ireneus: and that this was also taught by Polycarp, who formed the intervening link between Ireneus and the Apostles, Ireneus distinctly affirms. "Polycarp

\*Iren. Adv. haer. lib. i., c. 2, 3, pp. 34-36.



also," he says, "who was not only instructed by the Apostles, and conversed with many of them, but who was likewise by the Apostles made Bishop of the Church of Smyrna, in Asia: this Polycarp always taught us those things which he had learned from the Apostles themselves, which he also delivered to the church, and which alone are true. All the churches in Asia, and they who succeeded Polycarp, down to the present day, give testimony to these things.\*

Now, among the Asiatic churches thus appealed to, Polycarp had been a burning and a shining light, for the space of more than half a century; which period of more than half a century had expired only twenty-eight years previous to the making of the appeal on the part of Ireneus. Therefore, the churches of Asia, and the successors of Polycarp, could not possibly have then been ignorant as to the mere naked *fact* of what doctrines were really preached by Polycarp.

The justice of the appeal is however directly evinced by the testimony, both of Polycarp himself, and of the members of his church who witnessed his martyrdom, which has been already quoted, and by the testimony of Justin Martyr, whose conversion† took place shortly after the year 130, or but little more than thirty years subsequent to the death of St. John. Hence, the doctrinal testimony contained in any of his writings, is, in fact, the doctrinal testimony of the year 130; for, about that time it was, that Justin was catechetically instructed in the principles of christianity. About the year 130, therefore, the whole christian church, in doctrine and in worship, was avowedly Trinitarian.

The testimony of Justin Martyr, be it also observed, vouches for the yet additional fact, that the christians of that day were ready to deliver their faith and their practice to all who should wish to learn them, even as they themselves had been previously taught the same faith, and the same practice, by the regularly appointed catechists, their own ecclesiastically authorized instructors and predecessors. The whole body of christians, in the year 130, therefore, both themselves held, and were ready to teach to others, the doctrine and adoration of God, even the Father, and the Son, and the prophetic Spirit.

The conclusion to which we have thus been regularly brought, perfectly agrees with the testimony of Ireneus; and so far as I can judge, the final result, on the legitimate principles of his-

\*Iren. Adv. haer., lib. iii., c. 3, p. 171.

†See Faber, vol. i., B. I., ch. xi. pp. 272-286.

torical evidence, is the positive Apostolical antiquity of the doctrine of the Trinity.

There are many works in which the opinions of the early fathers on this doctrine will be found collated. Of these, the principal one was, *A Vindication of the worship of the Son and the Holy Ghost against the exceptions of Mr. Theophilus Lindsey, from Scripture and Antiquity*: by Thomas Randolph, D. D., President of C. C. C.; and Lady Margaret's Professor of Divinity, Oxford, 1775. Bishop Bull's works: 1. *Defence of the Licene Creed*. 2. *The Judgment of the Catholic Church of the three first centuries, concerning the necessity of believing that our Lord Jesus Christ is true God, asserted against M. Simon Episcopus and others*. 3. *The Primitive and Apostolical Tradition concerning the received doctrine in the Catholic Church of our Saviour Jesus Christ's Divinity, asserted and plainly proved against Daniel Zuicker, a Prussian, and his late disciples in England*. Of these, Dr. Burton's *Testimonies of the Ante-Nicene Fathers to the doctrine of the Trinity, and of the Divinity of the Holy Ghost*, which is already very scarce, is eminently full, candid and satisfactory.\* From this I will quote the following declaration: "The first question for inquiry is, whether the writers of the first three centuries were unanimous; whether one uniform system of belief concerning the Son and the Holy Ghost can be expected from their writings, or whether they opposed and contradicted each other. Even if we should adopt the latter conclusion, it would by no means follow that they held the Socinian or Unitarian notions. Pains have been taken to rescue some of them from an inclination to Arianism; and the present work may shew whether the attempt has not been successful; but there is not even a shadow of proof, that any one of these writers approach to the Socinian or

\*Dr. Burton's *Testimonies of the Ante-Nicene Fathers to the Doctrine of the Trinity, and of the Divinity of the Holy Ghost*, published in Oxford, 1831. It contains the names of the following writers: Ignatius, Polycarp, Justin Martyr, Athenagoras, Lucian, Ircneus, Clemens Alexandrinus, Tertullian, Hippolitus, Origen, Eppian, Novatian, Dionysius, Alexandriaus, Romanus, Theognostus, Alexander, Athanasius, Eusebius, Council of Nice. In every case, also, he gives the original, as well as the translation. See also his *Testimonies of the Ante-Nicene Fathers to the Divinity of the Son of God*.

Besides these distinct works on the subject, are the works of Dr. Waterland, in ten vols. 8 vo. Oxford, 1833, chiefly occupied with voluminous and full discussions, including the testimony of the Fathers, on the subject of the Trinity. See also Cary's *Testimonies of the Fathers of the first four centuries, to the doctrine of the XXXIX Articles, Art. 1*. Welchman on the same subject. Smith's *Testimony to the Messiah*, Appendix. *Suiceri Thesaurus*. Eccl. sub. nom. *τριαε*, &c. Hagenbach's *Hist. of Christian Doctrine*, vol. i., pp. 49, 50, 222, 123. And in a variety of other works.

Unitarian tenets. It will however be seen, that the Fathers of the first three centuries were perfectly unanimous. There are no signs of doubt, or dissension, in any of their writings. Some of them were engaged in controversy, while others merely illustrated Scripture, or applied themselves to practical theology. In all of them, we find that the same uniform mode of expression concerning the Son and the Holy Ghost. The testimony is collected with equal plainness from the casual and incidental remarks, as from the laboured conclusion of the apologist and the polemic."



# The Divinity of Christ.



A DISCOURSE

BY THE

REV. THOMAS SMYTH, D. D.



## THE DIVINITY OF CHRIST.

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*John xi:35.*—JESUS WEPT.

In all our meditations on the character and works of Jesus of Nazareth, we are to keep steadily in view his proper and essential divinity. Shorn of that divinity, Jesus is for us no Saviour. Without that divinity, we, professing christians, must all perish in our sins.

What is Jesus without Deity? a man 'tis true, according to the description given us in holy writ, of excessive sensibility, virtue, amiability—all that is kind, all that is to be commended; but, being not God incapable of answering for the sins of a world. To give effect to the christian dispensation, there must be the divinity of Jesus clearly proved, in order to stamp value on his ministry, in all that we profess to believe of his atonement; because there is in every human soul, however much man may endeavour to hide it from himself, a desire to be free from all iniquity, to transfer all guilt to some other being. Thus was it with the heathen, they laid their hands on the beasts prepared for immolation, believing in the imputation of guilt. Thus is it now-a-days with the Romanist; he imputes his sin to the priest, or to the sacrifices that are offered by the hands of that priest. While life lasts, while there is health, strength, prosperity, there may be an unconsciousness of guilt; but when all are past away, and when man is left to reason with his conscience alone, then must he look to some object, being or individual, to whom he may transfer his iniquities, and become saved.

When we consider our race, we are compelled to confess that man is a monster of sin. In every rank, every class, every nation, every State, man is a monster of iniquity. His crimes are fearful, they press his soul down to the very nethermost hell; and therefore, do we desire and long for the proof of Jesus' divinity. It may sound harsh and unjustifiable to say that man is, in every class and state and nation, a monster of iniquity. What is your work in watching over the education of man in his *infancy*? Is it not to counteract and crush the instinctive and precocious love of sin that develops itself in infancy? You find the children committed to your care as parents, or teachers ready for theft and falsehood; and your

labor is, to train them up in self-restraint, and ensure them the mastery over their own evil passions.

When the days of childhood are departed, what is *youth*? The same in moral disposition. Whenever the restraint and control of parent or guardian are removed, you find, that youth, liberated from every impediment to indulgence, rushes forth to the free gratification of sensual passion, to revel in the enjoyment of long desired but forbidden pleasures, withering and blasting many a fond hope once formed of better things, of happier results, from early moral discipline. And why? because the disposition of man's nature is to evil, and to "evil continually." Of the few who retain some sense of virtue for a while, after emancipation from the discipline of schools, who go to mingle with the world, how rarely do any prosper to the end in goodness! The great proportion of that few mixing with the world with an evil, a corrupt, a selfish, a covetous world, a world exercised to cunning, crafty, and accursed practises, learn all its wisdom, grow formed into its ways and habits, are bound up with it; and after having embraced its maxims as their creed, spend their days commercially, or professionally, or politically, in the accumulation of wealth, the increase of popularity, and the advancement of self, the Idol, Mammon, or rather that Idol self is worshipped; and then, when the Gospel is preached to such subjects of cool, deliberate worldliness, they condemn it. Imagine to yourselves, one of accomplished manners, as well as most amiable life,—bring such a one, for the first time into contact with the Gospel of Christ,—open to him the riches of God's love—he starts from you with shuddering abhorrence, as if a serpent had risen in his path, or as if Satan had stood before him: and why? Because the soul hates all the tender mercies of God, because it is fearfully corrupt; and where this abhorrence does not show itself, you observe a cool indifference, a scorn of all the statements, all the arguments, and all the entreaties of Holy Writ; so that man in his every condition—find him as you may, and visit him as you please, is a monster of iniquity.

Because of this truth, how desirable is it that the divinity of Christ may be clearly proved; that we may know him to be in all things adequate to bear the weight of our iniquities! Hence, then, we shall proceed to the examination of Christ's divinity, not in the form of controversy, but for the purpose of comfort and instruction. We shall turn merely to the passage before us, and from the whole occurrence there reported, deduce cer-



tain proofs of Christ's divinity, abounding with consolation to those who tremble lest that divinity should be merely an imagination, or theory, or fanciful vision, and abounding also with warnings and heart searching denunciations against any continuance in sin.

1st. We open this chapter, and the first proof of Christ's divinity that breaks on us from it, is *the fact of his prescience and providence*. When the disciples told Jesus that his friend Lazarus was sick he replied "this sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified thereby." Jesus knew beforehand that the sickness of Lazarus should not hold him in the hands of death; he knew before hand that his disease should eventuate in bringing glory to God; and it would also seem from the whole context, that by his providence Jesus had arranged, that the sickness should befall him at such a time, and take its regular course; for when he afterwards informed the disciples that Lazarus was dead, he added, "I am glad for your sakes that I was not there to the intent ye may believe, nevertheless let us go unto him." We perceive then in his own language, an assertion of his providence and foreknowledge, "this sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby." Granting Jesus then, credit for veracity, for common honesty, having asserted indirectly that he was God, we are bound to believe him such and recognise in his foreknowledge and providence the attributes of the true Jehovah.

Having thus looked hastily at this first evidence in favor of the divinity of Christ, let us for a moment turn our thoughts to the *consolations* that may be hence derived. There was a power of providence, you perceive, here engaged: "Lazarus sleepeth," said the Lord, "but I go that I may awake him out of sleep." He speaks not there as a deputy, as an agent, a prophet, or an inspired man, favored with visions from heaven like Elijah; he might have learned that Lazarus was sick, that Lazarus should rise again by his instrumentality; but he does not use the language of an agent, he speaks in his own proper person. "I go, that I may awake him out of sleep." This is the language of conscious divinity alone.

Now the sickness of Lazarus had not fallen on him fortuitously; it had not reached him in the common course of events. It seems to have been directed by "the finger of God," and ruled by the providence of Jesus Christ. From that sickness Lazarus was subsequently delivered, after it had been

consummated by death, and that sickness did end in bringing honor to Christ, proving his deity, confounding Christ's enemies and comforting his disciples. What was Lazarus? No more than a believer, a follower of Jesus in faith; we take him merely for an example of divine mercy, compassion, and providence; and we have the assurance from the whole history before us that the same Jesus who loved Lazarus, loves every one here present that believes in his truth, who has cast on him the burden of his guilt, and confessed his sole power to save.

Now, there is not a single circumstance which has been ordained from the foundation of the world, that has not been ruled and regulated by the providence of Jesus Christ. "He upholds all things by the word of his power," by him all things consist; well may we believe that he exercises special providence over his people, as his people, his "brethren," as those whom he loves. In sickness or health, riches or poverty, the multiplying of enemies, or the bereavement of our friends—in all these circumstances, we may know that the Lord will be with us. Here, then is comfort to the mourning believer. Have you fallen into troubles? Are you laid on the bed of languishing and brought down to the gates of death? In all this remember that Christ is at hand, and that your sickness shall not be a sickness unto eternal death, but the means of a conveyance to a life of eternal joy. Count not yourselves in that weak and debilitated state, out of the service and beyond the power of bringing honor to your God. Your meek submission to his providence brings him honor. Recollect though there may not be fixed on you, in the time of patient suffering, the eye of any mortal, yet the eyes of exalted intelligences are on you, when you submit without a murmur, saying, "the Lord's will be done."

2d. The second proof of Christ's divinity is opened to us in his own saying, "I am the resurrection and the life." Now what is resurrection? It is not merely re-animation, it is re-construction, re-creation, it is the taking up of the dissipated atoms that once composed the human frame, placing them together, joining every member, casting life into every function, restoring the equilibrium of mind, and fixing the spirit once more in its habitation—this is resurrection. And it means something more, it means besides, restoring and reviving the glorifying of man. Such is resurrection from the dead, but resurrection of which Jesus was the first fruits and Jesus too the author. Now if resurrection, which is the overturning of the realm of death, the destruction of the power of death, be,

as it most plainly is, a re-construction, a re-action is not this an evident proof of Christ's essential divinity? Satan may mar the fair works of God, and death may produce havoc among us, scattering the visible elements of our body, dissipating its several parts and portions. But Satan, death, and every change that takes place in this world cannot annihilate, cannot destroy. To him alone who created, belongs the power really to destroy, and to him who made, at the first, man in all his fair proportions, belongs the power to remake and to restore. Thus then, Christ comes before us as the mighty Creator, as Jehovah, with all his power to restore all things. "Behold, I make all things new," a new heaven and a new earth, when the redeemed of the Lord will be brought together in new and glorious order.

What comfort is there in this evidence of Christ's divinity! It tells us, beloved friends, to fear not death, neither the slow wasting of our present tenements; it tells us that the God who intended man for an eternity of bliss, an immortality of soul and body, hath determined that that intention shall be fulfilled; he will raise the corrupt body of man to incorruption and immortality, and glory; no part of his plan, not one of his purposes ever could, or ever shall be thwarted. Furthermore, you have here the promise that you shall never die—"he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me, shall never die." Never shall the believing soul lose its consciousness, lose its enjoyment of Christ, its assurance of eternal peace, and favor with God.

3d. The text, "Jesus wept," opens to us the divinity of Christ. You might imagine perhaps that the phrase is descriptive rather of his humanity. On the subject of his humanity, I purpose addressing you next Sabbath from the same text; but here, at present, I do think that the text shows us much of the Deity of Christ. Whenever you read in Scripture, that Jesus did weep, it was with sorrow for the sins of the people. Thus, "when he was come near Jerusalem, he beheld the city and wept over it, saying, if thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things that belong unto thy peace, but now they are hid from thine eyes." Again, you find the surrounding multitude objected against the divinity of Jesus saying, "What! could not this man who opened the eyes of the blind, have caused that even this man should not have died?" And the Lord "again groaning in himself, cometh to the grave." This insinuation against his power and against his Godhead, this expression of infidelity it was, that wrung the heart of

Jesus with grief, and caused him to groan and weep afresh. Take any cause from Scripture of an ambassador from God into whose power it was put to speak for the divine majesty, and to plead the cause of heaven against sinners; and where he is brought face to face with the blaspheming multitude, you discover, in most cases, yea, almost always, that natural indignation predominates, rather than sorrow of heart and anguish of spirit such as Jesus betrayed,—“Master,” said the disciples, James and John, “wilt thou that we call down fire from heaven upon them?” because they did not receive Jesus of Nazareth. You even find Paul, zealous as he was, and forward in the cause of the Gospel, speaking at times with severity and indignation rather than exhibiting a tenderness of spirit that could weep over hardness of heart and unbelief. Angels show not this same tenderness, they are God’s host, they are God’s warriors against the spiritual powers of the air their language is, “The Lord rebuke thee;” Christ’s language was tears of sorrow. This, therefore, speaks to us with more eloquence than man was ever endured withal, upon the danger, upon the ruin that must involve every unbeliever. If God mourned over this world in its defection and rebellion, if he compassionated it so, as to send his Son to be its Redeemer; if God, in human form, visited this world, inspected every scene of woe, and ministered to every affliction with his own hand, gave honor to whom honor was due, censure to whom censure, and tears to whom tears; then, Christ’s lamentation over unbelief, does testify to us that unbelief is the last, the deadliest condition of crime. There is for that, at the final state of man, no remission, no salvation.

There is a form of address suited to every state of man in the word of God. The persons around Jesus were infidel, as to his divinity, because of their ignorance; they had not searched the Scriptures, they had not observed the correspondence between the prophetic accounts of Scripture and Jesus, therefore they were ignorant or unbelieving, and the Lord mourned over them, as lost.

Now, are there among us this day some “who know not God, and obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ?”—who passing along the common course of time, and mixed up with the cares of this world, are content with a bare nominal profession of christianity, and with the assemblies and services of religion from Sabbath to Sabbath, and who have not yet rolled the burden of their sins on Christ, and given themselves wholly up to

the Lord—what is your state? Why, the Lord weeps over you as lost, and expresses your condition to be, of all conditions, the most miserable. Oh sinners! who have hitherto stood aloof from God, and have not embraced his salvation, can you withstand the tears of the Son of God? Can you resist that argument? Here is a God of all tenderness and compassion beseeching you to approach him, to make one with him through faith; to become, through him saved, that he may rejoice over you, as he did in the conversion and salvation of others, “now is the Son of man glorified, now is the prince of this world cast out.”

4th. Lastly, we find Jesus at the grave of Lazarus speaking as God, when he uttered the words “Lazarus come forth!” Immediately, he that had been dead rose up from the tomb in his grave clothes, and came forth in the perfect possession of all his mortal powers. Observe the whole circumstance of this miracle, it was not a mere experiment; it was not the resuscitation of one whose life might have been for a time only suspended; four days had Lazarus been dead, corruption had set in, and sealed him for its own. Jesus stood among his enemies and friends, commanded the dead to rise, and the dead came forth; corruption was put back; all injury sustained in the person of Lazarus was removed, he was restored completely, and was received into the arms of those who had mourned him as lost for ever. This was a full proof of Christ’s divinity, on his own authority he commanded the grave to give up its possession, and it obeyed. It is said in Scripture, that “the hour is coming and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God.” That was a word of mercy; for the Lord lived among them that were dead in trespasses and sins, and, preached to them the gospel of salvation, conveyed to them the life of his spirit. There is a day coming again however when the dead in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God. It shall be the last day, the day of judgment, the day when mercy shall have ceased, the day of the “second resurrection” when the sea and the earth shall give up their prey, when all the unbelieving and ungodly shall “stand before the judgment seat of Christ.” There are two appeals, one now is, and the other is yet to come to the dead. Christ now speaks to you from his word. Oh, hear him and your souls shall live. Hear him not, and when he speaks the second time you must both hear and obey! That is a time of vengeance to the ungodly and to the unbelieving, when he shall shake the heavens and the

earth, and drag forth the tenants of the tomb to his judgment seat. "Come forth," shall then be the summons, we may trifle with Christ's summons of mercy now and say, on to-morrow, or at "a more convenient season," I will receive this word and give myself to the Lord. But to-morrow, the convenient season, may never come; and if it should come, it will find us one degree more hardened against heaven; and next year may come, and years may roll on while we procrastinate and carry on the hardening process of the heart, till we go down to the grave steeled to the very soul against mercy; and then—what then! why we shall hear the voice of Christ at the last whether we like it or not, and we must rise at his call; and stand, shivering, defenceless, self-condemned and despairing before his throne, to receive that sentence—"Depart from me ye cursed into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels."

May God of his infinite mercy cause all who are here present no longer to trifle with the day of salvation, but to receive his favor with devout thanksgiving, ascribing all honor, glory, and dominion and majesty to Jesus of Nazareth—God and man combined, world without end. Amen.

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By the Lord's good mercy, we are permitted to resume the subject opened on the last day of our meeting together, and to consider the second grand doctrine that may be deduced from the verse before us, or rather from the chapter generally, out of which it is selected. We have briefly examined the perfect *divinity* of Christ, we go now to consider his perfect *humanity*.

It might appear to you almost absurd to call attention to such an undoubted doctrine as the humanity of Jesus Christ, but we should remember that it is on that humanity that every thing relating to the grand scheme of redemption depends. *God* did not suffer, *God* is incapable of suffering, it was *God* in Christ that suffered; it was the perfect humanity of Jesus that underwent the curse for us, supported by "the fulness of the Godhead." Unless we understand this, we cannot know the value of the atonement or the consolation afforded in the doctrine of redemption or the security of the redeemed through the all-perfect offering made for them once for all.

To come then to our text and the subject of this day. We have to examine the humanity of Jesus Christ. The chapter before us opens with an indirect yet full testimony to the humanity of Christ. "Now Jesus loved Mary, and her sister, and Lazarus." There is a specification here you perceive of a

particular attachment to these individuals; that attachment of course does not belong to divinity or deity, because God feels not to man naturally and essentially any particular attachment. God, high raised above man, and seeing into the heart of man, observes only one mass of crime. "God," we are told in Scripture, "is no respecter of persons." All this belongs to the character of Jehovah. Man alone distinguishes his brethren, unites with those to whom he is drawn by any assimilation or by any sympathy; and so, particular attachment or peculiar friendship is a part of humanity. If you allow this, then the notice of Christ's particular attachment to the family of Bethany is a notice of his humanity. That attachment was not a secret one, it was known to all men, in so much that when Lazarus was ill, the sisters, having no stronger arguments to use, to beseech and procure the assistance of the Lord for their relief, having no extraordinary virtues to rehearse, nothing to urge his haste, sent to him, saying, "Lord, he whom thou lovest is sick;" they rested emphatically on that attachment which Christ had permitted them to know. Similar was the attachment of the Lord to John, the brother of James, who laid his head on his Master's bosom—all this you will allow belonged to the humanity. Of what character was this humanity? Like our own, stained, polluted, corrupt and fallen? No, it was holy, perfect, as perfect, and more so than that of Adam when he came forth from the hands of his Creator.

Every moral disposition in the descendant is derived from the sire, "as your fathers did, so did ye." Jesus of Nazareth, in his moral nature inherited no sin, and was spotless and without blemish. The prince of this world sifted him to the heart's core, and found in him nothing, he was pure even unto death. And while Jesus was pure and perfect, without fault or error, or trace of iniquity, he was a man that formed friendship, showed peculiar attachment, and a man who once engaged in love, a friendship to any human being, never failed and never deceived.

Now look at the great advantage resulting from this view of the humanity of Christ. It affords you every possible consolation, whatever be your misery or affliction in this life; if you are fatherless, childless, friendless, forsaken, the outcast of all men—here is Jesus of Nazareth, the same Jesus that loved "Mary, and Martha, and Lazarus," that hastened at their call to relieve distress, and alleviate woe, ready to solace you, to wipe away every tear from your eyes, and relieve you in all

your adversities. Here is Jesus, ready to show you the same tender attachment and kindness he did to the family of Bethany. Only believe he lived and died to bring his people to glory. He hath counted his believing people in this world, and not one of them shall be lost; not one of their sorrows shall lack his sympathy. Such is Jesus, he is prepared to meet with the least in this congregation, and bless that least, when the world has frowned on him, and every earthly consolation has failed.

Consider the advantage of contemplating thus the humanity of Christ,—Christ ate with the family, drank and associated with the family, sat down with them as a friend. In his communication and converse with this family he never once lowered his dignity, or lost sight of his commission; whenever occasion did offer, he was prompt to administer salutary instruction, and to advertise them, that “one thing was needful,” and that whosoever had “chosen that good part,” should find, it would “never be taken away.” Christ is now your example; from his intercourse and intimacy with the family of Bethany; learn that he has sent you who believe, into the world as his ambassadors, he has commanded you to glorify God, to be his missionaries to all men, to plead with them, to exhort them, to warn them, and to entreat them to have mercy on their own souls, while the world is the great scene of temptation, to bring man from serious reflection on the things of eternity,—you are to beseech men, and warn them, and win them by “a word fitly spoken,” to salvation. Think not that the Lord Jesus would have you go forth in a spirit of moroseness, or uncharitable harshness to warn men, as ascetics from the desert. No, he commands you to be meek and lowly, not to “break the bruised reed, or quench the smoking flax,” but in all things to order yourselves in his likeness and commend his doctrine by love to your fellow sinners.

Look again, at this development of the humanity of the Lord Jesus Christ. It teaches you to put on the very character of Christ; this family enjoyed his society. Now, it is not a matter of probability, that this was an amiable family, but it is almost a certainty; there are traces of amiability in their history; they were united in the truest attachment, they loved each other ardently, and they had many friends to sympathize with them; for “many of the Jews came to visit the sisters” on the death of Lazarus. If they were not an amiable family, they would not have met with this amount of kindness, and respect from their



acquaintance. We find that John was a man of great amiability, and judging from his style of composition, we would say, that he originally received from the God of nature much suavity of spirit, as well as from the God of Grace much true amiability; there is nothing more probable than this, that the strong regard which Jesus showed to John the brother of James, was founded on a sympathy arising from a resemblance between their characters. If you value the society of Jesus, if you would partake of his sympathy in your affliction, if you would have him your friend in all things, I would beseech you, "by the meekness and gentleness of Christ," "be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewal of your minds," put on the Lord Jesus in lowliness, in meekness, in kindness and courtesy, in all graciousness, that you may prove suited to his companionship.

2d. However, to go on with the proofs of Christ's humanity. We see in the second place, that Jesus was exposed to suffering and exposed to death. In v. 7, we are informed that he said to his disciples, "let us go into Judea again, his disciples say unto him, the Jews of late sought to stone thee, and goest thou thither again?" Christ was thus liable to suffering, injury and agony, and death. Now it is this very liability to suffering that provides us with a full sacrifice in Jesus. Were he altogether divine and incapable of suffering, there would be no redemption in him, no sacrifice, no "shedding of blood," and therefore "no remission of sins."

We have before us then in the christian dispensation, a perfect Saviour, a perfect sacrifice, a perfect redemption. Does it trouble you to understand this redemption—this matter of sacrifice? Does it cause in your minds any doubt or difficulty, how the shedding of blood can take away sin? The matter is simple; it is altogether the business of substitution, that one word explains the mystery, a mystery which God has revealed. God declared, that "the soul that sinned should die;" our substitute has died, Jesus died for us, that we might live pardoned and saved. This is the doctrine of redemption, of atonement, and let me observe, that this unravelling of the mystery of atonement is that which God has given to us in the very law of social life. The world is governed by substitution; there is not a single proceeding in which we are occupied in this life but is a proceeding of substitution. A man befriends his fellow, by substitution; he raises his companion to prosperity by the substitution of his own interest, by his own property, his

own person; man relieves, and sometimes rescues from the afflictions of this life, his fellow creatures, by substitution:—and so it is was by the substitution of himself—the Lord Jesus came to save us from eternal wrath.

Having shown, thus briefly, from the humanity of Christ the complete substitution of a perfect Redeemer, let me charge you to hold fast by the cross of Christ, to-day “God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ by which the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.” Oh! were the last words of the dying Saviour written on man’s heart, “it is finished,”—were these words written in indellible characters on his soul, could he mar the fair proportions of christianity by super-adding to them his own righteousness; or destroy the liberty and freedom of divine grace, by entangling it with his own conditional performances? Believe, that the work is finished, that Christ has accomplished all that is necessary for your redemption, and the glory of God shall rest upon you.

Lastly, as an evidence of Christ’s humanity, look to the text, “Jesus wept.”

It is true, that the tears of the Lord were much produced by his divine compassion for the unbelief of the surrounding multitude, who insinuated against his divinity, because Lazarus died. But when we read the verses as they follow in natural order, we perceive that the tears of Christ, also flowed from human sensibility. For it is written, “when Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping, which came with her, he groaned in the spirit and was troubled;” and having faltered out the inquiry, “where have you laid him?” burst into tears.

Though we live in a miserable, fallen, and degraded state, though our sensibilities and passions are embarrassed, and all but extinguished by the prevalence of sin, yet we know this same passion, sympathy; we have experienced what it is to “weep with them that weep,” and “rejoice with them that do rejoice.” This sympathy came from the humanity of Christ—it was the humanity of “Jesus wept.” In the divinity, he saw, that all the sorrows of the sisters, and all the sorrows of the Jewish relations were to pass away in one moment; as he was about to restore Lazarus to their arms, he knew that all their sorrows should be converted into acclamations of joy. But he felt in his humanity, compassion for those who wept around him, and he could not forbear to mingle his tears with theirs.

Thus then Jesus, as man, sympathized with the sisters and relatives of Lazarus.

What a blessing is opened to us in the consideration of the text, "Jesus wept!" Jesus will weep with his people, Jesus ever does sympathize with his disciples. Could he do no more for us than this, to partake our sorrows, and share with us in our trouble, it would go far to diminish the burden of our earthly woes. We count that man alone truly and perfectly wretched, who has no friends,—no comforter,—no kindred spirit from whom he may receive compassion. But now, you can believe, as if you had seen Jesus standing at the grave of Lazarus, that he will weep with you, share with you your afflictions and thus lighten the load of your distress.

But Scripture is clear on this point, Paul tells us in the epistle to the Hebrews, that this sympathy of Christ was a necessary ingredient to compose his priestly office, as mediator. "Seeing then, that we have a great High Priest that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession; for we have not an High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin, let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need;" you may go now from all the troubles of life to "the throne of grace," to pour out your sorrows into the bosom of Jesus, and receive from him every consolation. And, better still, we find that Christ feeling for us in all our infirmities does more than console us by the deed of sympathy; he pitied our infirmities and pleads for us with God. "But this man, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood, wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost, that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them;" thus the mediation of Christ is complete sympathizing with us, feeling with us, sharing with us our sorrows, and then rising up to plead for us, that we may receive blessing from on high: there is not a care, there is not a calamity that can come on you, but the Lord will pity you, and aid you; when you approach him in faith, and in the confidence of a friend and brother.

You may say, perhaps, this is consolation for what we may call sufferings in this life, but is there any consolation for us in our sins? Can Christ sympathize with us, when we experience the bitterness of remorse, the tortures of an accusing conscience? Aye, even here, Christ can feel for us. He never

sinned, it is true, never did guile proceed from his mouth, no stain of iniquity ever was in his heart; if so, the hopes of men were dashed to earth. But though Christ was spotless, yet we read, that as he was our substitute, God laid on him, as if he were guilty, all the consequence of our crime, and he had then to wither under the curse, and then to writhe under the agony and remorse of sin. If Christ tasted all this, can he not feel for you?

Oh, brother in the faith, who hast been betrayed into transgression; recollect that Jesus reprov'd Peter after his base denial, after his ungrateful and cowardly desertion of his master in the last extremity, with no more bitter censure than this "Simon Peter, lovest thou me?" Your blessed and divine master is ready to pity and pardon you in your transgressions, apply to him, "he ever liveth to make intercession" for you, pray to him, that you may "go and sin no more." Are there among us yet, any that have not gone to Jesus, that have never sought an interest in his intercession, or entreated him saying, "Lord, save or I perish?" You may think your iniquity is too great to be forgiven, and that the amount of your crimes is too heavy to be removed by any act of divine mercy; God has told you, "as far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us." God has told you that his Son died for the chief of sinners. Are you the chief of sinners? Are you a blasphemer, an obstinate, daring infidel? No; well, then, come now to this Jesus, who "ever liveth to save to the uttermost those who come unto God by him." Place the greatest monster the world ever saw under the teaching of the gospel, and if he is brought to believe it, as sure as God is in heaven he shall be saved; for God has said, "whosoever believeth shall not be confounded."

Sinners, there is but one crime unpardonable, and it is the entire, enduring, obstinate rejection of Jesus. If he was a mere brother beloved, "a brother born for adversity," full of sensibility, sympathy, tenderness, your coldness towards him is an aggravation of all past sins. Cast not away then the gospel of pardon and salvation, but draw near to him who ever liveth to make intercession for lost sinners, who can save to the uttermost and "your souls shall live."

They received only a single apocryphal Gospel which, by mutilation and corruption, they had made to harmonize with their own peculiar views, and discarded the whole canonical New Testament as it has been delivered down to us.

Having thus disposed of the objections suggested by our general scriptural argument for the Trinity, we now proceed to call attention to one particular scriptural proof of the doctrine of the Trinity, and that is, the divine commission of our Lord and Saviour considered in connection with the form of christian benediction.

The baptismal as well as ministerial commission is found in Matt. 28:19 in these words, "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 this passage forms a part of the original text is, and must be, admitted. Unitarians indeed have dared to suspect, and some of them positively to assert, that it is a spurious addition. But, as Dr. Pye Smith with unusual severity remarks,\* "This insinuation, or assertion, is in contradiction to all fair evidence, and in despite of all legitimate criticism. All the evidence by which the text of ancient authors is settled, is incontrovertibly in favour of the genuineness of the passage. The anxiety and the efforts to expunge this text, even by means so flagrantly unworthy of liberal learning, indicate a strong feeling that it cannot, by fair interpretation, be made consonant with Unitarian views."

The christian benediction is found in ii. Cor. 13, 14, "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen." A similar form of christian salutation is contained in Rev. i. 4, 5, "Grace be unto you, and peace, from him, which is and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven Spirits which are before his throne; and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth."

In reference to this last passage Dr. Smith remarks as the conclusion of a critical examination of the passage,† "I conceive that the principles of rational interpretation authorize our coinciding with those interpreters who understand by the expression "the Seven Spirits which are before the throne," that one

\*Test. to Messiah, vol. 3, p. 23.

†Pye Smith 3, p. 144.

Divine Person who is called in Scripture the Holy Spirit, and the Spirit of God.”

The general import, so far as they relate to the doctrine of the Trinity, of these several passages is the same. The baptismal communion and the benediction both alike refer to the three persons—FATHER, SON, and SPIRIT as objects of worship, sources of all spiritual and divine blessings, and therefore as equally divine, omniscient, omnipotent, and omnipresent. The first forms the basis on which christianity is made to rest,—the initiatory form of christian dedication and profession,—and the latter forms the short and closing form of christian prayer salutation and benediction to be used in all occasions of christian worship.

We shall confine our remarks chiefly to the former, that is, to the instituted form of baptism, since much of what will be brought forward in elucidation of its bearing upon the doctrine of the Trinity will apply equally to the latter.

This is the language of the risen Saviour before ascending up to that glory which he had with the Father from before the foundation of the world. It was delivered to the collected body of his disciples, met by appointment in Galilee. It was introduced with the declamation that ALL POWER of every kind, the highest authority in heaven and on earth was delivered unto Him. That is as the only begotten Son of God, he derived from God the communication of that divine essence which involved power and prerogatives which could neither be received nor exercised by any being less than God. And considered as referring also to his mediatorial character and work it is to be borne in mind that,\* “The mediatorial function, and the assuming of human nature in order to discharge that function, constitute a new office, a new character, new manifestations of the uncreated glory to intelligent beings, a new kind and course of relation to those beings. In the contemplation of these, nothing can be more proper than to say that the dominion and glory of Christ are the GIFT to him of the Divine Father, “of whom are all things;” while the essential excellences of his superior nature remain necessarily unchangeable, because they are infinite.”

In these words therefore we have the authoritative commission upon which rests the ministry, ordinances, and order of the church of Christ upon earth. It refers to all nations, and to all ages, and to every thing pertaining to the discipling or

\*Smith, Messiah, vol. 2, p. 186.

converting of men to the faith as it is in Jesus, and to instructing them, when baptized, in the doctrines and duties of christianity as there known or to be communicated by Christ through His Spirit and the Apostles as inspired by Him. And as this commission is introduced with the declaration of Christ's infinite dignity and power so it is closed with the same assurance of omnipresent and omniscient ability to bless, prosper and govern those who acted in conformity to his command. This, then, is the fundamental, permanent and supreme constitutional basis of the Church of God under its last and christian dispensation.\*

\*Similar is the declaration in Matt. 18: 20: "For where two or three are gathered together in my name there am I in the midst of them." Smith 2, p. 224, 225, 226. "What, then, is it, to be gathered together to the name of Christ?" The connexion plainly shows, that it is the union of christians, for the preservation of good order and purity among themselves, with social prayer for the divine direction and blessing. "Again, verily I say unto you, that if two of you consent upon earth, concerning any matter about which they may supplicate, it shall be done for them by my Father who is in heaven: for where are two or three gathered together unto my name, there am I in the midst of them."

"It appears therefore that the name of the Lord Jesus Christ (his perfections and glories manifested in his revealed truth), is the object, to do honour to which the social worship of christians is to be conducted; and that the language especially selected by him, for conveying this declaration, is in exact conformity with that which in the Old Testament is appropriated to the Eternal Deity. Is it imaginable that the wisest, meekest, and best of teachers would have selected such language as this—language by no means of frequent occurrence, if he were conscious to himself of nothing, in nature and condition, above the rank of a human prophet! Upon the hypotheses of denying any such superior and truly Divine nature, would not this language be a most unwarrantable, unnecessary, and dangerous deviation from plain modes of speech; seeming, at least, to intrench upon the prerogatives of the Divine Majesty, and likely to be an occasion of serious error and actual idolatry!

Christ promises a peculiar presence of himself: "There am I in the midst of them."

To be in the midst, (בְּתוֹכָם and בְּיָרְדָם), is a Jewish phrase, frequent in the Old Testament, applied to every variety of subject, and simply denoting presence; sometimes with the accessory idea of presiding, as in the prophecy of Zephaniah; "The righteous Jehovah in the midst of her;—the King of Israel, Jehovah, in the midst of thee;—Jehovah, thy God, in the midst of thee, mighty."

The question is: "In what sense is this presence attributed to Christ?"

After a very full and lengthened examination of all possible modes of interpreting the passage, see p. 225-235. Dr. Smith thus concludes: "It remains for me to express my conviction, founded on the preceding reasons, that the only fair and just interpretation of this important passage is that which regards it as a declaration of such a spiritual and efficient presence as implies Divine perfections: such a special exercise of power and mercy as in the use of this phrase, the Scriptures habitually ascribe to the Deity; and such as involves the attribute of omnipresence." Smith 3, p. 458, 459. The ancient Rabbinical Jews attribute this condescension to the Shecinah; which term they applied to the Messiah: "Where two sit together, and their conversation is not of the law, that is the seat of the scorner.—But where two sit together and converse upon the law, the Divine Majesty (the Shecinah) dwells between them; according to (the declaration.) They that fear the Lord converse each one with his neighbour, and the Lord hears it and observes it, and a memorial is written before him for them." *Pirke Avoth* (Dictates of the Fathers), one of the most revered parts of

Of this church, or of this dispensation of the church, rather, baptism is made the initiatory rite, sign, and seal instead of circumcision and sacrifice which had hitherto existed. For the alteration of the sacramental sign of initiation into the church of God this is the only positive authority besides apostolic example. Baptism is therefore every where said to be in the name of Christ, as denoting his authority,\* in the origin of the institution, or "to his name" as the object of the honor and obedience implied in this observance.†

And whatever may be, in other respects, the nature and extent of that honour and obedience which are here signified, it is unquestionable that they recognize their object as the Head of a religious dispensation.

What then does this instituted sacrament of initiation into the christian church import. If we revert to the sacrifices which constituted the primitive form of initiation into the church of God and the mode by which the Sons of God and the sons of men were distinguished—the manner in which men called upon the name of the Lord—and the manner in which Noah and Job deprecated divine anger, implored divine blessing and returned grateful thanks for divine favours to them and their children—we are led to regard baptism as an act of invocation imploring divine blessings,—as an act of divine authority administered in the name and by the divine commission of the parties in whose name it is performed,—as an act of dedication by which the parties baptized are devoted to their worship, honor, and service,—and as an act of solemn covenant in which God the Father, Son and Holy Ghost ratify by an outward seal

the *Mishna*, of which it forms the Fourth Seder and the Tenth Book. The Jews attribute it to a very high antiquity, and there can be no reasonable doubt of its having been in their possession from, at the lowest, the third or fourth century. This passage is in Surenhusius's *Mishna*, part II, p. 435 and Rabe's German Translation (Onolzback, 1760) vol. 4, p. 276.

On this passage of Scripture, Abadec remarks, p. 240, 241: "A promise this, which Christ could not perform, as man, but only as God: because, as man, he is limited by time and place; as God, he acts independently on both. To say that he is in the midst of our religious assemblies by his Spirit is not sufficient. For if the Spirit intended be the Spirit of Christ, Christ must be God; because that Spirit is present, with devout worshippers, in all places at the same time. But that Jesus is really and properly God, our opponents will not allow. The Spirit in question, therefore, must be that of the Father, and not of Christ; consequently, not our Lord, but Divine Father, is present in our assemblies. Nor is Jesus said to be in the midst of his people 'by faith,' which is gift of the Holy Ghost. Elisha received a portion of the Spirit of Elijah, in receiving from God such gifts as were similar to those of Elijah; yet it is never said that Elijah was with the Jews, or in the midst of their assemblies, after his ascension into heaven."

\*Acts 10:48.

†Acts 8: 10 and 19: 5, and 2: 38, when it is 2 1 with regard to Christ.



and a sacramental ordinance the covenant of grace, making over to the parties baptized the several blessings promised by binding them on their part to seek and to secure them in the way of God's appointment.

The church, by its ministers, is therefore required to baptize, consecrate and introduce into the church under its christian dispensation, all such persons of every nation and people under the whole heaven, as had ever been initiated, and she is to do this in the name of the Father, Son and Spirit, and as authorized to do it as their representatives. God thus engages to fulfill to every one thus baptized the promise "he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." "To this," to use the language of Calamy,\* "God in baptism sets his seal; and all the sacred three are concerned. The Father engages that He will be reconciled and gracious; the Son that he will fully act the part of a kind and faithful mediator; and the Holy Ghost, that he will be a sanctifier, guide and comforter. All this is as certain, in the case of persons truly devoted, and that are afterwards faithful, as it is that water which we see with our bodily eyes is applied in the sacred name of the triune God. And we ministers by applying this water in their name, do in their stead give assurance of all this. And it being but agreeable to our commission so to do, it may as much be depended on by persons truly serious, that these engagements will be answered, as if each of the sacred three assumed a bodily shape, and gave verbal assurance of it."

Before this commission was given, baptism, administered by † John *into* the name of Him who was to come, or by the disciples of Christ *into* the name of Jesus, was, legitimate and perfect for all purposes, because it was so ordained by the supreme authority; but now that the recognition of the Persons is distinctly prescribed, to omit any of them would be an act of disobedience to the command of Christ.

Baptism therefore "signifies the full and entire consecration of the person who is baptized to the service and honor of that Being, in whose name it is administered." But if this is the only signification we can attach to baptism—then it follows that this consecration can never be made to God and two of his creatures, nor to God with one of his creatures together with an attribute an energy and a mode of operation. Such an idea would be as absurd as it is impious.

\*Calamy on Trinity, p. 171.

†The Jews in the name of the Father only.

What! baptize in the name of God and two creatures, in the name of God and two servants, the one inferior to the other! I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, *his servant* and of the Holy Ghost, *an inferior servant! the servant of a servant—the creature of a creature!* Such, when analyzed, is the *Arian baptism*. On the same principles of analysis, the *Arian benediction* will run thus. The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, a creature of God, a servant of the Deity, and the love of God—and the communion of the Holy Ghost, a servant of Jesus Christ—a servant of a servant be with you all. Amen.

And this absurdity and impiety would be increased when to use the words of Dr. Wardlaw\* the words are considered as the terms of an initiatory rite, connected with a religion, in which all worship but what is addressed to the one Jehovah, is under every form, whether expressed or implied, so decidedly condemned. The apostles were to teach the Gentiles, that they should “turn from those vanities which they worshipped, to the living God:” and those who received their instructions they were to baptize “in the name of the Father, the Son, and Holy Spirit.” What, then, must have occurred to their hearers and converts, from the use of these words, but that they were now, *instead of the multitude of their former deities*, to adore and serve the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, as the one living and true God? Baptism was to be administered, in the name of all the three, *in the very same way*; and surely, therefore, there is the fairest reason to conclude, *in the same sense*. It is not, “baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of his two servants, the Son and the Holy Spirit;”—nor even, “bap-

\*On the Socinian Controversy, p. 49, 50.

Wardlaw, p. 50, 51. “On what principle of criticism, then, are we to interpret the expression, ‘the grace, or favour, of our Lord Jesus Christ,’ an expression so precisely the same in form, in a different sense? in a sense that does not imply Jesus Christ’s being the object of a similar inward aspiration? And the same question might be asked, with regard to the remaining phrase, ‘the communion of the Holy Spirit.’ It should be considered, too, that the Corinthians, to whom he thus wrote, would at once associate the phraseology employed with the terms of the initiatory ordinance of baptism, to which they had submitted on their entrance into the christian church. They would perceive the coincidence between the one and the other; and would understand the apostle as addressing himself, in their behalf, to the three persons in whose name they had, upon his own instruction, been baptized. I would only further ask at present, how we can suppose an inspired man, or even a man of common understanding, to recommend, in the solemn language of prayer, his converts and brethren, to the love of God, and to the favour and communion of two of his creatures: or to the love of God, the favour of a man, and the communion of an attribute, or influence, or energy? and that, too, not only in terms so exactly alike, but with a precedence given to the creature, in the order of address?”

tizing them in the name of God, and of Christ, and of the Spirit;" but, without the slightest intimation or symptom of any change in the meaning of the expression, in its application to one of the persons more than another—"baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." The very same *kind*, and the very same *degree*, of honour and reverence, that are paid in this rite to one, are paid, as far as language can indicate the meaning of the speaker, alike to all."

This baptismal commission therefore implies necessarily invocation of the divine persons in whose name it is performed. It is the solemn invocation of all those blessings which constitute the glad tidings of great joy, the fulness of the blessings of the gospel of Christ, peace with God and life everlasting, for every helpless, guilty, sinful child or adult who is baptized, from those whose Godlike prerogative it is to bestow grace, mercy and peace. It is a solemn invocation addressed by the minister, the church, and the parents, to those divine beings who are supposed to be present and able to accomplish what is desired. And these persons, though not sensibly, are believed to be *really* present, such prayer is an act of religious worship. The blessings sought are not of that kind which one creature is competent to bestow upon another. They refer both in baptism and in the benediction to the judicial state of an accountable being before God; to the remission of moral offences; to the production and preservation of certain mental qualities, which none can efficaciously and immediately give but He who holds the dominion of human minds and feelings; and to the enjoyments of supreme and endless felicity. They are Grace, Mercy, and Peace: *Grace*; the free favour of the Eternal Majesty to those who have forfeited every claim to it; such favour as is, in its own nature and in the contemplation of the supplicant, the sole and effective cause of deliverance from the greatest evils and acquisition of the greatest good: *Mercy*; the compassion of infinite goodness, conferring its richest bestowments of holiness and happiness on the ruined, miserable and helpless: *Peace*; the tranquil and delightful feeling which results from the rational hope of possessing these enjoyments. These are the highest blessings that Omnipotent Benevolence can give, or a dependent nature receive."

The Sacred Three are not only distinctly named, but invoked, and called upon for needful help to keep the bond which the parties baptized are brought under. And therefore Origen represents baptism as an invocation of the adorable Trinity.

Athanasius, speaking of the form of baptism, says, "What society and communion can a creature have with the Creator? Why is that which was made reckoned up with the Maker?" And Gregory Nazianzen says, "The Trinity is not an enumeration of unequal things, but a complexion or comprehension of those that are equal and alike in honour."

Baptism also as certainly and necessarily implies, dedication to these three persons as invocation.. The object held forth in this ordinance is unquestionably recognized as the head of the christian dispensation, the foundation on which it rests, the source of its authority and blessings and the distinguishing badge of peculiar and characteristic doctrine of christianity. God therefore as Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, is the object to whom by baptism every christian is solemnly consecrated. The whole scheme of christianity centers in the revelation made to us of this triune God. The sum of all saving knowledge is comprehended in what is taught concerning Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. It is into the profession of belief in what is thus taught—of obedience to it—and of a joyful acquiescence in it—we are baptized. We are baptized into the names of each of these persons that is, into the belief of all that is taught concerning each in the word of God—their relations to each other in the covenant of grace, and to us in the provisions and promises of the gospel. This comprehends all that is necessary to our salvation and all that is peculiar and characteristic of the christian religion. In distinction from the Patriarchal and Jewish dispensation of the church in which this doctrine of the Trinity like every other was taught in a progressively developed form, the church as christian is based upon the knowledge of God as the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. And as all other forms of religion had many Gods and many mediators christianity reveals "one God and Father of all," one Lord and Mediator between God and man, and "ONE SPIRIT" of grace to renew, sanctify and save.

This doctrine therefore is the corner stone—the characteristic and essential feature of christianity. And that it may not possibly be obscured by any rationalistic interpretations of particular texts it is embodied in one of the only two symbolical sacraments of the christian church, by which it is necessarily propagated and perpetuated as long as the church itself shall endure. It has therefore ever been by a profession of belief in this doctrine, and by a public dedication to this triune God, that persons have been received whether as infants or adults into

the christian church and thus separated from the world lying in infidelity on the one hand and from the Jews who deny their God and Saviour the Lord Jesus Christ on the other.

Every member of the christian church thus enters by baptism into a covenant with God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit by which he is bound to honor, worship and serve them to seek their favour and mercy and help—and to live to their honor and glory, God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit pledging himself on his part to fulfill to them all his manifold and gracious promises.

All that is necessary to be believed and done in order to salvation is thus summarily comprehended in this baptismal commission and formula. It constituted therefore as we shall show the earliest creed and the basis of all the early christian creeds as for instance the Apostles, the Nicene, and the Athanasian. The love of the Father, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the communion and fellowship of the Holy Ghost comprise the sum of christian blessings and to know God experimentally in the spiritual indwelling of these heavenly gifts and graces is eternal life. Nor is there one doctrine of christianity which is not embraced in, or does not flow out from this glorious truth of the triune Redeeming God. Here we are led to believe in God the creator, preserver, and providential governor of the universe of mankind—in God the Redeemer by whose incarnation, mediation, death and intercession man is recovered out of this fallen miserable state,—and in God the Sanctifier by whom having been redeemed man is raised to a truly divine life being recovered in the spirit of his mind purified in conscience and made meet for an inheritance among the saints in light.

Here we behold the love of the Father in originating the glorious gospel of the blessed God and in receiving, justifying, adopting and restoring every believing sinner—the grace of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ in seeking and saving them that are lost, in giving them power to become sons of God, and in keeping, guarding and guiding them through faith unto salvation,—and the regenerating, sanctifying and comforting influences of the Holy Ghost. Here we see therefore the duties which we owe to each of these divine persons arising from the relations in which they thus stand to us and to each other. And here therefore we see the whole economy of salvation from its first inception to its full and final consummation as God is now in and through Christ Jesus reconciling sinners

unto Himself not imputing unto them their trespasses, but imputing unto them that righteousness which is without works on their part and giving His Holy Spirit to them that ask Him.

You will observe that this dedication is *eis cis into*, not *in*, as our translation renders it, but *into* the name of the Father, and into the name of the Son, and into the name of the Holy Ghost—that is, each of these persons are equally the OBJECT to whom the dedication is made, with whom the covenant is sealed, and whose blessing is sought and promised. Of this use of the preposition *eis* we have abundant proof. \*Now this implies to use the language of Dr. Smith,† “in the Being who is, in the highest and most proper sense, the object of it; such properties as these; *capacity* to receive the thing or person dedicated, *ability* to protect, and a *right and power* to confer all the good that is contemplated in the act of dedication. Now the acknowledgment of these properties, and reliance upon them, which are manifestly included in the idea of religious dedication, are affections belonging to the act, or the habit of mental adoration. The moral use of baptism is also intimated by its being “the *stipulation*” of “a good conscience towards God.” Now the existence of a stipulation implies the presence, or in some way the knowledge of acceptance, of the person to whom the engagement is made. It supposes, then, in this case, the presence or cognizance of the Son and the Spirit equally with

\*On the objection to this from the fact “that the Israelites (Smith 17) were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea.” We quote Dr. Smith’s words, p. 18: “Reply 1. In this passage the phrase is used in the sense of a very remote allusion and accommodation. It, might, with as much reason as is contained in the objection, be contended that there is no being who is truly and properly by God, or that there is no being who is truly and properly God, or that there is no ground for worshipping him alone, because Moses was made God unto Pharoah.” The same figure is employed in both cases. Moses is here represented as the designed representative of Christ, the Head of the new covenant; and the Israelites were “baptized unto Moses, as typical of the being baptized unto Christ.” “There is good reason for regarding the word Moses as being here put metonymically, for the institutes or religion of Moses; as it occurs in the subsequent epistle, “When Moses is read, the veil is upon their heart.” Thus the plain sense of the Apostle’s words would be, that the Israelites were, by their participation in the deliverance from Egyptian slavery, brought under a public and recognised obligation to obey all that God might enjoin upon them, by the ministry of Moses. I think it highly probable that the expression, “being baptised into Christ,” which occurs twice, has a similar signification; denoting, not any external act, but a mental and practical consecration to the influence of genuine christianity.

There are respectable grounds for the opinion that, by an ascertained though not frequent Hebraism, the preposition is put to denote the instrumental cause; “they were baptised by Moses,” as if it had been.

Thus the ancient Syriac translated the passage, using the phrase common to both the Hebrew and the Aramean dialects, “*by the hand of Moses.*” The second of these interpretations seems, to my judgment, the best supported by evidence.”

†See Smith 3, p. 17.

that of the Father. From these premises, I think there is ground to conclude, that baptism "into the name" of the Father, or of Christ, or of the Spirit, implies and includes a measure of those mental affections and acts which constitute religious worship; and therefore may justly be considered as, indirectly and by implication, an act of worship."

The early exposition of the Faith preserved among the works of Justin Martyr says, "Since in the doctrine of baptism, the one name has been unitedly delivered to us, of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit; what reasoning can set aside the existence of the Son and the Spirit in the Divine and Blessed Essence."

"The divine majesty and glory," says Limbarch, "are attributed to the Holy Spirit; since we are commanded to be baptized into his name, equally with that of the Father and the Son." "That the Spirit is put," says a late justly admirable divine of Germany. "in the same degree of dignity as the Father and the Son; so that he is entitled to the same religious honour, and upon the same ground of certain evidence, follows from the institution of baptism, in which we are dedicated 'to the name of the Holy Spirit,' as an object of worship and confession. So that the very first entrance into the christian religion shews, that the Holy Spirit is not a created being, but is God, equal with the Father and the Son."

But it may be said that it is only into the *name* of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost we are to be baptized. The name of God however often stands for God himself in his power and majesty.\* The name of God, therefore, is in other words the perfection and glory of God as God. †"In the sacred use of the Old Testament, the phrase under consideration was a formula, to express the direction and object of a religious act; and that all the acts with which it is combined, are such as express mental or external adoration. We will also perceive the same idea strongly marked in many examples from the New Testament." The phrase, "into the name," is properly applicable to persons only. Baptism into the name of a doctrine, or of a system of doctrines, is a phrase unexampled in the language of Scripture; and it presents an incongruous idea. The expression in the text, if interpreted without bias, manifestly requires that the

\*See Exod. XX, 7; Ps. 20:1; Exod. 3:13, 14 and 34:6; John 17:26; Is. 26:8; Mal. 1:11 and 2:2; II Chron., 20:8; Ps. 115:1 and 92:1 and 132:4 and 135:3. See Smith's Messiah, 2, p. 223-225 and 141-145.

†Smith, 2,224. See John 3:18; Matt. 12:21; Acts 9:27 and 19:5, and I Cor., 5:4; Acts 9:13, 14 and I Cor. 1:2 and Smith as above.

name of the Son, and that of the Spirit, must be understood, not of the doctrine of the one and the influence of the other, but with the same relation as the name of the Father; that is, with relation to a personal subsistence."

Baptism therefore is a dedication to three persons, and to each of them as God, since they are represented as capable of performing all the acts, and of bestowing all the mercies of which the Deity is capable; and of receiving invocation and worship as God; and of displaying all the perfections and glory of God's name. The inference is inevitable which has been drawn from this passage by christians in all ages that the Father, Son and Spirit are each divine and yet one God, a trinity in Unity since both here and in the doxology these three persons are represented as voluntary, sovereign, effective and almighty agents and as having equal powers attributed to them.

All Three plainly stand upon a level. They are equal in power and authority. If the Son, as some would represent him, was a created God, and the Holy Ghost a created substance, each of them would be infinitely inferior to the Father, and incapable of being joined with him on such an important occasion and in such an equivocal manner. The majesty of the Father would not have suffered any one to be in such a fundamental ordinance and as the object of its divine invocation, to be with him, had he not been God equal with himself, God in the very same sense as he is. And hence baptism into the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, is a plain and unanswerable argument that each of these divine persons must be God. Were not the Son as truly, and as much by nature God as the Father; and the Holy Ghost as truly and properly God as either Father or Son, our being baptized in their name could not be rationally accounted for. We are in this ordinance in a most affecting manner reminded of the distinct divine benefits they severally confer. The Father adopts us as his sons, and the heirs of eternal life; the Son washes us from our sins in his own blood; and the Holy Ghost regenerates us, and furnishes us with all needful grace. And since we are dedicated to each, each must be God: and the benefits which they confer being so distinct, they must be distinct in the Godhead. This is an argument which we should have always at hand, wherewith to repel the assaults of those who deny the Deity either of Son or Spirit. We should look as far back as our baptism, and remember that by that rite which is ordered to be administered in the name of the Son and Spirit as well as of the Father, our Saviour



has represented each of these three persons as joint objects of Faith, Worship, and Obedience, and that we by being baptized into their names are in the most solemn manner required to render them such equal and divine reverence and confiding trust.

Every christian therefore should remember seriously, "that Three great names were named upon them in their baptism, without any sign of an inequality, and that they have in this way been assured, the Father, Son and Spirit agreed in being favorable and propitious to them, received them into their discipline, grace, and patronage, and engaged to bestow the best and richest blessings upon them, upon their performing the conditions of the covenant. And they should not forget on the other hand, that they are bound with a firm faith, equally to acknowledge and confess the Sacred three, and to repose an equal hope and confidence in them; giving to each of them the highest adoration, and a perpetual obedience. And since this is plain duty, 'tis evident the Son and Holy Ghost must be God as well as the Father. And this is an argument that may, I think, convince and confirm, such as are strangers to the force of abstracted proofs, and that have no relish for the niceties of criticism. The very form of thy baptism, friend, may satisfy thee as to the Deity of thy Saviour. For had not the Son been God as well as the Father, he never would have been joined with him upon that solemn occasion, and represented as the joint object of the Faith, Hope, Love, Trust, Worship and Obedience. The Holy Ghost also must be God, or his name would not have been brought in upon the same occasion; nor would he have been ranked with the other Two, or represented as a joint object with them of divine trust, worship and obedience."

Of course Unitarians must have some way of explaining a passage so plainly and positively perpetuating the doctrine of the Trinity. Some, as has been said in flagrant contradiction to the fact of the undisputed genuineness of the passage, would nevertheless reject it as spurious. It is not, it is said, again referred to in the New Testament, but neither is the Lord's prayer. Others, like Socinus and Emlyn, would persuade us that baptism is only to be administered to such as become converts to christianity from a heathen or infidel state.† They would thus willingly forfeit the promise of our Saviour's pres-

†See his *Disput. de Baptism. Aquice*, and his *Questions on Bapt. in Tracts*.

ence and blessing, whom they render incapable of fulfilling it, rather than perpetuate an ordinance which is a standing demonstration to every age that the Son and the Holy Ghost, to whom all professing Christians are devoted, jointly with the Father, are as truly God as He is God, equal with them in that sacred, initiating solemnity.

Let us therefore cling to this proof of our holy faith that we may be assured of its truth and that our faith may have an abiding influence upon our hearts and lives. This doctrine is to be taught to all nations and to all ages as the true and only fountain of all spiritual blessing.

But seeing the futility and untenableness of such positions as these it is attempted to give this passage an interpretation consistent with Unitarian views. All such renderings, however, of necessity neither translations, paraphrases, nor interpretations but the most arbitrary and unwarranted substitutions of man's wild and incongruous ideas for the plain, simple and sublime doctrine which is according to godliness. "Thus Dr. Lardner would substitute for the passage this astounding declaration,‡ 'Go ye, therefore, into all the world, and teach, or disciple, all nations, baptizing them into the profession of faith in, and an obligation to obey, the doctrine taught by Christ, with authority from God, the Father and confirmed by the Holy Ghost.' Thus, besides the unreasonable force put upon the construction of the words, we are presented with the incongruous combination of the name of the Deity, the name of a doctrine, and the name of certain historical facts."

Dr. Beard, in his recent work on the Trinity, says, "Our Lord here speaks not of essences but relations."\* "They are accordingly terms of relation, and not terms of nature that he employs: the Father, the Son, the Holy Ghost."† "The words simply speak of three subjects, termed Father, Son, and Holy Spirit." "The words, however, point to three relations, to three well known relations, relations that are found in the whole economy of redemption." "The Father, the author, the Son, the medium, the Holy Ghost, the advocate of the Gospel; such is the practical relation in which the three subjects stand to each other, and in which every name is accurately descriptive and characteristic. As such, these few words are a summary of the whole Gospel, from its first conception to its last

‡Smith 3, p. 22, in his Letter on the Logos. First Postscript.

\*Beard's Rise, Progress and Decline of Trinitarianism, p. 82.

†Do., p. 83, thrice.

achievement. As such the words find a comment in every page of the evangelists, and in every discourse and letter of the Apostles."

In all this last we agree. But he goes on to say (Dr. Beard, pp. 83 and 84): "Well, then may our Lord have required all nations to be baptized into these three subjects, for by compliance with the prescribed rite, they would signify their readiness to receive the system of religious truth which had been given by the Father, published by the Son, and attested by the Holy Spirit. Let it not be objected, that as the Father and Son are persons, so the Holy Ghost must, also, be a person. We answer, the personality of no one of the three comes forward in the text. It is not asserted; is not implied. The name Father, is a word of relation, not essence, the same is true of the word Son; Jesus is the personal name of our Lord; equally, the term Holy Ghost refers to that relation, which the sanctifying Spirit of God bears to God himself." "A spiritual Saviour will not satisfy us."

"We consider the text, then, as setting forth a form by which neophytes were to signify their acceptance of the Gospel, binding themselves to receive, in a docile and reverent spirit, instructions on the three great divisions of gospel truth, represented by the three terms, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost."

This truly is a refinement upon christianity. This surely is transcendental enough for any philosopher who spake what he neither understood himself nor any that heard him. "Alas," exclaims this exalted genius, our minds are materialized; hence our conceptions are low, and unworthy, and we cannot rise to the spirituality of the doctrine of Christ."

Converts to christianity are initiated by being formally and solemnly baptized into three relations, which are no essences at all—which are none of them, no, not even the Father—beings at all. This surely were ridiculous absurdity were it not downright profanity. What! are we, and all men of all nations and of all ages to the end of time, to be baptized into the name of "three relations" called by the mystic, cabbalistic, titles of Father, Son and Holy Ghost? What puerile stuff is this, and how certainly does it prove the impregnable nature of this testimony to the doctrine of a triune God.

"Since," says Bishop Burnet,\* without any distinction, or note of inequality, "all Three, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, are in this charge set together, as persons in whose name this

\*On the XXXIX Art.

transaction is to be managed, they must be all three the True God; otherwise it looks like a just prejudice against our Saviour and his whole gospel, that by his express direction, the first entrance to it, which gives the visible and federal right to the great blessings that are offered by it, or their initiation into it, should be in the name of two created beings (if the one can be called so much as a being, according to their hypothesis) and that even in an equality with the Supreme and uncreated being. The plainness of this charge, and the great occasion upon which it was given, makes this an argument of such force and evidence, that it may justly determine the whole matter."

But it is further argued that this passage cannot contain a prescribed form for baptism because, as is alleged, not only is it not followed by the Apostles but is not even quoted by the early fathers as a proof of the doctrine of the Trinity, or as essential to christian baptism.

Now as to the former part of this objection, it is sufficient to say that we have no record of the actual form of words with which the Apostles baptized but only of the fact that they baptized into Christ, or into the name of Christ, a phrase which, as we have seen, must either mean into the baptism instituted and prescribed by Christ in contrast to that of John or of the Jews, or else into the faith, worship and belief of Christ as "over all God blessed for ever" the supreme object of christian faith and worship. In either way of interpretation, the doctrine of the Trinity as promulgated in this passage is confirmed and enforced.

And as it regards the early fathers and christians nothing is more capable of proof than that the very reverse of what is affirmed is true, and that, with emphatic strength, they represent themselves as believing that in this passage we have a clear and undeniable declaration of the doctrine of the trinity,—that that doctrine is in this passage made the essential form of christian baptism,—that a profession of faith in this doctrine was required of all candidates for baptism,—and that the omission of this doctrine as the form of administering baptism was made the test of orthodox or heretical baptism.

"If," says Dr. Pye Smith,\* "it be allowable, in any theological question, to draw an argument from prescription and universal use, in no case could that argument be more justly applied than in the present; in no case, (excepting however, the innovation of a few Unitarians of our own day,) could the

\*I, p. 15, 16.

rule of *quod semper et ubique et ab omnibus* be more triumphantly pleaded."

The only recognized creed, or formula of faith in the christian church, was for a long time this very form of words delivered by Christ. The earliest creed was therefore this creed of the Trinity as it has been called. Such is the opinion of Erasmus, Vossius, Stillingfleet and indeed of all learned antiquarians.\*\*

Justyn Martyr who was born in Palestine soon after the death of the Apostle John, A. D. 89, says, "that persons who were admitted to baptism, performed the washing in the water in the name of God, the Father and Sovereign of the universe, and of Jesus Christ our Saviour, and of the Holy Spirit."||

"The law of baptism," says Tertullian A. D. 160-220, "is enjoined and the form prescribed; Go teach the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit."

§"The form of baptism," he elsewhere says, "was prescribed by our Saviour himself as a law to his church."

Cyprian, A. D. 245, expressly declares,† "That the form of baptism is prescribed by Christ, that it should be *in plena et adunata trinitate: i. e.*, in the full confession of the Holy Trinity; and therefore he denied the baptism of the Marcionites, because the faith of the Trinity was not sincerely held among them. "How, then," he asks,‡ "do some assert, both without the Church and against the Church, that a Gentile, provided only he be baptized any where, and any how, in the name of Christ, can obtain remission of sins; when Christ himself commanded, that the nations should be baptized in the full and united Trinity."

Ireueus, a disciple of Polycarp, A. D. 177-202, speaks of the immoveable rule of truth (see Bib. Report, 1833, p. 610.)

Polycarp, A. D. 89, a disciple of the Apostle John, is recorded to have closed his prayer at the stake in these words:\* "On account of this, and concerning all things, I praise thee, and bless thee, and glorify thee, together with the eternal and super-celestial Jesus Christ thy beloved Son: with whom, to thee and to the Holy Ghost, be glory both now and for ever. Amen."

\*\*Erasmus ad. Censur Pavis. T. A. Vossii de Symb. diss Iu 38. Stillingfleet p. 178. See Bingham Augusti Riddle and Coleman's Chr. Antiq.

||Apology C., 61.

§Stillingfleet, 179.

†Stillingfleet, p. 177, 178.

‡Faber l., 130 and 318 compared.

\*Faber, 1:85.

†“Augustine,” says Stillingfleet, “calls them the words of the Gospel, without which there is no baptism.”

Other authorities to the same effect we give in a note.\*

From the time of Justyn Martyr, says Augustin in his *Christian Antiquities*,‡ and the author of the *Apostolical Constitutions* down to the eighteenth century, all the liturgical books of all sects and parties in the church contained only one form of words to be pronounced in the act of administering baptism; namely, “I baptize thee in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.” Some teachers and sects indeed there were who did not use these words in the generally received or orthodox sense; but the words themselves remained unaltered. “It would be easier,” adds Augustin, “to find heretics who do not baptize at all, than any who do not use this form of words in their baptism.”

§“Among the writings of the ancients,” he continues, “I have never yet met with any but two that plainly and directly allow or approve of any other form of baptism, save that which was appointed by Christ at the institution. But this,” he adds, “appears to have been a singular opinion in St. Ambrose, contrary to the general stream and current of the ancient writers.”||

The care with which candidates for baptism were instructed in the doctrine of the Trinity is evinced by all the writings of the Fathers. It formed the basis of the consummating lectures, which were delivered by the Catechists to the more advanced class of the Catechumens during the forty days which immediately preceded their baptism: and the same Creed, which had thus been employed as a text book, was recited by the candidate at the font ere he was solemnly baptized. Such being the case, as the Creed of each church was communicated to every Catechumen, and was received by every Catechumen, and at the font in answer to the interrogation of the minister was recited by every Catechumen: it, of course and by absolute necessity, expressed the faith of every baptized member of the Catholic Church.

Of these creeds we have in the first place what is commonly called the Apostles creed the ancient symbol of the Church of

†Stillingfleet, p. 179 and *Bib. Rep.*, 611.

\*Calamy, p. 180, 181, 182 and 317; Faber 1, 317; Smith 3, 21; Halley 292; *Bib. Rep.* 610; Jerome Stillingfleet 178; Wall ii., 146-7; Gregory.

‡Riddle's *Ch. Antiq.* from Augustin, p. 505.

§Riddle's *Ch. Antiq.* 507, 508.

||*Antiq. B.* xi., c. 3, § 3. He refers to an African Monk, Ursinus and Ambrose.

Rome, and of which the doctrine of the Trinity formed the basis.\* We have another in the catechetical lectures of Cyril, A. D. 350, in which this doctrine is very fully developed and which Cyril calls, "The Holy Apostolical Faith delivered to us for our profession." Another creed probably of the Alexandrian church is preserved by Athanasius, in which it is said,† "I believe in one God, who is known as the holy and perfect Trinity. Into which Trinity being baptized, and in this Godhead assenting, I believe, that I shall inherit the kingdom of heaven in our Lord Jesus Christ."

The same system of doctrine, though at greater length, is inculcated in the Confession of the Church of Neocæsaria. In this creed it is said, "There is a perfect Trinity, in glory and eternity and sovereignty neither divided nor separated." "Wherefore, in this Trinity,‡ there is nothing either created or servile or adventitious; as if it existed not before, but was afterward introduced. For the Son was never wanting to the Father: nor the Spirit, to the Son. But this Trinity is eternally the same, unchangeable and invariable."||

A creed equally explicit on the doctrine of the Trinity is given by Irenæus the scholar of Polycarp the disciple of John born A. D. 97. As this creed was evidently familiar to Irenæus, from his very boyhood, it cannot be of later date than the beginning of the second century. And as he attests, the universal reception of the doctrine of the trinity which it inculcates he stamps, with his own unimpeachable impress the strict apostolicity of those doctrines.\*\*

Besides the larger Symbols or Creeds which I have adduced, there was occasionally used in the early Church a very short Symbol, which seems to have been denominated the Symbol of the Trinity," which is the title given to it by Firmilian in his epistles to Cyprian.†† "Now this shorter Symbol was evidently constructed upon the form of administering baptism, which our Lord himself had prescribed; being as follows: "I believe in God: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost."‡‡ The same

\*Expounded by Ruffinen, Bishop of Aquilcia in the 4th Century, in Cyprian's Wks., and Faber, p. 166.

†Epist. ad. African Oper., vol. I., p. 725. Faber 167 and 168.

‡Gregory Thaumaturgus, in Faber 1, p. 169.

||Faber 1, 170. See Advers. Heret. and Adv. Praxeas in Do., p. 171, 172.

\*\*Faber I., 178. Adv. Paeres., lib. 1, c. 2; also again Mid. lib. 111. c. 4, § 2.

††Cyprian Oper. Ep., 75. Faber, p. 185. "Nunquid et hoc Stephanus, et qui illi consentiunt, comprobant: maxime cui nec Symbolum Tritatis, nec interrogatio legitima et ecclesiastica defuit." Note.

‡‡Faber 1, p. 185.

account of this creed is given by Cyril of Jerusalem in those supplemental lectures, which he was wont to deliver to his late Catechumens subsequent to their baptism. "Ye were brought," says he, "to the holy laver of divine baptism, as Christ was brought from the cross to his appointed sepulchre: and there each one of you was asked, if he believed in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost; and ye confessed a salutary confession. For each one of you, when interrogated, was directed to answer: I believe in the Father, and in the Son, and in the Holy Ghost, and in one baptism of repentance."‡

To the same effect speaks Tertullian: "When our Lord was leaving this world, his last command was, that his Apostles should baptize *into* the Father and *into* the Son, and *into* the Holy Ghost, not *into* any one of them separately from the others. Hence we are dipped, not merely once, but three times; each immersion at each name of each person. Before we enter into the water, and some little time previously in the church under the hand of the Bishop, we protest, that we renounce the devil and his pomp and his angels. Then we are immersed three times, answering somewhat more than the Lord in the Gospel commanded."§

"If any one," says Cyprian, "could be baptized among the heretics, he might obtain also remission of sins, he might be sanctified and made the temple of God. But, I ask, of what God? If of the Creator; he, who did not believe in him, could not be made his temple: if of Christ; neither could he, who denies Christ to be God, be the temple of Christ; if of the Holy Spirit; since these three are one, how could the Holy Spirit be reconciled to him, who is an enemy both to the Father and to the Son."\*

We might also refer to a similar creed found in the Apostolical constitution,† but will only add that Irenaeus affirms of the creed, used in his days, and which so explicitly teaches the doctrine of the Trinity that it exhibited the faith of the Universal Church in every quarter of the world, and that the Universal Church received it from the Apostles and their disciples."

But this is not all. The full and explicit reception of the doctrine of the Trinity by the primitive church may be learned not only from the creeds of the church but also from her letters

‡Cyril. Hieros. Catech. Myst. 1, p. 230. Faber 1, 185.

§Tertull. adv. Prax., § xvi. Tertull. de coron. Mil., § ii. Oper., p. 449. See in Faber 1, 186.

\*Cyprian Epist., 73 Oper., vol. 2. p. 203. in Faber 1, 188.

†Lib. vii. c. 41, Patres. Apost. Cotel., vol. I., p. 383.



of mutual edification, her homilies, her litanies, and benedictions, all which were confessions of her faith; and which all retained this original and divinely impressed form of baptism with surprising distinctness. This doctrine is implied also in the consecration of churches to God,—in the three elements of the eucharist—the bread, the wine, and the water,—in the three great festivals of the ancient church, which were instituted about the fourth century,—and in the form of the ancient christian's oath which was usually taken in the name of God, of Christ and of the Holy Spirit.

The doctrine of the primitive church is further exhibited to us in the fact that the want of this form of baptism constituted invalid baptism and was therefore repudiated.\* The baptism of the Eunomians was rejected, because they attested the form and the faith, saying, that the Father was uncreate, the Son created by the Father and the Holy Ghost created by the Son. The baptism of the Samosatzenians was rejected for the same reason by the Council of Nice. The Council of Arles A. D. 314 in express words rejects the baptism of all those who refused to acknowledge the doctrine of the trinity. "If any," it says, "relinquished their heresy and came back to the church, they should ask them the creed, and if they found that they were baptized in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, they should have only imposition of hands, but if they did not confess the Trinity, their baptism was declared void."

For their rejection or modification of the doctrine of the Trinity, Praxeas A. D. 205, and after him Novatian, Noetus and Sabellius, all previous to the Nicene Council were condemned as heretical, and as it regards the first Tertullian charges him "with introducing a new opinion into the church."†

This doctrine of the Trinity, as being necessary to salvation is also taught by the primitive church in its hymns and doxologies. These were most solemn parts of religious worship offered to Father, Son and Holy Ghost as each, and yet as together one, God. And as divine worship cannot be rendered to mere names, to attributes, or to any other than a personal being; and as equality of worship implies an equality of dignity in the object of worship; it is incontrovertibly plain that the primitive churches regarded each of these divine persons as equally God, and yet all as one God, a trinity in Unity. Christ

\*See Stillingfleet on the Trinity, p. 180.

†See the case fully discussed by Stillingfleet on the Trinity, Ch. ix., p. 182-196.

founded his Church, says Athanasius, on the doctrine of the trinity contained in the words of baptism; and if the Holy Ghost had been of a different nature from the Father and the Son, he would never have been joined with them in a form of baptism, no more than an angel, or any other creature.\* Indeed, as Bishop Bull well observes,† all the ancient Liturgies extant, in whatever part of the world they may have been used, contain, under one modification or another, that solemn concluding Doxology to the Blessed Trinity with which every Catholic is so abundantly familiar. "Glory be to the Father and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost: both now, and always, and to all eternity." Now this Doxology is evidently built upon that brief and most remotely ancient creed, which was familiarly denominated the Symbol of the Trinity." "I believe in God: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost." And the Symbol of the Trinity, again, is manifestly founded upon the formula of baptism enjoined and appointed by our Lord himself. "Baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

This is true of the Clementine Liturgy which is believed to exhibit this truth.‡ "For," says Mr. Faber, "if each Catechumen is to be baptized in the name of the three divine persons: each christian is required to profess his belief in the three divine persons. And, if each christian be required thus to profess his belief in the three divine persons: the Doxology, to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost, as used in public worship, will be the necessary consequence.§

"This Liturgy, whatever may be its actual antiquity, is confessed in it all its leading or principal parts, to exhibit the order of public worship observed in the Eastern Churches at least before the time of Constantine."

It is further true, also, that almost every prayer in the ancient services of the church for whatever service intended closes with the doxology. We find this doxology employed by Hippolytus about A. D. 222,|| and by Tertullian who refers to it.\*\* About the year 194, we find it used by Clement of Alexandria.††

\*Stillingfleet, 221.

†Faber 1, p. 195.

‡Faber 1, p. 196. See 196-202.

§This Liturgy, which commonly bears the name of the Clementine Liturgy, and the Directory which accompanies it, have been preserved in the eighth book of the Apostolical Constitutions.

||Contr. Naet. c. xviii.

\*\*Faber, p. 203, 204.

††Clem. Alex. Paedeg. lib., 111, c. 12. Oper., p. 266.

About the year 175, Ireneus incidentally remarks, that it was employed by the Catholic church in the course of her ordinary thanksgivings. § In the year 147, it was used at the stake by the venerable Polycarp: and, at the same time, it was attached, by the collective members of the church of Smyrna, to the Epistle in which they communicated the account of his martyrdom. Finally we have the direct attestation of Justyn Martyr: that, in his days, the prayers and thanksgivings of the church invariably terminated with some one or other modification of it. "In all that we offer up," says he, "we bless the Creator of all things: through his Son Jesus Christ, and through the Holy Ghost." "Nothing," says Basil, † "shall make me forsake the doctrine I received in my baptism, when I was first entered into the christian church; and I advise all others to keep firm to that profession of the Holy Trinity, which they made in their baptism; that is of the of the indivisible union of Father, Son and Holy Ghost." "By the order of the words," he adds,\* "in baptism it appears that as the Son is to the Father, so the Holy Ghost is to the Son. For they are all put without any distinction or number, which he observes agrees only to a multitude. For by their properties they are one and one; yet by the community of essence the two are but one: and he makes it his business to prove the Holy Ghost to be a proper object of adoration as well as the Father and the Son, and therefore there was no reason to find fault with the doxology used in that church." ‡

And in regard to the Doxology this father adds, "that, Firmilian, Melctius and the Eastern christians agreed with them in the use of it, and so did all the Western churches from Illyricum to the world's end: and this, said he, was by an immemorial custom of all churches, and of the greatest men in them." "Nay, more," he adds, "it had been continued in the churches, from the time the gospel had been received among them." ||

From these several sources we arrive at the certain and indubitable conclusion that the doctrine of the trinity is the only proper and possible inference to be drawn from the baptismal commission, and that such was the view taken of it, and practi-

§Iren. adv. Haer. lib. 1, c. 1, p. 10.

†De. Sp. Span. Eto., c. 10.

\*De Sp. Span. Eto., c. 17.

‡C. 18.

||Stillingfleet 207. Do. c. 29, in Stillingfleet, p. 207, where other authorities may be found. See p. 199.

cally acted upon, by all the christian churches during the three first centuries.

“During this period,” says Mr. Faber,\* “ALL the churches not only agreed in maintaining the system of doctrine usually styled trinitarian: but they ALL likewise agreed in yet another very important matter. While without a single exception, they ALL concurred in holding that peculiar doctrine, which is briefly denominated *The doctrine of the Trinity*; they ALL, moreover, without a single exception, concurred in declaring: That through one or at the most through two intermediate channels, they had received this doctrine from some one or other of the twelve Apostles, up to whom they severally carried their ecclesiastical succession; that the rule of faith which propounded this doctrine, was ultimately derived from Christ himself; and that, as it was universal in point of reception, throughout all the provincial churches in mutual communion with each other, so it was questioned by none save heretics who in parties of scattered individuals had gone out from the great and more ancient body of the Church Catholic.”†

\*Faber 1, p. 246, 247.

†See Iren. adv. haer. lib. 1, c. 2, p. 34-36. Lib. 111, c. 4, § 2, p. 172. Tertull. de praescript, adv. haer. § 4. Oper., p. 100.





# Unitarianism Not the Gospel.



Occasioned by the Recent Discourse of the Rev.  
Samuel Gilman, D. D., in Reply to One  
by Rev. E. P. Humphrey, D. D.



BY THE  
REV. THOMAS SMYTH, D. D.





## UNITARIANISM NOT THE GOSPEL.

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1 CORINTHIANS, 11, 19.

“For there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you.”

The Apostle here announces that sects and divisions among those who call themselves christians were *then*, and are *still*, permitted to exist. These arise, as a necessary result, from the passions of men, and the present evil propensities of human nature. As in the natural world we see good and evil mingled together, so in the moral world, we behold truth and falsehood, heresies and dissensions so permitted to exist, as to constitute both a state of suffering and of probation. And the end for which this condition of things is permitted is, we are told, that they who are perfect or sincere in their desire to secure and in their efforts to attain to, the truth, may be made manifest.

So it was in antediluvian times, when Cain and his followers rejected the doctrine of atonement and a divine method of propitiation and salvation through the sacrifice, blood and death of Christ, who was held forth in the appointed sacrifices as “the Lamb of God, slain from the foundation of the world.” So it was throughout the whole period of the ancient economy, when “there were false prophets among the people” by whom the Lord their God proved them to know whether they loved the Lord their God with all their heart and with all their soul.” Deut. 13, 3.

So it was in the days of Christ and his Apostles. “Also of your own selves,” says the Saviour, “shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.” “Even as there shall be false teachers among you, says the Apostle Peter, who privily shall bring in *damnable* heresies, even denying THE LORD THAT BOUGHT THEM, and bring upon them swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways, by reason of whom THE WAY OF TRUTH shall be evil spoken of.”

Thus it was declared in reference to Christ himself “Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign which shall be spoken against. Yea a sword shall pierce through thine own soul also that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.”

The doctrine concerning Christ—his person—his divinity—and his death—came therefore—even before the close of the

Scripture Canon and the death of the last Apostle—to be THE TEST AND EVIDENCE OF CHRISTIANITY, for “he is Antichrist that denieth the Father and THE SON, and whosoever denieth THE SON the same hath not the Father.” Many portions of the New Testament as well as of the Old, refer therefore to the errors and heresies, which had arisen or should arise by which “if possible, the very elect should be deceived,” and by whose “strong delusions many should believe a lie, that they all might be damned who believe not the truth.” “They went out from us,” says the Apostle John, speaking of many Antichrists, “but they were not of us, for if they had been of us they would no doubt have continued with us, but they went out that they might be made manifest that they were not of us.

That there exist, therefore, at this time, such a variety of creeds, all claiming to be divine, is what both reason and scripture lead us to expect, and what God permits for the trial of our sincerity and the test of our “obedience to the faith,” in contrariety to the wisdom, the pride, and the self sufficiency of human reason. The Epistles, written to the seven Churches of Asia Minor, by the direct instruction of Heaven, and through the instrumentality of the Apostle John, teach us that “the wisdom of man” is so foolish in its depraved enmity to “the truth as it is in Jesus” which it cannot receive, because “it is spiritually discerned” that even while the echoes of Christ’s living words were dying on the breeze, churches had become “synagogues of Satan,” received that as true which Christ “hates as blasphemy,” and were reprobated and anathematized by His divine rebuke. It is remarkable that in these divine epistles, Christ *commends* in some of these churches their “hating that which He also hates,” that “they could not bear them which are evil,” and that they had “tried them who say they are Apostles but are not, and hadst found them liars,” and that He *condemns* in *all*, the permitted existence among them of any error, either in doctrine or in practice. (Rev. ch. ii. and iii.)

It is *vain*, therefore, and worse than *vain*—it is *sinful*—to substitute a charity which sanctions a multitude of conflicting and contradictory opinions for “the truth as it is in Jesus”—that truth “which makes us free”—that truth which we are to “buy at any price and sell not,” and “for which we are to contend earnestly”—that truth which “he that believeth shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned.”

Now this truth centres in Christ. "I," says He, "am the truth," and to "know Him is life eternal." Christ is the Alpha and Omega of all divine revelation,—the first and the last—the beginning and the ending, which is and which was, and which is to come, the ALMIGHTY,—“the author and finisher of faith,”—the sum and substance of the gospel—the centre and circumference of all man’s hopes—“the only foundation,”—“the only name under heaven by which we can be saved.” It is, therefore, of infinite importance to every human being, to be able to answer the divine inquiry, “What think ye of Christ?”

“A belief in Christ as THE MESSIAH, which implies he believes, only a human or created nature is,” says Dr. Gilman, “the comprehensive and simple platform which he appears alone to have prescribed,” and the only probable “basis of a universal church.” This declaration he substantially repeats, in the close of his discourse. He makes the Apostle Paul also “to represent faith in Jesus the Christ *or Messiah*, as an all-sufficient, internal living principle, capable of producing righteousness of character and consequent acceptance with God.” Dr. Gilman excludes, therefore, from the gospel, all reference to Christ as THE LORD, AND SON OF GOD. Alas! alas! for those who build upon such a foundation, the hay, wood and stubble of their vain hopes for eternal life, for assuredly this is not gospel. “Whom,” asked this same Jesus, “do men say that I, the son of man, am?” “And they said some say thou art John the Baptist, some Elias, and others saith Jeremias, or one of the Prophets. He said unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art Christ, THE SON OF THE LIVING GOD. And Jesus answered, Blessed art thou Simon Barjona, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.”

Whosoever, says Christ, “believeth in me shall not perish, but have eternal life. For God 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. He that believeth on HIM is not condemned; but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he believed not in the name of THE ONLY BEGOTTEN SON OF GOD.” Again, in this same blessed gospel of John, it is said, “But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, THE SON OF GOD: and that believing ye might have life through his name.”

My brethren, I might fill a sermon, yea many sermons, with quotations from "the four gospels, so genial, so plain, so welcome to every heart," and from the "blessed New Testament" to shew that it is not in Christ as THE MESSIAH or a SON OF GOD merely, we are required to "believe with the heart unto salvation," but in Jesus the Messiah—THE SON OF GOD. "Even devils came out of many crying out, thou art Christ THE SON OF GOD." When the angel announced to Mary his birth, he said: "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee, therefore that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called THE SON OF GOD." Again the angels said unto the shepherds,—“Unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ THE LORD.”<sup>4</sup>

When Christ himself would test the faith of a disciple, he said, "dost thou believe in the SON OF GOD?" (John 9, 35.) So frequently and emphatically did Christ appropriate to himself this title, that he was obliged to justify himself from the charge of blasphemy. (John 10, 36.) On another occasion, Jesus answered them, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work. Therefore the Jews sought more to kill him, because he not only had broken the Sabbath, but said that God was his Father, MAKING HIMSELF EQUAL WITH GOD." On another occasion, "When Jesus saw their faith, he said unto the sick of the palsy, son, thy sins be forgiven thee. But there were certain of the scribes sitting there, and reasoning in their hearts, why doth this man thus speak blasphemies? Who can forgive sins but God only?" (See Mark 2, 5-10.) "Jesus said, I and my Father are one. They then took up stones to stone him. He told them of many good works that he had shewn them, and asked, for which of these works do ye stone me? They replied, for a good work we stone thee not, but for blasphemy, and because thou being a man, makest thyself God." On this charge, which in the most solemn manner Christ admitted as true, he was accused, condemned and crucified. The Jews said, "We have a law, and by our law he ought to die, because he made himself the son of God."

This faith was the test and evidence of the heartfelt belief of the Ethiopian Enoch, "I believe that Jesus Christ is THE SON OF GOD." The Apostles every where "preached Christ that he is THE SON OF GOD," and made the practical and living belief of this truth the essential mark of a genuine believer. And when our Saviour appears to John in the Isle of Patmos, he

commands him to "write these things" as "THE SON OF GOD." "He that believeth," says the Apostle John, "ON THE SON OF GOD, hath the witness in himself; he that believeth not God, hath made him a liar, because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son. And this is the record that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life: and he that hath not THE SON OF GOD hath not life. These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of THE SON OF GOD; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of THE SON OF GOD."

An analagous form of stating the gospel messages in "the blessed New Testament," is "Believe on THE LORD JESUS CHRIST, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house." "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our LORD JESUS CHRIST."

Now it is concerning Jesus Christ as "THE LORD and THE ONLY BEGOTTEN SON OF GOD," that one of the most fearful denunciations in the whole Bible is uttered: "If any man love not THE LORD Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maranatha." Jesus himself said "Thou shalt love THE LORD thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind;" and that "all men should honour THE SON EVEN AS they honour the Father. He that honoureth not THE SON honoureth not the Father which hath sent him." "We believe in God believe also in me."

It is now more than evident that in order to salvation it is made necessary BY CHRIST and HIS APOSTLES, that we should believe in, and love, honour and obey Christ, not only as the Messiah, not only as the son of man, but as THE SON OF GOD, and this, too, even as we love, honour and obey God the Father. What this imports, it concerneth the everlasting life of every man perfectly to understand, and experimentally to know. It were easy, we think, to shew from these same scriptures, that these titles of Christ imply divinity,—that they were so employed in the Old Testament in reference to Christ, since "to Him gave all the Prophets witness that THROUGH HIS NAME whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins,"—that they were so understood by the Jewish nation—and that they are therefore all important. To me they involve the mystery of "the great God and our Saviour," which the pride of human reason cannot receive unless it "becomes as a little child." True the doctrine of Christ's person, character

and work is a mystery—a great mystery. But does not the Apostle say that, “without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: 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.” True, the natural man cannot understand this doctrine, neither can he receive it because it is spiritually discerned. But does not the Scripture teach “that no man can say that Jesus is THE LORD, but by the Holy Ghost.” And on another occasion are we not told “while the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them, saying, what think ye of Christ? Whose son is he? They say unto him: The son of David. He saith unto them, How then doth David in spirit (or by direct inspiration) call him LORD, saying, The Lord said unto my Lord, sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool? If David then called him Lord, how is he his son? And no man was able to answer him a word, neither durst any man from that day forth ask him any more questions.” Are we not told “His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns, and he had a name written that no man knew but he himself.” And does not Christ himself declare that “He is in the Father and the Father in Him,”—that “He and the Father are one,” and that so inconceivable to human reason is this mystery, that “no man knoweth the Father but the Son, neither knoweth any man the Son but the Father and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him.”

Does not Christ, when Peter called him by the title of the Son of God, declare “that the fact affirmed by Peter was not properly apprehended but by divine instruction;” “Happy art thou, Simon, son of Jonas, for flesh and blood” (a well known Jewish idiom, denoting the unassisted principles and powers of human nature) “hath not revealed (it) unto thee; but my Father who is in the heavens.” But surely it required no such divine influence to enable a man, who had so copiously witnessed the evidences of the claims of Jesus, to perceive the rational conclusion from those evidences. Peter needed but the common understanding of men to receive the proof of *the Messiahship* of Jesus; and yet this is all that Dr. Gilman comprehends in the gospel and the basis of saving faith. The fact asserted by the Saviour, of a special divine influence enabling Peter to make his good confession, suggests also to us the strong probability that the Apostle did not, at the time, comprehend the full import of the declaration which he made. The subsequent teachings of the Holy Spirit would bring it to his

remembrance, with a much higher measure of knowledge and understanding.

It is further worthy of being observed, that Christ on this occasion immediately connects his being the Son of God with the exercise of sovereign authority and power, in relation to the salvation of men and to matters of moral obligation, yet *this* is the sole province of Deity. "I will build my church, the gates of hell shall not prevail against it: I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven." Let a man seriously reflect on the magnitude of his work, the power requisite to accomplish it, and the nature of the ground of certainty here assumed that it should be accomplished; and can he refuse to exclaim: "From Jehovah is this: It is marvelous in our eyes!"\*

Oh yes, Jesus who saves sinners from their sins, is "Emmanuel God with us"—"God over all and blessed forever"—"The mighty God, the Everlasting Father and the Prince of Peace"—"The Word who was in the beginning with God and who is God"—"Who being in the form of God thought it not robbery to be equal with God." He is an eternal, immutable, omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent, all wise, all merciful, living and sympathising Saviour, and "able therefore to save to the very uttermost, all who come unto God by Him."

I have dwelt thus long, my hearers, on this point, because the ultimate object of this discourse of Dr. Gilman is evidently and avowedly twofold, *first* "to secure his people from the danger of being entangled in what seems to him a heavy yoke of bondage, a system of confused, unpractical and unscriptural speculations;" and *secondly*, to press home the urgency of his powerful appeal "upon every believer in Jesus, on every reflecting, sensitive, inquiring man."

This discourse, I shall shew, was prepared without any challenge made to Unitarianism, preached at the public "service of the Unitarian Church," published at the instance of the Unitarian Book and Tract Society in a daily paper, and circulated by many additional hundreds, and addressed "to all who are interested in religion." He claims for "the Unitarian," the faith, humility, and every other grace portrayed by Dr. Humphrey. He glories in the great number who have become Unitarians in France, in Holland, in Germany, in England, in the United States, and even in Geneva. "The destiny of a universally popular and acceptable religion is still in reserve

\*See Smith's Testimony to the Messiah.

for some system which shall only embrace, like the teachings of Jesus Christ, a very few plain and powerful principles comprehended by every intellect, necessary to every condition, and welcome to every eager heart."

This discourse is, therefore, an assertion of the religious system known by the name Unitarian, and an aggressive attack upon the doctrines and polity of the Presbyterian Church.

Nor is it a feeble effort. It is characterized by the utmost ability of this talented writer, and by all the candour, honesty and sincerity, for which this most amiable and generally esteemed representative of his fellow-believers is so eminently distinguished. The cause could not have fallen into better hands, nor received an abler advocacy. And if *just* occasion had been given for this onslaught made upon the Presbyterian Church, we might well have been regarded as having merited the unmitigated severity of this public and most unlooked for reprobation. That no such provocation, however, was given, I will endeavor to shew by some remarks on the discourse of Dr. Humphrey, which has, I think, been made by Dr. Gilman the inappropriate "medium" for "unburdening his mind" against a system regarded by him with such aversion and disgust.

I remark, then, in the first place, that the discourse of Dr. Humphrey was delivered only in the usual way of opening our General Assembly, and was altogether an expression of the individual taste, talent, prudence and views of its author.

I remark, secondly, that the publication of this discourse was purely a matter of private enterprise on the part of the editor who undertook to report the proceedings of the Assembly. It was unknown and unexpected, and occasioned by its immediate appearance, no doubt, the surprise and delight of every member of that body.

In the third place, I remark that the General Assembly in no way committed itself to the sentiments or statements of that discourse, either directly or indirectly.

I remark, fourthly, that while the discourse of Dr. Humphrey was listened to with breathless admiration;—while it enkindled by its eloquence, power and pathos, the most soul-stirring enthusiasm;—while in *substance* it was, and is regarded as a truthful exposition of the principles and practical developments of our system;—and while by all it was considered as nearly faultless as a composition; nevertheless it is also true



that immediate exceptions were taken to the discourse by many who heard it.

These exceptions referred, *first*, to the statement, as a part of our doctrinal system, that "the purpose of God is the cause of creation, sin and redemption." This statement, *as now worded*, implies that God's purpose is the cause of sin, in the same sense in which it is the cause of redemption and creation, that is actively, self-originated, exclusively and efficiently. Now, taking Dr. Humphrey's language in this sense, it is impossible to frame a declaration more positively and directly opposed to the full, frequent and emphatic language of our standards. Our confession of faith recognizes God as "the first cause of all things," but it recognizes just as clearly, "the liberty and contingency of second causes." It holds to the former only so far as it does not "take away but rather establishes the latter," "so that neither is violence offered to the will of the creatures," "neither is God the author of sin." (Ch. III, § 1.) It teaches that God created men, "having the law of God written in their hearts and POWER TO FULFILL IT, and yet under a possibility of transgressing, being left to the liberty of their own will which was subject unto change." (Ch. 4, § 2.) It teacheth that God ordereth all things to come to pass, "according to the nature of second causes, either necessarily (*if material*) or "freely and contingently" *if moral agents*. It teaches that "God maketh use of means," and that while God's providence extendeth itself even to the first fall and all other sins of angels and men, "yet it hath joined with it a most wise and powerful bounding, and other wise ordering and governing of them in a manifest dispensation, to his own holy ends; yet so as the sinfulness thereof proceedeth only from the creature, and not from God, who being most holy and righteous, neither is nor can be the author or approver of sin."

Those quotations might be multiplied in reference to all the points in which God stands related to man and in and to God, both as it regards the kingdom of nature, of providence, and of grace, to shew that in every aspect our standards recognize man as a free, moral, accountable being, personally and consciously sinful, guilty and condemned, addressed as a reasonable being, wrought upon by motives, saved, if saved, by a personal faith in Christ, and lost, if lost under the gospel, by a personal rejection of the "great salvation." The statement, therefore, of Dr. Humphrey, which forms the basis and runs through all the strictures of Dr. Gilman, is not only unauthor-

ized, but is in plain and manifest contradiction to the standards of our Church.

It is but fair, however, to add that having very early called Dr. Humphrey's attention to this statement before any public notice *could* be made of it, he at once saw and admitted the incorrectness of the language, and authorized me, should the discourse be printed in pamphlet form, which was then privately thought of, either to omit the word "sin" altogether, or to introduce the words "either efficiently or permissively," to qualify the term cause.

A second exception taken to Dr. Humphrey's sermon by many, was the leading idea contained in it that the various characteristics by which he designated our system were developments of our creed.

Now, in reference to this fundamental and permeating idea of the discourse it is, we believe, the doctrine of our standards, of our fathers, and of all the leading divines during all ages, that the duties of religion and the organization, charter, rights, privileges, functions, offices and officers of the Church, in all that is fundamental to their *essence* and character, are just as truly, just as necessarily, and just as immediately, derived from divine warrant, authority and command of God—as these are revealed in the light of nature, scripture examples, divine approbation, divine acts and divine precepts,—as the articles of our creed. This is what is meant by that altogether misconceived and misstated doctrine of divine right\* which with such amazing indiscrimination Dr. Gilman confounds with the terrible—the terrible doctrine of the Romish Church, by which she claims exclusive and absolute jurisdiction in the church on earth, and power to declare what is scripture, what is truth, what is duty, and to open and shut purgatory, hell and heaven, to curse and grant indulgences, to punish bodily and spiritually, temporally and eternally, according to her own arbitrary will.

We believe that the truth of scripture doctrine is better preserved under the forms of scripture polity than any other, and that there is a harmonious analogy and adaptation of the one to the other, yet we are far from believing that our practical duties or our ecclesiastical polity are the developments of our doctrine, or that they are a test and standard by which those doctrines are to be judged. In reference to both and to all

\*These are the very grounds on which a divine right is established by the divines of the Westminster Assembly, as seen in the celebrated work "The Divine Right of Church Government."—see ch. II-V, and The Divine Right of the Gospel Ministry. Lond. 1654, 3d ed.

alike, our appeal is "to the law and the testimony." "If they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them."

This remark, which cannot but be sustained by every intelligent Presbyterian, (see Confession of Faith, chap. 21, 25, 26, &c.) qualifies the whole discourse of Dr. Humphrey, eliminates from it much that is invidious, cuts off as perfectly inapplicable to the Presbyterian system the greater amount of Dr. Gilman's strictures, and saves us from any necessity of proving, under all circumstances, the concurrent existence of our doctrines and of our peculiar forms of external polity. Either or both may be at once disproved, if possible, by an appeal to Scripture. But if they are found in accordance with these, then as surely as "one jot or tittle of all that God has said cannot fail, though the heavens and the earth pass away," however they may both be regarded as a scandal and a folly to the wisdom and proud reason of man," the gates of hell shall not prevail against them."

A third exception taken by some members of the Assembly, to this discourse of Dr. Humphrey, was to what they considered his unnecessary, and in some measure, unqualified remarks upon our brethren of the Methodist Church. The relations of christian amity, co-operation and communion, which in this city have always been maintained between this most zealous and devoted Church and our own, and the readiness with which they united in welcoming the Assembly to their houses and their pulpits, we were sorry to have treated "even with the appearance" of hostility. And I would add to the generous homage rendered by Dr. Humphrey to the system and to the zeal and success of our Methodist brethren, the wish and prayer that our relations may ever continue to be those of christian love, confidence and co-operation in every good word and work. "Grace be with ALL them that love the LORD Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen."

But I proceed in the fourth place to remark, that in this discourse, Dr. Humphrey no where claims for Presbyterianism *exclusively*, the virtues, the valor and the patriotism which he so eloquently pourtrays. That these are congenial to the principles, the spirit and the polity of Presbyterianism, he ably endeavors to demonstrate as pertinent to his occasion and his theme. But he nowhere charges upon other systems of faith or order, either a want of piety, of principle, or of patriotism.

In this respect he might have been sustained in making a contrasted picture, which he prudently refrained from doing.

His discourse is far, very far, from arraigning any of what are usually understood by the term "other denominations," except the Methodist and a portion of the Episcopal Church. On the contrary, he is every where most careful to shew that he pleads the cause, not of Presbyterianism alone, but of all who hold with them, the same great principles of divine truth. Thus, in the very beginning, he connects all that is subsequently spoken of in terms of praise with "our theology," in marked and avowed separation from our principles and our polity, which he afterwards attempts to prove are but developments from it. He traces this Theology to the Lambeth articles of the Episcopal Church, and the early reformers of the Church of England in general, to the articles of the Helvetic Churches, to the decrees of the Synod of Dort, which included representatives from the Churches of England, Germany and France. He includes in its great representatives, the New England Edwards and Bellamy, and the Congregationalist Owen. He specifies by name as equally included in his argument, "our Congregational brethren," and "the Churches of New England, of whose faith at the time, the Saybrook platform and shorter catechism were the exponents." Dr. Humphrey gives therefore, the praise of whatsoever things he enumerates as lovely, and of good report in his developments to the Congregational Churches, to the Baptist Churches, to the Evangelical Lutheran Churches, to the Dutch Reformed Churches, to the French Reformed Churches, and to those of the Episcopal and any other churches who held "THE SUBSTANCE OF OUR THEOLOGY."\* Nay, even in the list of the great adversaries of our faith, (§ 5 Disc.) he does not enumerate, as he well might have done, Arius, Socinus, Belsham, or Channing, and thus he cuts off the very *possibility* of Dr. Gilman having a shadow of pretext for making this discourse and the public interest it had occasioned, "a medium" for a proselyting effort to bring about his anticipated millennium—"those grand and promised evolutions, when all parties, no longer seeing through a glass "darkly, shall behold face to face," and when the universal, world-comprehending religion" of Unitarianism which will "not stagger the common reason and moral sense of mankind" shall every where prevail.

\*See paragraph 3d of Discourse.

And now, brethren, for your sake and my own, I will close, reserving for another season some observations on the discourse of Dr. Gilman, and the reasons why we cannot receive as christian truth that system of doctrine which it is the ultimate object of this discourse to commend to our liberality and acceptance.

Allow me now to remind you that the varieties of religious opinion and practice are permitted to exist, not because they are all alike acceptable to God, authorized by His word, or conducive to the present and future well-being of man, but "because the liberty of second causes is not hindered, and the pride of human reason is therefore left to indicate its *nature* by its *developments*."

To a certain extent variety in the form, order and polity of the Church, and in the extent and expression of its creed, is permitted to the christian discretion of God's believing people. In accordance with the diversity of human condition, and for many wise and important ends, an adaptation may be made of those things which are not of the *essence* either of the church or of the gospel. There may thus be "ONE LORD, one faith, and one baptism" of the Holy Ghost, one "captain of salvation," and one pillar-cloud of truth, and yet many tribes, with many banners, camps and leaders in the one sacramental host of God's elect. Bound together by unity of faith in the substance of their theology, these should be also bound together "by the unity of the spirit, in the bonds of peace,—provoking one another only to love and good works,"—"wherein they are agreed, walking by the same rule and minding the same things,"—all having an eye single to the glory of their great deliverer, and all striving together for the extension of His kingdom, the salvation of sinners, and the edification of saints.

Only let us bear in mind that we cannot be saved as Presbyterians, Baptists, Methodists, or as members of any other tribe of Israel. To be "an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no guile," we must be "new creatures, created in Christ Jesus, who is our life" and who "giveth power to as many as believe to become the sons of God." "Brethren let no man deceive you. Examine your own selves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates."

This living, transforming, and sanctifying faith in Christ THE LORD, is the only bond of living union "to the church of the first-born, whose names are written in heaven." "Blessed are they that put their trust in HIM." "O Father," says this same

Saviour, "all mine are thine, and thine are mine, and I am glorified in them." In Him as "the seed of the woman," our first parents believed, and "being justified by faith, had peace with God through our LORD JESUS CHRIST." In Him Abel trusted as "the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world," and therefore "offered a more acceptable sacrifice than Cain." "And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam prophesied saying behold THE LORD cometh with ten thousand of his saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him."

In Him Job found consolation amid all his troubles, saying, "I surely do know my REDEEMER, the LIVING ONE, and He THE LAST will arise over the dust. And after the disease has cut down my skin even from my flesh shall I see GOD, whom I shall see on my behalf, and mine eyes shall behold Him."†

Seeing his days afar off, "Abraham rejoiced and was glad." "I have waited for thy salvation O Lord," says the dying Jacob. "To Him gave all the Prophets witness," and to his divinity, mediation, sufferings, and death the rapt visions of prophetic inspiration guided the faith of that great cloud of witnesses who have passed into the heavens. To them "the arm of the Lord was revealed as He who is despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; he was despised and we esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows; yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed." "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called wonderful, counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace." "The Lord," that is Jehovah, "our Righteousness."

In this Divine Redeemer, the dying thief rejoiced, saying, "Lord remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom." When assembled at Bethany to witness Christ's ascension to "that glory which he had with the Father before the world was," "it came to pass while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven. And they worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy."

†See Smith's Testimony to the Messiah.

To Him the believing Thomas directed his adoring worship, saying, "My Lord and my God."

Stephen having testified to "THE LORD JESUS CHRIST," and having told the multitude "that they had slain them who shewed before of the Just one," when they had heard these things, they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed on him with their teeth. But he being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw the Glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God. Then they cried out with a loud voice and stopped their ears, and ran upon him with one accord. And they stoned Stephen calling upon GOD, and saying LORD JESUS receive my spirit. And he kneeled down and cried with a loud voice, LORD, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this he fell asleep."

Not only did the proto-martyr Stephen close his life by committing his departing spirit into the hands of Christ as GOD and LORD, but such was the mark by which at that time, as in the days of Pliny and Justin Martyr, christians were distinguished. Saul had authority to burn "all that call on the name of the Lord." "Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord,"—that Lord or Jehovah previously unknown to the Gentiles, "shall be saved," was the christian mission. And the Apostolic writings are addressed "to all that in every place, call upon the name of the Lord Jesus Christ."

God forbid, says Paul—as the voice of all the Apostles—"that I should glory save in the cross" the propitiatory sacrifice and atonement "of our LORD JESUS CHRIST by whom the world is crucified unto me and I unto the world." And as God said unto the Son "thy throne, O God, is forever and forever, and when he brought his first begotten into the world, said let all the angels of God worship him," so when he unveils to us the worship of the upper Sanctuary, "I beheld," says the inspired seer, "and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, saying with a loud voice, worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing. 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 upon the throne, and unto THE LAMB for ever and ever. And the four beasts said, Amen. And the four and twenty

elders fell down and WORSHIPPED HIM THAT LIVETH FOR EVER AND EVER."

Yes, my brethren, "God also hath highly exalted HIM, and given him a name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus EVERY KNEE SHOULD BOW, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is LORD, to the glory of God the Father." And when the end of all things shall come "then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and we shall see the son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of trumpets and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other."

That the Saviour as the Son of God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, is to be worshipped even as we worship the Father, might thus be proved by all those passages of Scripture in the Old Testament, which are declared in the New to be prophetic of Christ, and in which the supreme and divine honor of Jehovah is ascribed to Him,—by those texts in the New Testament in which divine worship and honor are commanded to be paid and are represented as actually rendered to Christ;—by those passages which shew that prayer is enjoined to be offered to Christ, and was, as has been seen, addressed to Him on various occasions by the disciples, by the thief upon the cross, by the dying martyr Stephen, by Paul, and by the christians as a body;—by the fact that Christ is invoked in the apostolic benediction, and in frequent prayers in the epistles, for grace, mercy and peace, for comfort, strength and guidance to believers;—by the ascription to Him of supreme adoration, glory, power and blessing, from the whole church in heaven and on earth,—by the fact, that thanksgivings are presented to Him for his grace;—by the fact that the sacred ordinance of baptism is to be performed in His name, together with that of the Father, and the Holy Ghost—by the fact that our whole service, whether living or dying, is to be done unto Him, and not unto man, as we are elsewhere commanded to live only to God;—and that God, therefore, is so manifested in the Lord Jesus Christ, and so united to, and one with, Him, that in worshipping the Son we are at the same time worshipping the Father.

Again therefore let me say, "Blessed is the man that trusteth in HIM."



“And now let us,” to use the language of Milton, who is most wrongfully regarded in any of his works, as advocating the system of Unitarian faith, let us “turn our eyes, and lift up our hands to that eternal and propitious Throne, where nothing is readier than grace and refuge to the distresses of mortal supplicants. Thou, therefore, that sittest in light and glory unapproachable, Parent of angels, and men! next, thee I implore, omnipotent King, Redeemer of that lost remnant whose nature thou didst assume, ineffable and everlasting Love! And thou, the third subsistence of divine infinitude, illumining spirit, the joy and solace of created things! one Tripersonal Godhead! look upon thy poor church, to thyself now unite us entirely, appropriate us to thyself, tie us everlastingly in willing homage to the prerogative of thy eternal throne, where in supereminence of beatific vision, progressing the dateless and irrevoluble circle of eternity we shall clasp inseperable hands with joy and bliss in over measure forever.”



# Unitarianism Another Gospel.

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A SERMON

Occasioned by the Recent Discourse of the Rev.  
Samuel Gilman, D. D., on the Discourse  
of Rev. E. P. Humphrey, D. D.

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BY THE  
REV. THOMAS SMYTH, D. D.



## UNITARIANISM ANOTHER GOSPEL.

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GALATIANS I, 6, 7.

"I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you unto the grace of Christ unto another Gospel, which is not another: but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the Gospel of Christ."

The term GOSPEL means literally "good news"—glad tidings of great joy. THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST is therefore good news or glad tidings of great joy concerning CHRIST, that is the Messiah, called JESUS, because He came to save his people from their sins," and therefore described as A SAVIOUR—THE LORD. This last title when it is used without any limiting phrase, in the scriptural Greek ordinarily denotes the supreme being, and is the word regularly employed by the Septuagint to translate the name ADONAI and JEHOVAH. This usage has been followed by the writers of the New Testament as must be obvious to every reader of the original text, and is applied by them in the form of unqualified pre-eminence to the Lord Jesus Christ.\*

Of this I have given numerous proofs in my previous discourse, and I might add to them a number of other passages.†

"In these passages," says the Rev. Dr. Pye Smith, than whom an abler or more candid critic never wrote, "it is evident that the gospel is called "the word of the Lord," and "of the Lord Jesus" as its ordinary designation and used interchangeably with the phrase "the word of God,"—that not only is the appellation, THE LORD, currently given to the Redeemer, but that it is combined with a peculiar and exalted knowledge, authority, power and influence, for the advancement of his kingdom and the protection of his servants;—and that the appellation, the attributives, and the style of dignity and authority, are in the characteristic manner of scripture, especially in the Old Testament, when it speaks of the Great Jehovah as the Protector, Guide and Saviour of his people. To those whose memories are familiar with that characteristic manner, the conformity must appear very striking."

The Saviour—the Messiah promised to the fathers; the Seed of the woman, who was to bruise the head of the serpent—the Seed of Abraham—the Shiloh of Jacob—the prophet like unto Moses, whom Isaiah, with holy rapture, described as "The child

\*Smith's Testimony to the Messiah, III, 25.

†See given in do. do. p. 25-29.

born, and the son given, whose name is the mighty God, the Prince of Peace;" and whom Jeremiah adored, and trusted in as "Jehovah our righteousness,"—This Saviour in all the glories of his Godhead, in which he is one with the Father,—in all the realities of his human nature in which he is one with us;—and in all the tremendous sufferings that characterized his death as the atonement for our sins,—is the sum and essence of the "glorious gospel." This is glad tidings of deliverance from sin and woe, and of the enjoyment of holiness and blessedness through Jesus,—God in our nature, Jehovah Saviour,—"who is the Seed of David according to the flesh" but "over all God blessed for ever,"—who was made sin for us, though he knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him,"—and who is exalted a Prince and a Saviour to give repentance and remission of sins,—by whom all who believe are justified from all things from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses, or by works of righteousness which they had done." This,—this, this is THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST.

This Gospel, as we have already seen, was even in the Apostles' days, corrupted and denied. It was corrupted by the Jews and the adherents to their Pharisaic spirit among the christians, who substituted for the work and merit of Christ as the only ground of salvation, "works of righteousness which they themselves had done," "and would not submit themselves to the righteousness of God."

This Gospel was corrupted by the Gentiles also, who endeavored to smooth down its asperities and to remove any thing which could "stagger the common reason and moral sense of mankind," and thus to commend it to the attention "of the wise and prudent." Against this corruption of the Gospel the Apostle warned the Colossians, when he said "beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ."

A third corruption of christianity was the attempt to render it palatable to the great mass of the people, by mingling with its simple ordinances the rite of heathenism, and this introduced Romanism, which is in truth Paganized christianity.

Thus, the addition of human doings, to the finished work of Christ on Calvary; or the attempt to derogate from the glories of his Divinity by the "philosophy," that, instead of receiving the testimony regarding him, would inquire into the MODE of his existence, and thus discover what is not revealed; or the vain efforts to render, by the appendages borrowed from

human inventions, the simple and beautiful religion of the cross, more pleasing to the natural mind, are all but perversions of the Gospel of Christ.

Now, the system-called Unitarianism, seems in our view, to concentrate the whole of the evil of these three, into one,—denying the “Father and Son,” because unable by “vain philosophy” to comprehend how in the One Jehovah, there can be a distinction, so as to leave room for first, or second,—substituting “works of righteousness which we have done,” for the one work finished “once for all,” on Calvary by Him, who is God manifested in the flesh,—and trying to recommend to the carnal mind which is enmity against God, that Gospel which is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.

Dr. Gilman assures us that the Gospel, as contained in the New Testament, is “so genial, so plain, so welcome to every heart,” that “even the very child blesses these Gospels.” And yet the Apostle, even in his day, “ marvelled ” that the members of one of the earliest christian churches “were so soon removed from the grace of Him that called them unto another Gospel which is not another.” “But,” says he, “there be some that trouble you and would pervert the gospel of Christ.” Now you will observe that what these false teachers propagated among the Galatians, they called the Gospel. But in the Apostle’s estimation, it was totally different from that which he had proclaimed. It was, therefore, another gospel and yet it was not another, for it did not deserve the name of Gospel at all.

The disciple whom Jesus loved, so meek, and gentle, and full of love as he is, waxeth even stronger in his malediction, for “Whosoever,” says the Apostle John, “transgresseth, and abideth not in THE DOCTRINE OF CHRIST, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed. For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds.”

Dr. Gilman would reprobate Calvinism, because it “fastens on men the brand of heresy for not being able to believe in the whole length and breadth of that complicated, cast-iron creed,—because it banishes those who reject the gospel heart-broken from the communion of their friends and neighbors, and sends them weeping into a stigmatised and miserable solitude for life,”—because it thus “interferes with the faith and practice of individual churches.” Of this illiberal, bigoted and unchar-

itable spirit of the Presbyterian Church, Dr. Gilman draws some very poetical and sentimental pictures of "innocent parties," "unprotected maidens," "beloved and respected wives," having a stigma of an intolerable nature fastened upon them, and sent home, if clerical, "unfunctional and ruined."

Are we to understand then, that the Gospel of Unitarianism is so full of what they call charity and benevolence, liberality and candor, that it prescribes no doctrines to be believed, no duties to be performed, no heresies to be denied, and no vices to be abandoned, in order to be either "lay or clerical" believers of its faith and partakers of its rites? If not, then to whatever extent Unitarianism either *prescribes* or *proscribes* the one or the other, it exercises towards "them that are without," what they will still regard as the intolerance of a bigoted exclusiveness. And if, on the other hand this *is*, as we would infer, the character of the Unitarian Gospel, then how certainly is it "another gospel and yet not another" than that of Christ and his Apostles.

True liberality, benevolence and charity, according to the Scriptures, consist not in partiality to the errors of men in points of practice and profession in which they are at variance with the Maker. God must be true though "every man should be proved a liar," and there can be no true love to man which does not flow from love to God. Indifference to religious principle, and esteem for what is erroneous or vicious in men, is in direct opposition to that true benevolence which inspires good will to the *persons* of all men\*—which leads us to esteem whatever is truly commendable in them,—which treats every man with candor, fairness and impartiality,—which hopeth all things and believeth all things concerning them that truth and justice will allow,—and which stirs us up to promote their real welfare, and above all, their spiritual and everlasting good. But all this is consistent with "a profound, conscientious attachment" to what we believe to be divine truth and as profound and conscientious aversion to what we believe to be subversive of that truth.

There may be a candor and charity which are destructive of all true benevolence, because they are treacherous to that truth which alone can sanctify the soul and introduce it into "the glorious liberty of the children of God." Truth cannot be

\*Coleridge, after declaring that Unitarianism is no religion, &c., says: "I affirm a heresy often, but never dare denounce the holder a heretic."—Lit. Romanus, vol. 4, p. 222.



transformed by any charitable alembic, into error, nor error into truth, and we must either abandon the Bible and the Gospel altogether, or be willing to be charged with the bigotry, illiberality and intolerance of believing what it teaches to be TRUE and what it condemns to be FALSE. "Beware," says Christ, "of false prophets who come to you in sheep's clothing,"—"deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the Apostles of Christ. And into an angel of light; therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness."

Our Saviour enjoined all matters of dispute to be brought before the church, and "if the offender neglect to hear the church, let him," says He, "be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican." He enumerated certain things which should be worthy of ecclesiastical censure, and some which should endanger hellfire. He gave to his church the keys of doctrine and of discipline that they might loose and bind according to His word. He declareth that "Whosoever breaketh one of the least of His commandments and teacheth men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven." His gospel is to be preached to every creature that being made disciples of it they might be "taught ALL things whatsoever he has commanded." John, with our Saviour's approbation, told Herod who had married "his brother Philip's wife," "that it was not lawful for him to have her."† The Corinthian church are enjoined "in the name of the Lord Jesus and with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ to deliver unto Satan an "unfortunate husband" and his "beloved wife," and "not to keep company, or hold communion with any man or woman who is called a brother," when he or she becomes a fornicator, a railer, or a drunkard or an extortioner, or "an heretic."

"Now we command you brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother

†I am aware that it can be, as I think, probably determined that Philip was yet alive, and that adultery may have been the crime charged against Herod. But as this is not incontrovertible, this passage, as well as the one in Leviticus, is regarded by many as proving the illegality of marriage with a wife's sister. Such was the unanimous opinion of christian countries and all churches, Orthodox and Unitarian, at the time when our Standards were drawn up, and is still the opinion of the large majority in Great Britain. But as the question is an open one and differently determined by the ablest minds, I am one of "the very respectable minority" in our church, now perhaps a majority, who think that the church should leave the matter to the decision of christian discretion and opinion in every part of the country. Dr. Gilman was bound, in all candor, to state that the General Assembly directed the restoration of the minister who, on this account, had been deposed. But this would have destroyed his *argumentum ad invidium*.

that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which ye received of us." "A man that is an heretic after the first and second admonition reject." "I know says the Son of God to the church at Ephesus thy works and thy labour and thy patience and how thou canst not bear them which are evil and thou hast tried them which say they are Apostles and are not, and hast found them liars."

What power, my brethren, is here given to the churches of Christ through their appointed officers, to fasten on all offenders "the brand of heresy for not being able to believe in the whole length and breadth of that complicated cast-iron creed," which Christ and His Apostles have laid down, and "to banish them heart-broken from the communion of their friends and neighbors, and to send them weeping, into a stigmatized and miserable solitude for life."

And as under the theocratic government of the church, the utmost severity of divine indignation was denounced upon the excommunicated Jezebel—woman, mother and wife though she was—so do we find our Saviour in opposition to all the sentimental liberalism of Unitarian gallantry, uttering denunciations against the church in Thyatira, "because it suffered that woman Jezebel,"—some female heresiarch,—“who called herself a prophetess to teach and to seduce his servants,” “Behold, says Christ, I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit *spiritual* adultery with her ‘*by embracing her corrupt doctrines,*’ into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds. And I will kill her children with death, and all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts: and I will give unto every one of you according to his works.”

How certain is it, my brethren, that Unitarianism, which reduces the whole teaching of the Bible to a few “simple and intelligible principles” which “will not stagger the common reason and moral sense of mankind,” being dismembered from all the “narrow cast-iron and complicated doctrines of Calvinism,” and which neither brands with heresy nor delivers unto Satan any man, though like Theodore Parker, he glories in the shame of open infidelity,—how certain, I say, is it that this system though it call itself the gospel, is not the gospel of Christ, but is another gospel and yet not another. How true is it that the gospel may be so perverted as that a man may believe it and yet be no christian,—that while a *false* glory is given to it which attracts the reason of men, all its *real* glory may be taken away,—and that the church of Christ may be so opened to this

ingress and membership of "maidens, wives, and lay and clerical" worshippers, "who receive not the truth in love of it," that were Christ to enter again into His earthly courts, He must make a whip of cords and drive them out of it.

I will now however, proceed to make some remarks on the sermon of Dr. Gilman. And in the *first place*, from what I said on the discourse of Dr. Humphrey, it will, I think, be apparent to every candid mind, that this attack upon the Presbyterian Church was *unprovoked*, there being in the discourse of Dr. Humphrey *no allusion, direct or indirect*, to the system of Unitarianism. It appears to conflict with that meek and quiet spirit which has ever adorned the walk and conversation of its author and with that humility, charity, and all comprehending liberality which he attributes to the system he defends, and for which he comes forth as a champion.

*Secondly*, I beg leave to remark on this attack of Dr. Gilman, that it was as *inappropriate* as it was *unprovoked*. This remark I hope I may be permitted to make without intending thereby any discourtesy to Dr. Gilman, any question of his perfect right to canvass, confute, or even denounce both "our theology and its developments,"—or any feelings of retaliating harshness and severity on my part. Dr. Gilman I have long and well known. Our social relations have been most kind and agreeable, and not the less so because he was and is sensible of "the profound and conscientious aversion which I entertain" for the system of Unitarianism as claiming to be the gospel, and because I am sensible of similar feelings on his part towards the theology called Calvinism. Profound conviction is always tolerant and charitable. Dr. Gilman can receive the strongest expression of argumentative condemnation of his system, in the same spirit in which he so powerfully utters it against ours. And even while I feel that "woe is unto me if I stand not up for the defence of the gospel," my heart's desire and prayer to God for him is, that he may be saved.

Allow me then, in this spirit, to say that this attack of Dr. Gilman was, *in the way in which it was conducted*, as *inappropriate* in him as it was *unprovoked*.

Dr. Humphrey had made war in his discourse, upon a portion of the Episcopal, upon the Romish, and to some extent upon the Methodist Churches. To these he had, therefore, thrown down the gauntlet, and from these he had fairly provoked retaliation. But he had fraternized with all other denominations and with Congregationalism, to which Dr. Gil-

man professes his attachment, in particular. Was Dr. Gilman then called upon by any claims of *duty* or *propriety* to become the champion of a creed which was unassailed and of a system of polity which was by name approved?

He is, however, most generous in his chivalry. He undertakes the defence of "our Episcopal churches,"—of the Methodist,—of the New School Presbyterians,—of all deposed and excommunicated ministers,—of all "unprotected maidens,"—"beloved and respected wives,"—of "his non-Calvinistic Protestant brethren,"—and of "Protestant brethren of all denominations." Like another David come forth to victory, he bids them all be still, throws over them the ægis of his protection, and singly and alone meets the dread Philistine.

Whether "his Protestant brethren of all denominations" will acknowledge the relationship and approve his "forward zeal on their behalf" it remains to be seen. Certain it is, that hitherto, in speaking among what are termed Evangelical churches of "other denominations," they would never have been supposed to allude to Unitarians. And whatever may be the views of these denominations at the South, the Congregationalists with whom he claims special fraternity as "OUR OWN Congregational forms," have, even in his own New England, been considerably reluctant to admit the consanguinity. There was indeed a time when Unitarianism constituted a part of the Congregational denomination of New England. But it was only so long as it continued latent and unavowed. As soon as it became known to the churches "the sacred ties of christian fellowship between sister churches were severed."\*

\*See the New England Puritan—"He," says the writer, "who dispassionately considers the differences subsisting between Orthodoxy and Unitarianism, cannot fail to perceive and allow that it is due to consistency and to the holy cause of truth, for the advocate of the first system to protest against and refuse communion with the last. To expect any thing less than this, is the height of illiberality; it is to ask one to lay himself on the ground, and as the street, for his opponent to pass over—to renounce self-respect, to prove a traitor to the cause of his God, and the highest interests of his race, as they commend themselves to his understanding and heart. There are some principles which all must admit are essential to christianity. Our Fathers, in accordance with the prevailing sentiment of the church in all ages, placed the doctrine of the divinity of Christ foremost among the essentials of revelation. It was, therefore, but a necessary part of their belief to refuse fellowship with those who rejected this truth. And in this they acted not only upon a proper, but upon a necessary principle. No man can have a serious faith in christianity, without embracing certain essential ideas involved in it; and no man can do this without refusing his fellowship to systems which exclude and oppose these ideas. We honor, therefore, those men who bore a full and unwavering protest against what they regarded as an essential departure from christian truth. We honor them for consistency, for their fidelity to the cause of truth, to themselves and to us."

"Unitarianism," says the *New Englander* for October, 1846, p. 505, "can no more be identified with the form of Congregationalism, than infidelity with republicanism. When Unitarianism appeared in the Congregational Churches of Massachusetts, instead of being retained in the existing system, it was compelled to come out and stand alone. It was thrown off or withdrawn from. Truth would not keep fellowship with it, would not live under the same covering. But the lovers of truth separated from it—or the heresy separated itself from them by an instinctive and a mutual repulsion and came out alone—that it might *die*."

A *third* remark which I would make in the same spirit on this discourse of Dr. Gilman is, that while it breathes much of the odour of gentle and unwilling rebuke, nevertheless it is to a very great degree unfair and uncandid in its statements of the doctrines, order and practices of the Presbyterian Church, or otherwise through his avowed "disgust" towards our "repulsive" system, he has not taken sufficient pains to inform himself as to what we do believe.

The slightest examination or inquiry would have led Dr. Gilman, as it did a gentleman of another communion, who was staggered by the same declaration of Dr. Humphrey,—that "the purpose of God is the cause of sin,"—to discover that it was undoubtedly an oversight in the language or views of the individual author, and that it was not the doctrine of our standards. But not only did Dr. Gilman not refer, as did the gentleman to whom I allude, to our standards before publicly assailing our doctrines, he even exaggerates the statement of Dr. Humphrey into the fearful declaration that "we were purposed to be sinners for the glory of God, and that we would be punished with eternal torments for the very sins thus occasioned." Indeed, the whole of Dr. Gilman's statement of the doctrines of Calvinism is a caricature,—in some parts, a misrepresentation bordering on what sounds to us, as blasphemy,—and altogether it is a creed which none would revolt from with more aversion than well instructed Calvinists. And when he declares that "the reprobation of the nonelect and their condemnation to everlasting death" is one of the vital and important Presbyterian dogmas, and that "it is in the power of the Presbytery of Louisville to call before them" Dr. Humphrey, and to "charge and convict him of heresy," and "by a majority of one to cashier him from his office and send him home to his people an unfunctional and ruined man," for omitting this

dogma in his statement of doctrine—when, I say, I find Dr. Gilman making these assertions and affirming that the omission of this dogma leaves Dr. Humphrey's "whole statement," singularly open to the charge of lurking Universalism," I can hardly feel justified in saying less than that this is a very flagrant violation of the ninth commandment. The only reason why I do not so charge it, is the hope that these utterances were made in undue excitement, and in ignorance of our standards. Such a doctrine as that of reprobation, (a term which is never employed in any of our standards,) and the everlasting punishment of any member of mankind, except "for their sins," "the sinfulness whereof" proceedeth only from the creatures "who harden themselves through their own lusts and in the exercise of their free wills," is unknown to our standards or to any recognized system of Calvinistic divinity.

There are several other instances of gross and inexcusable misrepresentations of our doctrines and of our discipline which we might adduce. But as this part of our duty is in the highest degree unpleasant and invidious, I will leave them unnoticed, † except the statement that "serious fears had been entertained" "that the Presbyterian Church in this country was making rapid strides, and aims to usurp the control of the government." These fears were entertained, I presume, only by those who dreaded a strict observance of the Sabbath, and the stoppage of Sabbath mails, to promote which Presbyterians, in common with many others, took a very active part. These fears will now, it seems, be revived by "these perpetual attempts to show that our church is peculiarly republican in its tendencies." The logic or the charity which can deduce such conclusions from

†He regards our system as involving taxation without representation. Dr. Gilman certainly does not "understand our system aright." In regard to all temporalities and the choice of a minister, *all pewholders* in our churches have an equal voice. And in regard to all spiritual matters, that is which relate to the communing members of the church, *ALL* who are members have an *EQUAL* voice. We have, therefore, a President, Standing and other Committees chosen by *all pewholders* in the congregation, for superintendance of its temporal affairs, and ruling elders who *may cease* to act, or be requested if unacceptable to cease to officiate, and who as they only act with the minister in the conduct of spiritual affairs, are elected by all the male communicants. Dr. Gilman's affecting picture of aggrieved parties, is at once destroyed by the fact that an appeal can be taken by the humblest member, against any improper or unjust decision of the church session, to the full and impartial judgment of a Presbytery or Synod or Assembly. Neither are the decrees of our General Assembly "omnipotent imprescriptible, irreversible," as was evinced by the late Assembly compromising on principles of peace and harmony, in contrariety to decisions of former Assemblies. A General Assembly cannot bind any future Assembly, nor contravene the will of the church at large, as this may be indicated by its representatives in any future Assembly.

such premises, are, however, equally beyond the pale of ordinary comprehension.

In the conclusion of these discourses, I will *indicate*, for I can do nothing more, some additional reasons why I cannot receive Unitarianism as the gospel of Christ, or as the system of doctrine taught in the Scriptures.

And my first reason, which is, preliminary to the rest, is that this system orders no deliverance from that uncandid, illiberal and intolerant spirit which is such a stigma upon human nature, and so hostile to peace, charity and good will among men. This spirit is inexcusable, unjustifiable, and promotive only of evil, wherever and in whomsoever, and in whatsoever cause it is found. It overcomes no enemies, makes no friends, and secures no good results. It is alike dishonoring to God's character, truth and cause.

Now this spirit we regard not as the result or offspring of any one system of belief, nor as the undeniable concomitant of any one party in the christian world. It is, we believe, the natural spirit of unrestrained and unrenewed human nature, according to the express and frequent teachings of scripture, (*read for instance Rom. III. 9-19, and the passages referred to in the margin,*)—and the universal and unvarying testimony of observation, experience and history. It was condemned in his Apostles by our Lord,—frequently and pointedly rebuked by the Apostles in others,—and from the beginning of the world until now it has sown dragon's teeth in every field of human ambition and rivalry, to spring up in an army of fierce and revengeful combatants.

This spirit I can see in the discourse of Dr. Gilman, notwithstanding his disposition naturally amiable above his fellows,—and notwithstanding the moderation and self-control acquired by age, experience and deep inward strugglings for the victory over himself. This spirit I know to be an element in my own nature, and feel it necessary to restrain its ebullition while I now write. And everywhere, and on all occasions, what evils has it not wrought in the earth.

Shall I then be delivered from this spirit by adopting the Unitarian system? Grant, if you please, that by that system it is reprobated and condemned. Even that reprobation, however, may be uttered in the spirit it condemns, and clothed in words full of bitterness and uncharitableness.

When Dr. Gilman employed what we think a most unfair caricature of Calvinism, which he dressed up in order to heap

upon it and its abettors the withering scorn, contempt and anathema with which he denounces it\*—when he represents the Presbyterian church, “as it sits with its eyes dazzled by the awful oriflame of *divine right* waving over its head, with nothing to gainsay or control it,”—when he declares that “serious fears” have been entertained “that the Presbyterian church in this country was making rapid strides to usurp the control of the government,”—when he implies that views similar to those of the Church and State champions of other lands, are furtively held by our churches in the United States,”—when he affirms that “the degree of freedom aimed at, and in some cases obtained by the Presbyterian polity, extends to an exorbitant and tyrannical degree, detrimental to the interests of religion, and dangerous to the peace and happiness of civil society,”—when he charges upon the Calvinistic theology “contradiction and perplexity,” and “as leading to the existence in its neighborhood of a bitterer, more defiant, and more hostile infidelity” than any other system,—and when he avers that “the liberty of thought and speech, which she claimed from Rome, she refused to indulge to others,”—in these, and in all similar cases, does not Dr. Gilman exhibit the working of this spirit within him?

He introduces Servetus for the sole purpose of throwing obloquy upon the character of Calvin. To do so he represents Servetus as “*unoffending*,” though in every way he made himself amenable to the existing laws of Christendom, whose utmost vengeance he braved by blasphemies of the most fearful kind, uttered in presence of his judges, and by an audacity of conduct to which he was actuated by the party of the Libertines, which finally alienated every kindly feeling, and secured his condemnation. He calls Servetus “as good a man as Calvin,” though guilty of avowed deception,—though ungovernable in his furious temper,—though when under solemn oath to speak the truth, “he spoke scarcely any thing but falsehoods, “and at every new examination there was a fresh oath and another instance of perjury,”—though he recanted at Vienne, all his principles, and solemnly abjured the authorship of his own works—and though he betrayed the greatest pusillanimity, rancour and malevolence. He calls Servetus a “Unitarian,”

\*The “piety of gratitude,” he says in another place, “may be as strongly elicited by the thought that God *never did* overwhelm us with an arbitrary and terrific condemnation, when it was in his sovereign power to do so, as by the thought that he adopted certain incredible measures to redeem us from such condemnation after it was once inflicted.”



though he declared that "he himself believed in the Trinity, and did not object to the term persons as applied to it," but only to "those who make a real distinction in the being of God,"—though he also "believed in the eternal Godhead of Jesus Christ, who was begotten in eternity but conceived in time by the Holy Ghost," and though he constantly, in his works and in his prayers, even at the stake, prayed to Christ as God. And he makes his execution "the initial victim" of Calvinism, whereas Calvin had, for years, endeavored to shake off all intercourse and controversy with him—had with extreme difficulty been induced to give up two of his letters to be used as evidence in his trial at Vienne, where he was condemned and burned in effigy,† and though he and the other ministers had used every influence to have his sentence commuted.

But to pass from Dr. Gilman, do we not find this spirit of illiberality and intolerance in the President of Harvard College, the man of "no denomination," who would proscribe men of all denominations from the government of a state institution, next, in Dr. Dewey, who in his Berry street address, declares that he "would rather be an infidel than a Calvinist, a strict Calvinist of the old school;" and yet withholds the christian name from Rationalists? Do we not find this spirit in that Unitarian clergyman who, not long since, published anonymously in the Christian Register, of Boston, articles in which the ministerial and christian character of the clergyman is assailed, and the moral character of his church *as a church* is impeached. To Dr. Spring of New York, he imputes a neglect of duty inconsistent with the standing of a christian pastor, and to his people as a whole, "covetousness, extortion, oppression of the poor and all sorts of shaving operations to acquire wealth;" and these sins are charged as the legitimate fruits of Dr. Spring's ministry of thirty-four years.‡

Dr. Gilman claims for Unitarianism the present Rationalistic Unitarianism of the European Continent. Now when, I ask, has greater illiberality, intolerance and even persecution been displayed, than against Orthodox Evangelical ministers and churches in Geneva and the Canton de Vaud?§

†See Life and Times of Calvin by Paul Henry, of Berlin. See Coleridge's Justification of Calvin in this matter—not of the penalty which all now condemn—in his Literary Remains, Vol. 3, p. 7.

‡See the discussion of this subject, not long since, in the New York Observer.

§The government of the Canton de Vaud has added now to all its other persecuting acts, that of a law prohibiting all religious meetings, except those of the State Church, under pains and penalties. The law is so rigor-

At two periods Unitarianism had the opportunity afforded by the possession of power, to discover what is its true character. One was in the States of Poland and Transylvania, where it had great prevalence during a considerable part of the sixteenth century. Being divided among themselves by numerous shades of opinions, and some thirty sects, Faustus Socinus employed every effort to reduce them to one harmonious body. As however he still considered the worship of Christ as an essential part of christian truth and worship, and in other points retained views now abandoned by Unitarians, he was not prepared to tolerate the introduction of the heretical opinion advocated and preached by Davidis, that Christ was a mere man and had no more claim to divine worship than any other saint. After vainly endeavoring to convince him of his error, the young prince of Transylvania was induced to cast Davidis into prison, simply on account of his pertinacious adherence to his opinion. Here the persecuted man died. We think that this case may fairly be placed as a parallel to that of Calvin. Socinus not only never changed his opinions respecting the worship of Christ, but he would hold no communion with any one who denied that Christ should be worshipped, and publicly taught and published the opinion that those who received the doctrine of Davidis, had no just claim to the name of christians.

ous, that meetings cannot be held, except by men having the spirit of martyrs. The Dissenters, against whom this law is levelled, are what would here be called Evangelical men. And the National church and government is in the hands of what would here be called Unitarians. They are called Rationalists in Europe. But the Unitarian Almanac, published in Boston, claims half of the Protestants in Europe, as Unitarians. And we are not aware that any of the Protestants of the continent are Unitarians of any other school than the rationalistic.—Here, then, is a work of cruel persecution, now in progress by a Unitarian national church; and our inference is, not that any of our American Unitarians are persecutors, or that they approve of those acts, (God forbid,) but simply this—that what is called the liberal creed is not sufficient to ensure liberal conduct. And the abettors of the liberal creed are persecuting, after those of most other creeds have become ashamed of persecution. We would advise those American Unitarians, who have so many regrets that Calvin burnt Servetus, to send over to the land of Calvin and Servetus, some friendly counsel to their co-religionists, to entreat them not to enact, in the nineteenth century, a work of persecution that would throw in the shade the Servetian tragedy of the sixteenth century. They are already in the habit of speaking denominationally and fraternally to governments at home, and to people beyond the seas, and of giving advice about governmental and social abuses. And now, in the name of our persecuted brethren in Switzerland, we entreat our Unitarian neighbors to favor them with their merciful interference, and set forth to that Unitarian and persecuting government, such reasons as shall induce them to change their course.—For it is an outrage on human language, to say nothing of justice, that liberal christians, and a liberal government, should thus have gathered up the broken implements of the inquisition, and gone to work with them.—*N. E. Puritan.*

It is also a fact that Unitarianism, or as it was then called Arianism,|| took its rise in the fourth century, and under the royal patronage of Emperors and their wives, became for a time, by means of very terrible persecutions, the religion of the Roman Empire, and was embraced by the Vandals under Genserie, in the East, in Spain and in Italy. "Dissimulation," says Spanheim, "and craft were qualities notorious with the Arians. This fact was chiefly visible in their formularies, and in their pretended, but not real consent and agreement with the Trinitarians. Their perfidy, inconsistency and calumnies against the Trinitarians were extraordinary, and their ambition of the principal bishoprics, and their flattery of the Emperor and great men at court excessive. Their rage against Athanasius, who almost alone opposed their attempts and sustained their fury, was terrible. They disseminated incredible slanders against him, and laid to his charge rape, murder, adultery, and other notorious crimes, but he was an innocent and pious man."

Every where we find churches desolated and every species of cruelty and rage was exercised towards bishops and their flocks. Vast numbers continued faithful, and suffered according to the Apostle's expression, "the loss of all things," and endured the horrors of death itself for their faith.

If in addition to the facts now mentioned we allow Unitarianism to claim as we are told they do, "that the Jews, before the time of our Saviour, were strict Unitarians as they still remain,"\* then the system is chargeable with an incredible amount of bigotry, intolerance and persecution, both towards all the prophets whose blood they shed, but above all in the horrible and illegal crucifixion of the Son of God himself, whom they put to death on a charge of blasphemy, because He called himself the Son of God, thus as they interpreted it making himself equal with God.

But not to dwell on this painful and invidious point, I would only further mention the fact that Mohammedanism is regarded by Unitarians as "a christian influence," and "a religion which recognizes and is based upon the Old Testament."† The English Unitarians‡ conveyed in an address to the Mahomedan ambassador of Morocco, in the reign of Charles the

||They are claimed by Dr. Lamson in his Tract, What is Unitarianism, p. 21—Unitarian Tracts No. 202.

\*See Unitarian Tracts No. 202—What is Unitarianism?

†Unitarian Tracts No. 197, p. 97, by Rev. G. E. Ellis.

‡See for the facts Whitaker's origin of Arianism, p. 399. Leslie's Works, vol. 1, pp. 207, 209, 337, 216, 217. Magee on the Atonement, vol. 1, pp. 132, 133; Eng. ed.

second, a cordial approbation of Mahomet and of the Koran. The one is said to be raised up by God, to scourge the idolizing christians, whilst the other is spoken of as a precious record of the true faith. Mahomet they represent to be "a preacher of the gospel of Christ," and they describe themselves to be "his fellow champions for the truth." The mode of warfare they admit indeed to be different, but the object contended for they admit to be the same. "We with our Unitarian brethren, have been in all ages exercised to defend with our pens the faith of one supreme God; *as he has raised your Mahomet to do the same with the sword*, as a scourge on those idolizing christians."

From what I have said,—and were I to go to the works of English Unitarians, I might quote largely to shew the intolerant spirit in which they speak of the Trinitarian, and especially of the Calvinistic faith,—it is more than apparent that the spirit of intolerance is confined to no sect or party of men, be they philosophers, or religionists, political or literary, and whether their association be secret or avowed, and to no age or period of the world. It is the development of that inward pride, hate, revenge and ambition which are characteristic of unrenewed human nature.

Our comparative deliverance from this intolerant spirit, we owe to the separation of Church and State, which Presbyterians mainly secured in this country§—the establishment of the great truth of man's responsibility to God, and to God only for all religious opinions and practices, which are not incompatible with the maintenance of public morals, or with the security of life;—to the existence of those numerous sects and denominations who exert a most powerful restraining and correcting influence on one another, and render a consolidation into one spiritual despotism impossible, while they stimulate thought and investigation and lead to conviction and faith, instead of a mere nominal and groundless belief—and to a growing intelligence, soundness, discretion and capacity of judging, in that great tribunal of a free country, I mean public opinion. No church in this country, except the Romish, either retains in its creed or avows in its journals, the principle of intolerance or persecution. And we may hope that they will all come practically to act upon the belief that candor, liberality and charity are as essential to the defence and diffusion of the gospel as

§See the author's Ecclesiastical Republicanism, and Foote's History of Presbyterian Church in Virginia.

they are to a perfect christian character. "Let what is by-gone be by-gone. Only let us not dress up, in the present day, a picture *entirely on one side*, and hold that partial delineation forth as specifically characteristic of any contemporary denomination."

A second remark which I shall make, and which may also be regarded as general, is that the system of Unitarianism is so indefinite and indeterminate as to be past finding out, by any inquirer after its truth.

"What is Unitarianism? The name is no guide to what the system is," for, says Dr. Putnam of Boston, himself a Unitarian, "Unitarian is a name which refers to a single doctrine, and one that has become less and less subject to controversial interest; a doctrine, too, which all other denominations profess to hold, and which some do clearly hold, as positively as we do."\*† Mr. Garnett in one of the Tracts of the Unitarian Association, is very strongly of the same opinion.\*\*

"What then makes a Unitarian? The denial of the divinity and the atonement of Christ; the rejection of the doctrines of depravity, regeneration and justification by faith? But these negations are common to almost all unbelievers, and they cannot therefore be made the peculiarities of any one denomination."

"Does the denomination include all who agree in this—that they have no positive faith; all who can not or will not tell what they believe; all who reject the dogmas of 'Orthodoxy?' Is it a promiscuous gathering of those who can find no other local habitation in the christian world?" How then shall they be distinguished? Of late they have styled themselves "liberal christians." "We do not concede the name, and Dr. Putnam says that there is a tone of arrogance about it," and Mr. W. H. Channing affirmed at an anniversary of the Unitarian Association, that "there is more bigotry at Cambridge than anywhere else in the land, and that Unitarians cannot adopt, with propriety, a single term of their triune motto, Liberty, Holiness and Love."

What then, I ask, is Unitarianism? "The time has fully come" says Dr. Putnam "when it is incumbent on the Unitarian denomination so called, either to draw some boundary lines for itself, and agree upon some sort of standard, and so become

\*†See Unitarian Tracts No. 184, pp. 23 and 24.

\*\*Until the time of Biddle, in England, Socinians retained much of the christian religion, for example redemption by the Cross and the omnipresence of Christ.

really and intelligibly a denomination or a sect, or else to remove, as soon and as entirely as we may, what little show there still is of boundaries and standards and cease absolutely to be, or appear to be, a denomination at all."

What Unitarianism is who then can tell? I have inquired with some diligence, and have been obliged to come to the conclusion that Unitarianism, as a system of doctrine to be believed, is simply the rejection of the doctrine of the Trinity in Unity of the Godhead and WHATEVER ELSE every individual may believe and assert. Among the Tracts of the Unitarian Association, I find that except on this one article of faith, "they avowedly differ more or less among themselves," and that different views on what we would consider essential doctrines, are expressed in its various tracts. The faith of Arius differed from that of Servetus. Socinus made essential to his system what "staggeres the common reason and moral sense" of modern Unitarians.†† And now among those called by this name, we find diversities of faith varying from the spiritual views of Dr. Gilman to those of Theodore Parker "who (with abilities and attainments not inferior to those of Mr. Newman) has reached the point of universal scepticism, as the latter has reached that of implicit reliance upon authority, by simply following out, with logical consistency, the principles in which he was educated." We cannot, therefore, receive as the system of doctrine revealed in the word of God, a system which is a chaos of conflicting opinions, containing among them those which are so unscriptural that even the organ of the body called christians, and who are claimed as Unitarians, "frankly acknowledge we are not prepared to pursue a course that will identify the christians with any people whose discipline is so lax that it cannot be strained up to a point high enough to excommunicate an infidel."

A *third* reason why I cannot receive as the gospel the system of Unitarianism is, because it leaves me without a Bible as a divinely inspired and certain rule of my faith and practice.

Unitarians have indeed boasted that the Bible is their creed, but there is a fallacy in the popular motto, "the Bible only," which deserves to be exposed. To say that I believe the Bible, may be a very faint indication of my religious sentiments. It may mean nothing more than what a Mahommedan might say, or nothing more than that I am not an infidel.

††"They regard the several books which comprise the volume as THE RECORDS OF A DIVINE REVELATION."—*Unitarian Tracts No. 202, p. 17.*

“What sort of a Bible do I believe in? An Oriental fiction—A collection of scriptures introductory to the Koran? An ethical treatise? Or a Revelation from God, attested by the appropriate signs? How much of the Bible do I believe, and how do I believe it? By what system of hermeneutics or philosophy do I interpret the Bible, and which do I seek to conform to the other?”

“Do you say,” asks Dr. Putnam himself, “the Bible only is our standard, and therein we are distinguished and marked off as a denomination? That is a plausible idea, and it has answered pretty well in quiet times; but it is unsound, and does not answer in all emergencies. There is no such thing as the Bible *only*, either for us or other christians. We, like all others, must take with the Bible some means or principles of interpreting it, ascertaining its purport and requirements. That, therefore, which we have usually held forth as our denominational test—the Bible only—is not sufficiently definite or distinctive to serve as a real test.”

An inspired, infallible, definite and intelligible rule of faith, is the very pillar and ground of all revealed authoritative truth,—the adamant base on which it stands. Now that God has revealed the doctrines which are essential to salvation, and that this truth is in the Bible both parties agree. “But how has this revelation been made? Have we any infallible record of it?” The orthodox christian answers, yes; the Unitarian, no. The one believes the Bible to be a revelation—the other that it merely contains a revelation. Observe the difference. One regards the Bible as an inspired book; the other as the bare depository of some inspired things; one as an authoritative rule in all duty; the other as having no authority whatever. The contrast is perfect. The Orthodox christian has but one step to take to ascertain the truth; the Unitarian has another more difficult task, namely, to determine whether the particular text is inspired, or whether the sentiment which it embodies is true.

Dr. Gilman speaks of the four gospels of the New Testament as “replete with inspiration.” But to what extent it is inspired, and whether the Old Testament is inspired, we are uninformed.

We do know, however, that on this subject there exist among Unitarians, the most varying opinions. Probably the most general is, that the Bible is the depository of a revelation but

that it is not itself plenary inspired, so far as that it is infallibly true in whatever it makes known.\*

"But what, we ask, is a book containing a revelation, but not one itself, worth to a man? What knowledge does it convey? What new ideas? We can confide in none of its declarations, unless we can verify them from independent sources of information."

And "it comes, therefore, to this, that the Bible contains an infallible revelation, from God, of those truths only which the light of nature discloses. Other doctrines of christianity cannot be tested and established from natural sources of information. It amounts to nothing that they are contained in the Bible—they may be the errors of the writers. In short, the Unitarian hypothesis is reduced to this absurdity, that the Bible does not even *contain* a revelation—for that part of its contents only which the light of nature first reveals, can be known to be true."

Such also is their peculiar mode of *interpreting* the Bible, that the doctrines which other christians, equally sagacious and equally good, can find in it, which appear to them as if written with a sun beam, and which they also consider as of the utmost importance to man's salvation, they cannot find in it. The *devil* and *hell*, and *everlasting punishment* many of them, therefore, reject as nonentities.

Dr. Priestley, who is claimed by them in the Tract above referred to, says: "Not that I consider the books of scripture as *inspired*, and on that account entitled to this high degree of respect, but as authentic records of the dispensations of God to mankind, with every particular of which we cannot be too well acquainted." "The writers of the books of scripture were," he says, "*men*, and therefore *fallible*; but all we have to do with them is in the character of *historians* and *witnesses* of what they heard and saw."

Mr. Lindley, also claimed by them, says: "The scriptures themselves, which might mislead us, are full of heathen prejudices, and so left, it should seem, on purpose to whet human industry and the spirit of inquiry into the things of God."

Some of their ranks, however, following the lead of Strauss, have of late subtracted so much from the history, authority and instruction of Jesus Christ, as in the opinion of Dr. Norton, not to leave enough to constitute any consistent and well grounded christianity at all. Still professing to believe in Christ they

\*Unitarian Tracts No. 186, pp. 33, 34.



recognize in him only a fictitious character, or a mere historic personage, having no higher authority to promulgate the truth in the name of God, and no greater security against error, than may pertain to any truly virtuous philosopher of our own times. They brand as falsehoods and fable, a large class of facts, all the supernatural facts, recorded as real in the four gospels.

I do not charge *every* Unitarian with these views of scripture. But what I affirm is, that I cannot receive a system as the gospel which leaves me in uncertainty as to whether there is an inspired Book of God,—if there is, how much and how far it is inspired,—or whether God has given to men a message which he requires them to obey under pain of his eternal displeasure—which they can reject only at the peril of their souls,—and which is after all so vague that we cannot tell whether a man is a believer or an infidel.

Coleridge in one of his conversations with Mr. Cottle, remarked "that he had renounced all his Unitarian sentiments: that he considered Unitarianism as a heresy of the worst description; attempting in vain to reconcile sin and holiness: the world and heaven; opposing the whole spirit of the Bible; and subversive of all that truly constituted christianity. At this interview he professed the deepest conviction of the truth of Revelation; of the Fall of Man; of the Divinity of Christ, and redemption alone through his blood."

But once more I remark in conclusion, that Unitarianism represents the character of God in such a way as contravenes my reason, my conscience, and my knowledge of human nature, of God's works, of God's providence, and of God's word.

THE MODE OF GOD'S EXISTENCE is utterly beyond the comprehension of the human intellect, which can neither determine whether He is absolutely one, or whether while one in essence there is in God a threefold subsistence of distinct and personal attributes.

Certain it is that reason, unaided by revelation never propounded the dogma of God's absolute unity,—that a trinity is involved in all the most ancient and prevalent theologies—that nature is in harmony with the doctrine of a triune God, as its creator, governor and beautifier—and that scripture makes it undeniable to the simple faith of the great mass of inquiring minds. I undertake, by the same species and amount of proof, to establish the deity of the Son of God and of the Holy Ghost, which can be brought from Scripture to prove that the Father is truly and properly God. For in what way is this possible,

but by showing that every name appropriated to Deity is his—every attribute characteristic of Deity his—every work peculiar to Deity done by him—and the worship which is distinctive of Deity his. But this is all true of the Son and therefore he is over all—God, blessed for ever. He is God—the Great God—the Mighty God—the true God. He is Omniscient, Omnipotent, Infinitely Wise. He creates, he upholds, he governs the universe: all is for his glory. “He is,” believer, “thy Lord, and worship thou him.”—(Ps. xlv. 11.) And this is all true also of the Holy Ghost.

AS TO THE CHARACTER OF GOD also, I must believe that He is necessarily holy and just, in order to be good and gracious, since a God all mercy is a God unjust. He must be a governor as well as a creator, a law *enforcer* as well as a *law giver*. Mercy, therefore, can be exercised by such a God only in accordance with the good of the whole universe of being and the maintenance of the holy laws by which that universe is governed.

Every element in my nature, therefore, combine to demand for the salvation of a guilty sinner, just such a divine and Almighty Saviour—such an omnipotent and omnipresent Sanctifier—such an all sufficient and vicarious redemption,—such a free and gratuitous salvation,—and such a full and gracious pardon,—as we believe to be announced in the plain and uniform teaching of the Bible.

While Unitarianism is thus condemned by reason as well as revelation, while it involves us on every hand in inextricable difficulties—it removes none. All that Dr. Gilman objects to in Calvinism, is objected to by infidels against Unitarianism. The existence of moral evil,—differences in the character and condition of men,—exhibitions of depravity, like that of Dr. Webster, inexplicable upon any ordinary motives to human conduct,—the belief on the part of perhaps most Unitarians, that there will be a future judgment and the punishment of men hereafter for sins which God permitted to be done here\*—in short the fact that God brings man into existence with such a nature that he does sin, and with such a destiny that he may everlastingly suffer for sins thus committed—this, which is the great difficulty in all theology, Unitarianism leaves as terrible as ever.

In all that is fundamental to Unitarianism, therefore, I consider it to be another gospel which is not another—depriving

\*Unitarian Tracts No. 186. pp. 33, 34.

man of consolation and strength in the discharge of life's duties, and the endurance of life's trials,—of all hope and triumph in death,—and of all confidence in the anticipation of the judgment day.

These points are of infinite importance. They involve a total difference of sentiment in regard to the God we worship, the medium of worship, the nature of all true and acceptable worship, and the way by which alone any of our guilty and sinful race can ever become sanctified and acceptable worshippers in the church on earth, and in the church of the first born in heaven. One or the other must be false. Both cannot be true. If one is idolatry the other is blasphemy. Dr. Dewey says he would rather be an infidel than be a Calvinist. Expressions quite as strong might be quoted from English Unitarians. Dr. Channing allowed himself to say that the Cross of Christ as the appointed way of salvation was the great central gallows of the universe. And "the unoffending and good Servetus" called "the Triune God a three headed hell bound monster."

On the other hand, Coleridge who had long been a Unitarian, says in his *Literary Remains*, "In consequence of our Redemption, the Trinity becomes a doctrine, the belief of which as real, is commanded by conscience. To christians it is commanded, and it is false candor in a christian, believing in original sin and redemption therefrom, to admit that any man denying the divinity of Christ can be a christian."

"Socinianism (Unitarianism) is not a religion, but a theory, and that too, a very pernicious or a very unsatisfactory theory. Pernicious, for it excludes all our deep and awful ideas of the perfect holiness of God, his justice and his mercy, and thereby makes the voice of conscience a delusion, as having no correspondent in the character of the legislator; regarding God as merely a good-natured pleasure-giver, indifferent as to the means, if only happiness be produced. Unsatisfactory, for it promises forgiveness without any solution of the difficulty of the compatibility of sin with the justice of God; in no way explains the fallen condition of man nor offers any means for his regeneration."† It never did and never can subsist as a general religion."

Amid these variant creeds there is but one infallible guide. It is that SPIRIT of wisdom—Who is able and willing to guide into all truth—WHO is promised to them that ask—and

†See Coleridge's *Nightly Prayers to the Trinity*, in his *Literary Remains*, vol. 2, p. 3, 6.

Who has said that if any man do His will he shall know of the doctrines whether they be of God.

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SUPPLEMENTARY NOTE.

*Presbyterianism and Republicanism.*

Dr. Gilman justly remarks in his discourse that it "is a suspicious circumstance for the votaries of any religion to recommend their views as peculiarly harmonizing with any form of civil government whatever. It is unworthy of their great mission, thus to flatter the political opinions and predilections of those whom they address." In this decision I fully agree, only that I extend the denunciation to those who endeavor to "recommend their views," by shewing their peculiar claims to literary and scientific attainments and to the great names of Newton, of whose theology we know little—of Locke, who affirms, as I understand him, his reception of the doctrine of the Trinity—of Milton, who certainly did not agree in one single point with modern Unitarianism. I can well remember when Calvinism was made to hide its diminished head by the triumphant inquiry, "What poem has it written?"

Dr. Gilman even arrays against us the name of Leibnitz who, although a member of the Lutheran church, illustrated and established the doctrine of Philosophical necessity, or the perfect consistency of the freedom of a moral agent with the infallible determination of his conduct, WHICH IS CALVINISM. There is a small book of his entitled "Essais de Theodcee, sur la bonté de Dieu, la liberte de l'homme, et l'origine du mal," which contains almost all the principles upon which we rest the defence of the Calvinistic tenets. Leibnitz also laid down, very clearly, the distinction between the absolute nature of God which is one undivided Godhead, and the will or personal attributes of God, which may be threefold and distinct in their conscious personality."\*

Dr. Priestley who is also gloried, in his work on Philosophical necessity has established as he thinks, principles which lead inevitably to all that is so staggering to the common sense of mankind in the doctrine of predestination.

I unite, therefore, in thinking that "it is an alarming thing (*and in this case certainly suicidal*) to see religion thus encroaching on unconsecrated ground, and seizing on the per-

\*See Coleridge's Lit. Rem. vol. 3, p. 73.

ishing elements of the world to advance her power and pretensions."

Calvinism, as a THEOLOGY, must stand or fall with its scriptural authority, and the analogy to Republicanism, claimed for our Presbyterian Polity, must stand or fall by a comparison of it with the Synagogue Polity of the Hebrew Republic, to which, as a model, it is undoubtedly assimilated,—by the historical evidence of its affinity, to constitutional forms of government, responsibility in governors and representation in the people;—by its whole history and character in England and in this country;—by the evidence for the declaration stated by Lafayette that it was looked to as a model in the formation of our national constitution,—and by the undeniable facts connected with the doings of our church and its members at the period of the revolution and since.

Dr. Humphrey made no exclusive claims to the glory of patriotism for the Presbyterian church and he certainly did not deny this glory to Congregationalism which embodies many of the elements of Presbytery. If, however, Unitarians can shew that they have been specially excluded in the distribution of the rewards due to patriotism, or if any other denomination has been unfairly dealt with, let them present their claims, and full payment will be made on demand.

But when Dr. Gilman goes on to say, "As for the enumeration in a note, of all those Presbyterians who took a leading part in the war of the American Revolution, I have always regretted to see such things brought into notice. There is not the slightest pretext for their introduction. The idea did not originate, I am persuaded, from this preacher, *nor any other true born native American*," I would remind him that in his over vaulting ambition to be severe, he has only unhorsed himself. Let him consult his own Unitarian fellow-believers, the historian Bancroft, who is "a true born native American," in his History of the United States. (Vol. I., p. 462, 464, and 266, 267; Vol. II. p. 459, 463.) He will find Mr. Bancroft, there declaring as an historian that "CALVINISM IS GRADUAL REPUBLICANISM." And what is far more, "the political character of Calvinism," says Mr. Bancroft, "which with our consent and with instinctive judgment the monarchs or THAT DAY feared as REPUBLICANISM, and which Charles I. declared to be a religion unfit for a gentleman, *that is a man of no creed and no morals*, is expressed in a single word predestination."

If not satisfied with these testimonies, let Dr. Gilman read the authorities and historical facts presented in my work on Ecclesiastical Republicanism, and perhaps he may have reason to alter his opinion, and to say, "Would that I could say as much for either the missionary or the political philanthropy of the system of Unitarianism."†

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#### AFFINITIES OF CALVINISM.

*From the Sermon by Rev. Albert Barnes.*

The Calvinistic doctrines seem to have some kind of affinity with the Presbyterian mode of government. It may not be easy to see precisely why it is but the general course of events has shown that there is such an affinity, and that this is a natural alliance. Using the word *Presbyterian* in a large sense, as it is often used, to embrace our brethren of New England, and as, in such a sense it is not improperly used, for they stand up for the essential views which we maintain on the subject,—it is to be observed that the purest form of Calvinism has sought to express itself in connection with Presbyterianism. Indeed, in the popular apprehension, these are now almost identical. It was not a matter of accident that the church founded by Calvin in Geneva was Presbyterian; it was not a matter of accident that the church formed by John Knox was Presbyterian; it was not a matter of accident that the churches in Holland represented in the Synod at Dort were mainly Presbyterians; it was not a matter of accident that the Calvinistic doctrines of the Puritans, represented in the Westminster Assembly, and the whole Calvinism of England in the time of Charles I. and the Protectorate, went forth in essential Presbyterianism as opposed to prelacy; and it was not a matter of chance that when the New England pilgrims came to our shores, though most of them had been reared in the bosoms of Prelatical churches, and most of the ministers had been ordained by Prelatical Bishops, the substantial form in which

†In Tract No. 199 of the Unitarian Association, p. 19, it is said, "The only missions to a heathen land which we of set purpose have cherished, were those of Madris—where the Rev. Mr. Roberts died in his faithful work—and at Calcutta, where Rev. Mr. Adam was compelled by the opposition of other christians to desist. A few years ago we were applied to, to send a missionary to the Sandwich Islands. Steps were taken to that end, but were retraced, from the fear of distracting those partially civilized regions with the same doctrinal contentions which have been going on here, and which have since taken place there between Catholics and Protestants."

these doctrines expressed themselves was the Presbyterian rather than the Episcopal form. There have been Calvinists, and there are still, in the Established Church of England, and there was a large infusion, we think, of genuine Calvinism into its "articles," but the doctrine has from some cause found little that was congenial; has been little welcomed there; has been cramped, and has never found its full development there; has been buried under forms, and silently melted away, or has been made a term for reproach. In connection with Presbyterianism, however, it has worked freely; combining, with a very efficient mode of church government, its own great energy as adapted to move and mould the human mind. In Geneva, in Scotland, in Holland, in New England, in the various Presbyterian organizations in our country, it has operated without restraint, and its proper fruits are to be found there.





# Dr. Watts Not a Unitarian.



BY

REV. THOMAS SMYTH, D. D.



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## DR. WATTS NOT A UNITARIAN.

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Dr. Watts was a very remarkable man. Born in weakness, he spent a life of continual suffering, and dwelt, as it were, upon the very confines of the grave. And yet so truly was the strength of God perfected in his weakness, that while the outward man was continually perishing, the inward man was made strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. A child in physical energy, he was a giant in intellectual prowess, and exerted seventy-five years of unintermitting mental labour. His poem on "Complaint and hope under great pain," seems to be an emblem of his daily experience.

He was born in troublous times, which tried men's souls, and tested their principles by persecution. His father was imprisoned for six months for his non-conformity, and afterwards driven from his family for two years. And when in prison, his wife, it is said, was seen sitting on a stone near the prison door, suckling her son Isaac. Thus introduced to the cause of non-conformity, Watts did not, like Butler, Secker, and others, yield to the overpowering influence of worldly advantages, but having studied the principles of non-conformity, and being satisfied that these principles were most congenial to a kingdom not of this world, he rejected the most flattering proposals and devoted himself to the interests of the dissenters.

He was a remarkable instance of early attention to books. Before he had well learned to speak, a book was his greatest pleasure, and when he received any little present of money, he was accustomed to run to his parents crying "a book, a book, buy a book." He began to learn Latin at the age of four, and his leisure hours seem to have been very early occupied in poetical efforts. He thus "lisped in numbers," and from four to fifty, was a writer of verses. And yet it may be said that in all this time he wrote no line, which dying, he could wish to blot. No uninspired poet has ever obtained the popularity of Watts, or so identified his muse with all that is sacred to the best interests of his species. His songs still constitute a principal medium of divine worship to the larger portion of Protestant christendom, and while they perfect the hosannas of "babes and sucklings," waft to heaven the aspirations of the hoary headed saint, and put songs of exulting triumph into the mouth of the dying believer "just ready to depart." Breathing

the spirit of their divine originals, conveying not their typical and literal sense, but their spiritual and true import as prophetic of the saviour and "shadows of good things to come," and written in every variety of metre, and in a style equally adapted to the unlettered and cultivated mind—his Psalms have far outshone any other version which has been attempted for the use of the christian church in the public worship of God. And as it regards his hymns, it may be safely affirmed that, taken as a whole, they are inimitable for their scripturality, fervour, and devotion, and that without many of them, no collection of christians Psalmody can be complete. And had Dr. Watts left no other legacy to the church than his Psalms, and Hymns, and Spiritual Songs, he would have erected for himself an enduring monument, not in tables of stone, but in the hearts of christians, whose lips employing his time hallowed language, will ever celebrate the high praises of God, the Father, Son and Spirit, where there are works to make HIM known or saints to love the Lord.

These Psalms and Hymns are employed by the churchman, the dissenter, and the Methodist; and "every Sabbath, in every region of the earth, where his native tongue is spoken, thousands and tens of thousands of voices are sending the sacrifices of prayer and praise to God, in the strains which he prepared for them a century ago."

"A copy was taken into Central Africa by Mr. Anderson, the fellow-traveller and brother-in-law of the unfortunate Mungo Park, and lately found by the Landers at Youri, hung up in the residence of a chieftain as *fetische*, or sacred. From his pulpit, Dr. Watts instructed and edified a numerous and attentive auditory; from his study he benefitted, by practical and doctrinal treatises, thousands who never heard the sound of his living voice; but from his closet he has given songs of praise to the churches, which will be used in their solemn assemblies and private devotions, till time shall be no more, and have been employed by the delivered spirit soaring triumphant over death, to its native skies. They have been instruments in the hand of God, of improving the religious experience, and increasing the spiritual enjoyments of his people, rousing their deadened affections, enkindling the almost extinguished flame of love, prompting the longings of desire, and calling back, by the 'voice of music,' and the gushing of 'sweet sound,' many a wandering sheep to the fold of his heavenly Father and Redeemer."

James Montgomery himself, pre-eminent as a poet, a christian, and a psalmist, in the preface to his *Christian Psalmist*, remarks, "Passing by Mrs. Rowe, and the mystical rhymes of her age, we come to the greatest name among hymn-writers; for we hesitate not to give that praise to Dr. Isaac Watts, since it has pleased God to confer upon him, though one of the least of the poets of his country, more glory than upon the greatest either of that or any other, by making his "divine songs," a more abundant and universal blessing, than the verses of any uninspired penman that ever lived. In his 'Psalms and Hymns,' (for they must be classed together,) he has embraced a compass and variety of subjects, which include and illustrate every truth of revelation, throw light upon every secret movement of the human heart, whether of sin, nature, or grace, and describe every kind of trial, temptation, conflict, doubt, fear and grief, as well as the faith, hope, charity, the love, joy, peace, labour, and patience of the christian, in all stages of his course on earth; together with the terrors of the Lord, the glories of the Redeemer, and the comforts of the Holy Spirit, to urge, allure and strengthen him by the way. There is in the pages of this evangelist, a word in season for every one who needs it, in whatever circumstances he may require counsel, consolation, reproof, or instruction."

It was owing to the earnest wishes of his friends, that Dr. Watts, about the year 1729, gave to the world, the work now presented in a new form to the public. This humble and unpretending performance, says his biographer, Mr. Milner, speedily obtained an unwonted popularity; edition after edition rapidly issued from the press in England and America; and translations have since appeared in many of the European and trans-Atlantic languages. The number of copies that have been circulated throughout the world, must amount to many millions; upwards of thirty editions in this country are regularly kept in print; and, upon a moderate computation, the average annual sale in England only cannot be less than eighty thousand. It was stated some years ago upon authority, that two Institutions, the Society for promoting Religious Knowledge among the poor, and the Religious Tract Society, had distributed upwards of one hundred thousand. It is an honourable distinction, that the most popular books in the English, and probably in any other language, have proceeded from the pens of non-conformists. In proof of the accuracy of this statement, there need only be instanced the "Pilgrim's Progress" of Bunyan; the

"Saint's Rest," of Baxter; the "Rise and Progress of Religion," of Doddridge; the "Divine Songs," of Watts; and the "Robinson Crusoe," of De Foe. Wherever the English name is known, and its language has penetrated, these productions have travelled the heralds of the literature and religion of the country of their birth.

Of the merits of the "Divine Songs," a very high opinion has been entertained. The writer, with singular felicity, adapts himself to the feeble capacity of childhood; his rhymes present a rare combination of the simple, the useful, and the attractive; and, perhaps, no equal instance can be found in our literature of the truths of religion, the duties of morality, and the spirit of poetry, being so admirably accommodated to an infantine comprehension. It is no slight praise to have expounded the sublimest lessons of philosophy to the educated, and at the same time, to have put into "the mouths of babes and sucklings," such plain and beautiful effusions. Dr. Johnson's striking eulogy should not be withheld: "For children," he remarks, "he condescended to lay aside the scholar, the philosopher, and the wit, to write little poems of devotion and systems of instruction, adapted to their wants and capacities, from the dawn of reason through its gradations of advance in the morning of life. Every man acquainted with the common principles of human action, will look with veneration on the writer, who is, at one time, combating Locke, and at another, making a catechism for children in their fourth year. A voluntary descent from the dignity of science, is, perhaps, the hardest lesson that humility can teach." In such compositions as the following: "whenever I take my walks abroad;" "my God, who makes the sun to know;" "Lord, how delightful 'tis to all;" "and now another day is gone;" "'tis the voice of the sluggard;" "how fair is the rose," &c., we see genius and devotion coming down to the level of the most juvenile understanding. Had Watts written nothing beside, his name would have lived forever; they form one of the most precious boons which the church of Christ has ever received from the hands of uninspired man; and they will be repeated by the seed of the righteous on earth, until they hear and learn the songs of the blessed in heaven.

Many of the correspondents of Watts refer to the happy influence of his songs upon the minds of children; and several striking testimonies to this effect are upon record. A Welch divine observes, "I have seen the sweet delight and joy with which they have been read by many of the young. On the

hearts of five children in my own connection they have by the blessing of God made deep impressions; and one of these the other day died comfortably, repeating them a few minutes before his departure." A religious periodical relates the following affecting instance of the conversion of a poor mother: "A poor wretched girl, religiously educated, but now abandoned to misery and want, with an illegitimate child, was struck with horror at hearing this infant daughter repeat, as soon as she could well speak, some of the profane language she had taught her by example. She trembled at the thought, that she was not only going to hell herself, but leading her child thither. She instantly resolved the first sixpence she could procure, should purchase Watts' "Divine Songs," of which she had some recollection, to teach her infant daughter. She did so; and on opening the book, her eye caught the following striking stanzas:

Just as the tree cut down, that falls,  
To north or southward, there it lies;  
So man departs to heaven or hell,  
Fixed in the state wherein he dies.

She read on; the event ended in her conversion, and she lived and died an honorable professor of religion." Thousands and tens of thousands of others have recurred in after years to these lessons of their childhood; and not a few have traced to the impressions made by their means, their direction to the paths of virtue and religion.

"I am surprised," says Mr. Cecil, "at nothing which Dr. Watts did, but his hymns for children. Other men could have written as well as he in his other works; but how he wrote these hymns I know not." Thousands of children have had them indelibly written on their memories and thousands of lisping tongues have been prepared by their instrumentality to utter the songs of heaven, which are now there swelling the chorus of saints and angels; and, doubtless, thousands more will have reason through eternity to bless God for the instruction contained in the "DIVINE AND MORAL SONGS."

It is important to remark as illustrative of the policy and principles of that artful *sect*, which President Quincy says, "has not within it the principle of sectarianism,"\* that †"an edition of the Songs for children, revised and altered, was published anonymously in the year 1785, and generally attributed to the celebrated Mrs. Barbauld. The design of the accom-

\*See N. Y. Observer, March 29, 1845.

†Milner, p. 275 to 277.

plished editor was, to accommodate Watts' little work to the principles of Unitarianism, in order to prepare it for circulation among the juvenile members of that body. After a compliment to the author for his pleasing versification, she remarks in the preface, that Dr. Watts' little book has been considered as very defective, or rather erroneous, by great numbers of serious christians; for though it has been very credibly reported, and generally believed, that he changed many of his religious principles before his death; nevertheless there are retained in his book some particular doctrines and phrases, which his better judgment would probably have corrected or expunged." But, be this as it may, the present editor has judged it expedient to make many alterations in both these respects. "It has been," she further remarks, "her principal design to confine all the ascriptions of praise and thanksgiving to the one only living and true God, to whom alone all praise and thanksgiving are most justly due." It will only be necessary to observe here, that whatever change Watts' religious opinions underwent, it was not such as to interfere with the sentiments expressed in his songs, much less to sanction in the slightest degree, the alterations and omissions of the arian editor. The hymns entitled, "Praise to God for Redemption," and "The Hosanna, or Salvation ascribed to Christ," are omitted in the spurious edition; and the doxologies of Dr. Samuel Clarke, are inserted in the place of those of Watts. A few specimens of this so-called improved version the reader may be curious to see.

## ORIGINAL EDITION.

## SONG VII., VERSE 6.

"Here would I learn how Christ has  
dy'd,  
To save my soul from hell;  
Not all the books on earth beside,  
Such heavenly wonders tell."

## SONG IX., VERSE 4.

"Dear Lord, this book of thine  
Informs me where to go  
For grace to pardon all my sins,  
And make me holy too."

## VERSE 5.

"Here I can read and learn,  
How Christ, the Son of God,  
Did undertake our great concern;  
Our ransom cost his blood."

## ARIAN EDITION.

"Here would I learn how Jesus  
dy'd,  
*To prove his gospel true,*  
Not all the books on earth beside,  
*E'er so much good can do."*

*"Oh God, thy book so good,*  
Informs me *what to do,*  
*Besides the knowledge of thy word,*  
It makes me holy too."

"There I can read and learn,  
How Christ the Son of God,  
Has undertook our great concern,  
*And sealed it with his blood."*



## VERSE 6.

"And now he reigns above,  
He sends his spirit down,  
To show the wonders of his love,  
And make his gospel known."

"*But God still* reigns above,  
And sends his spirit down,  
To show the wonders of his love,  
And make the gospel known."

## SONG XVII., VERSE 2.

"Jesus who reigns above the sky,  
And keeps the world in awe,  
Was once a child as young as I,  
And kept his Father's law."

"Jesus who lives above the sky,  
*Beloved of his God,*  
Tho' once a child as young as I,  
He kept his Father's word."

## SONG XXVII., VERSE 4.

"With thoughts of Christ and things  
divine,  
Fill up this foolish heart of mine;  
That hoping pardon through his  
blood,  
I may lie down and wake with  
God."

"With thoughts of Christ and things  
divine,  
Employ this foolish heart of  
mine;  
That hoping pardon through his  
*word,*  
I may lie down and wake with  
God."

This production gave rise to severe animadversions; and a small pamphlet, exposing the unwarrantable liberties taken by the editor, appeared under the following singular title: "A Letter to the Rev. Mr.—or a great disturbing of the Little Arian Foxes among the vines; and part of the remains of Dr. Watts cleared of a few leaves and rags of Arianism."

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But it was not only in poetry that Dr. Watts was eminent. Of no individual, who was fortunate enough to have Dr. Johnson for his biographer, has he spoken in such favorable terms as it regards their entire character and talents, as of Dr. Watts. \*"Few men," he tells us, "have left such purity of character, or such monuments of laborious piety. He has provided instruction for all ages, from those who are lisping their first lessons, to the enlightened readers of Malbranche and Locke; he has left neither corporeal nor spiritual nature unexamined; he has taught the art of reasoning, and the science of the stars. His character, therefore, must be formed from the multiplicity and diversity of his attainments, rather than from any single performance, for it would not be safe to claim for him the highest rank in any single denomination of literary dignity; yet perhaps there was nothing in which he would not have excelled if he had not divided his powers to different pursuits. Of his philosophical pieces his Logic has been received into the universities, and therefore wants no private recommendation; if he owes part of it to Le Clerc, it must be considered that no man,

\*Dr. Johnson's works, vol. 9, p. 245, 246, and 243.

who undertakes merely to methodise or illustrate a system, pretends to be its author.

"Few books have been perused by me with greater pleasure than his 'Improvement of the mind,' of which the radical principle may indeed be found in Locke's 'Conduct of the Understanding;' but they are so expanded and ramified by Watts, as to confer upon him the merit of a work in the highest degree useful and pleasing. Whoever has the care of instructing others may be charged with deficiency in his duty if this book is not recommended.

"I have mentioned his treatises of Theology as distinct from his other productions: but the truth is, that whatever he took in hand, was, by his incessant solicitude for souls, converted to Theology. As piety predominated in his mind, it is diffused over his works: under his direction it may be truly said, *Theologiae Philosophiae ancillatur*; philosophy is subservient to evangelical instruction; it is difficult to read a page without learning, or at least wishing to be better. The attention is caught by indirect instruction, and he that sat down only to reason, is on a sudden compelled to pray.

"He was one of the first authors that taught the Dissenters to court attention by the graces of language. Whatever they had among them before, whether of learning or acuteness, was commonly obscured and blunted by coarseness and inelegance of style. He shewed them, that zeal and purity might be expressed and enforced by polished diction.

"He continued to the end of his life, a teacher of a congregation: and no reader of his works can doubt his fidelity or diligence. In the pulpit, though his low stature, which very little exceeded five feet, graced him with no advantages of appearance, yet the gravity and propriety of his utterance made his discourses very efficacious. I once mentioned the reputation which Mr. Foster had gained by his proper delivery to my friend Dr. Hawkesworth, who told me, that in the art of pronunciation, he was far inferior to Dr. Watts."

The two Universities of Edinburgh and Aberdeen, in the year 1728, severally conferred on him, unsolicited and without his knowledge, the degree of Doctor of Divinity. This academical honour was never better bestowed or received with less vanity; and happy would it have been for such seminaries, had titles of this sort never been disgraced by any thing mercenary in their source, or by ignorance or superciliousness in their subjects. In this case the honour was reciprocal so far as a

diploma may be allowed to bear any proportion to poignancy of genius, highly cultivated understanding, the widest talents of the head, added to the most amiable virtues of the heart.

Although a non-conformist from principle and uniformly such in practice, he held a friendly correspondence with some of the first characters in the established church. Among these, were Secker, Archbishop of Canterbury, Gibson, Bishop of London, Hort, Archbishop of Suam, and many others of devoted rank, and eminent literary reputation. Their letters to him are written in an uncommon strain of veneration and esteem, and although many expressions occur which bear too near an affinity to the language of flattery, those who knew the man, and were benefitted by his writings, may be allowed some latitude beyond what is common in such cases.

Here we might close this introduction, but that the continued policy of Unitarians, who in the absence of any capital of gospel truth, are ever ready and anxious to live upon the borrowed capital of others, demands a vindication of the memory of Dr. Watts against the false and unwarrantable insinuations, that before he died he had apostatized from the truth adopted, the system from which the divinity of our Saviour was excluded, and had adapted his hymns to this rationalistic system. Such is the assertion still proclaimed in Unitarian Tracts, and most culpably encouraged by those who reject the use of all hymns and spiritual songs in christian worship.

Now for neither of these assertions is there any proof.

That Dr. Watts was led to deep inquiries into the doctrine of the Trinity, from an earnest desire, as far as possible, to explain and accommodate it to human reason, and thus to harmonize and unite such as might otherwise differ, is undoubtedly true. And that by so doing, he plunged himself into perplexity, gave offence to his brethren, and failed to satisfy those who take their reason as the guide and standard of religious truth, is also true. He was permitted to apply to this subject all the power of his genius, and the force of his indefatigable perseverance, in order to demonstrate that "no man by searching can find out God," that the doctrine concerning "God manifest in the flesh" is the "great mystery of godliness;—that "no man knoweth the Father save the Son" and that "no man knoweth the Son but the Father," while "the things of God knoweth no man but the Spirit of God, who searcheth the deep things of God;"—and that "no man therefore can call Jesus Lord but by the Holy Ghost."

But it is not true that Dr. Watts ever ceased to believe in the doctrine of the Trinity.\* Dr. Lardner and others may think that his views lead to the rejection of the Trinity, and so we think they would in most minds, but with him they were designed merely to illustrate in some comprehensible way, the mode in which a trinity of persons could subsist in one essence.

In the year 1726, in reply to Mr. Bradbury, he writes, "as for my attempts to maintain the new and essential deity of Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit, I have often examined my own heart, and am not conscious to myself that the pride and fondness of novelty has led me into any particular train of thoughts; and I beg earnestly, that he that knows all things, would search and try me in this respect. My only aim has been to guard this doctrine against the objections and cavils of men, and to see it in the most defensible light; and if I can see that done in any other form, I shall rejoice to bury all my papers in oblivion, or, if you please, to burn them all."

It may therefore just as well be said that all Trinitarians believe in three Gods, because Socinians say so, as that Watts did not believe in a Trinity, because they choose to affirm that with his views, he must have disbelieved that doctrine.

With equal propriety might those who approve the model definition of the word person in the Trinity, be held up as Unitarians likewise. But would not such men as Dr. Wallis, Baxter, Dr. South, the authors of the Oxford decree, which pronounced the system of the latter to be the orthodox doctrine of the Church of England, Tillotson, Doddridge, and the late Dr. Williams, who all favoured the idea of a model personality, have rejected the title with indignation?

The allegation that Dr. Watts became a Unitarian, is founded on certain papers which he drew up some three or four years before his death, and some of which Dr. Jennings, Mr. Neal, and Dr. Lardner judged not worthy of publication. The names of some of these were †"Essays relating to the Trinity, viz: An Inquiry into the Scriptural Representation of the Father, the Word, and the Spirit:" 2. "Of the proper Athanasian scheme of the Trinity:" 3. "The Holy Spirit the true God." 4. "The ill effects of incorporating the divine doctrine of the Trinity, with the human explications of it."

\*His error lay in attempting to explain it, so as to make its consistency with absolute unity apparent. See *Life*, p. 602.

†See page 726.

And it so happens that the largest of these treatise had been privately printed, though not published by Watts. "The manuscript," says his biographer, "mentioned in the list No. VII., "*A faithful Inquiry after the ancient and original doctrine of the Trinity,*" &c., was actually printed in 1745, while the author was living, but for certain reasons suppressed; A COPY OF THIS VERY PIECE has, however, been recovered, and a new edition published in 1802.\*

We have now then the means of ascertaining whether Dr. Lardner's representation of Dr. Watts' sentiments from his unpublished papers, was well founded or not. The manuscript of this curious piece, let it be remembered, was among the manuscripts which the executors destroyed. From the following extracts it will be seen, that the suppressed papers assert precisely the *same doctrines* that the author had for years maintained, and that he expresses himself in the same characteristic manner. He here asserts the pre-existence of Jesus Christ—his intimate union with Deity—and his atonement for the sins of men—sentiments decidedly adverse to the Unitarian scheme. He also asserts the doctrine of the Trinity, which Unitarians deny in every form of it.

"OF JESUS CHRIST THE SON OF GOD."

"He was born as a man here on earth, he lived and died as a man having a human body with a rational soul; yet it must be acknowledged, that there is some part of the constitution of the complete person of our Lord Jesus Christ which existed through all ancient ages, for he had a *glory with the Father before the foundation of the world*. God the Father *created*

\*The Editor observes further, "in a blank leaf of the original work, was written in a fair hand the following sentence verbatim: 'The Doctor printed off only fifty copies of this work, and showed them to some friends, who all persuaded him that it would ruin his character in his old age, for publishing such dotage, and at length he was prevailed on to burn them; so the whole impression of fifty was destroyed without publication, except this single copy of it, which by an accident escaped the flames.'"

Chalmers in his biographical dictionary, vol. 31, p. 253, says on this point: "Upon a careful perusal of the whole, we are inclined to think that Mr. Palmer has not removed all the difficulties attending the question; although on the other hand he has ably and fully vindicated Dr. Watts from the least evidence to be produced from his own pen; and all that remains to affect the character of the Doctor, rests on an anonymous accusation in a literary Journal, (Month, Rev. vol. 66, p. 170;) the author of which we suspect to be Dr. Kippis, who is no longer to be called upon for the proofs of his assertion. With respect to the reports propagated by some Arian and Socinian writers, that the author revised his Hymns and Psalms a little before his death, in order to render them, as they say, 'wholly unexceptionable to every christian professor,' they are generally discredited."

*the world by Jesus Christ; by him all things were created.* He had an existence, therefore, early enough to create this world, and to enter into councils of peace with God the Father for the reconciliation of fallen man to God.

“It is evident, also, that he is often called God in scripture, (John I. 1, &c.) and since he is true God as well as man, we have plain directions from scripture to suppose, that this second person, or this man Christ Jesus, has the true Godhead united to him, or dwelling in him, in a peculiar manner; so that they are often represented as one complex person. It may properly be called a personal union, since many personal actions are ascribed to these two Spirits, the human and the divine united. He is said to have *all the fulness of the Godhead dwelling bodily in him.* He is called *God manifest in the flesh.* He is of the race of the *Jews concerning the flesh,* and he is also *God over all blessed for ever:* Rom. 9, 5. In the Old Testament, as well as in the New, he is called both God and man; Isa. 9, 6: *a child born, a son given, yet called the mighty God.* And Jer. 23, 6: *the Lord our righteousness; and Emmanuel, or God with us.*

“The benefits which we are to receive from Jesus Christ, are pardon of sin through his *full atonement* of satisfaction for which the dignity of his person is sufficient, as he is one with God. The dignity of this union spreads itself over all that Christ did and suffered, and makes it divine and all sufficient. This union enables him to raise his church out of this world, to change the hearts of men and turn them to himself; to give his presence to his people in their worship; to preserve his church from all their enemies, to rule and govern the nations, to raise the dead, and to judge the world.

“The duties we are required to perform to him are, *to honor him as we honor the Father;* to trust in him; to obey him; to pray to him as dying Stephen did, *‘Lord Jesus receive my spirit;’* or as Paul, 2 Cor. 12, 8; to give praises to him and doxologies, as Paul often does, and as the whole creation does, Rev. 5: 12, 13: *‘Every creature in heaven and earth said, blessing, and honor, and glory, and power be to him that sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb, for ever and ever.’*

“OF THE HOLY TRINITY.”

“The doctrine of the blessed Trinity, or of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, with their peculiar characters and offices, is a special doctrine of the christian religion. This

sacred three in the Trinity are plainly represented in scripture, and have been generally represented by christian writers, like *three persons*, or three distinct personal agents, as acting different parts and sustaining different parts, and sustaining different characters in the affairs of our salvation; and yet it seems to be abundantly evident also in scripture that they are all three represented as having *true and proper Deity* some way belonging to them, and that the names, titles, attributes and operations of Godhead are ascribed to the three in the Old Testament, and in the New. This is the substance of doctrine itself, as revealed in the Bible, and the writers on the Trinity have so often proved it, that I need not repeat the proofs here. Yet there are sufficient guards in the New Testament, that the ancient doctrine of the eternal *unity of God* must have no inroad made upon it by christianity."

We will only add that on the Holy Spirit the views of Dr. Watts in their most latitudinarian state were these: "In his Scrip. Doct. of the Trinity," he asks, "Is it proper for us to address ourselves in a way of prayer or praise, directly to the blessed Spirit, since we cannot find it plainly commanded or practised in the word of God?"

"Answer. I confess we cannot find in scripture any such positive and express precepts or examples of petition and praise, so directly addressed to the person of the Holy Spirit, as there are to the Father and the Son. Yet, since we have proved before, that the Spirit hath real, true, and proper communion in the Godhead, there is sufficient ground in my judgment, to address ourselves to him by way of prayer for the spiritual mercies we want, and by way of praise for the blessings we receive." Again, in his "Arian invited to the Orthodox Faith," he remarks, "Though the scripture has not taught us distinctly to offer praise and honor to the Holy Spirit, yet it has taught us to hearken to the voice of the Spirit, to obey the Spirit, to hope and wait for the enlightening and sanctifying and comforting influences of the Spirit, and not to resist him; and since the Holy Spirit is true God, I think it follows by evident consequence, that we may offer him the sacrifice of praise for the blessings which he bestows."

So much then for the oft reiterated charge that "THIS GREAT AND GOOD MAN WAS ON THE SIDE" of Unitarianism.

And as to the report that he had actually prepared, or intended to prepare a revised edition of his Psalms and Hymns adapted to Unitarian sentiments, Mr. Milner concludes his

examination by stating that, "Upon the whole I think it may be concluded, that Mr. Watts admitted that his hymns were open to correction, to accord them in several instances with his last sentiments, that such corrections were not, however, in his estimation of moment, enough to induce him to make them; and that the report of his leaving an altered copy of his hymn book behind him, is without any just foundation."

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#### DR. WATTS A BAPTIST.

[We give the following traditionary rumor respecting Dr. Watts, without vouching for its correctness. It is from the London Baptist Reporter for January, 1846.]

Whether any intimation of such a fact has ever been given to the public, I know not, but I have heard it stated in such a way as leaves small doubt of it in my own mind. The statement is this, namely, that when Dr. Gibbons visited the sweet singer in his last illness, Dr. Watts thus addressed his friend:

"Dr. Gibbons," said he, "I have been lately reviewing our controversy with the Baptists, and my conviction is, that they have the best of the argument, and I die a decided Baptist."

This interesting reminiscence of Watts has come to the writer through the following medium: Dr. Gibbons communicated it to his wife, and this lady, being a Baptist, communicated it to her friends, the Stennetts, and a member of this family communicated it to my venerable and pious informant. Such a statement ought not to die away; and if it can be controverted or confirmed, so let it be.—*Baptist Memorial*.

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#### WAS DR. WATTS A UNITARIAN?

In our last number, under this title, we discussed the evidence, on the strength of which Dr. Lardner, Mr. Belsham, and other Unitarian writers, affirm that Watts was *not a Trinitarian*.

But what, on the other side, can be produced to show that he was one? We reply, his own writings and assertions, the best sort of evidence, as it seems to us, which can be produced respecting the sentiments and opinions of any man.

In one of his manuscripts, published after his death, there is a solemn address to the Deity, invoking direction and assistance in his studies respecting the Trinity, in the course of which prayer, Dr. Watts thus speaks of Christ:



"I believe he is *one with God*; he is *God manifested in the flesh*; and that the *man Jesus is so closely and inseparably united with the true and eternal Godhead, as to become one person, even as the soul and body make one man.*"

The last of his posthumous papers on the Trinity, published some years after his death, entitled, "*A faithful inquiry after the ancient and original doctrine of the Trinity,*" contains the following among other like passages.

"The doctrine of the blessed Trinity, or of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, with their peculiar characters and offices, is a special doctrine of the christian religion. This sacred Three in the Trinity are plainly represented in Scripture, and have been generally represented by christian writers, like *three persons*, or three distinct personal agents, as acting different parts, and sustaining different characters in the affairs of our salvation; and yet it seems to be abundantly evident also in Scripture that they are all three represented as having *a true and proper Deity* some way belonging to them, and that the names, titles, attributes, and operations of Godhead, are ascribed to the Three, in the Old Testament and in the New. This is the substance of the doctrine itself, as revealed in the Bible."

"The benefits which we are to receive from Jesus Christ are, pardon of sin through his *full atonement* or satisfaction, for which the dignity of his person is sufficient, as he is one with God."

This is one of the manuscripts, it will be remembered, to which Dr. Lardner refers us as containing *Unitarian* sentiments!

The last works published by Dr. Watts, the one in the beginning, and the other near the close of 1746, are entitled, "Useful and Important Questions concerning Jesus Christ," and "The Glory of Christ as God-man," displayed in three discourses. These works being his last, may be regarded as his final testimony, and the latter of the two, if not the former, was written, as we have already shown, *subsequently* to the manuscript left at his death, in the hands of his executors.

In the preface to the "Useful Questions" the writer says of himself that:

"He freely and delightfully confesses these following articles borrowed from the *Athanasian creed*, viz.: 'We believe and confess the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is both God and man; God of the same substance with the Father, a man of the

substance of his mother, *born* into the world, perfect God and perfect man; of a reasonable soul and human flesh, subsisting *together*; equal to the Father as touching his Godhead, and yet inferior to the Father as touching his manhood: One, not by conversion of the Godhead into the flesh, but by taking of the manhood into God, *so as to become one personal agent*, or one person; and, as the reasonable soul and flesh is one man, so God and man are one Christ, who suffered for our salvation."

In the "Glory of Christ," he thus affirms:

"All that I pretend to maintain here is, that our blessed Saviour must be *God* and he must be *man in God and man in two distinct natures and one person.*"

"There is not one sentence in all these discourses, but what is very consistent with a firm belief of the Divinity of Christ, and a just and sincere concern for the most eminent and glorious truths of the gospel, as they are professed by Protestants among us, against the *Socinian and Arian errors.*"

In the same work occurs also the following passage.

"We *know* that Jesus Christ is true God, and that his human nature is united to the Divine." "The sacred doctrine of the Divinity, united to the human nature in Christ, ought to be supported by all just expositions of Scripture. It is an article that *we cannot part with out of our religion, without shaking the foundation.*"

Such is Dr. Watts' own testimony respecting himself. In accordance with his writings was his death. Dr. Gibbons and Dr. Stennett who visited him but a short time before his death, found "his soul swallowed up with gratitude and joy for the *redemption of sinners by Jesus Christ.*" He spoke "particularly of our *dependence upon Christ as the foundation of all our hopes.*" He expressed to Dr. Stennett his firm belief in the doctrine of the atonement, and lamented with tears, that so many had given it up. Accordant with this is the epitaph which Dr. Watts ordered to be inscribed upon his tomb—*In uno, Jesu omnia—In Jesus alone is my all.*

Was Dr. Watts then, on the whole, a Unitarian? Let the reader judge for himself in view of the facts now presented. Even *Mr. Belsham* admits that Dr. Watts did not regard himself as one—and that "owing to early prejudices, he would, *to the latest day of his life*, have started from the imputation with horror."





The Scriptural Doctrine  
OF  
The Second Advent

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A DISCOURSE  
BY THE  
REV. THOMAS ✓ SMYTH, D. D.

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*A Reprint.*



## THE SCRIPTURAL DOCTRINE OF THE SECOND ADVENT.

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The term ADVENT has been commonly used in ecclesiastical language in reference to the incarnation; and also to the visible, real, and personal appearance of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, at the end of the world, to judge all men, the righteous and the wicked, both quick and dead. The one is called the first, and the other the second advent. We have said commonly used; for the term advent, and its synonyms, appearing, manifestation, etc., are employed frequently in the Scriptures both of the Old and New Testaments to denote any instrumental, figurative coming or interposition of the Lord, either to impart blessing or to inflict judgment.

This doctrine of the second advent has been held always, every where, and by all, in all churches, ancient and modern, oriental and western, primitive, mediæval and protestant, as one of the fundamental doctrines of the christian Church, one of the first principles of the oracles of God, concerning which there ought not to be, and never has been any doubt. Thus the Apostle's Creed, which certainly contains the germ of the earliest christian creeds, after declaring that Christ ascended up to heaven and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty, adds: "from thence," that is from heaven, where he is regarded as having continued to sit as our Mediator, Intercessor, and King, "he shall come to judge the quick and the dead," that is the whole world of mankind, good and bad, and at the same time. Irenæus, the disciple of Polycarp, disciple of the Apostle John, enlarges this article so as to express belief in the "ascension of our beloved Lord Jesus Christ in the flesh, and his coming again from heaven in the glory of his Father, to gather together, in one, all things; and to raise from the dead the flesh of all mankind . . . and that he may exercise righteous judgment on all, consigning to everlasting fire all . . . both the angels who transgressed and became apostates, and ungodly, lawless, and blasphemous men; and to bestow life upon them that are just and holy . . . and investing them with immortality and everlasting glory." Irenæus, who is made the father of the premillennial theory of the advent, believed that the Lord Jesus Christ would establish a kingdom on this glorified earth—not before, but after the resurrection.

The creeds of Tertullian, Lucian of Antioch, and Cyril, Bishop of Jerusalem, and the Nicene Creed on this subject, are perfectly synonymous with the above. In the creed of Pelagius the article is, "He will come to judge the living and the dead, that he may reward the just and punish sinners." The Athanasian Creed, which is one of the three embodied in the Thirty-nine Articles, says, "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 catholic faith, etc.," against the rejection of which is pronounced anathema. The Liturgy of St. James, one of the oldest and most important, in the prayer of consecration says: "We sinners, remembering his life-giving passion, his saving cross, his death and resurrection from the dead on the third day, his ascension into heaven, and sitting at the right hand of thee, his God and Father, and his glorious and terrible second appearing when he shall come in glory to judge the quick and the dead, and to render to every man according to his works, etc." It is unnecessary to quote from any later creeds, either anterior or subsequent to the Reformation, as their tenor will be found uniform. In our own standards, the doctrine of Christ's second advent is introduced under a variety of relations. Thus in the Confession of Faith, (Ch. 8, § 4,) it is said of Christ that "on the third day he arose from the dead with the same body in which he suffered; with which he also ascended into heaven, and there sitteth at the right hand of his Father, making intercession; and shall return to judge men and angels at the last day." In Chap. 32, the souls of the righteous are represented as being "received into the highest heavens, where they wait for the redemption of their bodies, and at the last day all the dead shall be raised up, etc." In Ch. 33, it is declared that "God has appointed a day wherein he will judge the world, etc.; in which day not only the apostate angels shall be judged, but likewise all persons, etc. For then shall the righteous go into everlasting life, but the wicked, etc." "As Christ would have us to be certainly persuaded that there shall be a day of judgment, so would he have that day unknown to men, that they may shake off all carnal security and be always watchful, because they know not at what hour the Lord may come; and may be prepared to say, Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly." The proof texts added to these and other passages of a similar purport will be found to include those adduced in



proof of a premillennial advent, and are, like all the Scripture proof texts of the Westminster standards, of equal authority with the text itself.\* In the Larger Catechism, Q. 53, it is said that Christ "shall continue (in the highest heavens) till his second coming at the end of the world." For teaching of precisely similar import, see Q. 52, 53, 56, 63, 64, 66, 68, 74, 75, 77, 78 81, 82, 83, 85, 86, 87. See also Shorter Catechism, Q. 23, 24, 25, 26, 28, 37, 38.

Such is the doctrine of the second advent of Christ as set forth in all the symbolic confessions of faith in christendom, and as declared by them to be taught in the Holy Scriptures;—simple and sublime; the logical sequence of the science of redemption; the last act in the divine tragedy of an Incarnate Deity; the topstone of the living temple of God's glorious grace; the final step in the progression of that coming of God's eternal Son whose initiation in the everlasting covenant was revealed in the foreshadowing promises of the prophetic dispensation, manifested in the Word made flesh and dwelling among us, is perfected in the appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ when he shall come to be glorified in his saints; the consummated triumph of that victorious conflict of salvation which crowns the Redeemer with a diadem gemmed with souls translated out of the kingdom of darkness, and shining resplendent as the stars for ever and ever;—and the hallelujah doxology of that heavenly song whose first strains were sung melodious by the angel choir over the silver mantled plains of Bethlehem, when:

"The joyous hills of Palestine  
Sent back their glad reply,  
To greet from all their holy heights  
The day spring from on high."

Of this advent, Scripture is full. It is spoken of or implied in all its teachings. Without it, no doctrine is complete. It constitutes the key-note in all its strains, whether plaintive or seraphic. This is the thunderbolt in every tempest of vengeful wrath and fiery indignation; this is the still small voice of tender merciful compassion and sustaining hope, fortitude and self-sacrifice in the Church's heart as she comes up from the wilderness leaning upon her Beloved; this the anchor which holds her fast amidst every swelling tide of adversity

"When cares like a wild deluge come  
And storms of sorrow fall."

\*See Ch. 25. § 1, Ch. 29. § 4, Ch. 12, Ch. 13. § 2, Ch. 19. § 3.

This also is the death-song of every weary pilgrim as he treads the verge of Jordan and plunges into its icy stream; and with this shall be commenced the universal, unending song of the innumerable, ransomed hosts, which, loud as the sound of many waters, shall fill the courts of heaven and resound throughout the universe of God.

Our Lord as the great teacher, and his apostles as taught by him all things, and guided by his Holy Spirit into all truth, have frequently and in most explicit terms spoken of this great consummating event. They speak of it in various relations, applications, and aspects. They represent it in all its solemn pomp and infinitely momentous issues as foreshadowed and assured in the destruction of Jerusalem, the destruction of the Roman Empire, the overthrow of the antichrist, the overturning of the nations, the fulness of the Gentiles, the spiritual ingathering of all Israel which shall be saved, and in all the glorious things spoken of the progress, perpetuation, and perfection of the Church of God till all her regenerated and redeemed saints shall be presented by him at his coming, without spot and blameless, unto God. Throughout these numerous passages, of which twenty-seven are contained in the Pauline epistles, this advent of Christ is spoken of as one and only one. Various terms, like rays of light, are employed to define and describe that day as one and only one, and throw upon this event their convergent lustre, such as "revelation," that is, the making to appear that which previously had not appeared; "presence" or "advent;" "appearance" or "manifestation;" the "day of God;" the "day of the Lord;" the "day of the Lord Jesus;" "the day of the Lord Jesus Christ;" "the last day;" "the great day;" "the day of wrath," and "the day of judgment," and of the "revelation of the righteous judgment of God." It is important also to remember that the Scriptures speak only of one literal and general resurrection of the dead, though it admits a priority in order for the righteous; of one literal and general judgment, including the righteous, the wicked, and the devils; one conflagration of the earth, as there was one deluge; and that they distinctly affirm that the heavens and the earth that now exist are reserved for that destruction by fire; and that the coming of Christ at that day is represented to be his coming again and the second time; and that they never speak of any third or other advent of Christ.

There are four ways in which this question of the second coming of Christ may be brought to a clear and positive determination.

I. Do the Scriptures teach that Christ's second advent is to occur in connexion with the general and simultaneous resurrection of the dead, the general judgment, the conflagration of the world, and the generation of new heavens and new earth? For if they do, then it is impossible that that advent should take place previously.

And *first*, as to the resurrection of the dead, it would be admitted by all persons, (did not the premillennial theory upon the strength of a single figurative expression in the book of Revelation question it,)\* that it will be *universal* and at the last day. Thus it is written: "Jesus saith unto her, Thy brother shall rise again. Martha saith unto him, I know he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day." "There shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust." "And this is the Father's will that hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me, I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day." "And this is the will of him who sent me, that every one who seeth the Son and believeth on him may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day." "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him; and I will raise him up at the last day." "Whoso eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day." "The hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." "Of the resurrection of the dead I am called in question." . . . "I hope toward God that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust." "Since by man came death, by man also came the resurrection of the dead;"—"so also is the resurrection of the dead." Scripture therefore indubitably teaches, 1. That there will be a universal resurrection of the dead. 2. That this resurrection will include the righteous and the wicked. 3. That this resurrection of both classes will take place on the same occasion. 4. That, excepting Enoch and Elijah and perhaps Moses, it will be a universal resurrection of the dead, as of this even Job was distinctly informed; for he says, "Man dieth, and wasteth

\*See Rev. xx. 6; on which see Fairbairn's *Typology and Prophecy*, and Brown on the *Second Advent*.

away; yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where is he? As the waters fail from the sea, and the flood decayeth and drieth up, so man lieth down and riseth not; till the heavens be no more, they shall not awake nor be raised out of their sleep."

The Scriptures are equally explicit upon the subject of the judgment; teaching, 1. That there will be a day of judgment. 2. That Jesus Christ will be the Judge. 3. That the judgment will comprise the whole of the human race without exception. 4. That the judgment will comprise also the angels that kept not their first estate, and thus will be universal as to man, and general as including men and devils. 5. That there is a day or one season or time appointed by God. 6. That this judgment shall take place at the last day or close of time. Thus it is written: "The angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains, under darkness, unto the judgment of the great day." "And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him." "In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ." "Because he hath appointed a day wherein he shall judge the world in righteousness by Jesus Christ." "Every idle word that men shall speak they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment." "Who shall give account to him that is ready to judge the quick and the dead." "It is he who was ordained of God to be the judge of quick and dead." "For we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ that every one may receive the things done in his body according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." "We shall all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ." Since, therefore, it is the indubitable teaching of Scripture that the personal coming of Christ again or the second time, will be at the end of the world, and simultaneous with the universal and general resurrection and judgment of all men, righteous and wicked, and of devils, it is impossible that that advent should be at any previous period.

II. Do the Scriptures teach that the Church, the Bible, the ministry, and the sacraments are to continue as God's appointed instrumentality for the conversion of the world, and the ingathering of his elect people, to the end of the world? For if they do, then of course Christ cannot come personally before the

end of the world, as the premillennial theory affirms, to abrogate this present dispensation, abolish the Church, and do utterly away with the Bible, the ministry, and the sacraments, and introduce an altogether new and different dispensation. Now, as to the *Church*, it is sufficient to remind our readers of our Saviour's declaration in the very institution and commission of the Church, (Matt. xxviii 18-20,) "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them, etc. . . . and, lo, I am with you alway, even to the end of the world;" and of the declaration of the apostle, (Eph. iv. 8-14,) "When he, that is Christ, ascended up on high . . . far above all heavens, that he might fill all things, he gave apostles, and prophets, and evangelists, and pastors, and teachers, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come in the unity of faith unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." See also Eph. i. 22, 23. As to the *Bible*, our Saviour declares, in Matt. v. 17, 18, "Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets . . . for verily, I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law till all be fulfilled." The apostle Peter also declares that all men shall die and pass away, "but the word of the law endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you." As to the *sacraments*, the words of Christ's institution require the administration of baptism with preaching, to "the end of the world." And as to the *Lord's Supper*, it is positively declared that "as often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup ye do show the Lord's death till he come." And as our Saviour declared to his disciples that he would not again in the flesh personally partake with them of the bread and wine till he "ate with them in his Father's kingdom," he teaches us that he will not come again until he shall have delivered up his present mediatorial kingdom unto the Father at the last day in heaven, after which event the Marriage Supper of the Lamb will be celebrated.\* As to the *ministry*, it is unnecessary to add anything to the passages already quoted. See Matt. xvi. 18, 19, and xiii. 19-30, and 38-42, where Christ declares as the result of the work of the ministry, that at the end of the world the tares and the wheat shall both be gathered together and the tares burned in the fire. "So shall it be at the end of the world." So also in Matt. xxv. 41, our Saviour describes himself as pronouncing final sentence upon the wicked as well as the righteous. Thus again it is

\*See Conf. of Faith on the Sacraments.

demonstrated that the Church and its present dispensation are to abide until the end of the world and the day of universal and general judgment.

But this conclusion, although indubitable, will be made more incontrovertibly clear by some passages which in this controversy have been strangely overlooked. In John xiv. 18-20, our Saviour, in his consolatory address to his disciples, after having declared to them that in his Father's house there were many mansions, that he was going to prepare a place for them, and that he would come again to receive them unto himself, that where he is, there they might be also, in these verses adds this declaration, "I will not leave you comfortless, I will come to you; yet a little while and the world seeth me no more, but ye see me; because I live ye shall live also." Now, it is perfectly clear that if Christ were personally to come again and dwell on the earth, then "the world" would see him again, and our Lord could not have said, as he does say, that *the world would see him no more*, that is, in other words, that he would not again personally dwell on the earth. But he told them further, that while the world, which, because of its carnal blindness that cannot discern spiritual things, would not see him in his spiritual comings or manifestations to believing hearts, on the contrary his believing disciples in all ages of the Church, in an evangelical, real, and spiritual presence—the dwelling in their hearts by faith, and being seen, felt, and enjoyed in sacrament, prayer, and worship—*would see him*. Christ therefore wished his disciples to understand that there would be no necessity for his personal presence, since his spiritual presence would be immeasurably more to their benefit and comfort. But as this perpetual presence of Christ spiritually, implies necessarily Christ's personal and real presence perpetually in heaven, in his capacity of High Priest, Mediator, Intercessor, and King, the premillennial theory, which implies that at any moment Christ may cease his celestial mediation and rule, abdicate the seat of his intercession and the throne of his power, and personally absent himself from heaven for a thousand years, is in manifest contradiction to Christ's own most comfortable declaration. See also vs. 25-30, where Christ enlarges this thought as a ground of unspeakable benefit and consolation to them, inasmuch as while he returned to the Father to carry on the work of their salvation in heaven, the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, would supply his place, teach them all things, and fill their hearts with divine peace.

In the continuation of this parting discourse, in chap. xvi. 6-16, our blessed Lord and Saviour, with a heart overflowing with infinite and pitiful compassion, recapitulates with pointed emphasis these pregnant thoughts. Referring to the coming of the Comforter, whom he said he would send unto them, he declares, "And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. Of sin, because they believe not on me, (that is, will not see me.) Of righteousness—mark these two reasons which Christ gives—because (1) I go to my Father, and because (2) ye see me no more." Christ here most authoritatively teaches that while the propitiatory part of his mediatorial work would be finished upon earth by his sufferings, death, burial, resurrection, and ascension, that mediatorial work would be resumed and continued perpetually in heaven; that as on earth he had provided a way of justifying, or constituting righteous in the sight of his Father, all those who truly believe in his name, the remaining part of the work of righteousness, our Lord was to perform in heaven in the execution of his intercessory office as our Mediator and High Priest in the heavenly sanctuary, by incessantly presenting the merits of his all-sufficient sacrifice, and to bestow upon his people, through the agency of the Holy Spirit, all necessary supplies of spiritual life, health, and succor; and by supporting, governing, and superintending all their interests, and defending them against all his and their enemies, in his character of King of Zion. Christ's exaltation and investment with his sacerdotal and regal authority as Mediator, and the perpetual continuance of his real presence, so that it would be impossible that he should absent himself from heaven and any more dwell corporeally upon earth, are here made by Christ the very foundation upon which the salvation, hope, and glory of the Church rest. It thus appears that it is absolutely necessary for the full and perfect accomplishment of the work of righteousness that the heavens should retain Christ personally until the day of final judgment, and that until that solemn period, the consummation of all things, the Church on earth should see him no more.

It will also be particularly observed on this testimony of Christ, that *because* he himself was about to return to heaven, the Holy Spirit would be sent in his stead to instruct, etc. Had it been his design, Christ would have said, "As I go to my Father and the world seeth me no more, I will send the Holy Spirit that he may convince the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment." But this our Lord has not said. Each of

the three subjects to which our Lord distinctly adverts has *its own separate exposition* annexed to it, and the words, "ye see me no more," must have a meaning peculiar to the particular subject which they explain, and a meaning not appropriate to the other subjects. These words therefore are most definite and unassailable proof that his disciples should not see him again, in the flesh, till he comes to judge the world, and that he could not by possibility be absent till then from his great mediatorial work in heaven. It cannot be thought that Christ can come to judge the world or to raise the dead before the millennium and the last day, because the perpetuity of Christ's mediatorial work, which is emphatically the work of righteousness, is repeatedly and absolutely asserted in the Scriptures. The meaning of our Lord's words is therefore most distinct and unpervertible—like something fixed by a wedge, immovable and bidding defiance to all efforts of criticism to take it away. And the argument from this passage is just as strong against the premillennial advent now, as it was against such a Jewishly believed advent as addressed to his disciples.

In corroboration, however, of this argument, it is declared by the apostle Peter in Acts iii. 21, "whom, *i. e.*, Jesus Christ, the heavens must receive until the times of the restitution of all things, etc." "Therefore (ii. 33,) being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear." (See also ch. v. 31.)

Nothing can be made more plain by Scripture than its declarations concerning our Lord's sacerdotal office in relation to the appointed place of its execution, its immutability, its continuity, its perpetuity, and as to its nature and design. As to the *place* appointed to our Lord's execution of his office as High Priest, it is, among other passages, declared that Christ "is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." "We have such an High Priest who is set on the right hand of the throne of the majesty in the heavens." "Christ is not entered into the holy place made with hands, etc., but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us." Christ, therefore, can never exercise his intercessory work in a kingdom upon the earth; "for if he were on earth, he would not be a priest," (Heb. viii. 4,) and "no man hath ascended up to heaven but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven." As to the *immutability* of our Lord's office of High Priest, it is declared, "But this man, because he



continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood." As to the *continuity* of our Lord's office of High Priest, we have the declaration of the last verse quoted, and these following: "Wherefore he is able to save to the uttermost, etc., seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." "But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down on the right hand of God; from henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool." And Melchisedec is said typically to resemble Christ, because he, the Son of God, "abideth a priest continually." As to the *perpetuity* of our Lord's high priesthood, it is written, "Jesus is made a high priest forever after the order of Melchisedec;" "but this man because he continueth forever;" "but this man forever sat down at the right hand of God, from henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool." Heb. x. 13. As to the *general nature and design* of our Lord's sacerdotal office, the Scriptures delineate its mediatorial and antitypical character: "Seeing we have a great High Priest that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast, etc." "We have not a High Priest who cannot be touched with a feeling of our infirmities, but one, etc." See also Heb. vii. 26; ii. 17, and vi. 20, from which passages we are taught that it was by the blood of his atonement Christ entered into the true tabernacle for us, where alone he can efficaciously plead the expiatory virtue of that blood; that there access by prayer with holy boldness to the throne of grace is only in the name of Christ as interceding for them at his Father's right hand; that his intercession therefore is an essential part of his work of salvation, and a fixed and indispensable ordinance of the mediatorial economy, requiring Christ's perpetual presence in the heavenly sanctuary; that if Christ were personally to quit that sanctuary to dwell on the earth, no covenant blessing could thenceforth be imparted to the Church; that it is indispensable therefore that Christ should conform and adhere to this appointed place and order of his intercessory work; and that it is absolutely necessary for believers that they should have a high priest at the right hand of God, constituted after the power of an endless life and made higher than the heavens. Finally, as to the antitypical character of our Lord's high priesthood, there is according to the previous and other passages a plain contrast pointed out between the typical and antitypical priesthood, as pertaining to the conscience, and it is made therefore utterly inconceivable that an economy thus comparatively defective, after having

answered its typical and temporary purpose, should again be revived, as the premillennial theory asserts it will, especially when it is considered that that economy possessed no value or efficacy in itself, but derived all its importance from that superior and final economy which it merely typified, and by which it was ultimately superseded as a "shadow" of the good things to come. (See Heb. vii. 11, 18, and ix. 23.)

This teaching of Scripture as to the impossibility of Christ again personally appearing on earth previous to the final consummation of his mediatorial economy, when he shall deliver up that kingdom to the Father, receives striking confirmation from those declarations of the apostles, in which, as in 2 Cor. v. 16, it is said, "Yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now know we him no more." And still further, the apostle Paul, in his Epistle to the Hebrews, ch. ix. 26-28, appears to us to state the whole doctrine of the second advent in terms so clear and positive that it can admit of no question among those who are willing to abide by the testimony of the Holy Ghost as given to the holy men inspired by him. The apostle declares in verse twenty-fourth that Christ as our High Priest has entered "into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us," "not that he should offer himself oft, etc. . . . but now, once in the end of the world," that is, as Doddridge and other critics think to be the best interpretation that can be given, "*now in this the last dispensation which God will ever give to man,*"—"hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." Here it is positively said that Christ made his first advent under the last dispensation which God will ever give to men, and consequently he cannot make a second advent under the same dispensation. It is to be observed also, that the term translated "world" is in the original, "ages," in the *plural*, and not as in Matt. xvi. 28, where it is in the *singular*, in which form it is employed to denote literally the end or last of this mundane system. So much for the first advent as here revealed. And now as to the second advent of Christ, the apostle goes on in verses 27 and 28 to say, "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment; so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin (*i. e.*, not as a sin offering) unto salvation." Now here we have asserted, 1. The universal law of mortality as the penal curse of God's violated covenant—"it is appointed unto men (that is the whole race of men, good and bad,) once to

die." 2. Here is the universal judgment of the same entire race of men after death—"the judgment of all men," that is, of course, of all who shall have become subject to the universal law, which consequently implies the previous universal resurrection of the dead. 3. We have here the judge whose advent is afterwards foretold—"Christ was once offered, etc., and unto them that look for him, shall he appear the second time, etc." 4. This appearance is explicitly declared to be the second personal advent of Christ. And thus as Christ's first advent is already past and there cannot possibly be an intermediate advent, it inevitably follows that the premillenary hypothesis is not true. That these words refer to the universal judgment, comprehending both the righteous and the wicked, will be still further evident in the contrast implied in the words "them who look for him" with those who do not look for him.

The argument of the apostle is this: the future judgment will be universal, and there cannot, therefore, so far as the human race only is concerned, be more than one day of judgment. The resurrection which must precede this judgment will be universal, and there cannot, therefore, be more than one resurrection. And as both the universal resurrection and the universal judgment will, as we have seen, take place at the last day, our Lord will not make his second personal advent to the earth till he comes to raise the dead and judge the world at the last day. And therefore, since Christ will not make his second personal advent to the earth until he comes to the universal resurrection and judgment at the last day, he cannot, as this hypothesis demands, make his second personal advent at any intermediate period. Observe well the apostle's analogical reasoning: 1. As the race of man dies once and only once as the penal curse for sin, so Christ could only die once to bear that penal curse. 2. That which awakes each man of the whole race of men after death is *judicari*—the judgment, the one and only judgment of the quick and the dead, good and evil, at the last day, which is the final fulfillment. So Christ's second coming is *judicare*, not to bear or atone for sin, but to judge sin and sinners, and pronounce on all the sentence of salvation or of perdition. 3. This death and judgment are by the appointment of God, his constitution or covenant or law, and are penal and final in their nature, and as such everlasting, and *actually* everlasting to all who die impenitent, "the wrath of God abiding on them." Christ's *second* coming, therefore, will be to pronounce judicially the final and full salvation of the penitent

and perdition of the impenitent.\* 4. The next event in the great scheme of man's redemption,—next to death, there being no intermediate dispensation admitting of a possible change after death—is the judgment and the second coming of Christ as judge; and since Scripture no where makes mention of any third personal coming of Christ, the millenary hypothesis must be untrue. Let it be added and duly considered that in the above interpretation of passage, there is, as far as our examination of commentators has gone, a universal concurrence, the word "salvation" being substituted for the word "judgment," as the analogy would require, because, as elsewhere, the apostles, when speaking of the judgment in relation to believers, speak of it as it really shall be, and as the song of the redeemed (see Rev. v., viii.,) declares it shall be—their consummated salvation. We shall only give the opinion of the great Dr. Owen on this passage: "Any other coming, Scripture knows not, and this place expressly excludes any imagination of it. His first appearing is past, and appear the second time he will not until the judgment comes and the salvation of the Church be completed." There are several other passages which, correctly interpreted, must confirm the conclusions to which we have arrived. Let us, however, only advert to two, one from the apostle Paul, and the other from the apostle John. In Col. iii. 4, the apostle Paul gives us his testimony positively: "When Christ who is our life shall appear, then shall we also appear with him in glory." Here the second advent or appearance of Christ is of necessity to be interpreted in accordance with the explicit statement commented upon in Heb. ix. 26-28, at the time of the general and universal judgment; and the place is also determined by the established use of the term glory as applied to heaven and the ultimate consummated blessedness of the righteous. The apostle John in like manner gives us a negative testimony (which is the more important as this whole theory in its traditional form is traced up to him) in John iii. 1, 2, in which there is an evident allusion to what he had recorded in his Gospel (see John xiv. 16, and above). "Beloved," says John, "now we are the sons of God, (that is the loftiest earthly condition possible for us,) and it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is," that is, in heaven. Here

\*In proof of the use of the term salvation, here employed, see Is. ~~xxv.~~ 28, 29; Rom. viii. 23; 1 Cor. xv. 51; Phil. iii. 22, 23; 2 Th. i. 7-10; Rev. vii. 10.

the apostle declares, first, that he had no knowledge of this premillennial earthly glorious advent; secondly, that he did know that at Christ's second advent—(as in the same passages referred to he had taught in his Gospel, and also in Christ's intercessory prayer recorded in c. xvii., where Christ says, "I will that these may also be with me,"—that is, with the Father in heaven where he was going—"that they may behold the glory which thou hast given me")—Christ's glory and kingdom would be in heaven as taught by the apostles.

III. The doctrine of Scripture on the second advent may be determined by asking, Does the Scripture teach that the kingdom of Christ—as foretold in some hundred passages, many of them literal and some symbolical, prophetic, and figurative, under analogies drawn from the kingdom of David, the tabernacle, the temple, and the Jewish ritual—has actually come? For if they do, then we have a divinely authorized rule of interpretation by which all the other prophecies relating to that kingdom are to be understood. The apostle James, in the council held at Jerusalem, after hearing the declaration of the apostle Peter, "how God at the first did visit the Gentiles to take out of them a people for his name," immediately afterwards recites a passage from the prophet Amos which is entirely subsversive of the millenary theory. "Simeon," said James, "hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles to take out of them a people for his name; and to this agree the words of the prophet; as it is written, After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up, that the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things." The preaching of the gospel is here represented by the building again the tabernacle of David and teaches that it was not to be restricted, but was designed for all nations without exception. We have here, therefore, the apostolic and inspired rule for explaining the rest of the typical and figurative predictions of the prophets, relative to the gospel dispensation, in which they use symbolic language drawn from the ancient history and institutions of the Jewish people. And as the tabernacle was employed by the prophet Amos to represent the Gospel Church in its migratory and unsettled state in the wilderness of this world, so the temple is employed by Ezekiel to prefigure that same Church in its most enlarged and exalted state, to signify its greatest external

stability, grace, sanctity, and glory. Such is the character of the only temple which christianity recognizes and to which alone it directs attention—a spiritual, not a temporal, an eternal, and not a perishable edifice, a temple “built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone, in whom all the building, fitly framed together, groweth up into an holy temple of the Lord.” “Ye also as lively stones are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.” Such is the noble temple, such the innumerable priests, such the rare sacrifices, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ, which christianity exhibits; but as to a material temple erected at Jerusalem, the restoration of the Jews and the reconstruction of the Mosaic institutions, christianity in her record says not one word. It is of this temple the prophets symbolically declare “the stone which was cut without hands became a great mountain and filled the whole earth.” “The mountain of the Lord’s house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills, and all the nations shall flow unto it.” “The kingdom of heaven is like a grain of mustard seed, . . . but when it is grown . . . and becometh a tree, etc.” “The kingdom of heaven is like unto the leaven which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal (the first disciples) till the whole (the whole generations of men) was leavened. This interpretation of the symbolic prophecies drawn from the tabernacle, the temple, the Jewish ritual, the kingdom of David, the restoration of the Jews, the throne, royalty, and dominion of the Messiah, were all fulfilled in Christ ever since his ascension. This is explicitly and most abundantly testified to (see Luke 2,) by the angel Gabriel in his annunciation to Zacharias and to Mary, and by Zacharias, Elizabeth, Mary, John, and the angelic choir, as also by apostles Peter, Paul, and John, and by Stephen. See Acts ii. 29-36; iii. 13-15; iv. 26-28; v. 29-31; Heb. x. 12, 13; Rev. iii. 7-12. Hence it appears that the kingdom of Christ, (of the theocratic kingdom, temple, and institutions, and especially the great typical kingdom of David with its temple,—prophetic figures,) is destined gradually to spread till it pervades all mankind, and will “occupy the entire course of time and cover all the space in the world, restoring and transforming the world into the kingdom of God.” This our Saviour absolutely declares in his final authoritative commission and promise to be with this Church and kingdom always, every day, all the appointed days, never

being absent from her a single day, never being absent in any of the days of her greatest trial and affliction, but remaining with her till the last day, when she will see him again in bodily presence—that is, until the consummation of this secular *αἰών*, or the period of time which comes to an end, with the *παρουσία* and involves the end of the present world itself. "Lo, I am with you:" that is, "he is not coming, he is here; he is with weak and strong, in battle as in victory, in life and in death; here Jesus is with his word and his ordinances as our royal Brother, eternal Priest, almighty Protector, unfailling accomplishment of our protection, as our almighty King, omniscient Witness, patient Forbearer, and righteous Judge. The whole duty of the Church, therefore, is to believe on the Risen One, extend the Church, and console herself with the Lord's gracious assistance till he come for each of us at death, and for his whole Church in glory. Christ never absenteth himself, but while sometime in the dark is never at a distance." (See Alfred, Wordsworth, Lange, etc.) Of this Church and kingdom of Christ, glorious things are still spoken; prophecy is full; sun, moon, and stars in their courses testify; a groaning earth and fettered Church longing for universal extension, exaltation, and glory, give unutterable testimony; while the Apocalyptic angel having the everlasting gospel to proclaim to every nature and kindred and tribe and tongue and people, and laden with all Scriptural blessedness in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, is preparing the way for the overthrow of the antichrist, the moral subjugation of thrones and empires, and the full ingathering of earth's spiritual harvest.\*

Away then with the treasonable and blasphemous allegation that "the gospel has proved a failure."† Sustained by our Lord's promised presence, power, and spirit, the active obedience of the apostles and their uninspired successors within a

\*See Matt. xiii. 31, 31; xxvii. 19, 20; Ps. ii. 7, 8; xxii. 27-29; lxxii. 8-11; Is. ii. 2, 3; xi. 69; lx. 12; lxvi. 23; Dan. ii. 35-44; Zech. ix. 10; xiv. 9; Rev. xi. 15.

†"If the gospel was to convert the world, then if it *is not* done, it will prove a failure." See Taylor's *Voice of the Church, or History of the Doctrine of the Reign of Christ on Earth: 1856*. Of this stereotyped work, purporting to be an index, with quotations, to the opinions of authors in all ages of the Church, we feel bound to say that it is the most unscrupulously dishonest and untruthful publication with which we have ever met, and is unreliable as to the real sentiments of any one author quoted in it. It is simply a man-trap to catch the souls of the ignorant and unwary. We can only give, out of many, one instance. Buck's *Theological Dictionary* and the *Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge* are quoted as favorable to the doctrine; while both have articles decidedly opposed, Buck stating that the premillennial theory is "grounded on some doubtful texts in the Apocalypse and other Scriptures."

period of thirty years accomplished the dissemination of the gospel throughout almost every part of the then known world, and rendered doubt respecting its future predicted universal prevalence altogether inexcusable, and inspires with continual reanimating hope the present zeal and hope of the Church. As the seed which lies long concealed in the earth before it springs forth in verdure, and at length displays itself in the golden ear; and as the leaven which lies hid in the meal till the whole lump is leavened; so the gospel, divinely represented by these similitudes, though for a long season it fails to attain to the maturity and strength of its predicated influence, is nevertheless gradually pervading the mass, and will at length rise and spread itself into that world-shadowing tree of life whose fruit will be for the healing of the nations. It is no idle dream, nor is it any premillennial and ever-shifting, never-fulfilling prophecy, but the sure word of him who is the faithful witness and the omnipotent Head of the Church, that he will continue to draw all men unto him until the "fulness of the Gentiles shall have come in." Then also shall "the Jews be grafted in; for God is able to graff them in again." "Even unto this day, when Moses is read, the veil is upon their heart; but when they shall turn to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away." "Blindness in part is happened to Israel until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in." When christianity shall have triumphed over infidelity, popery, Mahometanism, and every modification of false religion and corruption of the true faith, and shall have extended itself throughout every region of the globe, then will the conversion of the Jews as a nation commence. And when the Jews as a nation shall have embraced the gospel, a still more glorious display of divine grace and power will awake the Gentiles. The conversion of the Jews, the depth of their predicted penitence, the rapidity with which the gospel will spread among them, the numbers who will contemporaneously embrace it, the wonderful verification of Scripture prophecy which these events will exhibit, will diffuse the spirit of vital godliness, the heroic, self-sacrificing zeal of the blessed martyrs among the hitherto formal Gentile professors of christianity. "For," says the apostle, "if the casting away of them (the Jews) be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?" "If the fall of them be the riches of the Gentiles, how much more their fulness?" The fulness of the Gentiles will inaugurate the conversion of the Jews, and the full conversion of the Jews will crown the



Gentiles with a glorious effusion of all the spiritual blessings of the gospel in heavenly places in Christ Jesus—and then “there shall be one Lord and one Shepherd.” These glorious and happy changes, this predicted unity and spirituality of the Church, this matured and exalted personal piety, this delightful sanctification of all the families of the earth, shall usher in that glorious and happy era when the gifts and graces of the Spirit shall be poured forth in their utmost richness and abundance, as the fruit of the intercession of our great High Priest, who is, and will then still be, at the right hand of God, the Mediator of the new covenant, the great Apostle and High Priest of our profession, the King of his spiritual and enthroned Israel, sitting as King and Priest upon his throne in the heavens, administering all the ordinances of each of his exalted offices for the benefit of a regenerated, enlightened, sanctified, and happy world. Christ will then reign as King over all the earth, and his saints, who shall then be upon the earth, as they will fill all places of authority, both supreme and subordinate, will, in a correctly scriptural sense, reign with Christ—not he *with them* on the earth, but over all of them while he sits on his perpetual throne in the heavens.

The present dispensation we have seen is the last which God will ever give to man upon the earth. The gospel, as the revelation of the way of salvation and sanctification, is *perfect*, converting the soul, making wise unto salvation, and is and will be the power of God and the wisdom of God unto the salvation of every one who has believed, does now believe, or ever shall believe. And the Church is already Christ’s consummated earthly kingdom in which he rules with all power in heaven and upon earth, and is his final and complete instrumentality for the calling and redemption of all his chosen people. It carries the witness within itself of its intended universality. It is as powerful in its efficacy as it is perfect in its constitution, and in the doctrines and precepts, the promises and threatenings of the written word; in the ministration of the gospel; in the celestial advocacy of our great High Priest and in the efficacious agency of the Holy Spirit; and it is provided with every requisite for fulfilling the predictions of Scripture and effectuating the transcendently benevolent purposes of the Almighty, both in regard to this world and to the purer and sublimer blessedness of the next. Why then should another dispensation be expected? For what purpose can it be needed? What specific purpose is there, glorifying to God and beneficial to man, that the present

dispensation cannot effect, and that another dispensation can or would secure? Where is that country in which this divine seed will not grow? Under what clime will it not flourish? It has proved itself the gospel for man of every language and nation, and why should it not extend its dominion to the ends of the earth? Has it not effectually resisted or vanquished every form of hostility? Has it not corrected every species of iniquitous rule until they have eventually been subverted and overthrown—as when the river of pure water, flowing out from the fountain of divine grace, gathering strength in its course, forced back the all-powerful ocean of earth's greatest dominion, until commingling with it, it brought it into harmonious subjection to itself? Has it not moulded fierce and terrific war by its mild and gentle influence? Where is the heart which it cannot sanctify? Where is the will which it cannot subdue? Where are the passions which it cannot control? Where is the conduct which it cannot reform and regulate? Where is the person, family, community, or nation which it cannot purify, felicitate, and exalt? Away then, we say again, with that millenary theory—vain figment and tradition of those rabbinical fathers who made void the word of God—which casts dishonor upon the Church of God, and upon the wisdom, power, and grace of its glorious Head, who is always with it, the same yesterday, to-day, and forever. Away with that Church and dispensation which it would give us as a substitute—a Church without a High Priest and Advocate at the right hand of God; without any intercession there for the saints; and consequently without answers to prayer, without communications of the Spirit as the fruit of our blessed Lord's intercession at the right hand of God.

Finally, let us advert to another method by which the doctrine of Scripture, on this article of the Church's universal faith, may be brought to a test, but to which our time will only permit a general allusion. If Scripture teaches that there are many events yet to occur in the course of that divine providence by which the history of redemption shall be brought to its glorious consummation by the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, then of necessity such advent cannot be anticipated while these events are still future. The gospel, we have seen, is yet to attain to universal prevalency and power;—Christ shall receive the heathen for his inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession;—the Jews shall be converted to christianity and united in Christ's one fold with the

fulness of the Gentiles, and with such an awakened revival of spirituality, zeal, and divine power, as to realize all that is implied in the prophecy of the first resurrection, as foretold by the apostolic seer, and by the valley of dry bones of the prophetic Ezekiel;—a short season of apostasy and violent conflict between the kingdoms of light and darkness is also pre-figured. (See Luke xvii. 26-30; 2 Pet. iii. 3, 4; Rev. xx. 7-9.) It is also, further, clearly and distinctly made known that the present earth and its mundane system are reserved by God for destruction by fire at the time when this second advent of our Lord shall take place. This is taught in 2 Peter iii., see from v. 4-13, with Rev. xx. 11; xxi. 1-3, etc.; Ps. cii. 26; Ps. l. 3; Is. xxxiv. 4; lxxv. 17.

This whole passage of the apostle Peter is in itself destructive of the premillennial theory, a millstone tied about its neck, whether it is interpreted, as some of these theorists do, by a bold denial of the universality of this predicted conflagration, or by a denial of its literal meaning. Let it be remembered, 1. That this Second Epistle of Peter, like the Second Epistle of Paul to the Thessalonians, was written for the very purpose of condemning this very theory in its original Jewish-Christian form, as leading to the expectation of a speedy personal advent of Christ. 2. The passage in Is. lxxv. 17, to which the apostle is believed to have special reference, when it speaks of the new heavens and the new earth to be created, must intend to represent figuratively the happy condition of the Christian Church when the gospel shall have attained its most extensive and glorious triumphs, as it will then, in comparison, appear as a new creation—a resurrection from the dead; for in that prophecy the world is to be tenanted by inhabitants not only having offspring, but over whom death will reign, and in which all flesh will worship the Lord, in which state the Church will be a typical prefigurement and preparation for heaven. 3. In passages of the Bible too numerous to quote, heaven is revealed as the final and everlasting residence of the righteous—"an inheritance incorruptible . . . reserved in heaven." 4. This being so, the common interpretation which places heaven and the "new heavens and new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness" upon this earth, cannot consist with such general and otherwise invariable teaching of Holy Writ; and the interpretation given by Edwards in his History of Redemption, (see page 372,) may possibly be the true one, that this world which formerly was used by Satan as the place of his kingdom where

he set himself up as God, shall be the place of his full and everlasting punishment, where he and his angels and wicked men shall be tormented in everlasting fire. (See Deut. xxxii. 22.) In this passage, therefore, we are taught that the old world perished so far as water could produce that effect. This is the express analogy drawn by the apostle, that is, that so far as the world was inhabited by men, the deluge was universal to the destruction of all the ungodly, and that as only the Noachic family were saved from that destruction by the ark as a type of Christ, so at Christ's second coming, only those saints who are found alive will be caught up far above the fearful conflagration which rages below, to meet the Lord in the air, while all the wicked shall be left to be consumed by the flames, which shall rage fearfully over every portion of the globe. 5. The apostle further plainly affirms that, although God at that time spared the old world itself, it was not with a view to its *ultimate preservation*, but in reference to a final destruction, for which it is kept in store. 6. The apostle then predicts the particular element by which this utter destruction will be eventually effected, viz., fire. He repeats this idea afterwards, saying that this mundane system is "reserved unto fire;" that is, destruction by fire is the ultimate end for which at the time of the deluge it was spared. 7. The apostle therefore teaches that these heavens and earth are kept in store, not for a glorious renovation, but for a total destruction analogous to that of the deluge. 8. It may be further observed that in speaking of the "old world," the apostle says nothing of the "heavens," the reason obviously being that the former destruction was superficial and temporal, while the latter destruction involves the entire dissolution of the globe with the atmosphere and all circumambient appendages. 9. To make it still more evident that the destruction of the earth by fire will not be superficial as by the deluge, the apostle proceeds to say that not only the ungodly inhabitants together with all their works will be destroyed, but that the earth itself, and all that appertains to it, will be so utterly consumed as "like the baseless fabric of a vision, to leave not a wreck behind;"—"the heavens shall *pass away* with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat; the earth also, and the works that are therein, shall be burned up." This idea the apostle expresses no less than five times in about as many verses, thus peremptorily excluding the idea that the earth would undergo only a superficial ignition, and be only singed or scorched along its surface. This assertion of the

apostle, which he implies to be in accordance with the teaching of the apostle Paul, (see verse sixteen,) is taught as distinctly as human language can import by the apostle John in Rev. xx. ii; xxi. 1-5: "And I saw a great white throne and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them." "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away." Also in the remarkable prophetic language of Job: "As the waters fail from the sea and the flood decayeth and drieth up, so man lieth down and riseth not till the heavens be no more; they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep."

"Then cometh the end," and not till then. As Isaiah says, "Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look upon the earth beneath; for the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment, and they that dwell therein shall die in like manner; but my salvation (or scheme of redemption) shall be for ever, and my righteousness (or means of securing that redemption) shall not be abolished. Harken unto me, ye that know righteousness, the people in whose heart is my law; fear ye not the reproach of men . . . for the moth shall eat them up like a garment, and the worm shall eat them like wool; but my righteousness shall be forever, and my salvation from generation to generation. Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the Lord; awake, as in ancient days, in the generations of old." Is. li. 6-8. Thus certain it is, that till the utter end of the world God will go on to accomplish deliverance and salvation for and by his Church. "From generation to generation," that is, throughout all generations, beginning with the first generation of men upon the earth, and not ending till these generations shall end with the world itself, God shall carry on his work of redemption. And why should any wish to abridge this time of God's merciful visitation and these glorious hopes of a coming period when the earth's population shall be multiplied a hundred fold; when the kingdoms of this world shall have become the kingdoms of our God and his Christ; when the Church shall shine forth fair as the moon, glorious as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners, conquering and to conquer; when converts shall be multiplied as the stars in heaven above, as the drops of morning dew, and as the sand that lies heaped upon the earth; and when these innumerable multitudes shall be continually translated from the Church militant to the Church triumphant to swell that count-

less assemblage, from whom shall go up, with ever increasing volume and ecstasy, the song of the redemption?

We have thus presented in outline to our readers the doctrine of the second final and glorious advent of our blessed and ever adorable Redeemer, as it has been held by the Church of God *semper, ubicque, et ab omnibus*, as one of the first principles of the oracles of God (see Heb. vi. 1,) to be believed as one of the few essential articles of her earliest creeds, to be taught her children, catechetically enforced upon her youth, to be contended for as the faith given to the fathers, even unto blood, and for the maintenance of which millions have not counted life itself dear that they might bear a faithful witness to it; a banner of the truth taken up by the Church from generation to generation amid falling thousands in her fierce conflicts with her enemies, which, like a Rock of Ages whose foundations are in the depths of eternity, and whose top, piercing the clouds and pointing heavenwards, has beaten back every tempestuous storm of opposition; and from whose summit shall be described the first gleaming ray of that glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ, when he shall come in the brightness of his Father's glory, with his eyes as it were a flame of fire, and his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace, and his voice as the sound of many waters, having in his right hand seven stars, and out of his mouth going a sharp two-edged sword, and his countenance as the sun shining in his strength.

The premillennial theory of Christ's second advent is that the Lord Jesus Christ will come again from heaven, really and in person, before any general revival or universal extension of the Church, and in order to such a millennial dispensation; that this appearance of Christ is to be looked for now as it has been for days, months, years, generations, and centuries past; that the Church, as she now exists, with the ministry, the oracles of God, the sacraments, and the means of grace, were only designed to be temporary and introductory, and could never accomplish what prophecy foretells; that the office of the Church now, is therefore not for the conversion of the world, but as a witness-bearer for Christ, while he gathers his elect and prepares them for his coming; that when Christ shall come, the saints that are alive upon the earth and the saints now in glory shall dwell with the descended Saviour upon the earth for a period variously estimated at one thousand years, thirty thousand, three hundred thousand, or forever; that the world is then

to be subjected to partial destruction in order to effect a complete renovation; that Christ ceasing to be mediator between God and man in heaven, will establish an earthly throne and kingdom, having Jerusalem for its metropolis; that the Jews (who have nearly all hitherto remained anti-christians) are nevertheless to be restored to Palestine and acquire a pre-eminency; that the Jewish temple is to be rebuilt and adorned for the Saviour's residence; that the Jewish ritual, including animal sacrifices, is to be restored, while, strange to say, all the lower animals are to be brought back to the liberty and happiness enjoyed before the fall; that the nations of the world are to come up from Sabbath to Sabbath and month to month, bearing gifts and doing homage, at Jerusalem; that at some closing period of this dispensation, the world shall again be filled with wicked men, (how and whence is not known,) who shall, like the fallen angels, or under their guidance, come up to wage war against Christ and his saints, to destroy them; that by fire from heaven Christ shall utterly destroy them, and that then, and not till then, shall come the final resurrection of the dead and the judgment of the great day. This millennial period is to be one of as great earthly and temporal prosperity as of spiritual, according to Papias, to whom the earliest Jewish-Christian form of this tradition is traced by Eusebius: "The day shall come in which there shall be vines which shall severally have ten thousand branches; each branch ten thousand smaller branches; each smaller branch ten thousand twigs, each twig ten thousand clusters of grapes; each cluster ten thousand grapes; each grape, being pressed, yielding two hundred and eighty gallons of wine; and that when one shall take hold of one of these sacred bunches, another shall cry out, Take me, and by me bless the Lord." A flood of the most extravagant errors came in with this theory wherever it prevailed. Among these were the fancies of those called Chiliasts, (*i. e.*, Millenarians,) of whom Cerinthus, contemporary with the apostle John, was one, who maintained that the millennium would be employed in nuptial entertainments and carnal delights. Similar opinions were held by all the heretical sects of that period, by the Montanists, by Proclus at Rome, and by Nepos, an Egyptian bishop.

It will be found that the premillennial theory is not only as old as christianity, but that it was one of those traditions of the Jewish Rabbis by which they made void the word of God, which our Saviour constantly denounced, and upon the basis of which was grounded the general unbelief, apostasy, and rejec-

tion by the Jews of Christ as the true Messiah. Time will not permit us to show at length—what is not questioned by any\*—that the above millenary theory of Christ as a great temporal prince and saviour, in all its essential features, was prevalent among the Jews at the time of our Saviour's incarnation. This was made evident by the frequent questions addressed to our Saviour by the scribes, Pharisees, the high priest, Pilate, and by his own disciples, as when they had controversy among themselves which should be greatest, when the mother of two of his apostles asked that they should have places at his right and left hand in his kingdom, and as when, even after his resurrection, all his disciples inquired, "Wilt thou not at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" and as when repeated efforts were made to make him a king and to urge him to assume the insignia of royalty. The Jews, therefore, to this day continue to believe that the Messiah, when he does come, will fulfill all the expectations which this theory maintains, and they do this, on the very same ground upon which this theory rests its assumed scriptural claims; that is, upon several unfulfilled prophecies drawn from the analogies of the Jewish dispensation, temple rites, and kingdom, *literally* interpreted, and of which a *literal* fulfillment is anticipated. The question, therefore, involved in the truth or falsity of this theory is, to a very important extent, that of the truth of christianity, the claims of Jesus Christ to be the true Messiah, the whole doctrine and system of the gospel, and the foundation of our hope and faith towards God and our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom life and immortality are brought to light.

It is impossible in this article to enter into a full refutation. Did time permit, our arguments against it would be, 1. It is condemned by its history; 2. By Scripture; 3. Because it is merely of a theoretical, speculative, impracticable, and delusive character; 4. That it is injurious and dangerous, divisive, distracting, anti-missionary and anti-revival, ever shifting and variable, leading to enthusiasm, fanaticism, irreligion, absurdities, and the most wild and dangerous heresies, as in the case recently of the Irvingites and some bodies in this country calling themselves believers; of the Fifth Monarchy men, and the Anabaptists at the time of the Reformation; and thus, as the Rev. Dr. Hugh White says, (see *Practical Reflections on the Second Advent.*) having "at various times, and never perhaps

\*One chapter is devoted to Jewish extracts containing these views, in Taylor's History of this doctrine alluded to above.



more remarkably than in our own day, been so mixed up with startling heresies and wild schemes of millenarian prophecy and reveries of enthusiasm, that many sober-minded christians have been led to extend to the doctrine itself, (I mean the scriptural doctrine of the second advent,) the feelings of suspicious alarm justly excited by the extravagant theories of those who have grafted upon it heretical opinions or speculative dreams."

And first, this theory is historically condemned. It is, as we have seen, Jewish and ante-christian, originating altogether from ignorance of the spiritual character of the Scriptures and of the Messiah and his kingdom, and of the end and object of his appearance. This Jewish theory was brought into the christian Church by Jewish converts and attached to the christian prophecy of a millennial period of the Church. It constituted a leading doctrine with all the early heresies and sects,\* and led probably to the writings of the Second Epistle to the Thessalonians and the Second Epistle of Peter. Papias, to whom this opinion is traced by Eusebius, is represented by him to be a man very credulous, of slender judgment and not capable of understanding the prophetic symbols. There is nothing found to favor the theory in the epistles and genuine works of the earliest christian writers, Clement of Rome, Ignatius, and Polycarp; nor in the apologetic writings of Tatian, Athenagoras, and Theophilus of Antioch. Justin Martyr, who attributes his holding it to the tradition of Papias, acknowledges that others did not hold it. Tertullian brought it with him from the fanatical sect of the Montanists. The Roman Presbyter Caius, about the middle of the second century, opposed the doctrine as the invention of an arch-heretic who forged writings in its support. The great leaders of the Alexandrian school, Clement, Origen, Dionysius, etc., regarded the theory as a fable of man, and only capable of plausible defence by interpreting Scripture in a literal and Judaizing sense, and made formidable opposition to it. Fifty years later, a body of christians, headed by Nepos, seceded on account of this theory from the Alexandrian church, but after a discussion of three days by Dionysius, the successor of Origen, A. D. 263, this party made an open confession of their error and returned to the Church. Dionysius wrote a book against the theory, and its last echo in the Greek Church died away with

\*See Kitto's Cycl. of Bib. Lit., Art. Millennium; also Herzog's Theological Encycl., Art. Chiliasm; Watson's Theol. Dict.; Schaff's Hist. of the Church, page 299.

Apollinaris of Laodicea. In the West, the theory, in its most gross and sensual form,\* continued to have its advocates, but was powerfully opposed by Augustine, who established the true spiritual conception of the Church. Augustine and Philostorgus placed it in their lists of heresies. Appearing again at the time of the Reformation, Luther and Melancthon set themselves with earnestness to oppose the theory, which is condemning in the two leading reformed Confessions, the Augsburg and the Helvetic. Dr. Whitby, in his learned treatise on the subject, proves that it was never generally received in the Church of Christ and that there is no ground to believe that it was derived from apostolic authority, and, as we have seen, was never admitted as an article of belief in any creed of any Church in the world. Nor was the theory as held by many who are quoted in support of it, that which is now maintained, but directly the contrary. Irenæus, the disciple of Polycarp, held that the earthly advent and kingdom of Christ would take place not before, but after the general resurrection. Joseph Mede, (born A. D. 1550) who may be regarded as the father of the modern millenarians, distinctly rejected the idea of the personal appearance of Christ before the millennium. His words are: "The presence of Christ in his kingdom shall no doubt be glorious and manifest, yet I dare not so much as imagine that it should be a visible converse upon earth. For the kingdom of Christ ever hath been and shall be a kingdom whose throne and kingly residence is in heaven. There he was installed when he sat down, etc., . . . and there, as in his proper temple, is continually to appear in the presence of his father to make intercession for us." Bishop Newton, who is also falsely quoted in favor of this doctrine, supposes that the martyrs only shall rise from the dead at the commencement of the millennium, and that Christ shall not dwell personally upon earth. Bishop Burnet, in his visionary theory of the earth, supposes that the millennium will follow the general judgment and destruction of all the wicked, and accounts for the existence of apostates and persecutors who shall afterwards make war upon the saints by supposing them to be "generated from the mud or slime of the new earth." Dr. R. J. Breckinridge, by a theory, to say the most of it, as visionary and groundless, supposes that all the wicked, not existing upon the earth when

\*Munzer and his followers wished to establish the earthly kingdom of Christ by fire and sword, as did the Anabaptists and Fifth Monarchy men. See Schaff's Hist. Page 301.

Christ makes his advent, shall at the end of the millennium be raised from their graves, with opportunity to rise for an open onslaught upon Christ and the saints.

This theory carries with it its own condemnation historically, because it has never been capable of being stated in a fixed and definite form. Truth is one and the same; and as the Scriptures are now complete, that doctrine which is clearly deducible from them must be capable of clear and perfect statement. This theory, therefore, which has assumed such various and contradictory forms, is utterly destitute of that unity, consistency, constancy, and universality, and, in a word, catholicity, which are the essential marks of true doctrine. Like all other errors, this fluctuating heresy has only served to test, determine, define, and limit the doctrine of Christ's second advent, and so clearly to fix the sense of Scripture that there has been no variance or change in the expression of it in the creeds of the universal church.

Why then, it will be objected, has this theory continued, with more or less prevalency, to exist, and even now to be adopted by many of our most earnest, zealous, and faithful evangelical christians? To this it is sufficient to answer that the same is true of many other opinions which are held beyond the established form of sound doctrine; and that it has been held, (although, as we have seen, plainly condemned in the Athanasian and other creeds,) because it can be held by those who still hold to the essential doctrines relating to the divinity, atonement, and mediatorial work of Christ, but who are too sentimentally and impatiently desirous of some more personal and glorious earthly manifestation of Christ and his Spirit.

This theory, we have seen, is also condemned by the clear, constant and frequent testimony of Scripture in passages which are not prophetic, symbolical, or of doubtful interpretation, but dogmatical and positive.

This theory is erroneous in the fundamental rule of interpretation, that is, what is called the literal. In a proper sense, this canon of interpretation is of primary importance. It is essential, first, to attain the true text or words of Scripture, and then to ascertain the proper meaning of the words in relation to each other. But it is a gross perversion and abuse of this canon to interpret figurative, symbolical, typical, and prophetic language as if it was to be understood in the true literal meaning of these figures, symbols, types, and prophecies, because what the Holy Ghost teaches is not what is said in figure, but

what these figures analogically convey;—and because the Scriptures are to be interpreted, not as a book of human composition, but of divine inspiration and full of the manifold wisdom and teaching of God, the mere literal understanding of which killeth, while its spiritual meaning giveth life, converteth the soul, and is, both in the Old and New Testaments, a testimony to Jesus Christ. This rule of merely literal interpretation is heretically that of the Jews, who while students of the letter and overlooking the spirit, did not see Christ in Scripture, although he is the sum and substance of it. On this very ground they rejected him of whom Moses and the prophets did write. They thus incurred the punishment denounced by Scripture, as the apostle says, “because they knew him not nor yet the voices of the prophets which are read every Sabbath day, they have fulfilled them in condemning him.” (See Rom. iii. 2, and Wordsworth *in loco*; also Acts xiv. 21; John i. 45; Acts xiii. 27-40; 2 Cor. iii. 6.) This rule of baldly literal interpretation ignores the apostolic canon which is the analogy of faith and the spirit that giveth life. It dethrones Scripture and reduces it to the level of a human record, and is in its nature essentially sceptical and rationalistic, and is the false light which has lured Colenso and multitudes at this present time in Germany, in England, and in this country, to teach for doctrines the wildest theories of men, and to destroy the claims of Scripture as in all its teachings divine and authoritative; and is most explicitly condemned, both positively and negatively by Christ in his rebukes of the Pharisees; by Gabriel in his annunciations to Zacharias and Mary; by Zacharias, Mary, and Elizabeth, in their inspired songs; by the evangelists; by Peter, (see Acts ii. 3-5, etc.); by Paul (Rom. Heb. and Gal.); and by the apostle James, as above quoted in the council of Jerusalem; by the early Fathers as an entire body; and by the wisest and best interpreters of all churches and countries.

The reception of Christ as the Messiah; the miraculous establishment, progress, and permanency of christianity; the predicted rejection of Christ by the Jewish people; the interpretation of prophecy given by Christ and his inspired apostles, and the fulfillment in Christ of innumerable passages, and the whole spirit and typical character of the Old Testament, including many of those typically figurative passages, upon the literal words of which this theory bases itself, and the invariable rejection from the creeds of the Church of this theory, though existing; are demonstratively conclusive against both this

theory and its rule of interpretation. (See Matthew xiii. 11-44; John xviii. 36; Rom. xiv. and xvii.) The whole teachings of Christ and his disciples are to the effect that his kingdom is not of this world, not earthly, not an earthly dominion; that in it there should be no distinction between Jew and Gentile, no earthly temple, sacrifice, or priest. They declared that its qualification for membership, its promises, privileges, profession, practice, experience, responsibilities, and rewards, are all spiritual. (See, further, Luke i. 32, 33, 55, 67-70; Acts iii. 13-15, and v. 29-31; Rev. iii. 7-12, etc.) The whole spirit of apostolic instruction requires, therefore, that christians, as risen with Christ above all earthly expectations, should set their affections, aims, and hopes upon things above, upon the hope laid up for us in heaven. This theory, therefore, which bases itself upon a literal, self-contradictory, and impracticable interpretation of one passage of Scripture (Rev. xx. 6,) which is in itself difficult; which occurs in the most highly figurative book of the Bible; of which a figurative, spiritual interpretation is consistent with all the explicit teachings of Scripture on all the points involved, and the assumed literal interpretation of which would involve a fundamental doctrine (that is, two or more resurrections from the dead,) which is no where else authorized, but contrariwise, most undoubtedly excluded,—must be regarded as contradictory to the clear and uniform teaching of Scripture as interpreted by the clear and uniform interpretation of the Church of Christ.

The following articles have been universally received by the Church of Christ as the common-law interpretation of God's inspired testimony upon the subject now under consideration: 1. That the earth was created to be inhabited only by the human race, and that external nature is strictly adapted only to such a race of intelligent beings—"God hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on the face of the earth." "The earth hath he given to the children of men." (See also Gen. ii.; Ps. vii.) 2. That all the plans of the Divine Being, revealed in Scripture, so far as the earth is concerned, have relation to a race so constituted, and to no intelligent beings differently constructed. 3. That God, in the dispensation of redemption, has provided a perfect scheme of moral agency for the spiritual benefit of this race, and that this has been in a gradually developing form in operation since its origin, and will continue to be so until the end of time,—that is, until the world itself shall cease, with whose origin and motion time began. 4. That this

scheme of redemption or salvation (which are synonymous terms) is one, beginning with God's purpose in the covenant of grace, first revealed to our fallen parents in Eden in the prophetic promise of Him who was to come as a Saviour or Redeemer; which coming was manifested and set before the faith of men in the sacrificial and typical dispensations of the antediluvian, patriarchal, and Jewish covenants; fulfilled in Christ's first personal advent as the Saviour of the world, to make reconciliation and propitiation through his obedience and death; and now, under "this last dispensation which God will ever give to man," (Heb. ix. 26.) set before us in the Scriptures in the present exaltation and never-ceasing mediatorial, intercessory work of our Emmanuel in heaven, and the presence and operations of the Holy Ghost on earth, and in the constant prophetic assurance of Christ's second coming as our Emmanuel, for the consummated perfection of redemption or salvation, when the mediatorial kingdom will be closed and merged into the kingdom of God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, for ever, in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.

5. That an essential and most important part of this scheme consists in the intercessory work of Christ as our High Priest and Mediator at the right hand of the Majesty on high, where he ever liveth as a Priest upon his throne, at the right hand of God, whom the heavens must retain until the time of the restitution of all things.

6. That the gospel, with the ministry and other instrumentalities of the Church, through the intercession, and under the rule of Christ, by the influence of the Holy Spirit, and the divine blessing on these agencies, will be the only means of spreading among the inhabitants of the earth that knowledge, holiness, felicity, and glory, which will alone constitute—not another millenary church—but the millenary state of the Church.

7. That there will be only one resurrection of the dead, and that this resurrection will comprehend all the righteous and wicked dead who shall have died from the beginning of the world until the day of final judgment.

8. That at the day of final—that is, universal and general—judgment, every human being who has ever lived, or may be then living on the earth, will appear before the judgment seat of Christ, to be judged according to that which he hath done in the body. (See Rom. ii. and xvii.)

9. That at, or immediately after, the final judgment, the earth, having been defiled by sin, and dishonored by universal rebellion against the authority of its Creator and Governor, will be literally destroyed by fire; and that the two

classes which had constituted the great mass of its inhabitants, including all nations and ages, will “*go away*” to their appointed places of happiness or misery, viz., the righteous to heaven, the wicked to hell.

Such is the simple, accurately defined, unvaried, and unalterable creed of the Holy Catholic Church, throughout all ages, and in all the world.

In concluding this condensed outline of the doctrine of the second personal advent of our blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, we will notice the only plausible objection by which many general readers of Scripture are “ignorantly”—that is, without due consideration—perplexed and led to “wrest to the destruction” or weakening of their faith, that is, the constant reference to our Lord’s second coming, as if imminent or at any moment likely to come to pass. Now, it is undoubtedly true that the solemnities and glories of our Lord’s promised second appearing, are made to bear with all the pressure of the powers of the world to come, as the great practical motive by which every christian is required to identify this glorious hope with his daily devotions and meditations, and by which sinners are awakened by the terrors of the Lord at once to repent and be converted, while the day of their merciful visitation holds out. To understand this admitted and most important character of Scripture reference to our Lord’s second advent, let it be observed, 1. That in many passages of Scripture the time of this second advent is declared to be purposely concealed from the knowledge of men, as one of the secret things that belong only to God, and one of the great component parts of our present moral and spiritual probation and trial of faith. (See Matt. xxiv. 36; Mark xiii. 32; Luke xii. 40; Acts i. 6, 7; 1 Thes. v. 1-3; 2 Thes.; 2 Peter iii. 3, 4, 10; Rev. xvi 15.) 2. That it has been shown that many events, not yet consummated, occupying an indefinite period of time, are distinctly revealed as to occur before that advent can take place. 3. The form of language referred to was used by our Saviour and his apostles nearly two thousand years ago, when all the intervening events by which its occurrence was necessarily postponed were fully known, so that it must be explained on other principles than the actual proximity, according to our notions of time, of our Saviour’s advent, and must, under any interpretation, be more forcible now, since, with whatever delay, the judgment day must be nearer to us by at least two thousand years. 4. But this is not all, for Enoch the seventh from Adam

(see Jude, verse fourteen.) based his prophetic preaching of the gospel upon the certainty of this last advent of our Saviour, saying, "Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints, to execute judgment upon all." Such language was, therefore, practically appropriate, even six thousand years ago.

5. The apostle Paul, to whom, by inspiration and special visions, the whole future of the Church was clearly known, and who wrote his Second Epistle to the Thessalonians to correct the opinion they had taken up of an immediate advent of Christ, by foretelling future epochs; and the apostle Peter, who wrote his Second Epistle with the same object in view, and who meets this precise difficulty by declaring that, although Christ had not yet come, he would certainly appear at the appointed time, and that with the Lord a thousand years were as one day; and the apostle John, (after all the other apostles were dead, say A. D. 90,) who has given in Revelation a chart of the whole lengthened future course of the Church militant;—used frequently and closed the inspired record with the startling announcement, "Behold, I come quickly."

6. The same form of urgent warning and appeal has been employed by the Church universal from the very beginning under "the sons of God," who were the sons of Adam, during all the period of the ante-christian era, and since Christ's incarnation until now.

7. Bishop Horsley, so eminent for his biblical, critical, and historical knowledge, gives it as his opinion, after full examination, that the "coming of our Lord, always refers to his final advent." (See Sermons 1, 2, 3, and 12).

8. The rule for interpreting the order of events in the vast scheme of redemption is given by the apostle Peter, "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men (premillenarians) count slackness. One day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day." "*Soon and late* are words," says Bishop Horsley, "whereby a comparison is intended of the mutual proportions of different intervals of time, rather than of the magnitude of any one by itself defined. . . . Thus, although the day of judgment was removed undoubtedly by an interval of many ages from the age of the apostles, yet it might in their day be said to be at hand, if its distance from them was but a small part of its original distance from the Creator of the world. . . . There is, again, another use of the words *soon and late*, whereby any one portion of time, taken singly, is understood to be compared, not with any other, but with the number of events that are to come to pass in it in natural con-



sequence and succession. If the events are few in proportion to the time, the succession must be slow, and the time may be called long. If they are many, the succession must be quick, and the time may be called short, in respect to the number of events, whatever may be the absolute extent of it. In this last sense, the expressions denoting speediness of event are applied by the sacred writers to our Lord's coming. . . . In the interval between our Lord's ascension and his coming again to judgment, the world was to be gradually prepared and ripened for its end. . . . And when the apostles speak of that event as at hand, which is to close this great scheme of providence—a scheme in its parts so extensive and so various—they mean to intimate how busily the great work is going on, and with what confidence, from what they saw accomplished in their own days, the first christians might expect in due time the promised consummation. . . . And thus I have shown that our Lord's coming, whenever it is mentioned by the apostles in their epistles as a motive to a holy life, is always to be taken literally for his personal coming at the last day." (See Dis. pp. 8-10.)

9. Let it be further borne in mind that the great scheme of redemption or salvation—which in the abstract mean the same thing—is ONE, of which redemption or salvation through the coming of Christ as Jesus—that is, Jehovah the Saviour—to save the lost, is the beginning, middle, and the end. God gave Christ and Christ gave himself in the covenant of grace to be the Saviour of the world. As such, Christ was promised and prefigured, until, by the incarnation, he finished the work of atonement and ascended to heaven to perfect personal salvation in every believer, and will come the second time for the full and final salvation of all his completed Church. This second coming is, therefore, the next event to all living, so that no other coming or dispensation can intervene or obstruct our view in looking for it. 10. This leads to the remark that in God's view—to whom there is no past, present, or future, but one eternal now—the second coming of Christ stands in immediate and inseparable relation to his first. 11. In like manner to the enwrought vision of the prophets, this entire scheme appeared before them in its unity and continuity, so that their spiritually enlightened eye looked at once from its beginning in grace to its consummation in glory. 12. Such also is the aspect in which this scheme of redemption presents itself to the eye of enlightened faith, hope, and expectant, jubilant anticipation, and longing desire. 13. And let it not be forgotten by any that

this Lord and Saviour, for whose glorious appearing we now joyfully look, though now we see him not bodily—as he himself forewarned us, and as the apostle Paul rejoicingly declares, it was “needful” and “better” for us, and alone consistent with his necessary presence and mediation, that we should not—yet believing in and realizing his assured, actual, and spiritual presence with us, both personally, in his ubiquitous manifestation, and by his Spirit, we rejoice in him with a joy unspeakable and full of his anticipated glory. This faith and hope constitute the very essence of our Saviour’s farewell comforting discourse with his disciples, and, through them, with his people always, in which he now says, as it were, “I have now finished the work of salvation so far as it can be done upon earth, and now, therefore, I go to my Father’s house in heaven, there to continue and perfect it by my mediatorial and intercessory work, so that ye shall see me no more in the flesh, until I appear the second time unto all that look for me, to consummate the great work of salvation in your heavenly and everlasting glory. Nevertheless, I shall be always with you to the end of the world, in my spiritual presence and by my Holy Spirit to inspire your hearts, indite your prayers, exalt your praises, fill you with peace and joy in believing, and with all the fulness of the blessings of the gospel of Christ.” O, that christians would mediate more on the priestly office and intercession of our exalted Lord and Saviour, in his glorious character of High Priest of our profession, so as to be more identified with him, in all our reflections and in all our reading and meditations, and especially in our prayers, whether in the closet, in the family, or in the house of God; so that, on these solemn and interesting occasions, filled with all the fulness of his gracious presence, we might be able to approach the throne of grace, not only with more pious confidence and boldness, but with more fervent, tender, and affectionate sympathy and confidence. 14. Finally, let us triumphantly say that our divine Lord—our life, our love, besides whom there is none in heaven and none upon earth that we desire—comes virtually with that glorious grace with which he shall appear the second time unto salvation, to every believer at the hour of his departure. The unmistakable promise, so miserably perverted by the fictitious and unwarranted expectation of a mere Jewish, earthly, typical, and preparatory kingdom here upon the earth, has been hitherto, is now, and shall be fulfilled, in all its comforting and happy experience to every true believing heart. “I am with you to

the end—this day shall thou be with me in Paradise—I will guide thee by my counsel and afterwards receive thee into glory—I have prepared a place for you, and at the hour of death I will open for you the kingdom of heaven, and will receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also. And when thou passest through the valley of the shadow of death, thou shalt fear no evil, for I am with thee, and my rod and staff they comfort thee. To depart is to be with Christ.” (See James v. 7, 8; Heb. ix. 24, 26-28; x. 36, 37; Rev. ii. and iii.; 2 Cor. v. 8-10; Acts vii. 55-60; Luke xvi. 22, 23; Ps. xxxiii. 46.) And as it regards the unhappy, miserable, infatuated, and ever to be lamented man, who dies in his sins, unpardoned and unrenewed, let it be solemnly remembered, that Christ will in the hour of death virtually come to him as the great and terrible judge—“Behold, the judge standeth at the door—behold, I come quickly—and the door was shut—and he stood speechless—for after death is the judgment, when we must all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ to receive according to our deeds done in the body, whether they be good or evil.” And so short will the time intervening between the sinner’s death and the sinner’s final actual judgment and destruction appear, that when that last day, the day of wrath, shall come, as Luther says, “Every one will say, ‘Lo, I have but just now died.’” O yes, it will be as the interval between conviction and sentence and execution to the guilty culprit,—while to the righteous it will be like the seven years of Jacob’s loving and hopeful toil for Rachel. “Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me.”

NOTE.—Since closing the article, we have met with a beautiful confirmation of the closing point, in Stier’s Words of Jesus, vol. ix. pages 447-8, on the Epistle of James, v. 7-9: “St. James could in his day predict the coming of the Lord as at hand, and his word was soon confirmed. But after this *first typical* coming of the Lord to judgment upon Israel, the faithful always regarded the reserved and proper day of judgment and redemption, the *last* coming of their Lord, as near. When he shall come the second time. (See page 448.) . . . It is the will of God that there should be a reality in the continual presentation of the coming of the Lord as near. Every generation should wait for his day, for to every generation and to every mortal, the Lord already comes in death. . . . Because, for wise reasons, the interval between death and the last day is concealed from us, and the day of our death is dark. The Scripture sets before us instead, the day of Christ’s revelation as the bright goal of our expectations, and believers are generally, in the New Testament, (since the Lord’s Parables,) those who wait for the Lord.”



On the Fellowship and Communion  
of Believers with the Father,  
Son and Holy Ghost

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BY THE  
REV. THOMAS SMYTH, D. D.



## ON THE FELLOWSHIP AND COMMUNION OF BELIEVERS.

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In this discussion we have assumed that the Scriptures are the inspired word of God. By this we understand that the Scriptures were so far forth the words of "Holy men of God who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" as to convey with infallible accuracy what God would have us to know concerning Him, ourselves and everlasting things. This is the essential truth included under the terms verbal or plenary inspiration—the doctrine in regard to Scripture which was universal amongst the Jews—and general amongst the primitive christians and early fathers‡ and of the church generally.

From this doctrine it follows that the Scriptures being "written for our instruction, reproof, correction and wisdom unto salvation," its statements, and especially in reference to God, will be given forth carefully, deliberately, with a foreknowledge of and adaptation to all future time adapted to the comprehension and use of mankind generally, to be understood therefore according to the meaning which these words and phrases usually bear—and when so understood to be the final and authoritative standard of what is to be believed and obeyed.

It will also follow from this view of Scripture that it will be found consistent in all its statements and that any system of Doctrine which does not harmonize all the teaching of Scripture, however apparently contradictory, but requires the suppression or perversion of its contents cannot be Scripture.

It is on these principles the doctrine of the Trinity is received as the simple expression of the unsophisticated teaching of Holy Scripture without any attempt being made to lessen or to explain its mystery. "How can this be," asks the objector now just as he did in the time of Athanasius, "according to\* custom," says that Father; "as if that could not be, which they cannot understand." This doctrine is without controversy a mystery, "the mystery of the gospel;"—†"the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ: or, of God even the Father,

‡See Hagenbach's Hist. of Doctr., § 32, vol. 1, p. 74.

\*Calamy, p. 374.

†Do., p. 102.

and of Christ His Son. So that God's being a Father, and having Christ for His Son; the mutual relation which there is in this respect between the Two; the Foundation of this Relation, the purposes thereby served, and the several parts of the economy of our Redemption which depends upon it, have so much of a mystery in them, notwithstanding all that is revealed concerning them, that we must not pretend to be free of difficulty about them, or able fully to account for them."

But this doctrine is not a mere barren, speculative mystery. In it \*"are hid all the Treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge," and to understand it is to have become possessed of † "the riches of a full assurance of understanding of the mystery of the gospel."

As the Bible was only "given for our instruction," and all its "truth is in order to goodness," this doctrine was revealed not as an abstract or transcendental dogma but on account of its relation to our practical belief and duty. It makes no pretension to speculative significance, but is imparted only so far as it bears upon the economy of the divine nature in its relations to our world, our race and our sinful and ruined condition.

As affecting the object of our faith—the nature of divine worship—the ground of faith and hope for pardon, purification, acceptance, confidence and peace towards God—this doctrine is the foundation of all religion, of all faith and of all hope for salvation and eternal life. The source as well as every blessing of the gospel is derived from the trinity in the Godhead.

The foundation of the scheme of salvation is his equally in the nature of man and in the nature of that God of whose moral government man is a subject, man is conscious of intelligence,—of capacities to know the true, to choose the right, to approve and enjoy the good,—of acting freely, voluntarily,—of passing unavoidable judgment upon himself and his own free acts—and of a desire to obtain happiness and escape misery. In the exercise of these faculties every man is now conscious of evil in his disposition, thoughts, feelings and actions. He passes a similar judgment upon every one of his fellow men, spiritual religion; and the love and service of God are distasteful to him. He prefers the material to the immaterial, the carnal to the spiritual, the present to the future, the specu-

\*Calamy, p. 103.

†Do., p. 102.



lative to the practical, the sentimental to the divine, the honor that cometh from man to the honor that cometh from God. This character of man must arise from his own inward and spontaneous predisposition to choose and to do what is evil. Such is man's present character and condition. But such was not man's original condition. God made man upright. He enjoyed the blessing of God. He was holy, harmless and undefiled. Peace reigned in his own heart and the peace of God which passeth all understanding was shed abroad abundantly upon him. The same triune God who brought him into existence saying, "let us make man," now irradiated him with some beams of their incomprehensible light and joy and social society which the Father, Son and Holy Ghost had from all eternity enjoyed among themselves in the unity of the Godhead. The Father revealed to him his infinite love, complacency and delight. The Son as Jehovah visible and preincarnate, accompanied, talked, and communed with him, and the ever blessed spirit moved upon the heaving sea of his unquiet heart saying "peace be still."

But man disobeyed his merciful God and Saviour and grieved the Holy Spirit. He continued not in honor but made shipwreck of faith and fell into the condemnation of the Devil. The way of the tree of life was guarded against his approach. Arraigned before God, he was adjudged to be guilty, condemned and sentenced. The favor of God was changed into a frown and His smile into angry displeasure. Sin like a venemous disease spread itself over all the powers both of soul and body and into all the branches of his numerous posterity.

Hence that present character of man, of whose sad and sorrowful and sinful condition the Scriptures are so full.

But God so loved the world as not to be willing that they should perish. Though he spared not the angels, who of their own accord sinned against Him and then maliciously drew man into their guilt and condemnation, God shewed favor to Adam and his posterity. A fresh council of the Triune Jehovah was held. "And the Lord God, that is God the Elohim, said, behold the man is become as one of us." (See Gen. 3, 22-24.) Then was commenced the practical manifestation of that scheme of salvation, the mystery hid for ages, which was ordained before the foundations of the world in the councils of eternity. No wisdom, nor understanding, nor counsel could prevail against Him, but His own counsel did stand for ever and the thoughts of his heart throughout all ages. Then hav-

ing asked who will go for us and the covenant of grace having been entered into between the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, the decree was fixed though not declared that apostate men lying in their own blood polluted should live and that He would redeem them from the power of the grave and deliver them from death.

\*"This grace was the wisdom of God in a mystery, the hidden wisdom which God had fore determined before the world, unto our glory; but it was hid from the eyes of all the living, and hid from the fowls of the heaven. None of the princes of this world knew it. No eye had seen it, nor ear heard it, neither came it unto man's heart. Only God understood the way thereof, and from the beginning of the world it was kept secret and hid in Him, and still He hideth it from the wise, and men of understanding. Neither can natural man perceive it, until He revealeth it unto them by His Spirit, which Spirit searcheth all things, even the deep things of God."

The religion of God, that is the religion of the Bible, is founded on the doctrine of the Trinity, which we find interwoven with every part of the system and becoming more and more apparent as that system is more and more fully developed. God's nature involves social relations within itself—and thus implies the necessity of perfect holiness, justice, truth and love in order to comply with His own ineffable and eternal blessedness. Hence the origin of law, moral obligations, moral government and the immutable sanctions of law, all found in the very nature of Deity. And hence also as it regards man, as the law or covenant he had broken was the law of the triune Jehovah, any plan of deliverance, could be effected only by the concurrence, co-operation and vindicated glory of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, since the obligation to maintain the honour and vindicate the sanction of the divine law was as immutable as the divine existence itself. It pleased the Father therefore of His own grace and incomprehensible love before the foundation of this world to save a people from their sins and deliver them from the wrath to come, and thus to reconcile all things to Himself—both the things in heaven, and the things on earth by the mediation of the Son and the sanctification of the Holy Spirit.

And as this work of redemption could only be accomplished in a way which does no violence to man's free and active nature—to man's personal accountability and sense of guilt, and to the

\*Ainsworth, p. 36.

relations in which he stands to God's moral government—it is evident that nothing short of divine wisdom could devise, and divine omniscience, omnipotence and omnipresence execute the wondrous plan. And here we are brought to the manifest proof that the salvation revealed in the glorious gospel of the blessed God could only have originated and been achieved by the triune persons of the Godhead. It is therefore every where represented in Scripture, that our redemption was contrived by the Father, purchased by the Son, and is applied by the Spirit, through whose assistance, in the name of Christ, we are to make our approaches to the Father. Hence it appears that correspondent regards are due to each, which are accordingly required in many passages of Scripture. John v. 23; 1 Cor. v. 16, 22; Eph. 4, 30.

\*“The grace then by which the christian is consoled, or the salvation in which he rejoices, is not derived simply from God or the Father; but, first, simply from the Lord, as for example at the commencement of all the Pauline Epistles and lastly and thirdly, in a threefold divine manner, and this in such a way, that in the last case the Spirit is added to the Lord and Father, or to God and the Lord as for example, 2 Cor. 13, 14.”

We are thus led to perceive the wise and merciful purpose of God in revealing to us this mystery of godliness. The truth of a divine trinity in Unity, is eminently disclosed to human faith in order to goodness. It is good every way. To it we owe our highest conceptions both of the nature and counsels of God, both of the law, and the gospel.

By it we attain to a correct knowledge of God Himself.† “It is the doctrine of the Trinity alone,” says Nitzsch, “that affords a perfect protection against atheism, polytheism, pantheism, or dualism. For the absolute distinction between the Divine essence and the world is more securely and firmly maintained by those who worship the Trinity, than by those who do not reverence the same. It is precisely these systems of monotheism, which have, in the highest degree, excluded the doctrine of the Trinity, and have prided themselves on that very account, the Jewish and Mahometan for example, that have led, on account of their barrenness and vacuity, to the grossest pantheism. With the doctrine that the Word, which was God,

\*See also 1 Cor. 12, 4-6; 1 Pet. 1, 2; 1 Cor. 12, 4-6; Eph. 4, 6. Nitzsch's System of Christian Doctrine, p. 177.

†Netch., p. 181.

became flesh, there arises, likewise, the same necessity of conceiving God as personally united to man without sin, as there is a necessity for absolutely distinguishing between the Divine essence and human nature. Faith in everlasting holy love, which is God, can only be theoretically and practically realized through the cognition of Him who is the perfect and eternal object of divine self-knowledge and love; that is to say, by conceiving the love of the Father to the only-begotten Son. Finally, the full animating nature and communication of God, which includes neither a diminution nor restriction of his essence, can only be preserved by the trinitarian doctrine of the Spirit."

\*"The God whom we serve is not merely the God of nature: He is revealed as acting and decreeing in relation to plans which extend far beyond the present and visible state of things. In the revealed threefold personality of the Godhead, we discover the explanation of many wonderful circumstances that could never be understood from the simple knowledge of its essential unity. The designs of God are decrees, proceeding from the same unchangeable and eternal wisdom; but in the execution of these decrees a threefold mode of operation is manifest, which, though in each instance indicating the presence of Deity, manifests also a difference of personality, that is, the energy is one, but the persons acting are three. It is not till the personality of God is known and contemplated, that we see the importance of the doctrine of the Trinity. An impersonal God is a mere abstraction; but admit His personality, and the doctrine of the Trinity seems necessarily to follow. We may account for the characters impressed on the system of nature when we only recognize as its ruler a national Deity. But the system of grace requires for its explanation that threefold personality so sublimely exhibited in the solemn visions of the Apocalypse. There we behold the glorified Son clothed in the attributes of eternity,—and there the Comforter, designated by the mystic title of perfection, "the Seven Spirits of God;" while in the Unity of the one Lord God Almighty, they receive the homage of the Church and of universal nature."

Without this doctrine we must lapse into Pantheism or into Tritheism. We must believe in an impersonal God or in three Gods of equal or unequal divinity, as we have seen Unitarians

\*Pictorial Book of Common Prayer, p. 235. Note.

have boldly avowed to be the alleviative and gloried in as their faith.\*

But it is especially as it bears upon the person and work of Christ and of the Holy Spirit in man's redemption that the doctrine of the Trinity appears to have been revealed. It is ever associated with all that bears upon man's duty, hope and everlasting happiness.†

It is the embodied manifestation of the infinite, free and sovereign grace of the divine being. It is the medium of revealing and displaying to us this love. It is manifested by the Father, Son and Holy Spirit as co-equal and consubstantial persons distinct and yet united in one blessed essence.

§"The Infinite essence thus declares itself as unity never can be otherwise distinguished, and as distinction can never be otherwise united. And in this awful originality of being and entity there dwells, there inheres, this perfect love."

The purpose of God in this divine love implies engagements and mutual stipulations. The Father proposes the mediation. The Son offers himself. The Holy Ghost seals and qualifies the incarnate Son for his mediatorial work. The Elohim are the sworn ones. Between them was "the covenant of peace." With each other was this covenant "confirmed by an oath" that immutable pledge that God cannot lie. There is inauguration into office and subordination of trust and work. The head of Christ is God. God is in Christ. Christ is in the Father and the Father in Him. The Spirit is the Spirit of Christ, but proceedeth from the Father and the Son. The Father in His love predestinates those whom he has given to the Son and in due order calls, justifies and sanctifies them. The Son becomes incarnate and offers up himself once for all as a sacrifice for sin and thus becomes the surety prophet, priest and king of his ransomed ones. The Holy Spirit enlightens, convinces, converts, sanctifies, strengthens, witnesses to our adoption and fills us with joy unearthly and to the natural heart inconceivable.

How then are we found to admire and to adore "the mystic three in one?" One inexplicable three. One in simplest unity.

How abundantly should we bless God for the revelation of this heavenly doctrine—the foundation of all faith, hope and salvation—this glorious manifestation of himself—this mystery

\*See the proofs given in Dr. Edwards' *Preservative Against Socinianism*, p. 9-12.

†See *Phil.*, 2.

§Hamilton's *Sermons*, p. 9.

which no created mind could ever have discovered or even imagined. Now we can comprehend with all saints the length and breadth and height and depth of the love of God in Christ Jesus.

“In perfect consistency with\* his justice and holiness, God is now in Christ the sinner’s God, a way has been opened by the Son by which the sinner may draw near to the Father, and deliverance is offered by the Spirit’s sanctifying work from the power of sin.” “We should, moreover keep our eyes fixed on the Trinity as the pattern of our happiness and of the union that should exist among those who profess their faith in this great doctrine.”

O THOU, whom neither time nor space  
Can circle in, unseen, unknown;  
Nor faith in boldest flight can trace,  
Save through thy Spirit and thy Son!—

And Thou, who, from thy high abode,  
To us in mortal weakness shown,  
Didst graft the Manhood into God,  
Eternal, Co-eternal Son!—

And Thou, whose unction from on High,  
By comfort, light, and love is known!  
Who, with the Parent Deity,  
Dread Spirit! art for ever One!—

Great First and Last! thy blessing give!  
And grant us faith, thy gift alone,  
To love and praise Thee while we live,  
And do whate’er Thou would’st have done!

From this doctrine as a fountain having its source in the infinite bosom of the everblessed Godhead believers are permitted to draw evermore living water. We are brought into living relations with the living God. We enjoy communion and fellowship with the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, and that with such mutual love, the conjunction and kindly interchange of giving and receiving that God is said to dwell in us and we in Him.

The origin of this divine fellowship is the spontaneous and everlasting love of God the Father. Therefore does he say, “I have loved thee with an everlasting love therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee.” From this well head in the Divine love, flows out every good and perfect gift to the children of men. To the eye of infinite compassion we were apostate and undone. Whilst we were yet in God’s foreknowing presence sinners God loved us. When there was no eye to pity

\*Venema, p. 266.

and no arm to save in his love and pity he redeemed us and his divine power gave us all things that pertain to life and godliness. He gave us His only begotten, well beloved Son who was in the beginning with God and who was God. He gave us the Holy Spirit the Comforter, the Sanctifier, the perfecter of his people. He gave us the covenant of promise and with it all needful grace, mercy and peace to help us according to our need. Oh, yes, while we were enemies Christ in promise died for us and we were reconciled by the death of His Son and sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise.

Not sooner had man fallen and sin entered into the world and death by sin than God manifested his purpose that we guilty and despairing men might clearly see the fellowship of the mystery and might be \*<sup>able</sup> to comprehend with all saints, what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height, and to know the love of God which is in Christ Jesus, which passeth knowledge, and might be filled with all fulness of God; who hath given us beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of gladness for the spirit of heaviness."

God therefore revealed his glad tidings of great joy to all people. He gave to our first parents and through them to all mankind the promise of a Saviour—the word of life—the pledge of deliverance. The grace of God presented man's despair, revived his desponding spirit, and melted into penitence the hearts which showed no repentance and asked no mercy for their misdeeds. Thus the church began in them in whom sin began. God even then began to sever some from the rest of the world by the work of his grace, and called them by His word and spirit to the participation of eternal happiness through the knowledge of His Son and in the use of every precious and proper means he was pleased to appoint for the furtherance of their salvation.

God the Father therefore as He is the everlasting head of the everlasting persons in the triune Godhead is also the fountain of spiritual life. When quickened by His Spirit, we are made partakers of the life of God. We enter upon fellowship and communion with him. Our life is hid with Christ in God. We give ourselves unto God as they that are alive from the dead and present unto him our bodies, souls and spirits as a living sacrifice which is our reasonable service. God becomes in Christ our reconciled God and we the sons and daughters of the Lord God Almighty.

\*Ainsworth, p. 37.

As conducive to the purposes of his grace, in thus calling, saving and sanctifying souls the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of Glory giveth unto us \**“the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, in the knowledge of Him, whereby the eyes of our understanding are enlightened, and we know what is the hope of his calling and what the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints.”*

It is thus that their eyes are opened to see the wonders of his law and the still more wonderful ways of his grace and goodness. God's word is our light. The way of His precepts is their study. God himself is their instructor. They are all taught of God. They have an unction from the Holy One whereby we know all things. They need not that any one else teach us. This spiritual understanding is as a well spring of life to them that have it. The secret of the Lord is revealed in His covenant to give them knowledge. The Scriptures are unveiled. The mystery of God's will is opened. They are made partakers of God's love. They have a heart to know God who becomes their God and they His people.

From God the Father also believers receive faith which enables them to believe in what is invisible to mortal eyes, as full of glory because such glorious things are spoken of them by God who cannot lie. This gives substance also to what is in this world enjoyed only in hope because it is made sure by the promise of inheritance and the pledge and foretaste of its coming blessedness imparted in the witness of the Spirit that we are the children of God and therefore heirs.

Faith takes God's word as infallible security for all it declares whether as truth, as promise, as precept or as warrant. It finds therefore in all that God has said hidden manna on which it feeds—balm by which all its maladies are healed—instruction and reproof. Faith leads us to Christ, unites us to Him, as branches to the vine and members to the head. In Him we see the justice of God satisfied for our sins—our sins imputed to Him—and his righteousness imputed to us. We are found in Him not trusting to any righteousness of our own but to that righteousness whis was wrought out by Him as God and offered to the acceptance of our faith by God the Father. By this faith being justified we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ and experience the blessedness of the man unto whom the Lord imputeth a righteousness which is without works on their part and needeth none since it is that

\*Ainsworth, p. 92.



of Him who is the Lord our righteousness. Thus it is that they who were sinners condemned already live by faith. They walk with God. They converse with Him. His presence is with them. All through the wilderness His faith is their strength and stay. It is their breast-plate—their shield—the victory by which they overcome the world, the flesh and the Devil. By it they walk as pilgrims and strangers and absent from their Lord and far from their Father's house. By it they stand in the grace and favor of God, purify their hearts, fight manfully against all sin and labor earnestly in every good word and work. By its powers they are kept until their appointed change comes. And by it they are supported and comforted, when passing through the dark valley of the shadow of death.

Such and so great is that faith which is not our own, nor from ourselves, nor of our own creating. It is of the operation of God. It is the gift of God—the faith of God's elect.

There is another blessing pertaining to life and godliness of which God the Father is the ultimate source and that is our sanctification. As the Lord our God is holy so also must we be holy and so also are all whom he calls and justifies sanctified and made the people of his holiness. They eschew evil. They do good. The old man is sanctified and the new quickened so that being dead unto sin they are made alive unto holiness. In thus drawing himself, and away from all that is in the world that is not of the Father, God restrains us by the principle of fear and allures us by the principle of love. By the fear of the Lord we depart from evil. By it we are humbled, kept from pride, self-confidence and high-mindedness and led to walk in reverence before Him. This is the very beginning of wisdom. In this lies our strength and confidence, our deliverance from all other fear, our watchfulness, circumspection and prayer. Through this cometh also riches and glory and life. The fear of the Lord is called the believer's treasure, by it he has communion with God. They experience His goodness. For the eye of the Lord is upon them that fear Him and trust in his mercy. He delighteth in them and will fulfill the desire of their hearts.

But the end of the commandment is love flowing from a pure heart, a good conscience and faith unfeigned. Love to God and to our neighbour is therefore the fulfilling of the law. And it is from God we receive grace to love Him and his law. He circumcises our heart that we may love Him. It is when His love is shed abroad in our hearts we love Him who first

loved us and we are enabled to keep ourselves in the love of God. For God is love and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God and God in Him.

Having implanted in the believing heart that love which is the mightiest impulse to all willing and cheerful obedience, God of his abundant mercy enkindles within the soul a living hope by which it is saved in all its time of danger and distress. This hope is as an anchor within the veil beyond the reach of windy storm or tempest. Thither our forerunner has entered who is able to save to the uttermost, and who has this deep hope in the inheritance which is reserved for us in heaven.

And as faith gives substance to what is yet only promised, and an assured certainty to what is as yet invisible, and hope ever reacheth forth unto the things that are before looking not at the things which are seen and temporal, so patience quieteth all present discontent. We possess our souls in patience. We do not make haste, are not over anxious. We know that he who shall come, will come—that he is faithful who has promised and cannot deny himself. Though he tarry therefore and we are troubled on every side yet we wait. We are growing in hope because the Father hath loved us and hath given us everlasting consolation. Yea, He who is the God of hope fills us with all joy and peace in believing in hope through the power of the Holy Ghost.

Thus it is by the grace of God in which we are permitted to participate and have fellowship, we are enabled by faith to believe all things—by love to cleave to Him—by obedience in all things—and by hope to realize the fulfillment of all things, and thus does God seal us unto the day of redemption. Having effectually called, justified and sanctified us by his unspeakable grace He gives us assurance that we shall never be forsaken by Him. The seed implanted in our souls is immortal and can never die. It remaineth in us and endureth for ever. Christ also our advocate makes intercession for us that our faith fail not—gives us repentance and godly sorrow. We are thus renewed by repentance early, renewed by faith and kept by the power of God unto salvation.

The reality and blessedness of this communion with the Father is set forth in Scripture by many sweet and precious similitudes by which God would have us solace, strengthen and encourage our hearts. It is walking with God. It is dwelling with Him. He that is joined to the Lord is one Spirit. It is following Him. It is being ever near and present with God

and having God with us as He was with Joseph in Egypt, with Enoch, with Noah, with Daniel in the Lion's Den. It is to have God as our rock of defence, our Sun and shield, our strong tower to which we may continually resort and find God a very present help in every time of need.

The way by which this communion with God is maintained is prayer in which we converse with Him, pour out our complaints as children into the bosom of a father and receive from Him grace and mercy according to our need. To this affectionate and confiding intercourse God calls us by His many commands and frequent instructions, and His gracious assurances—and by the inward monitions of the Holy Spirit helping our infirmities and pleading in us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

\*"The fruits that come unto us by this holy exercise are more than can be told; there being infinite occasions, from day to day, of making request to the Lord, and filling our mouths with new songs of praise for our salvation."

In these and many such ways are believers made partakers of the divine, changed into the divine image from glory to glory, and have the spirit of adoption shed abroad in their hearts by which they cry Abba Father.

But the believer has also communion with our Lord Jesus Christ who as God manifested in flesh is the only Mediator between the Father and us. He is the way, the truth and the life, so that no man cometh to the Father but by Him. By God we are therefore called unto the communion of His Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who is made unto us wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption. From the bosom of the Father, Christ came forth as our prophet to reveal unto us all God's will, all truth necessary to be believed and all precept essential to be obeyed. This He does by those Scriptures which He caused to be written for our instruction, by the ministry which He instituted, by the sacraments which He ordained, by the command, grace, and divine power with which He accompanied them, making even the dead to hear his voice and live.

As our priest Christ offered up a sacrifice to make reconciliation for our sins. He makes intercession as our advocate with the Father. And by His mighty power He worketh in our hearts, making us priests unto God and blessing us with all spiritual blessings in Him. In all these respects we are made

\*Ainsworth, p. 117.

partakers of His grace. He reconciles us unto God by His death, having obtained eternal redemption for us. He having entered into the heavens to appear in the sight of God for us, still makes request for us to God and presents us holy and justified clothed in His apostles' righteousness. And as in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead, He is exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour to give repentance and remission of sins. He communicates all things pertaining to life and godliness. These He merited by sacrifice, obtains by intercession and imparts by His own sovereign and divine gift.

Applying Christ as thus set forth to us in the Scriptures to ourselves by faith, His sufferings, death and burial, His obedience and righteousness, His resurrection and glorious victory over sin, Satan, death and hell are ours so that we by the blood of Jesus are made priests unto God, an holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifice acceptable unto God by Jesus Christ. Through Him we are emboldened to enter through the veil unto the holy place by the new and living way which He hath consecrated for us. Yea, boldly may we go unto the throne of grace that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need. There we are permitted to present unto His Father and ours, the one offering of His sacrifice upon the cross that by His stripes we may be healed, that by His death we may be restored to life, that by His body we may be sanctified, that upon the head of this Lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of the world, we may lay the burden of our iniquities, and that by His curse we may be made the heirs of blessing and of all the riches of God's grace. Thus also we offer up unto God as our reasonable service our bodies, souls and spirits as a living sacrifice. This honor, which Christ confers by His word and Spirit, hath all the saints. They are incorporated into Him, have communion with Him in all the means of His grace. Looking by the eye of faith through these visible, earthly elements, seeing and feeding upon Christ, having our life by Him, dwelling in Him, and He in us united, we shall be raised up at the last day unto life eternal, then to be presented in blessedness before God His Father.

But there is still another aspect in which we participate in the rich grace of Christ our Saviour. For not only as our Prophet does He shew us our sin and wretchedness, and our righteousness and happiness, and not only as our Priest and Sacrifice does He impart to us the gift of sanctity and of nearness unto God, but as our King He upholds, He upholds and

preserves us in this holy and happy estate against all His and our enemies by that mighty power and sovereignty whereby He is able to subdue all things unto himself. In this aspect of His divine and mediatorial character Christ is called the Messiah, the Governor, the Captain, the Ruler, Michael the great Prince, Potentate, the Mighty One, the King of Kings, Lord of Lords, the head over all things to his church, unto whom is given all power in heaven and in earth and everlasting communion, and honor, and a kingdom is within us, upheld by the sceptre of His word, by the almighty working of the Spirit. For His people Christ overcame the world, the flesh and the Devil, and is now able to preserve the souls of his saints and to save to the uttermost, being able to keep that which is committed unto Him against the day of judgment.

And as Christ confers upon His people the honor and privilege of becoming themselves priests unto God, so does He make them kings to reign with Him upon the earth, that, as He sitteth and ruleth upon His throne so they, being made kings and priests unto God, may have power given to them to subdue their own sins and corruptions, to keep themselves unspotted from the world, obtain victory over it, are freed from its bondage and servitude and enjoy the glorious liberty of the children of God. Nor is this all. Through our Lord Jesus Christ they resist the devil, overcome him by the blood of the lamb, and the word of their testimony. Being begotten of God they keep themselves so that that wicked one fleeth from them and toucheth them not. And thus having reigned with Christ on earth, by faith in Him and strength imparted by Him, they shall hereafter judge the world and even the angels and shall reign with Him in glory forevermore.

Thus does Christ give strength and power to his people, yea, even to the faint and feeble. He is the head and they the members of His body receiving from Him life, motion, activity and all good things. He is the vine and they the branches living upon his sap and fatness. He is the husband and they joined to the Lord and one spirit with Him, married to him by faith, cherished and nourished by Him, are members of His body, His flesh and His bones.

\*“Whatever righteousness and holiness was in Christ manifested in the flesh, either by nature or by action, the same is made ours by grace and imputation. On the contrary, whatsoever sin and unrighteousness is in us by nature or action, the

\*Ainsworth, p. 136.

same is made his by imputation, and by Him is healed and taken away; so that it cannot be we now should perish, if we hold fast our faith and confidence of rejoicing to the end. Whatsoever troubles, sorrows, or temptations, sins only excepted, do befall us in this life, the like have befallen Him; were by Him overcome; and shall from us, as already they are from Him, be done away. Finally, whatsoever freedom and liberty Christ, as man, in ordinary estate, had on earth conversing among men, the like hath He given, daily giveth, and confirmeth unto christians."

So much for the communion and fellowship which believers enjoy specially with the Son of God, our incarnate and yet our living and divine Redeemer. But there is also a communion and fellowship which is enjoyed with the Holy Ghost and many graces and comforts.

In His distinctive character and office the Holy Spirit is the Comforter in adversity whom the Father and Christ has given to believers to abide with them forever, to cheer them in the absence of their Lord; that they might not be left as orphans destitute of immediate help and comfort amid all their trials. We see how great this strength and comfort was when bestowed to the apostles in emboldening their fainting and faltering hearts, in leading them into all truth, embuing them with power from on high and making them mighty to the pulling down of the strong holds of sin and Satan.

But not unto them only, nor unto primitive believers only, but unto all saints is this grace given. All are sealed with the same spirit of promise and furnished by Him with gifts and graces as seemeth to Him good. As in the beginning He perfected the work of creation and garnished the heavens so does He still as the finger or power of God create all creatures and renew the face of the earth. From Him come down also upon the children of men all those gifts, graces and endowments whether of body or of mind by which as of old they are made to minister to God's purposes in the affairs of men. By Him too God bears inward testimony unto all men striving with them and convincing the world of sin. We are thus admonished that in all ages men have struggled against these inward motives of the divine spirit, have provoked, grieved and tempted Him, have fallen away after receiving gifts whereby they have done many great works and yet finally perished. But it is especially in all that pertains to life and godliness that we are to consider the fellowship of the Holy Ghost, seeing that

it is by Him God worketh in us to will and to do of His good pleasure. To them the Holy Spirit is the source of spiritual life, help, comfort, sanctification and assurance of life eternal. By His power invisibly but effectually applied to their hearts they are born again. By Him is the immortal seed of divine truth quickened in their souls received and believed. By the Holy Ghost dwelling in them is that word retained, kept and obeyed. By Him are they confirmed, comforted, emboldened and assisted in all their spiritual warfare. By Him are their affections subdued and sanctified and their souls conformed to the image of God.

\*For whereas, aforetime some of them were fornicators, idolaters, thieves, covetous, extortioners, or given to other like vices; they are washed, they are sanctified, they are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of God. And whereas, while they were fleshly, having not the Spirit, they walked after the flesh, and favoured the things thereof, and could not please God, but were subject unto death; now, He that raised up Christ from the dead, doth also quicken their mortal bodies, because His Spirit dwelleth in them; and so is fulfilled that which, in figure, God said of old unto Israel: "Ye shall know that I am the Lord, when I have opened your graves, my people, and brought you up out of your sepulchres, and shall put my Spirit in you, and ye shall live." Thus then, living in the Spirit, they do also walk in the Spirit, and by it do mortify the deeds of the body, not fulfilling the lusts of the flesh, which they have crucified, but bringing forth the fruits of the spirit, which are love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance.

†"The love of God is shed abroad in their hearts, by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto them; and by Him are they sealed unto the day of redemption; the same Spirit beareth witness with their spirits, that they are the sons of God; and hereby they know that they dwell in God, and He in them, because He hath given them of His Spirit, which is as a pledge, or earnest in their hearts, where by they do not only behold the glory of the Lord with open face, but are changed unto the same image from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord."

Among the other benefits communicated by the Spirit is the help He imparts to the infirmities of believers in prayer, for as

\*Ainsworth, p. 144, 145.

†Ainsworth, p. 145.

they †“know not what to pray for as they ought, the Spirit itself maketh intercession for them, with sighs and groans which cannot be expressed; and the request which He maketh is according to the will of God, who searcheth the hearts, and knoweth what the meaning of the Spirit is.”

But time would fail to point the infinite, innumerable and incomprehensible way in which the Holy Spirit communicates help and hope, assistance and comfort to believers according to their need.

‡“Through the power of the Holy Ghost they abound in hope. By the comfort of the Holy Ghost, they and the churches of them are multiplied; and by Him whatsoever good thing is done among God’s people, is not by an army, not by strength, but by the Spirit of the Lord of Hosts, without which no man can say that Jesus is the Lord.

“Thus are the saints of God advanced to honour and dignity above all people on the earth, being themselves the temple of God, and having His Spirit dwelling in them; enjoying a most holy and happy communion with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ, and with the Holy Ghost; the grace, and peace, and comfort whereof passeth all understanding; and can no way be sufficiently expressed by the tongue or pen of man.”

†Ainsworth, p. 146.

‡Ainsworth, p. 148.







The Spirit's Influences Vindicated  
From Objections by Their  
Analogy to the Wind

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BY THE  
REV. THOMAS SMYTH, D. D.



## THE SPIRIT'S INFLUENCE COMPARED TO THE WIND.

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THE ANALOGY OF REGENERATION AND THE SPIRIT'S INFLUENCES TO THE WIND.

*"The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou canst not tell whence it cometh nor whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit."*—JOHN 3, 8.

What is the real nature of that subject to which our Lord here refers we are not left to question or to doubt. This is clear from the whole scope and bearing of the passage. Nicodemus was himself a ruler and instructor among the Jews, a member of the church, a man of wealth and influence, and high enrolled among the most worthy citizens of the Jewish commonwealth. When Christ therefore made known to him the true nature of the kingdom of God, the qualifications requisite for admission into it and the fitness necessary both for the discharge of its duties and the enjoyment of its privileges, and when He made it an indispensable prerequisite in order to this, that he, and every man, must be born again—we may be perfectly sure that Nicodemus did not misunderstand him. He could not think that our Saviour referred to any outward ordinances of the church for of all these Nicodemus had partaken;—nor to any forms, rites and services of religion, for of all these Nicodemus was punctiliously and religiously observant;—nor to any *opus operatum* efficacy connected with the orders and offices of a heaven-ordained ministry, all which Nicodemus had received; he must therefore have understood that Christ referred to an inward and spiritual change which bore the same relation to the soul that life does to the body—a change effected by the direct and immediate agency of the Holy Spirit and by which a principle of spiritual life, holiness and new obedience is implanted in the heart. "Marvel not," said Christ in reiterated earnestness, "that thou, even thou who art a Master in Israel and thyself an instructor and a guide to the souls of others, that even thou must thus be born again or otherwise be adjudged unfit to be a member of my spiritual kingdom, and a partaker of eternal life."

The truth of a new birth, a spiritual renovation, lies at the very foundation of the christian scheme as a system of doctrine, and of the christian character, which it is the great object of that system to produce. And the fact that many religionists now-a-days who claim to be *par excellence*, THE CHURCH, and the sanctimonious observers of every punctilio of the rubric and canon of superstitious and erring fathers, the very fact, I say, that these tell us that *baptism* is this *regeneration* in its beginning, and that *confirmation* and the eucharist constitute its perfection and continuance; and the very fact that others again tell us, as Nicodemus told Christ, that this whole doctrine is absurd, enthusiastic and fanatical; all this, I say, only proves that the Pharisees and the Sadducees, so far as their principle is concerned, are still standing sects. Like the one there are still found many prepared to believe every thing, and like the other many who will believe nothing; the one class grounding itself upon credulity, the other upon scepticism; the one making antiquity and tradition, and the other reason, the standard of revealed truth and duty. Brethren, let none of these things move you, for "verily, verily I say unto you, you must be born again," not of water, but of that spirit whose influences are symbolized by the water; and not by becoming fashionable members of a fashionable church, which may boast of including many wise men, and many men of taste, sentiment and philosophy, but by becoming members of the church of the living God, into which you can be introduced only by the life-giving energy of that Almighty Being who first moved upon the surface of the great deep bringing order out of confusion, light out of darkness, fertility out of barrenness, and life out of death.

In the declaration of our Saviour quoted above we have an analogy drawn from the nature and operation of the wind by which this high and mysterious doctrine may be made more plain to our minds. This analogy which is very striking has ever been observed by reflecting minds, and is thus beautifully depicted by a recent poet:

Air! and thou Wind!  
 Which are the unseen similitude of God  
 The Spirit, His most meet and mightiest sign;  
 The earth with all her steadfastness and strength  
 Sustaining all, and bound about with chains  
 Of mountains, as if life with mercies, ranging round  
 With all her sister orbs the whole of heaven,  
 Is not so like the unlikenable one  
 As thou. Ocean is less divine than thee;  
 For although all but limitless, it is yet

Visible, many a land not visiting,  
 But thou art Love-like, every where, o'er earth,  
 O'er ocean triumphing; and aye, with clouds  
 That like the Ghost of oceans' billows roll,  
 Decking or darkening heaven. The sun's light  
 Floweth and ebbeth daily like the tides;  
 The moon's doth grow or lessen night by night;  
 The stirless stars shine forth by fits and hide,  
 And our companion planets come and go;—  
 And all are known, their laws and liberties.  
 But no man can foreset thy coming, none  
 Reason against thy going; thou art free,—  
 The type impalpable of spirit, thou.  
 Thunder is but a momentary thing,  
 Like a world's death-rattle, and is like death;  
 And lightning, like the blaze of sin, can blind  
 Only and slay. But what are all these to thee  
 In thine all present variousness? Now  
 So light as not to wake the snowiest down  
 Upon the dove's breast winning her bright way  
 Calm and sublime as grace unto the soul  
 Towards her native grove; now stern and strong  
 As ordnance, overturning tree and tower;  
 Cooling the white brows of the peaks of fire—  
 Turning the sea's broad furrows like a plough,  
 Fanning the fruitening plains, breathing the sweets  
 Of meadows, wandering o'er blinding snows,  
 And sands like sea-beds, and the streets of cities,  
 Where men as garnered grain lie heaped together.  
 Freshening the cheeks, and mingling oft the looks  
 Of youth and beauty 'neath star-speaking eve;  
 Swelling the pride of canvas, or, in wrath  
 Scattering the fleets of nations, like dead leaves;  
 In all the same overmastering, sightless force  
 Bowing the highest things of earth to earth,  
 And lifting up the dust unto the stars;  
 Fate—like confounding reason, and like God's  
 Spirit conferring life upon the world,—  
 Midst all corruption incorruptible.

Some would reject the doctrine of regeneration altogether because it implies a fact beyond the cognizance of our senses and the full comprehension of our reason. They cannot take knowledge of this alleged change by the help of any microscope or telescope, nor by the assistance of their eyes, their ears, their taste or their touch. It is a thing beyond their own experience, and as it regards others it is a thing within their own bosom and invisible to every mortal eye. Its external manifestations are also dubious since it may exist to a great extent without them while its internal workings are known only to the heart of its recipient and are often hypocritically assumed and belied. How then such objectors triumphantly ask, can these things be?

For modes of faith let fools and zealots fight—  
 He can't be wrong whose life is in the right.

But may not such self-applauding philisophers who think that they are the men and that wisdom dwells with them, find an answer to all their cavils in the phenomena of the external

world? For do not they themselves believe in innumerable things of the nature and manner of whose existence they know nothing, merely because evidence requires them to admit the fact of their existence, and in resolving whose phenomena they have to steer amid the most conflicting and contradictory appearances? And do not these men receive all in which they do believe whether it regards science, art, history, politics, or commerce, all that lies beyond the measure of their own limited and partial experience, on the authority of others by whom their truth and certainty is attested? And yet while thus admitting the testimony of men which is so fallible and weak do they not reject the testimony of God which is infallible and unmitakeable?

Does not philosophy also teach us that there are two ways by which we may ascertain the nature and existence of any object or phenomenon? First, we may do this by the consideration of its cause. A man may be fully assured of *the existence* of any thing without knowing *how* it came to be *what* it is. For the cause of a thing is a very satisfactory way of coming to the distinct knowledge of its existence and nature. This indeed would of itself, when it is traced to the will of an intelligent being, lead us to anticipate beforehand the qualities of any effect from the known properties or intentions of the author. And when, therefore, the Holy Spirit is held forth as the author of a given change in the heart of man, and it is asserted that without it we cannot enjoy spiritual life, here or eternally, are we to deny the possibility of such a change because it does not come within the range of our observation and experiment when the Holy Spirit, who is the cause of it, is Himself inaccessible and infinitely beyond our finite comprehension? Are there not many things also in heaven, earth and hell not dreamt of in our philosophy? Are there no changes or effects but such as are visible, material, and to be reached by the scalpel or the chemic art? Is there, then, no God who is a Spirit unseen, invisible, incomprehensible, and unfelt? And can He not work spiritual changes when, where, and how He will? Who knoweth the spirit of a man what it is, whence it cometh, where it dwelleth, and how it worketh? What is life if thou canst tell, or death if thou canst fathom its mysteries?

Surely if there is an Almighty Spirit who worketh in the hearts of men, the change thus wrought must be, like Himself, spiritual and invisible. It cannot be outward. It cannot be ritual. It cannot therefore be either moral conduct, nor



pharisaic formalism, but a new creature, a spiritual mind, which imparts life and peace. To know consequently the alleged cause of this great change of regeneration is to know its certainty as a fact; its nature as a result; its necessity as a qualification; and its importance as a prerequisite to salvation.

But we may also ascertain the nature and reality of a phenomenon from the effects, properties and other characteristics by which it is distinguished from all others as well as from its cause. We are very certain that what hath no *being* at all can have no *properties* at all since this would be to argue that there may be effects where there is no cause, and properties when there is no essence in which these properties inhere. Whenever, therefore, we can trace the working, power, or manifestations of any thing, there we have demonstrative certainty that it exists and that too, however it may be in its own nature inscrutable, or in its present condition obscured and concealed. If then there are certain signs, evidences, and manifestations by which this spiritual change is revealed to its possessor or to others, or to both conjointly; then wherever these marks are found there we have clear, philosophical, inductive and most irrefragable evidence that the change has been effected and now exists. This conviction would be forced upon us although the change itself were invisible, and although in its first beginning and essential working it were utterly beyond the cognizance of ourselves or others. But that there are such marks of this spiritual and saving change Scripture assures us and in many places largely and distinctly enumerates them. And though in their *material* form or mere outward act these manifestations are in many cases similar to other actions, yet even then they are essentially different from them in their motive, spirit and end. But in many other respects the regenerate principle, that is the faith of the gospel, worketh in a manner entirely different from the principles and spirit of the world, both in the motive and the manner of its action. The works of the flesh and the works of the spirit are manifest and most clearly distinct, and however counterfeited and feigned, may be seen and read of all men who will test them by the sure word of God. And hence as the wind exists and is known to exist though it bloweth where it listeth and we *know not* what it is, whence it cometh or where it goeth, so is every one born of the spirit who brings forth fruits worthy of that change, however we may be ignorant when and how the change was wrought within him or what is its real nature.

On both these grounds, therefore, we may be assured of the certainty and truth of regeneration as an actual change even while as a phenomenon it lies beyond the cognizance of our senses and the comprehension of our reason.

But some again would reject this doctrine of regeneration, because the change it indicates is not within the range of human agency, but implies and requires the operation of a divine power. Such men act and reason upon the supposition that man is perfect and complete in himself and that he is left to be the entire arbiter and fashioner of his own character and habits. That is, they exclude the immediate and direct interference of the Almighty from His *moral* government over His rational and spiritual creatures. They walk altogether by sight, and while credulous to overflowing on every subject beside, imagine they exhibit a lofty and philosophic exaltation in believing nothing in the wide domain of spiritual matters which they cannot perceive by the rush light of their own puny reason. But here again do we not learn a lesson from nature in the mystery of her processes, in the unveiled secrecy of her hidden springs, and in the constant and evident working out of effects while the cause is invisible and undiscoverable, as for instance where the principle of life holds in subjection the omnipotent laws of chemical affinities and preserves the atoms of our organized system in operation and health while an incessant effort is made to reduce them under the dominion of those destructive chemical laws by which they must be at least dissipated into their primitive elements. Here then we are forced to conclude that a cause called life exists, but of whose nature we know absolutely nothing, merely because such a principle is necessary to account for the phenomena which we constantly behold. And so are we *every where* brought to a pause in our investigations of nature, and forced to seek for a solution of its phenomena by referring them to the wise and powerful providence of that great being who is wonderful in counsel and mighty in his operations.

The winds blow,—but who can tell whence they came or whither they go, or why they arise? Why does the North wind come forth with its icy breath to cover the land with frost and snow, and why again does the South wind breathe its balmy influence? Who can tell? or who give a better answer than that it is even so because so it has pleased Him of whom the winds are ministers and whom the winds and the waves obey? And if, therefore, all efforts are to be traced up to God as their

only ultimate and efficient cause, must it not be so also in reference to all who are born of the Spirit? That which is born of the flesh is and can be only flesh and that only is and can be spirit which is born of the Spirit. They who are christians indeed are born, that is, become such not by the will of man, nor by the will of the flesh, nor by any force of man's reasoning, eloquence or wisdom, but by the mighty power and working of God through the incorruptible word of His grace. Let us not then trust in the preaching or the agency of man, or in the power of our own self-determination for this regeneration. Let us not thus limit, set aside or deny the Holy One. The most expert seaman is only able from continual observation to read the signs of the heavens, and from them to gather the immediate course and force of the winds; and yet how often is even *he* baffled and overtaken by the sudden gale, or led to look wistfully to every quarter of the heavens, not knowing which shall send out the favouring breeze. And even so must we wait upon God, in the diligent use of all appointed means not knowing which shall prosper, this or that; or when it shall please Him to grant His blessing, in the morning or the evening. And he therefore only is the wise and successful voyager to eternal life who waits upon God, supplicating the promised influence of His almighty Spirit to work in Him to will and to do of His good pleasure, and having begun a good work in him to carry it on even unto perfection.

Regeneration, therefore, is no more unreasonable than any other effect whose cause is invisible because the ultimate author, will and intelligence by which it is produced is invisible.

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#### SECOND DISCOURSE.

Another objection to the doctrine of spiritual regeneration is that it represents God as partial to some and unjust to others. ALL, it is said, have an equal claim to this change if it is necessary, and to this gift if it is a blessing. Thus would man be more just than his maker and more merciful than Him whose tender mercies are over all his works. Thus would man challenge God's right to act as sovereign; to have mercy on whom He will have mercy and to leave whom He will to the hardening influence of their obstinate and self-willed impenitence. And thus confronting the high and holy one as He sits upon His throne judging righteously, impious man would say unto him, "what doest thou?" But how is this spirit also rebuked by

the analogy of the wind? "The wind bloweth where it listeth," not subject to the will, the laws, or the guidance of man. It is apparently self-moved and beyond any power to calculate or to direct. No man, therefore, thinks of setting himself as the guide and arbiter of the winds, or undertakes like Canute to say, where and how they shall blow. Thus do men in the kingdom of nature recognize the wisdom and necessity of her potent and irresistible laws. And yet the wind is of essential service to all the interests of man. It is either a great blessing or a great evil, causing fertility or blight, prosperity or disaster, a speedy voyage or shipwreck and destruction. As well then might mortals arraign the wisdom and Sovereignty of God in the guidance and control of the winds, as in the direction of that wind of the Spirit to which in the kingdom of grace it is so analogous, and accuse God as the author and administrator of the laws of nature, of partiality and injustice. And what a world of it would we have, if men were at liberty to make every thing subserve their own private interests and selfish ends, to adapt the winds and the weather to individual wishes. Not less confounded would be all the order and harmony of the world than when Aeolus let loose all the winds of heaven at once and from every opposite direction to waste and devastate the earth. And, if it be said that the objection lies in the case of spiritual changes, but not in regard to spiritual changes, because in the one case and not in the other there is a fixed and determinate course—laws constant and immutable—by which God acts, we reply that there is such a determinate course and such constant and immutable laws in both cases alike. In both the material and the spiritual world this course of the divine procedure is inscrutable and far above out of our sight. But in the case of spiritual influences just as much as in the case of material influences, as of the wind, God acts according to the views, or, if you please, the laws, which seemed consonant to His own infinite wisdom and goodness and best promotive of His own glory and the happiness of the universe. When, therefore, O, man, thou undertakest to quarrel with heaven's plans in the kingdom of His grace; to set up your individual interests against the general welfare; to claim for yourselves the regulation and control of heaven's purposes, and the distribution of His spiritual favors; and sullenly to deny the existence of these blessings or refuse to seek them in the way of God's appointment;—you only shew that your heart is at enmity with God; that you are

unworthy of His mercy and that you may be justly left in your impenitency, like the vessel becalmed in mid ocean, there to lie and perish, alone and undisturbed in your unbelief and hardness of heart.

As the winds are free so is God's grace free. His salvation is altogether of grace. It is not due to us on any ground of right, nor deserved by us on any ground of merit. "By grace," that is, by free, sovereign, unbought and unmerited favor, "are any saved and that not of themselves it is the gift of God." For even as "the wind bloweth, &c., where it listeth and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh or whither it goeth, so is every one that is born of the Spirit."

Another objection to this doctrine of regeneration is the impossibility of reducing the operations of the Spirit to any regular and systematic procedure so as to render it possible for us to secure with certainty this divine influence by any definite and specific course of action, or in connection with the use of any certain means. No such rules it is freely confessed can be given nor any such knowledge obtained. Ordinances and duties are only *the means* in the use of which God has promised that this grace will be given, when, and where, and in what measure, He pleases. But God has no where *tied* Himself to these ordinances or made them the *opus operatum* channels of certain and effectual grace. For even as the wind bloweth where it listeth, so that "we can give no account of its rise, increase or cessation, where it began, where it will stop, or how long it will last;" and, even as it regards the wind we must use all possible means and put our machinery in order and then wait upon its movements, so it is with the moving of the Spirit on the hearts of men. God is a sovereign and dispenses this blessing according to His good pleasure, and giveth it to all severally as He will. "There are," therefore as our own experience and observation and the history of the church every where shows, "diversities of gifts, but the same spirit, and differences of administration, but the same Lord, and diversities of operation, but it is the same God who worketh in all. All these worketh that one and the self same Spirit dividing to every man severally as He will."

We do not say that either as it regards the movement of the winds or the operation of the Spirit God acts without fixed and determinate plans or laws. These as we have seen may exist and yet may God give no account of them to us. These may exist and yet lie far beyond the compass of our minds, the

measure of our comprehension, or the extent of our survey. And these do beyond controversy exist. As it regards the winds "an attempt to develop the law of storms" has been recently for the first time instituted. The proverb which makes the wind the type and illustration of all uncertainty and changeableness, has been hitherto universally considered to express a physical truth. It was supposed that the motives and currents of the atmosphere, whether constituting the gentle breeze of summer, the gale or the hurricane, were no subjects for scientific inquiry, could be subordinate to no law, nor reduced to any system. This, however, now appears to be but the crude and hasty conclusion of ignorance. Subjected to a close examination, a collection of instances and a careful inductive process, the very first attempt to develop the law of storms has been attended with remarkable and interesting results which bid fair to rival the most homely truths in practical usefulness. It is not possible, in the limits assigned to this discussion to exhibit a satisfactory account of this inquiry or its results. For the present purpose it may suffice to observe, that the wind appears to be perpetually revolving in circles while it proceeds in an onward course. Thus the *whirlwind*, which was deemed a curious and somewhat anomalous phenomenon, is in fact a normal representation upon a small scale of all storms, gales, and hurricanes. Much in the history of storms yet requires elucidation, but the simultaneous circular gyration and progression of the wind appears to be well established.

Now, it may seem to some, not familiar with the omnific wisdom of Scripture very surprising that there is a distinct statement of Solomon's upon this point, which, if a due regard were had to the physical truth of Scripture, would long since have aroused the attention of philosophers, travellers and voyagers, and have excited this inquiry. The passage is Eccl. i. 6, "The wind goeth toward the south and turneth about unto the north, it whirleth about continually and the wind returneth again according to his circuits."

So much, then, may be said as it regards the law of the winds as analogous to the work of the Spirit. And that the influences of the Spirit are in like manner conducted upon fixed and certain principles we are assured by facts—such as the case of Esau and Jacob, of Ishmael and Isaac, of Jeremiah and others who were chosen from the womb; as in the case of the apostle who were sent where the Lord had many people whose

hearts it was his purpose to open while they were hindered from going elsewhere. By these and innumerable other facts which God Himself has explained, and by the frequent and express teaching of Scripture that God blesses His people "with all spiritual blessings, according as He has chosen them in Christ before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love, having predestinated them unto the adoption of children, according to the good pleasure of His will, it is made certain that while the Spirit of God, in His operations on the hearts of men, is above all law, sovereign and independent, that nevertheless He is a law unto Himself and acts according to the counsel of His own will. "No man therefore can tell with absolute certainty, with what means, or in what way, or to whom, God's blessing will come, even as in the case of the wind, or the harvest, we cannot foretell their certain course, or its ultimate character." But we can tell what are those means without whose use, that spiritual blessing will not come, or be given at all, and that it is therefore every man's duty at once and most urgently to besiege God's mercy seat that He, in the exercise of His sovereign and infinite mercy, may give the Holy Spirit to work in them both to will and to do of His good pleasure, and to seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness in the assurance that in so doing all other things shall be added unto them.

Many have attempted to materialize the doctrine of spiritual divine influence. Thus Mr. Combe concludes his observation on the phrenology as follows: "My inference therefore is, that the Divine Spirit, revealed in Scripture as a power influencing the human mind, invariably acts *in harmony with the laws of organization*; because the latter, as emanating from the same source, can never be in contradiction with the former, and because a well constituted brain is a condition essential to the existence of christian dispositions." How presumptuous is the attempt to set bounds to the operation of the Holy Spirit whose working while it is in accordance with the principles and purposes of His own infinite wisdom is altogether inscrutable by our understandings. "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof; but canst not tell, whence it cometh and whither it goeth. So is every one that is born of the Spirit." This is a subject which evidently lies beyond the reach of human reason, and it is therefore quite unphilosophical, and altogether absurd and foolish to pretend to predicate any thing whatever respecting it. If the Divine Spirit acts

upon and influences the mind, who shall set bounds to its influence in so acting?

If in the passage quoted, it is intended to be said, that the Spirit influences those, and those only, who possess the highest, and best endowments of natural sentiments and intellectual qualities, it is not true. Experience shows that many possessing the very best natural sentiments, continue through life utter strangers to christian principles. Some with high feelings of veneration, never once raise their minds to the adoration of their Maker and Saviour, never put up a single petition for the sanctifying aid of the Spirit: while many a poor, weak, erring, and offending mortal, conscious of manifold failings and sins, has, through divine influence, been brought to a true sense of his state, and has applied for and obtained a comforting assurance of mercy and pardon. There have been also, as has been well said, many cases of individuals of excellent development, possessing a large endowment of the higher sentiments and intellectual faculties, who, for want of having directed those faculties to their proper objects, have lived and died without a spark of devotional feeling, or without ever seeking, or being at all conscious of the want of any religious influences; and who even on their death-beds, showed an utter disbelief in, and dislike of all mention of christian doctrines. I could name individuals of this class, who adorned the walks of literature and philosophy, who, in point of mere cerebral organization, did not yield even to such men as Luther and Melancthon. There are many examples of others, who, up to a certain period, were perfectly careless on the subject of divine truth, but in whom some circumstance, apparently accidental, such as the death of a favorite companion, the listening to an impressive sermon, a conversation with a friend, or even the casual remark of a stranger, has awakened a train of totally different feelings, which have rendered them from that time forward, serious, pious, and prayerful christians, and induced upon them a change of character, well known and obvious to the whole world. There are other cases of individuals, far from possessing any refined sentiments or superior intellect, but who have early imbibed and firmly maintained through life a portion of true christian principles; and amidst many lapses into sin, and much weakness and imperfection, have kept fast the faith, and died in a state of genuine penitence and firm reliance on the merits of a Saviour. There are many other varieties; but this may be said of all, that whatever the character may be, however



high and noble, or the contrary, christianity will improve it, and that, without it, there is none which approaches, within a thousand degrees, even our poor and defective ideas of perfection. Christianity is the religion of sinners. Christ himself declared, "I come not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." The meaning is, I came not to call those who *think* themselves righteous, but those who are sensible of their manifold sins and imperfections, and willing to apply to a higher power than their own for light and assistance to guide them.

But if on the other hand, it is Mr. Combe's meaning in the above passage, that the Spirit, in its operation on the mind, only influences and directs, but does not alter its natural constitution, or if it at all alters that constitution, does so gradually, and in the same manner as any other moral agent,—that in short, it does not destroy the personal identity of the individual, but leaves the distinguishing traits of character nearly as it found them,—then I would admit that the representation is a true one. The apostles of our Lord were originally men of very different characters,—St. Peter, ardent, hasty, and sanguine, with rather a want of firmness—St. Thomas, slow and cautious—St. John, benevolent, affectionate, and modest—St. Paul, vehement, and fiery, and zealous for what he conceived to be the truth, even to slaying. After they were called, and after they had received the Holy Ghost, in a measure, and to an extent, of which in the present days of languid faith, we have no experience and hardly any conception,—they still continued to display the same distinctions of natural character as they did in their unregenerated and unconverted state. We find, in the epistles of St. Peter, the same ardent and sanguine temperament as he had formerly evinced, but chastened by the remembrance of his former weakness, and relying not so much on himself, as on his Divine Master. We find in St. Paul, still as before, the same uncontrollable vehemence and fire, bringing all his natural talents, and all his acquired human learning, to bear upon the minds of his hearers, and evincing powers which induced the inhabitants of Lystra to think that the god of eloquence himself had descended among them; while in the writings of St. John, with no display of learning, and even a comparative rudeness of phraseology, we see indubitable marks of the same kind and benevolent disposition, the same warm and affectionate heart, which had procured for him the peculiar friendship and love of his Divine Master, and pointed him

out to be chosen to heal the sorrows, and comfort the declining years of the mother of our Lord. These characteristics are such as can never be mistaken. The individuals remain the same individuals still, though, doubtless, the characters of all of them were influenced, improved and altered, as far as moral and spiritual influences can alter, in a degree greater perhaps than has ever taken place with any other individual on earth.

In regard to the influence of the Spirit we would make this further remark, that is no objection whatever to its reality, that some persons are not conscious of its operation in their own particular case; neither is it an objection that some pious, but mistaken individuals have attributed to its operation certain feelings which are clearly the result of physical causes affecting their bodily organs. We are not to be moved by the incredulity of one class of persons, or the mistakes of another class, to reject what is unquestionably true, what is clearly and unequivocally declared to be true in the Scriptures, and what many thousands have attained the full assurance of being verified in their own personal experience. And as it regards the possibility of the thing, we have the express opinion of a late distinguished antagonist of revelation, that our inability to explain the manner in which it is affected is no just objection against it. Lord Bolingbroke observes, that "an extraordinary action of God upon the human mind is not more inconceivable than the ordinary action of mind on body, or body on mind, and that it is impertinent to deny the existence of any phenomenon merely because we cannot \*account for it.

"Ye too, ye winds! that now begin to blow,  
With boisterous sweep, I raise my voice to you.  
Where are your stores, ye powerful beings! say  
Where your aerial magazines reserv'd,  
To swell the brooding terrors of the storm?  
In what far-distant region of the sky;  
Hush'd in deep silence, sleep you when 'tis calm?"

In regard to the Spirit's influence, let it be further remarked, that it is not to be expected to manifest itself by any outward throes or convulsions of the body, or by any sensible internal motions of natural feeling. It is seen only in its effects upon the life and conversation. St. John informs us how we should know that we have received the gift: †"Hereby we do know that we know him, (Jesus Christ,) if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his com-

\*Thomson's Lessons, p. 357.

†1 John ii., 3-5.

mandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected; *herby know we that we are in him.*" If, then, we would know and be assured that we have in reality received the true influence of the Spirit, let us examine ourselves, whether we do, or anxiously endeavour to do, the will of God, and to keep His commandments. If our consciences answer us that we do, happy are we. There may be many lapses and shortcomings, but if we still hold fast the faith, and earnestly endeavour after new obedience, we shall not fail in the end to obtain our reward.

The doctrine of regeneration is not therefore unreasonable or opposed to the analogy of nature, but is on the contrary in all respects conformable to God's dealings in the kingdoms of nature and of providence. The objections therefore of infidels and others made against it are founded in ignorance and are contradictory to the evidence and experience of men in all other departments of God's overruling providence. And since therefore it is so plainly and unequivocally taught in the Bible, it is and must be essential to the salvation of every man. "Marvel not that I say unto you ye must be born again."

And would you, my christian reader, be enabled to determine whether you have really experienced the influences of this life-giving Spirit—you may do this in two ways. You may have experienced its power in such circumstances and with such accompanying emotions—it may have come upon you so like a rushing mighty wind—that you may have certain knowledge of the time, mode and manner of the Spirit's operation in convincing you of sin and then leading you to repentance and to peace and joy in believing. Or this may not have been your experience. The Spirit may have come to you as the still small voice and as the quiet, gentle zephyr, so that you were not made sensible of His illapse by any sudden, mighty or powerful working, but felt drawn to the Saviour and to His cause by the silken bands of love, and the silent influences of invisible grace. There was, it may be in your case, nothing of violence, or fearful convulsions. You were led by the cords of a man. Every motive and argument was entirely agreeable to your faculties and accordant to the established laws of your minds. By frequent meditation, prayer, reading and hearing of the word, you were led to apply and feel the truth, to feel convinced of its certainty, and of your guilt and misery, to see the necessity and the glory of the Saviour; to call upon Him, cast

your soul, on His mercy and take up your cross and follow Him, walking in all His statutes and ordinances blameless even unto the present hour, and delighting yourselves in His cause and service. Has it, dear reader, been so with you? Then you have been led by the Spirit of God in that way which pleased Him and suited you best. *He* brought these convictions into your hearts. He fastened them there. He perfected them in conversion, peace and joy. And He has enabled you to hold fast the profession of your faith steadfastly. Your heart, christian, is the Lord's garden and the question is—do the plants of righteousness grow and flourish there? Is the fragrance of holiness diffused over your whole heart and life and conduct? Does the wind of the Spirit fan the leaves of your piety, and thus nourish and sustain every christian grace? Do you abound in faith and love and charity and liberality? These are the fruits of the Spirit and these the best evidences that he has made your heart a fruitful garden. And let it therefore be your prayer and effort that as you have been planted in the house of the Lord you may also flourish in the courts of the Lord.

Finally, as without the continued operations of the winds the earth must become barren and unfruitful, the sea stagnant, and the air putrid, so is it with the heart. It is only by the continual agency and operation of the divine Spirit we can grow in grace and in the knowledge of God and in the assurance of faith and hope and joy, and it is only by the diligent, constant and prayerful use of the means of grace our sails can be trimmed and our vessels prepared and made ready, so that as the Spirit comes forth and breathes upon them, they may glide peacefully and successfully onward towards the haven of eternal repose. Be ye therefore steadfast and immovable and always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing in due time you shall reap if you faint not.

How sad and melancholy then, O, sinner, is your state? You have seen a piece of ground parched, dry, cracked, and barren because no rain had descended on it and no wind cooled it. Even such, O, sinner, is thy hard and impenitent heart! No dews of divine grace have been permitted to sink into it and no winds of the divine Spirit to work upon it and it is therefore nigh unto cursing. Our gospel is hid to you because you are lost to all sensibility of its need and of its glory. Awake then, thou sluggard, and call upon thy God. Give no slumber to your eyes until you have found acceptance with God and His

Spirit has come forth and breathed upon your soul dead in trespasses and sins and made it alive in Christ Jesus.

In conclusion, we speak of the flight of years. Yes, "years rush by us like the wind. We see not whence the eddy comes, nor whitherward it is tending; and we seem ourselves to witness their flight without a sense that we are changed; and yet time is beguiling man of his strength, as the winds rob the woods of their foliage. He is a wise man, who like the millwright employs every gust."

"Does not the wind whisper, father?"

"Yes, child; you may learn to converse with it, and it shall tell you of its errand to earth. Pause when the lonely airs are calling stilly music from leaf and bough, in summer eventide—watch, as the stars peep forth, and the wind shall whisper to your heart of heaven."

"Does not the wind howl?"

"Yes, boy; then it tells the grandeur and the might of Omnipotence. If you have learned to joy in its balmy breathing, you must also know the great strength and glory of the wind. Is it not wonderful, my son? Even as this infant rivulet beneath us (upon which that dancing sunbeam has just alighted, piercing the leafy forest shade above,) rolls on and on, miles, leagues, and far away, still swelling, rising, and deepening, until at last it plunges into the vast desert of water around the globe, so can this gentle west wind, now so soft, rouse into louder voice, start into rage and terror, and fright the land and lash the ocean with tornado's wild and shrieking anger!"

"It is wonderful, father!"

"And it is wise, my son, and we must believe so, though we may not understand why it is so. Yes, the wind now sporting with the leaves around may tear those rooted trees from the firm earth, drive them like feathers along the land, dash off the mountain cone and whirl it into the vale, prostrate cities, and turn the coast of seas! It is wonderful!"

"Wonderful, father!"

"Then, where does the wind come from, my son?"

"From heaven, father!"

#### WIND AND SPIRIT.

The bird that sits and sings upon the thorn,  
Knows not its Maker's wonders, known to man:  
Man moves 'mid hidden things, to angels known,  
Nor knows of aught, around, above, beneath,  
Whene'er he turns, beside the path of life,  
Enough on earth to know. O, send Thou forth

Thy light and truth from Thine unseen abodes,  
 That they may lead me to Thy Holy Hill.  
 Thou that hast made the heart and seeing eye,  
 Give me to know Thyself, of all things else  
 Let me be ignorant deem'd; for Thee to know  
 Is to know all that's good and fair below;—  
 Without Thee we are blind, but in Thee see  
 Thy multitude of mercy far and wide,  
 Thee good in all, and all things good in Thee,  
 Thee only none can seek and seek in vain:  
 Thus travelling thro' the world's lone desert way,  
 If, with the Ethiop stranger, o'er Thy word  
 I bend, Thy heav'n-sent guide is at my side.

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#### WIND AND SPIRIT.

If music of that calmer sphere,  
 Find in that heart a mansion clear,  
 It with each virtue fills the soul,  
 And moulds to an harmonious whole;  
 As runs the air the organ round,  
 And modulates the varied sound,  
 Each pipe and stop in breathing gold  
 Answers with voices manifold.  
 Nor marvel that where'er it range,  
 Heav'n's breath should work such wondrous change.  
 At spring goes forth a viewless power,  
 On leaf, on wing, on bird, on flower,  
 From buried winter's winding sheet,  
 Wakening a sound or colour sweet,  
 Sky-tinctured plants, and feather'd things,  
 Fluttering upon melodious wings.  
 'Tis so with meaner sights of earth;—  
 The light of our celestial birth,—  
 Shall it not turn each cross and care  
 Into some glorious form as fair,  
 Tho' eye and ear see nothing there?

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#### WIND.

Air is like Happiness and Poetry,  
 We see it in the glorious roof of day,  
 We feel it lift the down upon the cheek,  
 We hear it when it sways the heavy woods,  
 We close our hand on 't—and we have it not.

I'd be above all things the summer wind,  
 Blowing across a kingdom, rich with alms  
 From every flower and forest, ruffling oft  
 The sea to transient wrinkles in the sun,  
 Where every wrinkle disappears in light.

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#### SPIRIT AND WIND.

Thus doth Thy spirit walk with soundless tread  
 In the outgoings of the morn and eve,  
 Leading us on, unseen, unheard of man:  
 Constant—as dews whose footsteps fall from Heav'n  
 Noiseless, and not less balmy in their tread;  
 Gradual—as rays that build the golden grain;  
 Unseen—as gales that homeward bear the sail;  
 Dear—as awaken'd thoughts of absent home;  
 And soothing—as familiar strains from far,  
 Long-lov'd, but dull to unaccustom'd ear.







ARTICLES

ON

The American Tract Society

BY

THE REV. THOMAS SMYTH, D. D.

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## ARTICLES ON THE AMERICAN TRACT SOCIETY.

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### WHY I LOVE THE AMERICAN TRACT SOCIETY.

1. I love it, because it is American. It is not English, Irish, or Scotch. It is not European, Asiatic, or African. It is American. It was born, nurtured and matured in these United States, and it is the offspring of the nation. It is not Northern, nor Southern, nor Eastern, nor Western. It is *American*. It has no relation to section or party, either in Church or State, either political or ecclesiastical. It knows no *isms*, except American *isms*, and no narrower limits than those which are defined in the ninth article of its constitution, that is "all parts of the United States."

2. I love it because it is a Tract Society. The Bible is made up of tracts written at sundry times, in divers manners, and by many various authors, but all breathing the same spirit, all telling the same story, and all having for their common object to "promote the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, as the Redeemer of sinners, and the interests of vital godliness and sound morality."

The publication of tracts is therefore, the divine plan for best instructing and awakening sinners, and love I this Society, because it adopts God's plan of doing good. And as the object of this Society is precisely the same as that of the Bible, I love it both for its object, and for its instrumentality as being both divine.

3. I love it because it is a Society—an association. Association is a divine principle, unknown to antiquity, originated and first exemplified by christianity. It is indeed the basis of the family, of the Church, of tribes, and of kingdoms. But as a bond of voluntary union on the ground of some common principles; selected from many others; because they are mutually believed that they may be mutually acted upon, for mutual benefit and for the good of others—*so far forth as these principles extend and no further*; in this aspect of it, association is exclusively christian, and only found co-extensive and cotemporaneous with christian civilization.

I love the American Tract Society, therefore for its principle as well as for its nationality, its patriotism, its divine instrumentality, and its God-like object.

4. I love it, however, for another reason, and that is because it is an *Evangelical* Society. The Gospel is its theme. Good news is its message. "Glad tidings" is the purport of all its communications. "Peace on earth and good will" is what it brings to men. "Glory in the highest" degree, in the highest attributes of His nature, in the most glorious perfections of His wisdom, power and providence, glory in the highest heavens, from the highest hierarchies in heavenly places as they behold His manifold wisdom in the Church of the Redeemer, this is what it brings to God. Free grace, free promises, free pardon, free propitiation, and free acceptance; a full, final and everlasting salvation; and all without money, and without merit though not without means—this is the blessed burden, which, as a colporteur for Christ, this Society bears, and such the priceless boon which it offers to every poor and perishing sinner.

This unspeakable gift it carries to every home and hamlet; to every mountain and valley; to every populous city and to every desolate wild; and in every season of the year, whether it be the heats of summer or the frosts of winter; in the morning sowing its seed, and in the evening not withholding its hand; never weary however wasted and worn; and though faint and sore, still pursuing knowing that in due time it will reap;—and therefore I love it.

And this balm for sin-sick souls, this one thing needful, it offers to every individual; putting it into the hands of the way-side traveller, and the voyager upon the waters; handing it to every fellow passenger on stage or rail; proffering it to the busy house wife and to the bed-ridden paralytic; to the youthful maiden, to the young man, and to the romping girl, to the impetuous boy, and even to the infant prattler that learns its A. B. C., at the knees of some grand-mother Lois;—and because it is thus good to all alike—to bond and free—to black and white—to slave and master—and is thus so like Christ "in whom there is no difference," and so like God who "has no respect of persons"—therefore I love the American Tract Society.

5. Once more. I love the American Tract Society, because it is christian and not Sectarian. It is neither Baptist, nor Methodist, nor Presbyterian, nor Episcopalian. It speaks in the name of none of these Denominations of christians, but in the name of all. It presents the peculiarity of none, but the faith and hope of all. It represents union not division, unity and not diversity, the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

To every man therefore, it is welcome, and to every man it bids welcome, and hence it finds every heart and home opened, and no door barred against it on account of Sectarian exclusiveness.

In this respect also, this Society is eminently christian as well as Evangelical. It is so in its power of association as well as in its object, and in its doctrines. Its affinities are all Evangelical and towards all that is Evangelical. It is Evangelically attractive and cohesive—drawing together and binding together, “all Evangelical christians in all parts of the United States.” Its principle and object draw *all* that love them—“all that have like precious faith”—into association. It draws them from beyond the pale of Church association to a wider association, according to the apostolic and heaven inspired command, “nevertheless whereunto we have already attained let us walk by the same rule,” “that is by that truth which we have all been led to believe—and let us mind the same thing”—that is, devote our united energies in love and charity, and burning zeal to the furtherance of the same glorious object.

The Tract Society is thus a sign and seal of christian union among all the different households of faith, and of unity amid all the diversity of their rites and forms. It is a pledge and an earnest of the communion of Saints. It is the rallying point to which soldiers of the Cross rush from every Sacramental host, that around their common banner and under its holy sign, they may repel the onset of their common enemies, and present a united front to their assaults. And thus we see in this Society, the present exemplification of the present oneness of all Evangelical christians, and the promise of the coming oneness of all Evangelical Denominations. Holding no communion with the world on the one hand, nor with the deniers of Evangelical truth on the other, it extends the hand of fellowship and the cup of blessing to “all who hold the Head,” and “love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity.”

6. But I love the American Tract Society further, because it is Evangelistic as well as Evangelical. It is not merely the ground, but also the pillar of Evangelical truth. It proclaims as well as preserves. It not only holds and “holds fast”—it “holds forth” “the form of sound words.” It not merely prints—it publishes the glad tidings. Its sound hath gone forth, not uncertainly but with the clear and solemn tones of the Sabbath bell, into all the regions of our broad land. Among the many-voiced populations of our world-collected nation,

there is not a speech in which its voice is not heard. Like the rays of the sun, like the drops of dew, like the rain and the clouds of heaven, it visits every territory in every zone and latitude; despising none for their poverty; dreading none for their pestilence; fearing none for their enmity; courting none for their wealth; and passing not by the waste and desert wilderness. It is the pioneer of all christian efforts, the axemen of the christian army. With knapsack on its back, and leathern apron on its front, and the well sharpened divine axe, in its hand with none or scanty fare, and exposed to all weather and to all dangers, it forces its way beyond the track of any former laborers, and laying its axe to the very root of the loftiest trees, cuts them down or prunes them until they bring forth fruit meet for repentance, and thus does it prepare the way of the Lord!!

In the very spirit of zeal, girded with enterprise, and animated with impetuous ardour, it enlists the strength of youth, the perseverance of manhood, and the wisdom of age, and presses forward its multiplying co-laborers, forgetful of all that is behind, and looking earnestly to the wide wasting harvest of dying sinners and perishing souls. Leaving the ninety and nine who are within christian folds, or within watch of christian shepherds, it goes forth into the wilderness after every "one that has gone astray."

7. But once more. I love the Tract Society for what it has done, and is still able to accomplish. The seed, small as a grain of mustard seed, has become one of the greatest of trees. Its roots have struck deep into the earth. Its stem has towered aloft into the heavens. Its branches have extended on all sides, from sea, to sea, and from the frozen pole to the torrid zone. Its blossoms have filled the air with fragrance, and its fruit has been for the healing of the nation. The birds have built their nests in its branches, and men have sat under its shadow with great delight. Like the Banyan tree, it has sent down branches in every state and territory, which have rooted themselves in the soil, and are bursting with life, budding, blossoming, and fruit-bearing.

Such it has been in time past, such it is at this moment, spreading itself like a tree of heaven planted by the waters of the river of life, whose fruit fadeth never.

And such it is capable of being to the generations, who in teeming millions, shall yet, *if it is Evangelized*, people this glorious empire.

Of the fruit of this tree, we have ourselves often partaken, and we found it as pleasant to the taste, as it was beautiful to the eye, and as nourishing as it was delightful, fruitful unto holiness and strength and health of soul. Yea, so quickening is this fruit that we believe no man ever carefully read one of its many tracts or volumes, without feeling that there was enough in it to guide the way-faring man, though a fool, in the way of eternal life.

Who can estimate the value of such a tree; already planted and in full maturity; growing in our very midst, flourishing on every way-side; common to all; imparting its shade to all; and dropping its life-giving and life-sustaining fruit into the hands of every passer-by! Let us cherish it! May the Sun of Righteousness shine benignantly upon it, and may the dews of heaven ever fall upon it in refreshing, quickening power!

8. And this leads me finally to say, that I love the American Tract Society, because it has thus long remained faithful to its trust. Storms have beaten upon it and raged around it. Blighting mildews have fallen upon it and withered many a now decaying or fallen branch, and adversaries have gathered and with deadly hatred, have cried "cut it down, cut it down," rase it to the very ground, let the axe destroy and then the fire consume whatever may be left. But all such efforts and influences have hitherto failed. The Constitution remains as it was thirty-three years ago. The compact is unbroken. The seal ratified in heaven, bears the original impress.

Drs. Alexander, and Rice, and Hoge, and Waddell, and Larned, and a thousand other holy men of the South—*clari et venerabiles nomines!*—have ceased to be its living friends, though among its original founders and life-long supporters. Drs. Milnor and Miller, and Mason, and Rodgers, and Romeyn, and Edwards, and Hallock, and a thousand more equally holy and renowned men from the North, who loved and labored and died with their brethren from the South, as fellow-members of this Society, have also passed away. But these fathers have left their spirit and their mantles behind them. Of the original founders, there still remain the venerable President and Secretaries and other officers of the Society, all imbued with the spirit, and faithful to the very letter of the original bond; and around that constitution, strengthened in the impracticability of assailing it at the last anniversary, there are thousands of devoted men both at the North and East and West, ready to unite with those in the South, in preserving that constitution

intact, and in carrying on the blessed work of reclaiming, restoring and saving lost and perishing sinners on the basis of Evangelical principles, and of love and concord, binding together all Evangelical christians in all parts of the United States.

Loving therefore as I do the American Tract Society, for each and all of these reasons, I will in another article, inquire what it has done to offend, or alienate any.      EVANGELICUS.

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## II. IS THERE ANY REASON WHY I SHOULD NOT STILL LOVE THE AMERICAN TRACT SOCIETY?

I have said that I love the American Tract Society because it is American, and because it unites all Evangelical christians in efforts to save sinners by the use of the same means which God has employed, and by the same blessed truths, promises and warnings which God has made powerful to the salvation of all who believe.

Is there, then, any reason why I should not still love it? Has the Society done anything that renders it either improper or impossible for me, as a christian, living in these Southern States, still to love it?

I think not; and the time, I think, has come when all may be led to feel that they can, and ought still to love the American Tract Society, and unite with Evangelical christians in all parts of the United States, in seeking the salvation of souls and the best interests of our country, by the agency of colporteurs and tracts and books, directed and controlled by our own appointed agents.

And, first, I remark that the Society is chartered, and its Constitution, therefore, could not be altered except by a new charter,—a change which would be opposed by all its members at the South, by the *great mass* of its members everywhere, and by *every one of its executive officers* without a *solitary exception*. And since all the Society's funds have been given to it on its truly catholic basis, the civil law would assuredly prevent it from perverting them by a violent revolution.

2. The Society has never yet attempted to alter the Constitution as at first formed by a convention of Southern and other christian brethren, *in any iota*, affecting either its PRINCIPLES OR ITS OBJECT, OR ITS POWER.

3. At the last Anniversary meeting of the Society, in New York, an alteration was made in the last article of the Constitu-



tion, by which the practicability of any future alteration of the Constitution, in any of the slightest particulars, is made very difficult.

That article, up till May, 1857, was—

“ARTICLE XI. This Constitution shall not be altered, except at an annual meeting, and by a vote of two-thirds of the members present.”

That article—the matter not affecting any fundamental object or principle—was *unanimously* altered so as to read—

“ARTICLE XI. This Constitution shall not be altered, except at an annual meeting, and by a vote of two-thirds of the members present; notice of the proposed alteration having been given at the previous annual meeting.”

4. Nor was this the only point in which the members of this Society present at the last Anniversary, including two general agents and probably others from the South, manifested their conservative spirit and their love to the Constitution and approval of the course pursued under it by its various officers in years past.

At that meeting, the Rev. Nehemiah Adams, D. D., of Boston, author of “The South-Side View of Slavery,” was re-elected on the Publishing Committee, by a very large majority.

The other officers, including the Secretaries, the Publishing, Executive and Finance Committees, were also re-elected.

The Reverend John M. Stevenson, D. D., from the Old School Presbyterian Church, whose conservative character is well known, was elected as a Corresponding Secretary, in the place of Mr. Cook, who on account of health had resigned. In his letter accepting the appointment, published in the *Messenger* for August, Dr. S. gives assurance that while he was chosen and elected by the Society at the North, he holds views and principles touching the constitutional sphere and limitations of the Tract Society which commend him equally to the kind welcome and confidence of Evangelical christians at the South.

“My heart, says Dr. S., has ever rejoiced in this beautiful exemplification of the oneness of Christ’s body, the Church. And while I do not and cannot relinquish my relations to a branch of Christ’s Church whose doctrine and order I esteem conformable to the divine model, yet I see a wide field for evangelical effort still unoccupied by distinctive church organizations, to the occupancy and cultivation of which your Society seems to me admirably adapted; especially if it shall continue

to be governed by wise counsels, and guided, in its issues, so as not to exclude its numerous colporteurs from the wide wastes of our extended country. Far distant be the day when the American Tract Society shall, from a man-fearing spirit, either shrink from publishing the truth that is in Jesus, or violate its admirable constitution by plunging into the vortex of excited parties, and becoming implicated in questions upon which many of the most devoted christians in the land yet differ widely—almost irreconcilably.”

Nor was even this all that was done at the last Anniversary to demonstrate the prevalent spirit of love for the Constitution, and the catholic spirit and unsectarian, unsectional objects of the Society. The Rev. Dr. Knox, Chairman of the Executive Committee and one of the original founders of the Society, and now upon its roll of departed worthies, read from a statement made in the name of the near twenty officers composing the Executive Committee:

“They are compelled ever to remember that the object of the association is *specific*, and its sphere *restricted*. This sphere is nevertheless ample, eminently important and is practicable. Our prescribed constitutional office is, to issue and circulate *religious truth in which evangelical christians are agreed*; embracing, therefore, whatever is most fundamental to salvation, and most vital in the common christianity, but excluding every topic of a purely denominational character, and besides *whatever else is matter of strife and distraction among evangelical christians.*”

“Its single object is to accomplish a work not otherwise to be so well done, if done at all, and which requires inward harmony and the confidence and co-operation of christians around of every section and every name. If either this *harmony* or this *confidence* fails, it is shorn of its strength.”

Nor were these sentiments only *received*, they were confirmed by the unanimous adoption of a resolution—“That thanks be rendered to God for the harmony which, for thirty-two years, has prevailed in the councils of the Committee,” &c.

Now, when it is remembered that all this was done on the eve of the recent and most excited political election through which as a country we have ever passed; when an anti-slavery candidate was prominent, and when anti-slavery excitement had inflamed every association of men of whatever kind, the emphasis and importance of these facts, as proofs of the conservative spirit of the friends of the Tract Society at the North,

and their devotion to its constitutional principles and limited object, must be apparent.

The sentiments quoted above are repeatedly, and, if possible, more emphatically stated in many official documents of the officers of the Society—as for instance, in the “Circular” and “Card,” re-published in the Report for 1856. Thus to give one quotation from the Circular:

“These principles have been understood and acted on as fundamental in the Society’s Constitution by all the committees and executive officers, and all agents and colporteurs employed, from the foundation of the Society to the present hour. What is ‘calculated to receive the approbation of *all evangelical christians,*’ has been practically held to be as fundamental in this Society’s charter, as in that of the Bible Society to issue the Bible ‘without note or comment;’ or that of an Orphan Asylum to devote funds to the good of the orphan, or the obligation of any other corporate body to adhere to the principles of its charter.”

And after enumerating many of the distinguished men who have labored with the Society, it is added: “From the lips of these deceased devoted founders and toil-worn laborers, connected as they were with five great evangelical communions, no intimation that the Society could rightfully, by any act whatever, give offence to evangelical christians of any name or locality, is known ever to have fallen, nor any such intimation from the lips of any member of the Committees; and no act of either Committee has ever been carried into effect, that was not *unanimous.*”

The reiteration of these views led to the anti-slavery political excitement against the Tract Society, charging it with having become unconstitutionally a pro-slavery Society. This charge was sustained by the alleged “sympathies of the officers—by the fact that they had actually omitted from some works, offensive passages against slavery—that they had dropped works in which it was alluded to altogether, and that they had never published anything against it.”

And what was the reply made by the twenty officers constituting the Executive Committee? They reply, in a paper published in the same Report, by asking—“*How far, then, can the Society go, in showing the evils of slavery?*”

“We answer, its Constitution allows it to go so far as evangelical christians in the Northern *and in the Southern States* can approve the publications it may issue, and no farther. The

question is not now, at the end of thirty years, how the Society ought to have been, or might have been formed, but how *it was formed*. In May, 1825, christians from the Northern and the Southern States united publicly and solemnly before God in adopting this Society's Constitution as the basis of a national catholic Society, to receive the prayers, co-operation, donations, and legacies of the whole country, for issuing such publications, *and such only*, whether of 'vital godliness,' or 'sound morality,' as should be approved by all evangelical christians, 'North, South, East, and West. No sophistry, evasion, or collusion, can change this historical fact. They acted from a belief that evangelical christians do agree in the great essential truths by which men are blessed and saved, and unanimously bound themselves to each other, to the christian community, and to God, to employ the Society's means only in publishing those truths; believing that if one class of evangelical christians be trespassed against, so might another, and the bond of union be dissolved. This compact has been so understood by all our beloved associates, the dead and the living. Never have we heard from one of them an intimation that it could have any other import. Every act of the Society to this day has been based on this understanding. In our labors to fulfil this sacred compact, we feel we can bear to be misrepresented or censured; that if smitten on the one cheek, we can, by the grace of God, 'turn the other also,' 'until seventy times seven;' but we cannot violate this solemn trust; the laws of God and the laws of the land forbid it. Nor can we virtually say of our brethren of different evangelical denominations south of Mason and Dixon's line, that they are *not* evangelical christians in the sense of the Society's Constitution; for *we know that, in the letter and spirit and intent of that document, they were and are included as fully as christians north of that line*. God has led the Society into a great work for the destitute, bond and free, in our Southern and South-western States, and we hear no call from Him to relinquish it."

This surely is enough, and more than enough, to satisfy every Southern Evangelical christian. The men who said this meant all they said. They are now **DOING** and **NOT DOING** all they said; all the Constitution required; all we have ever wished. They are now enduring all of prejudice and misrepresentation, the enemies of the Society can inflict upon them. But they are also sustained both in what they have done and in what they have not done, by nine-tenths of all Evangelical christians, and

among them by some of the ablest judges of our country, both at the North, the East, and the West.

Of course, it is to be expected that while thus speaking and acting as it regards Evangelical christians and slavery at the South, these officers were required to justify themselves to Evangelical christians and to anti-slavery at the North, East and West. This they were bound to do, and this they were therefore right in doing. *As officers of the American Tract Society* they ought to have no sympathy for either slavery or anti-slavery. As such they represent and act for ALL EVANGELICAL christians and are in good faith required to represent and act for them all—North and South, slavery and anti-slavery—in carrying on the one and only object for which such christians are united in “The American Tract Society.” This they have done, and this is all that they have done. And whatever they have said which is, or has been considered, offensive by some at the South and by others at the North, has been said in the wish to assure all Evangelical christians that, *as officers of the Society*, they had no other object or principle before them than those laid down in the Constitution as the one and only object and principle of the American Tract Society.

Let the Reports and Statements of the officers be looked at through this, which is the only true and charitable medium, and I feel perfectly confident that christians at the South and at the North will find that they have endeavored to the very utmost of human wisdom and caution to act and speak impartially, and that where they have failed to make this impression, it has been through an error of judgment and not through an intentional identification of themselves with any party or opinion whatever.

These remarks will not apply, except in part, to the Report and Resolutions presented by the Committee of fifteen at the last Anniversary, and so unaccountably adopted by it. So far as that Report alluded to slavery it is unjustifiable, and was certainly extra-constitutional, and therefore *null and void*, since the Tract Society is a body corporate to do a specified work, by prescribed and carefully limited means, and to DO NOTHING ELSE.

Neither do I believe that Committee of Fifteen had any intention to contravene the constitutional object of the Society or to injure the rights and feelings of their Southern brethren, as these are secured by the constitution. Far from it. That Committee was composed of high-minded christian men—all of

them men of eminence, and for some of whom all have cherished most profound respect. All that I have said proves that they did not. In their Report itself much of which is valuable, they show that they did not. For they throw upon the executive officers the solemn responsibility of acting upon their suggestions 'only so far as the widest and best usefulness of the society could be promoted throughout our WHOLE country.'" Several other remarks limit and qualify, and neutralize what they did say so as to make it impossible to do what, by a well-meant desire to harmonize all parties and preserve the greatest efficiency to the society, they did seem to recommend. And that such was the spirit of the Report is further evident from the fact that it was so interpreted by Southern gentlemen on the platform when it was read, and by many readers at the South afterwards, until a portion of the Report was falsely printed as the whole and heralded as an Abolition triumph.

While then part of this Report is objectionable this does not alter my views of the society itself or of the officers, or of our duty to hold on to both; and while heartily sustaining those noble and devoted men, at the same time to avail ourselves of this powerful instrumentality for diffusing among our millions of unevangelized population the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, as the only means under heaven for securing to them, and to our communities, and to our country, vital godliness, sound morality, and pure and abiding liberty.

And, hoping that all will be led with me still to love and labor for the American Tract Society, and with the noble and devoted and FAITHFUL officers of the American Tract Society, I will reserve some further observations to another and final article.

EVANGELICUS.

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### III. WHY I STILL LOVE THE AMERICAN TRACT SOCIETY.

"Ever since I have had a heart to understand and love the truths which your Society is bearing on its myriad wings alike to rich and poor, to the high and the low, to the bond and the free, I have admired the greatness of its object and the simplicity of its means, the richness of its treasure, and the freeness with which it is given. And every year's observation and experience serve to heighten and deepen my admiration. I love the great principles by which its elements are united; I love the noble spirit with which they are animated; and I love the blessed work which each separately and all unitedly are laboring to promote. May God preserve the Society, and make it useful so long as there are sinners to be won to Christ, or saints to be fitted for heaven."—*The Rev. John C. Lord, Baptist Missionary to Ningpo.*

I still love the American Tract Society, because I find that all evangelical christians at the South, and the great majority of

them elsewhere, unite in loving it for all the reasons I have before given. There is but one opinion among them all, as to the christian character and invaluable importance of the Society.

The Reverend and truly venerable Dr. De Witt, one of the Vice-Presidents at the last anniversary—the only occasion when any thing was done to grieve its friends at the South—“spoke of his early connection with the Society, and of the interest and even solicitude with which he had ever since watched its progress. He had great love for such an institution, uniting as it does members of all christian denominations on a common platform, for the diffusion of evangelical truth among men. God’s blessing, he said, had rested upon the Society; and although some of its friends may have felt and feared for it; although clouds and storms may have arisen, yet he could now see the bow of promise—the emblem and pledge of peace and security. He thought that the scrutiny which had been made into the business affairs of the Society would serve only to commend it to the increased confidence of the christian community. He well remembered that, as he and the lamented Summerfield, both of whom were permitted to take part in the hallowed exercises at the formation of this Society, sat beside each other, Mr. Summerfield said to him that he believed God would bless this institution as a powerful means of cementing the hearts of his people of every name and in all parts of our beloved country.” Another eminent clergyman, the venerable and beloved, and now sainted, Dr. Knox, Chairman of the Executive Committee, in the statement read at the last anniversary, and already quoted from, said, “God has singularly owned and blessed its efforts. In the great southern section of our country especially, the labours bestowed have never been greater, nor the evidence of spiritual results more cheering, than during the last year.”

“This institution, (said another venerable and life-long friend of the Society, Dr. Milnor,) commends itself to all of us, fellow-citizens, in our civil no less than in our religious relations in the community in which we live.”

“It is a noble enterprise, deserving the hearty encouragement and support of all who seek to promote the cause of Christ’s religion among the destitute of our country,” says the Hon. Simon Greenleaf, a Protestant Episcopalian.

“I doubt whether in the world, at this time, there exists an organization, the christian ministry excepted, which is more

effective in diffusing a knowledge of the truths of the gospel among all classes of people," said the Rev. A. Alexander, D. D., another venerated founder.

In these sentiments evangelical ministers in South-Carolina concur. In the Report and Resolutions of the South-Carolina Branch, in reference to the action of the last annual meeting, adopted though they were under much public excitement, all cordially united in the affectionate language in which the American Tract Society is spoken of: "Their publications have hitherto received the cordial sanction and approval of evangelical christians in all parts of the country. United together in bonds of mutual love, christians of various names have devoted their means, and contributed their efforts to promote this great and philanthropic work, and the blessing of God has always rewarded, in a very remarkable degree, their self-denying and charitable labors."

And, again, that Report says: "They feel the profoundest unwillingness to destroy, or even hazard the existence of an organization, which has accomplished so much for the souls of men, and the spread of christian truth. That Satan and his emissaries should achieve a triumph like this, is hateful to their minds, and they earnestly desire to be, in no degree whatever, responsible for such a result. It is their hope and prayer, that the Society which numbers in its ranks so many of the truest servants of God, when made aware of Southern sentiment upon this matter, will in the same spirit of christian forbearance and candour, withdraw from its recent position, and return in good faith to that platform of the Constitution, from whence the affairs of the Society have been so peacefully, happily, and successfully administered for the last thirty years."

I cannot, therefore, help loving the American Tract Society, because in loving it I love all evangelical christians, and all evangelical efforts to do good, and to win souls to Christ. I can, therefore truly say with the Rev. Dr. Peck, of the Methodist Episcopal Church, "I love the Tract enterprise, because it is a cause in which all evangelical christians can unite."

I can also say with Dr. Schmucker, of the Lutheran Church, that "No benevolent institution can be nearer my heart;" and with the Rev. Baron Stow, of the Baptist Church, I can eloquently, and yet truly say, "Over all lands this Society has poured, by the press, millions of streams of light and love. I know of no institution doing so much to fill the vials of incense in the hands of the angel standing by the altar."



2. But, secondly, I still love the American Tract Society, because its Constitution, which "embodies the object and principles which all evangelical christians (to use the language of the Hon. William Jay, an Episcopalian) peculiarly love"—can never, as I have shewn, be changed, so long as evangelical christians at the South, hold on to the Society. Such a change cannot possibly be adopted, except by two-thirds of all the life-members present at an annual meeting, and after having been proposed at a previous annual meeting. And even were such an alteration of the Constitution proposed by two-thirds of one annual meeting and adopted at another, the Society would be interdicted from violating its catholic principles, and its national and unsectional character, by a legal appeal, which, when necessary, would be sustained by a large majority of evangelical christians at the North, East and West.

And, it is still further to be considered, that as the Society has no invested capital, beyond its character and the confidence and yearly support of those who love it *as it is*, were it—let us imagine—even altered, it would be found like the destroyed city of Moscow, the grave, instead of the asylum of its victors.

3. I will, therefore, still love the American Tract Society, because by still loving and laboring with it, I will defeat the very end which abolitionists have for many years, and by every kind of strategy, been endeavouring to secure, and that is to induce evangelical christians in the slave-holding States to withdraw from this Evangelical Union of the United States of America, and thus leave it more dangerously exposed to their fierce opposition. This has been unquestionably the policy of the abolitionists.\* They have, for years, employed every possible effort to compel the officers of the American Tract Society to issue tracts on the subject of Slavery, *under the threat* that if they did not they should be displaced by others willing at the sacrifice of moral obligation and religious duty, to violate its Constitution, pervert its funds, and convert this holy instrumentality for diffusing vital godliness and sound morality into an abolition society. That this has been, and is their object is evident from the open avowal, made on their behalf by Dr. Wayland (whose past writings, however, would excul-

\*By Abolitionists I do not mean those who in any proper Constitutional and Christian way would be glad to see Slavery either abolished or limited to its present boundaries, but those who are politically disunionists, and morally and, christianly, a law unto themselves higher than the law of the land, than the common laws of sound morality, and than the almost universal interpretation of the laws of God.

pate him from any sympathy with such views.) For in his reply to the objection "that the usefulness of the Society will be impaired in the South," Dr. Wayland very calmly says, "the South if it please will form a society of its own for the teachings of which we are not responsible." Thus they coolly calculate on the withdrawal of the South. Their sentiments and intolerant spirit would drive off Southern christians, and they anticipate that then the control of the Society and the management of its funds would fall into their hands."

Now this is a very important fact, and as it gives a coloring to the whole action of the officers and their published statements, and also to the Report of the Committee of Fifteen,—and as it ought to be our stand-point in judging them, and deciding our own course,—I will quote what is said upon it, in the Report of the South-Carolina Branch, adopted in June last: "For some time past, Southern christians have been aware of the fact, that the same restless faction, whose untiring agitations against Slavery have introduced confusion and division into every body which has allowed their influence, were also at work in the American Tract Society, striving to intimidate its officers, and pervert the principles upon which the Society's operations were based, with the hope of converting it into an engine for the promotion of their fanatical and mischievous designs."

This then makes it plain, that as the officers and friends of the Society at the North and elsewhere have been for years endeavouring to prevent the abolitionizing and perversion of the Tract Society, and have prevented it; and as the continued co-operation and hearty zeal of Southern christians can make such a perversion impossible, I will still love it, and invite all around me to do so.

4. And ought I not still to love the Tract Society, when I find its officers and its friends at the North—including some of the first Judges and leading Journals, are prepared to stand with us in vindicating the true character of the Society, the limited object of its Constitution, and the equal privileges and rights of Southern Evangelical christians;\* and when I hear them calling upon us not to be driven away from them, but to come up to their help, and to the help of the Lord, and of our whole country, by a liberal and laborious employment of its tracts

\*That Southern christians have any rights in, and under the Constitution of, the Society, Dr. Ray Palmer seems to have never conceived. To him it is a New England Society, and of "bad and unchristian and purely selfish men" at the South, he says "it is our high duty to disturb them."

and volumes, diffused by our own Colporteurs, under our own supervision, for the benefit of our own people, and to the extent of the utmost outlay of all the money we can raise, and even beyond it if needful?

In a Circular, published in June, and addressed as to "dear brethren in Christ," to "Evangelical christians, and especially to the Society's Colporteurs, Superintendents, and General Agents, and to the Editors of the religious press throughout our Southern and South-western States:" it is said

"The almost unanimous voice, not only of the Special Committee, but of the Society and of its friends and patrons in all parts of the country is decided, that the Society must carry out in good faith the sacred compact in its Constitution, and must convey the messages of salvation through a crucified Redeemer to every accessible immortal being, in all circumstances and conditions, throughout all our boundaries, in fulfillment of the great command to 'preach the gospel to every creature.'

"We most respectfully and in christian confidence ask our esteemed fathers and brethren in the ministry, and those who control the religious press, if they will not in kindness and courtesy, and from love to Christ, and to millions of destitute, perishing souls, refrain from prejudging the future action of their brethren of the Committee in whom they have hitherto gratefully confided.

"And in the name of our blessed Master we would call upon ourselves and all our brethren, general agents, superintendents and colporteurs, providentially engaged in this service, to go on in our work of faith and labor of love, undiverted by whatever may occur around us; to confide in God and his people; to do all we can to spread the gospel of our Redeemer; to trust in Him to order all events; to supplicate Him to remove prejudice and open the way before us, to give us love to souls, a spirit of peace and good will towards all men, and to make our poor endeavours effectual in winning souls to Him. And may we not confide in the great body of evangelical christians still cordially to co-operate in this blessed work?"

5. But it will be said, does not the report of the Committee of Fifteen, adopted at the last anniversary, including as it does extra-constitutional and most objectionable resolutions in reference to publishing on moral duties and evils connected with Slavery, render it impossible for Southern christians thus to co-operate with the Society? Now, in reply, let the following considerations be candidly dwelt upon, and taken as a whole:

(1.) That Committee was the result, and appointed in the midst, of the political anti-slavery excitement, to which we have alluded, and had special reference to alleged pro-slavery proceedings in the past course of the Publishing Committee and other officers, and to alleged improprieties in their whole management of the Society.

(2.) The object, however, for which that Committee was in fact raised, was to inquire into and review the proceedings of the Society's Executive Committee, that is of some twenty officers composing all its Committees. No power was granted, and no report or resolutions authorized, on the subject of Slavery, or on the right or power of the Society to publish on that subject. Indeed, there is reason to believe, that a Committee for such a purpose, never could have been appointed. The appointment of any Committee of investigation was, we think, strenuously opposed, and the whole subject laid upon the table, by a vote declared by the President. The Executive Committee, however, having voted that "should it be the pleasure of the Society" to appoint such a Committee, they would "welcome and facilitate all their inquiries," the matter was compromised, and the special Committee of Fifteen "appointed to *inquire into and review* the proceedings of the Executive Committee, and report."

(3.) The subject of publishing on Slavery appears to have been brought before that Committee by the paper of Dr. Wayland, and the consequent desire to say something which, while it would not offend their brethren at the South, would remove all objections founded upon the alleged pro-slavery character of some past proceedings.

(4.) What this Committee did report, was therefore merely an expression of their own judgment of what the Publishing Committee, in their wisdom, acting under the Constitution, and *with many guards and cautions suggested by the Committee itself*, should attempt to do. In going, even thus far, however, the Committee acted without any authority from the Society, in contrariety to another letter from the Rev. Dr. Anderson, a Baptist, and President of the University at Rochester; and against a paper addressed to them by a State Tract Society, bearing their distinct and earnest protest against the Society's violating the catholic pledges of the Constitution, by issuing Tracts which the South would not receive.

(5.) The Committee were led, therefore, to qualify and restrain what they did say by a very full and solemn enuncia-

tion of the constitutional object and principles of the Society, that is, to issue only what is "calculated to receive the approbation of all evangelical christians."

"We believe," say the Secretaries in the above card, "the tenor and aim of the Report of the Special Committee, taken as a whole, to be in full accordance with this view, and that it was so understood by the Society in adopting it. That report solemnly re-affirms, word for word, the fundamental and catholic article of the Society's Constitution; and as publications are issued only by the unanimous sanction of the Publishing Committee, consisting of six prominent clergymen from as many different evangelical communions, the Special Committee have, in the closing resolution, (which Dr. Ray Palmer himself offered,) enjoined on the Publishing Committee, 'that their action in carrying out the principles contained in the previous resolutions, will be such as will tend to promote *the widest and best usefulness of the Society throughout our whole country.*'"

(6.) This view was taken by some Southern gentlemen present at the anniversary, and by many afterwards at the South, who nevertheless altogether disapprove of the objectionable resolutions, and protest against them as extra-constitutional, null and void. And that this was the real meaning of the Committee at large is evident from their throwing the whole responsibility upon the Publishing Committee and requiring them to act under their resolutions, ONLY so far as would be found expedient within the limits they defined, and which really destroyed their apparent force; and because some at least of that Committee have approved of the course taken by the Publishing Committee in refusing to publish.\*

(7.) It is also important to bear in mind that the report and resolutions of the Committee were never submitted to, nor seen by, the officers until after its adoption; that as it related to them it was listened to in silence; and that if we deduct from the number of life-members who voted upon it, the fifteen of the Committee, and the twenty general officers, the number who adopted it would be reduced probably to less than one

\*The Hon. Mr. Frelinghuysen, when he was informed of the effects it had produced in embarrassing the operations of the Society over large portions of the country, he authorized a member of the Executive Committee to say from him, that if such was the effect, he, as an individual, thought the Publishing Committee were justified in pausing as they did.

hundred out of the twelve thousand life-members on the list of the Society.

(8.) The report of the Committee of Fifteen, embodying the report of a Special Committee appointed by it, and who gave laborious investigation into all the general, financial, and business operations of the Society, with every assistance from the officers that could be afforded them, and with results reported by them as highly satisfactory, and containing a great amount of information,—the whole report, we say, is extremely important, as it removes all possible ground for calumnious imputations, and confirms the public mind in its unbounded confidence in the wisdom as well as the integrity of the management of the Society.

(9.) It is our belief also, that this report will lead ultimately to great good to the Society. It is a climacteric. It is the development of long cherished purposes and plans of abolitionists. It is a demonstration of *their* feelings and of the feelings of evangelical christians throughout the whole country. It has led to the most thorough examination of the Constitution, the principles and the object of the Society. It has brought out the "opinions" of honored as well as honorable judges and journals in the extreme North, East and West, adverse to the interpretation given by the Committee and by Dr. Wayland. It has drawn forth on the same side, the able advocacy of our leading religious journals in the same regions of our country. And it has consolidated the views of all denominations, of all Tract Societies, of all Journals political and religious, and of every individual christian, ("the good friends and patrons of the Society," as Dr. Ray Palmer so kindly terms them,) in the South and South-west, in one earnest protest against such an alteration of the Constitution and perversion of the Society.

(10.) And finally this Report has led to action on the part of the entire body of officers, composing in their united counsels, the Executive Committee; to action which the Committee of fifteen seem to have anticipated and provided for, by throwing upon them the responsibility of maintaining the constitutional principles, object, and past course of the Society, so as to secure its widest usefulness in all parts of our whole country. The publication of a small collection of discourses on the duties of masters, (by Southern Divines, and which had been published in the South,) was withheld; other works, to which objections had been made, were taken from the catalogue; and

the impracticability under the constitution, of publishing any tracts or volumes on the subject of Slavery, clearly and repeatedly presented in Statements and Circulars, issued by officers of the Society. And all this has been the result of, and has been accomplished under the requirements and responsibilities which this Report itself created.

This Report, therefore, has developed and made evident, the general feeling of evangelical christians throughout our country, as being that of love for the Tract Society, as it was originally constituted, and as it has heretofore been carried on, that is, as a union of all evangelical christians who are willing to co-operate in diffusing the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ, as the Saviour of sinners, and of vital godliness and sound morality. And it has shown conclusively to their brethren every where, that evangelical christians at the South, are one with them in this affection for the Society, both as it regards its principles and its object; that they are satisfied with it as its constitution makes it, as they were united in its formation, and as they have remained in co-operation with it ever since; and that as they have never interfered with any of its principles, either by asking more or less, so now they only ask, and do confidently expect that the Society will be preserved from all attempts to add to, or subtract from, its constitutional object and principle.

6. I will, therefore, still love the American Tract Society, because the officers have reinstated the Society in our confidence, by carrying out the catholic principles and evangelical spirit, and Christ-loving, and soul-saving character of its past labours; by doing every thing that as a Southern christian I could desire them to do; and because in doing this, they were sustained by the authority of the Society, as expressed by the Committee of fifteen itself.

I will love it, because I feel every confidence that in view of the universal protest of the South, and the very general protest from the North and elsewhere, against the course recommended in that Report—"if found consistent with the widest influence of the Society in all parts of our country,"—that the Society at its next anniversary, will justify the officers for not carrying it out, commend their wisdom in thus preventing final disruption, and that they will thus perfectly restore confidence, and increase and perpetuate the widest usefulness of the Society in all parts of the United States.

I will still love the Society, because it has generously endeavored to extend its manifold blessings to the Southern States, not only so far as the South enabled them to do so, but by employing suitable laborers wherever they could be found, and expending whatever amount could be advantageously used. And while in 1856 the number of Colporteurs in the Southern and South-western States was 221, besides students, and while in the agency covering South-Carolina and Georgia during the past four years, up to June, 1857, the outlay was \$11,279.61 beyond the income, and since then in a much greater ratio, yet the Society has desired to increase and to extend its labors.

And I will love the Society still, because were it broken up, or the South broken off from it, we could not hope to form a Southern Evangelical Tract Society, but would have denominational and rival Societies. This result has been considered unavoidable by many in different denominations, and has already been developed in Virginia, where one denomination now employs more Colporteurs in the circulation of its publications, than the American Tract Society had in the field last year.

"I will therefore love the Tract enterprise, because (to use the words of Rev. Dr. Peck of the Methodist Episcopal Church,) it is a cause in which evangelical christians can unite. I hail as an omen of good the establishment of any institution which will bring together christians of different denominations. Bring them into contact; let them become acquainted with each other; let them mingle their prayers and sympathies; and their prejudices will give way, and they will find that they have the same religion."

7. And now in conclusion, I would say to my readers, that since to use once more the closing language of the Report and Resolutions of the South-Carolina Branch, "all the Colporteurs now in the field in South-Carolina and the adjacent States, are under the superintendence of the highly esteemed officers connected with the South-Carolina Branch of the American Tract Society; as these Colporteurs are themselves Southern men; as no works or tracts are circulated, which do not pass through our Depository, and as it is evident from the foregoing Report, that no interference with the subject of Slavery will be permitted through any agency of the American Tract Society, we indulge the reasonable hope that the operations of the South-



Carolina Branch (and all other Southern Branches) of the American Tract Society, will receive undiminished and even increasing support, confidence and co-operation at their hands.\*

EVANGELICUS.

\*Next to the Middle States, says the New-York *Evangelist*, the most liberal contributor to the general Treasury is—not New England—but the Southern States. In these is included the Southwest, as in the Western States we include the Northwest. The territory thus embraced is immensely larger than New England, the population is greater, and therefore the amount given *in proportion* less. But the aggregate for the same year (1856) was greater, amounting to \$27,754.

New England is third on the list, having given during the last fiscal year \$25,580.

Fourth in the enumeration is the Western and Northwestern States, which gave the same year \$21,458.

These facts show that the American Tract Society is truly what it claims to be—a National institution. It represents our whole country. It is sustained by the contributions of all the States, and labors for the welfare of all.



ARTICLES

REFERRING TO

The American Tract Society

ON DR. WAYLAND'S LETTER

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BY

THE REV. THOMAS SMYTH, D. D.

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*Published in the New York Observer*  
1858



## ARTICLES REFERRING TO THE AMERICAN TRACT SOCIETY.

### I.

DR. SMYTH, OF CHARLESTON, S. C., ON DR. WAYLAND'S LETTER.

*Messrs. Editors:* I was glad to see the argument sent by Dr. Wayland to the Investigating Committee of the Tract Society, published in your paper, although I differ altogether from the venerable writer. If any man could by subtle argument make out a case against the officers of the Society in refusing to publish Tracts or Books offensive to christians of fifteen States on the subject of Slavery, Dr. Wayland is the man; and if he has failed to do this, we may conclude that it cannot be done, and that they have pursued the only course which they could either constitutionally or properly adopt.

The object of Dr. Wayland's paper is to prove that the Tract Society should publish "the whole will of God," on the subject of slavery, "and the consequences which must follow from obeying or disobeying it."

In order to reach this conclusion he lays down the premise that if the constitution of the Society does not allow this to be done, then "the constitution itself would require emendation and amendment." He proceeds, however, to show that the constitution of the Society *imposes no such restrictions*, and he concludes, that as Slavery deeply involves "the interests of vital godliness and sound morality," as this is one of the most practical questions known to ethics, and as the wrongs and sufferings of the slaves extend to "hundreds of thousands who are our own christian brethren," this, therefore, is "one of those questions concerning vital religion and sound morality, the treatment of which comes fairly within the objects for which the Society was constituted."

#### THE ARGUMENT INCONCLUSIVE.

1. The Tract Society is *an incorporated body, and bound to act in strict accordance with its constitution*, which limits its publications to those "calculated to receive the approbation of all evangelical christians." To reform and amend the constitution so as to require the Society to publish Tracts on the subject of Slavery, offensive to its Southern constituency, it is not enough that mere resolutions requiring the issuing of such

Tracts should be passed. To do this the constitution itself must be altered, and that in a legal way, or else the law of the State will by an injunction restrain the Society from such a perversion of its funds, and such an abrogation of its original principle.

2. The Tract Society is not a Northern, or Eastern, or Western Society. It is not sectional in any respect. It is *a National Society*. It is a Southern Society just as much, and as truly, as it is a Northern Society. Christians from the South as well as from the North united in its original formation. It was founded and incorporated as THE AMERICAN Tract Society. By the eighth article of its constitution it is required that "the benefits of the Society" "shall be as far as practicable the same *in all parts of the United States,*" and by the seventh, the second, and the third articles of the constitution, "any person," and "any Tract Society," may, in the prescribed way become a member, or an auxiliary of the Society. Neither does the constitution prescribe any one place for the location or the annual meetings of the Society. It is therefore most evident, that the Society can only represent views and opinions, and objects, which are of common interest and approval "in all parts of the United States."

3. It is manifest from these facts imbedded in the very foundation of the Society, that it never was designed, and never could be adapted, to publish *everything which any body of evangelical christians* believe to be a doctrine pertaining to "vital godliness." Dr. Wayland says: "The interests of vital godliness are to be promoted by setting clearly before men THE WHOLE will of God." Yet he knows as well as I, that what "the whole will of God" on the subject of vital godliness is, is *to some extent* a matter of dispute among evangelical christians. The Tract Society, therefore, can only set forth in its publications "the whole will of God," so far as, and to that extent, in which evangelical christians "are agreed," and "mind the same thing." On the *general* doctrines of christianity, "all evangelical christians are (as Dr. Wayland properly expresses it) in harmony." But on *some* doctrines pertaining to vital godliness, *as each denomination of evangelical christians must consistently believe*, each denomination of evangelical christians differs from the rest. Whether the peculiar doctrine be of baptism; or of the Church, with its ministry, and ordinances and liturgy; or of psalmody; or of close communion; or of the five points of Calvinism, and the opposing five points of Armin-

ianism; or of any other doctrine or point of discipline that separates one denomination of evangelical christians from another, each must justify its existence as a denomination upon the belief that said doctrine pertains to the interests of vital godliness.

And it is equally evident from the same facts, that the Tract Society never was designed and never could be adapted, to publish *the whole will of God* respecting "*sound morality.*" On this point, also, there are different "minds" among evangelical christians, so that what is considered as contrary to sound morality in regard to eating and drinking, to dress and equipage, to personal and household expenditure, to the Sabbath and the mode of its observance, to education, secular and ecclesiastical, to the various modes of conducting business, to the factory system, to manufacturing establishments, and an indefinite number of other matters, evangelical christians in different parts of the country and viewing them from different points, hold different sentiments. For the Tract Society to set forth *the whole will of God* respecting all these points; to publish on whatever subject has, as Dr. Wayland expresses it, "*anything to do with the interests of vital godliness and sound morality;*" to set forth clearly *whatever* it is important that any should understand, and "*whatever is at variance with vital godliness and sound morality, whether at the North or the South, at the East or the West, in city or in country, among the rich or the poor*"—this is clearly an impossibility.

What is thus "*at variance with vital godliness and sound morality,*" the Tract Society cannot determine beyond what evangelical christians in all parts of the United States agree in so considering, and hence the Society "*does (not) seem called upon in view of the object for which it was constituted to bear a decided testimony*" on subjects about which there is a difference of opinion among evangelical christians. "The Society cannot go behind," nor before, nor beside, nor above, nor contrary to what is agreed in by evangelical christians united in the Society. This is the constitutional and imperative limitation put upon its publications. And the only discretionary power given to the Society itself and exercised under solemn responsibility by its officers, who are amenable to the constitution sanctioned by the incorporating charter and seal of the state, is to decide what tracts, in their judgment founded upon a knowledge of their views generally and as made known in *various*

ways, are "calculated to receive the approbation of all evangelical christians" "in all parts of the United States."

The Tract Society was not therefore intended to set forth (as Dr. Wayland sophistically paraphrases its constitution), "*the whole will of God,*" nor "*whatever*" that is, *everything* that "is at variance with vital godliness or sound morality," and to "exhort the wrong-doers to repentance." The Society is a union of many men with many minds, on the basis of those truths of God respecting vital godliness and sound morality *wherewith they are agreed*. It is a compromise. It is a partnership entered into by all evangelical christians who are willing to become partners, not for *every* object, but for a *specific* object carefully limited and defined. It implies and recognizes differences of views as to what concerns the interests both of vital godliness and sound morality, and it excludes from its sphere of operations all such differences. It recognizes also—and this is its benign and blessed characteristic—one faith, one Lord and a common salvation; and in the spirit of christian love and of ardent zeal for the salvation of souls, "the object of the Society," the one and only object, was, ever has been, and ever should be, to "diffuse a knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ as the Redeemer of sinners and to promote the interests of vital godliness and sound morality." It was not intended to set forth the *whole* will of God and to discuss *whatever* is at variance with that will, and thus publish on any and every subject which any and every evangelical christian may consider as a part of that will, or at variance with it; but to "promote" *so far as unitedly they can*, the interests of *vital* godliness, that is what they unite in believing to be vital, and of *sound* morality, that is, not politics, not sectarian or sectional schemes of morality, not "questions of doubtful disputation," not every thing that may by many be regarded as "having to do" with sound morality; but all that, and only that which "is calculated to receive the approbation of all evangelical christians."

4. Dr. Wayland therefore encourages a *very dangerous* spirit and puts into the hands of unbelievers a two-edged sword, when he represents such a limitation of the object and publications of the Tract Society as "presenting a *mutilated view* of christian duty and placing in the hands of unbelievers an argument against the divine origin of Revelation, difficult to be answered." It is only doing what the Bible enjoins, when it requires of all christians, "whereto ye have already attained let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing." By the



very nature of its object and the careful limitation of its sphere of operations, the Tract Society is preserved from the very danger thus pointed out. It makes itself responsible only for holding forth the truth in reference to Christ as a Saviour of sinners, to vital godliness and to sound morality, so far as evangelical christians are agreed and can agree harmoniously to co-operate in publishing and circulating. So far it is responsible and challenges the objections of unbelievers. But as to all other questions it is and must be silent. It says nothing. It publishes nothing. It neither condemns nor approves. It leaves all points wherein evangelical christians are not agreed to the individual or denominational opinions of evangelical christians, to promulgate and to diffuse them according to their individual and denominational convictions. As well, therefore, might an unbeliever cavil at the Bible Society for not publishing all other kinds of works, and at the Sunday School Union for not teaching theology and the whole will of God, and at every humane association which is formed for "the promotion" of some specific good for not attempting to accomplish every other good work, as to cavil at the Tract Society and its officers, for doing the only work which they were ever intended to do, and for not doing some other work which they were not intended to do—which they were carefully withheld from doing.

Dr. Wayland confounds the duty of churches, ministers and christians in their individual and separate capacity in reference to the whole word and will of God, with the duty of officers who are appointed *in trust, under a limited and carefully guarded constitution* to perform a specific and limited duty, the only object for which the Society was constituted.

So far from this limited object and operation of the Tract Society being any ground for objection or unbelieving cavil, it is the very characteristic which has always and everywhere commended it to the hearts and affections of all who love our Lord Jesus Christ as the Redeemer of sinners, and who are anxious to promote to the widest extent the interests of vital godliness and sound morality. This is proved by the whole history of the Society. "Every year," to use Dr. Wayland's own language, "on every platform and in every pulpit of the land, this restriction has been held forth as the crowning excellence of this catholic institution."

## ANOTHER INGENIOUS BUT FALLACIOUS ARGUMENT.

Dr. Wayland feeling perhaps insecure in this first attempt to sustain his momentous conclusion that the Society must publish on Slavery even at the hazard of "abandoning the whole Southern field," erects another and a still more ingenious argument. It is this: As "all evangelical christians" can be known to the Publishing Committee only as members of different *denominations*, and the opinions of each individual can be known only "by the FORMULARY OR ARTICLES OF FAITH AND PRACTICE to which he affixed his name when he became a member of that particular communion, and as "the christian lawfulness of Slavery is not affirmed in the formularies or confessions of faith of any evangelical denominations," and Slavery "is not one of those subjects of denominational difference on which the Society is *forbidden* to publish," it is *therefore* (?) one the treatment of which comes fairly *within* (*because it is without*) the objects for which the Society was constituted; or in other words, whatever is *not forbidden* is *required*.

Now let any one examine the terms of this argument, and he will at once perceive that it is not an argument. There is no necessary connection between the premises and the conclusion. We deny the assumption on which the argument rests and the conclusion drawn, even were the assumption granted; and we affirm that the point in question is left by the argument just where it was found, and where it still stares us in the face. The Constitution knows nothing of "formularies of faith." Subscription to or explicit adoption of formularies of faith is not required of private members by any denomination. In some denominations such creeds are not recognized as fixed and obligatory at all. In others where they do exist, different interpretations are known to prevail. To constitute, therefore, the officers of this Society judges of the existence, authority, and true interpretation of the formularies of all evangelical denominations, and upon such judgment to decide *who are* and *are not* evangelical, and what is or is not, consistent with the various evangelical creeds, in all their variations, this surely is preposterously absurd.

But the argument is not only based upon the assumption of facts which do not exist, of powers never conferred, and of duties impossible to be discharged; it is *suicidal*. It does not prove what was intended by it and it confirms what it was intended to overthrow. Dr. Wayland allows *the binding force*

*of the catholic principle of the constitution.* He says: "It is intended that no tract shall be published on subjects on which *the sects are at variance*, but only on the subjects on which *they are agreed.*" If, then, members of the Society are known only through church formularies, and those formularies are silent on the subject of Slavery, does it not follow that no member is to be known as either approving or disapproving anything on the subject; and that the Society, not finding in those formularies any article on the subject of Slavery, is not at liberty "to go behind," or beyond, or beside, what is in those formularies? And as the denominations are known to be *at variance* on the subject of Slavery, and as they *are agreed in excluding it from their formularies*, is not the Society *therefore* bound to *exclude* the discussion of that subject from its publications? Is not this a logical and inevitable conclusion from the premises assumed by Dr. Wayland?

We *reverse the argument* of Dr. W. There is not a formulary of faith adopted by any prominent evangelical denomination, north, south, east or west, in which Slavery is *denounced as a heresy or a sin*, or in which the abolition of Slavery is *held forth as a dogma of faith or a duty of practice*, either among its *credenda* or its *agenda*. Slavery is thus regarded by all the formularies of christian faith and duty as lying beyond, in the territory of political and social economies. Even if the Tract Society were based upon the platform of evangelical denominational creeds, it would therefore be *confined* to a field of operations from which, in the wise and gracious providence of God, Slavery has been excluded.

Suppose the Publishing Committee attempt practically to apply Dr. Wayland's theory to the subject of Slavery. They find that no church formulary has any article on that subject to guide them. They find that those who are, and those who are not, opposed to Slavery, have the same formulary. They find denominations at the North, and at the South, with the same creed, and yet divided and having no communion with each other as denominations. They find that correspondence and the interchange of delegates, which had long subsisted between different denominations holding essentially the same creed, is now terminated. They find that all this was the result of attempts to "go behind and beyond" the creed, and to agitate and legislate on Slavery. Must they not then conclude, that as Slavery is a dividing wedge to denominations, an apple of dis-

cord even among brethren of the same ecclesiastical family, it is necessarily excluded from discussion by the Society?

But Dr. Wayland's theory is not only suicidal, and absolutely incapable of application, but it is contradicted by indubitable historical facts. The framers of the constitution, several of whom are still active officers of the Society, testify that they intended no such thing, and did not suppose it possible that its plain and explicit language was susceptible of such an interpretation. In the formation of the Society, the convention *unanimously* adopted the phrase "all evangelical *christians*," instead of the phrase "Christians of all evangelical *denominations*," which had been proposed, thus making it a union of christians, and not of denominations, a christian and not a denominational Society, for christian and not denominational, or political, or party, or sectional purposes.

And it is evident that it is only on such a basis and in such a view of the Society that any sincere and conscientious denominationalist can unite in it. *As a member of his denomination*, he is, if an officer, bound to maintain its creed, its discipline, its forms and rites, in short, its differences and peculiarities, that is, *the whole will of God* as that denomination understands it, and hence if the Tract Society is to be made a union on a denominational basis, he cannot join the Society; it is impossible.

We ask then, what does this theory gain? and what difficulty does it remove? The answer is, nothing—not one.

But suppose it were otherwise. Let us suppose that the subject of slavery was embodied in any or all evangelical creeds. Suppose further that its abolition was included by them among the requirements of vital godliness and sound morality, still the union of all evangelical christians for evangelical purposes, dear to them all, would be just as proper and just as practicable as it is and has been in the Tract, and Bible Society, and Sunday School, and Missionary Unions, and Young Men's Christian Associations, and many others. In all these, differences are left to denominational zeal, and all labor together for the advancement of some common and specific principles and ends.

We are brought, therefore, by every aspect of the Society, to the conclusion that the Investigating Committee were right in *not concurring* with the object or the argument of Dr. Wayland's paper, since its argument is as inconclusive as the object is foreign to the special and specified end of the Tract Society.

That Society cannot discuss the subject of slavery if it would, and it ought not to do so if it could.

The new theory is like new wine put into old bottles. It bursts the bottles. And to our taste, "the old wine," which has become mellow with age, and flavored with the fragrance of venerated men of God, by whom it has been preserved for our use, "is better."

But Dr. W. like many sound orthodox evangelical christians, *is opposed to Slavery*, and anxious to see it, and all the evils they believe to be inseparable from it, removed. Be it so. Evangelical christians at the South can love and honor them, as they do Dr. Wayland, none the less on this account. They would not restrain or hamper their opinions or philanthropic christian exertions. But as they cannot unite with them on this subject, they would unite heart and hand in promoting the interests of all that is dear to them in common as evangelical christians—and such is our union in this Society.

The Society is not denominational but christian. Hallowed be the thought, an olive branch from THE ARK of our "common salvation," a tender branch plucked from the mountains of hope, emerging above the waste and howling waters of our envyings and strifes and carnal divisions—let us cherish thee, and plant, and nurture and water thee with the tears of joy and the prayers of exultant anticipation, until the night is past and the Dayspring from on high shall usher in the day of millennial glory.

Based on that divine principle of association, which christianity originated, the Tract Society is the demonstration and the living proof that the tribes of Israel are one Israel, and that amid all sectional and political and denominational differences, holding the Head, calling upon the name of one and the same Lord, loving Christ in their heart of hearts, and loving all who love Christ, EVANGELICAL CHRISTIANS ARE ALL ONE. Bound together in this Society in the unity of the Spirit and the bond of peace they have for more than thirty years awakened joy among the angels of God, diffused peace and good will on earth, and proclaimed glory to God in the highest.

## II.

DR. SMYTH, OF CHARLESTON, S. C., ON DR. WAYLAND'S  
LETTER.—(CONCLUDED.)

The American Tract Society cannot therefore become either sectional in its sphere of operations or anti-slavery in its principles. All evangelical christians in the slaveholding States holding evangelical creeds and belonging to evangelical denominations are and ever have been to as great an extent perhaps as at the North, members of the Tract Society. They love it. As far as their means permit, and corresponding efforts have been made to interest them, they have contributed to its funds and have otherwise sustained it. Its books have found their way to every family. Its colporteurs and its agents have labored in every community and among the bond as well as the free.

Now the evangelical christians in these slaveholding States are not willing to abandon their connection with the Tract Society, and they are equally unwilling to be driven out of it. The sacred compact into which, in the persons of Dr. Alexander, and other venerated fathers, they entered, they are not willing to dissolve. The contract then formed no power on earth can dissolve. God was one of the partners to it; it was signed, sealed and delivered in God's presence and handed over, for a perpetual covenant that shall not be broken, to the archives of heaven. Its engagements will follow them and all represented in it, through time, and accompany them to the judgment seat. Evangelical christians at the South and Southwest may be excluded from their inherited reversion in this Society; evangelical christians at the North and West may add to, alter, and by "going behind" may so change the constitution or practically pervert it, as to oblige those at the South and Southwest to withdraw; and the State of New York may be induced to authorize the perversion of its charter, and the misappropriation of chartered funds, and the abuse of a long established name and character and power for evil or for good. But in no event do evangelical christians at the South and Southwest draw back from their plighted faith, or abandon their vested interests, or consent to the violation of the bond of union.

Such are the views and feelings of all evangelical christians in the South and Southwest as members of the American Tract Society, and to these they tenaciously cling from no selfish,

sectional or pecuniary motives; of these as members of the Tract Society, they know nothing. No! they cling to the Society as affectionate children do to a reverend parent, because they love both its Christ-loving character and its soul-saving work. They dwell among a people who are all sinners—many of them great sinners—and many of them ignorant and hardened sinners, equally destitute of “vital godliness and sound morality.” The diffusion, therefore, among them of the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ as the Saviour of sinners, and the promotion of the interests of vital godliness and sound morality, they most earnestly desire. They love all who love Christ and this glorious work. They love and honor evangelical christians of every denomination and of every section of our country. It is a joy to them to co-operate with them in this good work, and they have therefore never done anything to render such union impracticable. They are now just what they were when they united in the organization of this Society. Their social and civil institutions are the same only with a growing zeal for the diffusion of the knowledge of Christ as the Redeemer of sinners, and ESPECIALLY AMONG THEIR COLORED POPULATION. They have never proposed an alteration in the constitution of this Society. They have introduced into it no new element. They desire no restrictions, and they are not willing to have any enlargement either of the OBJECT or of the SUBJECTS of the Society’s publications. All they ask the Society to be and to do, is to be and to do, *what it has been, and has done, from the beginning.* They neither wish the Society to know slavery or anti-slavery, to be pro-slavery or abolition, but just to keep to its constitutional and sole purpose. This is what evangelical christians at the South expect and all they desire. This is what the officers of the Society have ever done. They have always acted under a solemn sense of the sacred chartered trust reposed in them and of the constitution under which they act. This is what departed men of God who have labored for the Society, have ever done. “To execute this trust on its true catholic basis, the Rev. Dr. Milnor labored twenty years as Chairman both of the Publishing and Executive Committee; Timothy R. Green, Esq., seven years; Mr. Thomas Stokes eight years; Dr. Marinus Willett twelve years; Dr. John Stearns twenty-three years; Dr. James C. Bliss thirty years, and Rev. Dr. Justin Edwards nearly as long—all till their death; and the venerated Dr. Alexander, who cheered and counselled the Society from the beginning, acted three

years on the Publishing Committee. From the lips of these deceased devoted founders and toil worn laborers, connected as they were with five great evangelical communions, no intimation that the Society could rightfully, by any act whatever, give offence to evangelical christians of any name or locality, is known ever to have fallen, nor any such intimation, from the lips of any member of the Committees; and no act of either Committee has ever been carried into effect that was not unanimous."

And as this course, which is all that evangelical christians at the South ask, is what the officers and venerated co-laborers of this Society have always pursued, they confidently hope and believe that this course will be *required* by the great majority of evangelical christians at the North and in all non-slave-holding States. Southern christians love and honor these brethren in the Lord, and have perfect assurance that right feelings, right views and right measures will be adopted by them; that whatever may be their personal views of slavery, they will keep to the holy bond which binds them to us and us to them, in the Tract Society; that as the direction and management of this Society has been entrusted to them for the benefit of "all parts of the United States," they will faithfully perform the trust.

That in this confidence we shall not be disappointed, you, Mr. Editor, have given us great assurance. You say: "If the present Publishing Committee were unanimous in their desire to issue anti-slavery Tracts, they could not do it until they were convinced that such Tracts would receive the general consent of their constituency. But it is as plain as the sun at noon-day, that the vast majority of the churches united in the Society, wish the Committee to confine themselves to the specific work for which the Society was made. Does the Episcopal Church wish the Tract Society to engage in the anti-slavery excitement of the times? No. Does the Reformed Dutch Church wish it? No. Does the Old School Presbyterian Church wish it? No. Does the New School? No: some may, but the Church, as a whole, does not. Does the Baptist Church wish it? A portion may, but the whole South, and a large part of the North do not. Does the Congregational Church wish it? A large portion does, but we presume not a majority, even of that denomination, desire the fatal step to be taken. How, then, stands the case? If the Congregationalists and Northern Baptists were unanimous in wishing the Society to publish on slavery, there would still remain the Episcopalians, the



Reformed Dutch, and the Presbyterians, who oppose the measure with greater unanimity than the others favor it. At a moderate estimate, four-fifths of the patrons of the Society demand its abstinence from the discussion of Slavery, and its continuance in its accustomed work."

May God grant that it shall be so. May He who has all hearts in His hands dispose to wise counsels and to peaceable and loving determinations. May He avert from this Society the calamity of disruption or of legal contention. May He secure for its officers who have grown grey in arduous devotion to its interests, the increasing gratitude and confidence of all its friends on earth, and reward them hereafter with a crown of righteousness which the Lord the righteous Judge shall give to all them who here on earth, for His sake and for the salvation of souls, deny themselves, take up their cross, and follow Him.

And that you, Mr. Editor, and all Evangelical christians who are like minded with yourself, may be animated with the zeal and energy necessary to accomplish what is required, let me, in conclusion, ask you to consider well the alternative. It is truly A MOMENTOUS ALTERNATIVE. IT INVOLVES THE SALVATION OR PERDITION OF COUNTLESS MILLIONS OF IMMORTAL SPIRITS. And this alternative is made clearly and distinctly the issue, and the necessary issue, of this controversy. Dr. Wayland admits that "hundreds of thousands of the slaves in our slave-holding States are our brethren, members of Episcopal, Presbyterian, Methodist and Baptist churches." It follows, of course, that to them, even in Slavery and by slave-holding christians the Gospel is preached, and faith and salvation come by what they hear. Besides these *hundreds of thousands* of converted slaves, there are some *two millions* of unconverted slaves, and some *seven millions* of white people in the slave-holding States, every one of whom has a soul to be saved or lost. And the Tract and Colporteurs of the Tract Society constitute, as all admit, a most efficient instrumentality for diffusing the knowledge of a Saviour and of vital godliness and sound morality, an instrumentality which has, in time past, been beyond all calculations, valuable, successful and popular, and having had in these Slave States among their millions of population, unlimited access to bond and free and to the poor and rich.

Evangelical christians at the South ask of their brethren at the North, that this wide and widening field, extending into new States and illimitable Territories, and boundless popula-

tion, and whose harvest is perishing for want of laborers—that this vast portion of our common country, embracing hundreds of thousands of evangelical christians, denominationally united with their brethren and sisters in the same church throughout the North, and the East, and the West, shall continue to receive at least some crumbs of the bread of heaven, some mercy drops of the water of life, as for them that are ready to perish! Yea, they claim this by virtue of the sacred authority of the Constitution, the Charter, and the thirty-three years of love and labor and success which we have spent together, and of that seal of heaven by which the witnessing Spirit, witnessing with this Society, *that it is* of God, has bound us to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. They claim and they expect this because their brethren at the North are, they believe, with few exceptions, wise as well as good, and just as well as generous, and magnanimous as well as manly. And finally, because it will restore to them their beloved Society, and again and forever unite all evangelical christians in all parts of the United States, in promoting throughout the length and breadth of our extended territory the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

And now, brethren in the Lord in non-slaveholding States, whatever may be your views on slavery, look prayerfully and conscientiously, and in the spirit of fraternal christian association, on the dread alternative which Dr. Wayland admits, and which the universal protest of the South declares to be inevitably before you. Are you prepared, even *if allowed by law*, to alter the Constitution and national catholic character of the Society, to abandon eleven millions of people, one in every five of whom is your christian brother by evangelical profession, for the sake of publishing Tracts on Slavery to circulate *exclusively among those who are already opposed to Slavery?* Dr. Wayland answers this question by saying, YES, ABANDON THEM, rather than “withhold any portion of Divine truth because men are unwilling to receive it;” and “our blessed Lord,” he says, “seems to have made provision for precisely this case” when he required his disciples to “wipe off the dust from their feet and retire from any city” where “men would not receive his message.” “Does not this example,” he adds, “determine for us the rule of our duty!”

Strange infatuation, that can blind the mind and harden the heart of a man so wise and good and christian as Dr. Wayland! What answer will he give, and what answer, Mr. Editor, will all evangelical christians give, when I point them

to a field covering fifteen States of this Union, and some eleven millions of souls, who with one heart and voice say, "Give us THE BIBLE, and the WHOLE BIBLE, AND NOTHING BUT THE BIBLE," who hail with welcoming joy the feet of every herald of the Redeemer of sinners, who bringeth salvation and publisheth the glad tidings; who open their doors, their hands, their purses and their hearts to the Tract Society and say, "Come over and help us," by diffusing to the very utmost of your power among the bond and the free, among white and black, "the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ as the Redeemer of sinners and promoting the interests of vital godliness and sound morality."

Let conscience and every christian feeling answer, "Lo, I come to do thy will, O Lord." Let the Society at its next anniversary answer and "say, Come; and let him that heareth say, Come," that every one throughout this widely extended country "who is athirst," may come, and "whosoever will take the water of life freely."

Amen and amen.

THOMAS SMYTH.

P. S.—The writer need hardly repeat the assurance of his high regard for the character of Dr. Wayland, as a man of genius, as a profound scholar, an able professor, an author of world-wide celebrity, and a christian of deep-toned piety and tender charity. To his discourse on missions, the writer owes much of that enthusiasm which has become a master passion even in the death of manly vigor; and although unknown personally he is loved in spirit. And even if disowned and cast out as abominable by him on the earth, the writer will indulge a humble hope that as a sinner saved by grace, justified by faith, sanctified by the spirit of holiness, and made perfect through the perfect righteousness of the Lord our Righteousness, he may know and love him in the kingdom of heaven, and then unite with him and with all of every name, denomination, and kindred, who love our Lord Jesus Christ, in ascribing glory, and honor, and blessing, and praise unto Him who loved us, and gave Himself for us, and hath made us kings and priests unto God.

T. S.



# The Destruction of the Hopes of Man

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A Discourse Delivered in the Second Presbyterian  
Church, Sabbath Morning, May 9, 1841, Being  
the Funeral Sabbath Set Apart in Memory of  
the late

GENERAL WILLIAM HENRY HARRISON,  
President of the United States,

BY THE REV. THOMAS SMYTH, D. D.,

In Compliance with the Resolution Adopted at a  
Public Meeting of the Citizens of  
Charleston, S. C.



## THE DESTRUCTION OF THE HOPES OF MAN.

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CHRISTIAN FRIENDS AND BRETHREN: We are invited this day by the public voice of our fellow citizens of every religious persuasion, to the contemplation of that melancholy event which has clothed our nation in mourning. Death is in itself considered, and in all possible circumstances, the most solemn and august event which can transpire in the history of any individual man. In it as in some imfathomable abyss the hopes and the fears, the joys and the sorrows, the anticipations and regrets, the matured plans and the projected schemes—of man—are all engulfed. The eye that shone becomes dim; the hand of industry is relaxed; the arm of strength is paralyzed; the tongue of eloquence becomes mute; and that frame which moved in energy and beauty, lies prostrate in the dust. The inexorable judge, the indomitable adversary, the ruthless destroyer, death—reigns and triumphs over the ruins of a depopulated world. No tears can soften—no pity melt—no sympathy affect—no wealth bribe—this grim and ghostly tyrant. We all nevertheless love life. We all dread death. And all therefore are susceptible of unutterable emotions when called upon to behold a fellow being in convulsive struggles with this last enemy. Hard and inhuman must be that heart which can calmly witness its agonies or reflect upon its nature, and not be solemnized by, death.

But while this is the characteristic influence of death, yet when it is made to visit a sound individual who is elevated above his fellows by the greater enjoyment of earthly fortune or of sublunary glory, that, which in all cases is impressive, is under such circumstances, actually overwhelming. We stand abashed as if struck by the lightning's flash, or by the sudden bolt of heaven. All that the imagination could lend of enchantment to the fancied greatness of such eminent personages; and that inviolability which we had attached to their favoured station, we see crushed as the moth and broken by the spell of this great magician. And although in this land of equal rights and privileges there are no titled nobility—no ancestral splendour—nor any transmitted insignia of aristocratic greatness—yet are there the self-created destruction of a people's

choice, and that nobility which is conferred by eminent talents, when consecrated to the public welfare. When therefore any individual—any statesman, legislator or judge—who has won his way by public service to the enjoyment of public favour, and who has received at the hands of a free people, some elevated appointment as the proof of their heartfelt gratitude—when such an one is made the mark of this great enemy and falls beneath his irresistible stroke—it is peculiarly proper and becoming in that people to give expression to their grief for the departed and their sympathy with the living.

Funeral honors have been paid to the dead, among all nations and in all ages of the world. The Egyptians embalmed, the Greeks buried, the Romans burnt; but however ancient their forms, all agreed in some manifestation of their honourable estimation of the dead while they terminated their mournful ceremonies, with songs and shouts of victory, as if he whose death they celebrated had now secured the prize and attained the summit of felicity. Orations also were by some appointed orator, delivered to the people who were thus taught to emulate their glory and willingly to sacrifice their lives upon the altar of the public weal. Similar also were the funeral solemnities observed by the ancient Jews. Mourners followed the bier, upon which was borne the corpse of the deceased wrapped in folds of linen, who poured forth the anguish of their hearts in lamentable wails. Eulogists and musicians also were in attendance, who deepened the sympathetic feelings of the occasion by a rehearsal of the virtues of the departed. Men who were distinguished for their rank and who at the same time exhibited a claim to the favour of the people, for their virtues and their good deeds, were honoured with the attendance of vast multitudes to witness the solemnities of their interment.\*

Most appropriate therefore and consonant to the general feelings of humanity, is the civic appointment of this day for the special commemoration of an event which has deprived the nation of its presiding head. For while he whose death we deplore was personally unknown to almost all of us, and it was impossible for us to unite in the solemnities of his burial; yet inasmuch, as he was the common head and representative of this extended commonwealth, and legally entrusted with its executive supremacy—therefore should every member of this confederated family testify his respect for the Father of his

\*See Gen. 50:7-14; I Sam. 25:1; II Chron. 32:33; I K. 14:13, and John's Archaeology, § 205.



country. True it is that in his adoption into that endearing and responsible relation is associated with the stoutest opposition of a large portion of our fellow citizen. But we have never learned that any individual so resisted his introduction to the presidential office upon the ground of any serious objection to his personal or moral character. However, many may have questioned his qualifications, and especially at his advanced age, for the onerous duties of the presidency—none have denied his honesty as a man; his claims as a distinguished citizen of the republic; his valorous achievements as the leader of his country's hosts; his wisdom, prudence, and uprightness as a public statesman; or the unimpeachable integrity, and unblemished patriotism, with which he discharged every duty entrusted to him by his country during a long, honourable and useful life. That he rendered eminent services to the State all cheerfully allow. That he was great in arms; wise in counsel; disinterested in conduct; respected in public and beloved in private life; the patron of the needy; the friend of the deserving; and the advocate of virtue, morality and religion—history will attest.

Death—which extinguishes all resentments; which crushes the rising spirit of envy and hatred; which pacifies even the fiendish malice of inexorable revenge; death—which covers with the mantle of charity a multitude of sins; which dissipates the clouds of prejudice and gives vivid distinctness to every remembered virtue; Death—has now concealed from us the object of so many discordant feelings, and around whom were gathered the hopes, the bright anticipations and dark forebodings and fears of a million hearts. "The memory of them is forgotten. Also their love, and their hatred, and their envy is now perished; neither has he any more a portion for ever in any thing that is done under the Sun." He that hath gone down to the grave shall come up no more. He shall return no more to his house, neither shall his place know him any more.

It is but a little while and we behold him coming forth as the flower of the spring, decked in all the glory and resplendency of his exalted eminency. And now—although the story of all this splendid pageantry is but of yesterday—his days are extinct, his breath is corrupt, the graves are ready for him. How true is it that man's days are as the grass; as a flower of the field so he flourisheth. For the wind passeth over it and it is gone; and the place thereof shall know it no more. The mighty are exalted for a little while, but are gone and brought

low; they are taken out of the way as all others and cut off as the tops of the ears of corn.

My brethren, it is not our place or duty to eulogize the dead or to recount the history of one whose exploits will form a part of the history of his country. This duty has been assigned to more fitting hands, and has already been discharged by many well qualified for the task. Our business is with the living and not with the dead. We would invite you to the contemplation of death because this is the end of all men and the living will lay it to heart. We would not desecrate this sacred temple on this sacred day—and amidst these sacred services—by the undue exaltation of man—whose breath is on his nostrils and whose foundation is in the dust. The heathen magnified their ancestors into deities and even granted them an apotheosis while alive. Christians too have imitated this heathen superstition and are even now found canonizing and worshipping the dead. While therefore such evils have resulted from extravagant and blasphemous funeral orations, it becomes us while commemorating "the departed spirits of the mighty dead," to have a sacred regard to the true interests of the living.

To our minds therefore it has appeared no small tribute to the praise of this community, that while other cities have exhausted their sympathetic emotions in some great pageant—and have given their testimonials in honor of the memory of the late president, in the form of some civil and military procession, the citizens of Charleston have unanimously resolved to show forth their regard, by the public expression of their heartfelt sympathy—by the appointment of a public orator who may perpetuate in faithful history the character of this honoured leader of a mourning nation.

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#### PART SECOND.

*JOB 14:19: Thou destroyest the hope of man.*

We are here led to a contemplation of human life and divine providence—of man as he urges on in his career as if possessed of absolute and unlimited control over the destinies of life, and of that irresistible and invisible power by which all his schemes are frustrated and his plans subverted. "Thou destroyest the hope of man."



Such is the aspect here presented to us of human life—and such the mysterious paradox in the constitution of our nature in relation to future events which it is our present object to explain. We will then endeavour to shew from an examination of the present state and condition in which he is placed, that the fond hopes of man must be in many cases inevitably destroyed.

Man is a finite being. Though a free agent he is not possessed of absolute dominion. Though rational, his knowledge is not unlimited or perfect. His powers are, in their fullest development, feeble and confined. He is bounded by a horizon beyond which he cannot gaze. He is fastened to a narrow sphere to which he is held by an irresistible attraction so that he cannot possibly ascend. “’Tis vain to seek in man for more than man,”—to ascribe to him faculties he does not possess, and to require of him attainments to which he cannot possibly reach. Whether we look backward with retrospective eye, or forward with eager anticipation, we are alike incapable of comprehending the infinite relations in which every event stands to every other. “Boast not thyself of tomorrow,” says the wise man; “for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth.” “O Lord,” exclaims the confounded prophet, “I know that the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps.”

Such is the nature and such the destiny of man. Now it is not for us to quarrel with this constitution of our nature, or to say unto God “why hast thou made us so.” It is not for us to imagine that we are other beings, or of a higher order, or endowed with superior powers, than the facts of the case will warrant.

Man know thyself. All wisdom centers here.

Since then hope has reference to the future, and implies a certain knowledge of a thousand contingencies it is at once evident that in the formation of his hopes man must be liable to innumerable mistakes, and that his hopes therefore must be in most cases destroyed. Besides, hope depends, for its strength, more upon the peculiar temperament of mind than upon the real nature of external circumstances. Some therefore indulged hope when they might well despair or at least seriously doubt. Their own feelings and desires colour distant objects with a seeming brightness. These shine forth resplendent on the lustre of their own vivid imaginations. Meanwhile as they hasten their approach to such scenes of

promised bliss—the heavens gather blackness—all before them is gloom—and they find their path concealed by an impenetrable obscurity. “Their hopes are destroyed.”

The same conclusion follows from the consideration of that relation in which such hopes stand to the similar constitution of other minds. For if, in their formation, we are all liable to inevitable oversight and mistake, notwithstanding all our watchfulness and our keenest penetration,—when we remember that in the attainment of any object of hope we are dependent upon the co-operation of other minds, equally short-sighted and imperfect, with no assurance of their favour, and no motive to any special attention to our interests—how impossible is it to avoid this destruction of our fondest hopes. Unable to direct our own way we travel through a devious void, and are disconcerted in our plans by endless paths each leading to some different termination, and all crossing one another. And if, were there no other than a straight and beaten course we are so liable to come short of our desires;—when we venture blind-fold to be guided by the blind, through this variously intersected pathway, can the result be other than the bitterest disappointment? Our hopes spring from our own imperfect and unstable minds and therefore rest upon a false foundation. They depend upon the promises of others which are made only to be broken and which the slightest change may turn into the bitterness of hatred and revenge. They are built upon the virtues of humanity, which are too generally only the covering for selfishness and pride. And therefore our hopes, founded on insecurity, and supported by buttresses which are themselves without strength, are overwhelmed with destruction by the first windy storm and tempest.

This deceitfulness of hope arises further from the nature of those external objects upon which our hopes are fixed. The mutable purpose of a mutable mind, and depending upon the purposes of other minds as changeful, hope centres upon objects which are themselves mutable. The failure of any one of a thousand contingencies—or occurrence of any one of a thousand possible events—may make the realization of our hopes altogether impracticable. Our hopes, then, are, in every way, uncertain. There is no solid basis upon which they can be made to rest. They arise, like the fluctuating billows of the uncertain deep. Like them they are inflated with a momentary fulness, and, like them, they sink, to be again elevated and again destroyed.

They raise us from despair and give us hopes,  
Only to plunge us in the gulph again,  
And make us doubly wretched.

And besides this—that good which is the object of hope is oftentimes and in view of all the circumstances of the case, not really a *good*. It is good as it appears to us, but not as it appears to God. It is good as it presents itself to our imperfect minds now, but not as it will afterwards be received by us in its true developments. It is good when contemplated from that point of observation where “Hope with a goodly prospect feeds the eye,” but not when it comes to be estimated from the lofty summits of an all-surveying futurity.

This leads us to observe that this destruction of our hopes must necessarily follow from the nature of that unknown future upon whose disclosures they depend. In attempting to fathom the depths of the untried futurity the mind of man transcends its powers. It estimates the future as if it were present. It draws its own inferences and conclusions as if the whole series of coming events had passed in review before it. It confidently reposes upon the infallible accuracy of its own calculations which are founded upon ignorance, conducted in doubt, and sure to betray. And it takes for granted as an assumed datum for all its prognostications, the certain continuance of life which yet may at any moment cease.

Whether therefore we consider the nature of man himself—the relation in which he stands to other men—the nature of those external objects on which hope is fixed—or that unknown and undiscoverable future upon whose developments they depend—it is at once apparent that the hopes of man must be ever found evanescent, deceitful and liable to destruction. Now that what the reason of the case thus teaches us to expect as the inevitable result of man’s present character and destiny is actually the case, will at once appear by a reference to human life. History is little more than a record of the vain pursuits—the thwarted ambition—the disappointed expectations—the overthrow, calamity, vicissitudes and distress of individuals and of empires. Poetry is confessedly based upon this instability of earthly good. She may be personified as the genius of melancholy, seated upon the “ruins wild” of some desolated hearth; her harp is in her hand, and as the evening breeze fans her dishevelled hair, she awakes its chords to sounds of tenderness and pity. By her delineations of an ideal happiness and her pictures of unfading joy she would lift the soul above

earth's cloudy sky and mitigate the real ills of life by the contemplation of her visionary bliss, and by giving voice to that inward sense of grief which would otherwise prey upon the heart. Look round upon the nations of the earth and ascertain the history of their present empires. Who sits upon their mighty thrones? Who wields their sceptres? Do we not every where find new races of men who have dispossessed the old—new dynasties which have broken up the lines of a kingly succession whose perpetuity was regarded as fixed and certain as fate. Their unalterable laws, their immutable decrees, their invincible armies, their universal empires, their eternal dominion—have all been insufficient to withstand that mighty torrent which overwhelms in destruction the fondest hopes of man. For:

As the waters wear to pieces the stone,  
As their overflowings sweep the soil from the land,  
So consumest thou the hope of man.

Seek out upon those majestic cities on whose erection were lavished the riches of the world, whose strength was as the strength of mountains, and whose overthrow was deemed among the most impossible of all events. Where now are Thebes, and Ninevah and Babylon, and Tyre, and Persepolis, and Petra that builded herself on the very clefts of the rocks? "As the crumbling mountain dissolveth and the rock mouldeth away from his place," so have they passed away. Their glory has vanished, their memory is forgotten, and their name and their memorial have perished with the hopes that once clustered so thickly around them.

Nay, my hearers, you have but to make a survey of any existing community to have the truth of this melancholy picture fully confirmed. Who, half a century ago, were the rich, the fashionable and the leading members of society? Will you not find, too frequently their survivors, reduced to circumstances of hard necessity? Who are now the possessors of wealth, and honor and elevated station? Are they not those who have risen to eminence upon the advancing tide of fortune? Revisit the place of your birth after a few years' absence, and will you not find yourself as in a strange land? Inquire after the associates of your early boyhood and how many tales of disappointment and sorrow will their history unfold? Recall the scenes through which you yourselves have passed—the visions of youth—the ambitious dreams of maturer years—the expectation of a near and certain happiness which at a later period you confidently indulged—who does not weep over

buried joys? Who ever realized in manhood the anticipations of boyhood? Is not the present a perfect contrast to the plans and prognostications of the past? Do we not every one of us bear testimony to the impotence, the ignorance, and the insufficiency of man, and to the vanity of all earthly hopes?

II. Let us, then, in the second place, attempt to fathom this mystery and to collect together those rays of truth which are thrown upon this condition of man when received in reference to the overruling providence of God. In the conduct of the affairs of men—and in the disappointment of all human expectations—God is represented as the agent. "Thou destroyest the hope of man."

Are we then to understand that human life is conducted upon a system of fatality or that God as an omnipotent and irresistible Sovereign by the mere exercise of his arbitrary will, orders the affairs of men? No! by no means. Fatality excludes all recognition of a superintending mind or of justice and mercy, wisdom, goodness and truth as the attributes of that mind. It refers all events to the fountain of absolute power, inherent in the very nature of things, and working by their sole instrumentality. The doctrine of a divine, disposing providence as received by christians is infinitely removed from such fatalism. It recognizes every possible event, as a component part of that grand and universal system, over which God presides, and which, in the combined exercise of all his glorious and benign attributes, he makes to work together for the accomplishment of the best ends. Nothing happens by chance. Nothing proceeds from blind fate. Nothing arises from uncontrolled and arbitrary destiny. Divine justice invades not human freedom, nor is the liberty of man controlled by the divine governance. Mercy rejoices in co-operating with human weakness. Unerring wisdom directs and regulates all events; while omnipotent energy secures the best ultimate and everlasting good. God therefore is not an inexorable tyrant, but an all wise and pre-scient father. He is not the despot but the wise governor of the nations. He is not unguided by law but is on the contrary in all things governed by infinite wisdom and by infinite goodness. God is a Sovereign—the Supreme Lord and ruler, possessing all authority in heaven and on earth without control from any other being. God is omnipotent, and therefore having unlimited and infinite power is able to do whatsoever seemeth to him good.



But then God is also infinitely just and holy and wise and merciful, and we are therefore assured that while He *can* do all things, He *will* do all things wisely and well.

The apparent incongruities in the present dispensations of divine providence and this destruction of all man's fairest and fondest hopes is a subject of great moment—of great obscurity, but nevertheless susceptible, we think, of very clear illustration. The confusion is only apparent and not real. It is founded upon our ignorance and not upon the true facts in the case.

Such confusion and uncertainty, you will observe, is not found to exist in inanimate nature. Here all is order, regularity and system, so that we can calculate the future and act upon the certainty of its coming changes. And yet even in nature whenever our knowledge is imperfect, her laws become involved in mystery and the occurring phenomena seems to be unregulated and in utter confusion. It is hence apparent that all seeming confusion in the conduct of the affairs of God's moral kingdom arises from our imperfect understanding of its nature and its principles. We look upon the vast machinery of God's wide and universal providence. We see ten thousand wheels, and wheels within wheels, all in busy revolution. Instead of the uniformity and necessity of natural causes we perceive men as free agents, apparently controlling the changes that ensue. Thus regarding mere visible and secondary causes, and being altogether unable to comprehend the invisible and great first cause we are ready to regard as without order and void, what in its true relations would appear to be consistent and harmonious.

We are thus led to another observation which will go far to unravel this labyrinthine maze. It is the very fact, already established, that human beings are rational, moral, accountable and free. God's disposing providence is therefore directed towards them as such. But as the actions of men, however to the view of omniscience they are certain, are toward mortal comprehension among the most contingent of events, and, to any considerable extent, altogether undiscoverable and incalculable—it must necessarily follow that the whole scheme of divine providence which depends upon them, and is made up in part by these concurring elements, will appear to us as equally dark, confused, and uncertain.

Another observation here arises. God's providence is not to be estimated by any exclusive reference to isolated or individual cases, but only as it comprehends the entire system.

God is moral governor not of me, or of you or of any number, but of all men, and of all beings throughout the wide universe. He must of course direct every thing with a view to the best interests of that universe. And since we are utterly incompetent, in any given case, to decide what is or is not accordant with this universal good, it must follow that our judgment or reference to individual events will be in all cases necessarily fallacious. The very event we deplore and at whose occurrence we are staggered and confounded may constitute a link in some golden chain by which the welfare of millions is bound together.

Besides, as has been seen, the very objects on which men ground their confident hopes are oftentimes sinful and injurious or altogether beyond their proper sphere. It thus becomes necessary for the real good of such individuals, and for the true welfare of others connected with them, that such objects should be withheld and their enjoyment prevented. Such hopes are wisely and mercifully frustrated. God destroys all such hopes of vain men, and all the vain and sinful hopes of every man. Such hopes as would be injurious to God's children, to His church and to His cause, or as would interfere with His wise arrangements, God scatters as the chaff before the wind. He thus gives wings to riches, and plants a thorn in the side of the ambitious, and disperses the gatherings of the covetous, and levels the palaces of the great.

This apparent mystery and severity of divine providence arises further from the character of God as God. He is incomprehensible by us and past finding out in His nature, character, attributes, or ways. There is an infinite disproportion between God's actions and our ideas. His purposes of wisdom or equity of goodness or mercy in any particular dispensation, we cannot discover. And while the end and design which God has in view are hidden among the secret things which belong only to the Lord how can those proceedings which conspire to such ends be otherwise than obscure, perplexing and seemingly contradictory. Who hath known the mind of the Lord or who hath been His counsellor? As the heavens are higher than the earth so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts saith the Lord.

But what is most important to be observed is, that while our ideas and hopes are founded upon the supposition that we stand toward God in the natural relation of unfallen creatures, God directs all his dispensations toward the children of men

with a single and a constant view to our present fallen and sinful state—that, as it regards the wicked, their designs may be thwarted—that, as it regards the righteous, they may be disciplined and prepared for a better state—and that, as it regards all, they may be continually reminded of the vanity.—the sinfulness and the unsatisfactionness of all sublunary good.

As the wise disposes of all events God therefore destroys the hopes of men because those hopes are grounded upon an ignorant misconception of our own best interest, and of the true welfare of God's moral empire—and because our views of what is expedient or proper in any given circumstances are based upon narrow, selfish and partial and arrogant presumptions. The cause of all such disappointments is to be found, therefore, not in God but in man—not in the disorder of the divine procedure but in the short sighted policy of the creature—who looks only to the means of his present gratification while God has regard to the permanent and best good of every individual and of all worlds.

We may therefore consider all sudden and overwhelming calamities and of the destruction of earthly hopes as intended to recall our minds to the solemn and too much forgotten fact that God reigneth and ruleth amongst the inhabitants of the earth as well as among the armies of heaven. Strange it is that any additional evidence should be necessary to impress upon our minds a truth in itself so sublime, and in the lustre which it throws over the whole creation so resplendent and glorious. Whether we look to the heavens—we behold in their order and beauty the glory of God—or to the earth we see in the whole system of its laws the evident impress of the divine wisdom and goodness. And yet, because of that very system by which all things are carried on,—that certainty with which all events follow their respective causes—and that silence and stillness with which the movements of the divine providence are conducted—there is generated a sceptical unbelief in any presiding, intelligent, and governing mind. That very certainty and regularity in the affairs of men which are essential to the existence of any permanent society, and which God, therefore, in His infinite goodness has so generally secured, is made the reason for denying His existence altogether, for rejecting His interposition or control, and for living as atheists in the world.

Now it is to meet this sceptical tendency of the human mind to refer the uniformity of nature to some blind and unintelli-

gent fatality or chance, and to direct the attention of His creatures to the numerous proofs of His assured existence and government, that God allows events to happen which baffle all human calculation, confound all carnal wisdom—and destroy all sublunary hopes. And just as the interest and attention of men are attracted to the study of astronomy and God's physical laws, by the occurrence of phenomena of a rare and unusual order; so would God invite the consideration of His creatures to the laws of His moral kingdom by some overwhelming and unanticipated calamity. God now addresses us through the understanding and not through the senses. He speaks as unto wise men and not any longer as unto children. He is no longer heard as by some audible voice—or seen as in some burning bush—or listened to as when He uttered His voice amid the thunders of Sinai—or made manifest, as when the man's hand paralyzed the awe struck monarch. But God is just as certainly most high over all the earth,—the God in whose hand our breath is and whose are all our ways—now as he was in ancient times. But for proof that God is the one Law-giver who is able to save and to destroy, who maketh sore and bindeth up, who woundeth and His hands make whole—we are now to look—not for any supernatural, revelations, but to the extraordinary events of His daily providence. When we find Nebuchadnezzar in the very height of his glory admonished by a sudden obscuration of that glory, and when at the appointed time, with the words of exultation on his lips, we behold the might of his power and the honour of his majesty departing from him—we are required to believe with holy writ that the matter is by the decree of the watchers, and the demand by the word of the Holy Ones; to the intent that the living may know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men. Now just in the same way and by the same conclusions of necessary reason “the Lord is now known by the judgments which he executeth.” When we see, as in the case of the late emperor of France, one who may be regarded in comparison with hereditary princes as “the basest of men”—by a series of events which transcend all ordinary occurrence and which taken together appear to be guided by a supernatural influence, raised to that proud eminence where he shed terror upon all the nations of the earth. And when we behold this same individual after so many miraculous achievements and so many hair-breadth escapes, and at a time when his prospect of victory was brighter than on many an eventful day when his sun rose

ascendant through the storm of an impenetrable darkness—when we behold him thus humbled with defeat—seized as a prisoner—abandoned by his troops—and in the eye of the whole world bound as a victim to a lonely and barren rock of the ocean. Surely in this wonderful history the interposition of the Most High as ruler in the kingdom of men is just as necessary to account for the otherwise inexplicable phenomena as in the case of the Babylonish despot.

And similar therefore must be our conclusions from the reasonable interpretation of those daily occurring events which, from our inability to trace them up to their certain causes, or otherwise to explain, we term mysteries of Providence.

My brethren let me commend this fruitful subject of practical instruction to your most attentive consideration, both in its natural and individual application. Wonderful has been the history—unparalleled the progress—and glorious is the future destiny of this great republic. Plucked as a healthful branch from the most fruitful and luxuriant of all trees, by God's own hand it was planted in this untrodden wilderness. The dews of heaven have watered it—and God Himself, as the good husbandman, has watched over and preserved it. He prepared room before it, and did cause it to take deep root, and it filled the land. The hills are covered with the shadow of it and the boughs thereof are like the goodly cedars. She sends out her boughs unto the sea and her branches unto the mighty rivers of the West. This is the Lord's doing and it is marvellous in our eyes. The hand of the Lord was in all this and for our instruction and as an example to the world has God thus made bare His arm and declared His mighty works unto this people.

Let then this nation know and consider her origin—the source of her present greatness—the conditions upon which hang her coming destinies—and the consequent responsibilities under which she lies to acknowledge, fear and honor God. Let the Lord be known by the judgments which he executeth. Let him be recognized and adored as “the One Law-giver who is able to save and to destroy.” Let our minds be turned away from that atheistic and excessive idolatry which is by all parties, given to the virtues, the talents, the achievements, and the wisdom of man; and let us be taught that it is not by might, nor by power, nor by wisdom nor by the skill and cunning of man, apart and by themselves considered, but that it is by righteousness alone any nation is exalted, or permanently secured.

But we must forbear. The hope of man—the hope of all men—the vain hopes even of the good and the wise—all the hopes which centre as their object and their end upon the creature or upon any created good shall be destroyed.

Whether it be pleasure it shall vanish as the morning cloud and the early dew. Whether it be honour it shall burst like the bubble upon the stream. Whether it be fame it shall be found vain as the empty sound and false as the deceiving heart. Whether it be riches they shall take to themselves wings and flee away. Whether it be knowledge and learning these also shall perish. Whatever, in short, in the world or the things of the world may attract, and engage our hearts, shall be destroyed. Though apparently firm and well grounded as the everlasting hills yet shall they waste away “as the crumbling mountain dissolveth, and the rock mouldeth away from his place.” Though the objects of our hopes may be enduring as the rocks and stones of the earth—yet

As the waters wear to pieces the stones from the land,  
As their overflowings sweep the soil.

So are the hopes of man consumed. Such, O man, is thy condition and destiny. Such is the unalterable nature of all sublunary hopes, and earth-born wishes. Brethren, let no man deceive you by vain and foolish fancies. Though your heart be hard as the nether mill stone. Though you stand in your pride like a mountain. Though you bare your heart against the divine vengeance as an invulnerable rock. Depend upon it you shall yet give way when it may be too late. In God's hand there is a hammer with which He can break even the rock in pieces and shiver the hardest stone. Your proud hopes shall perish. Your loftiest looks shall be brought low. Your most gorgeous palace, shall be overthrown and laid in the dust. The rays of darkness will come upon us all. The storms of adversity will burst in thunders upon your path, and you will know that the Lord He is God when He lays His vengeance upon you. For it is appointed unto all men once to die and after death the judgment.

But there is a hope which shall not be destroyed—which is stronger than mountains—more lasting than the everlasting hills—and more durable than stones themselves. The mountains may crumble and decay—the land yield to the wasting torrent—the stones themselves be overcome—and all earthly good perish—but this hope remaineth firm and abiding. It is

the hope of the christian—the hope which is in Christ—the hope of the gospel—a good hope through grace. This hope is full of immortality and, in the measure of its promised blessings, past finding out. This hope is sure and it is steadfast. It is fastened by that chain of divine purpose and mercy which all earth and hell cannot sever, and it is anchored within the veil, in that rock of ages which shall remain when moon and stars and all else shall pass away.

It was this which arose as the star of Bethlehem upon that night of storm and tempest, when the foundering bark of a nation's hopes, driven upon the rock, was battered by the irresistible breakers. The thought that our late president had been led to cherish the christian's hope—that he gave daily evidence of a change of feelings and of views—that his first act on returning to his presidential residence was an act of prayer—that his first purchase was a Bible—that his first determination was to profess the christian religion and enrol himself under the christian banner—this it is which sheds a ray of light over the otherwise impenetrable gloom of this dark dispensation and covers as with a celestial bow this destruction of the hopes of man.

I confess that to this hope my mind involuntarily and constantly turns when I bring to view the eventful transition of this honoured personage from time to eternity—and from the chief seat of executive authority on earth, to the bar of heaven's judgment before which all must alike stand. Nor do I at all doubt but that in that closing scene of his earthly drama however General Harrison may have thought upon the events of the past or upon the anticipated glories of the future—he turned away from all other considerations to this unspeakable gift of God to man. Insignificant to him were then the riches—the honour—the fame—that cometh from man. But infinitely momentous and important to him were the favour of God and the honour that cometh from Him. And while millions were ready to celebrate his happiness in his pre-eminent success—sure we are that to his mind the only desirable object of hope was the blessedness of that man whose sins are covered and to whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity but imputeth righteousness without works.

Let him then though dead yet speak unto you my dying yet immortal hearers. Let his voice reach you from the eternal world, and by its loud utterance of the nothingness and vanity of all earthly hopes, and the transcended value of the hope of

everlasting life break the spell of your enchantment and awake you to the due consideration of your danger and your destiny. Turn—turn my brethren from the false glare of ambition—the deceitful splendour of gaiety and fashion—the flickering light of short lived sensuality or appetital indulgence—and from all the perishable objects of human wishes, and “incarnate not your sublime hopes on the dust which you trample under your feet.” You are now brethren but on your pilgrimage. You are surrounded by phantoms and vain shadows. The realities are now invisible and future. They are indiscernible to the eye of flesh and can only be perceived by that inward presentiment which God implants within the believing heart. Seize then by the arm of faith that olive branch of peace and hope, and celestial joy which is borne to you over the waters of destruction by the heavenly dove of God’s free and infinite mercy.

And may God thus enable us all to profit by this bereaving dispensation and to His name shall be all the praise.







ARTICLES

ON

# BAPTISM

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## ARTICLES ON BAPTISM.

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### INFANT BAPTISM.

The argument for infant baptism may be presented in different lights, as we look at it from various positions.

There is one general view of the subject which, to our minds, is well adapted to satisfy every unprejudiced mind. I will give it in the words of the martyr Reformer, Philpot, from the Parker Society edition of his works.

“The Catholic truth delivered unto us by the Scriptures plainly determineth, that all such are to be baptized, *as whom God acknowledgeth for his people*, and vouches them worthy of sanctification and remission of sins. Therefore, since that infants be in the number or scroll of God’s people, and be partakers of the promise by their purification in Christ, it must needs follow thereby, that they ought to be baptized as well as those that can profess their faith; for we judge the *people of God as well by the free and liberal promise of God, as by the confession of faith*. For to whomsoever God promiseth Himself to be their God, and whom He acknowledgeth for His, those no man without great impiety may exclude from the number of the faithful. But God promiseth that He will not only be the God of such as do profess Him, but also of infants, promising them His grace and remission of sins, as it appeareth by the words of the covenant made unto Abraham, ‘I will set my covenant between thee and me, (saith the Lord,) and between thy seed after thee in their generations, with an everlasting covenant, to be thy God and the God of thy seed after thee.’ To the which covenant circumcision was added, to be a sign of sanctification as well in children as in men; and no man may think that this promise is abrogated with circumcision and other ceremonial laws; *for Christ came to fulfil the promises, and not to dissolve them*. Therefore in the Gospel He saith of infants, (that is, of such as believe not,) ‘let thy little ones come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of heaven.’ Again, ‘It is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish.’ Also, ‘he that receiveth one such little child in my name, receiveth me. Take heed, therefore, that ye despise not one of these babes: for I tell you, their angels do continually see in

heaven my Father's face.' And what may be said more plainer than this? 'It is not the will of the heavenly Father that the infants should perish.' Whereby we may gather that He receiveth them freely unto this grace, although as yet they confess not their faith. Since then, that the word of the promise, which is contained in baptism, pertaineth as well to children as to men, why should the sign of the promise, which is baptism in water, be withdrawn from children when Christ Himself commanded them to be received of us, and promiseth the reward of a prophet to those that receive such a little infant, as He for an example did put before His disciples?

"The gospel is more than baptism; for Paul saith, 'the Lord sent me to preach the Gospel and not to baptize.' Not that he denied absolutely that he was sent to baptize, but that he preferred doctrine before baptism; for the Lord commanded both to the apostles. But children be received by the doctrine of the Gospel of God, and not refused; therefore what person being of reason may deny them baptism, which is a thing lesser in the Gospel? *For in the sacraments be two things to be considered, the thing signified and the sign; and from the thing signified in baptism children are not excluded. Who therefore may deny them the sign, which is baptism in water?* St. Peter could not deny them to be baptized in water, to whom he saw the Holy Ghost given, which is the certain sign of God's people: for he saith in the Acts, 'May any body forbid them to be baptized in water, who have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?' Therefore St. Peter denied not baptism to infants, for he knew certainly, both by the doctrine of Christ and by the covenant which is everlasting, that the kingdom of heaven pertaineth to infants.

"Even so faithful people which were converted . . . . when they understood their children to be counted among the people of God, and that baptism was the token of the people of God, they procured also their children to be baptized."

T. S.

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#### THE WESTMINSTER ASSEMBLY AND BAPTISM.

*Mr. Editor:* My attention has been called to an article and a P. S. (like the tail of a comet, as "threatening as the article itself.") in "*The Christian Index*," upon my former statement

as to the action of the Westminster Assembly on the subject of Baptism.

There is certainly no lack of confidence in the writer, and if dogmatism and assertion could determine a question of history or of lexicography, then are they here indubitably established.

I am informed that I was "*most shamefully imposed upon* by my informant," in supposing that the Rev. Mr. Kirkpatrick *could* state that the Assembly debated "whether baptism by sprinkling is lawful and proper," "BECAUSE HE holds that there cannot be any such thing as baptism by sprinkling. The absurdity of such an idea makes it perfectly inadmissible." The Westminster Assembly *could not*, therefore, even question whether sprinkling is the scriptural—the lawful and sufficient—mode of administering baptism, *because* Mr. K. is of opinion that to suppose this is an absurdity. *The great majority* of christians throughout the world, embracing the most learned and pious men of the present and past ages of the church, are of opinion that sprinkling is a scriptural, lawful, and sufficient mode of baptism; and a rapidly increasing number are of opinion that SPRINKLING IS THE ONLY MODE OF BAPTISM WARRANTED BY SCRIPTURE LANGUAGE, PRECEPT AND EXAMPLE—and yet because this writer is of a contrary opinion, "it is an absurdity" to suppose the members of the Westminster Assembly "*could*" have entertained a question upon the subject. This surely is infallibility and dogmatism worthy of a Pope.

Mr. K. has no authority for stating what that Assembly did or did not think upon this subject, except what Lightfoot has preserved. This he admits. It will not avail, therefore, with any candid inquirer, to say that "the absurdity of an idea makes it inadmissible"—that "there cannot be any such thing as baptism by sprinkling"—that the controversy "is a wonderful discovery of the sixteenth century"—that this is "an absurdity *not to be tolerated*"—that this "Dr. S. knows just as well as he knows that two and two make four, if he knows anything about the original word"—that the idea is too supremely ridiculous to be admitted for a moment"—and to bravado about "reckless assertions," "common sense," and "sane minds." *The question is not one of opinion, assertion, or argument, but one of simple fact.* What did the Westminster Assembly do in this matter?

One thing is very clear. That Assembly prepared and published a Directory for Baptism, in which they instruct the churches that CHILDREN are to be *baptized*, and that after giving some "instruction touching the institution, nature, use, and ends

of the sacrament," &c., the minister "is to BAPTIZE the child with water, which for the manner of doing it IS NOT ONLY LAWFUL, but sufficient and expedient to be BY POURING OR SPRINKLING of the water on the face of the child."—[Directory, 1646, 4to.]

This is what the Westminster Assembly *did*, as a matter of fact, *actually do*. And as persons who had been brought up in the Church of England, they had no discovery to make (as is most gratuitously affirmed,) in coming to this conclusion, since it had been the *law* in that Church since A. D. 1281, that "the priest shall dip the child" . . . "if the godfathers shall certify him that the child may well endure it; but if they certify that the child is weak, it shall suffice to pour water upon it."—[See Burns' Ecclesiastical Law, 7th Ed., vol. 1, p. 110.]

As it is thus manifest that, absurd or not absurd, the Assembly *could* debate the question "is baptism by sprinkling lawful and proper," the query is, did they as a matter of fact do so?

Lightfoot, *the only authority* in the case, as is admitted by Mr. K., positively affirms that they did. "Then," says he, "we fell upon the work of the day, which was about BAPTIZING 'of the child, whether to dip him or sprinkle,' and this proposition 'it is lawful and sufficient to besprinkle the child,' had been canvassed, and was ready now to vote."

Thus is it proved that the Westminster Assembly not only did debate the question of the lawfulness of baptizing by sprinkling, but that they actually and positively decided that sprinkling is not only the lawful mode of baptizing, but is "sufficient and expedient."

On this question the Assembly had a long debate. Why? Dr. Lightfoot, who is *the only extant authority* in the case, tells us very explicitly why. "Whereupon," says he, "it was fallen upon, *sprinkling being granted*. WHETHER DIPPING SHOULD BE TOLERATED WITH IT. . . . After long dispute . . . for so many were unwilling to have DIPPING EXCLUDED . . . it was at last put to the question," &c. This was the reason, according to Lightfoot, (and no one else knows anything in the case,) why there was a long debate, and why there were 24 to 25, "THE 24 FOR THE RESERVING OF DIPPING, AND THE 25 AGAINST IT."

Such, Mr. Editor, is the plain and evident statement of this matter, as found in Dr. Lightfoot; and whatever may be his "unhallowed and false assertions, and which Dr. S. appears to endorse with a zest amounting even to greediness"—they are



the only assertions now extant in reference to this debate; and all the affirmations and arguments of Mr. K. as to what must have been the nature and cause of the debate, are perfectly beside the question of fact.

There are many points in this article which I would feel called upon very openly and confidently to contradict, were they not irrelevant to the question at stake. "Pedobaptist brethren" do not, as is affirmed, frequently "preach" in favor of the lawfulness or propriety of dipping. "All, all the more learned, pious and candid of the Pedobaptists" would not, as is here declared, "unhesitatingly admit that to *dip* is the primary and proper meaning of the word baptize, and that dipping was the Apostolic practice." "Macknight and Campbell" are not "among the learned and pious," nor is Dr. Chalmers *any authority* upon a question of exegetical or historical research. The Old Testament is, I believe, the very best and only *authoritative* guide, next to the New, for determining the *usus loquendi* of the word baptize, and the true and only proper purport, nature, and mode of baptism. Sprinkling and pouring I believe to have been THE ONLY mode of baptism under the Old Testament economy, and the ONLY method applied to our Saviour, to infants, and to adults, by John the Baptist and the Apostles. Immersion I believe to have come into the Church with naked baptism, and all the other heathen and Polish ceremonies with which Scripture baptism was early encrusted. The original meaning of the word baptize, as used by the Holy Ghost, through inspired men of God, and even by profane writers, is not to dip, but is in the former case to pour and sprinkle, and in the latter to pour, to sprinkle, to dip, and various other acts. And if dipping is essential to baptism, as Baptists affirm, then there never was an individual yet who was truly baptized, since even in immersion churches the individual immerses his own body in the pool or river up to the middle, and has only his head and shoulders *turned under, but not dipped or immersed* in the water. So that no part of his body is really and truly baptized.

In conclusion, I would say, in reply to Mr. K.'s cautionary advice, that I would much rather "undertake to defend all or the hundredth part, of the improper conduct of our brethren of that day," than "all, or the hundredth part, of the improper conduct" of the Anabaptists of a former period.

THOMAS SMYTH.

N. B. Should the Index and the Southern Baptist publish my original article on this subject, then you might, Mr. Editor, *generously* allow three columns for one by admitting this lengthened reply.

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#### THE ALLEGED DECREASE OF INFANT BAPTISM.

The cause of *ducking grown persons* (we use the words as the only proper contrast to the contemptuous nickname ascribed to us by the editors of the Southern Baptist,) is based essentially upon the letter which killeth, and not upon the Spirit which giveth life.

Of this we have a striking example in a long article inserted in the above paper by one who has "gone under the water," and been *ducked* after having received "baby sprinkling," and who seems desirous therefore that others should submit to the same "ordinance of man."

In this article it is gravely attempted to prove that infant baptism is on the *decrease* because of the small number of reported baptisms in the printed minutes of the General Assembly of our Church, compared with the number of members in many particular churches.

Now on this argument we would observe that it is very inconclusive. It is so, 1st. Because the number of children baptized may be necessarily less during one year than another: 2d. Because there may be, as there undoubtedly is, great negligence in making up an accurate record and report: 3d. Because there may be typographical error in the printing of the figures, as in the case of one church mentioned, where the number six ought to have been at least sixteen, as there have been at least 12 baptisms in it within six months; and 4th. Because a real decrease of *infant* baptism would be shown by the real increase of *adult* baptisms in the same report, which is however not the case.

The foundation of the argument therefore is baseless, and only shows how eager "the friends of adult ducking" are to "compass sea and land to make one proselyte." It conveys however an admonition to all our pastors to be more careful in reporting all the baptisms, both white and coloured, which have taken place in their congregations.

The same paper feels called upon to vindicate their denomination against the "charge of being remiss in the religious training of their children." While doing so, they say:

“There is one body of christians that we candidly confess surpasses us in fidelity to the young. We mean the Presbyterians. To no other religious society do we feel under obligation to make this concession, and there are probably those who will question the justice of even this acknowledgment. Whatever may be the cause or causes that have secured for our Presbyterian brethren an honorable pre-eminence in this department of christian duty, one thing is very clear—*Infant Sprinkling is not that cause.* If it were, then would Episcopalians be in advance of them, and Methodists not behind them, whilst, in fact, both are quite as far behind as ourselves.

“We have said this much, not to excuse Baptists for their sins, but to repel an unjust insinuation sometimes made against us, and upon the fallacy of the argument in favor of sprinkling infants, which commonly goes along with that insinuation.”

We leave our Episcopal and Methodist brethren to profit by the lesson given to them, and trust our own friends will endeavor by increased devotion to the religious training of the young to deserve the encomium, and maintain the supremacy here generously awarded them. As however we can see no manner of reason in the repudiation here given to the moral influence of infant baptism as a motive to diligence in the work of religious education, we must maintain that the superior attention given to this duty by the Presbyterian church is owing VERY GREATLY to her high sense of THE MORAL AND SPIRITUAL BENEFITS AND OBLIGATIONS OF THAT MOST HOLY AND DIVINE INSTITUTION—INFANT BAPTISM. By this she regards every child as constituted a member of the catholic visible church, and a disciple in the school of Christ, and whom therefore she is bound to “teach all things whatsoever Christ has commanded.” Infant baptism therefore is not a mere controversial or theoretic dogma—a standard about which to rally and to fight—“it brings much advantage every way.”

We are persuaded that, rightly observed, the ordinance is rich in practical piety, and eminently fitted to endear that Redeemer whom it so vividly exhibits as the Saviour of the little children, the shepherd carrying the lambs in his bosom. Of this we give an extract from the Life of that eminent Presbyterian, Philip Henry:

“In dealing with his children about their spiritual state, he took hold of them very much by the handle of their infant baptism, and frequently inculcated that upon them, that they were born in God’s house, and were betimes dedicated and

given up to him, and, therefore, were obligated to be his servants. Psalm cxvi. v. 16, 'I am thy servant, because the son of thine handmaid.' This he was wont to illustrate to them by the comparison of taking a lease of a fair estate for a child in the cradle, and putting his life into it. The child then knows nothing of the matter, nor is he capable of consenting; however, then he is maintained out of it, and hath an interest in it; and when he grows up, and becomes able to choose, and refuse, for himself, if he go to his landlord, and claim the benefit of the lease, and promise to pay the rent, and do the service, well and good, he hath the benefit of it, if otherwise, it is at his peril. Now, children, he would say, our great Landlord was willing that your lives should be put into the lease of heaven and happiness, and it was done accordingly, by your baptism, which is the seal of the righteousness that is by faith; and by that it was assured to you, that if you would pay the rent and do the service, that is, live a life of faith and repentance and sincere obedience, you shall never be turned off the tenement; but if now you dislike the terms, and refuse to pay this rent, (this chief rent, so he would call it, for it is no rack,) you forfeit the lease. However, you cannot but say that you had a kindness done you, to have your lives put into it. Thus did he frequently deal with his children, and even travail in birth again to see Christ formed in them, and from this topic he generally argued; and he would often say, 'If infant baptism were more improved, it would be less disputed.'

And in conformity with the foregoing thus writes Philip Henry's son, the illustrious commentator:

"I cannot but take occasion to express my gratitude to God for my infant baptism; not only as it was an early admission into the visible body of Christ, but as it furnished my pious parents with a good argument (and, I trust, through grace a prevailing argument) for an early dedication of my ownself to God in my childhood.

"If God has wrought any good work upon my soul, I desire, with humble thankfulness, to acknowledge the moral influence of my infant baptism upon it."

To these we only subjoin at present an extract from the journal of a late co-presbyter, the devout and truth-loving John Macdonald.

"*Sabbath, November 24.*—This day, in the kind providence of God, have I been permitted and enabled to dedicate my little offspring to my covenant God in baptism; and for this I give

thanks. O what a privilege is it! I trust I have had communion with the Lord in this deed, if ever I had it. Many encouragements have I felt, and no misgivings as to infant baptism in its faithful form. Yes, I praise God for such an ordinance. I know God's willingness to bless infants. I know that He did of old receive them into His covenant by seal. I know also that infants are capable of enjoying the blessings of the covenant of grace—that the want of faith in those who are incapable of faith is just as applicable to salvation as to baptism, and therefore constitutes no argument against it. I believe that the seal of the covenant will be just as valid to the child when it afterwards believes, as if baptized when adult, that it is a great privilege to have it externally united with the Church, and for a parent to say, 'This, my child, has been solemnly and publicly given to God, it is federally holy.' I believe that the commission of Christ included the children of believers, and that the apostles baptized such; and I know that the holiest of men in all ages have had communion with their God in this ordinance. But why enlarge? Oh! my Lord, I bless thee for saving me from falling into the cold and forbidding doctrines of antipædo-baptism! O give me grace to improve thine ordinance! Look in mercy on my little Catharine. Oh! Spirit of the Lord, inhabit her, regenerate her! I have given her to thee—make her thine own! Bless mother, father, and daughter. Oh! bless us! All glory be to God!

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#### DEW DROPS OF HUMANITY.

*The Substance of an Address Delivered by the Rev. Dr. Smyth, Charleston, S. C., at the Baptism of His Three Grandchildren—the Children of Three Different Sons.*

A more beautiful analogy was never formed than that drawn by the Holy Spirit in the 110th Psalm—where, in depicting the future triumphs of the kingdom of Christ, the drops of dew in the womb of the morning are compared to the dew drops of humanity created by the wonder-working power and wisdom of God in the womb of Providence. Each particular drop of dew, how small and yet how perfect, containing as it were a diamond in a crystal of light! How pure amidst the impurities of surrounding earthliness! How gladsome and refreshing to every drooping herb and flower! How dark and opaque, and

yet how capable when the sun shines upon it, of becoming brilliant with beauty, and of reflecting a full-orbed picture of the heavens above it! How evanescent, "the morning cloud and the early dew soon vanishing away," and yet when it does expire, how is it attracted upwards until absorbed in the bosom of heaven's own light! In like manner, each individual dew drop of humanity—how little and yet how complete; a perfect microcosm of full developed humanity! How comparatively pure, gentle, and lovely, in contrast with the ugliness of matured depravity! With what gladness is it welcomed into every household, as its life, light, and joy! How mortal, and yet how immortal! How earthly, and yet how heavenly! How voiceless and inarticulate, and yet there is no speech or language where their voice is not heard—their sound has gone forth into all the earth, and their words unto the end of it, proclaiming the glory and the grace of God their heavenly Father! How frail and fleeting are they, coming forth like a flower, and in great part soon cut off and vanishing away, as in the gracious purpose of God it is so ordered, for the very end of securing their everlasting salvation. When they do, therefore, leave our earthly homes, how bright and blessed is the hope with which we follow them to their more blessed home in their Father's house with many mansions!

God has therefore led us to regard these little dew drops of humanity as of transcendent interest and importance, containing as they do within themselves in touching and impressive form, the most practical and necessary lessons both as to His nature and as to that fatherly heart, which leads Him to exercise all gentleness and tender mercy towards those who love and trust Him. Nor is the instruction imparted by these little ones accidental, or even incidental to that law of humanity according to which we all come into existence in the form of infancy. On the contrary, God has expressly taught us that this very law—according to which these dew drops of humanity are formed on the trees of life scattered up and down along the green pastures and quiet waters of our earthly homes—is itself ordained by Him for the express purpose that, out of the mouths of these babes and sucklings, He might perfect the praise of his glorious grace.

For would we have conveyed to us in the most expressive manner an image of the tripersonal existence in the unity of the ineffably blessed Godhead—upon which depends the whole scheme of redemption and the method by which it may become

savingly and experimentally ours—we have it exhibited in the threefold nature which enters into the complex unity and personality of each of these little ones. Would we again have brought before us in living character the most winning irresistible proofs of that heart of fatherly love by which God in Christ is reconciling the world unto Himself, not willing that any should perish but that all should come unto Him, drawn to love and trust in Him by every motive of grateful affection—behold it in all His dispensations and ways of dealing with these tender dew drops of humanity.

Why else should God have ordained that we should all come into this world in the condition of little children, but that His own delights are with these children of men—that He finds pleasure in their gentle and innocent loveliness, and looks on with admiration as these flowers expand their leaves, unfold their beauties, and exhale their fragrance? Why else should God have endowed each one of these little ones with those wonderful instincts by which they find at once rest, nurture, and quiet happiness, upon their mother's bosom? Why else should God prepare for each of these little ones a home whose atmosphere is love—where every thing has been provided for the reception of the little stranger, and where all matters are arranged so as to secure its comfort and well-being? Why else should God awaken, for every occasion requiring it, in each maternal bosom, a new-born affection which welcomes each little one to her home and heart with all its cares and responsibilities and manifold trials—an affection which knows no weariness, which gladly welcomes every self-denying and self-sacrificing service, which laughs at impossibilities, which is stronger than death, and which lives in the life and love of the little one? Why else should God encircle them with His arm of mercy, underneath His wings of love, and by such a special providence as has given rise to the universal observation that "heaven lies about us in our infancy?" Why else should the great Teacher sent from God to reveal to us His nature and His heart, so often and with such tender emphasis discourse to us of these little ones—telling us that "in heaven their angels do always behold the face of their Father;" that "it is not their Father's good pleasure that one of these little ones should perish;" and that "it would be better for a man never to have been born than to have offended one of these little ones?" Why does the Saviour so severely rebuke even His own disciples when they would

have hindered mothers, carrying their little ones in their arms, from approaching unto Him? Why, on the same occasion, does He advance towards these mothers, and, taking their little ones in His arms, bless them, and declare that of such as these His own Church both on earth and in heaven is in a large measure composed? Why, again, should he so often as it would appear, have placed a little child in the presence of His disciples, that He might thus teach them, in the most impressive and unmistakable manner, the nature of God's sovereign and gracious love in the great salvation, and the only proper and possible way in which this unspeakable gift of grace and mercy may become ours; but that children live as recipients of all parental blessing, which they can reciprocate only by their loving gratitude.

Again I ask, Why but that He may reveal to us His loving and blessed Fatherhood in Christ Jesus and the ineffable enjoyment of social communion existing between the Father, the Son, and Holy Ghost, should God bring himself down to us, so appropriately to this threefold baptism in His threefold gift of Himself to us sinful, guilty, and perishing sinners? God the Father so loving us as to give His only and well beloved Son for our redemption; God the Son so loved us as to give Himself for us; and God the Holy Ghost, the loving Spirit, so loving us in the incomprehensible mystery of His condescending grace, as to work in our hearts the experience and enjoyment of His so great salvation.

And once more, Why does God attract and unite to himself in triple bonds, these threefold united parents with their threefold offspring by all that is alluring in his nature, in their nature, and in the nature and necessities of these children, by presenting Himself in His threefold gift of Himself, under the form of that everlasting covenant now to be sacramentally sealed and ratified, which is ordered in all things and sure, which is all our salvation and all that we can desire?

Does He not in this manner adapt Himself to our human capacities and feelings, declaring to each of you parents that He will be a God to you—giving Himself to you in daily hope and fellowship, inspiring your hearts with all prayer for the spiritual well-being of these children, looking unto Him with holy confidence for that wisdom and grace which shall enable you to bring them up in His nurture and admonition as His children by covenant-adoption? And does He not declare also to each of these children, "I will be a God to you, giving unto you in present possession, a *right of property* to all the blessings of



my salvation, and giving to each of you a joyful hope, that through the faith, example, and teaching of these your parents, I will early satisfy you with a *right of actual possession* and enjoyment of them, that you may rejoice and be glad all your days, hearing my voice in the early morning and saying unto me, 'My God, my Father, wilt thou not from this time be the God and guide of my youth?' "

And what does God require, I would now ask of each of you, the united parents of these children, but that you realize in all believing faith and loving confidence your present blessed attitude before Him? Profoundly recognize the solemnity and importance of this transaction. You are now in the presence of God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. You have brought with you, in your arms of faith and hope, your threefold children to your Triune Jehovah who brought them into existence, and has since, through manifold dangers, preserved them. You have heard what God the Lord has spoken unto you. You have again received, by a fresh bestowment, His threefold gift of Himself to you and to your children. You have also now beheld God impress the seal of His holy sacrament upon these children according to His threefold offer of mercy, sprinkling them with water, and in this way receiving them visibly into the arms of His visible Church and fold on earth. Draw, then, nigh unto Him in faith, nothing doubting, nothing fearing. Only believe all these things He has promised you, and offered and bestowed upon you and upon them. As you have received these threefold precious children from your Triune covenant God, present them in your arms of faith again to Him, that He may bless you to rear them for His own service and glory. As they have been given to you for a season, and if "need be" only for a little season, so give them back to God, in this covenant of love, to be His—His supremely and His forever. As you and your children are equally helpless and dependent for all spiritual light and health and blessing on Him, cast yourselves and your children upon His mercy, that He may bestow upon you large and abundant blessings—that He may make and keep you all as His children; enable you to live, while you live, as meek followers of your Lord and Saviour; uphold and preserve you through all the dangers and temptations of life; and at last present you faultless before the presence of His triune glory, saying, in humble, adoring rapture, "Here, Lord, are we, and the children thou hast given us."



FORM

FOR THE

Solemnization of Matrimony,

ACCORDING TO

THE ORDER OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

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✓  
BY THOMAS SMYTH,  
PASTOR OF THE SECOND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH,  
CHARLESTON, S. C.

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BOSTON :  
CROCKER AND BREWSTER.  
1841.

The ceremony of marriage is a religious act; but the same act is in most christian nations made, likewise, to serve as the form of a civil contract; and civil privileges and penalties are made to depend on it. And out of this union no very serious evil perhaps has arisen, to detract from the advantages of the arrangement. [*Hind's Rise of Christianity*, vol. ii, p. 227.

The well spring of all natural delight arises from the need man has of his fellow-man, by which he is led to seek from others those things wherein the excellency of his kind doth most consist. In marriage this communion takes place more perfectly and fully than in any other mode. [See *Hooker's Eccl. Polity*, B. i, § 10, and *Coleridge*.

God has restored it to a portion of the dignity which it had from His institution in Paradise, dignified it in the Patriarchs, set forth an example of it in "Abraham His friend;" and in the pure blessings of Isaac, made its mutual love a similitude of that which He bears to His Church, and of her reverence to Him, her Head and Saviour; hallowed it yet more, in that His Son was born of the seed of David, according to the flesh; He takes us by the hand and hallows our union by the blessings of His Church; so that what man might have feared to approach, is, when "enterprised reverently, discreetly, advisedly, soberly, and in the fear of God," a continual image and representation of things Holy and Divine.—*E. Irving*.

On the law and doctrine of marriage, see *Matt. xix, 2-12. Gen. ii, 18-25. Heb. xiii, 14. 1 Cor. ch. vii.*

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DIRECTION.

N. B.—In taking their position, the man should stand on the right hand and the woman on the left.

## FORM FOR THE SOLEMNIZATION OF MARRIAGE.

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*The Company, With the Parties, Being Assembled, the Minister Shall Say,*

WE are gathered together, my friends and brethren, that in the presence and before the altar of God, we may, according to God's ordinance, unite these persons in the indissoluble bonds of wedlock. I require therefore, and charge all and each of you now present, that if you know of any impediment why they may not be thus lawfully joined together in matrimony, you do now make it known, or ever after hold your peace.\*

*No Objection Being Offered, the Minister Shall Then Make the Following Address.*

When God had created man, and would crown him with the chiefest earthly blessing, He gave him marriage; which was instituted in Paradise,—in the time of man's undepraved innocence,—when God created woman by His miraculous power,—so that humanity previously one was divided, and yet, so as by this holy bond, to be again rendered one.†

Thus was man constituted the head, protector, guardian, and friend of woman, whom he was bound to love even as his own flesh: and thus was woman given to man by his all bounteous Creator, to consummate his felicity, and to be his helper, companion, and the perennial fountain of sweet and pure delight.

Marriage was honoured by our Saviour—who came to restore corrupt nature from the ruin of the fall,—by His presence and the working of His first miracle. Thus was this endearing relation hallowed by the beginning of miracles, as well in the time of this new creation as in that of man's original formation.

Marriage is thus made honorable in all. It is consecrated by God's peculiar favour and blessing. And since by this

\*Or *this*—which should hinder this pair—this man and this woman from being united in the holy matrimony as in the presence of the great God—I charge you speak.

†A unity in duality.

sacred union, they who were aforesaid twain become, in the language of Scripture, "one flesh;" and should cleave one to another, forsaking all beside; and since it is not, by any, to be engaged in unadvisedly or lightly, but advisedly and in the fear of God; therefore should it be formed as in God's presence, and the hymenial torch be lighted at His altar.

You are now therefore to become one. One in all your temporal interests and possessions, and in the eye of the law. One in every event of life, whether prosperous or adverse; one in every condition, whether of sickness or health. One should you be in all your affections and desires, your hopes and your fears, your joys and your sorrows—walking together as fellow-travellers; helping one another as co-workers; living with each other, as heirs together of the same immortal destiny; that you may thus become partakers of the same inheritance of glory.

And may the blessing of God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, rest upon and abide with you wherever you be.  
*Amen.*

*The Minister Having Then Requested the Parties to Join Their Hands, Will Solemnly Ask Each of Them,*

Do you, who now hold each other by the hand, promise and covenant in the presence of God, and of these witnesses here assembled, that you will be to each other—*you*, a loving, faithful and affectionate husband,—and *you* a loving, faithful and dutiful wife;—and that you will love, comfort, and honor each one the other, in health and in sickness—in prosperity and adversity—and forsaking all beside, keep thee only to each other, so long as you both shall live?

*When a Ring is Used Either of the Following Forms May Be Employed.*

And as a sign and seal of this your freely and solemnly taken vow, *you* have given, and *you* now receive, and will ever wear, this ring. *Or this:*

In testimony that you, M. and N., do advisedly and solemnly ratify all that hath been declared and promised by you, do thou M. acknowledge and endow this woman as thy wife, by delivering unto her a ring in token of thy faith; and do

thou N. in like manner receive the same, as a pledge of his faith and as a witness of thy vows?\*

*The Minister Shall Then Address the Parties Severally,  
Saying,*

Do you A. B. thus promise?

Do you C. D. thus promise?

*The Parties Having Each Signified Their Assent, the Minister Shall Proceed to Say,*

Forasmuch, then, as no obstacle exists, and you have now consented together in holy wedlock, and having witnessed the same before this company, I do now pronounce you to be man and wife, in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; and whom God hath joined together, let no man put asunder.

*The Minister Shall Then Say, Let Us Pray.*

Almighty and most merciful God, our heavenly Father! We worship and adore thee, as the Creator, Preserver, and Benefactor of mankind, who in the beginning didst form man after thine own image, that he might glorify and enjoy thee for ever.

We bless thee that while in wisdom thou didst create and plentifully endow him with all bodily and spiritual gifts, thou didst in marvellous kindness consult and promise for his earthly comfort and felicity, in the institution of marriage.

Still more would we magnify and bless thy great mercy, that even in our present fallen and corrupt estate, wherein we deserve only anger and rebuke, thou still continuest to us, as a remnant of our lost and forfeited inheritance, the joys of conubial and domestic life.

Most blessed Saviour, who didst deign while Immanuel, God with us, to grace a marriage feast; we would implore the condescension of thy gracious presence on this occasion. Look down in the plentitude of thy grace and goodness upon this bridal pair, who have now, in plighted faith, made an absolute disposal of themselves, the one to the other in love, according to their own appointment. Crown their union with thy rich

\*From the Liturgy of the French Protestant Church.

favour. Bless their nuptial bands, and make them firm and abiding even unto life's end. Bless them in their persons. Bless them in their substance. Bless them in thier souls. Bless them in health and in sickness, in prosperity and adversity, in life and in death. And after death bless them with a happy reun'on in that heavenly home, where there shall be no more parting, neither sickness, sorrow, or death, and where all tears shall be wiped away from every eye.

And for all these, they mercies, we would now and ever praise thee, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, to whom be glory and honour, both now and for evermore. *Amen.*

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ADDRESS.

*The Following Address May Be Used, in Place of That Given in the Preceding Form.*

The relation of marriage which we are now about to constitute in the presence of God, and with the invocation of the Divine blessing, was established by God soon after the creation, during the state of man's innocence, in the earthly paradise. For the first benefit God gave to man was a society, and that society was a marriage. It was sanctioned by laws, and consecrated by a blessing; therefore God said, for this purpose shall a man leave his father and his mother, and cleave unto his wife, and they twain shall be one flesh.

The covenant of wedlock, which is the very bond of life, under whose united and consecrated canopy all the health and prosperity of the rising generation doth grow, solemnly recognizes the relations of the two great divisions of the human kind, and ratifies and confirms them by the laws of God and man; requiring on the part of man righteous, loving, and affectionate government; on the part of woman, duty and loving obedience in the Lord; and on the part of both, community of goods, interests, and affections.

Marriage is, therefore, between one man and one woman, as it was from the beginning, when God created them male and female—one man and one woman, that there might be one husband and one wife.



As it was thus ordained by God for the mutual help of husband and wife, this sacred obligation should be formed at the altar of piety. It should have infused into it the sweetness of affection, and be hallowed with the unction of grace; that it may prove itself to be the bond whereby you shall be bound in love and communion, in holy concord, in loving offices, in every growing and endearing regard, the one to the other. Thus shall it be found in God, the completion of your being and the fountain of joy, the solace in all earthly sorrows—the best state of preparation for the future, and for the full enjoyment of the blessedness of Christ—the restorer of our corrupt nature, who honored the nuptial rites with His presence and first miracle.

What God hath deemed it no degradation of His majesty to institute—what our Lord Jesus Christ sanctified with His presence—what the Holy Apostles pronounced to be honourable in all, and dignified by their own participation of it—do you, who are now to be united together, honour and approve in the truth, faithfulness, and oneness of a united heart, and an undivided affection one toward another. And may the blessing of that heavenly parent who ordained it—of that Divine Redeemer who re-appointed it—and of the ever blessed Spirit, the source of all grace and comfort, rest upon you and abide with you forever. *Amen.*

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#### HUGUENOT MARRIAGE SERVICE.

The following is a copy of the nuptial celebrations practised by the Huguenots of France, as drawn up by the immortal Calvin. A translation of it, with a few omissions, may, perhaps, be acceptable.

At the conclusion of the general prayer on the Lord's day, the officiating Minister having taken his station at the communion table, and the candidates for the yoke have taken theirs, he begins—

“The Great God! our Father who is in Heaven, having created man in His own image, a similitude for Himself, and gave him dominion over the beasts of the field, the fowls of the air, and the fishes of the sea, is declared to have said

within himself, 'It is not good for man to be alone,' and therefore proceeded to prepare 'an help-mate for him.'"

[Here the two accounts of the creation of woman was read. *Gen. i. and ii.*]

"'Therefore,' continues the sacred historian, 'must a man leave his father and his mother, and cleave unto his wife,' and to her only. The husband must love his wife, as Jesus loved the church, for which He laid down His life—that is unto death.

"In like manner, must the wife cleave unto the husband, and love him and abide with him in all holiness and gentleness, till death shall part them.

"From the solemnization of this ordinance, instituted by God, the husband is no longer his own; he is consecrated to his wife: he is hers; in like manner, the wife is no longer her own; she is sacred to her husband; she is his! Nor may either of them violate the sancity they owe to each other. Ye are temples of the living God; and if any one pollute those sanctuaries, him will God destroy: what God hath conjoined, may no one disjoin.

[Here *I Cor. vii.* is read, which certainly might be as well read at home.]

This over, the Minister proceeded:

"You A. and you B. are aware that the solemn contract into which you are about to enter, is the ordinance of God. Are you prepared to live together as the Most High requires, in holy bonds; in the sacred wedlock which God appointed, and Jesus honoured by His first miracle?

"As you evidently indicate by appearing, as you do appear before *this* holy congregation, to await His assent, is it your fixed intention so to live with each other?

"A. It is! "B. It is!

"Looking around on the congregation, I call, says the Minister, on every one here present who witnesses what we do; I call on you, I entreat you, I beseech you speak *now*—recollect yourselves and say—Is there any impediment which should hinder this pair; this man and this woman from being united in holy matrimony, as in the presence of the Great God? I charge you speak.

“Since there exists no obstacle to it,

“You, A. avow before God, and His holy congregation, that you have chosen this B. to be your wife! You pledge yourself to watch over, to love her, to cherish her, as a faithful and affectionate husband ought to watch over, love, and cherish, the wife of his bosom; to love with her in hallowed sanctity, constant and true to her to the last; according to the ordinance of God and the gospel!

“A. I pledge myself so to do!

“You B. vow before God, and His holy congregation, that you have chosen this A, for your husband! You pledge yourself to him—to be his help-mate; to serve and obey him in love; to be constant and true to him in every thing, as an affectionate wife ought to be, according to the ordinance of God and the gospel!

“B. I pledge myself so to do.

“Then, the Lord! the Lord God! confirms your hallowed purpose; and in His name be it accomplished; the Lord, the Lord God, who hath called you in His grace and mercy to His holy estate, pour out his Holy Spirit upon you, that you may serve Him in unity and honour with one accord.

“Amen!

“Receive the instructions above read—pronounced by Jesus—recorded by His evangelists, and know, and be sure, that as the Most High has joined your hands, He will require it of you that you keep your pledges, and live together in affection, in holiness, in peace, in unity, condescending to each other, faithful to each other, true to each other, as God hath commanded.

“Let us pray with one heart and with one soul.

“O Thou! All-powerful, All-wise, All-good, who from the beginning, didst foresee that it could not be good for man to be alone, and therefore did prepare a meet help-mate for him, and command that the two should no longer be two, but one; we humbly pray, we devoutly beseech thee, that as thou hast been pleased to call these thy servants, to the holy state of nuptial union, thou wouldst also be pleased, in thy grace and mercy, to bestow upon them the rich effusions of thy favour; that in true and holy love, in fidelity not to be shaken; in

mutual tenderness and sympathy, they may live;—subduing every evil propensity, in constant kindness and correctness, edifying each other, blessing each other, blessed by thee, as were the patriarchs of old, blessings to the community; that, nurtured and admonished in the Lord, their children may rise up to call them blessed; with them to praise and serve thee to their own good, and to the good of those around them, a general blessing!

“Here us, O Lord! God of all mercy through our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

“The Lord bless you—the Lord keep you and cause his face to shine upon you! In fulness of grace, and in all good may you live long, in holiness, in happiness.

“Amen! Amen! Amen!”

This service, says one, is beautiful; it is touching, is solemn. In every respect appropriate to the covenant contracted; the effect of which is to last to eternity; its olden ideas, and olden modes of expression, are of course modernized, but whether in olden or modern verbiage, comes from the heart—it goes to the heart, and hard must the heart be which cannot be affected by it. The practice of solemnization on the Lord’s day, is perhaps worthy of all imitation; there cannot be too many witnesses to the bond; and scarcely, under such a regime, could there be any improper marriages, nor can those who have been long wedded, be reminded of the obligation they have taken upon themselves too often. Would it not be an improvement, were the bridegroom on pronouncing, “I pledge myself so to do,” to give the bride his hand; and the bride, on her pronouncing “I pledge myself so to do,” to offer her hand and receive the ring? The ring is a sort of household pledge, it is a constant remembrance of a circle of duties, never to be interrupted but in sacrilege; never to be modified, never compromised. The Scriptures appropriate to the occasion, were better read from the pulpit before the ceremony begins. It should be as short as possible; it cannot but be painful to a blushing, timid, female to stand long in the fixed gaze of the congregation.





AN ORDER

FOR

FUNERAL SERVICES

PREPARED FOR PRIVATE USE

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BY

THOMAS SMYTH,

PASTOR OF THE SECOND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH,

CHARLESTON, S. C.

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## FUNERAL SERVICES.

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*When the corpse has been brought into the church, the service may be introduced, where time and other circumstances render it expedient, by singing a suitable hymn.*

*Then shall be read one of the following forms of scripture services, according to the age and character of the deceased.*

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FORMS OF GENERAL INTRODUCTION, OR PREFACE, TO BE READ  
BEFORE THE PARTICULAR SERVICE USED ON ANY OCCASION.

### I.

BELOVED FRIENDS AND BRETHERN: Seeing that in the midst of life we are in death; and that, in the very fulness of health and strength; we know not what a day or an hour may bring forth; it becometh us at all times to keep in mind, that God will bring us to the house appointed for all living; that so we may be led to work out our salvation with fear and trembling; and this so much the more, as we see the day approaching. Yet ought we especially to remember that we are dust, and that it is appointed unto us to die, on such an occasion as the present; when the mortal remains of a departed friend, in all their weakness and decay, are outstretched before us; when the grave is opened to receive them; and we are admonished, as by the voice of heaven, to prepare to meet our God, seeing that in such an hour as we think not, the Son of man cometh. Let us, then, humbly receive, and duly ponder upon, the declarations of God's holy word, as appropriate to this solemn occasion, which shall now be read.

### II. OR THIS.

MY BRETHERN, as God hath spoken unto us in His afflictive bereavement, may our hearts be opened to receive, with meekness, humility, and reverence, the words of that heavenly wisdom, which is profitable to direct, to comfort, and to instruct us.

## III. OR THIS.

THE providence of God, by whose appointment death cometh upon us all, has called us together at this time, that we may commit to the grave the cold remains of our departed friend. It becometh us, therefore, seriously to consider what God designs to teach us by this solemn event. For this purpose, let me bring before you some appropriate instructions from that holy word of God, by which it is our duty now to be directed and governed; as it is our destiny, that, by it, we should hereafter be judged.

## IV. OR THIS.

CHRISTIAN FRIENDS, as we have assembled together to weep and mourn for ( ) who has gone the way of all the earth, let us hear the words of heavenly wisdom, which admonish us to lay this solemn event to heart, seeing it is appointed unto all men once to die, and after that the judgment.

## FORM I.

## AN ORDER FOR THE BURIAL OF A PROFESSOR OF RELIGION.

## DIDACTIC.

MAN that is born of a woman hath but a short time to live, and is full of misery. He cometh up like a flower, and is cut down; he fleeth as it were a shadow, and never continueth in one stay. The voice said, Cry; and I said, What shall I cry? All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the grass. The grass withereth, the flower thereof fadeth, because the Lord bloweth upon it. One generation passeth away, and another generation ariseth; when a few years are come, then shall they also go the way whence they shall not return.

Man dieth, and wasteth away; yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where is he? Our fathers, where are they? the prophets, do they live for ever? There is no man that hath power over the spirit to retain the spirit; neither hath he power in the day of death; neither shall wickedness deliver those that are given to it. Surely every man is vanity. Surely every man walketh in a vain show. Surely he is disquieted in vain. He heapeth up riches, and knoweth not who shall gather them; for we

brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out.

But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also who sleep in Jesus, will God bring with Him. For this we say unto you, by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive, and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent them who are asleep. For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we who are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we be ever with the Lord. Wherefore, comfort one another with these words.

If in this, only, we had hope in Christ, we were of all men most miserable; for if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised; and if Christ be not raised, our preaching is vain, and your faith is vain also; ye are yet in your sins. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, who is the resurrection and the life; in whom he that believeth, though he were dead, yet shall he live. For we know, that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal, in the heavens. We, therefore, that are in this tabernacle, do groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed with our house which is from heaven. Therefore we are always confident, knowing that whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord. We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord.

The righteous hath hope in his death. The day of his death is better than the day of his birth. The righteous is taken away from the evil to come. Whether they live, they live unto the Lord; and whether they die, they die unto the Lord; whether they live, therefore, or die, they are the Lord's. For to this end Christ both died and rose again, and revived, that He might be Lord both of the dead and of the living. Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints. When they

walk through the valley of the shadow of death, they fear no evil; for God is with them; His rod and His staff, they comfort them. They are ransomed from the power of the grave. They are redeemed from death. Christ died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should be delivered from death.

And I heard a voice from heaven, saying, Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord, from henceforth; yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors, and their works do follow them. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall we also appear with him, in glory. There is laid up for us a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give unto all them that love his appearing. Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy; and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. Behold, I show you a mystery; we shall not all sleep; but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death! where is thy sting? O grave! where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law; but thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord; forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord. Lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh. Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning. For 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.

## FORM II.

AN ADDRESS FOR THE BURIAL OF A PROFESSOR OF RELIGION.  
EXHORTATORY.

It is better to go to the house of mourning, than to go to the house of feasting; for that is the end of all men, and the living will lay it to heart. Sorrow is better than laughter; for by the sadness of the countenance the heart is made better. Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous; nevertheless, afterwards it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness, unto them that are exercised thereby. Wherefore, lift up the hands that hang down, and the feeble knees. Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted. Comfort ye, comfort ye, my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably unto them. The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to comfort all that mourn, to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness. For this I say, brethren, the time is short; it remaineth, that both they that have wives be as though they had none; and they that weep, as though they wept not; and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not; and they that buy, as though they possessed not; and they that use this world, as not abusing it; for the fashion of this world passeth away. See, then, that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools; redeeming the time, because the days are evil; for here we have no continuing city; but we seek one to come.

\*[Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience. Behold, we count them happy who endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord. Be patient, therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts; for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh. These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having

\*May be used when christian friends are present, as an exhortation to patient resignation.

seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them. and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. Wherefore, seeing we are also compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us; looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.]

But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat; the earth, also, and the works that are therein, shall be burned up. Seeing, then, that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness; looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens, being on fire, shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt away with fervent heat. Nevertheless, we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent, that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless. The time is coming, in which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation. When the Son of man shall come in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory, and before Him shall be gathered all nations; and He shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth His sheep from the goats. And He shall set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on His right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. Then shall He say unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment; but the righteous into life eternal.

Behold, He cometh with clouds ; and every eye shall see Him, and they also who pierced Him. Abide, therefore, in Him, that when He shall appear, ye may have confidence, and not be ashamed before Him, at His coming ; that ye may have boldness in the day of judgment ; and that the trial of your faith may be found unto praise, and honor, and glory, at the appearing of Jesus Christ. For we must all stand at the judgment seat of Christ, and give account to Him, who is ready to judge the quick and the dead. The end of all things is at hand. Be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer. The time is come, when judgment must begin at the house of God ; and if it begin first at us, what shall the end be of those that obey not the gospel of God ? And if the righteous scarcely are saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear ?

We beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye be not soon shaken in mind, or troubled.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, according to His abundant mercy, hath begotten us again unto a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance, incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven. Wherefore, gird up the loins of your mind ; be sober, and hope to the end, for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. For if you believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also who sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him. At the glorious appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, we shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet our Lord in the air ; and so shall we be ever with the Lord. Wherefore, comfort one another with these words, looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.

## FORM III.

## AN ORDER FOR THE BURIAL OF A PROFESSOR OF RELIGION.

## TRIUMPHANT.

BLESSED be God, even the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath brought to light, life and immortality in the gospel, and hath saved us according to His own purpose and grace in Christ Jesus, who hath abolished death, and ransomed us from the power of the grave. God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him. He also Himself likewise took part of flesh and blood; that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death are all their lifetime subject to bondage. Therefore, we are always confident, knowing that whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord; and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.

I know that my Redeemer liveth; and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth; and though after my skin, worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God; whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another, though my reins be consumed within me. For I know in whom I have believed; and I am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him, against that day. I have fought a good fight; I have finished my course; I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing. For to me to live is Christ; and to die is gain.

O death! where is thy sting? O grave! where is thy victory? Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ.

I will behold thy face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, according to His abundant mercy, hath begotten us again unto a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance,



incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for them who are kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. Verily, there is a reward for the righteous. In thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for ever more. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun, in the kingdom of their Father. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall we also appear with Him in glory. We shall be where He is, to behold His glory, that, where He is, there we may be also. Neither shall life, nor death, nor any other creature, separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. He shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, when He shall come to be glorified in His saints. And we know, that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. We shall walk with Him in white, clothed in white robes, and palms in our hands, with crowns of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give, even a crown of glory, that fadeth not away. We stand and rejoice in this hope of the glory of God, looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ. We, minding this promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, confessing that this is not our rest, but that we seek a better country, even an heavenly. We shall come to Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven, and to God, the Judge of all, and to the spirit of just men made perfect, and to Jesus, the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel. After this, I beheld, and, lo! a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His temple; and He that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light upon them, nor any heat. For the Lamb, which is in the midst of

the throne, shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of water; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes. And they sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints. And He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people; and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying; neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away. And there shall be no more curse; but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and His servants shall serve Him; and they shall see His face; and His name shall be in their foreheads. And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light; and they shall reign for ever and ever. Wherefore, comfort ye one another with these words.

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#### FORM IV.

FOR THE BURIAL OF A PERSON NOT A PROFESSOR OF RELIGION.

##### DIDACTIC.

BEHOLD, God has made our days as an hand-breath, and our age as nothing. Our days on the earth are as a shadow, and there is none abiding. One dieth in his full strength, being wholly at ease and quiet; and another dieth in the bitterness of his soul, and never eateth with pleasure. They shall lie down alike in the dust, and the worms cover them. The grave is our house. We may say to corruption, Thou art my father; to the worm, Thou art my mother, and my sister. We dwell in houses of clay, whose foundation is in the dust; which are crushed before the moth. As for man, his days are as grass; as the flower of the field, so he flourisheth; for the wind passeth over it, and it is gone. Thou, O Lord, takest away their breath; they die, and return to their dust. Thou turnest man to destruction, and sayest, Return, ye children of men; neither can any stay thine hand, or say unto thee, What doest thou? Thou carriest them away as with a flood. The days of the years of our pilgrimage are threescore years and ten; and if, by

reason of strength, they be fourscore years, yet is their strength, labor and sorrow ; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away. What man is he that liveth, and shall not see death? Who shall deliver his soul from the hands of the grave? We know that God will bring us to death, and to the house appointed for all living. They that trust in their wealth, and boast themselves in the multitude of their riches, none of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him, that he should still live, and not see corruption. And when he dieth, he shall carry nothing away.

Let no man deceive you, brethren ; for it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment. For we must all stand before the judgment seat of Christ, that every one may receive according to the deeds done in his body, whether they have been good or evil. I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God ; and the books were opened ; and another book was opened, which is the book of life ; and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them ; and they were judged, every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life, was cast into the lake of fire.

Verily, verily, I say unto you, the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth ; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life ; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation. When the wicked man dieth, his expectation shall perish ; for as we brought nothing into the world, so it is certain we can carry nothing out. And thinkest thou, O man, who despisest the riches of God's goodness, and forbearance, and long-suffering, that thou shalt escape in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, who will render unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath ; but glory, honor, and peace, to every man that worketh good? The ungodly shall not stand in judgment. The wicked is reserved to the day of destruction. They shall be brought forth to the day of wrath. The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all that forget God ; for God will bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil. Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth ; and let thy heart cheer thee in the

days of thy youth ; and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes ; but know thou, that for all these things, God will bring thee into judgment. He hath appointed a day, in the which He will judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom He hath ordained ; whereof He hath given assurance unto all men, in that He hath raised him from the dead. So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.

Oh, that we were wise ! that we understood this ! that we would consider our latter end ! Lord, make us to know our end, and the measure of our days, what it is ; that we may know how frail we are. So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.

He that hath ears to hear, let him hear ; for, behold, the Judge standeth at the door.

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#### FORM V.

FOR THE BURIAL OF ONE NOT A PROFESSOR OF RELIGION.

##### ALARMING.

By one man, sin entered into the world, and death by him ; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned. By one man's offence, death hath reigned, even over them who had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression ; and so judgment came upon all, even to condemnation. The voice said, Cry ; and he said, What shall I cry ? All flesh is grass ; all the goodness thereof is as the flower of the field ; the grass withereth, the flower fadeth, because the spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it. Surely the people is grass. They trust in their wealth, and boast themselves in the multitude of their riches ; yet none of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him, that he should still live for ever, and not see corruption. One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh. It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment. And what man is he that liveth, and shall not see death ? Shall he deliver his soul from the hand of the grave ? If the Almighty set His heart upon man ; if He gather unto Himself his spirit and his breath, all flesh shall perish together, and man shall turn again unto dust. For there is no man that hath power over the spirit, to retain the spirit, neither hath he power in the day of death ; and there is no discharge in that war. Neither shall wickedness deliver those that are given to it. Their love, and their hatred, and

their envy, is now perished; neither have they any more a portion, for ever, in any thing that is done under the sun. O, that they were wise! that they understood this! that they would consider their latter end!

Is there not an appointed time to man upon earth? Are not his days, also, like the days of an hireling? What is my strength, that I should hope? and what is mine end, that I should prolong my life? Is my strength the strength of stones? or is my flesh brass? My breath is corrupt; my days are extinct; the graves are ready for me; my days are past; my purposes are broken off, even the thoughts of my heart. The grave is mine house; I have made my bed in the darkness. I have said to corruption, Thou art my father; to the worm, Thou art my mother, and my sister.

Boast not thyself, therefore, of to-morrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth. For we are but of yesterday, and know nothing; because our days upon earth are a shadow. Man also knoweth not his time. Go to, now, ye that say, To-day, or to-morrow, we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy, and sell, and get gain; whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow; for what is your life? It is even a vapor, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away. Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was; and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.

The hour cometh, when we must all stand before the judgment seat of Christ; for God hath appointed a day, in the which He will judge the world in righteousness; for the Lord Jesus shall judge both the quick and the dead. Unto Him must we give account. Behold, He cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see Him; and they also who pierced Him, and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him. As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow unto me, and every mouth shall confess to God. Behold, the Lord cometh to execute judgment upon all.

And I saw a great white throne, and Him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away, and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works; and whosoever was not found written in the book of life, was cast into the lake of fire.

My brethren, be not deceived. God is not mocked; neither is He a man, that He should lie. Has He said, and shall He not do it? Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap; for he that soweth to his flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption. 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, of how much sorer punishment shall they be thought worthy, who have trodden under foot the Son of God, and have counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith He was sanctified, an unholy thing, and have done despite to the Spirit of grace? How shall they escape, who neglect the great salvation?

For the time will come, that judgment must begin at the house of God; and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God? And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear? For yourselves know perfectly, that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace, and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them, and they shall not escape. In that day, when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to this gospel, thinkest thou, O man, whosoever thou art, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God? Or despisest thou the riches of His goodness, and forbearance, and long-suffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? For there is no respect of persons with God.

Prepare, then, O man, whosoever thou art, to meet thy God. Be ye ready; for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh. 'This night thy soul may be required of thee.

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#### FORM VI.

##### AN ORDER FOR THE BURIAL OF A CHILD, OR YOUNG PERSON.

CHRISTIAN BRETHREN, the scripture teacheth us that affliction cometh not forth from the dust, but that unto God the Lord belong the issues of life and death. He taketh away their breath; men die, and return to the dust. The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord. Is there not an appointed time to man upon earth? Are not his days also like the days of an hireling? There is a time to be born, and a time to die. Our days are determined, even the number of our months. God has appointed our bounds, that

we cannot pass. For none of us liveth unto himself, and no man dieth unto himself.

All flesh is grass, and all the goodness thereof as the flower of the grass; the grass withers, and the flowers fade, because the spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it. Man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble; he cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down; he fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not. He is like the grass that groweth up; in the morning it flourisheth; in the evening it is cut down, and withereth. His breath is corrupt; his days are extinct; the graves are ready for him. His days on the earth are as a shadow, and there is none abiding. As for man, as a flower of the field, so he flourisheth; for the wind passeth over it, and it is gone; and the place thereof shall know it no more.

Son of man, behold, I take away the desire of thine eyes with a stroke; yet neither shalt thou mourn nor weep; neither shall thy tears run down; neither shalt thou sorrow even as others who have no hope. Brethren, I would not have you ignorant concerning those who are asleep. For, if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus, will God bring with him.

\*[Suffer little children to come unto me, says our blessed Lord and Saviour, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of heaven. Verily, I say unto you, except you be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter the kingdom of heaven. Even so, it is not the will of your Father who is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish. He shall gather the lambs in His arms, and carry them in His bosom. Take heed that you despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of their Father. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call. Take also David for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience. David therefore besought God for the child; and David fasted, and went in, and lay all night upon the earth. And the elders of his house arose and went to him, to raise him up from the earth; but he would not, neither did he eat bread with them. And it came to pass, on the seventh day, that the child died. And the servants of David feared to tell him that the child was dead; for they said, Behold, while the child was yet alive, we spake unto him, and

\*Omit, when used for a youth beyond the years of childhood.

he would not hearken unto our voice: how will he then vex himself, if we tell him that the child is dead? But when David saw that his servants whispered, David perceived that the child was dead. Therefore David said unto his servants, Is the child dead? And they said, He is dead. Then David arose from the earth, and washed, and anointed himself, and changed his apparel, and came unto the house of the Lord, and worshipped. Then he came unto his own house; and when he required they set bread before him, and he did eat. And he said, While the child was yet alive, I fasted and wept; for I said, who can tell whether God will be gracious to me, that the child may live? But now he is dead, wherefore should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me.

And so, also, when the Shunamite woman had received a son from the Lord, and he died. So she went, and came unto the man of God, to Mount Carmel. And it came to pass, when the man of God saw her afar off, that he said to Gehazi his servant, Behold, yonder is that Shunamite. Run, now, I pray thee, to meet her, and say unto her, Is it well with thee? is it well with thy husband? is it well with thy child? And she answered, It is well.

This child hath died, and you all mourn for it, and bury it; but weep not as David wept for Absalom. Let there not be heard in your dwelling lamentation and bitter weeping; Rachel weeping for her children, and refusing to be comforted, because they are not. Wo to him who striveth with his Maker. What! shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil? Surely it is meet to be said unto God, I have borne chastisement. Submit yourselves, therefore, to God. Be dumb, and open not your mouth; neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed. With Eli rather say, It is the Lord; let Him do what seemeth Him good.]

I will ransom them from the power of the grave, saith the Lord. I will redeem them from death. Death shall have no more dominion over them. Awake, and sing, ye that dwell in dust; for thy dew is as the dew of herbs. And the earth shall cast out her dead. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall these also appear with him in glory. He will swallow up death in victory.



## FORM VII.

## FUNERAL SERVICE FOR AN AGED CHRISTIAN WOMAN.

37. Mark the perfect *man*, and behold the upright: for the end of *that man is peace*.

11. For by me thy days shall be multiplied, and the years of thy life shall be increased.

16. With long life will I satisfy him, and show him my salvation.

15. And thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age.

26. Thou shalt come to *thy* grave in a full age, like as a shock of corn cometh in in his season.

And Sarah was a hundred and seven and twenty years old: *these were* the years of the life of Sarah.

2. And Sarah died and Abraham came to mourn for Sarah, and to weep for her.

19. And after this, Abraham buried Sarah his wife in the cave of the field of Machpelah before Mamre:

36. And there was one Anna, a prophetess, she was of a great age,

37. And she *was* a widow of about fourscore and four years, which departed not from the temple, but served *God* with fasting and prayers night and day.

2. And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps:

3. And they sung as it were a new song before the throne: and no man could learn that song but the hundred *and* forty *and* four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth.

2. And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire, and them that had gotten the victory stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God.

3. And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb. These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

15. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His temple: and He that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them.

16. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat.

17. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.

These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, *being* the first-fruits unto God and to the Lamb.

5. And in their mouth was found no guile; for they are without fault before the throne of God.

And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.

2. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, *was there* the tree of life, which bare twelve *manner of* fruits, *and* yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree *were* for the healing of the nations.

3. And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and His servants shall serve Him:

4. And they shall see His face; and His name *shall be* in their foreheads.

5. And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever.

6. And he said unto me, These sayings *are faithful* and true:

4. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.

13. And I heard a voice from heaven, saying unto me, Write, Blessed *are* the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them.

51. Behold, I show you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed

52. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

53. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal *must* put on immortality.

54. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.

55. O death, where *is* thy sting? O grave, where *is* thy victory?

56. The sting of death *is* sin; and the strength of sin *is* the law.

57. But thanks *be* to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

58. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.



# The Form of Public Admission to the Church



BY REV. THOMAS SMYTH, D. D.

CHARLESTON, S. C.



# THE FORM OF PUBLIC ADMISSION TO THE CHURCH.

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## ADDRESS TO THE CANDIDATES.

You have thus presented yourselves\* before Almighty God, with a view to dedicate yourselves† to His service, and to be received as members of His visible church. By a public contract you are about to surrender yourselves to your Creator; to avouch the Lord to be your God; Jesus Christ your Redeemer; and yourselves His servants forever. You are surrounded by witnesses who attest the compact into which you enter. The all-seeing eye of Jehovah is upon you; and His holy angels are spectators of this scene. Brethren, we trust you have not rashly come up hither. And in this confidence we invite you to approach, with a holy boldness, unto the great Head of the Church; casting all your anxieties and cares upon Him, and relying on Him alone for grace and strength, to fulfil your solemn engagements.

## PROFESSION OF FAITH.

You believe that there is one true God constituting in his incomprehensible essence, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, three persons in one Godhead. You believe in the divine inspiration of the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament: and that they contain the only rule of faith and practice. You believe in the fall of man, in his entire depravity by nature, and in the necessity of repentance towards God, and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. You believe, that by His humiliation, obedience and death, Christ made such a satisfaction to divine justice, as is sufficient to expiate all sin, and to remove and wash away all the guilt incurred by both original and actual sin, from all who rest upon him in truth and sincerity. You believe in the doctrines of a general resurrection, and future judgment; in the everlasting blessedness of the righteous, and in the endless punishment of the final impenitent.

\*The singular or plural may be used as required.

†Or to renew your dedication. This may be used when any one joins on certificate.

## COVENANT.

And now in the presence of these witnesses, you do solemnly surrender yourselves to the Lord Jehovah, receiving Him as your portion, and acknowledging Him to be the supreme object of your love. Depending upon divine grace for assistance, you hereby sacredly bind yourselves to glorify God by obedience to His laws, and by a diligent observance of His ordinances. You promise to separate yourselves from the world, so far as its engagements would cool your attachment to piety, or bring a stigma upon your holy profession. You are willing to consecrate a reasonable proportion of your time, influence, and property to the cause of Christ; to co-operate in every good work; to live not unto yourselves, but unto Him who died for you; and in your closets, in your families, and in the world, to act as becoming the gospel of Christ; and as you are required in the word of God. You pledge yourselves to obey the laws and regulations of this particular church, and to submit to its discipline, while you continue members of the same, throwing yourselves upon its care, and affectionately regarding its interests.

## CONCLUDING ADDRESS.

Beloved in the Lord, your engagement is sealed now. You have formed a contract which no power on earth can dissolve. These engagements will follow you through time, and accompany you to the judgment seat.

We who are members of this church, affectionately welcome you to a fellowship with us. We hail you as participants in the same glorious hope and blessings of the gospel.

And now when you depart from this place, carry with you the salutary recollection, that the eyes of the world are upon you, and that as you henceforth conduct yourselves, religion will be disgraced or honored. Remember that your engagement is not with man, but with God. The negligence therefore, or the folly, or the coldness of others around you, can never furnish an excuse for your own dereliction. You stand or fall, each one of you by yourselves. Abide then, near a throne of grace; be diligent in duty; watchful in life and conversation; and you shall be assured of the fulfilment of that promise "that he who has begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ."







# The Lord's Supper

A MANUAL OF INSTRUCTION AND HELP TO SELF-  
EXAMINATION FOR THOSE WHO WOULD REALIZE THE OBLIGATION, AND ENJOY ALL THE BENEFITS OF

## The Holy Communion



BY THE REV. THOMAS SMYTH



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## INTRODUCTION.

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The Editor of this work has often felt the want of a work which could be put into the hands of *inquirers* in which their minds would be at once *awakened* to a sense of their imperative obligation to become communicants by making a sincere, heartfelt and public profession of religion; *instructed* in the real nature, object, and design of the Lord's Supper and of what is implied in its observance; and *assisted* in their preparation for it by some form of self-examination, humiliation, and devotion.

This work will, it is hoped, serve this threefold purpose. It is adapted not only to those who have made up their minds to come forward to the communion, but to those who are disposed to examine into the claims which the ordinance has upon them. It will, he trusts, deepen their convictions of the necessity of a personal interest in the Saviour and of a personal discharge of all the duties which, as redeemed sinners, we owe to Him "who loved us and gave Himself for us;" and lead them to see the solemn and important interests both of their own souls and of the souls of others, which are involved in a proper observance of the Lord's Supper; and thus fill them with a holy desire to participate in its unspeakable benefits.

It will at the same time constitute a closet companion which will be of inestimable service. The perusal of the *whole* volume at least once a year and of *the Catechism* as a part of their devotional services before every communion season is earnestly recommended. This catechism has been long and favourably known both in the old country and in America and has passed through many editions. It is now out of print and its reproduction has been desired by many in different parts of the country. Dr. Morrison gives a very clear and satisfactory view of the authority and obligation of the Lord's Supper, while Bishop Wilson's outline is one of the most comprehensive views of the whole subject in our language.

As the whole doctrine of transubstantiation and the real presence as held by Romanists and High-churchmen, is founded on the discourse of our Saviour respecting the eating of his flesh in order to attain everlasting life, a chapter is appended

in which this discourse is examined and the different theories of the sacrament contrasted.

The whole volume is commended to pastors and to all inquirers with the fervent prayer that it may be used by the ever blessed Spirit in awakening, convincing, instructing and comforting many souls, and to Father, Son and Holy Spirit shall be all the praise.

T. S.



## SECTION I.

### THE ABSOLUTE NECESSITY AND DIVINE AUTHORITY OF THE LORD'S SUPPER.

I COR. XI. 24.—*This do in remembrance of me.*

THE Apostles of our Lord, though acting immediately in his name, in no instance attempted to legislate for conscience, or to dictate the number or nature of those institutions which are to regulate the observance of the christian church. Their office consisted not in originating a single doctrine or ordinance; but in making known the express will of the great Master; at the same time confirming the divine authority of what they taught, in the name of their exalted Lord, by the unequivocal display of miraculous powers. What they received from the Lord Jesus *that* only did they deliver to the church. Of the fignment of the church's authority, and of her power to bind conscience, inspired apostles knew nothing; and were ever careful to speak of her not as a *legislative*, but as an *executive*, body, destined to carry into effect the standing laws of the Redeemer's spiritual empire. If an apostle had pleaded his own personal authority for any particular doctrine or observance, it would have contained nothing in it to bind the human conscience, or to entitle it to rank among the institutions of the New Testament.

I have been led to make these remarks on two accounts: *first*, because the apostle of the Gentiles distinctly informs the Corinthian church that what he delivered to them respecting the ordinance of the Lord's Supper he received immediately from the church's sovereign; and, *secondly*, because I am of opinion that very erroneous and mistaken views obtain among thousands on this highly interesting topic of ministerial instruction.

To find out Christ's will, and to do it, must be the whole amount of a christian's duty. "We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord." It is not to establish our own lordship, but Christ's, that we declare unto you the gospel of God; and we are deeply persuaded that the reign of divine truth does not truly commence in any mind till it comes to feel that it is acting in direct homage to the Son of God.

To strengthen upon the consciences of men the authority of Christ, so as that in all things it may become paramount, should

be the unceasing aim of the christian ministry, as it is the great design of revelation itself.

Fully aware of the transcendent force and excellence of these principles, the inspired apostle brings them to bear on the great, and sacred, and universal duty of showing forth the death of Christ. He reminds the Corinthians that, though their shameful abuse of the Lord's Supper had no shadow of countenance from the Master, the institution itself was the result of His own gracious appointment; at a crisis, too, when the act acquired an inconceivable interest and significance.

It is not imperfect and fallible man to whom we are introduced in these words; but the Son of God Himself, who has a right to command, and a claim to be obeyed. What He says to us, as He spreads before us the memorials of His death, is "*Do this in remembrance of me.*" Let us, then, steadfastly looking at His authority, examine into the nature of this particular requirement, that we may learn His gracious will, and that, learning it, the language of our hearts may be—"Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" The subject naturally divides itself into three parts,—the claims of the lawgiver who here issues his mandate; the definiteness and peremptory character of the law prescribed; and the resistless force and tenderness of the motive urged.

I. THE CLAIMS OF THE LAWGIVER WHO HERE ISSUES HIS MANDATE.—It is the Lord Jesus Christ who here says, "do this in remembrance of me." In issuing the mandate He speaks in the character of the church's sovereign, and makes His appeal to all who, having heard the tidings of His death, look for redemption "through the blood of the everlasting covenant." The question, then, which each one should ask himself is this, What is the nature of that right by which the Redeemer claims the prerogative of giving law to His church? Is it a right which all ought to feel, or which appeals only to the few? Is it a right which we may either regard or disavow as seemeth good to us? Is it a right which is absolute or conditional? To such interrogations as these we may reply by briefly illustrating the following propositions.

1. *Christ's right to govern His Church, and to give law to it, is divine.*

It is so, in respect to His own nature, and the appointment of the Father. As to His own nature, He was originally "in the form of God," and "thought it not robbery to be equal with

God;”\* and, as to the appointment of the Father, “all power is given to Him in heaven and in earth.”† In the one instance we exclaim, with the Apostle John, “this is the true God and eternal life;”‡ and in the other we exult in seeing Christ raised to His Father's right hand, “far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also that which is to come;” and given “to be head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all.”§

Remember, then, that He who says, “do this in remembrance of me,” is “the mighty God, the everlasting Father, and the Prince of Peace;”\* that He “is the image of the invisible One, 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 were created by 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 the pre-eminence; for it pleased the Father that in Him should all fulness dwell.”††

The claim which Christ asserts when He says to us, “do this in remembrance of me,” is the claim of one clothed in a divine nature, raised to universal dominion, constituted the only head of the church, and entitled to the supreme and grateful obedience of all intelligent creatures. If He who made us and sustains us, and if He who made and sustains the universe of being, has a right to appoint the laws of His empire, and to demand obedience to them, then Christ Jesus must have a right to say to each of us, “do this in remembrance of me;” nor dare I conceal my impression, that it is palpable rebellion against Christ, as a divine lawgiver, to neglect an immediate compliance with this express portion of His revealed will.

2. *Christ's right to govern His Church, and to give law to it, has been acquired by the greatest of all sacrifices.*

Do you ask, then, what is Christ's right to govern His church? I reply, HE DIED FOR IT. He “loved the church, and gave Himself for it; that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that He might present it to Himself a

\*Philip ii. 6.

†Matt. xxvii. 18. John xvii. 2.

‡1 John v. 20.

§Eph. ii. 20-23.

\*\*Isaiah ix. 6.

††Col. i. 15-19.

glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish."‡‡ By what an amazing act of condescension has Christ established His claim to rule His church! "Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though He was rich, yet, for your sakes, He became poor, that ye, through His poverty, might be rich."§§ "He made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and, being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."\* If He who redeemed the church has a right to prescribe laws for its government, assuredly Christ has acquired that right. "Forasmuch as 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."† Are we not "justified freely by divine grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus?"‡ Have we not "redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace?"§ Has not Christ "obtained eternal redemption for us?"|| Has He not "redeemed us unto God by His blood?"\*‡ Has He not delivered "us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us?"\*\* Did He not give "Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all injury, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works?"†† And is not the church that sacred, inalienable property "which He hath purchased with His own blood?"

If disinterested benevolence, such as has no parallel in the history of the universe—if the most surprising act of divine love ever put forth on the theatre of this globe—if the procurement of blessings which run parallel with eternity, and with the worth and value of the immortal spirit, can confer an inalienable title to the rule and government of the church, then that title, unquestionably, belongs to Him, who says, to all His subjects, "Do this in remembrance of me."

Oh, christian! it is one who redeemed you who here addresses you. He has, indeed, a native right to your obedience; but, to this divine and original claim, He has added the unutterable obligations of redeeming love. He has become a man of sor-

‡‡Eph. v. 25-27.

§§2 Cor. viii. 9.

\*Philip. ii. 7, 8.

†1 Peter i. 18, 19.

‡Romans iii. 24.

§Eph. i. 7.

||Heb. ix. 12.

\*†Rev. v. 9.

\*\*Gal. iii. 13.

††Tit. ii. 14.

rows for you; He has laid down His life for you; He has delivered you from the fearful pit, and from the miry clay, and set your feet upon a rock; He has rescued you from the captivity of sin, and brought you into the glorious liberty of the children of God; He has risen to His throne of glory for you, and on that throne He will continue to sit until all enemies are made His footstool. We may observe—

3. *That Christ's right to govern His Church, and to give law to it, is of a nature altogether exclusive.*

As there is no name but Christ's given among men whereby the guilty can be saved;‡‡ so there is no other Potentate with whom He will divide the rule of His Church. He claims the right of governing His church; and He claims it as His only, His eternal due. "Whatsoever ye do, in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks unto God and the Father by Him."§§ If only habit, or the force of public opinion, or the desire to be seen of others, or motives of self-interest, or submission to the ordinances and commandments of men,—if only these, or such as these, are the sources of our obedience, even to the most sacred laws of the kingdom of heaven, we are not paying express homage to Zion's great Lawgiver; nor will He regard that as a religious and christian act, which does not aim at His glory, and which is not performed in obedience to His revealed and gracious authority. Christ is sole Lord of conscience; and every sentiment, feeling, or observance, may be regarded as christian, in proportion as it terminates upon Him who laid the foundation of His empire in the blood of His great sacrifice. It is a most enviable state of mind to be enabled to feel, that all our religious duties are sacred because Christ has enjoined them. It is a state of mind most highly to be deprecated, when men take upon themselves to dispense with any part of His revealed will. One Lawgiver has issued every precept of the christian code; and he who practically tramples upon any one command, may, upon the same principle, dispense with all. Having contemplated Christ's claims as a Lawgiver, we may now proceed,

II. TO CALL YOUR ATTENTION TO THE DEFINITENESS AND PEREMPTORY CHARACTER OF THE LAW HERE PRESCRIBED—"Do this in remembrance of me." What can be more simple or more express? Difficulties there may be in reference to some parts of Divine Truth, but here certainly there are none. It

‡‡Acts iv. 12.

§§Col. iii. 17.

is a duty this most significant; it is a duty universally binding; it is a duty to be performed without further delay.

1. *It is a duty most significant.*—"For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show forth the Lord's death till He come." The present dispensation is marked by its spirituality, and by its exclusion of ritual ceremonies. But, amidst all its simplicity, it retains the symbolical rites of Baptism and the Lord's Supper; the one ordinance pointing to the quickening power of the Divine Spirit, and the other, to the great sacrifice of the Lamb of God.

Examine well the original account of the first communion, as celebrated by the Master Himself. "And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat, this is my body. And He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it: for this is my blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins."\* We must explain one portion of Scripture by another; and when our Lord says that the bread is His body, and that the wine is His blood, we are not to charge absurdity upon Him, when we find an inspired apostle furnishing a simple interpretation of the phraseology employed. "The cup of blessing," observes Paul, in writing to the church at Corinth, "which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ?—the bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?"† Bread and wine are significant emblems of the body and blood of Christ, as a sacrifice for the sins of men; and when, in obedience to Christ's command, we approach His table, we have communion with Him in His sufferings and death, and in all the high blessings which flow from them, by the aid of the simple and expressive emblems of bread and wine. The doctrine of the real presence of Christ's body and blood in the ordinance of the Supper, is an outrage both upon scripture and reason.

Here, however, all is divinely significant;—the officiating minister, acting in the name and by the authority of Christ, confessing his own sinfulness, and hastening with his flock to the cross of Calvary; the members of Christ drawing near to the feast which the great Master has provided, and, with Himself, exclaiming, "with desire have we desired to eat this pass-over;" the act of benediction, proclaiming the church's gratitude for redeeming love; the act of distribution, pointing most emphatically to Christ's gift of Himself for the redemption of

\*Matt. xxvi. 26, 27.

†1 Cor. x. 16.

the world; the act of reception, representing the office of true faith in resting upon the merits of the Redeemer's sacrifice, and feeding upon Him as the bread of life; the act of fellowship, shewing the oneness of the church's faith, and the mutual sympathy which should pervade "the communion of saints."

In this solemn observance, christian, "you do shew forth the Lord's death, till he come again." While others trample on the cross, you are ready to glory in it; while multitudes are ashamed of Christ, you are hastening to His table to confess Him; while some draw near, as to the altar of an unknown God, you see "Christ evidently set forth before you as crucified;" while not a few deny the true nature of His sacrifice, as an atonement for sin, you declare your unshaken confidence in Jesus as the "Lamb slain from the foundation of the world;" while the ignorant, the insincere, and the formal, eat and drink judgment to themselves, you yield to the command of a Master whom you know, and love, and adore; and, mingling penitence with your faith, you at once deplore your transgressions, and triumph in your great deliverer.

Here must be combined the *faith* that can discern Christ's death as an offered, a perfect, and an accepted sacrifice for sin; § the *love* that kindles into holy ardour at the sight of emblems so dear and memorials so sacred; the *holy contrition* that melts into tenderness in sight of Gethsemane and Calvary; the *gratitude* that rises into rapture whilst it gazes on an incarnate, suffering, and dying Redeemer; the *joy* that ascends from the cross to the crown, from the sepulchre to the throne, and from the communion table to the judgment seat; the *purpose of new obedience*, which determines to spare none of Christ's enemies, and which aims at making the communion table the powerful promoter of "all holy conversation and godliness."

2. *It is a duty universally binding.*—When Christ said, "Do this," He did not point out any special class of disciples that were exempted from the discharge of the duty enjoined. By whom, then, has any exemption been made? Alas! must we not confess that the exemptions made are very many? It might have been hoped that none but wicked persons and unbelievers would have turned their back on the communion table. But is it so? We dare not assert it! Many who, in other respects, seem to revere Christ's authority, here take a doubtful stand. And why do they venture to disobey the Master's

‡Rom. xiii. 8.

§Heb. x. 5-14. Isa. xlii. 21. 2 Peter i. 17.

express command? *Is it because it is useless and redundant?* No; for this would be to impugn His infallible wisdom, and to prefer the conceit of their own brain to the unequivocal demands of the written word.

*Is it that there is something special in their views and feelings which justifies their conduct to their own minds?* To themselves,\*\* indeed, they may stand justified; but by the Word of God, the only infallible rule, their conduct is condemned. No personal or private feelings can give to any servant of Christ the right of dispensing with any one of all His appointments. Besides, the duty of showing forth the death of Christ must be coeval and co-extensive with faith in the glorious event.

*Is it that they dread partaking unworthily?* Such a dread is not only lawful but salutary. Profaned sacraments must be high offences against Him who searches Jerusalem as with lighted candles. But if such a plea were admitted for neglecting the commemoration of the death of Christ, might it not be urged, in a proportionate degree, in reference to all other duties? Will not formal prayer,†† neglected Sabbaths,‡‡ and an abused gospel,§§ all involve measures of danger and of just condemnation? Be ashamed, christian, of such a plea as this. Remember that the Master whom you serve will not call on any of His servants to the performance of a duty for which He will not qualify them with all needful grace.

*Is it that there is no church pure enough for them?* Alas! such an objection were a sad proof of the insufferable pride and self-righteousness of their hearts. But that there are some such individuals cannot be doubted, when we call to remembrance the censorious habits of not a few, who say by their conduct, "stand by us, for we are holier than you." When such individuals come to know themselves better, they will soon find a church pure enough for them. Their only wonder will be that any church should be ready to admit them into his fellowship, as brands plucked from the burning.

*Is it because they dislike the ordinary methods of gaining admission to christian churches?* Before such a difficulty as this is suffered to weigh on the mind, or to bias the conduct, let them ask themselves if the churches to whose terms of communion they object, demand any thing more than would have been looked for by Peter, among the three thousand, on the day

\*\*Prov. xiv. 12.  
††Matt. xv. 7-9.

††Isa. i. 15. Ezek. xx. 13, xxii. 8.  
§§2 Cor. iv. 3, 4. ii. 14-17.



of Pentecost, viz:—*marked anxiety about the salvation of their souls?*\* If they do nothing more, actually, than apostles did—nothing more than protect the church of Christ from the pollution of ignorant, careless, and impenitent members—nothing more than simply require a reason of the hope that is in you—nothing more than what is calculated to fix a salutary regard on your highest interests,—then why object to practices alike scriptural, reasonable, and useful? May there not be reason to suspect that pride, in some of its forms, is deterring you from a disclosure of your sentiments and feelings on the great business of the soul? May there not be far more of self-will than of principle in the aversion you display? Ought you not to show a greater readiness to make known to the ministers and to the churches of Christ what God has done for your souls; and to regard it as a privilege of no mean order to enjoy the counsel, sympathy, and pastoral superintendence of a “man of God,” who will not seek to lord it over your conscience, but to prove himself a helper both of your faith and joy?

*Is it that they are too sinful to draw near to the communion table?* This cannot be the case, if their sins do not exclude them from Christ, whose “blood cleanseth from all sin.”† If they have come to Himself, they are assuredly welcome to His table; nor can they hope to realize any great advancement in conformity to His holy image, while they are neglecting one of the most distinguished means of sanctification.

*Is it because they are apprehensive lest they should incur that dreadful sentence pronounced upon unworthy partakers: 1 Cor. xi. 29?* Such an apprehension has deterred many. But surely this is not the proper effect of a Scriptural warning against the abuse of any particular ordinance. The course to be pursued is not to abstain from an acknowledged duty, but to guard against its practical abuse. The Corinthians were many of them chargeable with very gross impiety, in indulging at the table of Jesus in excesses more fitted to the orgies of a heathen deity than to the commemoration of the death of the spotless “Lamb of God.” For these most sinful excesses the judgments, or chastisements, of Heaven, came on the Corinthian professors. They were visited with sickness, and even with death;‡ but they were thus “chastened of the Lord, that they might not be condemned with the world.”§ The security suggested by the apostle to them against the judgments men-

\*Acts ii. 37, 41, 47.

†1 John i. 7.

‡1 Cor. xi. 30.

§1 Cor. xi. 32.

tioned is not abstinence from the table of the Lord, which would doubtless have procured equal judgments, but the habit of judging themselves,\*\* that is, the habit of watching over, guarding against, and correcting those irreverent and unsuitable methods of observing the Lord's Supper in which they had so shamefully indulged. The threatening, then, pronounced upon unworthy partakers should in no instance operate to deter from the communion table; it should only quicken our christian diligence in cultivating those sentiments, tempers, and habits, which are suitable to such a solemnity. Let those who abstain from the table of Jesus to avoid the judgment threatened, remember that there are other judgments in reserve for those who neglect the command of Christ.

*Is it that they are afraid of drawing back into perdition?* If so, in what respect will the neglect of Christ's table prevent the fatal catastrophe dreaded? On the contrary, if there be any saving impressions on the heart, will they not be more likely to be obliterated by the act of abstaining from the Lord's table, than by the act of frequenting it?

*Is it that they are not yet able to come to a determination?* How dangerous to remain in a state of indecision upon any question so great and vital! To what particular does your hesitation refer? Is it to your own personal salvation? If so, what if you should die ere you decide? Do you not remember what Christ said—"He that is not with me, is against me."†† "How long, then, will you halt between two opinions?" Remember, time rolls on—eternity draws near—the Judge may be at the door—your salvation is at stake. A few more delays, and your account will be required; a few more vain excuses, and conscience will cease to be a reprover; a few more efforts to "serve God and mammon," and the fatal madness will be revealed; a few more pangs to the faithful ministers of the cross, and you shall see their face no more till you meet them at the judgment seat of Christ; a few more strivings of the Spirit of God, and He will depart from you for ever. It is then a duty,

3. *To be performed without delay.*—To hesitate is to harden the heart, to stifle conscience, to oppose the direct commandment of Christ, to confirm infidels in their scorn, to cast a stumbling-block in the way of inquirers, to weaken the hands of ministers, to withhold your full support from the church.

\*\*1 Cor. xi. 31.

††Matt. xiii. 30.

and to leave yourself without those divine consolations which are only dispensed by Christ over the memorials of His death.

As the Gospel claims now to be received, so all its obligations press upon us with immediate urgency. We are never to dream of doing that to-morrow, which ought to be done to-day. If we are not members of christian churches, it is high time we should be so. Even young inquirers do well to hasten their decision. It is an exhilarating spectacle to see the bloom of youth, the vigour of manhood, and the maturity of old age, blending at the table of Jesus.

This is an immediate duty, *because the command of Christ makes no mention of the future*. "Do this," is the injunction; and the legitimate interpretation is, "do it *now*, and never again neglect it while the lamp of life continues to burn."

It is an immediate duty, *because, if neglected now, there may be no opportunity afforded in the future of obeying Christ's call*. And easy as your mind may be in your present neglect, remember that conscience will whisper many faithful remonstrances in a dying hour. It will tell you, for instance, if you have sat under a faithful ministry, that shunned not to remind you of your duty; and if your only recollection should then be that you waited for a more convenient season, which God never permitted to arrive, how gloomy and perplexed may be the last lingering moments of human existence!

It is an immediate duty, *for it is even now indispensably necessary to the progress and establishment of your christian character*. It is part of that spiritual medicine which the Great Physician has prescribed for restoring and preserving the moral and spiritual health of the soul. You can as little dispense with the Lord's supper, as a christian, as you can with prayer, with the reading of the Scriptures, with the day of sacred rest, and with the ministry of the word. Christ has appointed no ordinance which it is either safe or wise to omit.

It is an immediate duty, *because it has relation to the most touching and tender scenes in the Redeemer's history*. It has relation to your Redeemer's sufferings, to the agonies of Gethsemane, and to the anguish of the cross. It has relation to those awful scenes as they bear immediately on your redemption from hell and sin. It is not for *Himself*, but for *you*, that Christ has appointed this ordinance. For your welfare He arranged and consulted in the whole matter; and will you, after all, forego the benefits which He intended to confer on you through its medium? Will you irreverently fling the cup of

salvation away from you? Will you allow Christ's dying command to be utterly neglected, so far at least as you are concerned? Only reflect for a moment what would be the state of our world if all acted as you do. Remember the church, as a visible community, would cease. And suppose you were to reason and act in reference to all other christian observances as you do about this? Then would you not cease to pray?—to read the word?—to honour the Sabbath?—to frequent the sanctuary? And why not do so? Does your *conscience* say you must not? But does it not equally say, "We must not neglect the table of Christ?" Does your *heart* say you must not? But does it not still more emphatically say, "We must not neglect our Lord's dying command?" In one word, if you and all other men in this nominally christian land acted in reference to christian duties in general, as you do in reference to this, would it not reduce the whole community to a state of absolute atheism? Unquestionably it would; for all christian obligations would be openly trampled on; and the next step would be that morality itself would cease to have any existence in the land.

Contemplate briefly the 3d branch of this solemn subject, viz.

III. THE RESISTLESS FORCE AND TENDERNESS OF THE MOTIVE URGED.—"Do this," said Jesus, "*in remembrance of me.*"

What a deeply humbling consideration it is, that we should be supposed capable of losing the remembrance of our dying Lord! But O, how kind and gracious was that Master who, seeing and knowing our infirmity, provided against it, and was pleased to establish a permanent institution in the church, to keep alive the memory of His sufferings and death!

It may, indeed, be said with truth that all christian ordinances have this great end in view. For this purpose especially has the christian ministry been appointed; for "we preach Christ crucified," as the very burden of our ministrations. But the death and sufferings of the Redeemer are so vitally important, that divine wisdom has seen fit to press home the remembrance of them *on our very senses*, in order that faith may plant her foot with unshaken firmness on the doctrine of the cross; and that, as often as she touches the memorials of Christ's death, she may be roused to exclaim, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world."

Bear in mind, then, christian, that in the ordinance of the supper the Lord Jesus calls upon you to remember Him—to remember Him in those scenes of sorrow amidst which He originally instituted the sacramental table. And can you ever forget your dying Lord, while His sufferings and death are your only hope for the pardon of innumerable transgressions, and for life eternal? It is impossible. I entreat you, then, not to cherish the fallacy that you can remember Christ as acceptably to Him by your own methods as by falling in with His own mild and gracious appointment. You must not only remember your suffering Lord; but you must remember Him in that way which He has ordained.

You must do this for *His* sake; for He is the sovereign Lord of conscience, who commands nothing unreasonable, and therefore looks for unshrinking obedience on the part of all his subjects.

You must do it for the sake of *the world*; for it is full of enmity to Christ and His ordinances; and, if you continue to live in the neglect of this great and sacred duty, you are strengthening the hands of the enemies of God and man.

You must do it for the sake of the *church*; for every new enrolment in the list of Christ's visible disciples calls forth her songs of praise, stimulates her gratitude, and strengthens her hands against the common enemy.

You must do it for the sake of *Christ's ministers*, for they watch "for your souls as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief, for that is unprofitable for you."\* How would their hearts be comforted by your open, cheerful profession of the truth! Perhaps you owe them much if they knew it; and why not tell them, if God has made them a blessing to your souls?

You must do it *for your families*. Your present example is pernicious in the extreme to them. You not only do your own souls an injury, but you are retarding the decision of others, and perhaps riveting upon them a train of worldly feelings and habits, never to be overcome. Give yourselves, then, to the Lord; and you may soon hear those around you, and with whom you are united by the ties of nature and affection, exclaiming—"We will go with you, for we perceive that God is with you of a truth."

You must do this for *your own sake*; for this ordinance cannot possibly be dispensed with. It is as great a privilege as it

\*Heb. xiii. 17.

is a duty, to show forth the death of Christ. You cannot safely or prosperously live in the neglect of an ordinance so closely associated with the exhibition of your faith as a christian, and your obedience as a subject of the Redeemer's spiritual empire. The ordinance of the supper is a part of that divine provision by which your soul is to be fed and nourished for eternity; it is the highest of all Heaven's festivals on earth; and, while it is neglected, the benefit of all other ordinances must be mournfully circumscribed.

You must remember Christ, then, in the way which He approves, and which has the sanction of His own direct and simple command.

Picture to yourself, O believer! the circumstances connected with the original institution of the supper. See your blessed Lord about to be betrayed, see the bands of wicked men ready to seize upon His sacred person, see the agonies of Gethsemane and Calvary about to drink up His spirit, and, whilst you meditate on the awful scene, hear Him say to you, "Do this in remembrance of me." Surely if He, in the very night in which he was betrayed, remembered you, it is the height of ingratitude on your part to forget Him, or to be unmindful of any appointment intended to commemorate His dying love. You could not be indifferent to the last tender utterances of a dying parent; you could not heartlessly refuse the last gentle wish of an expiring friend; you could not exonerate yourself from a compliance with the parting request of one whom you loved, by doing ten thousand things which He had never asked you to perform. And can you, O christian! live one hour longer in the neglect of your Lord's dying command? Can you turn your back on an observance which commemorates all that was tender, and endearing, and meritorious in your Redeemer's sufferings? Can you hope to meet the Master's approbation while you are setting loose by the most pathetic of all His commands? Say not in your heart, "I will render Him every other homage, but the homage of approaching His table I must be permitted for a time to defer."

When Christ says to you, "Do this in remembrance of me," He reminds you that the ordinance of the supper is, in its every feature, a memorial of Him.

At His table, the believer remembers Him in His *pre-incarnate state*. To the glory which He had with His Father before the world was, he elevates His adoring and grateful spirit, rejoicing that He to whom He looks for His redemption is

"God over all and blessed for ever." How ennobling to the mind the thought of a divine Saviour! It is this single conception alone that meets the exigency of the mind, when once it sees sin in its true colours. A created Saviour may suffice till the conscience is thoroughly awakened to a discovery of "the exceeding sinfulness of sin;" but after this, it must feel that millions of creatures, however exalted, could not ransom one immortal spirit. A divine Saviour is the all-attractive object at a communion-table; while the believer sets to his seal the truth of that declaration which could never have proceeded from the lips of any but a divine person: "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."†

At His table, the believer remembers Christ in His *assumption of the nature of man*. He feels unspeakable comfort in the thought, that "the Word was made flesh;"‡ that the Saviour, whom he adores, is the partaker of that nature in which he is clothed; that in Him dwell all the sympathies of humanity; that he is verily touched with the feeling of his infirmities; and that, in this nature, he is the fit subject both of suffering and reward.

At His table the believer remembers, with peculiar emotion, *the depth and anguish of his Lord's sufferings*. Looking on the lively emblems of His crucifixion and death, his heart melts with only contrition at the recollection of those sins which occasioned the awful catastrophe. His spirit, also, is overwhelmed with a sense of that boundless love which no sense of anguish could quench. Oh, what love was that, which the desertion of friends, the persecution of enemies, the malice of hell, and the wrath of Heaven, could not subdue!

At His table, the believer remembers that His Lord *will again appear for the salvation of His church*. Once, indeed, He appeared as a suffering Redeemer; but, when He shall appear the second time, it will be in the glory of the Father, and attended by multitudes of the holy angels. The hope of Christ's appearing is one of the great animating principles of the christian's life; and, as He shows forth the death of His Lord, he delights to meditate on the day when all the glories of His Godhead shall shine forth on that very world which has rejected Him; and when His despised and suffering church shall "lift up her head, and rejoice for evermore." How triumphant and how consolatory is that feeling which connects

†Matt. xxviii. 20.

‡John i. 14.

Christ's cross with His crown; which rises from the communion table to the throne of "the King eternal, immortal, and invisible;" and which, from the contemplation of the one great sacrifice, looks forward to "the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ;" § "who shall change our vile bodies, and fashion them like to His own glorious body, according to the working whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto himself!"\*\*\*

But may I not suppose that you feel the force of your blessed Lord's authoritative command?—and that you are mainly anxious to know how to yield yourselves to its influence with the greatest possible advantage? You have long stood back from the table of the Lord, during which period your conscience has not ceased to be a reprovcr; but now you feel drawn towards it by the impulses of duty and love. You have long forbore to confess Christ before men; but now the language of your heart is, "I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation, to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek." ††

In such a state of mind, how easy and inviting is his task who would seek to counsel you! The anxious inquiry of your mind is, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" ††† You only desire to know and understand your obligations that you may perform them. Assuming that this is your state, it only remains now that, being convinced of your duty to draw near to the Lord's table, you should adopt such methods, and cultivate such frames of mind, as may render this divine ordinance eminently conducive to your growth in grace, and to the still greater maturity of your christian character.

#### CONCLUSION.

Let me now conclude these counsels by placing before you a few encouragements to draw near to the table of the Lord.

1. *Your first encouragement is the command of Him who died for you.*

And what higher encouragement can you require? Ought it not to be to you as a thousand motives? If you have Christ's command on your side, in approaching His table, what other excitement to duty can you require? Forget not that His mandate involves in it the most tender and pressing invitation. As your best friend—your greatest benefactor, He asks you to

§ Tit. ii. 13.

\*\* Philip. iii. 21.

†† Rom. i. 16.

†† Acts ix. 6.



sit down with Him at the banquet of His love; and, while He spreads before you the mystic symbols of His death, His language is, "Eat, O friend; drink—yea, drink abundantly—O beloved." §§

2. *Be encouraged by the thought that, in drawing near to the communion table, you are honouring your divine Lord.*

Yes, even to us, who have been such unprofitable servants, has Christ entrusted the display of His glory in the world; and how can we be said to regard that sacred trust if we are indifferent as to His dying command? By yielding a prompt obedience to that command, we honour His authority, we exalt His name in the face of gainsayers and enemies, we proclaim Him to be the only Saviour of a ruined world, we exhibit to prominent view the doctrine of the cross, we profess to be His pledged and devoted followers, we become His witnesses amidst a scoffing and thoughtless generation, and contribute our humble part to maintain and perpetuate His cause in the world.

3. *Let your third encouragement be derived from the nature of the approach you are called to make.*

Is it not the table of the Lord Jesus—the table of your best friend—that you are invited to approach? What a privilege is here set before you! How refreshing to the soul must be the observance of an ordinance which brings it into such immediate contact with the grand mysteries of redeeming love! What a help must it prove to faith, and hope, and love, and all other christian graces! Though feeble and trembling, then, draw near to this solemn feast; for it is intended for all Christ's disciples, however weak, however much tempted, and however far removed from that full assurance of hope which would enable them to exclaim, "My Lord and my God!"\*

4. *Let your fourth encouragement be derived from the experience of the church.*

In every age since Christ ascended to His mediatorial throne, the Holy Spirit has given testimony to the ordinance of the supper, by making it the sacred channel of innumerable spiritual blessings to those who have drawn near to it in simple and grateful obedience to the will of Christ. Here the young disciple has been animated with the full determination of proceeding in his christian course; here the timid and despondent have been roused to the exercise of salutary confidence and joy; here the weary and heavy laden have found repose in the grace

§§Eccl. v. 1.

\*John xx. 28.

and tenderness of their compassionate Redeemer; here the wavering and perplexed have been restored to the full decision of their christian character; here the sorrowful spirit has been filled with the peace of God which passeth all understanding; here the spell of this world's temptations has been broken; here the evil heart of unbelief has been rebuked by the chastening of divine love; here the anticipations of heaven have thrown a shade over the glare of all earthly things; and here the enraptured mind has a thousand times exclaimed, "Surely this is none other than the house of God, and the gate of heaven!" Go, then, believer, to the table of Jesus, and there beseech your divine Lord that He would make the celebration of His death to you what it has been to thousands of His redeemed servants. Let this prayer be poured out in faith, and the result will doubtless correspond to the means employed.

## SECTION II.

### THE INSTITUTION, DESIGN, QUALIFICATIONS, BENEFITS, OBJECTIONS AND OBLIGATIONS OF THE LORD'S SUPPER.

My object in this Address, is to endeavour to explain to you what I conceive to be necessary to be known in order to your receiving, in a suitable manner, the Holy Communion of the body and blood of our Saviour Jesus Christ.

I will consider,

- I. The Institution of this Sacrament ;
- II. The Design of it ;
- III. The Qualifications of those who receive it aright ;
- IV. The Benefits to be derived from it ;
- V. The objections which are sometimes raised concerning it ;
- VI. The Obligations we are under to a regular partaking of it.

#### *I. The Institution of the Lord's Supper.*

A Sacrament is an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace, ordained by Christ Himself, as a means of receiving that grace, and a pledge to assure us of it. In the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper the outward sign is bread and wine ; the invisible grace, is a participation by faith of the body and blood of Christ, to the strengthening and refreshing of the soul, and preserving it to everlasting life. It was instituted by our blessed Lord the very same night in which He was betrayed. The Holy Scriptures inform us, that, as our Saviour was eating the last Paschal Supper with His disciples, "He took bread, and gave thanks, and blessed it, and gave it the disciples, and said, Take, eat ; this is my body which is given for you ; this do in remembrance of me. And after supper He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it ; for this is the New Testament in my blood, which is shed for you and for many, for the remission of sins." Matt. xxvi. ; Luke xxii.

Our Lord appointed bread and wine, which are the most nutritious parts of our ordinary food, to represent His body and blood, in order to show that his merits and death are as needful for the life of the soul, as bread and wine are for the life of the body. He commanded this bread to be broken, and this wine to be poured out, to set forth the sufferings He was about to endure in His agony and crucifixion ; when "He was poured out like water, when all His bones were out of joint, and

his heart in the midst of his body was even like melting wax." Psalms xxii. 14. And the eating of this bread, and the drinking of this wine, were intended to represent the spiritual feeding upon the merits and death of Christ by faith, and the applying them to our own comfort and salvation.

This institution is called by various names. It is very usually styled *The Sacrament*, the original meaning of which word is an oath; because the military oath which the Roman soldier took when he swore fidelity to his general, was termed *sacramentum militare*, a military sacrament. And this name is very appropriate; for in this ordinance, as well as in Baptism, we are solemnly pledged "not to be ashamed of the faith of Christ crucified, but manfully to fight under His banner against the world, the flesh, and the devil; and to continue Christ's faithful soldiers and servants unto our lives' end." And our Saviour has solemnly declared, in the words of prophecy, "Unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear." Isaiah xlv. 23.

It is spoken of as *The Communion*. 1 Cor. x. 16. "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?" because we therein have communion and fellowship with Christ our exalted head, and with all the Church, as the members of His mystical body.

It is further described as a *Feast*. "Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us, therefore let us keep the feast;" 1 Cor. v. 7, for the body and blood of Christ are the richest banquet to the faithful.

It is named also *The Eucharist*, from a Greek word signifying thanksgiving, because Christ, when He took the bread, gave thanks; and because therein we eminently "offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name." Heb. xiii. 15.

The Apostle Paul calls it lastly, *The Lord's Table*, *The Lord's Supper*, 1 Cor. x. 21; xi. 20, because it was instituted by Him as the Lord and Saviour of the Church, and because He sends the invitation, makes the provision, gives the blessing, and vouchsafes to sit down, as it were, Himself, as the master of the entertainment, that He may "sup with us, and we with Him." Rev. iii. 20.

Let us consider,

II. *The Design of this Sacrament.*

1. *It is intended to be a standing memorial of the blessed Redeemer amongst His disciples.* "Do this," said our Lord, "in remembrance of me." This ordinance is designed to remind us of His love, His promises, His grace, His sufferings, His redemption. While He is absent from us, as to His bodily presence, this sacred supper serves to keep Him ever present in our memories and hearts. A thankful, obedient, affectionate remembrance of our Saviour, as our friend, and master, and Lord, is one principal end of the Institution we are considering.

2. *It is instituted to be a visible and affecting representation of the sufferings of our divine Saviour.* "This is my body," said our Lord, "which is given for you. This is the New Testament in my blood, which is shed for you and for many." The bread broken, and the wine poured out, are the most lively emblems of the body of our Redeemer bruised and put to grief by His heavenly Father, and of His blood which was shed before the bar of Pilate, in the garden of Gethsemane, and on the Cross. The Sacrament was intended to present before our minds all the woe, and sorrow, and anguish of the Son of God; to recall to our memories the scourge, the spear, the nails, the crown of thorns; to impress deeply on our hearts every part of the unutterable scene.

3. *It is meant to be a perpetual testimony to the merits, atonement, and satisfaction of Christ.* "This is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins," are the words of our Lord. The Sacrament does eminent honour to this fundamental doctrine of christianity. It sets forth the Lord's death, it bears witness to the Lamb of God who was slain to take away the sins of the world. The very circumstance of a solemn institution being appointed to commemorate not the birth, not the resurrection, but the death and sufferings of Jesus Christ, connected with the numerous passages of Scripture which speak of the vicarious nature of those sufferings, is such a strong and palpable testimony to the proper atonement and satisfaction of Christ, that while the Sacrament continues in the Church, no sophistry of the infidel or heretic will be able to weaken the faith of humble christians in that essential article of our religion.

4. *It is instituted to afford us the most important instruction as to the manner in which the merits and atonement of Christ are applied to our own benefit.* "Take, eat; this is my body;

Drink ye all of this," was the command of Christ. As the bread and wine represent the body and blood of our Saviour, so the eating and drinking these elements are to point out that act of faith by which we apply to our own benefit the merits of Jesus Christ. In the 6th chapter of St. John, true faith in Christ is repeatedly described as "eating the flesh and drinking the blood of the Son of Man." And surely no image can be more appropriate; for as the most nutritious food can be of no service to our natural bodies, unless we actually receive and eat it, so the body and blood of Christ, offered up as a sacrifice for sin, can be of no benefit to us personally, unless we apply the blessings purchased by them to ourselves, receive them into our hearts by faith, and thus, as it were, feed on the body and blood of Christ, for the life and nourishment of our souls.

5. *It is designed to be a seal of the covenant of grace.* "This cup is the New Testament (or covenant) in my blood," said our Saviour; "This is my blood of the New Testament." As circumcision under the law was "a seal of the righteousness of faith," Rom. iv. 11; so are the Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper under the Gospel, they are seals on God's part and on man's part. *On the part of God*, the Lord's Supper is an appointed token and pledge of the pardon of sin, justification, and every spiritual blessing; as well as a means of conveying those blessings to the heart. It gives, as it were, a sensible evidence and assurance of the Divine favour; it confirms and ratifies all the promises of the Gospel, conveys the right to them, and brings the sincere christian into the actual possession and enjoyment of them. It is likewise a seal of the covenant of grace *on man's part*, as an instituted mark and pledge of our solemn and deliberate acceptance of that covenant. We set to our seal that God is true; we profess our wish to share all the mercies of the Gospel, and to perform all its duties. Like the spiritual converts in the Prophet, we there say, We are the Lord's; we call ourselves by the name of Jacob, we subscribe with our hands unto the Lord, and surname ourselves by the name of Israel. Isa. xlv. 5.

6. *It is intended to be a solemn act of thanksgiving for the Redeemer's victory over our spiritual enemies.* It is our Eucharist, our festival of praise and triumph. The Passover, to which it succeeds, was a feast in grateful commemoration of the redemption of the children of Israel from the bondage of Egypt. The Lord's Supper is a thanksgiving for our spiritual redemption from the slavery of sin; it is a feast in memory

of the triumphs of Christ. We are there called to a sacrifice of praise for the victory which our Lord has obtained over all our enemies, and for the high powers with which He is in consequence invested; we celebrate His grace, as "having spoiled principalities and powers, and made a show of them openly, triumphing over them" on the cross. Col. ii. 15. One design of this Sacrament is, that we should surround His table with joyful hearts, and exult with grateful thanksgivings in God our Saviour.

7. *It is intended to be a distinguishing mark of our christian profession.* The Apostle teaches us, that, "as often as we eat this bread and drink this cup, we do show the Lord's death till he come." I Cor. xi. 26. The Sacrament is a solemn declaration of our allegiance to Christ. We thereby publish and proclaim to all around, that we belong to Him. Wherever the religion of Jesus Christ is professed, the continual showing forth His death in the Sacrament is the badge of the profession. No one, properly speaking, continues a member, even of the visible body of Christ, who does not habitually join in celebrating this holy mystery, which for eighteen hundred years has been the distinguishing mark and bond of the christian church.

8. *It is meant to be a token of christian unity and love.* "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ?" saith the Apostle. "The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? For we being many are one bread, and one body; for we are all partakers of that one bread." I Cor. x. 16, 17. In this Sacrament, we profess our love to all the members of the church, we engage ourselves to mutual forgiveness and charity, we bind each other to keep "the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." We practically observe the New Commandment, to love one another: by which all men are to know that we are Christ's disciples. Especially do we pledge ourselves to cultivate the peace and seek the welfare of that part of the pure and apostolical Church of Christ to which we belong. This duty of unity and love is one of no small moment, as it formed a part of the last intercessory prayer of our Lord, that His disciples might all be one, "as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me." John xvii. 21.

9. *It is designed to assure us of the continued protection and mercy of Christ to the Church till he come to judgment.* "Ye do show forth the Lord's death till he come," said the Apostle;

implying that this Sacrament would afford the servants of Christ, however at times afflicted and despised, an assurance of His present help and guidance, until He should "come to receive them to Himself," that "where He was, there they might be also." Their "life is now hid with Christ in God," but their Saviour has left them a Sacrament to be ever preserved in the Church, as a pledge of His second coming; as a means of strengthening their faith in His power, faithfulness, and love, during their militant state; as an ordinance to remind them of that hope which is laid up for them in heaven: a pledge of that crown of glory which awaits all who love His appearing.

10. *It is intended to be a foretaste of the happiness and joy of heaven.* When our Lord had instituted the Sacrament, He added, "But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom," Matt. xxvi. 29; which teaches us, that in the realms of glory we shall receive that perfect consummation of bliss of which this sacramental feast is the earnest. The communion of saints in this world is a preparation for the same communion in a future and better one. We in some measure resemble, at the Supper of our Saviour, the adoration, the unity, and the joys of Heaven, in the object of our worship, in our sense of obligation to divine mercy, and our love to each other. And we are to regard our Sacraments as representations and foretastes of that heavenly Supper of the Lamb, Rev. xix. 9, which is reserved for the blessed in the kingdom of God.

We are now to explain.

### III. *The Qualifications of those who receive the Lord's Supper aright.*

This is a most important part of the subject. May God by his blessed Spirit assist us in considering it.

1. *You must have an adequate knowledge of the nature and design of this Holy Commission.* The Apostle speaks of those who do not "discern the Lord's body," and declares that they "eat and drink unworthily." It is necessary, then, for a young person to consider the subject of the Lord's Supper seriously, to read with attention the parts of Scripture where it is spoken of or referred to, (Matt. xxvi. 26-30. Mark xiv. 22-26. Luke xxii. 15-20. John vi. 32-58. Acts ii. 46; xx 7. 1 Cor. x. 16-18; xi. 17-34,) and to reflect frequently on the end and design of the institution; so that he may have a competent knowledge



of the solemn act in which he is to be engaged, and may offer unto God a reasonable service. An ignorant communicant must be an unfit one.

2. *There must be a genuine and unaffected humiliation before God on account of sin.* We must "look on Him whom we have pierced, and mourn as one mourneth for his only son, and be in bitterness as one that is in bitterness for his first-born." Zech. xii. 10. The foundation of all religion is deep conviction of sin. Till we see our own character, guilt, misery, unworthiness, and danger, we never can deeply value the Sacrament which seals our redemption. We must pray, then, that our language and feelings may resemble those of the ancient penitents; of Abraham, Gen. xvii. 27; of Jacob, Gen. xxxii. 10; of Job xl. 4, 5, and xli. 5, 6; of the Psalmist, Ps. xxxviii., li., lxxvii., cxxx.; of Isaiah, vi. 5; of the Centurion, Matt. viii. 8, 9.; of the repenting prodigal, Luke xv. 21; of the Publican, Luke xviii. 13; of the Apostle of the Gentiles, I Cor. xv. 9, 19. 1 Tom. i. 12-16. We shall find it, indeed, the most difficult of duties to abase ourselves in the manner we ought; but we must implore of God His special grace, to enlighten, soften, and humble our hearts, to "take away the heart of stone, and to give an heart of flesh;" to bestow upon us a practical view of our fallen condition, of the holiness of God's law, of the evil of sin, of the greatness and excellency of the God whom we have offended; of the unspeakable sufferings of Christ, of our innumerable personal transgressions, of the utter impossibility of doing anything to restore ourselves to the favour of God. Some feeling of these truths is indispensably necessary to a humble participation of the Lord's Supper. Pride is the most hateful of all vices in the preparation for such a duty.

3. *You must earnestly desire to partake of the blessings of Christ's atonement.* A leading design of the Eucharist is to represent the blood of Christ, which was "shed for many for the remission of sins." Your state of mind cannot be a right one, unless you desire entirely to renounce all dependence on yourself, and are solicitous to trust entirely to the merits and death of Jesus Christ. You must constantly pray to be "found in Christ, not having your own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, even the righteousness which is of God by faith." Phil. iii. 9. When you partake of the consecrated memorials of the body and blood of your Saviour, you must pray that your souls may be

supported and blest by a participation of His merits and atonement, as your body is refreshed by the bread and wine.

4. *You must be prepared to renew your solemn and hearty acceptance of the covenant of grace.* The Sacrament is the seal of the "New Testament in Christ's blood." It requires from those who partake of it a serious and devout dedication of themselves to God in Jesus Christ, according to the tenor of that covenant with which it is connected. You must, then, consider the account given in Scripture of the covenant of works by which you are condemned, and the covenant of grace which must be your only hope. Rom. iii. 9-20, and 27; iv. 4, 5; vii. 4-6. Gal. iii. 10-13; iv. 21-31. Heb. viii. 6-13. You must understand the doctrine of salvation by grace, through faith in Christ Jesus, Eph. ii. 8-10; you must be desirous of becoming a party in that covenant of mercy, Isa. lv. 3; you must be willing to devote all you have and are, to the service of God, as being no longer your own, but bought with a price, 1 Cor. vi. 20: you must be resolved to walk in a course of uniform, humble, and cheerful obedience. And, when you come to the Lord's Table, you must come to seal this covenant, to renew the engagements of it, to receive the assurance of its blessings, and to partake of the comfort, pardon, and strength, which the Sacrament is the appointed means of conveying.

5. *You must seriously renounce and forsake the service of sin.* This you were pledged to do by the vow of your Baptism. You then engaged to "renounce the devil and all his works, the pomps and vanities of this wicked world, and all the sinful lusts of the flesh." This engagement you are to renew and confirm whenever you receive the Holy Communion. It is essential to a right participation of it. The love of sin is incompatible with the love of Christ. "You cannot serve God and Mammon." "He that nameth the name of Christ must depart from iniquity," and therefore much more he that approaches the most solemn part of a christian's worship. A determination to mortify the whole body of sin, to separate from the sinful pleasures of the world, and to renounce the service of Satan: a desire to grow in all holiness of heart and life; a resolution to be diligent in the employment of every means for promoting real solid godliness; a penitent confession before God of our many failings and imperfections; a constant reliance on divine grace for future obedience; in a word, a "forgetting the things which are behind, a reaching forth unto those things which are before, and a pressing towards the mark

for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." Phil. iii. 13, 14, combine to form that state of mind which a christian will desire to cultivate in celebrating his Saviour's institution.

6. *You must from your hearts forgive every one his brother their trespasses.* Matt. xviii. 34. "If we bring our gift to the altar, and there remember that our brother hath aught against us, we must leave there our gift before the altar, and go our way, and first be reconciled to our brother, and then come and offer our gift." Matt. v. 20-24. The petition in the Lord's prayer, "Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us," strongly inculcates the same duty. Indeed, it is impossible for us to come to the Sacrament with a heart deeply affected with a sense of our sins, and earnestly desirous to obtain an undeserved pardon, through the sufferings and death of our divine Saviour, without being disposed at the same time to forgive the small and inconsiderable offences which a fellow-creature may have committed against us. It is one main qualification, then, of a spiritual communicant, to forgive from his heart every one that has injured him, to root out envy, hatred, malice, revenge, so far as he can, from his breast, to imitate the merciful conduct of God his Saviour, "who doeth good to the unthankful and to the evil." But besides this,

7. *You must endeavor to be "in perfect charity with all men,"* not merely forgiving those who have injured you, but loving them in return, and exercising a spirit of christian benevolence, for God's sake, towards all the members of Christ's catholic church, and to the whole race of mankind. A leading object of the Lord's Supper is, to maintain and increase that communion of faith, that intercourse of love, that fellowship of the Spirit, that common interest of christians with each other, which is the great effect and ornament of the gospel of Christ. We must seek, then, the grace of God's blessed Spirit to form us to so heavenly a temper, to enable us, after the example of our Saviour's unmerited love to us, to love others, and especially our brethren, for His sake. Thus, like the various members of the natural body, christians will be united in one bond of natural affection. "We being many, shall appear to be one bread, being all partakers of that one bread." 1 Cor. x. 17.

8. *You must examine yourselves.* "Let a man," saith the Apostle, "examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread and drink of that cup." 1 Cor. xi. 28. This is so solemnly and

expressly enjoined, that it forms a very important branch of our present inquiry. Our examination of ourselves should, First, *relate to our general state and condition before God.* We should ask ourselves, what we are, whither we are going, what is our state in the sight of God, what are our evidences of salvation. We should examine whether we are "in Christ" by a living faith, united to Him, interested in Him; whether we are renewed and sanctified by the Holy Spirit, made new creatures by His grace, and gradually improving in a holy temper and conduct; and whether we are walking in the ways of God's commandments from a principle of gratitude and love, repenting of our continual imperfections, and aiming at increased measures of obedience. Secondly, *We should inquire as to our views of the sacred feast which we are about to celebrate.* We must ask ourselves, whether "we discern the Lord's body;" whether we have a right idea of the nature of the institution, of the design for which it was appointed, of the qualifications of those who receive it aright, of the blessings to be expected from it, of the course of life to which it binds us. Thirdly, *Our examination should be directed to the especial graces and duties which the Lord's Supper is intended to promote.* Here we must inquire whether we contemplate with holy admiration the condescension and love of Christ in becoming incarnate for our sakes; whether we view with some real penitence the unparalleled suffering of Immanuel; the contradiction, ignominy, privation, and reproach, which attended Him through His ministry, and His unspeakable sorrows in the bitter scenes of His agony and crucifixion. We should ask ourselves if we rightly understand the cause of all His woe; namely, the wrath of His heavenly Father on account of our sins: if we believe that He was "wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities;" that He was "made sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him?" We should inquire if we feel any genuine grief for our numerous transgressions, which were, in their measure, the occasion of such agony to the Son of God. We should ask if we are in any just degree abased and confounded for our sins, and heartily sorry for them, desirous to confess them to God in all their guilt, and to forsake them with unfeigned abhorrence, breaking our covenant with Satan, and returning to our allegiance to Christ. We should endeavour to ascertain whether we truly desire to devote our bodies and souls to the service of our Redeemer, as those who are "alive from the

dead," that we may live to His praise, follow His commandments, and obey His will. We should further endeavour to discover what are our special temptations, what our trials, what our duties, what our imperfections, what our besetting sins, what our master passions; that we may, in partaking of the Holy Sacrament, implore grace according to our peculiar necessities. We should anxiously learn whether we forgive all who have injured us, whether we love our enemies, and desire to do good to them that hate us, whether we especially delight in the company, advice, and admonition of God's holy servants, and aim at promoting the peace, unity, and enlargement of the Church. Thus we should examine our hearts and lives, as a physician examines the case of a patient, that he may know his real state, and apply the appropriate remedies; or as an heir examines the writings of his estate, that he may know whether his title be good, and his interests secured. But, Fourthly, *Self-examination should regard our growth in grace, and the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.* The topics I have already considered more immediately relate to the first principles of the christian life and conduct; but, in addition to them, it is an essential part of a right state of mind in approaching the Eucharist to examine into our progress in true religion, to compare what we actually are with what we have been, to determine whether we are advancing in our heavenly race or not. To this end we should endeavour to discover whether our knowledge is at all enlarged, as compared with what it was when we previously examined ourselves, Col. i. 9; whether our "faith groweth exceedingly; and the charity of every one of us all towards each other aboundeth," 2 Thess. i. 3; whether our minds and affections are more spiritual and heavenly, Rom. viii. 8; Col. iii. 2; and our tempers more amiable and conformed to the example of Christ, Col. iii. 12, 13; whether we advance in contentment, patience, submission, and resignation to the will of God, James i. 4; Phil. iv. 11, 12; Matt. xxvi. 39; whether we increase in holy zeal and devotedness to the cause of Christ, John ii. 17; Gal. iv. 18; Acts xxi. 13; whether we grow in fervent love to the Redeemer, 1 Cor. xiii. 22; 2 Cor. v. 14; whether we are more earnest in prayer, 1 Thess. v. 17; more constant in reading and meditating on the Holy Scriptures, Ps. i. 2; more watchful and simple in our general spirit and conversation, Mark xiii. 37; 2 Cor. i. 12; whether we grow in a practical conviction of the evil of sin, of all sin, of the sins of our hearts

as well as of our temper and conduct, viewing sin as the source of all misery, as that which is opposed to God and goodness, as the shame and disgrace of our nature; whether we abhor it as such, using every endeavour to mortify it more and more in its operations, and mourning deeply over the sad remains of it in our various affections and duties, Rom. vii. 13; Mark vii. 21-23; Rom. vi. 21; Ps. li. 5; Job xlii. 6; Rom. viii. 13; vii. 24. We should examine whether we are more upright and conscientious in our conduct towards others, Acts xxiv. 16, and increasing in our attention to our duties as parents or children, masters or servants, husbands or wives, brothers or sisters, Eph. v. 22-33; vi. 1-9; whether our conversation be, on the whole, more as it becometh the gospel of Christ, Phil. i. 27. Whether, in short, we are desiring more communion with God on earth, 1 John i. 3; Ps. lxii. 1, 2, and are longing for the full enjoyment of Him in heaven. Phil. i. 23. In this examination you must be careful to act with uprightness, as in the presence of God; you must pray for God's Holy Spirit to enlighten your minds and direct your judgments; you must beware of a proud and self-dependent spirit; you must not aim at "establishing your own righteousness," Rom. x. 3, but at attaining a knowledge of your actual state as professed believers in Christ, in order to your spiritual improvement when you partake of the instituted supper of the Lord. You must not yield to despondency at the discovery of your own sinfulness, but be led by that discovery to a more sincere repentance and a more entire dependence on the promises of God made to you in the Holy Sacrament. The great end of self-examination is, that you may obtain an acquaintance with yourselves, in order that you may be able the better to advance in the faith, love, and obedience of a real christian.

9. *You must cultivate habits of meditation and prayer.* Every other qualification must be connected with the exercises of fervent devotion. Our meditations should be *fixed on all the topics to which our examination of ourselves was directed*, that we may thus be suitably affected with every subject of our inquiry, and have it impressed on our hearts. Cold speculation will never benefit a christian. He must meditate as well as inquire, feel as well as know. Our thoughts should likewise be turned to those *parts of the Holy Scriptures, which are most suitable to the sacred feast we are about to keep.* The history of our Saviour's passion is eminently calculated to move all the best feelings of the heart, Matt. xxvi., xxvii.,

&c. The last discourse of our Lord with His disciples, concluding with His intercessory prayer, John xiv., xv., xvi., and xvii., is likewise admirably adapted to the same end. Many of the predictions of the Old Testament, relating to the life, sufferings, and death of the Messiah, the prosperity of His kingdom, and the glory of His church, and which form, in particular, so large a part of the prophecies of Isaiah (chap. xl. to lxvi.) may be advantageously used for a similar purpose. The devotional parts of scripture, especially the holy and fervent language of the Book of Psalms, are so obviously important to this view, that I need only mention them. Besides the Holy Scriptures, our meditations should be directed to *the Communion Service of our Church*, which is excellently calculated to be a guide and help to our devotions. I could scarcely mention any one method more likely to be useful to us in preparing for the Lord's Supper, than that of a frequent and close consideration of this service; which for simplicity and spirituality, for dignity and wisdom, for comprehensive views of the Sacrament, and fervent and elevated expressions of piety in celebrating it, has always appeared to me to stand unrivalled among human composition.

To meditation must be added *persevering and earnest prayer*. We can expect no benefit whatever from any means of grace without serious and humble supplication to God. We are "always to pray, and not to faint." The Sacrament of Christ's body and blood is profitable only to the faithful. It does not operate necessarily. It is an instrument merely in the hands of God of communicating grace to the heart. And, accordingly, the measure of grace we actually receive will commonly bear some proportion to our diligence in imploring that grace from the Holy Spirit of God our Saviour. We must pray *before we approach the altar of our Saviour*, that He would enable us to repent of our sins, to believe His blessed promises, to examine ourselves aright, to renew our covenant with God, to dedicate ourselves unreservedly to His service. We must pray, *whilst we are engaged in the sacred celebration*, that our Saviour, who instituted the feast, would vouchsafe to be really present with us; that when we view the consecrated elements of bread and wine, we may discern the body and blood of Christ which were offered up on the cross for our sins, may remember His sufferings and His love, may rejoice in His redemption, and may be truly thankful for all his unspeakable benefits; that when we receive the elements into our mouths,

we may feed by faith on the body and blood of Christ to the life of our souls, may repose our whole trust in His infinite merits, may "spiritually eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of God," may be united to Christ as members of His body, and may be animated with ardent love to His name, holy abhorrence of sin, sacred delight in His service, and fixed resolutions to live to His glory. We must pray, *after we have partaken of the Holy Communion*, that God would endue us with His Holy Spirit, that we may remember our obligations, keep our vows, observe the commandments of our God, and be strengthened to walk religiously in the discharge of every duty.

In mentioning so many topics for meditation, as well as in the enumeration I have made in the points for self-examination, I by no means wish to require an attention to all of them from every young person. Some part of them may very properly be the subject of our consideration at one time, and other parts at another, as our opportunities and circumstances may allow. The devotional habit is that which forms the qualification.

10. *You must unite holy expectation of God's blessing, on your receiving the Lord's Supper, with reverence and fear.* All the other parts of our preparation will be essentially defective, unless we add to them the combined feelings of joyful anticipation and sacred awe. We cannot raise our thoughts too high when we are to approach that institution which is the pledge of our Saviour's love, the memorial of His death, the visible representation of His passion, the seal of His covenant, the assurance of His grace. We cannot expect too much of His tenderness, mercy, and truth. We cannot conceive too warmly of the unspeakable love of Christ, in condescending to admit us to such intercourse with Himself, in "vouchsafing to feed us with the spiritual food of His own most precious body and blood," in stooping to the weakness of our mortal nature, and affording us such sensible tokens of his grace. Our faith should rise to the highest elevation. Our hope and joy should be quickened to more than usual vigour. We should prepare for large accessions of spiritual strength, enlivening discoveries of pardoning mercy, exalted exercises of love and communion, holy boldness of access to the throne of grace, delightful hopes of future assistance and final victory. Ordinary anticipations become not so singular a privilege.

But with these ardent emotions we must learn to unite the sacred feeling of awe and reverence. "God is very greatly to



be feared in the assembly of His saints, and to be had in reverence of all them that are round about him." We are to "work out our own salvation with fear and trembling." Especially, when we prepare for the nearest approach to God of which our present state admits, should we be filled with the most profound and unaffected abasement of mind, and be solicitous, as it were, "to take our shoes from off our feet, because the place whereon we stand is holy ground." We must ever remember the infinite distance there is between God and us, the innumerable transgressions we have committed, the many resolutions we have broken, the powerful enemies with which we are surrounded, the probation which yet awaits us, the deceitfulness and wickedness of our hearts, the solemnity of approaching the immediate footstool of God, or partaking of the consecrated emblems of the body and blood of Christ, of celebrating the mysteries where the Saviour is peculiarly and really present, of renewing the most sacred vows of obedience and love.

If we thus endeavour to combine the most evangelical with the most reverential views of this Sacrament; if we seek to raise our expectations to the height of the privilege, and yet to temper those hopes with a due recollection of our own unworthiness and guilt; if the delightful boldness and confidence of a child adopted into the divine family, be connected with the humble and filial reverence which such grace should inspire, we may trust that we are in some measure in a state of mind for fitly partaking of the Lord's Supper.

I now come to explain,

*The benefits to be derived from the Lord's Supper.*

These are important and various. They may in part be collected from the designs of the Lord's Supper, and the qualifications of those who partake of it aright. I shall therefore be more brief in describing them.

1. *We receive the blessing of increase of faith.* When we see the very elements which represent the body and blood of Christ, we learn to believe. Our doubts and apprehensions are lessened. We behold, when the bread is broken, the wounded body of our Lord hanging on the cross; and when the wine is poured out, His blood flowing from His transfixed side. In both we view His very "soul made an offering for sin;" and lifting up our eyes with holy devotion, our unbelief, like that

of Thomas, is dispelled, and we are encouraged to cry out with him, "My Lord and my God!"

2. *We obtain the benefit of the forgiveness of our sins.* The general offers of pardon which are made to all who truly repent and believe the gospel, are here confirmed to the humble communicant in particular. He comes with a burdened conscience, and views a crucified Saviour, and obtains the actual remission of all his sins. He hears, as it were, the dying Redeemer say, "Father, forgive them." He "receives the atonement." He contemplates, and applies to his own benefit, the great proposition.

3. *We have the privilege of union with Christ.* The christian "spiritually eats the flesh and drinks the blood of Christ; he dwells with Christ, and Christ with him; he is one with Christ, and Christ with him." There takes place at the Lord's Table that peculiar union with Christ, which no other means of grace is designed to convey. And who can estimate the value of this blessing? Who can describe the high advantage of so intimate a fellowship with our divine Saviour, so spiritual a participation of all His benefits, so delightful an assurance to the heart of an interest in His salvation, a communication of His grace, a share of His love.

4. *We are sealed by the Holy Spirit,* 2 Cor. i. 22; Eph. iv. 30. A special gift of grace is bestowed. That Holy Spirit, whose influences rest on all the means of religious worship, more peculiarly blesses the instituted memorial of the Saviour's love. There he richly descends, as the "rain on the mown grass, as showers that water the earth." Ps. lxxii. 6. He is pleased there to testify of Christ, "by taking of the things of His, and showing them to us," John xvi. 15. He condescends there to seal the faithful heart by brighter hopes of mercy, and larger measures of consolation.

5. *We receive the grace of adoption as the children of God.* We are not only delivered from the doom of criminals, but advanced to the dignity of children. "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons; and because we are sons." God is pleased, at the Supper of the Redeemer, "to send forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, Abba Father." Gal. iii. 13; iv. 5, 6. So high a distinction might well astonish your minds, and lead you to distrust the promise; but, lo! by these holy mysteries God assures you, as it were, of His faithfulness, gives you the children's bread, and treats you as the sons and daughters of

th Lord Almighty. He bestows on you not only the right, but the spirit and hope of children.

6. *Our gratitude to God is excited.* At this festival of praise, we learn how much we owe to our merciful God. We obtain the unspeakable blessing of a thankful heart. We are assisted to adore that God, "who so loved the world as to give His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John iii. 16. We are taught to look back on the way we have trodden, and on all the mercy and truth which we have received, and we exclaim with the Psalmist, "I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord. I will pay my vows unto the Lord, now in the presence of His people." Psal. cxvi. 13, 14.

7. *Love to Christ is inflamed.* The Sacrament is a feast of holy love. When we see our Lord presenting Himself in all His woe before our eyes, when we receive the pledges of His sufferings and His grace, surely we cannot but be moved with some feelings of affection to Him in return. His hands, His feet, His head, which were the subjects of excruciating agony; His heart, whence flowed out blood and water, as set forth in the Sacrament, must touch the most sacred sympathies of our souls. And when we view Him reaching forth to us the bread of life and the cup of salvation, we must indeed reply, "We will remember thy love more than wine; the upright love thee." Cant. i. 4.

8. *We receive the benefit of more affecting views of the evil of sin.* And this is no slight blessing to a christian, surrounded with everything which is calculated to efface the impressions of the sinfulness of transgression, and to lessen his hatred of it. His safety very much arises from deep and affecting apprehensions of the heinous and malignant nature of sin as committed against God. These apprehensions he cultivates at the sacred Supper of his Lord. He there sees the consequences of sin, in the separation which is made between God and man; he there learns its guilt, in the sufferings of the Redeemer; he there beholds the hatred God bears to it, in the satisfaction He required in order to pardon it. Thus he views it in all its enormity, and is strengthened to abhor it more sincerely, and fly from it with greater diligence.

9. *We obtain the blessing of greater separation from the world.* The partaking of the Eucharist is not only a line of demarcation between the spiritual church and the profane part of mankind, but is an important means of abstracting the heart

and affections of a christian from that tame, secular, worldly spirit which is perpetually creeping over him, and, like a lethargy, imperceptibly lulling him to a false and dangerous security. "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." At the Redeemer's Supper he is strengthened to come out more entirely from the customs, amusements, and pursuits of the more indifferent part even of professing christians, to aim at a spiritual walk with God, and to be crucified to the world by the transforming lessons of the cross. Gal. vi. 14.

10. *We gain support under the difficulties and sufferings of life.* "We are born to trouble as the sparks fly upward." Sorrow and disappointment are our lot. But amidst all our dangers, losses, and enemies, we may be refreshed by the "spiritual food of the most precious body and blood of Christ." We may remember that the Sacrament was instituted in a scene of unparalleled woe. "The same night in which our Lord was betrayed," He appointed this festival as a source of consolation to His distressed disciples. Thus the christian under affliction comes to His Saviour's Table, to view His unspeakable sufferings, to be assured of His loving-kindness, and to learn to follow the example of resignation which He hath left him. He comes to repose a weary head and a distracted heart on His gracious care, and, like the beloved disciple, to lean on His tender and sympathizing bosom. John xiii. 23-25.

11. *We derive courage and zeal for the discharge of our various duties.* "The joy of the Lord is our strength." We receive fresh vigour for our combat at this blessed celebration. Our fainting strength is renewed. Our drooping courage revives. We are animated by the promises of pardon and grace to fresh efforts of duty. We are excited by the sealing of the Spirit for larger exertions of diligence. We are enabled to "gird up the loins of our mind, to be sober, and hope for the end." We resume our journey with new alacrity: and as our bodies are refreshed by our ordinary food for the various duties of the temporal life, so our souls derive supplies of grace and consolation for the different obligations of the spiritual one. We learn to be courageous for the cause of our God, we gather zeal and strength against our spiritual enemies, we gird on our armour with fresh vigour for occasion of conflict.

12. *We are led to fix our thoughts on the world where Christ is gone.* The Lord's Supper engages our meditations, not only

on the cross and sufferings of our Saviour, but on His resurrection, ascension, and intercession at the right hand of God. We learn at His Table to reflect where He now is, as where He once was. We view the Lord of glory as well as the man of sorrows. We remember that our Redeemer has entered heaven as our surety and our forerunner: and that He hath promised to come again, that He may receive us to Himself. This sacred feast, then, carries on our thoughts to our Saviour's present glory, His intercession, His dominion over all worlds, His mediatorial throne, His infinite grace. And what a benefit is this! What a consolation! What a source of joy! Every time we receive the Lord's Supper, we receive a pledge that "where He is, there we shall at least be also."

13. *We are reconciled to the approach of death, and receive the earnest of everlasting life.* Even the king of terrors yields to the Cross of Christ. In the Sacrament we may view a Saviour dying in pain, and darkness, and agonies, though He was the Son of God and the Heir of all things; and may learn to walk with such a leader even through the darkest valley. We may there view death deprived of its sting, robbed of its power, yea, quite altered in its property. The body and blood of Christ offered up to God, have taken away the gloom of death, and made it the gate of everlasting life. And the blessed participation of this body and blood at the Eucharist gives a delightful earnest of that heavenly joy which is purchased for all believers. We may go to that Supper and learn to resign our bodies to the grave, we may learn to yield up our souls to the God that gave them, and to say, as we descend to the tomb, "I know in whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed to Him against that day." 2 Tim. i. 12.

The next division of our subject is,

#### V. *The Objections which are sometimes raised against partaking of the Holy Communion.*

I consider this branch of the inquiry as peculiarly important: and I would wish to enter upon it with all the tenderness and affection which the apprehensions of many sincere christians so much require.

The difficulties on this subject are either those which arise in the breasts chiefly of young people, who are desirous, under deep impressions of the importance of spiritual religion, to partake of so high a privilege; or those which occasionally harass

the minds of persons who are in the habit of conscientiously discharging this part of their duty as christians.

1. *The difficulties which arise in the minds of those who are sincerely in earnest about religion, on the subject of first receiving the Lord's Supper,* may probably be excited, First, by the enumeration I have made by the qualifications of those who receive the Holy Sacrament. Many may apprehend that they do not possess all these qualifications, or not in the degree which I have described. But let the humble penitent know, that if he exercises these various dispositions and habits, as to the main particulars of them, though only in a weak and imperfect manner, he may be prepared for coming as a young but sincere disciple to the Table of his Saviour. If he heartily desires to be abased for sin, if he anxiously seeks after the blessings of Christ's atonement, and if willing to dedicate himself to the service of God, he may be encouraged to celebrate that Sacrament which is one appointed means of increasing in him all the graces of God's Holy Spirit. These graces in a young person cannot be expected to be so advanced as in a christian of considerable standing in religion; but this want of maturity is so far from being a reason against partaking of the Holy Communion, that it is a strong argument for joining in it. "They that are whole need not a physician, but they that are sick." If there be life, feeling, desire, solicitude, for the blessings of salvation, these are all that is necessary in the first instance, in order to derive consolation and strength from the blessed body and blood of Christ.

A similar reply may be offered, Secondly, *to those who fear whether they are in a state of grace and acceptance with God.* Such apprehensions will long attend the best efforts of a young christian. And if he is not to partake of the Communion till they are wholly dispelled, he will probably have long to wait. Some fears as to our character and prospects will, and even ought to follow us whilst we are in a scene of contention and sorrow. But surely these fears should be controlled by the cheering promises and invitations of the adorable Saviour. "He casteth out none who come to Him." "He is able to save to the uttermost." "His blood cleanseth from all sin." Can the fearful inquirer doubt of his having some evidences of a renewed state of mind, when he is trembling on account of sin, abhorring himself, earnestly praying for divine grace, seeking for the way of salvation in Christ Jesus, and forsaking every known evil? Do not his fears, his anxiety, his alarm, all bear

testimony to the influences of God's grace in his heart? Phil. ii. 12. And should the remaining apprehensions which alarm him keep him from the very Sacrament which is the seal of salvation, the earnest of forgiveness, the means of enlightening and establishing his heart?

A third difficulty, connected with the two former, arises from *the dread of being found at last to have been only hypocrites before God.* A more fearful state than that of hypocrisy can scarcely be conceived. But is it very likely that those should be really hypocrites who are alarmed at the very possibility of being such characters? Is it not more probable that they mistake the conflict of the evil passions still remaining in their minds with the calls of duty and the leadings of grace, Rom. vii. 14, 24, for the base pretences of the false christian? Nay, does not the anxiety which they discover of taking nothing for granted, of examining their state to the bottom, of comparing their spirit and conduct with the rule of God's word, of soliciting instruction from ministers and friends, of seizing every opportunity of ascertaining the real principles by which they are governed, of avoiding hypocrisy as a most fatal delusion, and of imploring the grace and Spirit of God to lead them into the full knowledge of themselves, sufficiently testify that they are upright in their hearts before God? And should they not be encouraged to receive the Lord's Supper, that they may be enabled more steadily to resist every approach to dissimulation, and may bind themselves by stronger ties to an unreserved obedience to God?

Others may, Fourthly, *dread the possibility of eating and drinking damnation unto themselves, in partaking of the Lord's Supper.* This fear has agitated many sincere minds. It has arisen from the language of the Apostle, "He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself." 1 Cor. xi. 29. But it is evident that the Apostle did not here mean eternal damnation, from the explanation which he immediately adds, ver. 30, "For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep." The temporal judgments of God, then, as consequent upon a wilful abuse of the Lord's Supper, are decidedly intended. Accordingly, the word damnation here means, as it is given in the margin of our Bibles, *judgment*, which is indeed the Apostle's own explication, in verses 31, 32. "For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned

with the world;" which undoubtedly means, that if we would examine ourselves, we should not be punished. But when we are thus punished, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned of the world. The apprehension then of eating and drinking our own eternal damnation has no foundation whatever in this passage of Holy Writ. Let not therefore any be terrified with the apprehension, that any peculiar punishment is annexed to our eating and drinking unworthily, more than may be feared from any other offence against God. Every sin exposes to eternal death, and therefore this amongst the number; but "he that confesseth and forsaketh" this, supposing him indeed to have committed it, as well as any other transgression, shall most undoubtedly "find mercy."

But still, Fifthly, *the dread "of eating and drinking unworthily" may rest on the mind.* If our fears on this head arises from an apprehension that we are not in a state *deserving* to partake of this holy Sacrament, they spring entirely from an erroneous sentiment. No one, in this view, is worthy of receiving so great a blessing. But the expression of the Apostle refers to a suitable, fit, becoming state of mind in partaking of the holy Eucharist. This is evident from the interpretation which he himself gives, "He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation unto himself, *not discerning the Lord's body.*" not perceiving by faith the body and blood of Christ, not distinguishing between the consecrated elements of his body and blood and ordinary food, and therefore not being in a state of mind suitable for the sacred service. Nor is this use of the word uncommon. A criminal who has forfeited his life to the laws of his country, is wholly unworthy of the kindness of a benevolent visitor; and yet if he listen to the admonitions of such an instructor with meekness and contrition, if he welcome the truth which is placed before him, and appear desirous to profit by it, he may properly be said to have received them worthily. Every notion of merit must be carefully excluded from our views of the Lord's Supper. "We are accounted righteous before God only for the merit of our Lord Jesus Christ, and not for our own works and deservings." Art. XI. Our worthiness for this sacrament is that meetness and suitability which consists in right ideas of the institution, humble renunciation of our own righteousness, earnest prayers for an interest in the atonement of Christ, and hearty desires to be devoted to his service. It is the fitness of



a contrite sinner for receiving the memorials of the blessings of salvation.

Some may be deterred from approaching the altar of their Saviour, Sixthly, *by a fear lest they should not be able to keep the vows which they undertake.* This is indeed a matter of serious consideration, and may well awaken all your watchfulness and activity; but it can assuredly be no reason why you should not bind yourself by those vows, which you are called upon by every motive to undertake, and which the grace of God can assist you to perform. If you were invited to make an unlawful, or unnecessary, or presumptuous, or doubtful vow, you might properly hesitate; but when the engagements of the Lord's Supper are merely those of an entire separation from sin, and a hearty resolution to obey God, you cannot with any show of reason decline them. An honest mind will not shrink from giving assurances; especially when God has promised the supply of all needful grace to fulfil them, when the very giving them is a natural means of fixing our uncertain hearts in the service of God, and when the sacrament which seals our obligations is the means of conveying the grace and strength for carrying them into effect.

Others may be perplexed, Seventhly, *With fears lest difficulties should present themselves on the part of persons with whom they are closely connected.* We are timorous in what is good. We apprehend perhaps an opposition to our purposes of joining the Communion of the Church of Christ from those around us. The child, the servant, the sister, the wife, may be alarmed by the fear of those relatives or other superiors whom they are required to love and obey. Or they may be delaying their own participation of the Sacrament, under the hope of inducing the individuals in question to join with them in the solemn duty. I need not observe what extreme caution over our own spirit is necessary in the discharge of any one duty, when it appears to militate with another. But at the same time we must remember that we are to "obey God rather than man." We may perhaps properly suspend for some little time the execution even of so good a purpose, if there be a reasonable prospect of uniting those, whom we are bound to consult on so many other occasions, in it. But there is great danger, in such deliberations, of that "fear of man which bringeth a snare." The words of our Redeemer must therefore be ever present with us, "He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me, and he that loveth son or

daughter more than me is not worthy of me." Nor should we forget that we are never warranted in omitting a positive religious duty, by any calculation of temporal inconveniences; not to say in how many instances it may please God to bless our firm and open profession of His truth, to the spiritual benefit of the very individuals whom we have been so long anxious to conciliate.

Lastly, many may be disposed to say, *We dare not approach so awful and important a mystery as the Lord's Supper.* An indescribable alarm rests on some minds, especially those of young persons, respecting the Eucharist. A holy reverence should indeed always fill our hearts when we celebrate the most solemn of religious duties; yet we must beware of an overwhelming, and therefore an excessive apprehension. Jesus Christ is the tender and gracious Shepherd; He feeds His flock with all care and affection. He will not "break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax." He presents himself in the Sacrament, not in the terrors of the Judge, but in the condescension and love of the Saviour. Why, then, should you not believe His promises, and trust His grace, connected as they are with the most express invitation and command to celebrate this feast in remembrance of Him? You dare to pray, you venture to hear the word of God preached, you are bold enough to supplicate pardon and grace at the footstool of your Saviour. These duties you do not think yourselves justified by any excuses from neglecting. Why then should you dread to do that with regard to the Sacrament, which you constantly do as to the word of God and prayer? The same blessings are exhibited in the Lord's Supper as you have already most earnestly sought. Come then, with composure of spirit, and supplicate that pardon and strength, in receiving the holy body and blood of Christ, which you have so often implored in the use of the other means of spiritual improvement. "Fear not: only believe."

I pass on, Secondly, to the objections on the subject of the Lord's Supper *which occasionally perplex those who are in the habit of conscientiously discharging this part of their duty as christians.*

These may sometimes arise in the minds of christians: First, *from the idea that they have not found the benefit they expected from celebrating these holy mysteries.* This difficulty may possibly have been created by your expecting some impressions or effects not authorized by the word of God, or by your

looking for these consequences in a manner or degree beyond the real rule of Scripture. Or you may have mistaken an occasional depression of the animal spirits for desertion. Or it may be you have neglected the ordinary means, either preparatory to the Lord's Supper, or following upon it, with which God usually connects any important or permanent benefit. Or you have at some times been blessed with such elevated and holy emotions of heart at the Lord's Table, as have led you to conceive yourselves wholly destitute of any advantage under more calm and sedate exercises of devotion. But, whatever may have been the particular cause of the difficulty you feel, let it never for one instant deter you from persevering in a regular attendance on the Holy Communion. The promises of God can never fail. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. Pray only for more faith, implore of God a corrected and enlarged judgment, wait on Him for the fulfilment of His own word, look up to the blessed Saviour for His presence in the receiving of the consecrated memorial of His love, and you shall obtain all, and more than all, the blessings I have mentioned: you shall find that Christ's "flesh is meat indeed, and His blood is drink indeed."

Some christians may inquire, Secondly, *whether they should continue to approach the Table of their Saviour when their consciences are hardened with the guilt of some particular sin.* To this the answer is obvious, because one end of receiving the body and blood of Christ is to obtain the very blessings of pardon and peace of conscience, which the objection supposes to be most wanted. If, indeed, unhappily, we have committed some aggravated offence against God, and the ordinary period of our partaking of the Eucharist be near, it may be expedient to abstain for that season from the Lord's Supper: but this abstinence must be with the express intention of more humbly confessing our sins before God, that we may be prepared with sincere penitence and faith to renew the covenant we have violated, and apply again for that seal of pardon and reconciliation which we so much need. In other cases, which may occur, of our consciences being burdened with the remembrance of particular sins, our duty clearly is to renounce and forsake those sins with unfeigned abhorrence, and then to partake the body and blood of Christ, that we may be strengthened in our vigorous resistance of them.

But others may further doubt, Thirdly, *whether, when they are in a declining state of religious feelings, they may not be*

*committing a greater sin by receiving the Communion than by omitting it for a time altogether.* To this I reply, to adopt the sentiments of an able Divine, that the omission of the Lord's Supper is itself a sin in a christian who has been in the habit of receiving it, and a greater sin than communicating with whatever imperfection. It is true it is our duty to forbear sin, that is, all those actions which are sins in their own kind and nature; but not those actions which may become sins by some accident or the defect of some circumstances. In this case, the accidental evil is to be avoided, or the defect amended, and not the act to be omitted. Now receiving the Sacrament is of itself, and in its own nature, good, and becomes sinful from some adherent corruption, which brings a defilement upon it. Our concern, therefore, is to aim at the removal of this defilement, which weakens and pollutes our act of duty, and not to cease from the duty itself.

I might specify various other objections which may disturb the consciences of christians with regard to the Holy Communion; but I forbear, as those which I have answered may serve to suggest suitable replies in similar cases.

It may, however, be proper here to mention, that objections are sometimes raised against partaking of the Lord's Supper, upon grounds very different from any of those which I have as yet adverted to. The cases I have considered are those of persons sincerely in earnest about spiritual religion. But objections are also made by those who betray, by the very nature of them, a totally wrong state of mind. Many persons, when invited to prepare for this important duty, will at once admit *that they are not in a fit state for performing it, and will yet remain for years apparently quite unconcerned about that entire change of heart and character, which they are aware is necessary to their rightly receiving the Lord's Supper.* Others will meet every exhortation addressed to them on the subject, by replying, that they are *not prepared to make that separation from the amusements and pursuits of the world to which the Sacrament would bind them.* It is not uncommon, moreover, to hear it affirmed by some, that they do *not consider the duty so essential to salvation* as we endeavour to represent it: whilst too many imagine that *the hurry and engagements of their families* is an adequate reason for declining a compliance with our Saviour's command. Others likewise, though *living in the communion of known sin*, will satisfy themselves in continuing it, by the wretched pretence that they do not receive the Holy

Communion. Many, lastly, either defer attending to the subject, under the *distant and slender hope of becoming better and more fit for celebrating the Eucharist hereafter*; or rashly and superstitiously suppose, *that receiving the communion on a dying bed* will be some security for the admission of their souls into the happiness of heaven.

To these, and various like statements, one answer must be given. They will proceed from minds fixed on the love and practice of sin, and unawakened to a proper feeling of the nature and importance of religion. The duty of all such objectors is twofold: first, to repent and believe the Gospel: and, secondly, thus repenting and believing, to prepare for celebrating, in an humble and spiritual manner, the most blessed mysteries of the body and blood of Christ. A merely external participation of the Sacrament, in a formal, ignorant, and superstitious state of mind, can indeed only increase the guilt of those who so profane the Redeemer's holy institution. No one is to be encouraged to such a profanation. Those who, with the objectors before us, consider their religious duties as in some way meritorious before God, and regard the Sacrament as a finish to their other performances, are fundamentally wrong. They must be directed to fervent prayer to God, for spiritual illumination, for contrition of heart for sin; for real faith in the sacrifice of the death of Christ, for a new spirit and a right conduct. Till they have thus entered in earnest on the duties of religion generally, in vain will they inquire as to the particular duty of receiving the Lord's Supper. They must become in some measure true christians, before they can celebrate the christian's most sacred festival. They must learn to know, and value, and love the Saviour, before they can approach his table. They must have spiritual life, before they can offer up spiritual sacrifices.

But this leads me to consider, in the last place,

#### VI. *The obligations we are under to a regular partaking of the Lord's Supper.*

I need say less on this topic, after the various points which I have already considered, because everything which has been offered with respect to the Institution of the Sacrament, the Design of it, and the Blessings to be derived from it, immediately tends to enforce the obligation under which we lie to a constant receiving of it. It may be sufficient to notice that the obligation rests,

1. *On the express command of our Saviour Christ.* His words were, "Do this in remembrance of me;" words delivered when He was about to undergo the most bitter anguish of His passion, and which therefore should move the love, as well as ensure the obedience, of those who profess to be His disciples. The command is besides the more obligatory, as it rests on the ground, not of natural duty, but of positive institution; and accordingly the observation of it is a more direct acknowledgment of the authority of Christ, and the neglect of it is more immediately connected with a marked contempt of His power and grace. Add to this, that it was the last mandate of a dying friend, and that friend our Redeemer and Lord; circumstances which, even in ordinary cases of human affection, give a sanctity to an injunction, and which should much more do so with respect to the blessed Saviour of our souls. The command also is one which the Apostle Paul has largely enforced and explained far beyond any other similar topic,—a fact which evidently shows the high importance we should attach to the institution. The simplicity of the rite, in opposition to the burdensome ceremonies of the Mosaic Law, whilst it increases the facility of complying with the duty, augments its obligation. To all which, when we further subjoin that the christian Church has in every age fulfilled this their Lord's command, and has thus given all the encouragement of prescription and example to the conscientious performance of the duty, it will appear, I think, beyond all dispute, that it is indispensably binding on every christian.

But the obligation to this duty is not less apparent if we take into view,

2. *The benefit of our own souls.* Every motive to be derived from the value of the soul of man, and the importance of spiritual religion for his present and future happiness, is united in the case of this blessed Sacrament. The due and humble participation of it brings with it unspeakable blessings; the omission of it, where it is wilful, is inconsistent with a state of grace and acceptance with God. All the obligation, then, that can rest on an accountable being to consult his highest interests, and on a sinner under a dispensation of grace to avail himself of the offers of divine mercy, enforces the necessity of partaking of that Sacrament which is the seal and bond of all the blessings of salvation, and is the means of conveying to us strength and support here, and preserving us to everlasting life hereafter.

Sincerely therefore would I hope that all into whose hands this Address may fall, will be convinced of the obligation under which they lie, to partake in a suitable manner of the Lord's Supper.

It remains only that, to promote this end still further, I enforce, in conclusion, the obligation I have explained.

I. *On those who may be living in sin and negligence of religion, for the purpose of exhorting them to repent and to turn to God.* Let such remember, that whilst they are unfit for the Holy Communion, as at present they undoubtedly are, they are equally unfit to die, and appear before God in judgment. Let them call to mind that the same state of heart which would lead them to living faith in the Son of God, would prepare them for celebrating the memorials of His death. Their continuance, then, in habits of sin brings on them not only the immediate guilt of the acts of provocation which they commit against God, but also that mediate and remote criminality which is connected with their renouncing virtually their holy profession, disallowing the dedication made of them to God in baptism, and remaining unfit to celebrate those mysteries of religion which are absolutely essential to the name of a sincere christian. Every one, in fact, who was in infancy admitted to the Sacrament of Baptism, and there devoted to the love and service of God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and who, being now arrived at years of discretion, lives in a course of life which incapacitates him for participating aright in the Communion of Jesus Christ, does virtually "trample underfoot the Son of God, counts the blood of the Covenant wherewith he was sanctified an unholy thing, and does despite to the Spirit of grace." The fearful state of such a person I need not describe. When he leaves the temple of God where the mysteries of Christ are about to be celebratd, he turns away from "Him that speaketh from Heaven;" he declares that "he has no part nor lot in the matter," "he judges himself unworthy of eternal life." Let me affectionately call on such to consider their ways, to hear the voice of mercy, to yield themselves unto God, and to submit to the sceptre of Christ. Then will the Church welcome them to this Holy Supper; then will the Saviour feed them with His precious body and blood; then shall they know the blessedness and peace which spring from pardon and acceptance with God, and the strength and consolation which are derived from that Sacrament which is the means of building them up to eternal life.

II. Allow me next to press the obligation of receiving the Holy Eucharist on those *who are hesitating as to the course they should pursue*. You have been devoted to God in the Sacrament of Baptism; you have been blessed perhaps with much religious instruction; you have some good impressions on your mind towards God; your lives and conduct are amiable and respectable; but yet you delay the time of publicly devoting yourselves to Christ at His holy institution; you "halt between two opinions." Oh! let me beseech you to "choose this day whom you will serve." Let me urge on your consciences the duty of deciding for God. Let me remind you, that the nearer you seem to Heaven, if at last you should fall short of it, the more lamentable will be the event. Let me tell you, that he that is "not with Christ is against Him, and he that gathereth not with Him, scattereth abroad." Oh! "remember now your Creator in the days of your youth; enter seriously on the consideration of the Lord's Supper; implore fervently the grace you require for partaking of it in a suitable state of mind; seal your covenant with God: confess your Saviour publicly before men; join yourselves fully to His mystical body; and doubt not of receiving your Saviour's grace at His Table to enable you to fulfil your vows. Thus shall you look back in future life on the season when you first approached the Holy Communion, as a time ever to be recorded with devout thankfulness to the God of your salvation."

Lastly, Let me urge the obligation of receiving the Lord's Supper *on those who are in the habit of performing this duty, with the view of exhorting them to a more regular and conscientious discharge of it*. Too many are defective in these respects. Let me invite such to entertain an increasing esteem of this institution, and never to rest satisfied without receiving some distinct, and practical, and abiding advantage from it. Let no opportunity of joining in this celebration be willingly omitted. Rather look forward with anticipation and joy to the seasons as they approach. Cultivate that high value and love for it, which will always bear some proportion to your love to the Saviour who instituted the Sacrament, and who never ceases to bless it. Be diligent in seeking the presence and grace of God in your preparation for it, as well as in the discharge of the duties to which, from time to time, it binds you. And may God grant that the writer of these lines, and the readers of them, may ever continue united to the mystical body of Christ, may be nourished in the union of that body by the



most precious food provided at the Supper of the Lord our Redeemer, and may be so strengthened and nourished by that and the other means of grace, that they may be preserved, by the power and mercy of their Saviour and the influence of His Spirit, through the various temptations of this life, till at length they attain to everlasting salvation.

### SECTION III.

#### THE YOUNG COMMUNICANT'S CATECHISM AND CLOSET COMPANION.

##### CONCERNING MAN'S NATURAL ESTATE.

*Ques.* IN what estate were you born?

*Ans.* In a woful, miserable estate, wanting the image and favour of God, which man at first had, and with a sinful nature, prone to what is evil, backward to what is good, and exposed to the wrath of God both here and hereafter.

*Q.* How came you to be born in this estate?

*A.* Because of my descent from sinful Adam, who fell from his happiness, by breaking covenant with God, and incurring the penalty thereof; whereby he lost all his grace, and was wholly unable to recover himself.

*Q.* Is fallen man left without hope in this miserable estate?

*A.* No; there is a noble remedy provided; for, though the old covenant be broken and dissolved, there is an excellent new covenant contrived, yea, revealed and tendered unto lost sinners of mankind.

##### CONCERNING THE TWO COVENANTS.

*Q.* What are these covenants which God hath made with man?

*A.* The covenant of works, and the covenant of grace.

*Q.* By which of these two covenants is it you can be saved?

*A.* Only by the covenant of grace, which is called the New Covenant.

*Q.* What is the covenant of works?

*A.* It is God's agreement with Adam and Eve, wherein He promised them life upon their perfect obedience to His laws, and threatened death upon their disobedience.

*Q.* Why cannot you be saved by the covenant of works?

*A.* Because I am neither able to fulfil the condition, nor endure the penalty of it; that is, I can neither give perfect obedience to God's law, nor bear His wrath which is due for breaking it.

*Q.* What is the covenant of grace by which you are to be saved?

*A.* It is God's gracious agreement with elect sinners in Christ, in which He is pleased mercifully to offer and promise

salvation to all poor fallen sinners of Adam's race, who believe in his Son Jesus Christ.

Q. Who are all these that truly believe in Him?

A. They are such who, being made sensible of their lost estate, are content to receive Jesus Christ as their Surety and Saviour, and depend upon His righteousness and satisfaction to divine justice as the only ground of their justification before God; and are resolved, in His strength, to show forth their faith by a sincere love and obedience to God.

Q. Why is this new covenant called a covenant of grace?

A. To distinguish it from the covenant of works, wherein the ground of a man's justification was something done by the man himself: whereas, in this new covenant, the ground of a man's justification is something done by a surety in his room; and also, because the Surety himself, and all the blessings of this covenant, are most gracious and free gifts, bestowed by God upon undeserving and ill-deserving creatures, who could do nothing to obtain them.

Q. How can this covenant be altogether of grace, when faith is required of us as a condition to interest us in the blessings of it, and likewise good works to show forth our faith?

A. Though both these be required of us, yet the grace for producing that faith and these works is promised to us in this covenant, as freely as any other blessing in it; upon which account this covenant is frequently called in Scripture a *testament*.

Q. Why is this covenant called a testament?

A. Because all the blessings and good things promised therein are freely bequeathed and made over to the elect as legacies, left and made sure to them by the death of Jesus Christ the testator; and also, in it there is grace left them to perform all the duties required of them.

Q. What are the principal legacies of this testament?

A. Pardon of sin, deliverance from wrath, peace with God, all the graces of the Spirit, with perseverance therein to the end; safety through death, resurrection to life, and eternal glory.

Q. How is it that this covenant or testament is established and confirmed to us?

A. By the death and blood of Jesus Christ, the mediator and testator of it; and by the outward signs and seals which He hath instituted to be dispensed to us, with the preaching of the gospel.

## CONCERNING THE SEAL OF THE COVENANT.

Q. What are the seals of the covenant of grace?

A. The two sacraments, Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

Q. For what end hath God appointed these sacraments, or seals?

A. To be sacred signs, memorials, and pledges of His mercy to us through a crucified Jesus, He being the great surety and sacrifice, to which we are appointed constantly to look for pardon, grace, and glory.

Q. Why are Baptism and the Lord's Supper called seals of the covenant of grace?

A. Because, like sealed charters, they confirm and assure us of the certainty of the covenant, and all its promised blessings; and particularly, that God is willing in and through Christ, to be a God to us, and to take us for His people.

Q. What is Baptism?

A. It is a sacred washing or sprinkling with water, in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

Q. What doth this sprinkling signify?

A. The cleansing of our souls from sin, by Christ's blood and Spirit; and our entering in among the disciples and followers of Jesus Christ.

Q. Why are you baptized in the name of the Father?

A. In testimony of my choosing and owning God the Father as my Father, and the great contriver of the gospel method of salvation through Christ.

Q. Why are you baptized in the name of the Son?

A. In token of my choosing and accepting of the Son of God as my great Redeemer and Saviour, in all His offices—Prophet, Priest, and King.

Q. Why is He especially styled our Saviour?

A. Because of the eminent hand He hath in the salvation we look for; He preaches it to us as our great Prophet, He procured it for us as our High Priest, He bestows it on us as our Lord and King.

Q. Why are you baptized in the name of the Holy Ghost?

A. In testimony of my owning and accepting of the Holy Ghost as my Sanctifier, and the great applier of Christ's purchase to me; whose office it is to work saving faith and all grace in the elect.

Q. What engagements have you come under by your baptism?

A. To believe and obey the holy Trinity, and to renounce the three great enemies thereof, viz., the devil, the world, and the flesh; and to live as a christian indeed, always remembering the name by which I am called.

Q. How is it that a christian, or baptized person, ought to live?

A. As one that is solemnly consecrated to the faith and obedience of the holy Trinity; and, particularly, as one that is washed in the blood of the Lamb, and who will not again adventure to defile himself with sin, but will study to make Christ his pattern.

Q. Are you not bound to renew your baptismal engagements, and to take them upon yourself?

A. Yes, I am; and I do it expressly, when I go to take the second seal of the covenant, and partake of the Lord's Supper.

Q. What is the difference betwixt Baptism and the Lord's Supper?

A. The first is to be administered to us but once, but the second often; the first doth signify our spiritual birth, the second our spiritual nourishment: Baptism is the door of Christ's house, by which we must enter, but the Lord's Supper is the table at which Christ's children must feed and get strength.

Q. What should be your great design in attending and partaking of these sacraments?

A. That thereby I may show my regard and obedience to the Author of them, and that I may find a crucified Jesus in them, and get myself assured of His love and purchase.

#### CONCERNING THE LORD'S SUPPER.

Q. What is the Lord's Supper?

A. It is religious eating of bread, and drinking of wine, according to Christ's institution and example, in remembrance of His death and sufferings for us.

Q. When did Christ institute this sacrament?

A. In the same night wherein He was betrayed, and immediately after He had eaten the Jewish passover with His disciples.

Q. Why did He institute it at that time?

A. To show that the passover was abrogated by this new ordinance, and the Lord's Supper come in its room; and also to lay all His people under the stronger obligations to observe and attend it.

Q. Why doth the time of the institution lay us under such obligations to observe it?

A. Because the command and directions which He gave us at that time are to be regarded as the solemn dying charge of a crucified Jesus, who was going to do more for us than all the world could do.

Q. Did Christ enjoin this ordinance as any task or burden on His people?

A. Not at all, but left it as a rare privilege and a precious legacy to the Church, seeing it is a bright memorial of His dying love, a sure pledge of His second coming, and a quickener of all the graces.

Q. What are the elements or signs appointed in this sacrament?

A. Bread and wine.

Q. What do they represent unto us?

A. Christ's body and blood, with all the benefits and blessings purchased to us.

Q. What is signified by the breaking of the bread, and pouring out of the wine?

A. All Christ's sufferings; and particularly, the breaking and wounding of His body on the cross, and the shedding of His blood to take away our sins.

Q. What is signified by giving the broken bread and poured out wine to the communicants?

A. God's actual making over and giving a crucified Christ, with all the benefits of His purchase, to believing partakers.

Q. What are these benefits here made over and sealed to them?

A. Remission of sin, freedom from wrath, peace with God, peace of conscience, adoption into God's family, increase of grace, perseverance therein, sanctified mercies and crosses, and a title to eternal life.

Q. What is signified by communicants taking the bread and cup in their hands?

A. Their putting forth the hand of faith to receive a crucified Christ for their Saviour, in all His offices, and with all His benefits, as offered to them in the gospel.

Q. In what manner ought we to receive a crucified Christ at His table?

A. With much humility, self-denial, thankfulness, and with close and particular application of His offices and fulness of my soul's necessities.

Q. What is signified by communicants eating the bread and drinking of the wine?

A. Their near union with Christ, their actual partaking of the benefits of His death, the great satisfaction they have in Him, and the spiritual strength and nourishment they get from Him.

Q. Why ought communicants to partake of the cup, as well as of the bread?

A. For the more full confirmation of their faith, and because Christ said to His disciples, *Drink ye all of it.*

Q. Why did Christ make choice of bread and wine, as the symbols of His body and blood?

A. To hold forth their refreshing and strengthening virtue to believing communicants; for as bread strengthens man's heart, so wine makes it glad.

Q. What were Christ's words when He instituted this sacrament?

A. He spoke something concerning the bread, something concerning the cup, and something concerning the whole sacrament.

Q. What spoke He concerning the bread?

A. He said, "Take, eat; this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me."

Q. What said he concerning the wine?

A. "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is shed for many, for the remission of sins."

Q. What said He concerning the whole sacrament?

A. He said, "As often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come."

Q. Do we partake of Christ's body and blood here in a carnal manner?

A. No, but only in a spiritual way.

Q. What is the meaning, then, of these words, "Take, eat; this is my body, which is broken for you?"

A. The plain meaning is, that the broken bread signifies and represents Christ's body as it were broken and buried for His people.

Q. Is not Christ really present in the sacrament?

A. Yes, He is so; but yet He is not bodily, but spiritually present there.

Q. How is it we partake spiritually of Christ's broken body?

A. We do it when our souls share of the benefits and fruits of His broken body; such as pardon of sin, increase of grace,

access to God, spiritual discoveries, loosing of bands, or the like.

Q. How long did Christ intend this sacrament should continue?

A. Until His second coming.

Q. Why no longer?

A. Because in heaven there will be no need of sacraments to represent Christ, He being always present there in a bodily way.

SOMETHING MORE PARTICULARLY OF THE NATURE AND ENDS OF  
THE HOLY SUPPER.

Q. What further account can you give of the nature and design of this sacrament?

A. It doth evidently partake of the nature of a seal or feast, and also of an oath.

Q. What hath it of the nature of a seal?

A. It is justly called a seal of the covenant of grace, because, like a sealed charter, put into our hands, it doth make over, seal, and confirm to us a right and title to all the benefits and fruits of Christ's purchase, which are therein promised to believers.

Q. What kind of a seal is this sacrament?

A. It is a spiritual seal, and of great value. seeing it is a seal of Christ's own devising and engraving, whose inscription is, Christ loving us; and whose image is, Christ dying for us.

Q. What hath this sacrament in it of the nature of a feast?

A. It is justly called a feast, as it brings food, nourishment, and delight to the souls of worthy communicants, the invited guests.

Q. What sort of a feast is it?

A. It is a spiritual feast, a marriage feast, a feast on the sacrifice of the Son of God; a feast of Christ's making, of a strange nature, in which Christ is both the master and matter of the feast, the provider and provision, the entertainer and the food; for "His flesh is meat indeed, and His blood is drink indeed."

Q. In what respect is this sacrament of the nature of an oath?

A. In respect the word sacrament was used among the Romans (from whence it is borrowed) for a military oath, whereby they bound themselves to be true and faithful soldiers to their general; so, in this ordinance, we, in effect, swear allegi-



ance to the King of heaven, over the broken body and shed blood of the Son of God; and also bind ourselves to be true and faithful soldiers to Christ, our captain-general in the spiritual warfare.

Q. What are the main ends you have in view, in coming to this ordinance?

A. To keep up the remembrance of Christ's death and suffering, to enjoy communion with Him, to renew my baptismal covenant, to get my faith strengthened and confirmed, and all my graces quickened.

Q. What are the sufferings of Christ which you are to remember at His table?

A. Those which are recorded in His Word.

Q. What do you remember of these just now?

A. I remember the assaults and temptations He met with from the devil; the reproach and persecutions He endured from wicked men; His soul suffering and agonies in the garden of Gethsemane; the cruel mockings, buffetings, crowning, spitings, and scourgings He endured in the high priest's palace, and in Pilate's judgment-hall; and lastly, His bloody sufferings and bitter death on Mount Calvary, when He was nailed to the cross, forsaken by His friends, derided by His enemies, and deserted of God.

Q. What was the cause of these sufferings?

A. Christ's own love, and our sins; for having in His astonishing free love, undertaken to satisfy divine justice for us, "He was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities."

Q. Are we not then under the strongest obligations to keep up this sacramental remembrance of Christ?

A. Surely we are; for He is matchless in His love to us, poor sinful worms, having remembered us in our low estate, and done and suffered more for us than all the world could or would have done. And likewise hath strictly enjoined us, among His last words, to continue to celebrate this memorial of His death.

Q. Why do we need this memorial? Are we in any hazard of forgetting His matchless love?

A. Yes; for so worldly are our hearts, so unbelieving our minds, so treacherous our memories, and so wavering our affections, that we are apt to be ensnared by the world's allurements, and to let Christ and His love slip out of our thoughts.

Q. Is not the fresh and frequent remembrance of a crucified Christ in the sacrament very useful and advantageous to us?

A. Yes.

Q. In what respect is it useful?

A. For weakening and killing of sin, for melting a hard heart, for overcoming Satan's temptations, for quickening and increasing grace, and for giving comfort in all tribulation.

Q. What kind of remembrance ought we to have of His sufferings and death at His table?

A. It should be an affectionate and believing, a mournful and sin-loathing, and yet a joyful and thankful remembrance.

Q. How can we both mourn and rejoice at the same time?

A. We may upon different accounts; for, as we should mourn for our sins that pierced Christ and put Him to death, so we ought to rejoice in His wonderful goodness, that undertook to be our surety and sacrifice to save us from sin and wrath: and the more we are helped to mourn, we have still the greater ground to rejoice and be glad in Him.

Q. How so?

A. Because a mourning heart for sin is a good evidence of a person's interest in Christ and his purchase.

#### OF WORTHY AND UNWORTHY PARTAKERS.

Q. Are all partakers to be reckoned welcome guests at this holy feast?

A. No.

Q. Who, then, are such?

A. Only believers, and worthy partakers of it.

Q. Who are these?

A. They are such who by faith do cordially consent to the covenant of grace, sincerely aim to do honour to Christ at His table, by showing forth His death, and study preparation for it.

Q. Who are the unwelcome guests?

A. Those who never closed with the offers of the gospel, and neglect preparation for this feast; and particularly those who continue in love and league with sin, while they pretend kindness to Christ, and to renew covenant with Him.

Q. What is to be understood by the worthiness of those who are called worthy partakers?

A. Not any worthiness in a legal sense, for we are all unworthy before God of the least mercy; but only a gospel suitability and meetness of the soul's state and frame to attend this holy institution.

Q. May not even a believer be guilty of partaking unworthily?

A. Yes, he may, if he neglect self-examination, indulge any known sin, or want grace in exercise.

Q. What is the duty of worthy partaking, and wherein doth it lie?

A. It is, in short, to eat and drink at Christ's table, with a believing and thankful remembrance of His dying love, looking by faith to Him, that we have pierced, for salvation, and lodging our souls in His wounds, mourning for sin that pierced Him, and solemnly resolving, in His strength, that we will pierce Him no more.

Q. What is the advantage of worthy partaking?

A. Hereby remission of sins through Christ's blood is assured, the power of sin is weakened, the graces of the Spirit are strengthened, the soul's diseases are cured, the doubts of the mind are resolved, and sweet views of Christ and glory are obtained.

Q. What is the sin of unworthy communicating, and wherein doth it lie?

A. It is to partake without due preparation and right ends, or to eat and drink without suitable knowledge and reverence, without reconciliation to God and our neighbour, or without the exercise of the sacramental graces, such as faith, love and repentance; or to approach while we entertain any known sin.

Q. What is the danger of unworthy partakers?

A. Hereby the guilt of Christ's body and blood is contracted, and God highly provoked; and the guilty person draws down judgments and condemnation upon himself, if it be not timely prevented by repentance and free mercy.

Q. Why is a man's unworthy partaking charged mainly upon his not discerning the Lord's body in the sacrament?

A. Because the unworthy communicant doth not consider, that the bread here is solemnly consecrated to represent the Lord's body, but eats it as carelessly as if it were common bread; and because he puts not due respect and honour upon the body of our crucified Lord, here set forth, but treats it as if it were the body of a mere man, or common person.

Q. How shall we prevent this sin and danger?

A. By entering into God's covenant; and making due preparation for approaching to His holy table, both habitual and actual.

## OF PREPARATION FOR THE LORD'S SUPPER.

Q. What is the necessity of making such preparation for attending this ordinance?

A. Because the approach we make to God in it is very near and awful; and the Author of it is a holy, jealous, and heart-searching God, who will shortly call us to account; and because we are assured there is great benefit by a worthy approach, and as great danger by an unworthy.

Q. What is our habitual preparation?

A. Our being in a gracious state.

Q. What is the actual preparation requisite for approaching to the Lord's table?

A. It mainly lies in these two,—examination of ourselves, and exciting of our graces into lively exercise.

Q. What sort of examination is needful before our partaking?

A. There is a public church examination necessary by church officers, that the Lord's table be not abused by the ignorant and profane; and there is a private self-examination necessary by our own consciences, that the Lord's Supper be not unworthily received through unbelief, impenitency, formality, earthliness, pride, malice, or any secret sin entertained by us.

Q. What things must we examine ourselves about, before we approach?

A. Principally concerning these three:—our right to the Lord's Supper, our need of it, and our actual fitness for it.

Q. Why about these three?

A. Because, if we have no right to it, we shall but usurp it; if we feel no need of it, we shall but despise it; if we be unfit for it, we shall but abuse it, and hurt ourselves.

## OF OUR RIGHT TO THE LORD'S TABLE.

Q. What is this right to the Lord's table?

A. It is twofold: *1st*, There is an outward and visible right before the church. *2d*, There is an inward and invisible right before God.

Q. Who are these that have the outward and visible right to this ordinance?

A. Those who are baptized, and have a competent measure of christian knowledge, profess their faith in Christ, and are blameless in their lives before men.

Q. Are all such persons worthy partakers?

A. No; but they have such an outward and visible right before the church, that they cannot be excluded; for of this outward right only the church is to judge.

Q. Who are these who have not this right?

A. Neither the ignorant nor profane have it, and therefore they are to be excluded from the Lord's table.

Q. Why are the ignorant to be excluded?

A. Because they are not capable to examine themselves, nor to discern the Lord's body; and behaved, in this case, to eat and drink unworthily.

Q. Why are the profane to be excluded?

A. Because they who allow themselves to live in sin can have no communion with a holy God; nay, they expose themselves to His judgments, by coming with defiled hands to His holy table.

Q. Who are these that have the inward and invisible right to this holy ordinance?

A. Those who not only have knowledge, a profession, and blameless walk; but are really within the covenant by a true faith in Jesus Christ, even a faith that works by love, and purifies the heart as well as the life: they are really in heart before God, what they seem to be outwardly before men.

Q. Who are the judges of this right?

A. Of this inward right the church cannot judge; but every man is to inquire, examine, and judge of it with respect to himself.

Q. By what evidence may a man know that he is really within the new covenant, and thereupon judge that he hath an inward and invisible right to its seals before God?

A. If he can say, That he hath seen himself perishing, while upon the old footing of a covenant of works, and that he hath fled from it to the new covenant, heartily approving the whole frame and contrivance of it, accepting of Christ the Mediator of it, in all His offices, and giving up Himself to be the Lord's, to live for Him, and walk with Him in newness of life; and that it is his earnest desire, that his inward, as well as his outward man, may be conformed to the laws and image of God.

See several questions subjoined to this Catechism, which may be assisting to us in the duty of private self-examination concerning our right and title to His holy table.

EXAMINATION OF OUR NEED OF THE LORD'S SUPPER, AND OF THE WANTS WE SHOULD SEEK TO BE SUPPLIED THEREAT.

Q. What need have you of the Lord's Supper?

A. I need it upon many accounts; as, *1st*, To bring a crucified Jesus in a lively manner to my remembrance. *2d*, To renew my baptismal vow, and lay me under stronger engagements to be the Lord's. *3d*, To nourish and strengthen my weak graces. *4th*, To fortify me against Satan's temptations, and all other discouragements. *5th*, To renew the sense and assurance of my pardon, which is frequently obscured and darkened.

Q. What are these things which obscure the evidence of pardon?

A. Sins both of omission and commission, and especially sins against light.

Q. Why should you examine your wants before you approach to the Lord's table?

A. Because there Christ is set forth with all His fulness, for the supply of my spiritual wants and necessities; and it is necessary that I should have a lively sense of these needs, that I may know what to apply for to this gracious Saviour, when at His table.

Q. What are these wants you ought to inquire into before partaking?

A. I ought to examine these chiefly: *1st*, What sins I want most to be subdued. *2d*, What graces I want most to be strengthened. *3d*, What mercies I want most to be bestowed. *4th*, What faculties of my soul I want most to be sanctified. *5th*, What offices of Christ I want most to be executed in my soul.

Q. How may you discover the sins you want most to be subdued?

A. By examining what are the sins or corruptions which do most prevail in me; if it be atheistical thoughts, unbelief, pride, passion, heart-hardness, earthliness, wandering, formality, backsliding, or any other; and these I must keep in my eye, that I may apply to a full Saviour, at His table, for strength to wrestle against them and overcome them.

Q. How may you discover the graces you want most to be strengthened?

A. By examining which of the graces are weakest and lowest in me, if it be faith, hope, love, meekness, humility, or any

other; and these I must bring to a full Christ at His table, to be cherished, strengthened and increased.

Q. How may you find out the mercies you need most to be bestowed?

A. By examining what are my present complaints, necessities, and difficulties; and what are the mercies which would be most suitable and relieving to me under them; if such as these,—intimations of pardon, spirituality of affections, liveliness in duty, patience under crosses, guidance in intricate cases, strength against corruptions and temptations, deliverance from atheistical or blasphemous thoughts, or the like; and these mercies I must remember, and ask them from Christ when at His table.

Q. How may you find out the faculty of your soul you want most to be sanctified?

Q. By examining what is the power or faculty that is least renewed, and needs most the Spirit's influences to be poured out upon it: if upon my understanding, to cure its blindness, and enlighten it with saving views of spiritual things; or if upon my will, to cure my perverseness and make it pliable to God's will; or upon my memory, to cure its treachery and weakness, and to strengthen it to retain God's word; or upon my conscience, to cure its sacredness, and to make it tender and watchful; or upon my affections, to cure their coldness to Christ and spiritual things, and to fix them upon right objects.

Q. How may you discover the office of Christ you want most to be executed in you?

A. By inquiring into the case of my soul, and plagues of my heart, saying, Whether do I need Christ most as a Prophet, to teach me, and cure my ignorance? or as a Priest, to cover me with His righteousness, and intercede with God for me? or as a King, to subdue my heart to himself, and conquer my indwelling corruption? And being sensible of my soul's need, I must go to my full Redeemer at His table, and say, Lord, come and execute such an office in my soul.

#### EXAMINATION OF OUR SINS NECESSARY BEFORE PARTAKING.

Q. Why must you inquire so narrowly about your sins before partaking?

A. Upon several accounts: *1st*, That there may be no Achan lodged to hinder the presence of God with me. *2d*, That by discovering them, I may be helped the better to look upon Him whom I have pierced, and mourn. *3d*, That I may be more

capable to point out my wound and sore unto my Physician for cure. *4th*, That I may behold the evil of them in the glass of Christ's sufferings, and be thereby moved to hate them, and turn from all unto God, and walk with Him in newness of life.

Q. How ought you to manage this part of your preparation work, so as to accomplish a diligent search of your sins?

A. *1st*, I must set time apart for it; and, before I begin it, pray earnestly for the illumination of the Spirit of God, to discover sin unto me. *2d*, I must think upon the sins of my station and character in the world. *3d*, For my help, I will read our Larger Catechism upon the Ten Commandments, and the sins therein enumerated with their many aggravations, and inquire how far I am chargeable therewith. *4th*, I will never give over searching and thinking, until I see my indispensable need of the blood of the Lamb of God, "which cleanseth from all sin."

#### EXAMINATION OF OUR ACTUAL FITNESS FOR THE LORD'S TABLE.

Q. What is that fitness which every communicant ought to have before he partake?

A. It is twofold, both habitual and actual; and both must be had by every one.

Q. What is this habitual fitness, or preparation, which every partaker must have?

A. He must be a believer, a man in a gracious state, that hath the habits of grace planted in his soul.

Q. What is that actual fitness you must have?

A. It is, when a man is not only in a gracious state, but in a gracious frame; when grace is not only in the habit, but in lively exercise.

Q. What are these graces which must be examined, quickened, and brought to exercise before partaking?

A. They are chiefly knowledge, faith, repentance, love, humility, thankfulness, spiritual appetite, and resolution for new obedience.

#### EXAMINATION OF KNOWLEDGE.

Q. What is that knowledge you must have to qualify you for worthy partaking?

A. It is a gracious discovery and apprehension of God and divine truths, as they are revealed in His Word.

Q. What are these things particularly which you must know in order to partaking aright?



A. I must have a competent knowledge of these five things: *1st*, Of God, in His essential perfections and Trinity of persons. *2d*, Of man, and his estate both before and since his fall. *3d*, Of Jesus Christ, the Mediator, in His twofold nature, and threefold office. *4th*, Of the new covenant, or gospel-method of justification by the Surety's righteousness, apprehended by faith. *5th*, Of the seal of this covenant, and particularly of the holy Supper, in its nature, ends, and uses.

Q. Is a literal knowledge of these things, sufficient for a communicant?

A. It must be a true, sanctified, and saving knowledge.

Q. How may we discover if our knowledge be sanctified and saving?

A. We may know it by its properties and effects; as, *1st*, If it be experimental, and gives us a sweet taste and relish of the truths we know. *2d*, If it be humbling, and makes us, like Paul, look upon ourselves as the least of saints, and the chief of sinners. *3d*, If it leads us to Christ and His righteousness, as the only ground of our hope. *4th*, If it be communicative, practical, and fruitful, and leads us to desire a greater conformity to Jesus Christ.

#### EXAMINATION OF FAITH.

Q. What is true saving faith?

A. It is a grace of the Holy Spirit, whereby a man, knowing his sin and misery, and assenting to the truth of God's record concerning Christ, doth cordially receive and rest upon Christ and His righteousness for pardon and salvation, according to the gospel offer.

Q. What need is there for the exercise of faith at the Lord's table?

A. It is needful, *1st*, For discerning the Lord's body, and the spiritual mysteries here represented; seeing faith is the spiritual eye whereby the soul sees Christ and things invisible. *2d*, For applying Christ and His benefits here set forth to our souls; seeing faith is the spiritual hand for taking hold of a crucified Jesus, and the mouth and stomach that feed upon Him.

Q. How may we know if our faith be true and saving?

A. True faith hath these effects: *1st*, It softens the heart, and makes it bleed for sin that pierced Christ. *2d*, It makes the soul approve and admire the gospel contrivance of salvation through the righteousness of Christ. *3d*, It works by love, and carries out the soul to love Christ above all things, and to do all

duties from a principle of love. *4th*, It makes a man sincerely obedient and fruitful in good works. *5th*, It looses the heart from the world and all earthly felicities, and carries it to things above.

EXAMINATION OF REPENTANCE.

Q. What is this true repentance which worthy partakers must have?

A. It is a grace of the Holy Spirit, whereby we are convinced of the evil of sin, sincerely mourn for it, and turn from it unto God, through Jesus Christ, resolving to serve Him in newness of life.

Q. What parts are there in true repentance?

A. Chiefly three: Conviction, contrition, and conversion.

Q. What is conviction?

A. It is a right sight and sense of the evil and sinfulness of sin.

Q. What is contrition?

A. It is true godly sorrow and grief of heart for sin, chiefly because God is offended, and Christ pierced thereby.

Q. What is conversion?

A. It is the soul's turning from all sin to God in Christ for mercy and pardon, and to all the ways of holiness and new obedience.

Q. What need is there for the exercise of repentance and godly sorrow at the Lord's table?

A. Because here we are to renew covenant with God; and certainly penitent mourning for former breaches and backslidings is very suitable upon that occasion. Again, we are here to behold Christ bruised for our sins, and to receive Him into our hearts; and nothing suits a broken Christ so well as a broken heart; nay, this is what He prefers to all sacrifices.

Q. How may we know if our repentance be of the right sort?

A. We may judge it right, if, *1st*, We lay the axe to the root of sin, the corruption of the heart and nature, and long to be delivered from it. *2d*, If we hate all sin, and resolve to harbour no known evil, either in heart or life. *3d*, If we have recourse to Christ's blood and Spirit for freedom from the filth as well as the guilt of sin, and breathe after universal holiness.

EXAMINATION OF LOVE.

Q. Why is the exercise of love so necessary at the Lord's table?

A. Because it is a love feast, and an ordinance wherein we have the highest representation of divine love to sinners that ever was given; which necessarily requires the exercise of love in us.

Q. What do you understand by the love which is required of communicants, and what are the objects upon which it must be placed?

A. It is a saving grace, or spiritual affection wrought in believers by the Holy Spirit, which terminates upon various objects, namely, upon God, upon Jesus Christ, upon the brethren, and every creature that bears His image, and in some sense upon all mankind, even our very enemies.

Q. Why do you make God and Jesus Christ different objects of your love?

A. I love Jesus Christ as He is God, and the same God with the other persons of the glorious Trinity; but seeing the Second Person is for us become God-man, our Mediator, and the great sacrifice to justice for our sins,—in this respect I view Him as a special object of my love.

Q. By what marks may you examine if your love to God be true?

A. By such as these: my care to please Him, my fear to offend Him, my desire after His presence, my regard to His laws, and concern for His glory.

Q. By what marks may you examine your love to Jesus Christ?

A. By the same before-mentioned, to which I may add, true love to Christ far exceeds all our love to relations, and dearest worldly enjoyments; it terminates upon Him in all His offices, as a prince upon the throne, as well as a priest upon the cross; in His life as a pattern, as well as His death as a sacrifice, and embraces Him as altogether lovely; also, it prompts the soul to have many thoughts of Him, and even to look and long for His second coming.

Q. How may we know if we love Him above all things in the world?

A. By these marks: if we value His favour more than that of any creature; if the loss of his countenance affect us more than any worldly loss; if we would rather displease all the world, than offend Him; and if it be our greatest grief that we cannot love Him more.

Q. By what marks are you to examine if your love to the brethren be true?

A. By such as these: if I love them, not for outward or temporal things, but upon spiritual accounts, because they are God's children, and bear His image; if my love be to all saints, poor and rich, hated and honoured, strangers and friends; if I sympathize with them, both in their joys and sorrows, and prefer their company to all others.

Q. How doth your love to God's people differ from your love to the rest of mankind, and those who are your enemies?

A. I love the rest of mankind, and even my enemies, with a love of benevolence and beneficence, being inclined to wish them well, pray for them, do them good, and even return them good for evil; but I love the people of God with a love of delight and complacency, and esteem them as the excellent ones of the earth, the friends of God, and the pillars of the land.

#### EXAMINATION OF HUMILITY.

Q. Why is the grace of humility so needful in your approach to the Lord's table?

A. Because I am a most unworthy creature, and He is a great and holy God with whom I have to do, and He hath a special respect unto the lowly; besides, this grace is necessary to make me resemble my Saviour, whose love I commemorated, for He was meek and lowly in His disposition, so He humbled Himself deeply for my good.

Q. How may you know if your humility be of the right stamp?

A. By such marks as these: *1st*, If I have low and mean thoughts of myself, under a sense of unworthiness, and be ready to say, with the prodigal, "I am not worthy to be called thy son;" and, with the Canaanitish woman, "Truth, Lord, I am a dog." *2d*, If I be more apt to suspect myself than to censure my neighbour, like the eleven disciples at the supper. *3d*, If I be grieved for the motions of pride and self-conceit within me. *4th*, If I renounce all my confidence in my duties, and betake myself entirely to Christ for righteousness and acceptance with God.

#### EXAMINATION OF THANKFULNESS.

Q. Why is thankfulness so necessary to worthy partaking?

A. Because it is the chief design of the ordinance to keep up a thankful remembrance of redeeming love, and to give thanks to God for the unspeakable gift of a crucified Christ; and hence it is called the Eucharist, or thanksgiving.

Q. How may you discern if your thankfulness be of the right sort?

A. By these marks: *1st*, If I account myself unworthy of the least mercy, and admire God's undeserved goodness. *2d*, If I look upon Jesus Christ as the mercy of mercies, and the channel of all other mercies. *3d*, If I sincerely love my benefactor, and study to please Him. *4th*, If I be oft meditating how to express my thankfulness to Him, saying, "What shall I render to the Lord for all His gifts and benefits towards me?"

Q. But what can you, or should you render for a crucified Jesus?

A. Though all I have be nothing in comparison of the benefits I receive, yet I should be willing to render it to the Lord, such as, *1st*, My endeared affections; *2d*, My triumphant praises; *3d*, My unfeigned repentance and reformation; *4th*, My faithful performance of vows; *5th*, My zealous acting for His glory; *6th*, My cheerful resolution to suffer for Christ, who so willingly suffered for me.

#### EXAMINATION OF SPIRITUAL APPETITE.

Q. Why is a spiritual appetite so requisite at this time?

A. Because a feast is not relished but by those who have an appetite for it; and it is the hungry and the thirsty that God hath promised to satisfy with good things.

Q. How may you know if your appetite or spiritual desires be of the right sort?

A. By these marks: *1st*, If I be glad of the news of Christ's feast, and an invitation to it. *2d*, If I count the cost, and be willing to be at all pains to obtain soul-food; such as to pray, to search the Scriptures, to humble myself, and part with my dearest sins. *3d*, If I be satisfied with no food for my soul, but a crucified Christ. *4th*, If I find this food very sweet and pleasant to my soul's taste.

#### EXAMINATION OF RESOLUTIONS FOR NEW OBEDIENCE.

Q. Why is a believer's obedience called new obedience?

A. 1. Because it proceeds from new principles—faith and love. 2. It is performed in a new manner, viz., by faith leaning upon Christ's strength, for enabling him to do it, and upon Christ's righteousness, for his acceptance with God. 3. It is done for new ends; not to advance his own secular interests, but to please God, and promote His glory.

Q. How may you know if your resolutions for new obedience be of the right stamp?

A. By these marks: *1st*, If I count the cost, and be deliberate in making them. *2d*, If they be absolute, without any reserve for a beloved sin. *3d*, If I make them in a deep sense of my own insufficiency to keep them, and in a humble dependence upon Christ, my Surety, for strength.

CONCERNING THE EXCITATION OF GRACE.

Q. How shall you get all these graces, before mentioned, excited and brought into lively exercise, before you come to the table?

A. I must use all the means which God hath appointed for this end, such as reading and hearing the Word, christian conference, retired meditation, fervent prayer, and frequent ejaculations to God for the awakening influences of His Holy Spirit; and cry with the spouse, "Awake, O north wind, and come thou south; blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out."

Q. What ought you to do, when spiritual deadness continues after using all the foresaid means?

A. I must go a little further in humiliation and prayer, and meditate more closely upon the sufferings of Christ, and also exercise faith upon Him, as my head of influences, for life and quickening unto my dead graces, and resolve still to depend upon Him for needful supplies of life, according to His promise.

Q. How ought you to pray at this time so as to prevail?

A. I must pray with humility, faith, fervency, and importunity, as knowing how much is at stake, both with respect to the glory of God, and the salvation of my soul. I must plead the power, the mercy and free promise of God, and the merits of Jesus Christ, His beloved Son.

Q. For what things ought you mainly to pray before this solemn approach?

A. For these things: *1st*, For the preparation of the heart; and chiefly for sanctifying grace, and a spiritual frame of soul. *2d*, For love and liveliness to all the sacramental graces, and for the assistance of the Spirit of God in all parts of the work. *3d*, For the cure of all my soul-distempers, and the pardon of all defects. *4th*, For much nearness and communion with God at His table. *5th*, For the Lord's precious presence both with ministers and people through the whole solemnity.

Q. How ought you to be employed upon the Saturday evening and Sabbath morning before partaking?

A. Besides the work of self-examination and excitation of grace, I resolve to spend much of that precious time in direct covenanting with God on my knees, taking and accepting of Him for my God in Christ, and of Christ the Mediator in all His offices, and in giving up myself, soul and body, to be the Lord's, to be disposed of by Him in time and through eternity. Also, I will make it a particular part of my preparations, to consider beforehand how I will act when I go to the Lord's table; how my faith and love shall then be employed; what objects I will think of, and what sins I will mourn over; that so I may not spend my short time there in confusion.

CONCERNING OUR EMPLOYMENT WHEN AT THE LORD'S TABLE.

Q. What is that suitable communion, frame, and disposition, with which you would desire to go to the Lord's holy table?

A. I would desire to go to it with a humble, believing, and affectionate frame of soul, having in it a mixture of holy mourning and rejoicing, which I look upon as a noble communion frame; I mean mourning for my sins, that were the cause of Christ's sufferings, and rejoicing in Christ Jesus, who came to satisfy justice for me.

Q. How are you to be employed, when sitting at the table, and when beholding and making use of the elements there?

A. *1st*, I must take a view of the sufferings of Christ, both in soul and body, for me; and, particularly, I must remember the anguish of His soul, when He lay under the pressure of God's wrath for my sins. *2d*, I must take a view both of the mercy and justice of God, and of Christ's love displayed in these sufferings. *3d*, I must exert faith in embracing a crucified Jesus; and my faith is to be attended with the exercise of the sacramental graces—repentance, love, thankfulness, &c. *4th*, I am to be suitably affected with the amazing sights set before me. *5th*, I am to make vows and prayers after partaking, and before I rise from the table.—(See the short account of the duty of worthy partaking, given before, p. 29.)

Q. Seeing faith is the principal grace in communicating, how is it to be exercised and employed at this time?

A. Faith being the soul's eye to discern Christ, the soul's hand to receive Him, and the soul's mouth to feed upon Him, it is to be employed at this time in the most active manner, in looking to Christ lifted up on the cross, for healing to our soul's

maladies; in embracing Christ, as our great surety and ransom, in fleeing into His wounds for shelter, in applying His blood for cleansing, and in pleading this blood with God for all we want.

Q. What are the amazing sights set before you at the Lord's table, which ought so much to affect you?

A. They are, *1st*, The unspeakable evil of sin, and God's infinite displeasure against it. *2d*, The inexorableness of divine justice, demanding satisfaction for sin. *3d*, The infinite greatness of the love of God to lost sinners, in providing a surety and sacrifice for them; and of Christ, in becoming both. *4th*, The great worth and preciousness of immortal souls, and the costliness of pardon and eternal glory. *5th*, Christ dying, and yet, in the meantime, conquering principalities and powers, and triumphing over them upon the cross.

Q. What ought you to vow when at the Lord's table?

A. That in the strength of Christ, my surety, I will abstain from all known sin, and make conscience of every known duty; that I will mind religion as the one thing needful, and make the pleasing of God the chief business of my life.

Q. For what things are you to offer your requests at this time?

A. For grace to preserve my liveliness of frame, for strength to pay my vows, for wisdom and skill to improve a crucified Christ in my after life, for preparation for future trials, for victory over Satan's temptations and indwelling sin, for mercy to my near relations, to my mother church, and for the enlargement of the kingdom of Christ through the world.

Q. In what frame ought you to rise and go from this holy table?

A. *1st*, In an admiring and thankful frame, upon account of redeeming love. *2d*, In a humble and watchful frame, because of the snares and dangers I am still exposed to. *3d*, In a believing and depending frame, leaning on Christ for guidance through the wilderness.

#### CONCERNING OUR BEHAVIOUR AFTER PARTAKING.

Q. How are you to behave, when the public work is over?

A. *1st*, I will retire in secret, and solemnly on my knees re-act what I was doing at the Lord's table; I will renew my choice of God as my God, and my acceptance of Christ in all His offices, and my engagement to be the Lord's. *2d*, I ought to pray for the continuance of a communion frame with me, when



the communion is over. *3d*, I must set about self-examination, concerning my behaviour and exercise at the Lord's table.

Q. How may we keep up something of a lively frame, when the communion is over?

A. In order thereto, we must, *1st*, Be jealous of Satan, the world, and heart-lusts, that lie in wait to rob us of it. *2d*, Learn the art of living by faith, and of deriving life from Jesus Christ, our head, for maintaining our life. *3d*, Still plead for the quickening influences of the Holy Spirit, which must, like bellows, blow up the fire, and maintain it against all the cold blasts of the devil and the world. *4th*. Delight in the company of lively christians.

Q. How may we examine our behaviour at the Lord's table, and discover if it was suitable?

A. We may take comfort, if we can say, *1st*, We had there very low and abasing thoughts of ourselves and our own righteousness. Or, *2d*, We had something of a heart-melting remembrance of Christ's death and sufferings, when the signs and memorials of them were presented to us. Or, *3d*, We were filled with abhorrence of sin, that pierced Him. Or, *4th*, We went in cheerfully with the terms of the covenant of grace.

Q. How may we examine our success, and know if we have got any good by this ordinance?

A. We may discern it by such effects as these: *1st*, If we have got any further assurances of God's love. Or, *2d*, If we have a greater hatred of sin than before. Or, *3d*, If we have a higher esteem of Christ. Or, *4th*, If we have greater delight in duty. Or, *5th*, If we have stronger desires after heart-holiness. Or, *6th*, If we have a better relish of ordinances and their usefulness, such as makes us resolve to hang still about God's hand.

Q. What should be our conversation after this solemn ordinance?

A. We should walk circumspectly, and conduct ourselves suitably to the Lord's dealings and dispensations towards us, whether we had success at it or not.

Q. How ought they to behave, who have got no good by this ordinance?

A. *1st*, They must search into the cause, if it was unbelief, sloth, self-conceit, or any sin reserved, and mourn over it. *2d*, They must flee to the blood of Christ, for pardon and cleansing. *3d*, They should look out for another communion-occasion, and

prepare for it more diligently and self-deniedly, and watch especially against that evil or defect in their management, which conscience suggests was the cause of their bad success at the former.

Q. How should they behave who have got good at the sacrament?

A. *1st*, They should be thankful to the Author, and, like the children of Zion, be joyful in their King. *2d*, Record what they have got, that it may be of use to them in a day of clouds. *3d*, Study to preserve it, by committing it to God, and walking humbly and tenderly before Him. *4th*, Pity and pray for others under discouragement, and be ready to communicate your experiences to them, for their support. *5th*, Study to recommend Christ and religion to strangers, by a holy and shining conversation before all men.

Q. What is that holy, becoming conversation which communicants should study?

A. It is a conversation ordered aright, and suitable to the rule of God's Word, to the principles they profess, the sights they have seen, the benefits they have received, and the vows they have made.

Q. What is it that makes our conversation to shine before the world?

A. When we have it adorned with humility, purity, justice, charity, meekness, patience, resignation to God's will, and contentment in every condition.

Q. Are not the best of God's people in hazard of miscarrying after such a solemn ordinance?

A. Yes, as appears from the instance of Peter, and the rest of the disciples, after the first communion.

Q. Whence is it that we are in hazard?

A. It proceeds from these things: *1st*, From the natural inconstancy of our hearts. *2d*, From that security and self-confidence we are prone to, after favours received from God. *3d*, From the malice and activity of Satan, who seeks by all means to ensnare us to sin after the sacrament, that he may thereby exceedingly widen the breach betwixt God and us.

Q. How shall we prevent backsliding, and yielding to Satan's temptations after the sacrament?

A. *1st*, We must labour to preserve a lively sense of the love of Christ in our souls. *2d*, Maintain an everlasting jealousy over our treacherous hearts, and never trust them at any time.

3d, Keep Christ, our ascended forerunner, still in our eye; and beware of losing sight or thought of Him. 4th, We must commit our souls, by humble and believing prayer, into the hands of God's power and mercy, as the child doth itself into the nurse's arms.

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### QUESTIONS FOR SELF-EXAMINATION,

PROPER FOR YOUNG COMMUNICANTS, IN EXAMINING THE STATE AND CONDITION OF THEIR SOULS IN SECRET, BEFORE THEIR APPROACH TO THE LORD'S TABLE; THE WHICH, IF THEY CAN ANSWER IN THE AFFIRMATIVE, OR SOME FEW OF THEM, THEY HAVE GROUND TO HOPE THEY ARE IN A GRACIOUS STATE, AND HAVE A RIGHT, BEFORE GOD, TO THIS SEALING ORDINANCE.

*Quest.* 1. Can I say that I am deeply affected about my soul, and my eternal state, so that my great and leading questions are, "What must I do to be saved? What shall I do to be born again? What shall I do for the Holy Spirit to come and work a saving change on me, and make me a new creature?"

Q. 2. Have I been spiritually enlightened to see the depravity of my nature, and the sinfulness of my heart and life, so as to be convinced that I am all as an unclean thing before God?

Q. 3. Have I been made to see sin as the greatest evil, and feel it as the greatest burden in the world, so as to account deliverance from it the greatest happiness?

Q. 4. Is my spirit very lowly and humble before God? Am I truly low and vile in mine own eyes, under a deep sense of my unworthiness and ill-deservings, so as to cry, with the centurion, "Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldst come under my roof;" and, with the publican, "God be merciful to me a sinner?"

Q. 5. Have I seen my absolute need of Jesus Christ to save me from sin and wrath, to restore the lost image of God, and to give me grace and glory, so that I am truly willing to part with all things for Christ?

Q. 6. Have I been made heartily to approve of the gospel method of salvation through the satisfaction of Christ? And is my soul well pleased with the self-abasing and grace-exalting way of saving sinners by the righteousness of another?

Q. 7. Have I made choice of God in Christ, the Mediator, as my God and portion? And can I say, that that which

moved me to this choice, was a sight of the vanity of seeking a rest for my soul among the creatures, and that its happiness lies in the enjoyment of God, which is only to be had through Christ?

Q. 8. Have I an high opinion of Jesus Christ, the Mediator? Is he very precious to my soul? Have I seen a matchless beauty in his person, in His offices and fulness, and that the fulness of the Godhead is in Him, and all freely exhibited for the use of those that come to Him?

Q. 9. Have I been helped to close with God's offer unto me in the gospel, and to accept of this well qualified Surety and Saviour in His fulness, and in His offices of Prophet, Priest, and King, and to embrace Him as altogether lovely?

Q. 10. Have I been determined to resign and surrender myself unto the Lord, to be taught, ruled and saved by Him? And have I given up all I have, to be disposed of by Him at His pleasure? Or, am I willing presently to do so?

Q. 11. Am I willing to renounce my own righteousness in justification, and my own strength in sanctification, and to look to Christ as my Surety and Head for both, saying, "In the Lord Jesus only have I righteousness and strength?"

Q. 12. Is Jesus Christ welcome to my soul as a King, as well as a Priest, so that I am as willing to be governed by His laws, as to be justified by His righteousness?

Q. 13. Have I got new discoveries of spiritual and heavenly things, which I had not before? Do I see a reality in a future life and glory, an awfulness in eternity, an emptiness in this world, a worth in my soul, an evil in sin, and a beauty in Christ and holiness, which I saw not before?

Q. 14. Do I seek more earnestly after the favour of God, through Christ, than after any earthly comfort or enjoyment?

Q. 15. Do I study the things which please God and make for His glory? And do I prefer His interest above the interest of the world, or of the flesh?

Q. 16. Is indwelling sin, and the corruption and plagues of my heart, my daily grief and burden? Do I struggle and strive against them, and long for a deliverance, crying with the apostle, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from this body of death?"

Q. 17. Can I say that I have respect to all God's commandments?—that I conscientiously practise whatever I discover to

be my duty?—that I dare neither omit duty when I know it, nor venture upon any sin against my light?

Q. 18. Can I say, as I dare not omit duty, as little dare I rest upon it?—that I see my prayers have need of pardon, and my tears need to be washed in Christ's blood, and therefore I can find no rest to the sole of my foot, but in my Cautioner's perfect righteousness?

19. Can I say, I am truly grieved in heart for sin, that pierced Christ; and am ready to put a bill of divorce into the hand of every lust, yea the most beloved idol; resolving never to give harbour to any of these traitors or enemies of my Lord?

Q. 20. Can I say, that I love Christ with my heart, and that I can appeal to Himself of the truth and reality of it, though it be but weak?—and that it is my great grief that I cannot get my weak heart to love Him more?

Q. 21. Can I say, that I breathe after greater conformity to God, both in heart and life?—that I desire heart-holiness more than any temporal thing whatsoever?—and that I cry oft with the Psalmist, "O that my ways were directed to keep thy statutes?"

Q. 22. Can I say, that I am truly desirous of converse and fellowship with God in the duties of religion?—and that I look upon that prayer, that sermon, that Sabbath, as lost, where I find nothing of His gracious presence?

Now, let young communicants retire in secret, for putting these questions to their souls, as in the presence of God; and let them wait till conscience give answer to them, but see that they do this when they are in the best frame.

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## A PROPOSAL

FOR YOUNG COMMUNICANTS RENEWING THEIR BAPTISMAL ENGAGEMENTS, BEFORE THEIR FIRST ADMISSION TO THE LORD'S TABLE.

*Quest.* 1. What moves you to seek access to the Lord's table?

*Ans.* The Lord's command; and because I desire to renew my baptismal engagements, and declare myself a christian by my own free choice and consent; and would join myself unto the Lord by my own voluntary act and deed.

Q. 2. Why do you desire to do so?

A. Because, when I got the first seal of the covenant, to wit, Baptism, I knew not what was done for me, nor was I capable to consent to my parent's deed; but now, when I am come to some knowledge and capacity, I am willing to declare that I make religion my free choice and reasonable service.

Q. 3. Why do you come so early? Will it not be soon enough to mind religion in old age?

A. No; for besides that I may die young, those who neglect religion, and give up themselves to the world or the flesh in their youth, fall into hardness of heart, from which few recover.

Q. 4. What is the most proper season to seek acquaintance with Christ and religion?

A. The time of youth, because in this age the heart is more easily melted, and the habits of vice are not so riveted as afterwards; and because God has a special delight in early piety.

Q. 5. What views, then, have you got of your natural state and condition?

A. I see it to be a most sinful, wretched, and helpless case: I am condemned to perish under a load of guilt and wrath, having broke the covenant of works, which I cannot fulfill; offended the justice of God, which I cannot satisfy; and lost the image of God and my precious soul, which I cannot recover. O! "what shall I do to be saved?"

Q. 6. To what quarter do you look for relief?

A. Only to Jesus Christ, who hath, in His free love to lost sinners, undertaking as Surety and Mediator in the new covenant, which is exhibited and sealed to believers at the Lord's table.

Q. 7. What views have you got of that covenant which is there sealed?

A. I see the way of salvation laid down in it, through the suretyship and righteousness of Jesus Christ, to be an excellent contrivance, "well ordered in all things, and sure." I look upon it as a device every way worthy of God, and of infinite wisdom; and I do heartily approve of it, consent to it, and desire to come and venture my soul and eternal salvation upon it.

Q. 8. What think you of the love of God, that was the spring of this new covenant?

A. I view it as wonderful and amazing: I admire the love of the Father, in contriving and sending His beloved Son to execute it; I admire the love of the Son of God, in undertaking to be a surety and sacrifice for lost sinners of Adam's race, when the sinning angels were past by and left to perish for ever; and I admire the love of the Holy Ghost, in undertaking to apply that redemption to lost elect sinners, by working in them conviction, conversion, and faith in Jesus Christ.

Q. 9. With what frame and disposition do you come to renew your baptismal covenant?

A. I desire to be sensible of my guilt in breaking this covenant, in running away from Christ's colours, in going over to Satan's camp, and in standing so long out against Christ's calls and offers; and I desire now to return to the Lord as a penitent prodigal, and a mourning backslider, with my face Zionwards, weeping as I go, willing to renew my baptismal vows with others, saying, "Come, let us join ourselves to the Lord in an everlasting covenant never to be forgotten." And in a word, I desire to go to a broken Christ with a broken heart.

Q. 10. What is that baptismal vow or covenant which you design to renew?

A. According to my engagement and dedication in baptism, I desire expressly to own and acknowledge the only living and true God, as my God in Christ, as He offers Himself in the covenant of Grace; and to give up myself, soul and body, to Him, to be for Him, and not for another. And I desire, in the most solemn manner, to renounce all the enemies of the Holy Trinity, viz., the devil, the world, and the flesh; and to declare my acceptance of God the Father, as my Father, of God the Son as my Redeemer, and of God the Holy Ghost as my Sanctifier, in whose blessed name I was baptized, and to whose service and glory I was dedicated.

Q. 11. What do you think of Jesus Christ, the Mediator of the covenant?

A. I think him a matchless person, and an excellent and all-sufficient Saviour; and I am content to accept of Him in all His offices, namely, as a prophet, to instruct me; as a priest, to atone and intercede for me; and as a king, to rule in me and over me.

Q. 12. What do you think of your own righteousness and strength, with respect to your salvation?

A. I look upon my own righteousness and strength as insufficient to answer the demands of God's law, and therefore I renounce them, and flee to a surety for both, saying, "In the Lord Jesus only have I righteousness and strength;" and I am content and resolved to make use of a borrowed strength for my performing of duty, and of a borrowed righteousness for my acceptance in duty.

Q. 13. How do you like this self-denying way of saving lost souls?

A. I am well pleased with it, as it makes me an eternal debtor to free grace, as it doth exclude all boasting and glorying in the creature, and ascribes all the glory of my salvation to Christ only, as it takes the crown off the head of self, and puts it upon the head of glorious Christ.

Q. 14. How do you relish the kingly office of Jesus Christ?

A. I am well pleased therewith, and content to take Christ as a king, to govern me by His laws, as well as a priest, to save me by His blood; nay, I am desirous He may come in as a king, and execute His kingly office in my soul; that He may set up His throne in my heart, subdue indwelling sin, and conquer all my rebellious lusts and corruptions.

Q. 15. What views have you of the Holy Ghost, the Third Person of the Trinity, and His office in the business of saving souls?

A. I look upon Him as the blessed applier of Christ's purchase unto me, and do accept of Him as such; and I am willing to give up myself to Him, to convince, enlighten, renew, sanctify, and guide me; and I believe He is as willing and ready to make the applications, as Christ was to make the purchase; and therefore I desire to trust Him for this blessed effect.

Q. 16. What think you of the things of this world, as a portion of the soul?

A. I look upon all its profits, honours, and pleasures, to be insufficient to suit the soul's desires, and that they are nothing but vanity and vexation of spirit; and therefore I will never set my heart upon the world as my portion. It is only the enjoyment of God, reconciled in Christ, that can afford complete satisfaction to my soul; and this only I choose for my happiness and portion.

Q. 17. What do you think of the world to come?

A. I look upon it, and the things thereof, as awful, certain, and very near; I look upon hell as the eternal habitation of



unbelievers; but I view heaven as the country and dwelling-place of the followers of the Lamb, with whom I desire to join to seek that country, and dwell with them for ever.

Q. 18. What do you think of a holy and religious life?

A. I think a religious life, or a life spent in the service of God, and in communion with Him, the most pleasant and comfortable life that a man can live in this world.

Q. 19. How do you think to attain to holiness, for living this life?

A. I look upon Jesus Christ as the purchaser of holiness as well as of happiness; as He who, by His death, hath obtained the Holy Spirit to effect the new birth, and form the image of God in His people: and therefore I desire to come to Christ and His blood for sanctification as well as for justification—for conformity and likeness to God, as well as for access to fellowship and Communion with God; and I will plead that He may send His Holy Spirit into my soul, for producing holiness, and all the graces of the Spirit.

Q. 20. What views have you got of the promises of the covenant, and their usefulness?

A. I look upon them as the ground of all my faith and hope; and I desire to make daily use of them, and to plead them with God, for strength to perform every duty, and for perseverance and thoroughbearing in all the steps of my pilgrimage, and I resolve to have recourse to them in every strait and difficulty.

Q. 21. As you profess willingness to accept of God in Christ as your God, are you not also willing to dedicate yourself to Him for His use and service?

A. Yes, I am willing (I hope through grace) to give up and surrender unto the Lord myself and all that belongs unto me, my soul and body, with all their powers, faculties, senses, members, and enjoyment, to be instruments of His glory, and to be disposed of by Him, for His use and service, at His pleasure.

Q. 22. How do you instruct your willingness to give up and surrender the powers and faculties of your soul unto the Lord?

A. I think I am willing to dedicate and give up my understanding to the Lord, to contemplate His perfections, and know His will: my memory to Him, to retain and treasure up His precious promises and counsels; my will to Him, to choose and refuse every thing according to His will, and to comply therewith in all things; and my conscience to Him, to be His deputy, to accuse and excuse according to His direction.

Q. 23. Do you also resign and give up the passions and affections of your soul unto the Lord?

A. Yes. I give up and dedicate my passion of grief to the Lord, to mourn for every thing that is offensive to Him; my hatred, to abhor every thing that is hateful to Him; my desires, to long for His presence; my love, to embrace and entertain him; my delight and joy, to solace myself, and acquiesce cheerfully in Him, as my soul's portion and happiness.

Q. 24. In what respects do you resign your bodily senses and members unto the Lord?

A. I give up my eyes, to read His Word, and behold His wondrous works; my ears, to hear His word, and attend to His counsels; my taste, smell and feeling to discern and relish His sweetness and excellency in the creatures; my tongue, to proclaim His praise, and commend His ways and service; my hands, to help His people; and my feet, to walk in paths pleasing to Him.

Q. 25. How do you resign your enjoyments and comforts to the Lord?

A. I resign my time, my health, my talents, my opportunities, my relations, my honours, my reputation, and all I have in the world, unto the Lord, to be employed and disposed of by Him, for His glory, as He thinks proper.

Q. 26. What view have you now of sin, and of those sins you once esteemed as your right hand and right eye?

A. I see and abhor them as the enemies and crucifiers of my Lord Jesus, and as the very nails and spear that pierced Him; and desire to throw them out of my heart, and to cut off every right hand, and to pluck out every right eye, and to renounce all ungodliness, and all beloved lusts, and to count no sin too dear to part with, for Jesus Christ my Lord.

Q. 27. What do you think now of companions in sin, and their solicitations?

A. I am convinced of their folly, and resolve never to follow the multitude to do evil, nor to join them in any of the common sins of the age, but steadfastly (through grace) to avoid the snares, and resist the temptations of evil company, saying, with the Psalmist, "Depart from me, ye evil doers, for I will keep the commandments of my God."

Q. 28. What thoughts have you of the people of God, and those who bear His image?

A. I look upon them as God's precious jewels, the excellent ones of the earth, and the most desirable company in the world.

Q. 29. In whose strength is it that you engage to all these parts and articles of the covenant?

A. Only in the strength of Jesus Christ, my Head and Surety, who hath promised to make His grace sufficient for me.

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### AN EXAMPLE

#### OF A YOUNG COMMUNICANT'S SECRET TRANSACTING AND COVENANTING WITH GOD, BEFORE APPROACHING THE LORD'S TABLE.

ALMIGHTY GOD, and Creator of all things, Thou didst make man upright and happy; but by the fall he is become most sinful and miserable. I acknowledge, that by nature I am an enemy to thee, a child of wrath, and a slave of sin and Satan. I have been a transgressor of thy laws from the womb; and it is a wonder of thy patience that thou hast not made me a monument of thy wrath in hell long before this time. O! what will become of me to all eternity, if I abide in this state!

I have heard there is mercy in God to lost sinners through the blood of a crucified Jesus, which reviews my drooping soul: O can this mercy reach the like of me! But surely the viler sinner I am, thou hast the fairer opportunity to show the freeness of thy love, and the efficacy of thy Son's blood; and if I be sharer of it, eternal hallelujahs will be sung to the Lamb of God on my account. I do therefore come and cast myself down at the feet of infinite mercy, and plead for it, according to thy promise, through Jesus Christ, thy dear Son.

O FATHER of mercies, and Father of my Lord Jesus Christ, I am now sensible of my sin and folly, in rebelling against thee, and going over to Satan's camp; I desire to return, as a penitent prodigal, to my heavenly Father, confessing my guilt, and willing to join myself unto the Lord in an everlasting covenant, never to be forgotten. O Father, I have sinned against Heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy child; but happy would I think myself, if I were admitted to the meanest station or room in thy family. I desire to magnify thy free love and infinite wisdom, in contriving a way of salvation to lost sinners, through a Mediator; and in sending thy eternally beloved Son to be the mediator and surety for satisfying thy justice for them, and for purchasing grace and

glory to them. According to thy command, I desire to put honour upon thy Son, and heartily to approve of this device of salvation, as every way worthy of God, and to fall in with it in all respects. O pity thy own creature, the workmanship of thy hands; go over thy work again, and, upon Christ's account, create me anew, after thine own image, that I may be fitted for thy service and glory.

O blessed JESUS, I admire thy love, in undertaking to be the surety and sacrifice for lost sinners, and in making offer of thy blood to wash the like of me. Welcome, Lord Jesus! I do here disclaim all other ways of salvation, and betake myself to thee as my only Mediator and Saviour! I do embrace thee in all thy offices; and give up myself to be saved, taught, and ruled by thee. I accept of thee as my great High Priest, to atone for my soul, and plead my cause with the Father, by thy meritorious death and powerful intercessions: I renounce all my own righteousness and worthiness in the business of justification and acceptance with God, and avouch thee alone as the Lord my righteousness: I accept of thee as my great Prophet, and give up myself to thy teaching and instruction, that I may be conducted by thee through this wilderness, and brought safe to heaven at last. O for wisdom to follow thy direction! I do accept of thee as my King, swear allegiance to thee, and heartily consent to thy laws and government; let thy throne be set up in my soul, and all thy enemies there made thy footstool. I accept of thee for my Husband, and consent to the marriage-covenant in all its articles; I accept of thee as my Captain, and list myself as a soldier under thy banner, to fight, in thy strength, against all thine enemies. I comply with all thy gospel terms, and am well pleased with the self-denying way of salvation proposed therein. I am content to be an eternal debtor to free grace, and that the glory of my salvation be for ever ascribed unto Jesus Christ, my Surety.

O HOLY SPIRIT, I thankfully accept of thee as the applier of my Redeemer's purchase, and do welcome thee to do thine office in my soul; to work faith in me, to believe the gospel; to bring about the change of the new birth, and to renew all my faculties. To thee I am beholden for all the good motions and inclinations excited in me: O let them be continued, and the good work carried forward in me to perfection. I do choose thee for my quickener, sanctifier, and my director through all my pilgrimage. I yield myself to thy influences and guidance,

and desire carefully to attend to all thy motions and convictions, both in performing my duty and in abstaining from sin. O work grace in me for that effect, and enable me always to study and choose the things that are pleasing to thee.

According to my baptismal vows, I do here renounce and abandon all the enemies of the Holy Trinity—the devil, the world, and the flesh; and I do here surrender myself unto thee, FATHER, SON, and SPIRIT, one GOD, to be thine, and only thine; thine and not the devil's; thine, and not the world's; thine, and not my lust's; thine, and not my own. I desire, with my whole heart, to choose and avouch thee to be my God and everlasting portion; and also to devote and dedicate myself, soul and body, and all that belongs to me, to be instruments of thy glory, and to be disposed of for thy use and service. O do thou henceforth set thy mark upon me, as a child born to thee, and formed for thy praise; stamp me with thy image, that I may be distinguished, set apart, and consecrated for thy service and glory all my days. And seeing, above all, thou requirest the heart, I do here make an offer and surrender of my heart unto the Lord; take it, and form it for thyself; make it entirely new; make it soft and tender, pliable and holy; put thy fear in it, and write thy laws on it, that I may serve thee continually, and never depart from thee.

Lord, I here give my consent to thy entering in, and taking possession of thy throne in my soul: be, therefore, cast open, all ye doors of my soul, that the King of glory may enter in, and dwell for ever. I have found my heart very corrupt, wicked, and deceitful; and will no longer pretend to manage it, but give it up to thee, to bring every thought and inclination in subjection to thee.

I see the world is nothing but vanity and vexation of spirit; I will never any more set my heart upon it, but endeavour to conquer it, and subdue my inclinations to it. I place my happiness only in the enjoyment of God; I view heaven as my country and dwelling-place, and will henceforth set my face heavenward, and spend my life here in God's service, and in communion with Him, that I may be meet for the heavenly state. I will always look upon sin as the enemy of God, and the crucifier of Jesus Christ, my Saviour, and will pursue it to death. I will never follow a multitude to do evil, but will join myself to the people of God, though they be despised or persecuted. I take Christ with His cross, as well as with His crown;

and I cheerfully submit to the rod and discipline of His house, Lord, if thou wilt undertake that thy grace shall be sufficient for me, I shall think nothing too difficult to attempt, or too much to suffer for thee. I desire to learn the life of faith and prayer. O teach me it, that I may make daily use of Christ, my Surety, both for justification and sanctification! for strength to perform duty, bear the cross, and resist temptation. I look unto thee, to send forth the Spirit into my soul, to assist and strengthen me for every good word and work.

Heavenly Father, I take thee for my Father; I take Christ for my life; I take the Spirit for my guide; I take thy Word for my rule, thy promises for my encouragement, thy testimonies for my counsellors, thy Sabbaths for my delight, thy ordinances for my trysting-place, thy people for my companions, thy glory for my end, holiness for my way, and heaven for my home.

LORD, I have no might, or strength to keep or perform any thing I have engaged to do, but undertake all in my Surety's strength, and depending upon His promises, that He will never leave nor forsake me. In the Lord Jesus only have I righteousness and strength. O Lord, be surety for thy servant for good. Give always what thou requirest, and then demand what thou pleasest.

And as an evidence of my sincerity in this solemn profession, dedicate, and engagement, I am willing to subscribe with my hand unto the Lord, as I am warranted, Isaiah xlv. 5.

Now I am thine; Lord, save me!

## SECTION IV.

### DIFFERENT THEORIES OF THE LORD'S SUPPER AND OF OUR SAVIOUR'S DECLARATION THAT ETERNAL LIFE IS IMPARTED BY HIS FLESH AND HIS BODY.

In John 6:54, it is declared that "Whoso eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath eternal life." We have here, and in other similar passages, a positive declaration by Him "who cannot lie," and who is also "faithful to His promises and cannot deny Himself." It is, therefore, *infallibly* certain that whosoever eateth Christ's flesh and drinketh His blood hath eternal life.

Life is a state of existence, and eternal life is that never ending state of existence entered upon earth to which the saints shall continue to enjoy in heaven. This life, in its completed state, implies perfect holiness, complete redemption, joy unspeakable, and felicity beyond the reach of change or the possibility of decay. It implies also the resurrection of the body which Christ will raise at the last day.

It is all important then to understand what these passages mean. That they are figurative and cannot be understood in their gross and carnal sense, all must admit. To suppose that they teach that, like savage cannibals, we are to devour the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of Man, were horrid blasphemy, and dreadful depravity. And even were such a thing possible,—to imagine that flesh and blood could impart spiritual and eternal life is an absurdity too gross to be conceived. Christ has now ascended with His glorified body into heaven. His real earthly body and blood have not been visible since He departed out of this world. And hence if these promises are to be fulfilled at all they must be regarded as figurative allusions to some benefits secured to us *now*.

Plain, however, as this appears, there are two interpretations of all such passages, diametrically opposed to one another and yet still extensively adopted, one of which may be called the SACRAMENTAL and the other the SPIRITUAL.

Let us notice both.

I. In the first place, we will examine the SACRAMENTAL interpretation of this passage. Under this head there are *three* opinions. *First*, there is the interpretation adopted by the Romish Church. This whole passage in the sixth chapter of

John as they teach, refer to the Sacrament, and inculcated their doctrine of transubstantiation and the sacrifice of the Mass. It is conceived that at all times when the Lord's Supper is administered the priest has the power of changing the bread into the body, blood, bones and sinews and actual divinity of Christ, so that the whole Christ is contained in their sacrament, and that the persons who receive what has been consecrated do not receive bread and wine but literally partake of the body and blood of Christ and truly eat His flesh and drink His blood. It is further conceived that this body, blood, sinews, soul and also Christ's divinity, through the wonderful and hypothetical union thereof with His body and soul, are offered up as a true and propitiatory sacrifice to God both for the dead and the living—all that was offered up on the cross being again presented in the sacrifice of the Mass. It is further believed that such is the inherent virtue and efficacy of this sacrifice, that its benefit does not depend upon the faith of him who received it, but operates immediately upon all who do not obstruct its working by some mortal sin. And hence also the council of Trent decreed that "there is no room to doubt that all the faithful in Christ are bound to venerate this most holy Sacrament, and to render thereto the worship of *latria* which is due to the true God." "Whosoever therefore," says this meek! and lowly! and christian! church, "shall deny that in the most holy sacrament of the Eucharist, there are truly, really, and substantially contained the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ together with His soul and divinity, and consequently Christ entire; but shall affirm that He is present therein only in a sign or figure or by His power; let Him be accursed." Then it goes on with a string of eleven distinct accursings. And all this is predicated upon the words of our text, together with those in the institution of the Sacrament.

A *second* interpretation of this passage was given by Luther and all who adopt his views, who are of opinion that these passages (which he also referred to the Communion)—together with those used at the institution of the Sacrament, do certainly teach that the actual body and blood of Christ are really present in the Lord's Supper. Not that they believe the absurd and incredible doctrine of the Romanists that the bread and wine are transubstantiated, but that while these continue to remain, there is present also the substance of the body and the blood of our Saviour which is literally received by communicants. The manner of this presence they call a mystery and



have offered various theories by which to explain and illustrate it, and to shew how that limited extension which enters into our very conception of the body of Christ, can be reconciled with that omnipotence of His body which appears to them to flow from the inseparable union of the divine and human natures. "They reject the term consubstantiation because that may seem to imply that the body of Christ is incorporated with the substance of the bread and wine. They reject another term also, which has been used upon this subject, impanation, because that seems to imply that the body of Christ is enclosed and lodged in the bread. But still they profess to hold that doctrine, which is expressed in all the standard books of the Lutheran churches, and is one of the principal marks of distinction between them and the reformed churches; that besides the earthly matter, which is the object of our senses, in the Sacrament, there are also present, in such a manner as not to be removed at any distance from it, the real body and blood of Christ. "It is fair, however, to mention that the doctrine of the real presence is in the Lutheran church merely a speculative opinion, having no influence upon the practice of those by whom it is adopted. It appears to them that this opinion furnishes the best method of explaining scripture expressions: but they do not consider the presence of the body and blood of Christ with the bread and wine, as imparting to the Sacrament any physical virtue, by which the benefit derived from it is independent of the disposition of him by whom it is received; or as giving it the nature of a sacrifice; or as rendering the bread and wine an object of adoration to christians."\* By many also and perhaps the greater number in the Lutheran church at the present day, the doctrine of consubstantiation is entirely rejected.

A *third* interpretation of these passages in the sacramental sense is that given by the Anglican church and by all who are denominated high-churchmen, both in England and America. These also refer these passages to the Sacrament and infer from them, and the words of institution, that Christ's body and blood are really present in this ordinance though not locally. "A thing is present," they say, "which is so circumstanced as to act upon and influence us, whether we are sensible of it or not. Now, this is what the Catholic Church seems to hold concerning our Lord's presence in this Sacrament, that He then personally and bodily is with us in the way an object

\*See Hill's Lectures.

is which we call present: how He is so, we know not, but that He should be so, though He be millions of miles away, is not more inconceivable than the influence of eyesight upon us is to a blind man." "In answer, then, to the problem, how Christ comes to us, while remaining on high, I answer just as much as this—that He comes by the agency of the Holy Ghost, *in, and by the Sacrament*. Locomotion is the means of a material presence; the Sacrament is the means of His spiritual presence. Let them but believe and act on the truth that the consecrated head is Christ's body, as He says, and no officious comment on His words will be attempted by any well judging mind." This writer admits, plainly, of a real superlocal presence in the Holy Sacrament. "Christ is present under the form of bread and water." "The clergy are intrusted with the awful and mysterious gift of making the bread and wine Christ's body and blood." "One who looks upon the Lord's Supper as little more than a commemorative sign of an absent thing, passes lightly over our Saviour's words, 'This is my body.' " "Receiving the body of our Lord."\*

Such, then, are the different interpretations which are given of this passage considered as referring to the Sacrament, and which we have, therefore, denominated THE SACRAMENTAL INTERPRETATION. But if these interpretations were correct, two conclusions would follow: *first*, that the participation of the communion is *absolutely* necessary, at least as far as the knowledge of christianity is necessary, to the salvation of the soul;—and, *secondly*, that this ordinance inevitably and necessarily secures the salvation of every one that does in fact outwardly partake of it.

These conclusions must follow from such an interpretation because our Saviour makes an absolute and unqualified affirmation that whoso eateth His flesh and drinketh His blood, *hath eternal* life, and again, as in John 6, v. 63, he declares, "Verily, verily I say unto you, except ye eat of the flesh of the Son of man, and drink of His blood ye have no life in you." And the same thing is taught in several other verses. Now this language is just as explicit as any that is employed in any part of the Bible in stating the terms and conditions of salvation, as, for instance, when it is said "except ye repent ye shall all likewise perish. He that believeth shall be saved, he that believeth not shall be damned." And so in John 6, v. 47, "He that believeth on me hath everlasting life." Now all denominations

\*See the authorities given in Maurs view of Puseyism, p. 33.

believe and *must admit*, that wherever there is true repentance and faith in any soul, there is found that spiritual life which will continue to exist for ever. The connection between true repentance, faith and salvation is direct, immediately and indissoluble. It is founded on everlasting love, immutable promise, unchanging faithfulness, and divine veracity. And therefore, though heaven and earth should pass away, one jot or tittle cannot pass away till in every case true faith is consummated in everlasting life.

But the connection between eating Christ's body and drinking His blood and the possession of eternal life is here declared by Him who is THE TRUTH to be equally absolute and immutable. And if, therefore, these words refer to this fact that Christ's flesh and blood are given and received in the giving and reception of the elements of the Sacrament; if this flesh and blood are really what is given *in* the bread and wine, or are really given *with* the bread and wine; or are really *present with* these elements, as these three theories severally teach, then it follows that whosoever receives this flesh and blood by the Sacrament is certainly and inevitably made partaker of eternal life; and that on the other hand, whosoever does not receive the Sacrament hath no life in Him and must be excluded from heaven.

Now, it is not difficult to shew that both these positions are contrary to scripture and in themselves absurd—that the sacramental interpretation of these passages is, therefore, false. For it is not true, as a universal proposition, that all who do not partake of the communion must perish for ever. All the ancient believers from Adam to Noah, from Noah to Abraham, from Abraham to Moses, and from Moses to Christ, died without the possible opportunity of eating Christ's flesh and drinking His blood in the Eucharist, and yet "these all died in faith," and now compass us about as a great cloud of witnesses, assuring us by their faith and peace and joy through life, their hope and triumph in death, and their everlasting life with God their Father, who "is not the God of the dead, but of the living,"—that although they had not received that which was intended by the promises and had not, therefore, seen Christ in the flesh or partaken of His flesh and blood in the Sacrament or in any literal sense, that nevertheless they knew that He lived, and that He would stand in the latter day upon the earth," and "they saw His days afar off and were glad." We believe

also that Scripture warrants us to hope that a large number from among the heathen, including certainly all dying in infancy, shall be finally saved through the merits and mediation of the Lord Jesus Christ; and yet any possible participation of the Sacrament is to them impossible. The same is true of ALL children dying in infancy. They will, we believe, all be saved, and that belief we ground on the doctrine of election on which alone it is either possible or sure. But it is certain that there are multitudes of children, even in christian lands, who die without ever receiving the ordinance of baptism, and that *all* die without the communion. Either, therefore, this multitude which no man can number are damned, or else the sacramental interpretation of these passages, we are considering, is false. We believe, further, that there are many in all Evangelical denominations to whom "God imputeth not iniquity, but imputeth righteousness without works," and who "being justified by faith in that righteousness, have peace with God," and are made meet for an inheritance among the saints in light. But although these persons have partaken of the Lord's Supper, they do not *even profess* to have received in it the true and literal body and blood of the Lord Jesus Christ; and these also must, therefore, be excluded from any benefit consequent upon *such* a participation. Both Romanists and prelatists also teach that the Communion of which all such dissenters from their dogmas partake, is *no communion at all*—and cannot, therefore, contain the real flesh and blood of Jesus Christ. And hence it follows in reference to true believers of the Presbyterian, Congregational, Baptist, Methodist, Reformed Dutch and other churches, that they are all without spiritual life, and that dying as they are, they must go into perdition, or otherwise it must follow that THE SACRAMENTAL VIEW OF THESE PASSAGES IS FALSE.

And are we not still further bound to believe that many, like the dying thief, are led to a true and saving faith on the Saviour in such circumstances as prevent them from enjoying the ordinance of the Lord's Supper? Or that interpretation, however, to which we are now adverting it is impossible that such persons can be saved, since "except a man eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of man he CAN HAVE NO LIFE IN HIM." Either, therefore, this interpretation must be false or such persons also must be all damned.

But, you will reply, does not every church teach that the participation of the Lord's Supper is, in some sense and to some persons, necessary to salvation? We answer, yes; it is the undoubted opinion of all evangelical churches that the Lord's Supper, being an ordinance instituted by Christ, being commanded by Him to be observed by all who love Him and believe in His name; is imperatively binding upon all who are not prevented by some hindrance and necessity imposed by providence, from "doing this in remembrance of Christ." Wherever, therefore, any individual *voluntarily and without such unavoidable necessity*, keeps away from the Lord's Supper and neglects to make that open and public profession of his faith which such an observance requires and implies, he "cannot be Christ's disciple;" "he is not worthy of Him;" and "of him, therefore, Christ will be ashamed when He comes to judge the world in righteousness."

So much for the first thing implied in the sacramental interpretation of this passage, that the communion is absolutely necessary to salvation. But we proceed to remark that it is equally unscriptural to teach that the participation of the Communion *necessarily and inevitably* secures salvation to all who partake of it, which is the second thing implied in the sacramental interpretation of this passage. Such certainly was not the effect of the passover under the former economy. And equally certain is it that such was not the effect of the communion upon Judas, Simon, Magus, Annanias and Sapphira, Diotuphes, Dumas and many more alluded to in the New Testament, or upon the members of churches of Galatia, Asia Minor and of Rome.

On the contrary, the apostles every where teach that there may be all the forms of godliness where there is nothing of its power; that he is not a Jew or a christian who is one outwardly, neither is that the true sacrament either of baptism or the Lord's Supper—which consist in the participation of the outward elements, but he is a Jew or a christian who is one inwardly, and the true sacrament is that of the heart and not in the letter or mere outward form, whose praise is not of man but of God. "Circumcision," baptism, and the Lord's Supper are, therefore, as the apostle teaches, "nothing" in themselves considered, "but the keeping of the commandments of God." "The Grace which is exhibited in or by the sacraments, rightly used, is not," as *our* standards well teach, "conferred by any

power in them; neither doth the efficacy of a sacrament depend upon the piety or intention of him that doth administer it, but upon the work of this Spirit and the word of institution which contains, together with a precept authorizing the use thereof, a promise of benefits to worthy receivers." We are, therefore, taught by God Himself as in Isaiah, chap. 1st, that even the ordinances appointed by God Himself, when not accompanied by and expressive of, right views and feelings, not only do not procure, but are even a hindrance to, salvation; and that unless a man be renewed by the Spirit of God, and sanctified and justified, he can never see the kingdom of heaven. These things, were it necessary, we might prove from the writings of the fathers and of these churches themselves, against whom we are contending. Nay, we might shew that even in their constant practice they openly contradict and disprove both positions. For, in order to secure that very spiritual life and salvation which is in such passages, pledged to every one who eats Christ's flesh and drinks His blood, the Romish church—as if conscious of the insufficiency of the Eucharist—has six other sacraments and innumerable acts and offices, and works both of penance and of merit; while both the Lutheran and the Prelatical churches, practically demonstrate their utter unbelief of either of those monstrous and horrid impieties, which would inevitably follow from their theories of the Sacrament.

Inasmuch, therefore, as the eating of Christ's flesh and drinking of His blood are *absolutely essential to salvation* and are *effectual* in securing the salvation of *every one that partakes of them*, the language of our text cannot be interpreted as applying to the Lord's Supper because, as we have just seen, the participation of the Lord's Supper does not *of itself*, or *in every case*, secure or communicate salvation, nor does the want of it, in *every case*, where not voluntarily neglected, forfeit that salvation and eternal life. This the advocates of the sacramental interpretation, that they may not appear destitute of humanity, are constrained to admit. But if this is so, then it follows that since the declaration in these passages is simply and absolutely true, THE SACRAMENTAL INTERPRETATION OF THEM MUST BE SIMPLY AND ABSOLUTELY FALSE.

II. We proceed, therefore, to what we term THE SPIRITUAL INTERPRETATION of these passages. According to this view these passages, though not spoken with any *direct reference* to the Lord's Supper, are nevertheless applicable to it, in *its*

true purport, and in *their true* signification. By this theory of the Sacrament, the consecrated elements are regarded as emblems or symbols of the body and blood of Christ; denoting that as our bodies are supported by eating and drinking, so are our souls supported by faith in the sacrificial death of the Lord Jesus. What Christ teaches incidentally in such passages from the common use of eating and drinking, to which His attention had been drawn by these Samaritans to whom He spoke, this He teaches us constantly by the Sacrament He instituted. That such passages, however, do not refer *directly* to the Lord's Supper and were not intended to *institute* or *describe* it, is most certain, since they contain no promise that such an ordinance should ever be appointed, nor is it any where declared that the words are to be so understood. But that in the language used in the institution of the Eucharist, Christ did have in view the conversation here recorded; the perplexity which on its first delivery it caused to His disciples; and the deep impression it made upon their minds, is, we think, highly probable. And hence we conclude that in this passage we have a divinely authorized *interpretation* of what Christ meant by the words "this is my body," used in the institution of the Sacrament, and of the true meaning and intent of that ordinance.

The meaning of all these passages, then, is this, "as he," says Christ, "who eateth bread or other meat, and drinketh wine or other drink, nourishes and sustains his physical life; so whosoever believes with a true and heartfelt confidence in that atonement which I shall make and is thus enabled by the influence of the Holy Spirit to discern the real and meritorious efficacy of the sacrifice of my body and the shedding of my blood, and to apply to his own soul the benefits it secures, hath eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day." Such declarations are, therefore, adapted most impressively to teach us that our spiritual life must come from God just as certainly as the life of our bodies; that we have no ability to originate or to preserve this spiritual life; that in consequence of sin we have forfeited all claim to divine mercy; that God so loved us as to give His only begotten son, that He, by becoming a sacrifice in our stead, might make a propitiation for our sins; that His atonement, which was completed and sealed when His body was crucified and His blood poured out upon the cross, is the only food which can quicken and sustain in our hearts spiritual

life and hope and peace with God; that faith is the way by which this spiritual food can be eaten and this spiritual drink be received; and lastly, that it is by a constant, lively, and believing reliance upon Christ and supplication of His promised grace and spirit, our spiritual life can be supported and be more and more invigorated.

That these passages refer to Christ's atonement cannot be denied, for the Scriptures everywhere tell us that, "we have redemption through His blood," and "boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus." That the sacrifice of Christ is, therefore, able to secure for us eternal life we cannot doubt, but *how* it thus works in our souls we are not required to fathom, nor is it necessary that we should understand. All that is necessary for us is to know and believe is that God is now in Christ Jesus reconciled and propitiated, and, therefore, able while just and holy and righteous as a Sovereign Judge, to justify even the ungodly, who by faith in Christ, become one with Him and have His righteousness imputed unto them.

This was the great truth which Christ was anxious to inculcate. He, therefore, told the Samaritans, to whom in the discourse in John 6th, He spoke, that He came not to give them temporal food, but that meat which endureth unto everlasting life. And when they in reply alluded to the Manna which Moses gave to their fathers, "then Jesus said unto them, my father giveth you the true bread from heaven, for the bread of God is He who cometh down from heaven and giveth life unto the world. I am the bread of life." And He added, "the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world." And when they asked Him for a more plain declaration of His meaning, and what they were to do to obtain this life, Christ said, "this is the work of God that ye believe on Him whom He hath sent." "He that cometh to me shall never hunger, and he that believeth on me shall never thirst." And when He had again, in the 54th and following verses, adopted the figure of meat, flesh and blood to signify this atonement and propitiation which He was about to make, He concludes the whole discourse by saying, "this is that bread which came from heaven, not as your fathers did eat Manna and are dead; He that eateth of this bread shall live forever." The entire discourse was founded on the fact that the Samaritans sought Christ, "not because they saw the miracles, but because they did eat of the loaves and were filled." It was,



therefore, designed to lead their minds to feel the necessity, and to understand the nature, of that gracious provision which God had made for the life and salvation of their souls. And hence Christ declares that there is in His sacrifice and death a meritorious virtue by which it is made the power of God to the salvation of every one that believes on His name. And that such was Christ's meaning He Himself further teaches when in reply to the wish of His disciples that He should explain His meaning, He said, "It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing; the words that I speak unto you they are Spirit and they are life."

Such is the interpretation which reason, criticism, and the consenting voice of the best ancient and modern commentators give us of this and similar passages. Taken according to the *letter*, it killeth and leads to impiety, blasphemy, idolatry and horrid cannibalism; but taken *spiritually*, it giveth life. And in this view of such passages we find the true nature and design of the Lord's Supper. On the nature and efficacy of the Lord's Supper our church takes the ground occupied by Calvin, and which is midway between that held by Teningluis on the one hand, and by Luther on the other. It teaches, with Teningluis, that the bread and wine are the *signs* of the body and blood of Christ which *are not locally present*, and, therefore, renounces both transubstantiation and consubstantiation. It teaches, further, with Teningluis, that the use of these signs, being a memorial of the sacrifice once offered on the cross, was intended to produce a moral effect. But it teaches, further, that to all who remember the death of Christ in a proper manner, *Christ is spiritually present*, that is, to their minds, and by the indwelling presence of His gracious spirit. To all, therefore, who observe this ordinance with a true and living faith, Christ is so spiritually present that they may truly and emphatically be said to partake of His body and blood, which, being spiritually present in their power and efficacy, convey the same nourishment to their souls as bread and wine do to the natural life.\* Such passages, therefore, and the Lord's Supper not merely imply that benefit which flows from exhortation and instruction, but such a union between Christ and His people as makes them interested in all His work and glory; such a communication of grace and strength as is sufficient to quicken them in duty and sustain in a course of holiness and

\*See Hill's Lectures.

true obedience. Our church thus avoids the opposite errors of those who, as Archbishop Leighton says, ascribe too much to the sacraments as if they wrought by a natural, inherent virtue and carried grace in them inseparably; and also of those who ascribe too little to them, making them only signs and badges of our profession the errors of excess and of defect. She teaches us, therefore, to reverence this ordinance, to look upon it with the eye of faith and to expect from it real and invaluable spiritual blessings. On the other hand she teaches us not to regard the Sacrament as containing innate grace, as containing in whole or in part the causal ground of our justification, or as carrying grace inseparably with its observance, even where faith is wanting in the recipient; or as being in itself exclusively or primarily the means of grace.

Our church teaches, in short, to use the words of Dr. Thornwell, "that one prime office assigned to the sacraments is to *represent* to the eye, as preaching unfolds to the ear, Christ as the substance of the new covenant. They are *signs* which teach by analogy. As water cleanses the body so the blood of the Redeemer purges the conscience, and the Spirit of the Redeemer purifies the heart. As bread and wine constitute important articles of food, and administer strength to our feeble frame, so the atonement of Christ is the food of the spiritual man and the source of all his activity and vigour?\*" This *analogy* is what Augustin meant when he said, "If sacraments had not a certain *likeness* and *representation* of the things whereof they be sacraments, then indeed they were no sacraments."† The *things themselves* unquestionably are not similar. There is no likeness between the water and the Spirit, between bread and wine and the death of Jesus, but there is a resemblance in their *relations*. Water performs a similar office for the flesh which the blood of Christ performs for the soul. Bread and wine sustain a similar relation to our natural growth which faith in Christ bears to our spiritual health. It is obvious, that regarded simply as *signs* instituted by the authority of Christ, the sacraments are happily adapted to confirm our faith in the truth and reality of the divine promises.

\*The signification and substance is to show us how we are fed with the body of Christ; that is, that like as material bread feedeth our body, so the body of Christ, nailed on the cross, embraced and eaten by faith, feedeth the soul. The like representation is also made in the sacrament of baptism; that as our body is washed clean with water, so our soul is washed clean with Christ's blood." Jewell, Defence of the Apology.

†Quoted in the above mentioned treatise of Jewell.

They place before us in a different form and under a different aspect, in a form and aspect adapted to our animal and corporeal nature, the same grounds and object of faith which the word presents to the understanding. They do not render the promises of the covenant in themselves considered more sure or credible, but they help us by images addressed to the senses, in apprehending what might otherwise be too refine for our gross perceptions.‡ They are a double preaching of the same Gospel; and confirm the word just as an additional witness establishes a fact. They are in short *visible promises* which we cannot contemplate in their true character without an increased conviction of the truth and faithfulness of God. But in addition to this, God may be regarded as declaring through them to worthy recipients that just as certainly as water purifies the body or as bread and wine sustain it, just so certainly shall their consciences be purged from dead works and their spiritual strength renewed through the blood of the Redeemer. The certainty of the material phenomena, which is a matter of daily experience, is made the pledge of an equal certainty in the analogous spiritual things. It is in this way I conceive that the sacraments are seals of the covenant. They not only *represent* its blessings, are not only an authorized proclamation of its promises addressed to the eye, but contain, at the same time, a solemn assurance that to those who rightly apprehend the signs, the spiritual good shall be as certain as the natural consequences by which it is illustrated, that the connection between faith and salvation is as indissoluble as between washing and external purity, eating and physical strength."

Such, therefore, is the spiritual view of this ordinance, and from a comparison, then, of these two interpretations of it, we are led to perceive the dangerous character of the first, and the certain fallibility and erroneousness of the churches by whom it has been adopted. For both rest upon the *literal* interpretation of the passages in question, whereas that the language is

‡Hence Calvin very justly observes: "And as we are corporeal, always creeping on the ground, cleaving to tenestrial and carnal objects and incapable of understanding or conceiving of any thing of a spiritual nature, our merciful Lord, in his infinite indulgence, accommodates himself to our capacity, condescending to lead us to himself even by these earthly elements, and in the flesh itself to present to us a mirror of spiritual blessings. 'For if we were incorporeal,' as Christ says, 'he would have given us these things pure and incorporeal. Now, because we have souls enclosed in bodies, he gives us spiritual things under visible emblems; not because there are such qualities in the nature of the things presented to us in the sacraments, but because they have been designated by God to this signification.'" Institutes Book iv. chap. 14, § 3.

figurative is incontrovertible—since what is declared in one verse of meat is spoken in another of bread, in another of Manna, and in another of flesh and blood; and since the words in every case “are spirit and life,” “The flesh” in its literal sense even if partaken, would, says Christ, “profit nothing;” and so with the bread, the Manna and the meat. These were all types of Christ under the ancient economy, signifying both how he should secure redemption, and how it should prove beneficial to the soul. And to those who would now imitate these ignorant Samaritans, and the carnality of the disciples by understanding them literally (though the real difficulty of the disciples was how to make *any sense* out of them *literally understood*, while they were yet unable to interpret them figuratively and clearly) we would address our Saviour’s words: “Are ye also yet without understanding? Do not ye yet understand that whatsoever entereth at the mouth goeth into the belly and is cast into the draught?” It is not that which *goeth into* the mouth that profiteth the soul but that faith which *goeth out* of the soul to feed upon the heavenly feasts of fat things; and that inward penitence and love, and joy, which are wrought by the spirit in the believer’s heart. And in like manner, in the words of the institution of the Sacrament we *must* see a figure, since no man can drink a cup, nor has any man ever yet eaten Christ’s body, flesh, bones, sinews, blood, bowels, and all, neither could the human stomach possibly contain such an amount of food. Christ’s body, too, was alive when the bread was called His body, and that body in its glorified form now sitteth on the right hand of God and there remaineth until He come again to judge the quick and the dead. Christ also had just finished the passover, in which it was declared of the roasted lamb, “It is the Lord’s passover.”\* To interpret the

\*The examples which we are to seek for, as similar and parallel to the expressions made use of by our Lord in the *institution*, must be those wherein some *real thing* is in *just construction* and *certain effect* allowed to be *another thing*. Moses was a God to Pharaoh not literally, but in effect (Exod. vii. 1.) The walking *tabernacle* or moving *ark*, being a *symbol* of the Divine Presence, was *considered* as God walking among his people, (Lev. xxvi. 11, 12.) *Faith* was reckoned to Abraham as righteousness or sinless perfection; (Gen. xv. 6, Rom. iv. 3, 9, 22.) Not that it strictly or literally was so, but it was so *accepted* in God’s account. John the Baptist was *Elias*, (Matt. xvii. 12), not literally, but in *just construction*. The Apostle tells his new converts “Ye are our epistle,” and the “epistle of Christ,” (2 Cor. iii. 2, 3); that is to say, *instead* of an epistle, or *equivalent* thereto; the same thing is in effect or use. These examples may suffice to show in the *general* that Scripture is no stranger to the *symbolical* or *constructional* language, expressing *one thing* by *another thing*, considered as equivalent thereto, amounting to the same as to real

words, "this is my body" literally, is, therefore, to contradict the facts in the case; to make Christ contradict Himself; to make one part of His language a figure and the others not, is both absurd; to assert what is not, and cannot be believed by any man, since it required him first to disbelieve in every sense and faculty he has, and of course, to render himself incapable of believing; it is to undermine all faith; to lead men to idolatry in worshipping bread as God; to make christianity more savage than the most savage cannibalism; and to destroy men's souls by leading away their minds from Christ and faith in Him to the mere imaginary efficacy of "the flesh which profiteth nothing."

We have, therefore, additional ground for confidence in the true scriptural character of the Presbyterian church, and for gratitude to God who has led us to be partakers of his inestimable privileges. Alike distinct from the extreme of superstitious idolatry, and latitudinarian rationalism, she steers the safe and middle course of "proving all things and holding fast that which is good," neither inventing mysteries when they do not exist, nor rejecting them where they are truly found. Addressing all as wise and reasonable men she invites them to search the Scriptures and thus see whether her doctrines are true, that being thus convinced in their minds, they may "give their own hearts to the Lord," and then unite "themselves" to His church and people "according to the will of God." And, oh, my impenitent reader, let me once more say if you are thus invited to participate in doctrines so pure and uncorrupt; in ordinances so simple and rational; and in an association so sublime and glorious; and yet refuse to consecrate your bodies, soul and spirit unto God which is so manifestly your reasonable service, how deeply aggravated will be your final condemnation. May God, therefore, give you grace to repent and to believe His word in this the day of your merciful visitation that while the door is still open you may enter in, saying as you take the cup of salvation into your hands and pray, &c.,

On thee alone my hope relies,  
Beneath thy cross I fall;  
My Lord, my life, my sacrifice,  
My Saviour and my all.

effects or purposes.—Waterland, vol. 7, page 151. See also *Hutchinson on the Lord's Supper*, serm. 2, p. 236, serm. 1, p. 217. *Par. Soc. edit.*

On account of the analogy of the sign and the thing signified, its declaration and sealing therein, and the certainty of the participation of the thing signified in its due use, the names and properties of the sign and the thing signified are in the Sacred Scriptures often interchanged. Spanheim Disp., liv. 122.

## SECTION V.

REPLY TO THE OBJECTION THAT THE OBSERVANCE OF THE LORD'S SUPPER IS NOT ESSENTIAL TO TRUE PIETY BECAUSE IT IS ONLY A POSITIVE AND NOT A MORAL DUTY, AND THE OBJECTIONS OF UNFITNESS AND WANT OF STRONG FAITH.

There are many who think they may be pious and devoted to the Lord and yet live in the neglect of this ordinance, because it is only an outward ordinance and not *in itself* necessary or communicative of spiritual blessings. To this objection we might reply that the same was true of the brazen serpent and of the passover, the neglect of either of which incurred death. The same, also, is true of prayer and of faith, neither of which have *in themselves*, any merit or power to communicate heavenly blessings, and yet without them we must remain in spiritual death and perish. Whatever God institutes as a *means* through and by which, He will convey spiritual and heavenly blessings to the soul, and accompanies with a command to "observe and do" it, and a promise that in so doing we shall be "blessed with all spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus,"—becomes necessary to salvation, not because *in itself* essential, but because it is made spiritual by the appointment of God who alone can impart the blessing. To all, therefore, to whom the opportunity of observing the Lord's Supper is given, it is imperatively binding.

But it may be further shown that where there is any true and real love in the heart to God and to the Saviour it will dispose it to be even more solicitous "to observe and do" what derives all its efficacy from their appointment and command, then what carries the importance and the advantage of its fulfilment *in itself*, and thus commends itself by its intrinsic value, to the obedience of the heart. On this subject I submit the following remarks from Dr. Wardlaw: "Now there is here a department of the Lord's will, that belongs more immediately than any other to our present subject: I mean what relates to the constitution and ordinances of the christian church. The obligations of the Lord's will, in this department, are by many christians more lightly esteemed than almost any other. They seem as if they felt themselves more at liberty than any where else, to take their own will, and their own way, and to conform to what they deem expediency. What I mean is this:—that

on the subject just mentioned, as well as on others, there ought among the true disciples of Jesus, to be conscientiousness:—that is, they should be as much in earnest in seeking to ascertain their Divine Master's will respecting this as respecting any thing else. With regard to any point in the range of moral duty, they would deem it a strange position for them to take up, that every one might follow for himself the course which in his eyes appears most expedient. And yet, on the subject before us, a position of this kind is far from uncommon. Now, although the distinction between *moral* and ceremonial is a quite intelligible and far from unimportant distinction,—the former involving the principles of immutable rectitude, the other resting on considerations of special and temporary utility,—yet it would be a very false conclusion, that to the observance of what is ceremonial we are under no properly moral obligation. We are *morally* bound to *do the will of God*. That will is our rule;—and whether His injunction be a personal commission with which no one has to do but ourselves,—or a ceremonial institute, prescribed to any limited number of men for a special purpose and a limited time, or an ethical precept addressed alike to all mankind,—a moral obligation is violated, if obedience is not rendered. The will of the Supreme Legislator is disregarded;—there is a moral offense,—a sin of omission. I am afraid that not a few of my fellow-christians are far from being sufficiently impressed with this. It is not a matter of *conscience* with them. Now in this there is a mistake in regard to the *manifestation of love to Christ*.

There is a mistake regarding the *manifestation of love to Christ*. I do not deny that there may be a love to Christ engendered by the glorious discoveries that are given us of His person, and character, and work, such as absorbs the mind entirely, rendering it regardless of every thing else,—unwilling to come down from these elevated and entrancing views by which the love is kindled, to any thing so far inferior as what relates to the external order and observances of the christian church. I would use terms of great lenity in finding any fault with such a state of heart,—there being unquestionably, as already admitted, no comparison between these sublime though simple truths, which are at once the basis of the believer's hope, the spring of his peace and joy, the character of his spiritual freedom, the impelling motive of his obedience and the bond of his union with the whole family of God,

—between these and aught that relates to principles or prescriptions of order and rites of external ceremonial. Yet there is an error. It is not the error of excess; for there can be no excess in love to Christ. It is rather an error of defect,—and of defect arising from inconsideration of what true love requires, on the part of those by whom it is felt and cherished, towards its object. The love that is professed, however, deeply sincere, must be under the influence of some false principle, when it operates in the way of *impairing conscientiousness* in regard to the knowledge or the performance of any part whatever of Christ's will. What is the test to which He Himself bring, the love of His people towards Him. It is brief but comprehensive: "If ye love me, keep my commandments," (John xiv. 15.) The question, then, which I would put to the fellow disciples with whom I now remonstrate,—is—Has true love any right to select, among His commandments, which it must observe and which it may neglect? or will true love ever be disposed to such selection? Would you think your child had correct conception of the way in which his love to you should be expressed, if he felt himself at liberty to pick and choose amongst your orders, doing such as he reckoned worth the doing, and leaving others undone,—saying to himself—These are but little matters, and therefore it is of no great moment whether they are done or not? If a parent you would hardly, I ween, be satisfied with your child's taking the liberty of so reasoning and so acting; nor if he did take it, would you think his heart quite in the right place, you would hardly be pleased were any one to offer and urge in his behalf the plea—that he loved you so well, and was so taken up about your more important instructions and commands, that these minor matters escaped his notice,—or were not considered by him (dwindling as they did into insignificance besides the others) as really worth his minding. You might try, perhaps, with the partiality of a parent, to make the most of such a plea:—but it would not carry conviction with it. True love will neglect no known commands of its object. The greater, of course, it will be most eager to do, and the most careful in doing; but it will not "leave the smaller undone." Nay, in a certain sense, attention to the smaller is a stronger and a surer test of affection than the most zealous execution of the



greater. In the greater there is an intrinsic importance, which, discovered by the mind, forms of itself an urgent motive to their performance. But the smaller, where this description of motive is absent, owe their fulfilment the more simply and exclusively to the impulse of love; and, when they have nothing whatever in them of a moral character, nothing in their own nature directly implicating the conscience,—still more perfect, perhaps, and unexceptionable is the indication of the uncompounded working of the one principle. In such cases, there is indeed conscience; but it is not conscience pronouncing. The act *in itself* to be obligatory,—but conscience approving the exercise of filial love;—and that love delighting to do whatever conscience does not actually interdict as wrong. The one element of affection—the simple spirit of obedience—is, then, evidently, most pure and unmingled in its operation.

These principles are directly applicable to the obedience of God's children to their heavenly Father, and of the followers of Christ to their divine Lord. The performance of duties such as are enjoined in the first and second tables of the moral law,—of duties to God, and duties to men,—duties morally binding, according to those eternal principles of rectitude which, existing in the Divine character, determine the Divine will,—is, without doubt, a manifestation of that love to God which is the primary and pervading principle of His law,—and which, in the bosoms of all believers of the gospel, must ever be in association with the love of Christ, whose character and whose will are the same with the Father's; and in order to the performance of the duties being such as can be accepted by the Supreme Judge, it must be the fruit and expression of this love. But still, in regard to all such duties, there is something *in themselves* that is owned and felt by the conscience as morally obligatory. When on the contrary, Divine injunctions are entirely of a *ceremonial* character,—being in their own nature indifferent, the conscience having, in this respect, no sense of right or wrong in regard to them, feeling neither obligation to do them, nor compunction at the thought of not doing them,—then the authority of God stands the more manifestly alone; and nothing whatever, save the consideration of that authority can enter into the motive to their observance:—and such observance becomes thus the fairer and more unequivocal test of love, and of the spirit of subjection. It is on this principle, amongst others, that we vindicate the Divine

propriety of the originally prescribed test of man's obedience to his Creator. It was a test, simply and exclusively, of subjection to *God's will*; there being nothing else, so far as we can perceive, in the prohibition of the interdicted fruit, than the intimation of that will. The test was thus precisely what it ought to have been;—and they who turn it into ridicule—than which nothing is more easy—really “understand neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm.” If, then, it be at all a correct principle, that the less in intrinsic magnitude, and the less in imperative obligation, the prescribed actions are, considered in themselves, the clearer and the stronger is the proof of love in the conscientious doing of them,—those christians had need to set about the duty of self-examination, as to the indifference with which they treat all questions relative to the outward order of the Church of Christ. Christian *conscientiousness* should extend to every indication of the Master's will, whatever its nature, whatever the degree of its importance, and whatever the mode of its conveyance. And if love is to be measured by conscientiousness, the more minute the inquiry, and the more anxiously punctilious the obedience, the greater are both the conscientiousness and the love.

And, therefore, if any reader of this work thinks himself or herself religious, or flatters themselves, that they have sincere love to the Lord Jesus Christ and yet are unwilling to come out from the world and be separate and take up their cross and follow Christ by obedience to His instituted ordinance and an open confession of Him before men—they may be sure “their religion is vain,” and their love “dead.”

There are two other special objections to which I will advert before closing this part of the work as they are often urged by those who are often really prepared to come to the Lord's Table.

One is, “I am not yet fit and prepared. I feel that I am a sinner and I am willing to have Christ as a Saviour and am fully determined to be a christian. But I must subdue my temper and make myself more worthy before I become a communicant.”

Now, to this I reply, 1: It is the spirit of self-righteousness. Christ invites you to His table *just on the same terms* that He invites you to Himself. That is AS A NEEDY, SINFUL, UNWORTHY SINNER, FULL OF UNBELIEF AND HARDNESS OF HEART, AND UTTERLY WITHOUT HELP OR STRENGTH IN YOURSELF. If, therefore, AS SUCH, you are willing to take Christ

as your Saviour and rely on His merits, His grace, His help, His righteousness, and His promises, then you are His and He is yours; and then He opens to you the door of His ordinance and says, "do this in remembrance that you are such a sinner and that I am, and ever will be, such a Saviour." To say, therefore, that you will wait till you are better, is to tell Christ you do not wish to come then to His table and profess that you are **ALTOGETHER** needy and helpless, and unworthy, that you wish to bring *some* worthiness of your own. 2. But, secondly, this plea is dishonouring to Christ, while it would appear to regard His will. Christ says to you, "do this, as a guilty, needy, hell-deserving sinner, in remembrance of the glorious fact that in me you have pardon, peace, and righteousness and complete redemption. Do it for my sake, for the sake of the world, and for your own sake." Now, were a parent to say to his children, "do this for my sake and for your own good," and one son postponed the doing of it in order that he might be able to do what was required *perfectly*, and as both *he* and his father would most perfectly approve, while another son set about doing it *at once*, as well as he could, and with a sincere desire to please his parent, which of these two dishonors and which really obeys and gratifies his father? Of course, you will reply the son who did willingly and at once what he was required, obeyed and honoured his parent, while the other exhibited more of pride and self-will. And how much more would this be the case if, as in this ordinance of the Lord's Supper, the parent promised to aid and assist his children in endeavoring to do his will and did not require it to be done perfectly, but heartily and sincerely and gratefully. How much, therefore, does your conduct dishonor your Saviour, slight his promises, and manifest the pride and selfishness of your own heart.

3. But thirdly, your plan is suicidal and impracticable. You *never can* do this duty perfectly. You *never can* make yourself fit and worthy. You *never can* by your own efforts, overcome what is evil in your heart. And the longer you wait the more will you realize the impossibility of doing so, and the more will you be filled with self-distrust, doubts, and misgivings. There is no other Physician than Christ, no other balm than His grace, and no other way to obtain this grace than by doing His will, obeying His commands, observing His ordinances and relying on His promises. "I am come," said a young applicant at a late meeting of our Session, "to the

determination to rely altogether upon Christ, for I find that all my own purposes and resolutions and efforts are vain. I, therefore, cast myself on Him." It is for you and weak, infirm and *frail* believers this feast is provided, and it is in coming to it you will find that grace and mercy which your necessities require. Come, then, not as the Pharisee, trusting to your fitness, but come as the Publican, sensible of your need and looking for mercy through the Redeemer. Then will you go away justified and accepted, and never otherwise.

But you say, "I have not faith enough yet. I would like to have a little stronger faith before I go." This, however, is only another form of the previous objection, and involves all the guilt, unbelief and self-righteousness it does. Suppose your child was recovering from a dangerous illness, but was as yet *very* feeble and weak. By the advice of the physician you prepare a nourishment which will, in connection with other food, give him new energy and health. But your child declines the nourishment, saying, "I am yet too weak and feeble to take such a strong and nourishing diet. I will wait till I have gained more strength and then I will use it." How foolishly would such a child act, and how certainly would he prevent his own restoration to health and strength! But just so foolish and suicidal is the course you are pursuing. For, it is *for the weak in faith*, "the babes in Christ," the feeble and immature, this ordinance, and a profession of religion and the enjoyment of all the privileges of the church were provided. It is to give *more* faith, and grace, and strength *to such*; these are enforced upon them as their duty and their privilege. By coming to the Lord's table in a humble and dependent spirit the Lord will increase your faith, revive your spirit, and add to your present store! Whereas, by staying away, God will leave you to your weakness and barrenness, and take away from you even that which you now have. Obey, then, the Saviour's command, relying on the Saviour's promised grace and mercy. Come to this table that you may there "buy wine and milk without money and without price," and Christ will abundantly supply all your need out of the riches of His free and inexhaustible grace.

Only hear your Saviour say,  
 "Strength shall be equal to your day;"  
 Then may you joy in deep distress,  
 Leaning on all sufficient grace,  
 And glory in infirmity,  
 That Christ's own power may rest on thee.

While you are weak then are you strong,  
 Grace is your shield and Christ your song,  
 You can do all things and can bear  
 All suffering if your Lord is there.  
 Sweet pleasures mingle with the pain,  
 While His own hand your head sustains.

Come, then, in grateful obedience and in heartfelt reliance upon Christ, and let your language and your spirit be:

If human kindness meets return,  
 And owns the grateful tie;  
 If tender thoughts within us burn,  
 To feel a friend is nigh:

O shall not warmer accents tell  
 The gratitude we owe  
 To Him who died, our fears to quell,  
 Our more than orphan's wo!

While yet His anguish'd soul survey'd  
 Those pangs he would not flee;  
 What love His latest words dispay'd,  
 "Meet and remember me!"

Remember Thee! thy death, thy shame,  
 Our sinful hearts to share!  
 O memory, leave no other name  
 But His recorded there.

According to thy gracious word,  
 In meek humility,  
 This will I do, my dying Lord,  
 I will remember Thee.

Thy body, broken for my sake,  
 My bread from heaven shall be;  
 Thy testamental cup I take,  
 And thus remember Thee.

Gethsemane can I forget?  
 Or there thy conflict see,  
 Thine agony and bloody sweat,  
 And not remember Thee?

When to the cross I turn mine eyes,  
 And rest on Calvary,  
 O Lamb of God, my sacrifice!  
 I must remember Thee:—

Remember Thee, and all thy pains  
 And all thy love to me;  
 Yea, while a breath, a pulse remains,  
 Will I remember Thee.

And when these failing lips grow dumb,  
 And mind and memory flee,  
 When Thou shalt in thy kingdom come,  
 Jesus, remember me.

## SECTION VI.

EXERCISES ON THE LORD'S SUPPER TO BE USED BY PARENTS IN THE FAMILY; BY SABBATH SCHOOL TEACHERS AND PASTOR'S IN ADULT BIBLE CLASSES; AND BY COMMUNICANTS THEMSELVES.\*

### SECT. I. SCRIPTURE NAMES GIVEN TO THE LORD'S SUPPER.

1. The Lord's Supper. 1 Cor. xi. 20.  
Because an ordinance of—  
Divine appointment. 1 Cor. vi. 23; Luke xxii. 19.  
Special spiritual nourishment. Mat. xxvi. 26, 27; Luke xiv. 16; John vi. 53-63; xii. 2.  
Superseding the sacrificial feasts under the law. Psalm cxli. 2; Dan. ix. 21; Exod. xii. 6, 24; Mat. xxvi. 26.  
Prefiguring and anticipating the rest and enjoyment of heaven. Exod. xii. 11; Mat. viii. 11; xxvi. 29; Luke xii. 18-22; Rev. xix. 9.
2. The Table of the Lord. 1 Cor. x. 21.  
Because believers, in the ordinance—  
Approach with deep reverence. Psalm lxxxix. 7; Lev. x. 3; Heb. xii. 28.  
Enjoy the reviving presence of their Lord. Song i. 12; John xx. 20; 2 Cor. iii. 18.  
Are privileged to speak to Him. John xiii. 25; xiv. 22; Esth. v. 6; vii. 2.  
And to partake of a repast of His own providing. Psalm xxiii. 5; Rom. viii. 32.
3. The Communion. 1 Cor. x. 16.  
Because in the ordinance, believers in Jesus participate in the benefits of—  
His blood. 1 Cor. x. 16; Mat. xxvi. 26-28; Mark xiv. 24.  
And righteousness. 1 Cor. x. 16; xi. 24; Mat. xxvi. 26; Luke xxii. 19.  
And sweetly sympathize with each other respecting Jesus and His grace. 1 Cor. x. 17; xii. 13.

\*In the case of the former the young persons will be required to be prepared on the proof texts and to be familiar with them, and perhaps communicants themselves can in no way derive more instruction and improvement than by prayerfully and attentively turning to and perusing all the passages referred to.

4. The Feast. 1 Cor. v. 8.  
 Because the provision is abundant. Isa. xxv. 6; John vi. 55.  
 Because a repast on a sacrifice. 1 Cor. v. 7, 8.  
 Because a feast of self-dedication. 1 Cor. v. 7, 8; 1 Kings viii. 65; Ezra vi. 16.  
 Because a feast of covenant engagement. 1 Cor. v. 7, 8; Gen. xxvi. 30, 31; xxxi. 46.
5. The Eucharist, or Thanksgiving.  
 1st, Because Jesus at the institution of the ordinance gave thanks. 1 Cor. xi. 24, 25; Mat. xxvi. 26, 27; Mark xiv. 22, 23; Luke xxii. 19.  
 For the glory that was about to accrue to God. John xiii. 31; xxi. 19.  
 For the salvation of sinners now secured. Isa. liii. 10; Luke ii. 14; Heb. ii. 10.  
 For the glory of which His human nature was about to become the partaker. John xii. 23, 24; xvii. 5, 22; Heb. xii. 2.
- 2d, Because believers should engage in the service with a thankful spirit. 1 Cor. x. 16; Mat. xxvi. 30; Mark xiv. 26; Psalm ciii. 1-5.

SECT. II. VIEWS OF DIVINE TRUTH EXHIBITED BY THE LORD'S SUPPER.

I. Of God.

There is the *love* of God in providing a Redeemer. John iii. 16; 1 John iv. 9; Rom. viii. 32.

There is the *justice* of God in requiring the sacrifice of Jesus. Mat. xxvi. 28; Heb. ix. 22; Rom. iii. 25, 26.

There is the *mercy* or *grace* of God in now freely and abundantly remitting sin, and otherwise blessing hell-deserving sinners. Mat. xxvi. 28; Rom. v. 21; 1 Cor. x. 16.

II. Of Jesus.

1st, He is God, in that—

He *instituted* the ordinance. 1 Cor. xi. 23, 25, 26.

He is *commemorated* in the ordinance. Luke xxii. 19.

He is repeatedly called *Lord* in connection with the ordinance. 1 Cor. x. 21; xi. 23, 26, 27; Psalm cx. 1—Mat. xxii. 43-45.

2d, He is also man, in that—

He had a true body. Mat. xxvi. 26.

And a reasonable soul. Mat. xxvi. 28, 38; Isa. liii. 12.

3d, When on earth Jesus was the *substitute* of sinners. Mat. xxvi. 28; Mark xiv. 24; Luke xxii. 19, 20.

4th, Jesus was a *voluntary* substance. 1 Cor. xi. 24; Luke xxii. 19; John x. 17, 18; Heb. ii. 14; x. 5-9.

5th, While acting as the substitute of sinners, Jesus fulfilled the law which man had broken, and exhausted the curse which man had incurred. Mat. xxvi. 26, 28; 1 Cor. xi. 24, 25; Psalm xl. 6-8; Heb. x. 5; Lev. xvii. 11, 14; Phil. ii. 8.

6th, There is exhibited the *love* of Jesus in thus becoming the voluntary substitute of sinners, and for them becoming "obedient unto death." 1 Cor. xi. 24; Luke xxii. 20; 1 John iii. 16; Rom. v. 7, 8.

III. Views of the Holy Spirit, implied in the experience of a lively believer in observing the ordinance of the Holy Supper.

His gracious operation is manifest—

In bringing the views of Christ suggested by the ordinance to remembrance. Luke xxii. 19; 1 Cor. xi. 24; John xiv. 26; xvi. 14; xv. 26.

In vividly discovering the glory of God in the person and work of Jesus. John xiii. 31; xiv. 13; 1 Pet. iv. 11; 2 Cor. iii. 18; iv. 4-6.

In unfolding the suitableness of Jesus and His work to the believer's spiritual necessities. John xvi. 7-11; 1 Cor. i. 30.

In drawing forth the affections of the believing communicant to Jesus, in whose person and work, symbolically represented in the Holy Supper, there shine out such glory and grace. 1 Peter i. 8; Rom. viii. 35-39; Luke xxiv. 32, 35; Phil. iii. 7-10.

IV. Views of man involved in the Holy Supper.

1st, That he is a sinner. Mat. xxvi. 28; Mark xiv. 24; 1 Cor. xi. 24; Rom. iii. 10.

2d, That, in consequence of sin, he ought in justice, to suffer the wrath and curse of God. Mat. xxvi. 28; Mark xiv. 24; Luke xxii. 20; Gal. iii. 13; Rom. vi. 23.



- 3d, That pardon and acceptance can be obtained only through Christ. Mat. xxvi. 28; Luke xxii. 19, 20; 2 Cor. v. 21; Rom. v. 9; Eph. i. 6.
- 4th, The deep depravity of man appears—in that he is apt to forget his greatest benefactor. Luke xxii. 19; 1 Cor. xi. 24, 25; Deut. iv. 9, 23; Psalm l. 22; lix. 11; lxxviii. 10, 11; ciii. 2; cvi. 13, 21.
- 5th, That notwithstanding the profession any man may be led to make, and the grace of which he may be the partaker, if unrestrained—if forsaken of God, he will deny, forsake, or betray the cause of Him whose death in the Supper he commemorates. Mat. xxvi. 21-25, 46, 69-75; Mark xiv. 18-21, 50, 66-72.
- The Holy Spirit alone can impress these humbling views of Divine truth regarding man upon the heart. John xvi. 8; vi. 63.

When a believing communicant is so impressed, he will manifest—

Deep humility of spirit. Luke xv. 18-21; xviii. 13.

Constant watchfulness. Mat. xxvi. 41; 1 Cor. xvi. 13; 1 Peter v. 8.

Unceasing prayer. Eph. vi. 18; 1 Peter iv. 7; 1 Thes. v. 17; Psalm xvii. 5.

Cordial cleaving to Christ. Rom. x. 4; Gal. iii. 24; Phil. iii. 7.

#### SECT. III. NATURE OR DESIGN OF THE LORD'S SUPPER.

1. The ordinance seems designed to exhibit Divine truth by symbols. 1 Cor. xi. 24, 25; x. 4—Exod. xvii. 6.

2. In particular to set forth, in a lively manner, the *sufferings* of the Lord Jesus—

In His body. Mat. xxvi. 26.

In His soul. Luke xxii. 19, 20; Isa. liii. 12.

In their intensity. Mat. xxvi. 26-28, 37, 38.

In their design. Mat. xxvi. 28.

In their termination. Luke xxii. 20; Isa. liii. 12.

3. The ordinance seems designated to illustrate—

The *nature* of faith in the Lord Jesus. Matt. xxvi. 26, 27—John i. 12.

The *life* of faith in the Lord Jesus. Luke xxii. 19; 1 Cor. xi. 26; Exod. xvi. 35—John vi. 51; Col. ii. 6.

- The *strengthening* of the life of faith. 1 Cor. xi. 24; John vi. 55.
- The *enlivening* of the life of faith. 1 Cor. xi. 25; John vi. 55.
4. The ordinance seems designed to set forth—
- The vital union of believers to Jesus. 1 Cor. x. 17; Eph. v. 30.
- Their union also among themselves. 1 Cor. x. 17; Rom. xii. 4, 5.
- And consequently their separation from the world. 1 Cor. x. 21; xi. 20-33; Acts xx. 7.
5. The ordinance exhibits, in a lively manner—
- The *glorious medium* through which all blessings are conveyed. 1 Cor. x. 16; John xiv. 6; Psalm lxxviii. 18.

#### SECT. IV. PREPARATION FOR PARTAKING THE LORD'S SUPPER.

Self-examination in connection with the Lord's Supper specially required. 1 Cor. xi. 28. As to—

- Knowledge to discern the Lord's body. 1 Cor. xi. 25-29.
- Faith to feed upon Him. 1 Cor. xi. 24, 25.
- Repentance. Isa. vi. 5; Job xlii. 6.
- Love. 1 John iv. 18, 19.
- New obedience. Rom. vi. 4.

- I. Knowledge is *saving* when the possessor of it is—
- Deeply sensible of great ignorance. 1 Cor. viii. 2.
- When he ardently seeks deeper acquaintance with Divine things. Phil. iii. 10; Eph. i. 18.
- When the little he may already know of truth is practical. 1 John ii. 4.
- II. Faith is of the operation of the Holy Spirit when it—
- Fastens upon Christ. Phil. iii. 7-9.
- Prompts the soul unfeignedly to love Jesus as revealed. Mat. i. 21; Titus ii. 13, 14.
- Cordially to receive Him in all His offices. 1 Cor. i. 30.
- Cheerfully to submit to His will. John xiv. 15; 1 John ii. 3.
- Moreover, faith is of the operation of the Spirit when it—
- Purifies the heart. Acts xv. 9.
- Works by love to God—His ordinances—His people—His law. Gal. v. 6; Rom. xiv. 7, 8.
- And enables the soul in some good measure to overcome the world. Mat. xiii. 45, 46; Gal. i. 4; 1 John v. 4.

III. *Repentance* consists in a *change of view* in the sinner's mind regarding—

God and His law. Psalm i. 21; Rom. vii. 12-16.

Himself and his neighbour. Rev. iii. 17.

All created good. Psalm iv. 6—xxx. 5.

If of the operation of the Holy Spirit, this *repentance* or *change of view* will be accompanied in the sinner's mind by—

A deep sense of personal guilt and unworthiness. Isa. vi. 5; 1 Cor. xv. 9.

Despair of salvation in himself. Rom. vii. 9; Luke xviii. 13.

Living upon Christ for everything. Gal. ii. 20.

IV. *Love* is a stranger to the heart of fallen man. Rom. viii. 7; Titus iii. 3.

And can only be excited in a sinner's heart by—

A discovery of the beauty or glory of the Lord in the face of Jesus. Hos. xi. 4; 1 John iv. 19; Titus iii. 4.

Love thus inspired will be manifest by—

Copying out in the life and conversation the character of God and of His Son Jesus. Eph. x. 1, 2, 25; 1 Peter ii. 19-25; 1 John i. 7.

Loving all who bear His image. 1 John v. 1; 1 Thes. iii. 12.

Delighting in His commandments. Rom. vii. 22; Psalm i. 2; John xiv. 15.

V. *New obedience*, so-called because—

Flowing from a renewed heart. Rom. vii. 6; 2 Cor. v. 17; Eph. iv. 22, 23; v. 1.

Influenced by new motives. Gal. v. 13; 2 Cor. v. 14; Phil. 9.

Directed to a new end. 1 Cor. vi. 20; 1 Peter ii. 9.

As great guilt is incurred by unworthily partaking of the Lord's Supper, 1 Cor. xi. 27—Heb. vi. 6, the foregoing points of Divine truth should be carefully and prayerfully studied, in connection with the texts of Scripture referred to.

SECT. V. SPIRITUAL EXERCISE OF A BELIEVER AT THE LORD'S  
TABLE.

I. Meditation.

II. Self-dedication.

III. Prayer.

I. Meditations.—On Christ. 1 Cor. xi. 26; John xiv. 21;  
Luke xxii. 19.

His original dignity. John xvii. 5; 1 Cor. viii. 9; Heb.  
i. 3, 10.

His amazing condescension in becoming man. 2 Cor.  
viii. 9; Phil. ii. 7.

His work in the human nature. John xvii. 4; Isa. liii.  
10; xlii. 21.

The acceptance of His work by the Father. Acts ii. 24;  
iii. 26; Rom. x. 9; Phil. ii. 9.

His exaltation in heaven. Acts i. 9; Rom. vii. 34; Phil.  
ii. 9.

His work at the right hand of God. John xiv. 3, 16;  
Rom. viii. 34.

His coming again. 1 Cor. xi. 26.

Either in renewed refreshing manifestations to the  
soul. John xvi. 17.

Or, to the emancipated spirit at death. John xiv. 3;  
xvii. 24.

Or, His coming again may refer, and certainly ultimately,  
points to His coming to judgment; when His  
people shall be acknowledged by Him as His people,  
and in soul and body, made for ever happy in the  
vision of His glory. 1 John iii. 2; Col. iii. 4; 1  
Peter v. 4.

H. Meditation on the new covenant. Mat. xxvi. 28; Mark  
xiv. 24; Luke xxii. 20; 1 Cor. xi. 25.

Its origin in the love of the Father. Psalm lxxxix. 3;  
John iii. 16; 1 John iv. 9.

Its ratification by the finished work of the Son. Heb.  
ix. 16, 17.

The precious spiritual blessings of the covenant, such  
as—

Pardon. Col. i. 14; Eph. i. 7.

Acceptance. John xiii. 8-10; Eph. i. 6.

Discipline. John xv. 2, 20; xvi. 33.

Final glory. John xiv. 3; xvii. 24.

Union to Jesus, and communion with Him, in these blessings of the new covenant. 1 Cor. x. 16; John xv. 1-8; xiv. 19.

III. Meditation—on sin. Mat. xxvi. 28; 1 Cor. xi. 25—1 John i. 7.

Its infinite evil. Rom. viii. 13; Heb. x. 4; ix. 22.

Its fearful desert. Isa. liii. 10.

The impossibility of escape from its penalty, in the case of all who believe not on Jesus. Luke xxiii. 31; Heb. ii. 3.

II. Self-dedication—at the Lord's Table, is a cheerful voluntary surrender, on the part of the believing communicant, to the service and glory of God. Isa. xlv. 5; Jer. l. 5; Rom. xii. 1; 2 Cor. viii. 5.

This exercise of the soul is the language of—

Conscious weakness. Psalm lvii. 1, 2; Isa. xxxviii. 14; xl. 29.

Lively confidence in the Divine promises. 2 Cor. xii. 9; i. 20; Lam. iii. 24; Psalm lxxiii. 24.

Felt obligation to redeeming mercy. 1 Cor. vi. 20; 1 Peter i. 17, 18.

Ardent and enlightened love. Psalm lxxiii. 23-26; cxvi. 1, &c.; Song i. 3; v. 10; viii. 6; 1 John iv. 19.

III. Prayer—at the Lord's Table. John xiv. 5, 8, 13.

Prompted by—

A fear of betraying the cause of Christ, whose love is now commemorated. Psalm xvii. 5-9; Luke xxii. 21, 28.

By enlarged, enlightened discoveries of the work of Christ, symbolically represented. John iv. 10; xvi. 24.

By a supreme desire to show forth the Divine glory. John xv. 8.

Prayer thus prompted, in the soul of the believing communicant, will be poured forth for—

More light and love to himself. John xiv. 5, 8.

Direction and protection in the future journey of life. Psalm xxxi. 3.

Salvation to those near and dear to him. Song viii. 8.

For the advancement of the Divine glory in the world. Psalm cxxii. 6.

SECT. VI. THE PROFESSION IMPLIED IN A COMMUNICANT.

Whoever approaches the Lord's Table, in effect professes—  
He has spiritual life. John xi. 25; xiv. 6; Psalm lxix. 32;  
Rom. viii. 6; Col. iii. 4.

Hunger and thirst after the nourishment of the spiritual life within. Deut. viii. 3—John vi. 35; iv. 14; vii. 37-39;  
Mat. v. 6; Psalm xlii. 2; lxxv. 1; cxliii. 6; cxlvi. 7; Isa. xlv. 3.

An open confession of sin. 1 Cor. xi. 26.

An apprehension of the person and work of the Lord Jesus. 1 Cor. xi. 24, 29.

Entire and exclusive dependence for pardon, acceptance, and eternal life, on the Lord Jesus as revealed. 1 Cor. xi. 26.

Sense of obligation to the Lord Jesus. 1 Cor. xi. 24—  
John xiv. 13, 21.

An honest resolution henceforth to seek the glory of Christ. 1 Cor. xi. 26; Gal. vi. 14.

A sincere desire to separate from the world. 1 Cor. x. 21;  
Eph. ii. 18, 19.

A determination to prefer the people of Christ to all other society. Acts iv. 23; Psalm cxix. 63.

SECT. VII. COMMUNION, AND ITS BLESSED EFFECTS.

Communion is—*sympathy* with others regarding certain objects presented to the mind. 2 Cor. v. 14.

Communion with God in the Lord's Supper, on the part of a believing communicant, implies some measure of the same view as God entertains concerning—

Sin, as exceeding sinful. Jer. xlv. 4; xvii. 9—Rom. vii. 13, 15.

Jesus, as supremely excellent. Mat. iii. 17; xvii. 5; Isa. xlii. 1, 21—1 Peter i. 8; ii. 7; Phil. iii. 7, 8.

The new covenant, as well ordered in all things. Isa. lv. 3; lvi. 4; Jer. xxxii. 40—2 Sam. xxiii. 5.

Communion with Jesus in the Holy Supper, on the part of the lively believer, denotes—

Vital union with Him. John xv. 5; xiv. 20; xvii. 23; Col. iii. 4; 1 Cor. vi. 17.

Receiving *now* of His grace. John i. 16; xiv. 19; Psalm lxviii. 18.

Anticipating glory with Him. John xvii. 24; 1 Cor. xi. 26; 1 John iii. 2, 3.

Communion with the Holy Ghost in the Lord's Supper imports—

Deep hatred of sin. John xvi. 9; Psalm cxix. 113.

High admiration of Christ. John xvi. 13, 14; Song i. 3; v. 5-16.

Cherishing His happy, hallowed operations. Eph. iv. 30-32; 1 Thes. v. 19.

Communion thus enjoyed will be manifested by—

Deep abasement of spirit. Exod. xxxiv. 8; Job xlii. 5, 6; Isa. vi. 5; 2 Cor. xii. 7; Eph. iii. 8; Rev. i. 17.

Deadness to the world. Gal. vi. 14.

Tenderness of conscience. Gen. xxxix. 9; Mal. iii. 18.

A spirit of prayer. Exod. xxxiv. 9; 2 Cor. xii. 8.

Brotherly affection. 1 John v. 1; Gal. v. 6, 13, 22.

Conformity to the image of Christ. 2 Cor. iii. 18; 1 John iii. 3; Phil. ii. 5; 1 Peter ii. 21-23.

Joy and confidence in God. Rom. v. 1, 11; viii. 15, 38, 39; 1 John iii. 21.

Devotedness to His service and glory. Isa. vi. 8, 9; Zech. x. 12; Gal. i. 16, 24.

#### SECT. VIII. WALK AND CONVERSATION OF A BELIEVING COMMUNICANT.

The spiritual exercise of a believing communicant at the Lord's Table summarily consists in—

Receiving the Lord Jesus. Mat. xxvi. 26, 27—John i. 12.

Feeding on Him. John vi. 55.

The reality of this spiritual exercise is manifested by daily—

Walking in Him. Col. ii. 6.

This exercise of walking in Christ implies an habitual looking to Him for—

Righteousness. Isa. xlv. 24; Jer. xxiii. 6; xxxiii. 16.

Strength. Isa. xlv. 24; Eph. vi. 10; Psalm lxxxix. 17; lxxi. 16.

Wisdom. 1 Cor. i. 30; Col. ii. 3.

Sanctification. 1 Cor. i. 30; John xvii. 19, 26.

All things. Col. iii. 11; i. 19; 2 Peter i. 3; Isa. xlv. 25; Prov. iii. 6.

After a season of communion, the believer may prepare for—  
Temptation. Luke xxii. 31.

The persecution of the world. Luke xxii. 47; 2 Tim. iii. 12.

Amidst his difficulties and dangers, it becometh the believing disciple to cherish—

Humility. Mat. xxvi. 33, 35.

Watchfulness. Mat. xxvi. 41; 1 Cor. xvi. 13.

Prayer. Mat. xxvi. 41; Psalm v. 3; cxli. 3.

Concern to advance the Divine glory in all the duties and in all the relations of life. Prov. iii. 6; Exod. xxxiii. 15; Tit. ii. 10; Mat. v. 16; 1 Peter ii. 12; Col. iii. 8, &c.

#### SECT. IX. GENERAL OBSERVATIONS ON THE LORD'S SUPPER.

The Lord's Supper is the memorial of Christ's death. Mat. xxvi. 28, 29.

It is a *solemn* memorial—

As it is the *dying* request of Jesus. Mat. xxvi. 28, 29; Mark xiv. 24, 25.

As it is designed to bring souls into close fellowship with God. Mat. xxvi. 28, 29; 1 Cor. x. 16.

It is a *perpetual* memorial. 1 Cor. xi. 24-26; Acts ii. 42; xx. 7.

It is a *public* memorial. 1 Cor. xi. 24-26; Mat. xxvi. 26, 27.

It is a memorial to be frequently observed. 1 Cor. xi. 25, 26; Acts ii. 46.

The *time* and *place* of its observance immaterial. 1 Cor. xi. 20, 33; Luke xxii. 12; Acts xx. 7.

The blessing of God alone can make the ordinance of the Supper the medium of conveying spiritual blessings to those who in faith observe it. Isa. xxv. 6; 1 Cor. xi. 24; Mat. xviii. 20; Ezek. xxxiv. 26; Psalm cxxxiii. 3.



## SECTION VII.

### PRAYERS BEFORE AND AFTER THE COMMUNION.

#### BEFORE SELF-EXAMINATION, PREPARATION TO PARTAKE OF THE LORD'S SUPPER.

HOLY, holy, holy Lord God Almighty, who are of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, who searchest the heart, and triest the innermost thoughts, I beseech thee now to assist me in looking into my own heart, and my own life. Feeling and acknowledging that my heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked, I beseech thee to shew me to myself. Enable me to try myself by the standard of thy holy word, and discover the true state of my soul: give me repentance for all my past sins; lively faith in Jesus Christ, the only Saviour from sin; deep humility before thee, and such tempers and dispositions as are meet for those who assemble round the table of our gracious Redeemer. These things I ask for His name's sake. Amen.

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#### CONFESSION OF SIN AFTER SELF-EXAMINATION.

O LORD, GOD ALMIGHTY, the judge of all the earth, keeping covenant and mercy to them that love Him, and to them that keep His commandments, have mercy upon me, a miserable sinner, coming back to thee in the name of Jesus Christ. My conscience accuses me of many transgressions, and much disobedience. If in any thing I have not greatly sinned, or have in a measure fulfilled thy will, this is thy work, and to thee alone be praise. But O how unfaithful have I been to my engagements, and how often have I transgressed thy law, and been disobedient to thy holy will!

I desire especially to confess and bewail those sins for which my own heart more particularly condemns me. [*Here enumerate those sins, and omitted duties, which have been brought to your mind by self-examination.*] And how much of my sinfulness is unknown to myself! But thou art acquainted with all my ways: O cleanse thou me from my secret faults, and from all my known transgressions. Wash me through that precious blood which cleanses from all sin.

Give me grace to look to Him who was pierced for my sins, and to mourn for them with that godly sorrow which works repentance unto salvation. O vouchsafe unto me a holy compunction of heart, a lively faith in Christ, and a sure hope of thy mercy through Him, that I may, with a pacified conscience, a believing and penitent heart, and a grateful and thankful spirit, commemorate His death at His table. Here me, for His name's sake. Amen.

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BEFORE THE COMMUNION.

PSALM cxvi, 12-14.—What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me? I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord. I will pay my vows unto the Lord now in the presence of all his people.

Most holy, and blessed, and gracious Lord God, with all humility and reverence I here present myself before thee, to seek thy face and entreat thy favour, and as an evidence of thy good-will towards me, to beg that I may experience thy good work in me.

I acknowledge myself unworthy, utterly unworthy of the honour; unfit, utterly unfit for the service to which I am now called. It is an inestimable privilege, that I am admitted so often to hear from thee in thy word, and to speak to thee in prayer; and yet, as if this had been a small matter, I am now invited into communion with thee at thy holy table, there to celebrate the memorial of my Saviour's death, and to partake by faith of the precious benefits which flow from it. I, who deserve not the crumbs, am called to eat of the children's bread.

O Lord, I thank thee for the institution of this blessed ordinance, this precious legacy and token of love, which the Lord Jesus left to His Church, and that it has been preserved to this age; that it is administered in this land, that I am admitted to it, and have now before me an opportunity to partake of it; Lord, grant that I may not receive thy grace herein in vain!

O thou who hast called me to the marriage-supper of the Lamb, give me the wedding-garment; work in me a dispensation of soul, and all those pious and devout affections which are suited to the solemnities of this ordinance, and requisite to qualify me for an acceptance and advantageous participation of it. Behold the fire and the wood, all things are now ready; but where is the lamb for the burnt-offering? Lord.

provide thyself a lamb, by working in me all that which thou requirest of me upon this occasion: the preparation of the heart, and the answer of the tongue are both from thee: Lord, prepare my unprepared heart for communion with thee.

Lord, I confess I have sinned against thee; I have done foolishly, very foolishly, for foolishness is bound up in my heart; I have sinned, and have come short of the glory of God; I have come short of glorifying thee, and deserve to come short of being glorified with thee. The imagination of my heart is evil continually, and the bias of my corrupt nature is very strong towards the world and the flesh, and the gratifications of sense; but towards God, and Christ, and heaven, I move slowly, and with many stops and pauses. Nay, there is in my carnal mind an aversion to divine and spiritual things. I have misspent my time, trifled away my opportunities, have followed after lying vanities, and forsaken my own mercies. God be merciful to me a sinner! for how little have I done, since I came into the world, of the great work that I was sent into this world to perform!

Thou hast taken me into covenant with thee, for I am a baptized christian, set apart for thee, and sealed to be thine; thou hast laid me, and I also have laid myself, under all possible obligations to love thee, and serve thee, and live to thee. But I have started aside from thee like a deceitful bow, I have not made good my covenant with thee, nor hath the temper of my mind, and the tenor of my conversation, been agreeable to that holy religion of which I make profession, to my expectations from thee, and engagements to thee. I am ever inclined to backslide from the living God; and if I were under the law I were undone; but I am under grace, a covenant of grace which leaves room for repentance, and promises pardon upon repentance, which invites even backsliding children to return, and promises that their backslidings shall be healed.

O Lord, I take hold of this covenant, seal it to me at thy table. There let me find my heart truly humbled for sin, and sorrowing for it after a godly sort: O that I may there look on Him whom I have pierced, and mourn, and be in bitterness for him; that there I may sow in tears, and receive a broken Christ into a broken heart: and there let the blood of Christ, which speaketh better things than that of Abel, be sprinkled upon my conscience, to purify and give me peace: there let me be assured that thou art reconciled to me, that my iniquities are

pardoned, and that I shall not come into condemnation. There say unto me, Be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee.

And that I may not come unworthily to this blessed ordinance, I beseech thee, lead me into a more intimate and experimental acquaintance with Jesus Christ, and Him crucified; with Jesus Christ, and Him glorified; that knowing Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, and being by His grace planted in the likeness of both, I may both discern the Lord's body, and shew forth the Lord's death.

Lord, I desire by a true and lively faith to close with Jesus Christ, and consent to Him as my Lord, and my God: I here give up myself to Him as my Prophet, Priest, and King, to be ruled, and taught, and saved by Him; this is my beloved, and this is my friend. None but Christ, none but Christ, Lord, increase this faith in me, perfect what is lacking in it, and enable me in receiving the bread and wine at thy table, by a lively faith to receive Christ Jesus the Lord. O let the great Gospel doctrine of Christ's dying to save sinners, which is represented in that ordinance, be meat and drink to my soul—meat indeed, and drink indeed. Let it be both nourishing and refreshing to me, let it be both my strength and my song, and be the spring both of my holiness and of my comfort. And let such deep impressions be made upon my soul, by the actual commemoration of it, as may abide always upon me, and have a powerful influence upon me in my whole conversation, that the life I now live in the flesh I may live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me.

Lord, I beseech thee, fix my thoughts; let my heart be engaged to approach unto thee, that I may attend upon thee without distraction. Draw out my desires towards thee; give me to hunger and thirst after righteousness, that I may be filled; and to draw near to thee with a true heart, and in full assurance of faith; and since I am not straitened in thee, O let me not be straitened in my own bosom.

Draw me, Lord, and I will run after thee; O send out thy light and thy truth, let them lead and guide me; pour thy Spirit upon me, put thy Spirit within me, to work in me both to will and to do that which is good, and leave me not to myself. Awake, O north wind, and come thou south, and blow upon my garden; come, O blessed Spirit of grace, and enlighten my mind with the knowledge of Christ, bow my will

to the will of Christ, fill my heart with the love of Christ, and confirm my resolution to live and die with Him.

Work in me, I pray thee, a principle of holy love and charity towards all men, that I may forgive my enemies, which by thy grace I heartily do, and may keep up a spiritual communion in faith, hope, and holy love, with all that in every place call on the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Lord, bless them all, and particularly that congregation with which I am to join in this solemn ordinance. Good Lord, pardon every one that engageth his heart to seek God, the Lord God of his fathers, though not cleansed according to the purification of the sanctuary. Hear my prayers, and heal the people.

Lord, meet me with a blessing, a Father's blessing at thy table; grace thine own institutions with thy presence; and fulfil in me all the good pleasure of thy goodness, and the work of faith with power; for the sake of Jesus Christ my blessed Saviour and Redeemer, to whom, with the Father, and the eternal Spirit, be everlasting praises. Amen.

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BEFORE THE COMMUNION.

SONG OF SOLOMON ii. 3, 4.—I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste. He brought me to the banqueting-day of his fierce anger.

O THOU infinite and eternal Majesty, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our Father in heaven; vouchsafe with an eye of favour and compassion to behold thy sinful creature, who now falls prostrate before thee, in humble adoration of thy distinguishing and most undeserved goodness to the children of men, and to me in particular, which I acknowledge to have been such as beyond measure to enhance the guilt of my offences against thee. With what sincerity, O Lord, thou desirest the conversion of sinners, the prosperity of thy saints, and the happiness of all that are upright in heart, thou hast abundantly discovered in the incarnation and death of thy well-beloved Son, our most worthy Mediator and Advocate, Jesus Christ: and in the rich variety of means which thou hast kindly provided for the healing the manifold disorders of our nature, and our continued progress towards perfection.

As for all these I bless and praise thy wise goodness; so, in a particular manner, and not least of all, for the institution of the holy supper, which, coming recommended by the authority of my blessed Saviour, and bearing His name, as it was

appointed in honour of His memory, I desire ever to set a very high value upon.

Being not only allowed, but invited, to attend this sacred feast, I joyfully accept the invitation, humbly trusting that thy grace hath made me in some degree meet to partake of so invaluable a privilege; and entreating thee, that what is farther wanting, in order to my communicating with yet greater advantage and acceptance, the same grace may supply. O let the blood of Jesus, thy Son, cleanse me from all sin; and His Spirit, even that eternal Spirit through which He offered Himself without spot unto God, enlighten, sanctify, and rouse my spirit, naturally dark, depressed, and polluted! Give me understanding in all thy precepts, and help me to discern the meaning, and to attain the ends of that holy ordinance for which I am preparing. Let the sacred fire, falling from heaven, consume my drossy affections, and kindle a flame of divine love in my breast, never to be extinguished.

Grant, O Lord, that I may approach with the deepest sense of my own meanness, unworthiness, and guilt; and with the most exalted apprehensions of thy holiness and mercy, both which thou hast so wonderfully displayed in the method of our redemption by Jesus Christ: that I may receive the pledges of thy forgiving love, and the memorials of my Saviour's bloody passion, with a lively faith, an abounding hope, with gratitude unfeigned, and joy unspeakable; and may so feel the attractive influence of His example, the efficacy of His death, and the power of His resurrection, that I may have my whole soul transformed into love; be all kindness and charity to men, and zeal for God and Jesus Christ; may die unto sin, and live unto righteousness; be able to tread on all the power of the enemy; to deny myself; despise the blandishments and temptations of the world; have my conversation in heaven, and overcome all opposition in the way to it; and, finally, after having loved, and served, and followed my Saviour, without seeing Him, may be with Him, according to His own prayer, where He is, to behold His glory; and, with all the heavenly multitudes, ascribe blessing, and honour, and glory, and power unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever. Amen.

## BEFORE THE COMMUNION.

JOHN vi. 54, 55.—Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed.

O BLESSED and eternal Jesus, who gavest thyself a sacrifice for our sins—thy body for our spiritual food—thy blood to nourish our spirits, and to quench the flames of hell and lust; who didst so love us, who were thine enemies, that thou desiredst to reconcile us to thee, and becamest all one with us, that we might live the same life, think the same thoughts, love the same love, and be partakers of thy resurrection and immortality,—open every window of my soul, that I may be full of light, and may see the excellency of thy love, the merits of thy sacrifice, the bitterness of thy passion, the glories and virtues of the mysterious sacrament. Lord, let me ever hunger and thirst after this instrument of righteousness; let me have no gust or relish of the unsatisfying delights of things below, but let my soul dwell in thee; let me for ever receive thee spiritually, imitate thy virtues piously and strictly, and dwell in the pleasures of thy house eternally. Lord, thou hast prepared a table for me against them that trouble me; let that holy sacrament of the Eucharist be to me a defence and shield, a nourishment and medicine, life and health, a means of sanctification and spiritual growth; that I, receiving the body of my dearest Lord, may be one with His mystical body, and of the same spirit, united with indissoluble bands of a strong faith, and a holy hope, and a never-failing charity; that from this veil I may pass into the visions of eternal brightness; from eating thy body, to beholding thy face in the glories of thy everlasting kingdom, O blessed and eternal Jesus. Amen.

## ON THE SUFFERINGS OF CHRIST.

LUKE xxii, 19.—This do in remembrance of me. Psalm cxxxvii, 5, 6.—If I forget thee, O *Jesus*, let my right hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth; if I prefer not *thee* above my chief joy.

O HOLY and immaculate Lamb of God, who wert pleased to suffer shame and sorrow, to be brought before tribunals, to be accused maliciously, betrayed treacherously, condemned unjustly, and scourged most rudely, suffering the most severe and most unhandsome inflictions, which could be procured by potent, subtle, and extremest malice; and didst choose this out of love greater than the love of mothers, more affectionate

than the tears of joy and pity dropt from the eyes of most passionate women,—by these fontanels of blood issuing forth life, and health, and pardon upon all thine enemies; teach me to apprehend the baseness of sin, in proportion to the greatest of those calamities which my sin made it necessary for thee to suffer, that I may hate the cause of thy sufferings, and adore thy mercy, and imitate thy charity, and copy out thy patience and humility, and love thy person to the uttermost extent and degrees of my affections. Lord, what am I, that the eternal Son of God should suffer one stripe for me? But thy love is infinite. And how great a misery is it to provoke by sin so great a mercy, and despise so miraculous a goodness, and to do fresh despite to the Son of God? But our sins are innumerable, and our infirmities are mighty. Dearest Jesus, pity me, for I am accused by my own conscience, and am found guilty; I am stripped naked of my innocence, and bound fast by lust, and tormented with stripes and wounds of enraged appetities. But let thy innocence excuse me, the robes of thy righteousness clothe me, thy bondage set me free, and thy stripes heal me: that thou being my Advocate, my Physician, my Patron, and my Lord, I may be adopted into the union of thy merits, and partake of the efficacy of thy sufferings, and be crowned as thou art, having my sins changed to virtues, and my thorns to rays of glory, under thee our head, in the participations of eternity, O holy and immaculate Lamb of God. Amen.

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THANKSGIVING FOR CHRIST'S SUFFERINGS.

LAM. i. 12.—Behold and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow, which is done unto me, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me in the house, and his banner over me was love.

O THOU, my crucified Saviour, glory be to thee for causing thy sufferings to be registered in the Gospel; there I have read and remember the wonders and triumphs of thy Almighty love, for which I will always adore and praise thee.

I remember, O gracious Lord, how thou, who thoughtest it no robbery to be equal with God, wast made in the fashion of frail man—of the vilest and most contemptible of men, for thou tookest on thee the form of a very servant; I remember how many reproaches and contradictions, blasphemies and persecutions, thou didst endure from a wicked and perverse generation; and all this to save us sinful men.



I remember, O gracious Lord, how thou didst endure a most bitter agony, and didst sweat as it were great drops of blood falling to the ground; how thou, who are God above all, blessed for ever, wast treacherously betrayed and apprehended, and bound as a malefactor, set at nought by Herod and his men of war, denied by Peter, forsaken by all thy disciples; and all this to save us sinful men.

I remember, how thou, O God of truth, wast accused by false witnesses; how thou, whom all the angels adore, wast blindfolded and buffeted, mocked and spit upon, stript naked and scourged; and all this that we might be healed by thy stripes, and to save us sinful men.

I remember, Lord, how thou, that art the great judge of heaven and earth, wast thyself dragged to the judgment seat, and condemned; how thou, O king of heaven, wast crowned with thorns, and oppressed with the weight of thy own cross; and all this to save us sinful men.

I remember, O blessed Saviour, how thou, who art the Lord of glory, and the sole Author of life, wast put to a most ignominious death; how thy hands and feet were nailed to a cross; how thou wast crucified between two thieves, and numbered with the transgressors; how thou hadst a potion given thee, to imbitter thy very last moments; and all this to save us sinful men.

I remember, O gracious Lord, how, when thou wert hanging on the very cross, thou wast scoffed at and reviled; how infinitely then thou wast afflicted and bruised for our transgressions, when the iniquities of us all were laid upon thy shoulders; how thou didst then express an anguish greater than all the torments of thy crucifixion, when thou didst cry out, My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me? And how thou didst at last give up the ghost, and die thyself, that we might live.

Was there ever any sorrow like that which my Lord and my God endured for me? Was there any love like to that love my Lord and my God has shewed to me? O my Saviour, with all my heart I love and adore thine infinite love and benignity to sinners; with all my heart I lament and detest the hatred and outrage of sinners to thee. Instill, O my God, penitential love into my soul, that I may grieve for my sins, which grieved thee; that I may love thee for suffering for us sinners, who occasioned all thy griefs. O may I always love thee! O may

I never grieve thee more! By the love of thy cross, O Jesus, I live; in that alone will I glory; that above all things will I study; that above all things will I value; by the love of thy cross I will take up my cross daily, and follow thee; I will persecute, and torment, and crucify, my sinful affections and lusts, which persecuted, tormented, and crucified thee; and if thy love calls me to it, I will suffer on the cross for thee, as thou hast done for me.

How illustrious and amiable were thy graces amidst all thy sufferings! O thou afflicted Jesus! I admire and love thy profound humility, unwearied patience, lamb-like meekness, immaculate innocence, invincible courage, absolute resignation, compassionate love of souls, and perfect charity to thine enemies. Give me grace to tread in thy steps, and conform me to thy divine image; that the more I grow like thee, the more I may love thee, and the more I may be loved by thee. Amen, Lord Jesus. Amen.

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AFTER THE COMMUNION.

GREAT and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty: what, then, art thou thyself, whose power hath produced and sustains, whose wisdom both contrived and directs, and whose goodness crowns them all. I praise thee, O my God, from the bottom of my soul, that having made of one blood all nations of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and having determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation, that they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after Him, and find Him, thou hast, in the course of thy providence, so ordered the circumstances of my birth and education, that I should be a partaker of the grace of the gospel from my earliest years, and know the wonderful works of God, even those things which many prophets and kings desired to see and hear, but could not. For all my powers and faculties, as a reasonable creature, all the testimonies of thy paternal care, all the effects of thy common bounty and goodness, in the course of my life, I bless and magnify thy holy name; but more especially for thy distinguishing grace and mercy in Jesus Christ, in whom, while I rejoice and glory, I cannot forget to pray that all mankind may enjoy the same happiness, and the whole world know that thou hast so loved it, as to give thine only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not

perish, but have everlasting life. Hear, O most gracious God, the prayers of thy faithful people for the enlargement of that kingdom of truth and righteousness which thou hast set up among men, that the religion of Christ may be professed and practised in its greatest simplicity. Grace be with all them that love the Lord Jesus in sincerity; may their numbers continually increase—their consolations abound—may the multitude of them that believe be of one heart and one soul, and the Church of Christ appear to be the school where immortal souls are trained up for the more perfect worship, and the everlasting felicity of the heavenly world.

O let not thy grace be received in vain by me! Let it not be in vain that I have been so fully taught the way of the Lord, have had both external and internal assistances, and every sort of encouragement, that I might abound in all the fruits of holiness, which are by Christ to the glory and praise of God. Forgive me, O merciful Father, that I have made thee returns so unsuitable to thy great goodness towards me, to the vast and numberless obligations thou hast laid me under, and the repeated engagements I have taken upon myself. O forgive me the coldness of my love, my sloth and inactivity, the little proficiency I have made in the virtues of the christian and divine life, with the advantage of so excellent a rule—so perfect an example—so free an access to the throne of grace—such almighty aids—and the prospect of so glorious a reward. And O may the consideration of thy readiness to pardon fill me with an ingenuous hatred and detestation of all sin; and may my abhorrence of sin, and care to avoid it, and all the occasions of, and temptations to it for the future, be a satisfying proof, that all my sins are actually forgiven me through the redemption which is in Jesus Christ, thy Son, whose death I have been shewing forth in His supper. And may the God of peace, who brought again from the dead the great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make me perfect to do His will, fulfilling in me the good pleasure of His goodness, and the work of faith with power. Help me to carry in mind the design of one duty to dispose me for another, and of all the instrumental duties of religion to beget and strengthen those exalted principles and habits of goodness in my soul, by which it will be more and more ripened for the life of heaven. By faith let me be able to see Him who is invisible, and always to walk as in His presence, and be more

affected and influenced by the contemplation of an absent Saviour, in every view of Him. While I meditate on the blessed Jesus, enduring the contradiction of sinners, and humbling Himself unto death, even the death of the cross, may I be instructed what to expect in the present life, and after what manner to behave under all the sufferings and afflictions of it; and may a risen and an exalted Redeemer elevate my heart above all the vanities of this transitory state of things to that happy world, whether He, my Lord, and the forerunner of all the faithful, is gone,—that I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Jesus Christ; for whose sake let me be willing to suffer the loss of all things, not counting my life dear to me, so I may finish my course with joy. Give me, O Lord, to feel more of the mighty power of thy grace concurring with the gospel of thy Son, to mortify every inordinate desire, to confirm every good purpose, to purify and regulate my affections, and to change my whole soul more and more into a divine image and likeness.

By that grace let me be enabled to trample on all the temptations to sin, and to keep a conscience void of offence, both towards God and towards man; that my love to thee may be superlative, and, though not adequate to thy excellencies and thy benefits, which it can never be, may bear some proportion to my capacities; that my devotion may be unaffected and fervent, my resignation entire, and obedience cheerful, uniform, and constant. To men let me be just and charitable, kindly affectioned, ready to do good and to communicate, as I have ability and opportunity, carrying it towards all with a mild, a peaceable, and christian spirit; while, as to myself, I am sober-minded, poor in spirit, and pure in heart; and, though not free from all mental irregularities, am yet gaining ground upon them daily—opposing my inclinations as often as they oppose my duty. Enable me to deny myself, and be temperate in all things, to bridle my tongue, and labour to be an example of patience, meekness, contentment, and to come behind in no good thing, looking for the mercy of God unto eternal life; that so, when I shall have done the work which thou hast given me to do, and suffered all that thou hast seen meet for the trial of my faith, and hope, and submission to thy will, I may finally inherit the promises which thou hast made us in Christ Jesus, our Lord. Amen.

## AFTER RECEIVING THE LORD'S SUPPER.

THANKS be unto thee, Holy Father, Lord God Almighty,—thanks be unto thee for the privilege which thou hast given me of uniting with thy people, to commemorate the sacrifice of the death of the Lord Jesus Christ, and for all the edification and comfort thus given to me.

O that this solemnity may so deeply and so permanently affect my heart, as constantly to influence my future life. Let the love of Christ now at length constrain me no longer to live to myself, but to Him who died for me.

Pardon all in this service that was not right before thee. All I do is defiled with sin; but I offer every service unto thee in the name of Jesus alone. I bless thee, through Him, for whatever thy Spirit enabled me to do in any measure agreeably to thy holy will. But my whole hope and trust is in the sacrifice of Christ Jesus, which I have been now commemorating, to atone not only for former transgressions, but for all the failings and defects of my preparation and performances even at this solemn feast. Lord, spare me, and accept me on account of that great propitiation for the sins of the whole world.

O that I may ever remember that the vows of the Lord are upon me, and that I am thine, irrevocably thine; and may I walk from day to day as becomes a child of God, and an heir of His glory.

Keep alive in my mind a constant sense of my weakness, and my entire dependence on thy grace. May I now go forth to my duties more humbled and more devoted, more watchful against my spiritual enemies, and more determined to give up all for Him who gave up His life for me.

Give unto me, I pray thee, this comfortable evidence of having had communion with Christ,—that my faith in Him for supplies in all my way to heaven is manifestly strengthened,—that I have the same mind that was in him, have become like Him, am copying His example, and treading in His steps. May I watch over my motives as well as my conduct, and do thou deliver me from improper motives in doing outwardly good works. May I also find in my growing experience more proofs of my being a member of the mystical body of Christ, in that my love to those that belong to Him increase, and that I can make larger allowances for their infirmities, and more readily do them self-denying services. Nor let my love stop short of

the divine pattern of Him who loved and prayed for His worst enemies.

O Lord, I would now, in the fulness of my heart, earnestly pray for the coming of that time when all that bear the name of Christ shall fulfil His dying precept, and thy table be crowded with believing and joyful guests. O when shall all the ends of the earth look to Jesus and be saved! Hasten it, in thy good pleasure, O Lord; that Christ Jesus may be known, loved, and obeyed in every land, and the Lord's name be praised from the rising of the sun to the going down of the same. Thus glorify thy great name, fulfil thy gracious promises, and let thy kingdom be fully established, through Jesus Christ, our only Redeemer. Amen.

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AFTER THE COMMUNION.

PSALM lxxxvi. 12, 13.—I will praise thee, O Lord, my God, with all my heart, and I will glorify thy name for evermore. For great is thy mercy toward me, and thou hast delivered my soul from the lowest hell.

O LORD, my God, and my Father in Jesus Christ, I can never sufficiently admire the condescension of thy grace to me: what is man that thou dost thus magnify Him, and the son of man that thou visitest Him! Who am I, and what is my house, that thou hast brought me hitherto; that thou hast brought me into the banqueting-house, and thy banner over me hath been love? I have reason to say that a day in thy courts, an hour at thy table, is better, far better, than a thousand days, than ten thousand hours, elsewhere; it is good for me to draw near to God. Blessed be God for the privileges of His house, and these comforts with which He makes His people joyful in His house of prayer.

But I have reason to blush and be ashamed of myself that I have not been more affected with the great things which have been set before me, and offered to me at the Lord's table. O, what a vain, foolish, trifling heart have I! when I would do good, even then evil is present with me. Good Lord, be merciful to me, and pardon the iniquity of my holy things, and let not my manifold defects in my attendance upon thee be laid to my charge, or hinder my profiting by the ordinance.

I have now been commemorating the death of Christ: Lord, grant that by the power of that death, sin may be crucified in me, the world crucified to me, and I to the world; and enable

me so to bear about with me continually the dying of the Lord Jesus, as that the life also of Jesus may be manifested in my mortal body.

I have now been receiving the precious benefits which flow from Christ's death: Lord, grant that I may never lose, may never forfeit these benefits; but, as I have received Christ Jesus, the Lord, give me grace so to walk in Him, and to live as one that am not my own, but bought with a price, glorifying God with my body and spirit, which are His.

I have now been renewing my covenant with thee, and engaging myself afresh to thee to be thine; now, Lord, give me grace to perform my vow. Keep it always in the imagination of the thought of my heart, and establish my way before thee. Lord, preserve me by thy grace, that I may never return again to folly: after God hath spoken peace, may I never, by my loose and careless walking, undo what I have been doing to-day; but, having my heart enlarged with the consolations of God, give me to run the way of thy commandments with cheerfulness and constancy, and still to hold fast my integrity.

This precious soul of mine, which is the work of thine own hands, and the purchase of thy Son's blood, I commit into thy hands, to be sanctified by thy Spirit and grace, and wrought up into a conformity to thy holy will in every thing. Lord, set up thy throne in my heart, write thy law there, shed abroad thy love there, and bring every thought within me into obedience to thee, to the commanding power of thy law, and the constraining power of thy love. Keep through thine own name that which I commit unto thee; keep it against that day when it shall be called for: let me be preserved blameless to the coming of thy glory, that I may then be presented faultless with exceeding joy.

All my outward affairs I submit to the disposal of thy wise and gracious providence; Lord, save my soul, and then as to other things do as thou pleasest with me; only make all providences to work together for my spiritual and eternal advantage. Let all things be pure to me, and give me to taste covenant-love in common mercies; and by thy grace let me be taught both how to want and how to abound, how to enjoy prosperity and how to bear adversity, as becomes a christian; and at all times let thy grace be sufficient for me, and mighty in me, to work in me both to will and to do that which is good and of thine own good pleasure.

And that in every thing I may do my duty, and stand complete in it, let my heart be enlarged in love to Jesus Christ, and affected with the height and depth, the length and breadth of that love of His to me, which passeth all conception and expression.

And as an evidence of that love, let my mouth be filled with His praises. Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive blessing, and honour, and glory, and power; for He was slain, and hath redeemed a chosen remnant unto God by His blood, and made them to him Kings and Priests. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and let all that is within me bless His holy name, who forgiveth all mine iniquities, and healeth all my diseases; who redeemeth my life from destruction, and crowneth me with loving kindnesses and tender mercy; who having begun a good work, will perform it unto the day of Christ. As long as I live I will bless the Lord; I will praise my God while I have any being; and when I have no being on earth, I hope to have a being in heaven to be doing it better.

O let me be borne up in thine everlasting arms, and carried from strength to strength, till I appear before God in Zion, for Jesus' sake, who died for me, and rose again, in whom I desire to be found living and dying.

Now to God the Father, Son, and Spirit be ascribed Kingdom, Power, and Glory, henceforth and for ever. Amen.

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AFTER THE COMMUNION.

PSALM cxlvi. 1, 2.—Praise ye the Lord, praise the Lord, O my soul. While I live will I praise the Lord: I will sing praises unto my God while I have any being.

I CAST myself at thy feet, O my God, to thank thee for all thy benefits, but more especially for that which I have now been receiving. Though outwardly but a single instance of thy goodness, it yet comprehends many blessings, every one of which deserves an everlasting thanksgiving. Well may I adore the boundless goodness and mercy in which thy blessings to me had their origin, when I think of my own unworthiness, and that thou hast not been prevented thereby from pouring them with such liberality upon my head. Surely I should be unworthy of living a single hour longer, if I felt not the obligations under which thou hast laid me, if I were not penetrated to the heart by thy goodness, if I were not actuated by a sincere and ardent desire to testify to thee my thankfulness.



Accept, then, O my God, my humble thanks for this thy great and wonderful loving-kindness. Thou hast carried me to thy house of prayer; thou hast put into my hands the memorials of my Lord's broken body and shed blood, thereby sealing me anew unto the day of redemption, giving me a fresh proof that thou hast chosen me out of this world that is lying in wickedness, and enabling me by faith to feed upon Christ and Him crucified, as made unto me wisdom, and sanctification, and life eternal. Blessed be thy name for this new mark of special favour to my soul. I was dead, and thou hast said unto me, Live; I am weary, weak, and heavy laden, and thou hast given me Christ as the resting place of my soul, nay, to dwell in me as the hope of glory hereafter, and the earnest of many a victory won over sin and Satan, the world and the flesh. From the bottom of my heart, O Lord, do I thank thee. Accept of my thanksgiving, or rather, as thou hast accepted the satisfaction of thy Son as the expiation of all my sins, accept the plenitude of His merits, the infinite preciousness of His sacrifice, and, by its imputation to me, regard not my inability to thank thee as I ought.

But this is not all, O my God. I have still another mercy to petition from thee. May it please thee to give me the succours of thy Holy Spirit to strengthen me for the performance of every duty incumbent upon me for the future. Fill my heart with zeal and ardour in thy service, with love and respect for thy holy will, with hatred and aversion to sin, with contempt for the world and its false gratifications. Sustain me by thy good hand during the course of my life; and whatever, in thy Providence, shall befall me, forbid, O my God, that I should ever abandon thee. Permit me not even to relax in the desire which I now have to please and serve thee, and to do my uttermost to observe thy holy precepts. Rather strengthen more and more this desire. Make it pass into an abiding resolution, and permit not that this resolution should be unaccompanied with those effects which it ought to produce, in order to please thee. In a word, I ask of thee, O Lord, all that is necessary to prepare me for receiving at length from thine own hand those infinite blessings, the earnest and assurance of which I have received in thy holy sacrament.

And whilst I am in this world, O Lord, leave me not to myself. Abandon me not to my spiritual enemies, to my native weakness, inconsistency, and sinful inclinations. May

I be found ever on the advance towards the end and object of my vocation—that perfection which is in Christ Jesus, and becometh thine house. May I every day be gaining fresh victories over myself, and learn to bring my heart more and more under the yoke of faith. For which purpose, may it please thee to watch over me by thy providence, and continue towards me thy protection and care, till the last moments of my life. Forbid that thy coming, O good God, should surprise me. Forbid that it should find me asleep, or off my guard. Give me to be always waiting, always ready to bid thee welcome. May my faith be ever lively, my charity ever active; may my heart be detached from the world and its vain delights, and fixed upon thee as the object of its main, its only desire. May I always be sighing after thee, until I be united to thy glory, to bless thee, and praise thee for ever and ever.

Go up with me, then, through this wilderness, and let that peace of thine which passeth understanding, which the world can neither give nor take away, reign ever in my soul, until transported to the triumphant Jerusalem, that city of peace, and calm, and repose; elevated above the storms and tempests of this world, and united inseparably to thee, I shall be, in some degree, a partaker of thy immutability, behold thy face in glory, and satisfy myself with the joys of thy sanctuary, the eternal pleasures which are at thy right hand. This I ask of thee not in my own name, but relying on the intercession of thy Son, the Prince of peace, the King of glory, to whom, with thee, and the Eternal Spirit, I ascribe all blessing and praise for evermore. Amen.





Forms of Doxology

AND

BENEDICTION

WITH

Concluding Prayers.

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SELECTED AND PREPARED

BY THE

REV. THOMAS SMYTH.

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## FORMS OF DOXOLOGY.

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### PART I.

#### FOR CLOSING PRAYER.

1. Through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen. Heb. xiii. 21.

2. Now, to Him that is of power to establish you according to the gospel of Jesus Christ: To God the only wise, be glory through Jesus Christ for ever. Amen. Rom. xvi. 25, 27.

3. Through Jesus Christ who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen. Rom. ix. 5.

4. Who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father: to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen. Gal. i. 4, 5.

5. Now, unto Him that is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us; unto Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen. Eph. iii. 20, 21.

6. Now, unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen. 1 Tim. i. 17.

7. Through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen. 1 Pet. iv. 11.

8. Through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, to whom be glory both now and for ever. Amen. 2 Pet. iii. 18.

9. Now unto Him that is able to keep us from falling, and to present us faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy; to the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen. Jude 24, 25.

10. Unto Him who loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father; to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen. Rev. i. 5, 6.

11. Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever. Rev. v. 13.

12. Through Jesus Christ our Lord; to whom with thee and the Holy Ghost be all honour and glory, world without end. Amen.

13. Through the might of Jesus Christ our Lord.

14. And this we beg, for Jesus Christ's sake.

15. Grant this, O Lord, for the honour of our advocate and mediator Jesus Christ.

16. Grant this, O Lord, for the love of thy Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

17. For the sake and merits of thy Son, our blessed Saviour and Redeemer. Amen.

18. Through Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost ever one God, world without end.

19. Hear us, O Lord, for thy mercy is great; and after the multitude of thy mercies look upon us, through the merits and mediation of thy blessed Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

20. Grant this, for thine only Son Jesus Christ's sake.

21. May thy bountiful grace and mercy speedily help and deliver us, through the satisfaction of thy Son; to whom, with thee and the Holy Ghost, be honour and glory, world without end. Amen.

22. May we be found, O Lord Jesus Christ, an acceptable people in thy sight, who livest and reignest with the Father and the Holy Spirit ever one God, world without end. Amen.

23. May we rise to life immortal, through Him who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, now and ever. Amen.

24. That we, thy servants, may evermore give thanks unto thee in thy holy church, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

25. We praise thee, we bless thee, we worship thee, we glorify thee, we give thanks to thee, O Lord God, heavenly King, God the Father Almighty; and thee, O Lord Jesus Christ, who only art the Lord, for thou only, O Christ, with the Holy Ghost, are most High in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

26. Through the merits of Jesus Christ our Saviour, who liveth and reigneth with thee, in the unity of the same Spirit, one God, world without end. Amen.

27. Through Jesus Christ our Lord, by whom and with whom, in the unity of the Holy Ghost, all honour and glory be unto thee, O Father Almighty, world without end. Amen.



28. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost: As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

29. Help, Lord, and save us for thy mercies sake, in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

30. This, we beg, through thy merits, O Lord, our Saviour and our Redeemer. Amen.

31. These things, and whatever else thou shalt see necessary and convenient for us, we humbly beg, through the merits and mediation of thy Son Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour. Amen.

32. Through thy merits, O blessed Jesus, thou gracious Bishop and Shepherd of our souls, who art, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, one God, world without end. Amen.

33. O God, Holy Ghost, sanctifier of the faithful, visit, we pray thee, this congregation with thy love and favour; enlighten their minds more and more with the light of the everlasting gospel; graft in their hearts a love of the truth; increase in them true religion; nourish them with all goodness; and of thy great mercy keep them in the same, O blessed Spirit, who with the Father and the Son together, we worship and glorify as one God, world without end. Amen.

34. O God, the Father of heaven, have mercy upon us, miserable sinners. O God, the Son, Redeemer of the world, have mercy upon us, miserable sinners. O God, the Holy Ghost, proceeding from the Father and the Son, have mercy upon us, miserable sinners. O holy, blessed, and glorious Trinity, three persons and one God, have mercy upon us, miserable sinners. Favourably with mercy hear our prayers, through our only mediator and advocate, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

35. Lord, have mercy upon us. Son of God, we beseech thee to hear us. Spirit of all grace, favourably with mercy hear our prayers. Glory be to the Father, &c.

36. O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive; O Lord, hearken and do; defer not, for thine own sake defer not, O Lord my God. According unto the multitude of thy mercies—according to the riches of thy grace—for thine own sake, O Lord, and for thy Christ's sake, be merciful unto us sinners, to the glory of thy rich and sovereign mercy in Christ Jesus. Amen.

37. For all thy mercies, O God the Father, we give thanks unto thee always, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom, with thee, &c.

38. Glory, and honour, and praise, and blessing, and thanksgiving, and wisdom, and virtue, and riches, and power, and might, and holiness, and salvation, be unto our God that liveth and sitteth upon the throne for ever, and unto the Lamb slain. Hallelujah. Amen.

39. Amen. Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen.

40. Blessing and honour, and glory and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever. Amen.

41. Worthy art thou at all times to be celebrated by holy lips, O Son of God, thou giver of life. Therefore, the world, in unison with all the host of heaven, do glorify thee, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, to whom be praise in the church throughout all generations. Amen.

42. O Lord, the hope of Israel, the Saviour thereof in time of trouble, forsake us not, but favourably hear us in thy mercy; and to the Father, &c.

43. O Lord my God, incline thine ear and hear, open thine eyes, and behold our multiplied necessities; for we do not present our supplications before thee for our righteousness, but for thy manifold and great mercies. And to the Father, &c.

44. We ask all through Jesus, the great Mediator of the Covenant, to whom, with thee O Father, and thine Holy Spirit, be everlasting praise ascribed. Amen.

45. We present these, our imperfect prayers and most unworthy services, in the all-prevailing name of Jesus, who died for our sins, and rose again for our justification, and ever liveth to make intercession for us, to whom be honour and dominion everlasting. Amen.

46. And let thy grace and blessing, thy love and fellowship, thy direction and assistance, O heavenly Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, be with us and with all for whom we ought to pray, this day and for evermore. Amen.

47. O Lord God of Hosts, hear our prayer; give ear, O God of Jacob. Behold, O God our shield, and look upon the face of thine Anointed. Amen.

48. So we, thy people and the sheep of thy pasture, will give thee thanks for ever; we will show forth thy praise through all generations. Amen.

49. And all we implore is through the mediation of Him who bore the sins of many, and made intercession for the transgressors, to whom, with the Father, &c.

50. Of whom, and through whom, and to whom are all things. And to God the only wise, the Father, &c.

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## PART II.

### FOR CLOSING WORSHIP.

1. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost, be with you all evermore. Amen. 2 Cor. xiii. 14.

2. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen. Rom. xvi. 24.

3. The Lord bless thee and keep thee: The Lord make his face to shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee. The Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace.

4. Brethren, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen. Gal. vi. 18.

5. Peace be to you, brethren, and love, with faith from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ. Grace be with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen. Eph. vi. 23, 24.

6. May God count you all worthy of his calling, and fulfil (in you,) all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power; That the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and ye in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ. 2 Thess. i. 11, 12.

7. Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant—make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen. Heb. xiii. 20, 21.

8. Peace be with you all that are in Christ Jesus. Amen. 1 Pet. iv. 14.

9. May God give you an understanding that ye may know him that is true, and that you may be in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life. Amen. 1 John v. 20.

10. Grace unto you, and peace from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ. Rom. i. 7; 1 Cor. i. 3; 2 Cor. i. 2.

11. Grace be to you, and peace, from God our Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ, who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen. Gal. i. 3, 4.

12. Grace, mercy, and peace, from God our Father, and Jesus Christ our Lord. 1 Tim. i. 2.

13. Grace, mercy, and peace, from God our Father, and Christ Jesus our Lord. 2 Tim. i. 2.

14. Grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ our Saviour. Titus i. 4.

15. Grace to you, and peace, from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ. Philemon i. 3.

16. Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied. 1 Pet. i. 2.

17. Grace and peace be multiplied unto you, through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord. 2 Pet. i. 2.

18. Grace 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.

19. Beloved, mercy unto you, and peace, and love, be multiplied, that ye may be sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ. Amen. Jude 1, 2.

20. Grace be unto you, and peace, from Him who is, and who was, and who is to come; and from the seven spirits who are before his throne; and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the Prince of the kings of the earth: unto whom be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen. Rev. i. 4, 5.

21. The peace of God which passeth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord: And the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, be amongst you and remain with you always. Amen.

22. The blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, be upon you, and remain with you forever. Amen.

23. God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, bless, preserve, and keep you: The Lord mercifully with his favour look upon you, and fill you with all spiritual benediction and grace.

24. Unto God's gracious mercy and protection we now commit you. The Lord bless you, and keep you: The Lord make

His face to shine upon you, and be gracious unto you: The Lord lift up His countenance upon you, and give you peace, both now and evermore. Amen.

25. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost, be with us all evermore. Amen.

26. The Lord have mercy upon you; pardon, and deliver you from all your sins; confirm and strengthen you in all goodness; and bring you to everlasting life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

27. The good Lord pardon every one that loveth Him with his whole heart, and seeketh the Lord God of his fathers; and the love of God, our heavenly Father; the grace of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour; with the fellowship of the Holy Ghost, our Guide and Sanctifier, be with you all now and ever. Amen.

28. To thee therefore, our dear Father, our Creator, Protector, Governor, and Defender, and thy beloved Son Jesus Christ, our only Prince, Redeemer, Justifier and Advocate, and thy Holy Spirit, our Sanctification and Wisdom, our Teacher, Instructor, and Comforter, be all dominion, power and glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

29. My brethren! The end of all things is at hand. Be ye therefore sober minded, watch and pray.

The Lord be with you. Almighty God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, bless and protect you. Amen.

30. Glory be to God on high, and on earth peace, good will towards men. We praise thee, we bless thee, we worship thee, we glorify thee, we give thanks to thee for thy great glory, O Lord God! heavenly King! God the Father Almighty!

O Lord! the only begotten Son, Jesus Christ: O Lord God! Lamb of God, Son of the Father, who takest away the sin of the world, have mercy upon us. Thou, who takest away the sins of the world, receive our prayer. Thou, who sittest at the right hand of God the Father, have mercy upon us.

For thou only art holy; thou only art the Lord; thou only, O Christ! with the Holy Spirit, are most high in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

## PART III.

PRAYERS, TO BE USED, OR EMBODIED IN THE PRAYER AFTER  
AND BEFORE SERMON.

1. O Lord! have mercy upon us; hear our prayers, and let our supplications come unto thee.

O Lord! let thy mercy shine upon us, and grant us thy salvation.

O Lord! preserve thy Holy Church, and favourably hear through thy grace, all who call upon thee.

Clothe thy Ministers with righteousness, and cause thy chosen people to rejoice.

O Lord! save thy people, and bless thine heritage. Grant us peace in our day, for thou canst defend us.

O God! make clean our hearts within us, and take not thy Holy Spirit from us.

2. O Lord of all power and holiness! the author of every good and perfect gift, we beseech thee to engraft in our hearts the love of thy name. Increase in us true religion, nourish us with all thy goodness, and of thy great mercy keep us in the same, through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

3. Almighty Father! who has given thine only Son to die for our sins, and to rise again for our justification, grant that we may always thankfully receive this inestimable benefit, and daily endeavour to follow His blessed footsteps in singleness of heart and purity of life, through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

4. Almighty and everlasting God! who of thy tender love towards mankind, didst send thy Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ, to take upon Him our flesh, and to suffer death upon the cross, mercifully grant, that we may follow the example of His patience and humility, and be made partakers of His resurrection, through the same Jesus Christ our Redeemer. Amen.

5. Almighty God! unto whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hidden, purify our thoughts by the inspiration of thy Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love thee, and worthily magnify thy holy name, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

6. Almighty God! the fountain of all wisdom, who knowest our necessities before we ask, and our ignorance in asking, we beseech thee to have compassion on our infirmities, and those things which, for our unworthiness we dare not, and for our

blindness we cannot ask, vouchsafe to give us, through the merits of thy Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

7. O God! the protector of all who trust in thee, without whom we have neither strength, nor faith, nor holiness of life, we beseech thee to increase thy grace in our hearts, and to multiply thy blessings upon us. Vouchsafe to be our ruler and our guide, that we may so pass through things temporal, as not to lose things eternal. Grant this, O heavenly Father! for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

8. O God! the strength of all who put their trust in thee, mercifully accept our prayers; and since, through the weakness of our fallen nature, we can do nothing good without thee, grant us the continual help of thy grace, that by keeping thy commandments we may be found acceptable in thy sight, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

9. O God! who desirest not the death of a sinner, but art pleased to manifest thine Almighty power, chiefly in pity and forgiveness, mercifully vouchsafe to us such a measure of thy grace, that walking in the way of thy commandments we may obtain thy gracious promises, and be made partakers of thy heavenly treasures, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

10. Assist us mercifully, O Lord! in all our prayers and thanksgivings, and dispose the hearts of thy servants towards the attainment of everlasting salvation: that among all the changes of this mortal life, we may ever be defended by thy gracious and ready help, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

11. Almighty God! thou hast given us grace at this time with one accord to make our common supplications unto thee; and hast promised, that when two or three are gathered together in thy name, thou wilt grant their requests. Fulfil, now, O Lord! the desires and petitions of thy servants as may be most expedient for them; granting them in this world knowledge of thy truth, and in the world to come, life everlasting, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

12. Almighty and everlasting God! who hatest nothing which thou hast made, and forgivest the sins of all who are penitent, create in us new and contrite hearts, that lamenting our iniquities and acknowledging our wretchedness, we may obtain of thee, the God of all mercy, forgiveness and remission, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

13. O Almighty and everlasting God! who art always more ready to hear, than we to pray, and art wont to give more than we desire or deserve, vouchsafe unto us the abundance of thy mercies, pardoning the transgressions whereof our consciences are afraid, and granting us those blessings, which we are unworthy to ask, but through the merits and meditation of Jesus Christ. Amen.

14. O Lord! who hast gathered unto thyself a Church upon earth, and dost guide and sanctify it by the Holy Spirit, receive our supplications for all its wants, and for persons of every condition therein, that it may be to thee a Church glorious and without spot, and that every member of the same in his vocation and ministry, may serve thee faithfully. Hear us, in the name and for the sake of the head of that Holy Church, thy blessed Son, Jesus Christ. Amen.

15. O Lord! we beseech thee to keep thy household, the Church Universal, in continual godliness, that, through thy protection, it may be free from all adversities, and serving thee faithfully in good works, may glorify thy holy name. Hear, we entreat thee, the devout supplications of thy Church; and grant that those things which we ask faithfully we may obtain effectually, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

16. Grant, we beseech thee, Almighty God! that the words which we have this day heard, may through thy grace be so grafted in our hearts, that they may bring forth the fruit of good living, to the honour and praise of thy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

17. Almighty God! who has graciously promised to hear the supplications of all who ask in thy Son's name, we beseech thee to accept the service and the prayers now offered unto thee. May those things which we have faithfully asked, according to thy will, be effectually obtained for the relief of our necessities and to the advancement of thy glory, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

17. O Almighty and merciful God! the source of all good, and the author of every perfect gift, we bless thee, that we have been enabled at this time to meditate on the wholesome truths which thou hast revealed to us in thy word. Give us grace, we beseech thee, to profit by the instructions we have heard, and by the exhortations which have been addressed to us. So graft them in our hearts, that, being more and more strengthened in faith, we may serve thee with a pure con-



science during the rest of our lives. Increase, O Lord, in our children, in our young people, and in all the members of this Church, a knowledge of thee, and the fear of thy name. Grant, that being steadfast in obedience, and faithful even unto death, we may obtain through thy mercy, that blessed and eternal life to which we are called, through Jesus Christ thy Son our Saviour! Amen.

18. O God, the eternal source of wisdom and purity, from whom all good counsels, all holy desires, and all just works do proceed; we offer up our prayers unto thee, beseeching thee to sanctify our hearts by thy holy word. What we know not teach thou us. Whatever is wrong in us, dispose and enable us to reform. Whatever in us is good, assist us to carry forward to perfection. Grant that we may go forth with the spirit of true religion in our souls, and spend all our days in thy fear and love; that we may depart from this scene of discipline, whenever thou shalt take us away, with christian hope, and be admitted into thy sacred temple above, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

19. Accept, O thou God of compassion, the thankful acknowledgments of our hearts for the privileges which we have enjoyed at this time. Forgive the imperfection of our devotions, and whatever thy pure eyes may have seen amiss in us. Of thy great mercy grant us such things as shall be good for us, though we may neglect to pray for them; and deny us such things as would be hurtful to us, though we should earnestly desire them. Impress upon our minds the solemn counsels of thy word, and let not the cares or pleasures of the world prevent or impair their efficacy. Help us to walk as in thy sacred presence; and at last vouchsafe to receive us into glory, through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour. Amen.

20. Almighty God, our heavenly Father, through whose infinite goodness we have been permitted to offer up our united supplications, and to meditate upon the interests of our immortal souls; hear thou in heaven, we beseech thee, the petitions of our hearts, and give thy blessing to the lessons which we have learned, as far as they agree with thy truth in scripture. Establish our minds in the love of every christian ordinance and duty. Grant, that this house of prayer may become and continue to us the gate of heaven, the temple of devout and holy joy, the refuge of our souls from the trials and temptations of life, the school of genuine wisdom and virtue. Fit us

more and more perfectly for glorifying thy name upon earth, and for singing thy praise in the mansions of thy house above, through Jesus Christ our Mediator and Redeemer. Amen.

THE PRAYER WHICH JOHN CALVIN ORDINARILY MADE AT THE  
ENDING OF HIS SERMONS.

21. Let us fall down before the face of our God, that it may please Him to grant this grace,\* not only to us, but also to all people and nations of the earth, bringing back all poor ignorant souls from the miserable bondage of error and darkness, to the right way of salvation, for the doing whereof it may please Him to raise up true and faithful ministers of his word, that seek not their own profit and vain glory, but only the advancement of His holy name, and the welfare of His flock: and contrariwise root out all sects, errors, and heresies, which are seeds of trouble and disunion among His people, to the end we may live in good brotherly concord altogether; and that it may please Him to guide with His Holy Spirit, all kings, princes, and magistrates that have the rule of the sword, to the end that their reigning be not by covetousness, cruelty, tyranny, or any other evil and disordered affection, but in all justice and uprightness, and that we also living under them may yield them their due honour and obedience, that by the means of good peace and quietness, we may serve God in all holiness and honesty: and that it may please Him to comfort all afflicted persons, whom He visiteth after divers manners with crosses and tribulations: all people whom He afflicteth with plague, war, or famine, or other His rods: and all persons that are smitten with poverty, imprisonment, sickness, banishment, or other calamity of body or vexation of mind: giving them all good patience, till He send the full discharge of their miseries. Specially, that it may please Him to have pity upon all his poor faithful ones, that are dispersed in the captivity of Babylon, under the tyranny of Antichrist, chiefly which suffer persecution for the witnessing of His truth, strengthening them with true constancy, and comforting them, and not suffering the wicked and ravening wolves to execute their rage against them, but giving them such a true steadfastness as His holy name may be glorified by them both in life and death. Finally, that it may please Him to strengthen all Churches that are now-a-days in danger and assaulted for the quarrel of His

\*He here specified the objects presented by his sermon.

holy name, and overthrow and destroy all the devices, practices and attempts of all His adversaries, to the intent that His glory may shine over all, and the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ be increased and advanced more and more. Let us pray Him for all the said things in such wise as our good master and Lord Jesus Christ hath taught us to pray, saying: Our father, &c.

Also, let us pray our good God to give us true continuance in His holy faith, and to increase it from day to day, whereof we will make confession, saying, I believe in God, &c.

THE PRAYER WHICH JOHN CALVIN MADE ORDINARILY BEFORE  
THE BEGINNING OF HIS SERMONS.

22. Let us call upon our good God and father, praying Him to vouchsafe to turn away His face from the great number of faults and offences, whereby we cease not to provoke His wrath against us: and forasmuch as we be too unworthy to appear before His majesty, that it may please Him to look upon us in the countenance of his well-beloved Son our Lord Jesus Christ, accepting the desert of his death and passion, for a full recompense of all our sins, that by means thereof He may like well of us, and vouchsafe to enlighten us by His Spirit, in the understanding of His word; and grant us the grace to receive the same in true fear and humility, so as we may be taught thereby to put our trust in Him, to serve and honour Him by glorifying His holy name in all our life, and to yield Him the love and obedience which faithful servants owe to their masters, and children to their fathers, seeing it hath pleased Him to call us to the number of His servants and children. And let us pray unto Him as our good master hath taught us to pray, saying: Our Father, &c.

THE PRAYER USED BY THE REV. JAMES SAURIN, IMMEDIATELY  
BEFORE SERMON.

23. O Lord! our God and Father! thou seest us prostrate in thy presence, to render the homage due to thy majesty, to confess our sins to thee, and to implore thy favour. Had we followed the first emotions of our consciences, we should not have presumed to lift our eyes to heaven, but should have fled from thy sight. We are creatures mean and infirm, a thousand times more unworthy of appearing before thee for our depravity, than for our natural meanness. But, O Lord!

though our sins and miseries depress us, thy mercies lift us up. Thou art a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abundant in goodness; thou hast no pleasure in the death of a sinner, but that He should repent and live; and thou hast given thy Son to the world, that whosoever believeth in Him should have everlasting life. So many benefits, so many promises, encourage our trembling consciences, and inspire us with the liberty we now take to approach the throne of thy mercy, and to implore the powerful aid of thy grace. We have always need of thine assistance; but now, O Lord, we feel a more than usual want. We are assembled in thy house, to learn the doctrines of our salvation and the rules of our conduct: but, O God, our duty surpasses our strength: we cannot succeed without thy Holy Spirit. Grant a double portion of this to us who preach thy word; grant, after we have understood their oracles, we may be first affected with the truths they contain before we propose them to others, and may we announce them in a manner suitable to their excellence. But suffer us not to labour in vain: dispose our hearers to receive their orders with submission, and to practice them with punctuality: so that all of us being animated with one spirit, and aiming at one end, may sanctify our conduct, and live agreeably to the holiness of our conduct. We pray for all these blessings in the name of thy well-beloved Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Our Father, &c.

## PRAYER BEFORE SERMON.

Almighty and everlasting God, who art the author of every perfect gift; what fervent gratitude do we owe to thee for the privilege of assembling together in thy house, holding communion with thee, of confirming our faith in thy blessed Son, and of nourishing our souls with the bread of eternal life! How rich is the provision, which thou hast been pleased to make for the supply of all our spiritual wants! Accept, we beseech thee, the thankful acknowledgments of our hearts for the ordinances of thy gospel, and for the institution of this day of sacred rest; and enable us to make a wise and a profitable use of them. Assist us to worship thee, who art a Spirit, in spirit and in truth. Dispose us so to understand, to recollect, and to apply the discoveries and precepts of thy word, that we may perfectly love and serve thee, and cordially confide in thy government and promises. Grant, especially, that the serious remembrance of the triumphant resurrection of thy

Son our Saviour Jesus Christ, of which we are reminded this day, may animate us to the steadfast profession of His name, raise our affections and wishes to the things which are above, incite us to follow Him in His holy and benevolent life, and fill us with joy, peace, and hope in believing. Save now, O Lord, we beseech thee. In thee do we put our trust: let us never be ashamed. Amen.

O thou ever-blessed and most glorious God, who art the object of supreme veneration, on whom all the families of the earth continually depend! we, thine unworthy servants, would come before thee with reverence and thanksgiving. We esteem it good for us to draw near unto thee, and we desire to serve thee with filial joy and godly fear. May the various exercises, in which we engage, be acceptable in thy sight and be accompanied with thy blessing. May we celebrate thy praises with understanding and devotion; and so remember thy great goodness to us and to all men, that we may be inclined to love thee and to cherish good will towards one another. May we confess our sins unto thee with unfeigned sorrow and steadfast purposes of amendment. May we offer up our supplications with humble confidence in thy wisdom and kindness. May our intercessions be accompanied with upright charity towards all mankind. May we receive instruction with attention, candour, and meekness; lay it up in our hearts, and bring forth the fruits of righteousness in our lives. May no vain thoughts distract our minds, no unworthy object withdraw our affections. May we so carefully improve all the means of religion, that we may grow wiser and better; be gradually trained up for thy heavenly kingdom; and at last be made partakers of that happiness, which eye hath not seen, which ear hath not heard, and which it hath not entered into the heart of man to conceive, through the riches of thy redeeming grace in Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.

















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