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DEFENCE  
OF THE  
**PRESERVATIVE**  
AGAINST  
UNITARIANISM:  
INCLUDING  
*A VINDICATION of the GENUINENESS*  
OF THE  
EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS:

IN A SECOND LETTER TO

LANT CARPENTER, LL D.

Occasioned by his Letters addressed to the Author,

ENTITLED

*“Unitarianism the Doctrine of the Gospel.”*

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Rector of PLAMTREE, Devon,

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EXETER:

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## CONTENTS.

	PAGE.
INTRODUCTION - - - -	I
Unitarian doctrine, respecting the person and office of Christ - - - -	5
Of the argument in favour of Unitarianism, from the topicks, usually insisted upon by the Apostles, in their preaching - -	12
Of the supposed silence of all the Writers of the New Testament, (St. John excepted,) respecting a supra-human nature in Christ	20
Of the attempt to collect the doctrine of St. John, not from what <i>is</i> contained in his own writings, but from what <i>is</i> NOT contained in the other books of Scripture	35
Cautions to be observed in interpreting holy Scripture - - - - -	41
Explanation of the first fourteen verses of St. John's Gospel - - - - -	45
The passages of Scripture, brought to prove the supra-human nature of Christ, vindicated from the forced interpretation of the Unitarians - - - - -	53
Of the scriptural declarations respecting the human nature of Christ - - - -	113

	PAGE.
Of the exaltation of Christ to a state of glory	116
Christ, the object of religious adoration -	122
Of the doctrine of atonement, and of the supposed <i>figurative</i> language of holy Scripture - - - - -	145
Of the argument against a propitiation for sin, from the benevolence of the Deity, and from the ground of man's acceptance, as it is declared by Moses and the Prophets in the Old Testament, and by Christ and his Apostles in the New - - -	157
Of the argument against a propitiation for sin, from its supposed inconsistency with the <i>freedom</i> of God's pardoning mercy -	165
Of the Gospel scheme of redemption, and the efficacy of Christ's death. according to Dr. C. - - - - -	173
Of the Epistle to the Hebrews - - -	179
Of the priesthood and offering of Christ -	212
Vindication of the passages brought to prove the doctrine of atonement, by the blood or death of Christ - - - -	229
Of the death of Christ considered as a ransom	272
Conclusion - - - - -	275

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A  
*SECOND LETTER*  
TO  
LANT CARPENTER, LL. D.

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SIR,

TO what a multiplication of words does controversy lead! Who would have imagined that a small Pamphlet of hardly more than forty pages would have given rise to an answer of nearly nine times its size! I confess that the bulk of your volume at first rather startled me: but my surprize was somewhat abated, when, upon taking a general view of its contents, I found that it was composed of much extraneous matter, in which the merits of the controversy are not concerned, and that you had not only undertaken to answer the points to which my letter had called your attention, but had also made me the vehicle of conveying to the public your sentiments upon other points of doctrine, which I had not brought into the dispute: such as, the doctrine of the Tri-

nity, the equality of the Son with the Father, vicarious punishment, &c. &c. But what most surprized me was, that you should still persist in deducing from the doctrine of satisfaction, pernicious effects and consequences, which I had fully shewn could be imputed only to an abuse of the doctrine, and to such a sense of it as I expressly disavowed. Surprized indeed I was at this circumstance, which I could hardly have expected from a fair reasoner. At the same time I was not displeas'd; as it fully convinc'd me that the doctrine itself, fairly stated and rightly understood, is even in the opinion of its adversaries free from every objection of the kind.

You tell me that you did not discover in my letter "any of that deep scriptural research and acquaintance with the arguments of the Unitarians, which one was naturally led to expect in a *Preservative against Unitarianism*."\* That, which you expected to discover, made no part of my plan. I had rather in view a popular work, the language and argument of which should not be above the reach of common understandings, which might tend to counteract the avowed designs of the Unitarians. I saw with concern their growing activity, and their zeal for disseminating their tenets; and I knew not how I could employ my time more

\* Letters, page 2.

either to the glory of God, or to the benefit of his Church, than by contributing my endeavours to preserve men from opinions thus zealously disseminated. In doing this, my object was to shew, that the commonly received doctrines, respecting the person and offices of the Saviour, have their foundation in the Scriptures: and for this purpose I selected a few passages, which I brought forward, "almost without comment," from a conviction that if they were suffered to speak for themselves, their true meaning must be obvious to the meanest capacity: and in this attempt, I trust, I have not been wholly unsuccessful.

Nor ought you to wonder at my total inattention to the Unitarian explanation of those passages of Scripture which I cited. Unitarians have, at different times, given different explanations of the same passage. I have seen for instance many Unitarian explanations of the commencement of St. John's Gospel, (a passage of the highest importance in the Unitarian controversy,) all widely differing from each other. If I had been inclined to act in the manner which you seem to have expected, how in the midst of such variety was I to distinguish that which you would call the *Unitarian* explanation? But now since the publication of your book, the case is altered. Unitarianism comes now before me in a tangible form: I can

now lay my finger upon any one of your comments, and say, this is the true Unitarian explanation: or at least (which is the same thing to me,) this Dr. Carpenter accounts the Unitarian explanation; and I can proceed accordingly.

Before I advance further, I beg to be understood, that in any thing which I may say respecting the Unitarian tenets, I mean nothing personal to the Unitarians. Personalities are my abhorrence: and though it is difficult for a man to be always upon his guard, yet I hope, upon all occasions, to abstain from them. And lest I should be tempted to transgress the rule, which I have thus set to myself, the present is all the notice which I shall take of the personalities (not always of the most liberal kind) respecting the Church of England, and its members, which with concern I have occasionally observed in your book. Such things may please the illiberal of one's own party: but as they contain no argument, they can be of no real service to any cause. The *persons* of the Unitarians, I profess to hold in respect; but not so their religious tenets. Much of what the title of my book may seem to indicate, I openly avow:\* I do not think Unitarianism a harmless system; on the contrary, I esteem it a pernicious heresy; a dangerous departure from the truth of the Gospel: otherwise,

\* Letters, page 5.



why should I think of providing a *Preservative* against it? or why should I now defend the Orthodox cause?

I shall (for the present at least) pass over your first letter, which consists chiefly of remarks relating to ourselves personally. Some few things of more general concern I shall have an opportunity of noticing as I go along in their proper place.

The second letter begins with a description of Unitarianism: which you say "I take in its more limited, and at present more common acceptation, as including not only the proper unity of the Deity, but the proper (or simple) humanity of Jesus."\* The expression, "proper (or simple) humanity," seems to imply that the words *simple* and *proper* are synonymous. But can this be your meaning? I myself believe that Jesus Christ was properly and truly a man, but I do not believe that he was simply and merely a man: nor can I consent to receive the declarations of his *proper* humanity as proofs of the *simple* humanity.

Next follows your belief as an Unitarian, as far as it respects the person and office of our Saviour. As to his person, you believe that he was a Man; and you tell us that you use the word *man* in the plain and obvious sense, to denote "one, who was strictly and properly speaking a human Being,

\* Letters, page 28.

“ who had no existence before his human birth.”\*  
 Here then you expressly deny the pre-existence, and you virtually deny the divinity of Christ.

Your belief, as it respects the office of the Saviour, may be thus stated. He was appointed “ to reveal the doctrines of free pardon and everlasting life; to point out the conditions by which these blessings are to be acquired; and to declare the consequences of impenitence and disobedience.” In proof of the divine authority, with which he acted, he was “ empowered to work miracles.” In the execution of the commission with which he was entrusted, he “ voluntarily submitted to a painful and ignominious death, and thus completed his part in the Gospel scheme of redemption, or deliverance from the power of sin and death.” But “ God raised him from the dead, as a proof of his divine authority, as a pledge” of the resurrection of his followers “ and as an assurance to all men that he has appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness by him.” Lastly “ God exalted him to great dignity and power, which power, during the age of the Apostles, was miraculously employed in diffusing the privileges and blessings of the Gospel.”‡

In this profession of your faith, something seems

\* Letters, page 29. ‡ Page 28, 29.

to be wanting: I do not see the whole of what you formerly professed. You say indeed that the Saviour "submitted to a painful and ignominious death," but you do not add "as an attestation of the truth:" nor are we any longer told that God raised him from the dead, "as an assurance of a future state of retribution."\* You appear at length to have perceived that your reference to Acts xvii. 30. 31. in support of this position, will not bear you out:† and therefore "a future state of retribution" is very properly lowered down into a *day of judgement*.

In your further illustration of the office of Christ, I meet with much obscurity and perplexity, so that it is difficult to discover the meaning intended to be conveyed. "The one great end and purpose of the work and sufferings, the miracles and resurrection of our Saviour," you "believe to have been, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify to himself a peculiar people zealous of good works, Tit. ii. 14."§ In this passage of Scripture our redemption and purification are ascribed to Christ as his personal work: it is, not that we might be redeemed and purified; but, that HE might redeem and purify us. But if, as you just before asserted, his part in the Gospel scheme of redemption was completed, when he submitted

\* Disc. Page 6. † Letters, page 22. § Page 29.

to death, I see not how any share in the accomplishment of this work can be ascribed to his resurrection. And, indeed, the Apostle himself does not introduce upon this occasion, either the miracles or the resurrection of the Saviour; but ascribes the whole to that one act of Christ, which he calls his having given himself for us. But we are told that in order “to accomplish this great end, three most “important subordinate ends or means were accomplished; the mercy and forgiveness of God “were *afforded* to repentant sinners, a state of re- “tribution was *revealed*, and the terms of pardon “and everlasting happiness declared.”\* and you are of opinion that the Scriptures do not “teach “any end of the mission and death of Christ, which “is not included in these, or at least subordinate “to them.”§ So then these are *ends* of the death of Christ: and they are also *means* for the accomplishment of the great end: but if so, they must have been accomplished first; otherwise they could not have been employed as *means*. But if these were the *means* by which the Saviour accomplished the work of our redemption, how can they, or any one or more of them, be at the same time *ends* of his death? Yet so it is: and you go on to affirm that in your apprehension “the importance of “the sufferings and death of Christ, in the Gospel

\* Letters, page 29. § Page 30.

“ scheme of redemption, arises entirely from their  
 “ being *necessary* means to the accomplishment of  
 “ one or more of these ends.”\* Thus then you  
 state the case: The great end, which the Saviour  
 proposed to himself, in all that he did and suffered,  
 was our redemption and purification; the means  
 which he used for the accomplishment of this end,  
 were these three; he gave to repentant sinners an  
 assurance of God’s mercy and forgiveness, he re-  
 vealed a state of retribution, and he propounded  
 the terms of pardon and everlasting happiness; and  
 the means necessary to the accomplishment of one  
 or more of these means were his own sufferings  
 and death. Hence arises entirely the importance  
 of Christ’s sufferings and death in the Gospel  
 scheme of redemption; they were the means of  
 accomplishing the means by which the Saviour  
 effected the purpose for the accomplishment of  
 which he suffered and died! This strange confu-  
 sion of means which are ends, and ends which are  
 means, perplexes one extremely, and makes it  
 difficult to unravel all the windings.

You afterwards state the importance of Christ’s  
 sufferings somewhat more broadly, but with no  
 little obscurity. You rightly observe that “ it  
 “ would be presumptuous in an erring mortal to  
 “ say, that the Supreme Being could not have

\* Letters, page 29.

“ appointed some other means of effecting these  
 “ purposes:”\* that is, as I understand you to mean,  
 it would be presumptuous in us to say, that the  
 means for accomplishing the redemption of man-  
 kind, could have been effected only by the death  
 of Christ:—consequently the death of Christ was  
 not absolutely necessary. But it seems that if not  
 absolutely necessary, yet the circumstances of the  
 case made it become necessary, or at least gives us  
 sufficient reason to affirm it to be so: for thus you  
 argue; since “ we know from the event that these  
 “ means *were* appointed by God, and can perceive  
 “ from the circumstances of the case, that in *those*  
 “ *circumstances*, the assurance and extension of the  
 “ blessings of the Gospel covenant *required* the  
 “ sufferings and death of Jesus, there can be no  
 “ hesitation in saying that the sufferings and death  
 “ of Jesus were *necessary* in order to fulfil the gra-  
 “ cious purposes for which he came, and that  
 “ therefore his death was a *necessary sacrifice* for the  
 “ redemption of mankind; that is, for their delive-  
 “ rance from the power of sin and death.”§ The  
*circumstances of the case*, which gave to our Lord’s  
 death that importance which otherwise it would  
 not have had, are not expressly stated, till near the  
 close of your book:¶ but they are briefly these.  
 It seems that our Lord towards the conclusion of

\* Letters, page 30. § Ibid. ¶ Page 296-303.

his ministry, was by the mere course of events, brought into such a situation, that if he had avoided death, he would either have deserted the objects of his mission, without the sanction of divine authority, or at least he would not have pursued the best method of accomplishing them. He therefore voluntarily submitted to death, as the best and most efficacious means of forwarding and promoting the great purpose for which he came. According to this statement, the death of Christ appears not to have had any part assigned to it in the original plan of man's redemption; and therefore it cannot with any propriety be said to be *essentially* necessary: it appears at most to have become, by the casual concurrence of circumstances, a measure of fitness and expediency. Nevertheless this fitness and expediency is magnified into requisition and necessity; and the death of Christ is, on this account merely, affirmed to be "a *necessary* sacrifice for the redemption of mankind." This redemption of mankind you make to consist wholly in their deliverance from the *power* of sin and death; and are totally silent as to any *guilt* from which they need deliverance. It is true, we are all subject to the power of sin, from which, thanks be to God, we obtain deliverance through Christ. But this is not all: the sinner, as such, is a polluted creature, offensive to God, and unfit for communion with

him, and it is only by the blood of Christ that he is washed and sanctified, and made an object of divine favour. This I believe to be the doctrine of the New Testament: consequently what you peremptorily deny to be Christian doctrine,\* I most firmly hold; namely, that the death of Christ propitiated God; or reconciled God to Man.

It is the common practice of Unitarians to suppose that the topics upon which the Apostles usually insisted for the conversion of unbelievers, place before us all the essentials of Christianity, and were the only points to which they required the belief of their converts. I remember formerly to have laboured through much to this purpose in a work of Dr. Priestley; and I perceive, Sir, that you pursue the same train of argument. You tell us that from the account of Luke, in his invaluable narrative, it appears to you “next to certain” that the first teachers of the Gospel proposed for “the belief of their converts nothing but Unitarianism.”† And presently after you add, “For myself when I examine Acts x. 33-44, I feel convinced that I possess all the essentials of Christianity, and that as far as faith is concerned, I need not fear the disapprobation of my Judge.”§ This, Sir, is bold language; and it behoves you to neglect no means of ascertaining whether it be well

\* Letters, page 31. † Ibid. § Page 32.



founded. Of the Apostolical sermons, recorded by St. Luke in the Acts of the Apostles, the greater part were their first addresses to the unbelievers, whom they assayed to convert: and the topicks upon which they insisted, were adapted to the circumstances of the case. The foundation of their argument was commonly laid in the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. But the superstructure which they raised upon this foundation, differed according as the persons to whom they preached were Jews or Gentiles. To the Jews, they insisted upon the resurrection, as a proof that Jesus was the Messiah or Christ:\* to the Gentiles that he was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead:‡ topicks peculiarly fitted to excite the attention, and to shew how nearly all, Gentiles as well as Jews, were interested in the Gospel. But, Sir, will you contend that these first addresses to the unconverted, must or ought to contain all the essentials of Christianity; every thing which the confirmed Christian can be required to believe? Common sense demands a different conclusion. And he must be blind indeed who does not perceive the difference between these sermons to the unconverted, and St. Paul's address to the Elders of the Church of Ephesus, recorded in the same book.†

\* See Acts ii. 22-36 and xvii. 2. 3.    § See Acts xvii. 31.

† Acts xx. 18-35.

So much for the Unitarianism taught by the first preachers of the Gospel. But because you refer particularly to St. Peter's address to Cornelius, recorded in Acts x. 33-44, I request you to review with me this passage of Scripture, in order that we may see how far the case of Cornelius will justify the confidence with which you rely upon it. Cornelius was by nation a Roman, and by profession a Heathen; but he was not an Idolater. From his residence in Judea, he had imbibed the knowledge of the true God, whom he religiously feared and devoutly worshipped. He was what the Jewish Doctors were accustomed to call a *Profelyte of the Gate*: he had disclaimed Idolatry and worshipped the true God, the God of Israel; but not having submitted to the rite of Circumcision, and to the yoke of the Mosaical law, he was without the pale of the Jewish Church, and was still accounted unclean, and unfit for the converse of a Jew. This devout man was selected by divine Providence to be the first among the Gentiles, who should be admitted into the Church of Christ. He was therefore prepared by a vision to attend to the doctrine which should be preached to him by Peter: and Peter was prepared by another vision to suspend his Jewish prejudices, and to obey the call of Cornelius.

The passage, to which you refer, contains

Peter's first address to Cornelius. He begins with acknowledging his conviction, that a worshipper of the true God, was capable of the divine favour, even though he did not belong to the common wealth of Israel. He then proceeds to speak of Jesus, concerning whom he enumerates things of which no resident in Judea could be ignorant; such as, his prophetic character, his preaching, his miracles, and his ignominious death: to these he adds his resurrection from the dead; an event, less notorious, but capable of abundant proof from the testimony of the Apostles, his chosen witnesses. These are all bare facts, of which no purpose is expressly assigned. The Apostle then announces the appointment of this Jesus, whom the Jews had killed, and whom God had raised from the dead, to be the Judge of Quick and Dead. This, as I before observed, was the usual topick upon which the Apostles insisted in their addresses to the Gentiles. Lastly, the Apostle discourses upon a topick more immediately adapted to the case of Cornelius. The Jews held that none were holy, and the people of God, but such as were circumcised and observed the law. They made legal righteousness the instrument of sanctification; without which even a devout worshipper, such as was Cornelius, was unholy, and yet in his sins. But the Apostle declares that the Prophets all bear testimony to ano-

ther instrument of sanctification, even faith in Christ; and that all who believe in him, and embrace his religion, shall, notwithstanding their want of legal righteousness, receive remission of sins, and be numbered among the people of God. This, Sir, as I conceive, is the full import of Peter's discourse to Cornelius. It is a discourse peculiarly adapted to the circumstances of the case: it pretends not to detail the essentials of Christianity, but merely holds out encouragement to a devout Heathen to become a Christian. The topics insisted upon, are not points of doctrine proposed for the belief of a convert, but are arguments urged for the conversion of an unbeliever. And if so, upon what a sandy foundation do you build your confidence in the sufficiency of your present Creed!

When you come to view the subject in this its true light, you will not, I think, any longer be of opinion that the Acts of the Apostles afford almost a certainty, that the first Teachers of the Gospel proposed for the belief of their converts nothing but Unitarianism. Indeed, independently of this I see no ground for such a sweeping assertion. Are the doctrines contained in these Apostolical Sermons the peculiar doctrines of the Unitarians? You do not pretend that they are: indeed the whole tenor of your argument goes to shew that

the leading tenet of Unitarianism is, that Jesus was simply a man. But where is it said that the Apostles proposed this as an article of faith to their converts? You will not assert that it is any where said. These are your words. "I do not mean to say that the first Teachers of the Gospel often laid stress upon our Lord's being truly and properly one of the human race, but that their preachings imply this, and contain nothing inconsistent with it."\* The next sentence states the reason both why the Apostles did not insist upon the simple humanity, and also why Unitarians are now obliged to pursue a different conduct. "If the doctrines of two natures in the person of Christ, and of his divinity and pre-existence, were as much unknown now, as I believe that they were in the times of the Apostles, Unitarians would not be obliged to make the *simple humanity* of Jesus a part of their Creed." When I had read thus far, I could not avoid saying to myself with some astonishment, can Dr. Carpenter be ignorant that the Gnostic heresy prevailed in the days of the Apostles? But my astonishment was not a little increased when I had read the concluding part of the note, "It does not appear that the Apostles thought it necessary to assert that Jesus was really a man, (though they

\* Letters, page 31. Note.‡

reasoned from the fact) till the Gnostics and Docetæ taught that he was a man in appearance only." Then, exclaimed I, Dr. C. did know that the Gnostic heresy prevailed in the Apostolical age; and further that the Apostles preached and wrote against it—how then could he assert that the doctrines of two natures in Christ, and of the divinity and pre-existence, were unknown in the times of the Apostles?—Perhaps some of our readers may not know much of these Docetæ. They taught, as you rightly observe, that Jesus Christ was a man in appearance only: but you do not (at least in this place) state the whole of their doctrine. They taught also that he was *really* the Son of the Supreme God, from whose heavenly habitation he descended upon earth for the salvation of mankind. Hence it appears that this ancient heresy is the very reverse of modern Unitarianism. The Docetæ denied the humanity, but confessed the divinity and pre-existence: whereas, if the Unitarian doctrine be true, they ought to have denied the divinity and pre-existence, and have acknowledged the humanity: and if so, then, Sir, I contend that the first Teachers of the Gospel, if they noticed this heresy at all, were called upon to assert, in opposition to it, not the proper humanity merely, but the simple humanity. Now the Apostle St. John unquestionably had this heresy in view when in his

second Epistle he declares "Many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh,"\* And (lest you should object to my citing a passage from an Epistle of questionable authority) there are words of the same import in his first Epistle. "Every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God."§ Here is an express assertion that Jesus Christ was truly a man. But if to affirm the divinity and pre-existence had been no less heretical than to deny the humanity, was it not incumbent upon the Apostle to oppose the former as well as the latter, and to affirm not only that Jesus Christ was truly a man, but also that he was not more than man? What then are we to think, when the Apostle not only does not do this, but uses language favourable at least to the opinion which the Docetæ themselves entertained? For in the same chapter in which he condemns those who deny that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh he has these words, "We have seen and do testify that the *Father* sent the *Son* to be the Saviour of the world. Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him and he in God."† Surely, Sir, this can hardly be called teaching nothing but Unitarianism.

You now proceed to treat distinctly, and in

\* 2. John, 7. § 1. John, iv. 3. † 1. John, iv. 14-15.

order, of the two great branches of the Unitarian doctrine; as it respects, 1. the person or nature, 2. the office of Jesus Christ.

Respecting the nature of Jesus Christ you enumerate four opinions,\* all differing from each other, and all opposing the Unitarian doctrine. Of these the principal, and indeed, as far as I know, the only opinions which at present prevail, are the Trinitarian and the Arian. These differ widely from each other; but with this difference we have little to do in the present controversy. I acknowledge myself to be a Trinitarian; but, in a controversy with an Unitarian, I am not called upon to defend the doctrines which distinguish me from the Arian. The opinions of the Arian, respecting the nature of Christ, fall vastly short of what I believe to be the truth: but low as his opinion is, yet if that, or even a lower than that, if nothing more than the supra-human nature of Christ be proved to be true, the Unitarian doctrine must be false. It follows that the true point in dispute between us is, whether the nature of Christ be superior to that of man; and to this I shall principally attend in the present argument.

You are aware that of all the writers of the New Testament, the Apostle St. John is the most unfavourable to the Unitarian cause, and you la-

\* Letters, page 34.



labour with no common industry to make his evidence neutral at least, if not decidedly for you. Your reasoning for this purpose is founded upon the following assumptions. 1. "That at the time  
 " when the books of the New Testament were  
 " written, all was known by the Apostles which  
 " can now be known respecting the nature of our  
 " Saviour; and that no one of the writers of the  
 " New Testament could be ignorant of what was  
 " then known." 2. "That the writers of the  
 " New Testament did not compose their respective  
 " books with reference to each other, so that *all*  
 " might *together* form one whole; and that each  
 " wrote what was requisite for his particular pur-  
 " pose without reference to what might in future  
 " be written by others."\* From these assumptions you argue, that if the nature of Christ had  
 been superior to that of man, it seems next to im-  
 possible that three of the Evangelists " should have  
 " written respecting this illustrious supra-human  
 " personage, not only without in any way *declaring*  
 " his superiority in *nature* to other men; but so as  
 " to give no room for the inference that they  
 " *knew* of such superiority."§ And in detailing  
 the doctrine of the Evangelists respecting this point,  
 you boldly assert that " throughout the whole of  
 " St. Matthew's Gospel there is not a single pas-

\* Letters, page 34, 35. § Page 32.

“ sage, which indicates that the Evangelist thought  
 “ our Saviour to have possessed any nature superior  
 “ to that of man.”\* You make a similar obser-  
 vation respecting the Gospel of St. Mark; assert-  
 ing “ that this Evangelist, who was the relation  
 “ and disciple of Peter, and who is usually thought  
 “ to have compiled his narrative under the imme-  
 “ diate direction of that Apostle, says not one  
 “ word which indicates that he regarded our Savi-  
 “ our as having a nature above that of man.”†  
 Respecting St. Luke’s Gospel your assertion is  
 somewhat more qualified. You say “ that it con-  
 tains nothing from which alone it could be inferred  
 that Jesus possessed a nature above human.” And  
 again “ there is not, I believe, through the whole  
 “ of his Gospel above one passage (ch. x. 22.)  
 “ which appears to indicate that he possessed a  
 “ nature more than human; and the appearance  
 “ merely arises from not distinguishing character  
 “ or office from nature.”§ You next proceed to  
 the Acts of the Apostles; concerning which you  
 thus speak; “ I consider it as indisputable, from the  
 “ narrative of Luke, that the sum and substance of  
 “ the Apostles’ preaching relative to doctrine,  
 “ both to Jews and to Gentiles, was, that Jesus of  
 “ Nazareth was the Son of God and the Christ;  
 “ that God raised him from the dead, and appointed

\* Letters, page 41. † Page 43. § Page 41.

“ him to be the Judge of all Men, and that those  
 “ who believed in him and turned from their sins  
 “ would receive forgiveness.”\* I have already  
 had occasion to observe that the preaching of the  
 Apostles recorded in the Acts consists chiefly of  
 their first addresses to unbelievers; in which they  
 pretended not to detail all the essential doctrines of  
 Christianity, but merely insisted upon such topics  
 as were calculated for the conversion of their  
 hearers. From these dawnings of Gospel light (as  
 we have already seen) you derive your own faith:  
 nor is this all; but you boldly pronounce concern-  
 ing the faith of the Apostles and their companions.  
 For thus you proceed, “ And I consider it as fur-  
 “ ther indisputable, that there is nothing in the  
 “ Acts which can justify the opinion that Luke  
 “ knew of the supposed fact that our Saviour was  
 “ the very and eternal God, or even that he  
 “ pre-existed in a nature infinitely more excellent,  
 “ or even that he existed at all before his human  
 “ birth. I think it also evident from his account  
 “ that such opinions either were not known, or at  
 “ least not believed by the Apostles Peter and Paul  
 “ after they had received the holy spirit: and  
 “ though we have not the same positive evidence  
 “ respecting the belief of John and the other Apof-  
 “ tles, yet as they certainly knew of the preaching

\* Letters, page 46.

“ of Peter to the Jews, and did not add any thing  
 “ thereto, I think I am authorized in concluding,  
 “ that they also had the same scanty Creed with  
 “ Peter and Paul.” That the full force of this  
 reasoning may not be lost by so long a detail, I  
 will state it in brief. In the Apostolical sermons  
 which we find in the Acts, the doctrines of the  
 divinity and pre-existence of Christ are not asserted:  
 therefore Luke who recorded these sermons, and  
 Peter and Paul who delivered them, knew not, or  
 believed not any such doctrines. This is called  
*positive evidence*; which indeed is acknowledged to  
 be wanting in the case of St. John and the other  
 Apostles: nevertheless their faith could not be  
 different from that of Peter and Paul; and there-  
 fore they also knew not or believed not these doc-  
 trines. All this, it must be owned, is reasoning  
 very fast. but it is the conclusion drawn from this  
 reasoning which most of all deserves our attention.  
 “ My inference from these things is, that what the  
 “ Apostles have said in their own writings cannot  
 “ in justice to Luke, be interpreted so as to speak a  
 “ different language from that recorded in the Acts,  
 “ if on comparing Scripture with Scripture it ap-  
 “ pear that their words can be justly interpreted  
 “ agreeably thereto.” What a defence have we  
 here of Unitarianism, and of the mode of interpre-  
 tation usually adopted by Unitarians. And all

derived from a chain of consequences, which may be briefly stated as follows.—The Apostles, when they first began to preach to unbelievers, proposed no other doctrines than those which Unitarians now hold: therefore they never proposed any others to believers: therefore no other are to be found in their writings; therefore all those passages, in which other doctrines are apparently taught, must be interpreted in an Unitarian sense!

Having thus conducted us through the three first Gospels, and the Acts of the Apostles, and having told us that these contain nothing but Unitarianism, you stop to make a general reflection, in which you betray no little fear of St. John.\* “Let us for a moment suppose that the first three Gospels and the Acts had alone been preserved to us.”—Sir, do I read aright? Can you seriously put a case, which, if it had existed, would have deprived us of more than half of the sacred volume, and then reason from it as though it were a probable case? Thanks be to God, the case does not exist; and who will say that there has not been an especial interposition of Providence to prevent its existence? But let us hear the whole of your argument without further interruption. “Let us for a moment suppose that the first three Gospels and the Acts had alone been preserved to us—

\* Letters, page 47. See also page 69.

“ inestimable as the Gospel of John and other  
 “ parts of the New Testament appear to us, will  
 “ any one venture to assert that without them the  
 “ fundamental truths of Christianity would have  
 “ been unknown, and that Matthew, and Mark,  
 “ and Luke, have not said enough to enable the  
 “ disciple of Jesus to possess the faith which sanc-  
 “ tifieth and saveth? And yet this must be main-  
 “ tained, or the fundamental truths of the Gospel,  
 “ and the faith required by the Gospel in order to  
 “ enjoy its blessings, must be very different from  
 “ what modern Creeds, and modern evangelical  
 “ preachers, teach them to be.” I again repeat  
 that all reasoning from a case which not only does  
 not exist, but, for aught that we know, through the  
 especial interference of divine Providence, never  
 could exist, is weak: but the attempt to insinuate  
 that any part of the sacred volume is unnecessary,  
 and that the remaining part would have been of  
 itself sufficient, is not weak merely, but presumptu-  
 ous, and even impious. Rather, Sir, let us con-  
 tend, that if the first three Gospels had been suffi-  
 cient, another would not have been given; or if  
 given, would not have been preserved: for divine  
 Providence does nothing in vain. If the Evange-  
 lists Matthew, Mark, and Luke, have said no more  
 than is implied in your account of them, I, for  
 one, am venturesome enough to assert that their Gos-

pels do not contain all the fundamental truths of Christianity: nor is it to be expected that they should: these Evangelists had it not in view to detail the whole of Christianity in systematic order: their design was merely to record the life of Christ upon earth, and especially the last great year of his ministry in Galilee, and its accomplishment at Jerusalem. During this time he appeared as a man, discoursed as a man, acted as a man, and died as a man; and in the same nature he both rose from the dead, and ascended into heaven. Accordingly in all these transactions he is represented as a man by the sacred Historians. But we are not to infer from hence that they knew of no higher nature, or that no higher nature was at that time generally acknowledged. If indeed there ever had been a time, when the Christian Church had nothing but these Gospels for their instruction, there might then have been some ground for such an inference. But there never was such a time: long before any one of these Gospels was penned, and after they were all penned, the preaching of the Apostles and their companions was the regular and appointed means of instruction. Nor ought it to excite any astonishment that these Evangelists, and the sacred writers in general, of whom it may be observed that they each wrote upon some particular occasion, and

with some professed design—it ought not, I say, to excite our astonishment that these writers should keep close to their point, and not go out of their way to detail truths respecting the nature of Christ, with which their subject was not immediately concerned, and which, if mentioned at all, could be expected to be mentioned only incidentally. Let me add that these truths, however astonishing in themselves, were now, at the end of thirty years, grown familiar to the Evangelists: they were moreover known to all, and believed by all; known and believed through the personal teaching of the Apostles. But when at length the Church was about to be deprived of this personal teaching, it pleased God to move the beloved Disciple to write a Gospel, not after the plan of the former Evangelists, but with another design; a design which would lead him to speak more fully and expressly than had before been done, of the nature of his Master; that thus the Church in future ages, might be in full possession of the whole doctrine of the Apostles, upon this essential point. And thus, even if no trace whatever of a superior nature in Christ could be found in the first three Gospels, nothing could be inferred from this circumstance against the doctrine itself. But is this really the case? Are the Evangelists as silent upon this important point, as you labour to represent



them? Truly they are not. There is at least one fact, narrated by two of them, which hangs like a mill-stone about the neck of your hypothesis. And of this you appear yourself to be so sensible, that you would willingly, if it were possible, expunge it completely from the New Testament: I mean the miraculous conception, recorded in the first chapter of the Gospel both of St. Matthew and of St. Luke.

You admit that the first two chapters of St. Matthew's Gospel are generally believed to have been written by that Evangelist, but in your own opinion their genuineness is very doubtful.\* And speaking of St. Luke's Gospel, you tell us that "doubts have been entertained by many respecting the genuineness of the two first chapters."† You do not state from what cause these doubts arose, nor by whom they were entertained; nor indeed do you seem inclined to support your own opinion. But in order to obviate the mischief, which such an unsupported insinuation has a tendency to produce, I must be permitted to observe, that the chapters which contain the miraculous conception, are found in all the MSS. and in all the versions extant;‡ nor can I find that their genuineness was ever in ancient times denied by any but Heretics,

\* Letters, page 39. ‡ Page 44.

† This is admitted by the authors of the "Improved version." See their note upon Matt. i. 16.

who, at the same time, rejected other parts of the sacred volume, which even the Unitarians acknowledge to be genuine. The Ebionites who held the simple humanity, rejected the two first chapters of St. Matthew;\* but they rejected also all the other Gospels:† and Marcion who held that Christ was a man in appearance only, acknowledged no Gospel but St. Luke's, from which he cut off the narrative of the miraculous conception.‡ Such is the company, which that man must be fain to keep, who denies the genuineness of these portions of the sacred volume. You have therefore done well in not pressing your doubts upon us; but in my judgement you would have done better, if you had expressed no doubt at all, in a case where no doubt can be reasonably entertained. But notwithstanding your doubts, you admit that the first two chapters of St. Matthew's Gospel are genuine: and thus you proceed—"This Evangelist informs us that the birth of Jesus was miraculous; but gives us no ground to suppose that the offspring of divine Power was possessed of a nature different from human nature; ON THE CON-

\* Epiph. Hær. 30. c. 13.

† Iren. adv. Hær. lib. 3. c. 11. Eus. Eccles. Hist. lib. 3. c. 27. Epiph. Hær. 30. c. 3. They also rejected St. Paul's Epistles.

‡ Epiph. Hær. 42. c. 9. See also Iren. adv. Hær. lib. 3. c. 11, 12, 14.

“ TRARY what is said plainly implies, that Jesus  
 “ first began to exist in consequence of that exer-  
 “ tion of divine Power.”† How that which is  
 affirmed in the latter part of this sentence, can be  
 said to be contrary to that which is denied in the  
 former part, I do not perceive. Surely there might  
 be ground to believe, that the offspring of divine  
 Power was possessed of a nature different from the  
 human, even if the Evangelist had *expressly* said  
 that he first began to exist (as man) when the di-  
 vine Power was exerted. And indeed admitting  
 that the Evangelists are silent respecting the exist-  
 ence of the Saviour in a prior state; and therefore  
 that no proof of the pre-existence can be derived  
 from this miracle; still I contend most strenuously,  
 that the circumstances narrated prove in the  
 strongest and clearest manner that his nature was  
 supra-human. He was the Son of God in a pecu-  
 liar manner, being conceived in the womb of a  
 Virgin by the operation of the Holy Ghost, with-  
 out the intervention of a human Father. And  
 can it for a moment be supposed that this offspring  
 of divine Power was a mere man? It cannot be:  
 he must have been more than human; he must  
 have been, as the Evangelist, using the language  
 of the Prophet, denominates him, Emmanuel God

† Page 39. 40.

with us.\* And what more is required to overthrow your hypothesis of the simple humanity, and to shew that Unitarianism is not the religion of the Gospel.

I shall not stop to notice the other intimations of this important doctrine, which are to be found in these Gospels: nor is it necessary that I follow you step by step in your examination of the Apostolical Epistles, (St. John's excepted,) † because, as I before observed, other than incidental proofs are not to be expected in any book professedly written

\* I find in a note the following observations to shew that the circumstances of the birth of Jesus, do not of *themselves* prove that he possessed a *superior* nature. "If it had pleased the Supreme Being to have at once formed Jesus, with all his powers of body and mind, precisely as they were at thirty years of age, the circumstance would have been at least as miraculous as what is now supposed to have been the fact: yet would any one say that such a formation would have proved or even implied that Jesus possessed a nature superior to that of man? If so, then Adam was not strictly and properly a man. Besides the birth of Isaac, of Samuel, and of the Baptist, was miraculous. And will any one say that they possessed a superior nature? The cases are not precisely parallel; but in both cases the miraculous agency of divine Power is the same." P. 40. I am almost ashamed to point out the weakness of such reasoning. If Jesus had been formed in the manner here described, I should acknowledge the miracle: but there is no reasoning from such a case to one totally dissimilar. Adam was a man by creation; and another person formed as Adam was, and with precisely the same powers both of body and mind, would be also a man. But the Saviour was not so formed. The birth of Isaac, Samuel, and the Baptist, although wonderful, was not strictly out of regular course of nature. But far different was the birth of the Saviour. Indeed you yourself acknowledge that the cases are not precisely parallel.

‡ See page 69.

with a different design, and upon another subject. I shall therefore at present only observe respecting this part of your work, that I found in it much bold assertion, frequently unsupported, and sometimes totally unwarranted. The following is an instance, which I the more readily go into, on account of its connection with the subject just now discussed. Upon Gal. iv. 4. "When the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman," I find the following note, "That the appellation *Son of God* has nothing to do with nature, but refers to *character* or *office*, I shall shew in my next letter."\* Upon referring to this letter, I do not find you quite so positive. nevertheless you venture to draw the following conclusion from your supposed proofs of this position. "I think it evident from these and similar passages, that there is nothing in the exalted appellation *Son of God*, in any way implying that there was a peculiarity of *nature* in Jesus."|| It excited my astonishment to perceive, that at the very time you ventured to make this assertion, you had before you Luke i. 35. "And the Angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: THEREFORE also that holy thing which shall be born of thee, shall be

\* Letters, page 52. || Page 133.

“ called THE SON OF GOD.” It is beyond my imagination to conceive how, with this passage staring you in the face, you could go on to assert as follows. “ If any, neglecting a widely prevalent Jewish idiom, and interpreting the expression by their own religious system, maintain that the expression does refer to *nature*, it is incumbent upon them to shew the *scriptural* grounds of this position. I think they will find none.” Surely, Sir, the words of St. Luke above cited, are decisive as to this point. And what else is implied in the words of the Apostle more immediately under consideration: “ God sent forth his SON, *made of a Woman,*” or, as you render the latter clause from the “ Improved version,” *born of a Woman.* Although *born of a Woman*, he was nevertheless the *Son of God*, You indeed adopt the opinion of the authors of the “ Improved version,” who assert\* that “ the phrase ‘ born of a Woman,’ bears no allusion to the supposed miraculous conception of Christ:” but “ is a common Jewish phrase to express a proper human Being.” In proof of this last assertion they produce five instances, three from the LXX. and two from the New Testament; not one of which by your own confession is in point. And whoever upon the ground above stated is persuaded that the title, *Son of God*, has to

\* See their note upon this text, quoted in page 52, note 3.

do with nature, not only may, but will dissent from their opinion *in toto*.

But I hasten to your summing up of the evidence collected in this examination, and to the purpose for which the examination itself was instituted. Thus you begin.\* “I have now briefly stated what I believe to be a just view of the evidence of all the writers of the New Testament, except that of the Apostle John; and I feel no hesitation in asserting, that no one of them in any way *teaches* the proper Deity of the Son of God, still less that he is “the very and eternal God, of one substance, power, and eternity with the Father,”—that the *general tenor* of their writings is *entirely inconsistent* with those positions;—and that *some passages* are in *direct opposition* to them.” And thus with one bold stroke of your pen, you drive before you both the Arians and the Athanasians, and shut them out completely from all intercourse with all the sacred writers, St. John only excepted. Those whose opinions go only to the rejection of the simple humanity, you treat somewhat more moderately: “With respect to the lower schemes which reject the simple or proper humanity of our Saviour, I feel authorized by my examination to maintain, that though a few passages occur, which, if those schemes were

\* Letters, page 72.

“ *previously proved* to be scriptural, would counte-  
 “ nance them, yet they admit of a just interpreta-  
 “ tion much more conformable to the general  
 “ tenor of those writings, and most strongly sup-  
 “ ported by express assertions in other parts of  
 “ them; and that the evidence derived from those  
 “ writings is therefore totally inadequate to prove  
 “ doctrines which, to say the least, are not con-  
 “ sistent with the plain and obvious sense of the  
 “ words of the writers in various parts.” Next  
 follows your general conclusion against your op-  
 ponents. “ And since it is inconceivable that  
 “ they” (i. e. the writers of the New Testament,  
 St. John excepted,) “ would leave a point so  
 “ striking, and, as most will admit, so momentous  
 “ as our Lord’s superiority in nature, to be derived  
 “ by inference merely, from a small number of  
 “ passages, which correctly admit of a different  
 “ construction, and in some cases require it, if we  
 “ consider their connexion, I am justified in assert-  
 “ ing that those Apostles and Evangelists do not  
 “ teach such superiority of nature; and that there-  
 “ fore from their evidence alone, there would be  
 “ no sufficient reason to receive this doctrine as  
 “ Christian doctrine.” Let us attend to this rea-  
 soning a little. You admit that in this large por-  
 tion of the sacred volume, there are passages from  
 which our Lord’s superiority of nature might be



inferred. Why then is not the inference made? Because it is inconceivable that the writers would leave so surprizing and momentous a doctrine, if true, to be derived, by inference merely, from a few passages. You had before told us that if either the Athanasian or the Arian doctrine, “ respecting the nature of Jesus, had been accordant with the matter of fact, we may reasonably expect to find in every book, in which he is expressly spoken of, sufficient reason to believe that the writer was acquainted with it and believed it.”\* Now I should have thought that in all cases where the writer was not professedly treating of the nature of Christ, this reasonable expectation would have been fully answered by his using language from which the doctrine might be inferred: But no such thing: he must openly avow his belief of it; he must maintain and teach it in the most direct and positive terms; otherwise it seems we have not sufficient reason to conclude that he either knew or believed it:—that is, be the occasion of an Apostle’s writing what it might, or let the doctrine of Christ’s superiority in nature have ever so little immediate connection with it, though this doctrine (admitting it to be true) must now at the end of so many years be familiar to all the sacred writers, must have been generally known

\* Page 35.

and believed; notwithstanding all this, it is inconceivable that any writer would think it sufficient to mention this doctrine incidentally, and in words from which it might be inferred; but he is expected to make an open avowal of his belief of it in direct and positive terms. Surely, Sir, this is expecting rather too much; and then, because this unreasonable expectation is not fully answered, all the passages, in which this doctrine is incidentally mentioned, and from which it might be inferred, are all to go for nothing—are all to be explained away, and you think yourself justified in asserting that no one of these writers teach any such doctrine! Thus peremptory is your decision against your opponents: Nor is it less peremptory in your own favour: for thus you proceed, “And further, “since in those writings there is nothing which, “when interpreted by the connexion, and by other “passages of the same writer, is in any way inconsistent with the belief, that Jesus, the Son of “God, was strictly and properly speaking a Man, “who was appointed by God to execute a purpose “of the utmost importance to the welfare of mankind,” &c. &c. “and since these things (and nothing more than these respecting the *nature* or “even dignity of Jesus) are taught in these writings, “I feel myself authorized to assert that, on their “evidence, Unitarianism is the doctrine of the

“ Gospel.” And thus all the writers of the New Testament, John excepted, are pressed into your service; and if at any time they appear inclined to speak a word favourable to the other side, their mouths are immediately stopped, and they are compelled to utter such words, and such only, as you approve. But now comes the master-stroke of policy. “ Is it then probable that the *writings* “ of the *Apostle* JOHN alone declare the essential “ truths of the Gospel? I do not ask if they *teach* “ any thing *inconsistent* with those of the other “ Apostles, who had equally their commission “ from Jesus, and were equally partakers of the “ Holy Spirit; but, do they *teach*, do they even “ *imply* any thing *additional* to what we should “ learn from the others, separate from the evidence “ of John. I think not.”—Here then is the unravelling of the whole plot; here is developed the occasion of the previous examination of the other writers: They are first compelled to be silent, and then their silence is made the pretence for imposing silence upon St. John. And the advocates of a supra-human nature in Christ are in effect shut out from the whole New Testament: they were before deprived of those passages which confessedly countenance their doctrine, in the other writings, unless they could previously prove this doctrine to be scriptural; and now St. John is locked up from

them, because they cannot prove their doctrine from the other writers: And thus in effect they are called upon to prove their doctrine to be scriptural, before they are permitted to derive any proof from any part of the Scriptures. But let us attend to the chain of proofs by which this total exclusion is effected. It is as follows. No writer of the New Testament, except St. John, avowedly and explicitly teaches the doctrine of Christ's superior nature; therefore they none of them teach it incidentally and by inference; therefore they do not teach it at all; therefore neither does St. John teach it; therefore it is no where taught in the New Testament.

And now St. John being thus stripped of his Orthodox dress, an Unitarian garb is provided for him, which he is compelled to put on; and we presently find that the famous passage, John i. 1.—14, upon which we rely with so much confidence, is pronounced, in your opinion, not only *not* to be “inconsistent with Unitarianism,” but even “to teach the proper” (that is the simple) “humanity of the Logos!” Is this possible! Surely, Sir, the Unitarian controversialist is possessed of a kind of alchemy—whatever he touches, immediately becomes gold! He can extract the precious drops of Unitarianism from the driest and toughest Orthodoxy! Let a passage be apparently ever so

obstinate and unfavourable to the Unitarian cause, yet let the Unitarian take it in hand; let him put it into his literary alembic; and let him distil in a menstruum, strong in proportion to the stubbornness of the materials to be acted upon; and then the pure spirit of Unitarianism will be sure to ascend and come over, while the dregs of Orthodoxy will remain at the bottom a mere caput mortuum! But let not the Orthodox Christian despair. Truth is great, and will in the end prevail. The materials decomposed shall again be compounded, and the meaning of the Apostle will come out more pure and bright from the ordeal which it has sustained.

Before I enter upon the work of interpretation, I beg to premise that the first thing to be done in order to a right understanding of an author, is carefully to observe the end or design with which he wrote, and the means which he has employed for the accomplishment of his end. If we pay no regard to these circumstances, we shall frequently mistake the meaning of a writer, and shall blunder most egregiously. I am induced the rather to insist upon this, because I do not perceive it among the rules which you have laid down at the commencement of your third letter:\* and you will permit me to observe, that it was for want of due

\* Page 138.

attention to this rule, that you yourself converted arguments urged for the conviction of unbelievers, into points of doctrine proposed for the belief of converts; that you made the silence of the Apostles, respecting our Lord's superiority of nature, an argument for their ignorance or disbelief of any such doctrine; and that you pronounced incidental proofs of this doctrine to be no proof at all. Nor should we attend only to the general design and intention of the writer; but also to the scope of each particular part, and to its connection with the rest. You will perhaps tell me that you have yourself provided for this case in your sixth rule;\* which sets forth that "no meaning of any word or phrase can be the just one, which does not suit the connection." If we both mean the same thing, let us enquire whether upon all occasions you have observed your own rule. St. Paul, 1. Cor. viii. 4-6, declares the vanity of Idols, and contrasts the faith of Christians, who believe in one God and one Lord, with that of the Heathens, who acknowledge Gods many, and Lords many. "We know," says he, "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

\* Page 139.

" 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." This posi-  
 tion " to us there is but one God," you, being to-  
 tally inattentive to the scope of the Apostle's rea-  
 soning, convert in one place into an argument  
 against the Trinity;\* and in another place, into an  
 argument against the divinity of our Saviour.†  
 " This passage" you say upon the latter occasion  
 " appears to me an irrefragable proof that Paul  
 " believed that one person only is God, and that  
 " person, the Father, the Father of all, the Father  
 " of our Lord Jesus Christ." Your argument, as  
 it stands at present, is partial, extending only to  
 the first clause of the passage. Let me beg you to  
 carry it into the second clause; and in the same  
 manner as you have already proved that " one  
 " person only is God, and that person, the Father,"  
 you will then prove that one person only is Lord,  
 and that person, Jesus Christ." The argument, if  
 good at all, is equally good in both cases. To us  
 there is but one God, the Father: therefore Jesus  
 Christ is not God. Again: To us there is but one  
 Lord, Jesus Christ: therefore God the Father is  
 not Lord. Such is the consequence of inattention  
 to the scope of a writer's argument: We shall be  
 in perpetual danger of misapplying his words to a

purpose foreign from his design, and of drawing from them consequences to be rejected with abhorrence.

In defending the doctrine for which I am contending, I shall make no apology for pursuing a course the very reverse of that, by which you have thought fit to assail it. You divide the writers of the New Testament into two classes; in the former of which, stand all, except St. John; in the latter, St. John alone. You begin with the former, and contend that they no where teach the supra-human nature of Christ, because they no where distinctly and explicitly assert it; and then you infer that it is no where taught by St. John, because it is improbable, that he should teach a doctrine which is not taught by the other Apostles and Evangelists. The fallacy of this reasoning, I have already, as I hope, sufficiently exposed; and have shewn in opposition to it, that direct and explicit proofs of any doctrine are then only to be expected, when the view of the writer is directed towards such doctrine: but that a writer, who has another object in view, can be expected to furnish only incidental proofs. I beg further to observe by the way, that the direct and principal proofs being once established, the incidental and indirect become the strongest confirmation that can be imagined. Hence it follows, with respect to the doctrine in question, that the first class of writers may



teach it incidentally, notwithstanding they had another object principally in view; and that St. John may teach it explicitly, notwithstanding the other writers teach it only incidentally. I propose, therefore, to begin with the Gospel of St. John, and shall first shew that it contains positive and explicit proofs of the doctrine in dispute; and having thus previously proved that this doctrine is a scriptural one, I shall then avail myself of those other proofs, whether direct or incidental, which are to be found in the other books of the New Testament.

You have, I think, rightly stated the design of St. John's Gospel, when you affirm\* that it was written agreeably to his own express assertion, "to convince men that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God."† But when you assert that these words refer, not to *nature*, but to *office*,§ I am constrained to differ from you. For I am persuaded that the Apostle here refers to certain heretical opinions, which at that time prevailed, respecting the *nature* of Christ, from which his Gospel acted as a preservative. If we go back to the days of the Apostles, we shall be at no loss to discover what these opinions were. I have already had occasion to mention the Docetæ, who held that

\* Page 75, note.\* † John xx. 31.

§ Letters, page 75, and 131.

the Christ, the Saviour of the world, was, as to his nature, really the Son of God, and a man only in appearance. Besides these, there also flourished, at the same time, a Gnostic Heretic, named Cerinthus, who did not, as the Docetæ did, deny the reality of the human nature, but held, that the Saviour consisted of two natures, the divine and the human: that in respect of his human nature, he was Jesus, the son of Joseph and Mary; and in respect of his divine nature, he was Christ, the Son of God. He further held, that when Jesus was baptised, Christ entered into him in the shape of a dove, and departed from him just before his crucifixion, leaving the man Jesus to suffer alone.\* Extravagant as these blasphemies appear, they undoubtedly prevailed even in the Apostolical age; and in St. John's first epistle, there are frequent allusions to them. as in ch. ii. 22. "Who is a liar, but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ;" and again in ch. iv. 15. "Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he is in God;" also ch. v. 1. "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God." And this may serve as a key to the meaning of the Apostle in the passage above cited, in which he declares his intention and design in writing his Gospel: it was

\* *Irenæus adv. Hær. lib. i. cap. 25.* See also Mosheim's *Eccles. Hist. cent. 1. part 2. chap. 5. § 16.*

to arrest in their progress the heretical opinions of Cerinthus, that men might not be led by them to suppose that Jesus and Christ are two distinct persons—the former, a Man, the latter, the Son of God; but that, on the contrary, they may believe that Jesus and Christ are one person; or, as the Apostle himself expresses it, “that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.” In confirmation of this sense of the words, if it wants confirmation, it may be observed, that in the earliest ages of the Church it was believed that such was the intention of St. John in writing his Gospel, as appears from the testimony of many of the Fathers.\* The same was also the opinion of a person, whose authority with some Unitarians may perhaps be even greater than that of the ancient Fathers, I mean the late Dr. Priestley.

Having this clue to guide us to the Apostle’s meaning, I may now proceed to the commencement of his Gospel; to the explanation of which nothing more is necessary than a plain statement of the errors which he there opposes. The names *λογος* (the Word) *μονογενης* (the Only-begotten) *αληθεια* (Truth) *ζωη* (Life) and others, which occur in St. John’s Gospel, occupy a distinguished place in every branch of the Gnostic heresy, and among

\* Iren. adv. Hær. lib. iii. c. 11. Epiph. Hær. 51. c. 12.  
Jerom. Cat. Script. Eccles.

others in that of which Cerinthus was the founder. The Gnostics in general, taught, that the Supreme Father had dwelt from all eternity in the fullness of light and bliss;—that his habitation became, in process of time, stocked with a progeny of celestial Beings, called *Æons*, whom they enumerated by pairs, the one male, the other female;—that these pairs were produced by successive emanation;—that the first pair, *μονογενης* and *αληθεια* (the Only-begotten and Truth) proceeded immediately from the supreme Father and his female associate, *εννοια* (Thought);—that from this original pair proceeded a second, named *λογος* and *ζωη* (the Word and Life), from this second pair a third, and so on in what St. Paul, with reference to this very heresy, calls “endless genealogies.”\* They considered the first great Cause as all pure and perfect: but they conceived that the emanation must be less pure and perfect than the source from which it emanated; and that, consequently, after a succession of emanations, it will become very imperfect, and will at length bear little resemblance to its source. They further held, that the visible world was created by an *Æon*, far removed from the Supreme Father, and even cut off from all communion with him. This *Æon* they called *Demiurgus*; and Cerinthus in particular, taught,

\* 1. Tim. i. 4.

that he was a malevolent spirit, and the God of the Jewish nation; and that it was to deliver mankind from his tyranny, that the celestial Æon, Christ, descended and entered, in the manner above described, into the Man Jesus.

In the above statement are contained the principal positions, which the Apostle opposes in this part of his Gospel. It is plain, from the foregoing account, that the Gnostic Æons had a beginning; that in particular, the Logos did not proceed immediately from the Supreme God, but from the Only-begotten of the Supreme; that consequently he existed apart from the Supreme God, and was as to nature inferior. In the first and second verses, the Apostle opposes these errors, by declaring, that when the things which were made, took their beginning, the Logos was then existing; that he was existing, not apart from God, but with God; and that he was not of a nature inferior to God, but was himself God. “1. In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2. The same was in the beginning with God.” The Apostle next opposes the opinion, that the visible world was created by the Æon Demiurgus, declaring, that the Logos himself was the Creator. “3. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.” He then rejects

the notion that ζωή (Life) was a female Æon, associated with the Logos, declaring that Life was not distinct from the Logos, but was in the Logos, who was at the same time the Light or instructor of mankind. 4. 5. "In him was life, and the life " was the light of men. And the light shineth in " darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not." From this appropriation of the term Light to the Logos, the Apostle takes occasion to speak of John the Baptist, who had been exalted by some of his followers into a celestial Æon, and had been called the 'Apostle of light.' The Evangelist opposes these positions by declaring, that John was a man, and was not himself the light, but was sent to bear witness of the light. 6. 8. "There was a man " sent from God, whose name was John. The " same came for a witness, to bear witness of the " light, that all men through him might believe. " He was not that light, but was sent to bear wit- " nesses of that light." The Evangelist now returns to the Logos, whom he declares to be the true light, and the Creator of the world; but that nevertheless the world which he had created, was ignorant of him, and would not receive him. 9-11. "That was the true light, which lighteth every " man that cometh into the world. He was in the " world, and the world was made by him, and the " world knew him not. He came unto his own,

“ and his own received him not.” “ But” (proceeds the Apostle, 12. 13.) “ as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the Sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.” Lastly, in opposition to the Gnostic conceit of two distinct and separate natures, the Apostle states the incarnation of the Logos, giving us to understand, that the giver of life and light was not a celestial *Æon*, who had assumed the appearance of a man, or had merely joined himself to a man, for the purpose of enlivening and enlightening mankind, but was himself man, and that he became so by assuming our nature, and veiling his divinity within a body of flesh. 14. “ And the Word was made man, and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth.” Nor by this assumption of human nature was his divine glory wholly obscured: it was manifested on many occasions, and especially upon the holy mount; where it was beheld in all its lustre by three of his Disciples, who were convinced both by it, and by a voice from heaven, that he was the true *μονογενής*, or the Only-begotten. “ And we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father.”\*

\* See Michaelis Introd. to the New Test. vol. 3. part 1. chap. 7. § 5.

I am bold to affirm that the above interpretation considered at least in a general point of view, and in respect of its great and leading features, conveys a just and accurate representation of the Apostle's meaning. It is throughout easy, natural, and consistent; it imposes no new sense upon any of the words; it does no violence to the construction in any part; moreover it falls in with the avowed design of the Apostle; and it is agreeable to the opinions which were prevailing at the time; lastly, it is no new interpretation, in framing which the mind of the Apostle was not at all consulted; but was acknowledged by believers, in the earliest times, by whom it has been handed down to us as the true and undoubted sense of this important passage.

From the preceding enquiry it appears, that the Apostle in this part of his Gospel, teaches unequivocally and explicitly the incarnation of the divine Logos; and it further appears from the whole tenor of his Gospel, that the incarnate Logos is the person, of whom he afterwards speaks under the name and character of Jesus the Christ, the Son of God. And thus this passage furnishes decisive proof of the divinity and pre-existence of our Saviour. It proves also most incontrovertibly that the beloved Disciple, St. John, was not, as you have laboured to represent him, an Unitarian.



For when the Heretics had ascribed to the Saviour a supra-angelic nature, what Unitarian would go about to confute them by ascribing to him a nature still higher, even the divine nature? \* And since we must not ascribe one faith to St. John, and another to his fellow Apostles, and their companions, it follows that if St. John was not an Unitarian, then neither were the other writers of the New Testament, Unitarians. Consequently though their subject might not lead them to maintain avowedly and explicitly the doctrine in question, yet we may reasonably expect to find in their writings passages, in which this doctrine is taught incidentally, and from which it may be inferred. And thus the whole of the New Testament is unlocked and laid open to us; and we are now at liberty to derive our proofs from any part or book, in which, as we conceive, it is either expressly asserted, or incidentally taught.

I shall now consider, in order, the several passages which I have brought forward in the Preface, as proofs of the divinity and pre existence of our Lord; and shall vindicate them from the forced interpretation, which Unitarian ingenuity has attempted to fix upon them.

\* I forbear to press this argument further at present, having already insisted upon it at large, in a sermon preached before the University of Oxford, entitled, "The doctrine of St. John, and the faith of the primitive Church, not Unitarian."

John i. 1. 3. 14.

1. " In the beginning was the Word, and the  
 " Word was with God, and the Word was God.  
 " 3. All things were made by him, and without  
 " him was not any thing made that was made.  
 " 14. And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt  
 " among us."

According to the above interpretation of this passage, the Apostle, in the first clause of the first verse, explicitly asserts the pre-existence, and in the last clause, the divinity of the Logos; to whom in the third verse he ascribes the creation of the world; and of whom in the fourteenth verse he affirms that he became incarnate, and dwelt among us in our nature. In order to make way for another interpretation, you propose to render the beginning of the first verse (*εν αρχη ην ο λογος*) as follows, " At the beginning *he* became, or was appointed the Logos."\* a rendering which, as I conceive, will not meet with many advocates, even among the Unitarians. It is on many accounts inadmissible. It makes the first sentence in the original to be a subjectless proposition, whose predicate is a common word, having the article prefixed; and is therefore to be taken in a limited sense, without any other word, going before or accompanying it, by which it can be limited.

\* Letters, page 77.

It also gives to the verb of existence a new sense, for which indeed you cite the authority of Schleufner; but upon examination, I cannot find in the places to which you refer,\* any such sense. The meanings given to εἶμι by Schleufner, in No. 2. are *existo, orior, originem habeo, nascor: to arise, or proceed from, but not to become*—and in No. 9. *agnoscor, habeor, æstimor, reputor, declaror, celebror: to be accounted or pronounced; but not to be appointed.* “If this rendering be not satisfactory,” you offer us another: “At the beginning the Word “ was (or became) *ῥῶ* ;” that is, the Word was the Word; which you explain to mean, “ He, who “ was the Word, became *ῥῶ* (or was appointed to “ be the Word) at the beginning, viz. of the Gos- “ pel dispensation, which commenced at the bap- “ tism of Jesus.”§ A rendering no less inadmissible than the former; if for no other reason, yet because it takes the verb of existence in the same strange sense as before. The last clause (καὶ θεὸς ἦν ὁ λόγος) you propose to render “ And the Word was “ a God.”† This rendering can be justified only upon the ground, that in the original, θεὸς is without the article: upon which great stress has frequently been laid, and by no one more than by yourself. In your *discourse* I find you asserting that the words now under consideration “ should be so

\* Ibid, note.\* § Ibid. † Page 156.

“ rendered as to mark a distinction, which, *in this*  
 “ *situation, is as plain as the Greek language could*  
 “ *denote it,* between the application of the word  
 “ God to the Supreme Being, and to any one to  
 “ whom, according to the customary usage of the  
 “ Jews, it may correctly be applied, but not in  
 “ the absolute sense of it.”\* The unwarranted  
 assertion which I have marked in Italics, you af-  
 afterwards thought proper to retract: for at the back  
 of the advertisement prefixed to your discourse, I  
 find the following note: “ Page 55. note on John  
 “ i. 1.—It is not meant to assert that *θεος* cannot  
 “ agreeably to the laws of the Greek language, be  
 “ here taken in the absolute sense; but that  
 “ it may be taken in its relative sense; that the  
 “ absence of the article, according to the usage  
 “ of the Evangelist, decidedly favours the latter,  
 “ (see particularly ch. x. 34. 35.) and that there-  
 “ fore we ought to be determined in our rendering  
 “ of *θεος* by the analogy of Scripture.” By the  
 absolute sense of the word *θεος* I suppose you mean  
 its highest or proper sense as denoting the Supreme  
 God—by its relative sense I suppose you mean its  
 lowest and most improper sense, as importing  
 nothing divine, but denoting a creature only above  
 his fellow creatures *in rank and power*. What you  
 mean by being “ determined in our rendering of

\* Discourse, page 55, note on John i. 1.

“*θεος* by the analogy of Scripture,” I do not pretend to divine; and therefore will not attempt to explain; only upon the whole I think I may safely understand you to mean, that *θεος*, notwithstanding the absence of the article, may be taken in its highest sense; nevertheless, in the present instance, it ought to be taken in its lowest sense. I have stated that much stress has been laid upon the absence of the article in this place: and, Sir, if you should still entertain any partiality for your first sentiments upon this point; or if you even think that the presence of the article would have been of advantage to us, I beg to observe, that if the article had been prefixed to *θεος*, the words ought not to have been rendered (as they are rendered in our translation, and as we contend they ought to be rendered) “the Word was God:” for in order to give them this meaning, the absence of the article is even necessary. But you will tell me, that the words may be rendered “the Word was a God.” I acknowledge that they may: but I make this acknowledgement only upon one condition, that *θεος* is a common word, significant of many things of the same kind. We may truly say that John is a man: why? because there are more men than one: there are many men, of whom John is one. In like manner, if we may say, that the Logos is a God, it must be because there are

more Gods than one: and thus the unity of the Godhead, for which the Unitarian boasts himself so strenuous an advocate, is completely cut up by his own interpretation.

But here you will remind me of the two senses of the word  $\theta\epsilon\omicron\varsigma$ , its highest or proper sense, and its lowest or improper sense; and will contend that it is here used, in its improper sense, to denote one who, as to nature, was a mere man, but as to office, was highly exalted; and “was to us a God, “the representative of the most high.” But, Sir, where is this said? or why is it introduced upon the present occasion? I allow that the Hebrew  $\text{אלהים}$  is sometimes in the Old Testament, used to denote judges and magistrates; and in the translation of the passages in which it is so used, or with express reference to these passages, the Greek  $\theta\epsilon\omicron\varsigma$  may be used in the same sense. But, Sir, will you venture to say, that it was ever so used by any Greek writer, expressing his own sentiments in that language? If you know of any such instance, I beg you to produce it. Besides the Apostle confessedly uses  $\theta\epsilon\omicron\varsigma$  in its proper sense, both immediately before, and immediately after the passage in question. And is it to be supposed that in the very same breath he would use the same word in a sense so very different, and withal so foreign to the idiom of the language in which he was writing,

without necessity, and without giving the smallest intimation of his design?\*

But you will tell me, that though the words are Greek, yet the phraseology may be Jewish; and you contend that the expression here is “ac-  
“cording to the customary usage of the Jews.” I have already said that such a manner of expression may be found in the Scriptures of the Old Testament; but that it was a manner in common use among the Jews, in the days of the Apostles, I positively deny. It is your part, who first made the assertion, to prove it if you can. But even if you could prove it, what has Jewish phraseology to do in the present case? The Apostle was not writing among Jews, nor to Jews, nor for Jews: he is not detailing the discourse of a Jew; nor is

\* An attempt has been made to destroy the force of this objection, by replying, that in the 28th chapter of Ezekiel, there are two verses, the second and the ninth, in each of which the word *Seos* is applied in a similar manner, to denote the true God and the Prince of Tyre. See page 120, note.\* The weakness of this reply will be made sufficiently apparent by a bare recital of these two verses. “2. Son of Man say unto the Prince of Tyre, Thus saith the Lord God, because thy heart is lifted up, and thou hast said I am a God, I sit in the seat of God, in the midst of the seas; yet thou art a man and not God, though thou set thine heart as the heart of God:—9. Wilt thou yet say before him that slayeth thee, I am God? but thou shalt be a man, and not God in the hand of him that slayeth thee.” Who does not perceive that the title God is here applied not in its improper sense, to denote a man of superior rank and power; but in its proper sense, to denote God in opposition to man: though no more than MAN, the Prince of Tyre, had impiously called himself God.

he describing Jewish customs or manners. How absurd then to talk of "Jewish phraseology," which, if the Apostle had used upon this occasion, would probably have been intelligible to hardly one in a hundred of his readers. And when it is further considered that the persons, among whom the Apostle was writing, were Heathens, who had been in the constant practice of deifying men, was it not upon your own principles incumbent upon him studiously to avoid a phraseology, which, if it must not be understood literally, could not fail of being misunderstood, and misapplied by the persons for whose use it was intended? Let me bring to your recollection the manner in which you justify this very phraseology upon another occasion. Our Lord had permitted Thomas to address him, as God, without any rebuke or notice.\* Thus you justify the appellation. "Employing the Jewish idiom, Jesus *was* a God, as being the representative of God, as being one 'to whom the word of God came:' and a Jewish disciple, one, who from his infancy, was imbued with the strictest ideas of the unity and unrivalled supremacy of God, and accustomed by the scriptural usage of the appellation *God* to great latitude in the employment of it, could not be misunderstood, by persons of his own na-

\* John xx. 28.



“tion, in employing it when addressing one of  
 “whom they saw abundant proof that to him the  
 “word of God came, that he was to them the  
 “representative of the most high.”\* By this very  
 justification, you virtually condemn the use of  
 this appellation, under circumstances totally dissi-  
 milar, and where a misunderstanding of its true  
 sense might reasonably be expected. And what  
 other could be expected from the persons among  
 whom, and for whom the Apostle was writing?  
 Would they not naturally conclude from the  
 Apostle’s language, that since the Saviour, in whom  
 they believed, was not truly and properly God,  
 he must at least be a deified man? It is, more-  
 over, useless to insist upon Jewish phraseology in  
 this place, which, if it were to be admitted, would  
 little avail your cause. You will not, I suppose,  
 contend that this supposed Jewish phraseology is  
 confined to the word *θεος*; but will admit that it  
 pervades the whole sentence at least. Now, Sir,  
 there is a Jewish as well as a Gnostic meaning to  
 the word *λογος*. In holy Scripture the creation of  
 the world is ascribed to the WORD: as Ps. xxxiii.  
 6. “By the WORD of the Lord were the heavens  
 “made.” And I need not inform you that “the  
 “WORD” is often supplied in the Chaldee Para-  
 phrase, when in the Hebrew there is nothing

\* Letters, page 87. See also page 165.

corresponding with it. Thus Is. xlv. 12. "I have made the earth, and created man upon it," is in the Chaldee Paraphrase, "I by my word have made the earth," &c.; and again Is. xlvi. 13. "My hand hath laid the foundation of the earth," is in the Chaldee, "By my word I have laid the foundation of the earth." The following are instances of the same kind, Gen. iii. 10. "I heard thy voice in the garden." Chal. "I heard the voice of thy word in the garden."—Ex. xix. 17. "And Moses brought forth the people out of the camp to meet with God." Chal. "to meet with the word of God." Job xlii. 9. "So Eliphaz, &c. went and did as the Lord commanded them," Chal. "as the word of the Lord commanded them."—Ib. "The Lord also accepted Job." Ch. "The word of the Lord accepted Job."—Ps. ii. 4. "The Lord (Ch. the word of the Lord) shall have them in derision." If therefore the passage is to be interpreted agreeably to what you choose to call Jewish phraseology. I contend that the personality and divinity of the Logos, are most clearly asserted in it: so that even upon this ground there is no reason to suppose that *θεος* is used in any but its proper sense.

Your interpretation of the third and fourteenth verses, is a mere adaptation of the Apostle's words, to your previous interpretation of the first verse: and if this cannot be maintained, the other must

fall at the same time. It may, however, be expected that I vindicate the common interpretation of the third verse, from an objection which you raise against it, founded upon the meaning of the verb *εγενετο*. You assure us that though St. John “uses the word *γινωμι* more than 100 times, he “no where uses it in the sense of creation.”\* It would be something, though not decisive, if you had shewn that St. John frequently speaks of the creation, but never on such occasions uses the verb *γινωμι*, but always some other verb. This, however, has not been attempted: we are merely told that, though he uses the word more than one hundred times, (I understand you to mean exclusively of the disputed places,) yet not once in the sense of creation. Perhaps on all and every of these hundred occasions and more, the subject does not relate to the creation, and if so, how is it to be expected that *γινωμι* should have this sense. But that it is capable of this sense you do not deny: nor indeed is this sense inconsistent either with the general meaning of the word, or with its use. *Γινωμι* as far as my observation has gone, denotes generally the coming forth of the thing spoken of, either into being originally, or into a new state of being. From the first branch of this general meaning, are deduced the following acknowledged

\* Page 79, note.

senses of this word; *to be, to be born, to be produced, to be effected, to be accomplished, to be performed, to arise, to arrive, to come to pass, to happen, &c.* and why not, if the sense should so require, *to be created or made?* Accordingly we find that when at the creation of the world, “God said, Let there be light: and there was light:” the divine word, and its accomplishment, are thus expressed by the I.XX. *γενηθητω φως, και εγενετο φως.\** Why then might not St. John, intending, in opposition to the Gnostic heresy, to declare that the universe came forth into being by the agency of the Logos, thus express it? *Παντα δι’αυτου εγενετο.*

I am not absolutely called upon to notice your interpretation of the tenth verse; nevertheless, since here also you refuse to *εγενετο* the sense of creation, I shall beg your attention to the following observations:

I said above, in speaking of the general meaning of the verb *γινομαι*, that it signifies the coming forth, not only into being originally, but also into a new state of being. In this latter branch of its general meaning, it is not used absolutely, but is followed by a word denoting the new state, in which the thing spoken of, is said to appear: as in the following examples; Matt. iv. iii. *ειπε ινα οι λιθοι ετοι αρτοι γενωνται* ‘command that these stones *become* bread.’

\* Gen. i. 3.

John xvi. 20. ἡ λύπη ὑμῶν εἰς χαρὰν γενήσεται; ‘your sorrow *shall be turned* into joy.’ This meaning you ascribe to ἐγένετο in the tenth verse, respecting which (after having observed that the common rendering “has perhaps more than any thing contributed to establish in the minds of the unlearned the Trinitarian, or the Arian hypothesis, respecting our Saviour,”) you thus speak; “what the Apostle actually says is, ‘the world became by him,’ or, if (as in Matt. xxiii. 15.) we supply the obvious ellipsis from the preceding verse, ‘the world became *enlightened* by him.’\* And again in another place, “Κοσμος *the world*, according to the almost uniform usage of John, and agreeably to the next clause, signifies *the world of mankind*, not the natural world; and he frequently uses γίνομαι *become*, to denote a *change of state*: the expression ὁ κοσμος δι’ αὐτου ἐγένετο might therefore justly, but somewhat freely, be rendered ‘mankind were brought by him into a new state.’ If, however, we translate more literally, and supply the ellipsis from the preceding verse, we shall have the world became *enlightened* by him.”† You will observe, Sir, that after ἐγένετο in this place, there is no word denoting the supposed new state; therefore one of your renderings, ‘the world was brought by him into a

\* Letters, page 79, note. † Page 172.

new state,' is totally inadmissible. Against the other rendering 'the world became enlightened by him,' I should urge without more words the same objection, if you did not speak of an ellipsis to be supplied from the preceding verse. But, Sir, I ask what authority is there for such an ellipsis? That, which you cite, will not avail you. For though I admit that in Matt. xxiii. 15. the word 'profelyte' is to be supplied from the preceding sentence, yet it is to be placed *before* the verb, and not *after* it, "Ye compass sea and land to make "one profelyte; and when the *profelyte* is made, "ye make him twofold more the child of hell than "yourselfes." Again; how can *enlightened* be supplied from the preceding verse, and predicated of *the world* in this? For in the preceding verse, it is not said that HE affordeth light to *the world*; but to "every man that cometh into the world," that is, into the natural world. Lastly, how does this rendering suit the context? Is it not a contradiction to say that the world became actually enlightened by him, and then to add immediately that "the world knew him not?" I therefore reject without hesitation both the proposed renderings, and choose to abide by that of the public version, which, I doubt not, is the true one.

Little need be said respecting the fourteenth verse. You acknowledge that St. John "fre-

“quently uses *γινομαι* *become*, to denote a change of state.” Consequently, yourself being judge, ὁ λογος σαρχ̄ εγενετο may be rendered “the word was made, or, became, flesh.” And this rendering is sanctioned by the order of the words, which is the same as is commonly observed, when *γινομαι* is used in this sense; and is also required, by the context, in which, when rightly interpreted, the divinity and pre-existence of the Logos, is expressly asserted.

John viii. 58.

“Before Abraham was, I am.”

You object to this rendering of the original, and affirm that the correct rendering of *εγω ειμι* is, ‘I am he:’ and in support of this rendering, you refer to no less than eight places in this Gospel, in which the words are so rendered in the public version. These places are ch. iv. 26.—viii. 24. 28.—ix. 9.—xiii. 19.—xviii. 5. 6. 8.\* But, Sir, you will permit me to observe, that not one of these places is in point: for not one of them relates to existence absolute. The first is the reply to the woman of Samaria, who had asserted “I know that “Messiah cometh, who is called Christ: when he “is come, he will tell us all things. Jesus saith

\* Letters, page 244.

“unto her, I that speak unto thee, *am*.” The expression is clearly elliptical—*am* what? That very Messiah of whom thou art in expectation. Of the same kind are the following places: ch. ix. 9.—xviii. 5. 6. 8. In the other places the expression manifestly refers, not to the existence of the person spoken of; but to the relation in which he stood to others, and to their knowledge and belief of such relation. John, ch. xiii. 19. “Now I tell you “before it come, that when it is come to pass, ye “may believe that I am”—that I exist, not absolutely, but *quovis modo*, in some way which has relation to you: that I sustain some character, in which you are interested. And of the same kind are the two remaining instances.—It is manifest, therefore, that in no one of these instances does the expression refer to the *quando*, but only to the *quid*, or the *quale*. It is otherwise in the passage in question. At the 56th verse, our Saviour had declared to the Jews, that “Abraham rejoiced” (or, as the original word may also be rendered, *earnestly desired*) “to see my day:” by which expression they unquestionably understood, the time of his existence upon earth; and when he afterwards said that the Patriarch “saw” his day “and was glad,” they understood him to say, that he was coeval with Abraham, who had beheld his contemporary with joy. Now certainly it is implied in this, (you, indeed,



assert the contrary)\* that our Lord had seen Abraham: and the Jews understood it in this sense, as appears from their reply—"Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham?" We perceive, then, that this question of the Jews refers solely to the time of our Lord's existence: they supposed him to have asserted, that he was contemporary with Abraham; and they enquire how that was possible, when, by the most favourable computation, he could not as yet be fifty years old. The question thus referring to time, the answer must, in all reason, be admitted to refer to the same. It is not to be supposed that our Lord would usher in an irrelevant answer by this solemn asseveration, "Verily, verily, I say unto you:" therefore the verb *ειπαμι* must here denote existence absolute; and the words are rightly translated "before Abraham was," or, was born, "I AM." But you also object to the rendering of the former clause, "Before Abraham was, or was born," for

\* It may be proper to state the passage in which this assertion is contained. "Jesus said (v. 56.) that Abraham earnestly desired to see his day, 'and he saw it, *obviously* meaning foresaw it,' and was glad." Here the Jews interrupted him with a perversion of his meaning, 'Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham!' Our Lord had *not said a word* IMPLYING *this*, and he does *not* rectify their misapprehension: but justifies 'his own expression by declaring that he was designated to his office before Abraham *was born*, v. 58. this designation therefore might have been revealed to the Patriarch.' See "Imp. vers." page 244.

two reasons—1. because St. John never uses *γεννηται* in the sense of *to be born*. You had before made a similar objection to the use of this same verb, “in the sense of creation:” and an answer similar to that which was then made, may serve upon the present occasion. You do not pretend that *to be born* is an unusual sense of this verb, or that it is inconsistent with its general meaning. I observe, moreover, that it is so rendered by the authors of the “Improved version,” in this very place: I think, therefore, that you are not very serious in this objection, and I conceive that you principally object for the second reason, viz. because “the form of the verb here used, *γεννησθαι*, generally throughout the New Testament, and always in John’s writings, has a future signification; when joined with prepositions of time, it always has it; and in the only other passage (John xiv. 29.) where it is joined with *πριν* before, it must have it.”\* It is very certain that *πριν* before, has upon all occasions, reference to the future. But, Sir, you seem not to be aware that a thing may be future in two respects: 1. in respect of the present time: 2. in respect of some other thing to which in point of time it is subsequent. The grammatical present time is that in which the speaker or writer is actually speaking or writing: all before,

\* Letters, page 245.

grammatically speaking, is past; all after, is future. In our language, that alone can be expressed in the future tense, which is subsequent to the present time; not that which is only future in respect of some other thing, but past in respect of the present. Let me explain my meaning by an example. Suppose 'the destruction of Jerusalem' to be future in respect of 'the advent of the Messiah.' While the Messiah was yet expected, and consequently, while the destruction of Jerusalem, was future in respect of the present, it might be said, Before Jerusalem *shall be* destroyed, the Messiah *will* come. But now that the advent of the Messiah is past, and the destruction of Jerusalem is also past, in respect of the present, we cannot express that event in the future tense, but must use the past, and say, Before Jerusalem *was* destroyed, the Messiah *came*. If we apply what has now been said to the instance before us, we shall see the reason why  $\pi\epsilon\upsilon\ \text{Αβρααμ}\ \gamma\epsilon\gamma\epsilon\sigma\theta\epsilon\iota$  must in our language be expressed in the past tense, notwithstanding  $\pi\epsilon\upsilon$  implies a relative future. The time of Abraham's existence or his birth, was not future in respect of the present time, that is, of the time when our Lord was speaking; but had then been long past: Therefore, the true rendering is, before Abraham *was* or *was* born. But it is otherwise in the Hebrew language; there even a rela-

tive future may be expressed in the future tense, notwithstanding the thing spoken of is past in respect of the present. Thus Gen. ii. 5. "And every plant of the field, before it *was* ("Heb. יִהְיֶה" "shall be") in the earth; and every herb of the field "before it grew." (Heb. יִצְמַח shall grow.) The being of the plants in the earth, and the growing of the herbs, was subsequent to their creation, although past in respect of the present. We have, therefore, here a relative future merely, which is, nevertheless, in Hebrew, expressed by the future tense of the verb. Pf. xc. 2. "Before the mountains were brought forth (Heb. יִלְדוּ) or ever "thou hadst formed" (Heb. וַיִּתְהַוֶּה לְ) "the earth "and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God." In conformity with this idiom, the Syriac version of the New Testament expresses γεγενεσθαι, in the passage now under consideration, by the future of the verb of existence. Hence it appears, that in translating πρὶν Ἀβραάμ γεγενεσθαι into English, the past tense *may* be used, notwithstanding πρὶν implies the future: and that the past tense *must* be used, if the thing expressed was past, before the time in which our Lord delivered the words. There is therefore no force in the objection which you make to the public version in this particular. As for the rendering which you found

upon the supposed validity of this objection,\* “Before Abraham shall become,” it is not very easy to understand it, even with the advantage of your explanation; but as the Jews, to whom the words were spoken, had not the benefit of this explanation, the whole must have been to them wholly unintelligible. I contend, therefore, that these words refer to the time of Abraham’s existence, and that the whole passage is properly rendered, “Before Abraham was, I am.”

I come now to the meaning and force of these words. And here the least that can be said is, that they prove decisively the pre-existence of our Lord. But this is not all: the circumstances of the case manifestly require something more. It appears that the reply of our Lord operated upon

\* “Hence it appears that the true rendering of the first clause is, ‘Before Abraham shall become,’ and as the second clause ‘I am’ is obviously elliptical, we may reasonably suppose a similar ellipsis in the first. Now *Abraham* signifies *the Father of many nations*; and the name was given to *Abraham* (Gen. xvii. 5.) on account of the divine promise, that he should be what that name implied. In reference to this, our Lord says, ‘Before Abraham shall become so, I am *he*,’ that is before he who was called the Father of many nations, actually becomes so, I am the Christ, or I must be acknowledged as the Christ.” Page 245. This form, in which the nominative to the verb serves to express both the subject and the predicate of the proposition, is, I own, new to me; nor should I be inclined to admit it unless a legitimate example of it could be produced. This is the second *imaginary* instance which has occurred in St. John, (see page 77,) but I want a necessary and undeniable one.

the Jews, like an electric shock: it excited in them so great indignation, that instantly with one accord they prepare to inflict upon him the punishment, which the law had denounced against Blaphemers. Now if the words of Jesus imply no more than a claim to a priority of existence, you yourself allow, that this would have been no ground for their attempting to stone him.\* Nor even if they had understood him to assert his own superiority to Abraham, would this have been sufficient ground. He had already in effect done this; and the sensation which they felt upon the occasion was not *indignation*. “Then said the Jews  
 “unto him, now we know that thou hast a Devil.  
 “Abraham is dead, and the Prophets: and thou  
 “sayest, if a man keep my saying, he shall never  
 “taste of death. Art thou greater than our Fa-  
 “ther Abraham, which is dead? and the Prophets  
 “are dead? Whom makest thou thyself?” vs. 52.  
 53. To what then are we to impute that sudden indignation, which impelled the Jews to inflict upon our Lord so severe a punishment? I can

\* “Why the Jews were so indignant at these words, may be learnt from v. 53. They must consider the words of Jesus as derogatory from the dignity of Abraham, and asserting his own superiority. If they had conceived him to have claimed a priority of existence, it is likely they would have regarded him as insane, or have made that claim a ground for ridiculing him themselves, and exposing him to the ridicule of their fellow-countrymen, instead of attempting to stone him for it.” Page 246.

impute it to no other cause, than their supposing him to have been actually guilty of blasphemy. I conceive that there was something, either in his words, or in his voice and manner, or in both, which wrought in them a conviction, that he had applied to himself the incommunicable name of the only God. You positively deny that the words are capable of this sense.\* But, Sir, you have not fully considered the matter. You will admit that the words in St. John's Gospel are not the very words which our Saviour uttered; but a translation of them into Greek: an exact and literal translation, I have no doubt: but words in the original have frequently a force, which it is difficult for any translation to convey. Let us, therefore, enquire of what words these are the translation. Upon looking into the Syriac version of the New Testament, I find that the words which express *εγω ειμι* *I am*, exactly answer to the Hebrew **אני אהיה**. These therefore are probably the very words which our Saviour uttered. It appears from the book of Exodus, ch. iii. 14. that **אהיה** is the very name by which the God of Israel revealed himself to Moses, when he said "I am the "I AM," and again "I AM hath sent me unto "you." Now **אהיה** may denote here as in the

\* Letters, page 86, and page 246, note.\*

book of Exodus, the name of God: and if so, then the expression **אני אלהים** is capable of being so understood as to apply this name to our blessed Saviour; this you will not be disposed to deny, when you consider how very frequently in holy Scripture the verb of existence, or copula, is understood, between the pronoun of the first and second person and the name of God. An instance of this form occurs in the words just now quoted from the 90th Psalm, "Even from everlasting to everlasting thou *art* God," **אתה אל**. See also Exod. vi. 2. 6. 8. 29. "And if we suppose that the voice and manner of our Saviour were such as to mark such an application, and to make it in a manner unavoidable, we cannot be at a loss to account for the sudden indignation with which the Jews were filled; and at the unanimity with which they prepared to stone him as a Blasphemer.

I have gone thus far into the subject in order to shew that the Trinitarian interpretation of this passage, is not so unwarranted, nor so totally indefensible, as you have chosen to represent it. That by the words which our Lord uttered, he might be understood to apply to himself the distinguishing name of the God of Israel, I have sufficiently shewn: that by such an application, he would, in the eyes of the Jews, be guilty of blasphemy, cannot be doubted; and that he actually



was, in their eyes, guilty of blasphemy, is manifest, from their preparing to inflict upon him the punishment due to that crime. But in what his supposed blasphemy consisted, if not in applying to himself the name, I AM, I cannot perceive. The effect of our Lord's words upon the Jews is most evident: the cause assigned fully accounts for this effect; and the context furnishes no other adequate cause. This at least must be allowed, that if our Lord, as you suppose, had said "Before Abraham shall become so, I am he," an answer so irrelevant, and withal so unintelligible, might perhaps have excited their derision, but would hardly have roused their indignation.

John xvii. 5.

"And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee, before the world was."

You admit that this passage is capable of the sense in which it is usually taken,\* and most unquestionably in this sense, it proves the pre-existence of Christ. But you contend that the words do not *require* this sense; meaning that they may be taken in another sense, in which they afford no proof of the pre-existence. I have to thank you for not subjecting me to the necessity of vindicating the usual interpretation: for I cannot but

\* Letters, page 242.

think that the same ingenuity which has discovered a new sense, might with equal ease, if properly exerted, have set aside the old one. But let us see what this new sense is. "And now, O Father, glorify thou me by thine own power, (*παρα σεαυτω*) with the glory which I had, in thy purpose (*παρα σοι*) before the world was." And this interpretation you regard "as more accordant with the phraseology of the New Testament, than that which renders it an argument in favour of the pre-existent scheme."\* But, Sir, there are to it serious objections. In the first place, you give to the preposition *παρα* two different senses, in neither of which is it ever used in the New Testament, nor as far as I know, in any other book. *Παρα σεαυτω* you render "by thine own power," and in support of this rendering, you refer to four passages, in which this preposition is used with a dative no less than eight times, and every time, as you suppose, in the sense here assigned to it. You perceived that *power* was somehow or other implicated in all these passages; and you hastily gave this force to the preposition, which, a little further consideration, might perhaps have convinced you, belonged rather to some other word in the sentence. Among your examples is the following, Matt. xix. 26. "With men

\* Page 251.

“ (παρὰ ἀνθρώποις) this is impossible: but with God  
 “ (παρὰ δὲ Θεῷ) all things are possible.” Now in the  
 very possibility or impossibility of a thing, power  
 is implied. That is *possible*, which power can  
 effect: that is *impossible*, which power cannot  
 effect. But, Sir, not sufficiently adverted to this  
 circumstance, you conceived that power was de-  
 noted by the preposition *παρὰ*, and you render  
 thus “ By the power of men this cannot be done;  
 “ but by the power of God all things can be  
 “ done:” \* whereas, the true rendering is, “ With  
 men, or regard being had to men, this is not an  
 object of power, and is not to be effected by  
 power; but with God, or regard being had to  
 God, all things are objects of power, and may be  
 effected by it.” All the examples, which you ad-  
 duce, are similar to this last: in all of them the  
*possibility* or *impossibility* of the thing spoken of, is  
 asserted: and, therefore, no one of them proves  
 that the preposition *παρὰ* signifies ‘ in the power of.’

So much for the first sense of *παρὰ*. As for the  
 other sense ‘ *παρὰ σοι* in thy purpose,’ you give  
 for it no authority whatever; nor has it any au-  
 thority. You tell us that in the New Testament,  
 when this preposition is used with the dative in  
 reference to God, ‘ it signifies in the *sight*, *purpose*,  
 or *estimation* of God.’ Who would not under-

\* Page 249, note.

stand by this, that these three words have all the same, or at least a cognate sense.<sup>2</sup> And again, in a note, the third meaning of *παρὰ* is stated to be “in the *dispositions*, SIGHT OR PURPOSES, *estimation of*.” Here *purposes* is manifestly, used as synonymous with *sight*. But is it really so? By purpose you mean unalterable determination or decree:\* but surely this is not the meaning of *sight* or *estimation*; nor can the one be substituted for the other. When St. Peter says, “One day is “with the Lord (*παρὰ κυρίου*) as a thousand years,”<sup>3</sup> admitting that ‘with the Lord’ means in his *sight* or *estimation*, is this the same as in his *purpose* or *decree*? Or are you willing, that in the passage before you, instead of “the glory which I had in thy *purpose*,” we should read “the glory which I had in thy *sight*?” Such a substitution would completely overturn your interpretation. It must therefore be admitted that *sight* and *purpose* do not mean the same thing: and, after a careful examination of all the examples, which you have adduced of this third meaning, I find not one in which it means *in the purpose of*. I contend, therefore, that this meaning of the preposition is

\* See page 252, where I find the following words, “This further shews that our Lord in v. 5. refers to glory, never actually possessed, but given him in the unalterable decrees of God.”

unwarranted, and consequently is inadmissible. I have another objection. The expression is "Glorify thou me with the glory which I *had*" (*εἶχον* was having) with thee." Now the past imperfect tense very well suits the case of a person who was once in a state of glory, but has voluntarily suffered a diminution of it, and had 'made himself of no reputation.' But how does it suit your case? which plainly requires the perfect tense *have had*. If I say, I *have* a blessing in reversion, or *have had* it for some time past, this implies that the right, though not the actual possession, is vested in me. But when I say, I *had* a blessing in reversion, and seek for a renewal of it, does not this imply, that though the right was once mine, it is now gone? Take heed, Sir, that you do not, by your interpretation, make the purposes and decrees of the unchangeable God, as uncertain and reversible as those of fickle and inconstant man. On all these accounts, I have no hesitation in pronouncing, that your interpretation does not give the true sense of the passage in question, which, since the literal and obvious sense, is thus without a rival, proves most incontestibly the pre-existence of the Saviour.

Phill. ii. 5. 6. 7. 8.

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in  
"Christ Jesus: who being in the form of God,

“ thought it not robbery to be equal with God;  
 “ but 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 be-  
 “ came obedient unto death, even the death of  
 “ the cross.”

On this very interesting passage, you observe,  
 “ that there is not one expression which implies  
 “ that Jesus possessed a superior *nature*.” At the  
 same time you “willingly allow” that “the whole  
 “ may admit of a convenient explanation, upon  
 “ the supposition that such was the case.”\* I con-  
 sider this as a confession that the sense in which we  
 take the passage is unobjectionable, as far as the  
 construction and connection are concerned, and is  
 to be rejected only because it militates against the  
 Unitarian doctrine of the simple humanity. I am,  
 therefore, now much in the same situation as with  
 respect to the last passage: I have rather to com-  
 bat your sense, than to defend my own. Let me  
 therefore follow you in your explanation.

The principal expression, which stands in your  
 way, is “Who being in the form of God,” which  
 you thus explain. “To be *in the form of God*, and  
 “ to be *instead of God*, are obviously expressions of  
 “ the same general import.”† *Obviously*, Sir, do

\* Letters, page 196. † Page 193.

you say? Sure I am, such a thing would never have occurred to me: for to my apprehension there are many, very many shades of difference between them: and I think that you yourself would hardly contend that ‘to be in the form of a servant’ is of the same import as ‘to be instead of a servant.’ If, however, such should be your opinion, who will say that the doctrine of the Docetæ may not yet revive?. Indeed the Docetæ and the Unitarians appear to argue much after the same manner, only upon opposite principles. The Docetæ affirm that the Saviour is, as to his nature, divine: and hence they infer that he could not be really human, but was only in appearance a man. The Unitarians, on the other hand, affirm, that the Saviour, as to his nature, is human; and hence they infer that he cannot be really divine, but is only ‘instead of God.’ Both are equally wrong. But let us see what use you make of the above parallellism. It follows: “Moses is said  
 “ (Exod. iv. 16.) to be *instead of God* to Aaron;  
 “ he, by divine appointment, informed him of the  
 “ purposes of God. Our Lord was *in the form of*  
 “ *God*, inasmuch as he spoke and acted with divine  
 “ authority; and, according to Jewish phraseology,  
 “ (see p. 78. and 157.) he was *a God*, be-  
 “ cause he was thus in the form of God. He was  
 “ the representative of God: God by him declared

“ his gracious purposes to mankind, invested him  
 “ with authority, and by his supernatural agency  
 “ enabled him to prove that authority.”\* This  
 then is the argument: ‘To be *in the form of God*,  
 means the same as to be *instead of God*. Moses  
 was instead of God. Why? Because he acted by  
 divine appointment. Therefore Christ must be  
 said to be in the form of God, for a similar rea-  
 son, because he spoke and acted by divine autho-  
 rity: and being thus in the form of God, he was,  
 as the Jews were accustomed to speak, a God.  
 Again: Moses was instead of God to Aaron, be-  
 cause he informed Aaron of the purposes of God:  
 In like manner our Lord was in the form of God,  
 or a God to us, because God by him, as his re-  
 presentative, declared his gracious purposes to  
 mankind. Hence it appears that to be *in the*  
*form of God*, to be *instead of God*, and to be a  
*God*, are all expressions of the same general im-  
 port, and when applied to our Saviour, mean no  
 more than a mere man, acting by divine authority.  
 But you thus proceed “ Whenever Jesus spoke  
 “ and acted in the form of God, with the divine  
 “ authority with which he was invested, whenever  
 “ he claimed honour and obedience, because he so  
 “ spake and acted, he was *as God*: and thus  
 “ much for the purposes of his mission, we know

\* Ibid.



“ he did assume : it was not only his right, but his  
 “ duty to do so.”\* Does it not from hence follow  
 that our Saviour was *in the form of God*, was a *God*,  
 was *as God*, at the very time when he was ex-  
 ecuting the office to which he was appointed, and  
*because* he was executing this office; and that  
 these expressions are on no other account appli-  
 cable to him, but because he was invested with  
 divine authority for that purpose? Now, Sir, I  
 have carefully examined this whole passage, over  
 and over again; and I can find in it nothing  
 which asserts this, nothing which implies it. On  
 the contrary, if any thing of the kind is implied  
 in this passage, it is, that the Saviour, in order to  
 execute the purposes of his mission, not only did  
 not put on, but actually put off the form of God :  
 that while he was executing this office upon earth,  
 he did not appear in this form, but had previously  
 emptied himself of it, had made himself of no re-  
 putation, and had assumed a form of the very  
 opposite kind, even the form of a servant. But,  
 as I before observed, I see in this passage no men-  
 tion at all of the office of Christ, but only of that  
 humble condition, in which he submitted to an  
 ignominious death, contrasted with a previous  
 state of glory, from which he had voluntarily de-  
 scended. You indeed are pleased to insinuate

that in order to arrive at this sense, we must "interpret Jewish phraseology by our own modes of thinking and speaking:" for that otherwise, "this passage speaks no other language than what the Apostle elsewhere employs, that there is one Mediator between God and men, the MAN Christ Jesus."\* Sir, your own interpretation affords abundant ground for retorting this (with respect to us unfounded) charge. For could any person, who was not pre-determined to find the Unitarian doctrine in every passage relating to the Saviour, have maintained that this passage asserts nothing more than the *humanity* of the *Mediator*? And how is a colour given to this assertion? Even by adopting English idiom to Greek phraseology; by taking a word, which in English is equivocal, in that sense which the corresponding Greek word will not express. Thus you assert: "To be *in the form of God*, and to be *instead of God*, are obviously words of the same general import." It is true, we sometimes use the English word *form* somewhat loosely to denote mere outward shew; or as Johnson defines "external appearance without the essential qualities:" and perhaps a person, who is ignorant of the original word here rendered *form*, might be led, by this not unusual sense of the word, to think that the two expres-

\* Page 196.

sions bear some resemblance to each other. But the original word *μορφη* has not this sense: it means, indeed, the exterior of a thing, but not an exterior without the essential qualities; but an exterior which implies the essence, and by means of which the essence is exhibited and manifested. Thus, that effulgence of unapproachable light, which, under the law, first in the tabernacle, and afterwards in the temple, was displayed between the Cherubim, which overshadowed the mercy-seat, was the *form* by means of which the divine presence was manifested to the Israelites of old. And we read of our blessed Saviour, that having appeared after his resurrection, first to Mary Magdalene, he afterwards appeared to two of the Disciples, in another form *εν ἑτέρᾳ μορφῇ*:\* the essence was the same as before, but the *form* or exterior was different. And it is observable, that when our Lord was transfigured upon the holy mount, in the presence of three of his Disciples, the word in the original is *μετεμορφωθη*,† which implies that his figure or exterior underwent a change: and this glorious occurrence may serve to illustrate, in no small degree, the meaning of the Apostle, in the place before us. In both cases there was a change of form; but the change was

\* Mark xvi. 12.

† Matt. xvii. 2. and Mark ix. 2. compared with Luke ix. 29.

in opposite directions. The Evangelists speak of a change from meanness to glory; St. Paul of a change from glory to meanness: and the whole passage may be thus explained, "Who being in "the form of God," encircled with divine glory, and dwelling in unapproachable light, "thought "it not robbery to be equal with God," or rather, "did not esteem the being as God, (*αρπαγμαον*) a "thing to be eagerly grasped, and pertinaciously "retained;" did not insist upon his right, and resolutely determine, always to appear as God; "but made himself of no reputation, and took "upon him the form of a servant, and was made "in the likeness of men:" he divested himself of the exterior of the divinity, by assuming the exterior of a servant, and becoming partaker of the human nature: "and being found in fashion," in state and condition, "as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the "death of the cross." And thus this remarkable passage plainly teaches, that before the Saviour of the world assumed the form of a servant, and became man, he was existing in the form of God, and consequently was God. It is, therefore, an illustrious proof both of the pre-existence, and of the divinity of Christ.

Col. i. 15. 16. 17.

"Who is the image of the invisible God, the

“ first born of every creature, for by him were all  
 “ things created, that are in heaven, and that are  
 “ in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be  
 “ thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or  
 “ powers; all things were created by him, and for  
 “ him; and he is before all things, and by him all  
 “ things consist.”

Against referring the two last verses to the creation of the natural world, you state four objections,\* not one of which, as far as I perceive, has the least force. Your first objection is drawn from the *connexion*, which you tell us “ refers entirely to Gospel blessings; and to the instrumentality of Jesus Christ, in bringing mankind into a state of reconciliation and blessedness.” Admitting the context to be as you state, what is there in this, which should prevent the Apostle from exalting the character of the instrument in what you call the new creation, by asserting his instrumentality also in “ the original natural creation?” Your second and third objections may be taken together. they are as follows, “ 2. The manner of expression essentially differs from the usual manner of expression respecting the natural creation.” “ 3. The natural creation is uniformly ascribed to God, as one person, and to him only.” For the manner in which the na-

\* Letters, page 175.

tural creation is expressed, you refer us to p. 166: where I find a collection of passages, chiefly from the Old Testament, in which God is declared to be the creator of all things. And hence you infer,\* that “if it was not God, but his holy servant Jesus, who created the heaven, earth, and sea, and all things in them, we may reasonably expect this singular fact to be declared unambiguously, and by proper authority.” But, Sir, let me ask you, who ever said, who ever supposed that God was not the creator? You must know that no such language was ever held by any Orthodox member of the Christian Church. You cannot be ignorant that the first article in one of our Creeds, † runs thus, “I believe in God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible.” And though we also say, to use the language of the same Creed, that it was the only-begotten Son, “by whom all things were made;” yet if this is to assert that God was not the creator, you, Sir, are guilty of the same heterodoxy, in respect of your new creation, which you ascribe sometimes to the *agency* of Christ; sometimes simply to Christ; and sometimes solely to God: as appears from the following scriptural account of this new creation, which occurs in the same page. “The

\* Page 167. † The Nicene Creed.

“Apostle, speaking of Christian believers, says,  
 “Eph. ii. 10. ‘For we are HIS (i. e. God’s) work-  
 “manship, having been created *through Jesus*  
 “*Christ* to good works,’ and in v. 15. speaking  
 “of the union of the Jews and Gentiles, says,  
 “that CHRIST abolished by his death the cause  
 “of enmity, (in order to create in himself of the  
 “two, one new man.) In ch. iii. 9. he says that  
 “GOD ‘hath created all things,’ meaning, if we  
 “judge from the connexion, created them anew  
 “to holiness.”—You object 4. that “if the  
 “Apostle had intended to reveal the supposed fact,  
 “it is surely reasonable to suppose that he would  
 “have expressed himself unambiguously, by say-  
 “ing, for instance, (instead of what he does say  
 “in v. 16.) “For he (i. e. *Jesus*) made heaven  
 “and earth, and the sea, and all things that are  
 “in them,” as in Acts xiv. 15. we find that he  
 “said “the *Living God*, who made heaven and  
 “earth, the sea, and all things that are in them.”  
 Your whole argument proceeds upon the suppo-  
 sition, that if this passage relates to the visible crea-  
 tion by Jesus Christ, the Apostle must be here  
*revealing* this fact; that is, must be now making  
 it known for the first time. But why should this  
 be supposed? Admitting the fact to be so, it had  
 doubtless been revealed long before this Epistle  
 was penned; it was a fact well known to the

Colossians, and firmly believed by the whole Christian Church. There could, therefore, under these circumstances, be no ambiguity in the expressions which the Apostle employs. At least it must be acknowledged that the expressions are to the full as ambiguous when referred to your new creation: and if I were to say that they are much more ambiguous, I should not err from the truth. And you will please further to observe, that in Acts xiv. 15. the Apostle was discoursing to ignorant Heathens, to whom he was revealing the true God, under a character best of all adapted to their capacities; that of *Creator of the Universe*. No wonder, therefore, that his language upon this occasion somewhat differs from that which he employs, when speaking to *Christians*, concerning the Lord, in whom they believed. But your own interpretation is liable to many and great objections; a few of them I shall now proceed to state.

1. Who is the image of the invisible God? (ΕΙΚΩΝ ΤΗΣ ΘΕΟΥ ΤΗΣ ΑΟΡΑΤΗΣ.) You explain, "Who is the representative of God to Man?" I have observed that you frequently apply this expression to Jesus Christ, and have before asked, "Where is this said?" If you have for it no better authority than this passage, it is without warrant. ΕΙΚΩΝ may signify a *representation*, and we may suppose the meaning to be, "Who is a visible representation



“ of God who is invisible.” But it does not signify a *representative*, or one who bears the character, and exercises the power of another, which is your sense of the word.

2. The first-born of every creature, *πρωτότοκος πάσης κτίσεως*; i. e. as some of the Fathers explain, (placing the accent on the penult, *πρωτότοκος*;) (the first author of the whole creation;) or, as others, in allusion to the eternal generation, (accenting on the anti-penult, *πρωτότοκος*;) (born before the whole creation,) you explain, “ is pre-eminent in the new “ creation.” This explanation proceeds upon the assumption that the passage does not relate to the visible world: But how is this made out? We shall see presently.

3. “ By him *were* all things created (*εκτισθη*) “ that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible “ and invisible.” You render, “ in him all things “ *have been* created;” and explain to mean “ have “ been *anew* created.” Now, that the creation here spoken of is the *moral* or *new* creation, you think is rendered exceeding probable from what is said in v. 20.\* “ And having made peace through the “ blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things “ to himself, whether they be things in earth or “ things in heaven.” The argument which you build upon this verse is thus stated; † “ I think it

\* Page 176. † Page 174, note.†

“ cannot reasonably be denied that the meaning of  
 “ the phrase ‘ things in heaven and things in earth,’  
 “ is the same here as in v. 20. The point then is,  
 “ whether, from the Scriptures, we have sufficient  
 “ reason to believe that the gospel dispensation  
 “ was designed to reconcile the inhabitants of hea-  
 “ ven to God; if not, which I think very clear,  
 “ things in *heaven*’ must mean, men of some par-  
 “ ticular civil or religious class, as well as ‘ things  
 “ on earth.’ That this is the fact is obvious from  
 “ Eph. i. 10. compared with ii. 11.-18.: and these  
 “ passages also shew what is meant by the expres-  
 “ sion in question, viz. the two great bodies of  
 “ Jews and Gentiles, who in the Gospel were  
 “ united into one body: ‘ things in heaven,’ de-  
 “ noting the Jews, and ‘ things on earth,’ of  
 “ course the rest of the world.” There is not a  
 little mistake and misapprehension of the Apostle’s  
 meaning in this argument. You think it very  
 clear that the gospel dispensation was not designed  
 to reconcile the inhabitants of heaven to God:  
 and I confess that there is not, as far as I know  
 any good reason to think, that it was; and fur-  
 ther, I see no reason to think, that even upon  
 our interpretation, any such thing is asserted in  
 this passage. “ By him to reconcile all things to  
 himself”—that is, as you interpret, ‘ to reconcile  
 ‘ all things to God.’ Sir, even the English does

not require this interpretation; and the original not only does not require it, but will not bear it. δι' αὐτὴ ἀποκαταλλάξαι τὰ πάντα εἰς αὐτὸν. If αὐτὴ refers to Christ, why should not αὐτὸν also? Nor is the reconciliation here spoken of, the reconciliation of things in earth and things in heaven either to God or to Christ; for then the expression would have been ἀποκαταλλάξαι αὐτῷ, not εἰς αὐτὸν.\* But the reconciliation is rather of things in earth and things in heaven to each other; which, I presume, might have been effected through the blood of the Cross, even upon the supposition that the gospel dispensation was not designed to reconcile the inhabitants of heaven to God. It is to be observed, that the expression here is the same as before, where it was said that all things were created δι' αὐτὴ καὶ εἰς αὐτὸν by him and for him; and the meaning is, 'by him to bring all things together, 'things in earth and things in heaven,' that they may be all formed into one body 'for him' that he may be head and Lord of all;' and thus the sense of the passage is similar to Eph. i. 10. It is now manifest that no such inference can be drawn from this passage as that which you propose, namely, that things in heaven *must* mean men upon earth; and we may still go on to believe that "things in heaven," actually mean things in

\* See 2. Cor. v. 18. 19. 20. Matt. v. 24.

heaven: and if so, how unfounded is your supposition, that ‘things in heaven,’ mean the Jews, and ‘things on earth,’ the Gentiles; and also, that by things visible, we are to understand “those who are in the usual walks of life;” and by things ‘invisible,’ “those who, living in the seclusion of ecclesiastical or civil dignity or state, are not within the reach of common observation, Kings and Princes, Rulers and Magistrates.” You object to the common interpretation, that if such be the Apostle’s meaning, it is expressed ambiguously. But how much more forcibly may this objection be urged against your interpretation? What reason is there to say, that if this be the sense of the passage, it is expressed not ambiguously merely, but even enigmatically?

4. “By him all things consist,” “*τα παντα εν αυτω συνεστηκε*,” which you render “all things are united in him:” and you declare that the connexion obviously points to this use of the verb *συνεστηκε*, which, in your judgment, “is a fully justifiable one, both as to derivation and actual usage.”\* The use to which the connection points, will depend upon the sense which we put upon the context. If the passage relate to the creation of the visible world, the Public Version exhibits the natural and obvious use of the verb.

\* Page 175, note.\*

Your sense of the passage may make a difference : so that, as far as the connection is concerned, we may stand upon somewhat equal ground. But in respect of the derivation, I cannot yield even thus much to you. The Latin word *confisto*, or the English *confist*, is unquestionably a more literal rendering of *συνιστημι*, than any word which has the sense of *union*. Also the tense in which the Apostle uses this verb, is no less favourable to our sense, than it is adverse to yours. Your interpretation absolutely requires the *present* tense : to the common interpretation, the *perfect* tense is more suitable ; and the meaning is—By him all things *were* created, and by him all things *have* continued : i. e. have ever since been preserved. Upon the whole, I agree with Dr. Clarke, that  
 “ nothing can be more forced and unnatural than  
 “ the Socinians interpretation of this passage, who  
 “ understand it, figuratively, of the *new creation* by  
 “ the Gospel.”\* And from the considerations already stated, I feel no hesitation in drawing a conclusion the very reverse of that which you have drawn,† from a conviction, “ that whatever be  
 “ the meaning of the separate parts, the whole together has” “ reference to the original natural  
 “ creation.”

\* Scripture-doctrine of the Trinity, No. 550, page 80.

† Letters, page 172.

Heb. i. 8. 10.

“ But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O  
“ God, is for ever and ever—And, Thou, Lord, in  
“ the beginning, hast laid the foundation of the  
“ earth, and the heavens are the works of thine  
“ hands.

These are two passages, the former from the forty-fifth Psalm, the latter from the hundred and second, which are applied to Christ: in the former, he is expressly called *God*—in the latter, he is declared to be the creator of the visible world. In your *discourse* you affirmed, that the former of these passages ought to have been rendered “ God is thy throne:”\* And this I observe, is the rendering of the “ *Improved version.*” But you now give the preference to the public version,† and very wisely no longer press upon us a rendering which in effect makes the Son to be superior to the Father: for which is greater? the Throne? or he that sitteth thereon? But you contend that this appellation God, is not used in reference to *nature*, but merely to *dignity* and *office*.§ In order to determine this point, we must consider, who it is to whom this appellation is given. It is to the Son; “ But unto the Son he saith, thy throne,

\* Disc. page 57, note.

† Letters, page 164. See also Introduction page x

§ Page 165.

“ O God, is for ever and ever :” that Son, who is expressly called the brightness of the Father’s glory, and the express image of his person : the same of whom the Father declared, “ Thou art my “ Son ; this day have I begotten thee.” Of which do these things favour most? of nature? or of office?—In the other passage, as I have already observed, the creation of the world is ascribed to the Son. This you will not allow. You admit, indeed, “ that the words may be referred to the “ Son, as far as the construction is concerned :” but you say that “ the construction in no way “ whatever requires it.”\* To whom then are the words to be referred? Thus you tell us. “ This and the two following verses are quoted “ from Ps. cii. and were obviously addressed to the “ Supreme Being. The writer to the Hebrews “ employs them as a proof that the sovereignty of “ Christ would be lasting, since he who declared “ that it would be so, is himself almighty, un- “ changeable and everlasting.”† According to this statement, the duration of Christ’s kingdom depends upon the attributes of God, and not upon the declaration of his will ; and the Apostle’s argument is as follows: God *was* before the heavens were made, or the foundation of the earth was laid, and he shall remain, after these shall

\* Page 179. † Ibid.

all have perished: therefore Christ's kingdom is a lasting kingdom! But really, Sir, I cannot conceive, how any unprejudiced person, who reads the passage with attention, can hesitate for a moment to acknowledge, that both these quotations are intended to refer to the Son, in order to shew his superiority to the Angels: And if so, then the former proves his divinity, and the latter his pre-existence and agency in the creation of the visible world.

These are all the passages, which I introduced into the *Preservative*, in order to prove the pre-existence and divinity of the Saviour. There are, however, two others, introduced afterwards upon another occasion, and for another purpose, which, as they refer to the same points, may fitly be considered at present.

Tit. ii. 13.

“Looking for the blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ.”

In a note upon this passage,\* I referred to Granville Sharp's “Remarks on the uses of the Definitive Article,” where it is shewn that the true rendering is, “Looking for the glorious appearing of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ.” You acknowledge that this is a prac-

\* *Preserv.* page 35.



licable rendering;\* but deny that it is a necessary one: you admit "that it is accordant with the Greek "idiom," but affirm that "it is not required by "it."† That it is a practicable rendering, and accordant with the Greek idiom, is most certain: because, as far as my observation has gone, there is no instance (this and the other disputed passages excepted) in which a different rendering was ever thought of for words of the same kind, and in the same form. If, therefore, the disputed passages are to be excepted, it is incumbent upon those, who are advocates for such exception, to shew the lawfulness of it, not by vague reasonings and unwarranted assertions, but by producing clear and legitimate instances, in which the rendering *must* be otherwise. This you have not done, you have contented yourself with referring to two Pamphlets, which you denominate BLUNT and WINSTANLEY, the latter especially, in which as I understand from you the point in question is proved.§ I have never seen either of these Pamphlets, and being in London in the spring of the year 1809, I endeavoured in vain to procure them. Blunt's work, I was told, was out of print; and the publisher of Mr. Winstanley's book, assured me, that the author had, some time before, actually withdrawn from him all the

\* Letters, page 148. † Page 149. § Page 149, note.\*

copies which remained unfold. There is, therefore, some reason to suppose, that Mr. Winstanley, was not himself perfectly satisfied with his own *proofs*. But whatever these proofs were, I have no opportunity of acknowledging or of denying their force. All therefore that is left for me to do, is to vindicate the rendering proposed by Granville Sharp, and to shew that it is not only justified, but even required, according to the invariable usage of the Greek language. That the English reader may perceive the full force of the argument, by which I mean to contend, that the title 'GREAT GOD,' is here ascribed to Jesus Christ, I will first give an exact literal rendering of that part of the passage to which the argument more immediately applies; and then compare it with another passage of a similar form, the true sense of which can hardly be mistaken. The words in the common version 'the great God and our Saviour,' literally rendered are 'the great God and Saviour of us,' *τὸ μέγα θεὸς καὶ σωτὴρ ἡμῶν*. And we have a passage of a similar form in Eph. i. 3. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ," *ὁ θεὸς καὶ πατὴρ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ*. In which passage the relative nouns GOD and FATHER, are coupled by the conjunction *and*; and the article *the* is prefixed only to the former: but it is manifest that the article, so pre-

fixed, affects both the combined nouns, so as to make them, in conjunction, denote one of the terms in a relation, of which 'our Lord Jesus Christ' is the other term: and it is in effect declared, that the Relate stands to its Correlate (Jesus Christ) in the double relation of God and Father. Just so it is in the other instance 'the appearing of the great God and Saviour of us:' GOD and SAVIOUR are relative nouns, coupled by the conjunction *and*; the article, prefixed to the former, shews that the two in conjunction, denote the Relate, in a relation, of which the pronoun *us* denotes the Correlate: and the whole declares that the Relate stands to its Correlate, in the double relation of God and Saviour. But this Relate is here expressly said to be JESUS CHRIST: therefore, it is JESUS CHRIST, who stands to *us* in the double relation of God and Saviour: consequently Jesus Christ is here expressly called the GREAT GOD. It gives the strongest confirmation to this reasoning, and establishes the conclusion drawn from it beyond (one would conceive) the very possibility of doubt, to know that the Greek Fathers, who must be supposed to have understood their own language, have uniformly and unanimously given to the passage this interpretation; of which Mr. Wordf-

worth's six letters to Granville Sharp, afford the clearest and most decisive proof.

There is another passage Eph. v. 5. *εν τη βασιλεια τε χριστου και θεου* which in the publick translation is rendered 'in the kingdom of Christ *and of God*;' but which being properly rendered, asserts the divinity of Christ, no less strongly than the preceding. I will first produce a passage of the same form, the sense of which will be readily acknowledged. 1. Cor. xv. 24. *οταν παραδω την βασιλειαν τω θεω και πατρι*; which in our version is thus rendered 'when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father.' In the original of this passage, the conjunction combines the two nouns GOD and FATHER, and the article is prefixed to the first noun, precisely in the same manner as in the former instance: but the force of the article is somewhat different: it has, as grammarians speak, the force of the possessive pronoun: and therefore, the true rendering is, 'when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to *his* God and Father.' Here then, as before, GOD and FATHER constitute the Relate in a relation, of which CHRIST is the Correlate; and it is declared that the Relate stands to its Correlate in the double relation of GOD and FATHER. In like manner in the original of Eph. v. 5. the conjunction combines, and the article is prefixed precisely in the

same manner: consequently the passage sets forth the double relation, in which Christ stands to his kingdom; he is *its* CHRIST and GOD. And it is to be observed, that this passage has accordingly, as Mr. Wordsworth has abundantly proved, been uniformly understood by the Greek Fathers, to declare of CHRIST that he is also GOD.\*

Heb. i. 3.

“Who being the brightness (*απαυγασμα*) of his  
“glory, and the express image of his person,  
“(*ὁμοεικείας*) 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.”

You affirm that the words of the original,  
“do not justify this rendering,” and tell us that

\* In the Latin version this passage is rendered ‘in regno Christi et Dei,’ where the want of the article makes the sense ambiguous. Accordingly it was understood by some of the Latin Fathers, in the sense in which it is taken in the English version, ‘in the kingdom of Christ and of God:’ and they applied this text to prove the equality of the Son with the Father, against the Arians, who argued for the inferiority of the Son, from the order in which the two are arranged in the form of baptism. Now, if from the same ambiguity, the original text had been capable of this sense, would it not have been applied to the same purpose by some of the Greek Fathers? For, as Mr. Wordsworth observes, “they would (as might easily be shewn) have been equally glad to have availed themselves of a verse, which should have supplied them with those doctrinal topics, which were by the Latin Church derived from the clause in question. How then, we mean to ask, did it happen that no Greek ever adopted that interpretation?” *Letters to G. Sharp, page 37.*

“ *απαυγασμα* means a ray or *shining forth*, and  
 “ *ὑποστασις* obviously denotes the essential attributes  
 “ or moral perfections of the divine character.  
 “ The true rendering probably is, ‘ Who being a  
 “ ray of his glory, and the image of his perfec-  
 “ tions, and directing all things by the word of  
 “ his power.’\* This meaning you illustrate by a  
 passage from the book of Wisdom, ch. vii. 26.;  
 the first sentence of which, *απαυγασμα γαρ εστι φωτος*  
*αιδιου*, you thus translate; ‘ For she is a ray of in-  
 visible light:’ In which translation there are two  
 mistakes: for *απαυγασμα* does not, as far as I can  
 find, ever signify a ray or *shining forth*; but  
 merely *splendor* or *brightness*; a splendor arising  
 perhaps from the continued emission of rays, but  
 not the rays emitted. Nor does *αιδιος* signify in-  
 visible. Indeed the very supposition of invisible  
 light is manifestly absurd. We have all admired  
 the boldness of the poet who ventured to speak of  
 “ darkness visible,” but who before ever thought  
 of *light invisible*? But, Sir, it is not difficult to  
 discover the occasion of your mistake: you have  
 evidently misconceived the origin of the word:  
 you derive it from the privative *α* and *ειδω* *video*;  
 whereas it really comes from *αει* *semper*: conse-  
 quently the sentence is properly translated in the  
 common version, ‘ For she is the brightness of the

\* Letters, page 191.

everlasting light:’ and if so, then your own illustration makes against you: for the *brightness* must have been coeval with the light; and if the Son be the brightness of the *everlasting* light, then must he have been from everlasting. From the preceding examination of the passage illustrating, it does not appear that the passage illustrated, is mis-translated in the first instance alledged; and ‘the brightness of his glory’ may still pass as the just rendering of *απαυγασμα της δοξης*. But you tell us in the next place that “*ὑποστασις* obviously denotes “the essential attributes or moral perfections of “the divine character.” What, Sir, does *ὑποστασις* obviously denote attribute? I confess if I had been called upon to name a word which denotes that which is *not* attribute, I should, without hesitation, have fixed upon this very word; which, I had been always taught to suppose, denoted SUBSTANCE the *support* of ATTRIBUTE: and I should probably have appealed to the derivation of the word in confirmation of this sense.

There is yet another passage, not introduced into the *Preservative*, upon which I beg to say a few words. It is the following:

Rom. ix. 5.

“Of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ  
“came; who is over all, God blessed for ever,

“ ἐξ ἧς ὁ χριστός το κατὰ σάρκα ὁ ὢν ἐπὶ πάντων θεός εὐλογητός  
 “ εἰς τρεῖς αἰῶνας.”

The rendering of the common version, (which you allow to be justifiable, as far as language merely is concerned,) you propose to supersede by the following, of which, you tell us, the original equally well admits, ‘From whom was the Christ, as to the flesh. God, who is over all, *be* blessed for ever.’\* You will not allow “that the expression το κατὰ σάρκα according to the “flesh,” is any proof “that the Christ had two “natures.” And you refer us to v. 3. where the Apostle speaks of his brethren, his kinsmen, “according to the flesh, κατὰ σάρκα.”† But, Sir, you do not notice that in the last instance, the article is wanting before κατὰ. Its insertion in the other instance, you will, I think, allow, must make some difference: and what can its use be, unless to remind us, that Christ was of Israel, *only* according to the flesh; but that in truth he had also a higher nature, of which he proceeds immediately to speak. And thus the connection plainly points to the common interpretation of the latter part of the passage; to which also the order of the words is as manifestly favourable, as it is unfavourable to any interpretation which proceeds

\* Letters, page 145. † Ibid, note.\*



upon the supposition that the term ‘God,’ does not refer to Christ.

The original has been thought to admit of different renderings, according to the punctuation adopted. The Unitarian rendering above given, requires the point after *σαρκα*. Mr. Locke, placing a point after *παντων*, thus paraphrases the passage. “And of them, as to his fleshly extraction, Christ is come, he who is over all; God “be blessed for ever.” By both these renderings, the latter part of the passage, which, in the common version, positively asserts the divinity of Christ, is converted into a Doxology in praise of the Father. But the inadmissibility of both has been ably shewn by Dr. Middleton;\* whose words, as far as is necessary to his argument, I shall quote, chiefly for the sake of repelling from him, what I cannot but account an unfair attack. “On the first of these constructions, it is to be “observed, that in all the Doxologies, both of “the LXX. and of the N. T. in which *ευλογητος* is “used, it is placed at the beginning of the sentence: “in the N. T. there are five instances, all con- “spiring to prove this usage; and in the LXX. “about forty. The same arrangement is used in “the formulae of cursing; in which *επικαταρατος* “always precedes the mention of the person cursed.

\* In his doctrine of the Greek article, page 459.

“ The reading would on this construction rather  
 “ have been *ευλογητος ὁ ὡν ἐπὶ πάντων θεος εἰς τὰς αἰῶνας.*  
 “ Against the other supposed Doxology which was  
 “ approved by Locke, the objection is still stronger;  
 “ since that would require us not only to transpose  
 “ *ευλογητος*, but to read ‘Ο θεος. This word, as has  
 “ been already remarked, though it have some lati-  
 “ tude in taking or rejecting the article, never uses  
 “ its licence so as to create the least possible ambi-  
 “ guity; thus it can make no difference, whether  
 “ we write (viii. 8.) *θεῶ* or *τῷ θεῷ ἀρεσται*, but *ευλογητος*  
 “ *θεος* will appear to signify not “Blessed be God,”  
 “ but that the words are to be taken in immediate  
 “ concord with each other; accordingly in all in-  
 “ stances where a Doxology is meant we find *ευλογητος*  
 “ *ὁ θεος*. See also below on 1. Cor. i. 9. For these  
 “ reasons I conclude that both the proposed con-  
 “ structions are inadmissible.” Having quoted the  
 first part of this passage, as far as the words, ‘The  
 reading then would, on this construction, RATHER  
 have been *ευλογητος ὁ ὡν ἐπὶ πάντων θεος εἰς τὰς αἰῶνας;*  
 you observe, “ This is the only reason Mr. M. ad-  
 “ duces, and the only one, which, in my opinion,  
 “ can be adduced, against the rendering, ‘God, who  
 “ is over all be blessed for ever.’ Yet he afterwards  
 “ says, ‘For THESE reasons, I conclude, that both  
 “ the proposed constructions are INADMISSIBLE,’  
 “ referring to the above, and to Mr. Locke’s, which

“ is “ God be blessed for ever.” Now, Sir, would not any one conceive, from the manner in which the word THESE is printed, that Dr. M. had assigned one reason, and no more, for the inadmissibility of the two constructions, one and the same for the inadmissibility of both, and that you were animadverting upon the impropriety of his speaking of that one reason in the plural number? And yet upon referring to the above quotation, it plainly appears that he assigns two reasons, one applicable to the Unitarian construction, the other to Mr. Locke’s. But you proceed. “ Mr. M.’s “ assertion then, as far as it respects our construction, amounts to this, ‘ It is inadmissible, “ *because* the reading, would on this construction, “ *rather* have been *ευλογητος ὁ ὢν ἐπὶ πάντων θεος εἰς τὰς* “ *αἰώνας.*’ As Mr. M. has not ventured to maintain that such must have been, or even probably “ would have been, the arrangement of the words “ on our construction, his unjustifiable assertion “ may be left to its just fate.” This, Sir, is a very harsh and an unmerited sentence: and upon what is it founded? upon a mere quibble (for I can call it by no better name) upon the word *rather*. A liberal controversialist sometimes uses less decisive language than he might have employed: and thus Dr. M. has acted in the present instance. For most assuredly he did not mean to

say, that the present order of the words admits of your construction, but that, nevertheless, another order would have been better, because more usual: on the contrary, he intended to declare that agreeably to the established usage of the Greek language, your construction requires a different order from that which the text exhibits; and because the order of the words is not such as your construction requires, that therefore, your construction is inadmissible.\* What the usage is upon such occasions, he has clearly shewn; and this usage, as far as appears, is invariable. If you think that the present order will admit of your construction, it is your part to prove it, as I before observed upon a similar occasion, not by vague assertion, or by fanciful distinctions, but by clear and undeniable examples. Till this is done, I shall adhere to the common construction, which, I doubt not, is the true one.

I have thus examined, somewhat at large, the preceding passages of Scripture, in order to vindicate them from the misrepresentations and forced constructions, which have been put upon them, and to shew that they contain unequivocal and

\* In sentences of similar construction, this sense of the word *rather* is not uncommon. Matt. x. 28.—Mark xv. 11.—Luke xi. 22. I may be oblig'd to bring Dr. O's own authority for this use of the word. "Agreeably to a common use "of *ut* in the N. T. it may here express the consequence "rather than the object, &c." Letters, page 216, note. §

decisive proofs of the pre-existence and divinity of Christ. Nor is it any objection to these doctrines,\* that the blessed Jesus, while he was upon earth, spake of God as his Father, and himself as Man; that, as such, he declared his inferiority to the Father, to whom he ascribed his mission, his miracles, and his doctrine; that he possessed human feelings and affections, and was subject to human wants and sufferings. All these things are the consequence of his manifestation in the flesh, and prove the truth of his human nature, of which the Unitarians are not more strenuous assertors than we. We believe that the divine Logos assumed our nature, and became Man; that in this nature he lived, suffered, and died; that in the same nature he rose from the dead, ascended into heaven, and was received into glory; and lastly, that in this nature, thus glorified, he is now at the right hand of God, and will hereafter come to judgement. In this manner is our Lord and Saviour represented to us in Scripture: and we receive this representation as an indubitable proof, that he was truly and properly Man. But we do not set these explicit declarations of the human nature, in opposition to the no less explicit, though perhaps less numerous, declarations of the divine nature: we do not sit down coolly to cal-

\* See Letters, page 117-129.

culate, how often Christ is called *Man*, how seldom he is called *God*, and make the greater prevail by the difference: but we receive both declarations with due reverence; we bow to them with submission, and believe that in him both natures are united; that he is both *God* and *Man* in one person.

I said above that the declarations of Christ's divinity are perhaps less numerous than those of his humanity. This is a circumstance which appears to you to deserve attention.\* "It could not," you tell us, "be an object of revelation that Jesus was truly and properly a *Man*; but that he was *more* as to *nature*, could not be known *without* revelation. Might we not then reasonably expect to find that he is expressly and plainly called *God*, at least, as frequently as he is expressly and plainly called *Man*, if he were truly and properly *God*, as well as truly and properly *Man*?" But why as frequently? It is as *Man* that he is related to us: It might, therefore, on this account, were there no other cause, be reasonably expected that his humanity would much more frequently be brought into view than his divinity; because the things, which he did and suffered for us, as *Man*, must much more frequently be the subject of the Apostolical

\* Letters, page 127.

discourses and writings, than his prior existence in the form of God. But we cannot be at a loss to discover another cause, in the heretical opinions, which very early infested the church. Even in the Apostolical age we know that the true and proper humanity of the Saviour was denied: his divinity, as far as we know, never. It is true, the Heretics had corrupt notions of his divinity; but the doctrine itself they held one and all; as well those who admitted his proper humanity, as those who denied it. But, Sir, when false opinions were thus disseminated, and perhaps were widely spreading, was it not most meet, and therefore, might it not reasonably be expected, that the inspired teachers of Christianity would oppose the growing evil by unfolding the true doctrine? And thus accordingly it happened. The beloved Disciple applied himself especially to this work; and hence it is that we find in his writings more clear and explicit declarations respecting the nature of Christ, both as to his humanity, and also his divinity, than are to be found in any other part of the sacred volume. And it is worthy of remark, that though this Apostle openly asserts the humanity of Christ, and severely condemns those who denied it; yet he nowhere denies the divine nature, or passes any censure upon those who maintained it: on the con-

trary, he frees it from the corruptions with which the Heretics had defaced and incumbered it; and, by so doing, he attests the doctrine itself in the strongest and most pointed manner. Would the Apostle have acted thus, if his own belief had been purely Unitarian? Would a teacher of true doctrine have given this encouragement to heresy, if the doctrine in question had been heretical? Is it thus that the Unitarians now, that Dr. Carpenter himself, opposes the doctrine of Christ's divinity? But I forbear to press any further an argument which is obvious to the common sense of every unprejudiced man. It is an irrefragable argument: contradict it, if you can.

In the part of my work to which I am now proceeding, I perceive that I shall not have from you the opposition which I have hitherto experienced. I have not to contend that the Saviour is now exalted to a high state of dignity and power. This makes a part of your own Creed;\* and I will be satisfied with taking it in general, without disputing about particulars. But I must be allowed to comment upon the use which you make of the exaltation of Jesus. "By many," you tell us, it "is regarded as a proof of his proper Deity: to me it appears a direct argument against it." How is this made out? It follows:

\* See Letters, page 205.



“ That Jesus possessed, before he came forth  
 “ from God, dignity and power superior to what  
 “ the Scriptures state to have been bestowed upon  
 “ him as a reward for his having fully executed  
 “ the work assigned him, is a contradiction in  
 “ terms; inferior honour and authority cannot  
 “ have been the reward for the voluntary relin-  
 “ quishing of greater: and if his previous dignity  
 “ and power were greatly inferior to what he  
 “ possessed after his exaltation, which the plain  
 “ and obvious meaning of Scripture directly  
 “ shews, two things necessarily follow, he did not  
 “ possess them by any original constitution of his  
 “ nature, and he was not, *before* his exaltation,  
 “ superior to angels, principalities and powers.  
 “ (See 1. Pet. iii. 22.) That the full force of  
 this argument may be seen at once, I will state it  
 briefly, but truly. The intention of the argument  
 is to shew, that the state of glory to which the  
 Saviour is *now* exalted, is a proof that he did not  
 exist in a *previous* state of glory. For upon the  
 supposition that he did, let the two states be com-  
 pared; and their relation to each other will stand  
 thus: the previous glory was either superior to  
 the present, or inferior: you first shew that it was  
 not superior; and then that it was not inferior:  
 and the consequence is, that there was no such  
 previous state of glory. Or, more briefly thus,

if at all, then either greater or less; but neither greater nor less; therefore, not at all. But, Sir, are you sure that you have exhausted all the relations? I have ever understood, that admitting A. to be neither greater nor less than B. it might, nevertheless, be equal. And this is precisely the case in the present instance. “And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee, before the world was.”\* Our Lord prays not for greater glory than he had before enjoyed; he speaks not of less: he prays for the glorification of that nature which he had assumed, and in which he now appeared a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: he prays in effect, that the Logos incarnate might be admitted to the same glory, which the Logos, before his incarnation, had enjoyed even from all eternity.

Speaking of Matt. xxviii. 20. Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the world; (*τῆς αἰωνίου*, which you translate “of the age,”†) you admit that it contains a promise that Christ would be personally present with his Disciples, at least, during the Apostolical age.‡ Respecting succeeding ages you speak thus cautiously. “I do not venture to say that Jesus is not now personally present, wherever his Disciples assemble toge-

\* John xvii. 5. † Page 202. ‡ Page 201.

“ther as fuch : his powers we know were greatly  
 “ extended when he entered into his glory, and  
 “ they may have been thus far extended: but I  
 “ do not perceive any proof of the fact in the  
 “ Scriptures.”\* And again, in another place, †  
 you fay, “ Whether Jesus has at present any di-  
 “ rect and personal concern in the regulation of  
 “ his spiritual kingdom, we are not certainly  
 “ informed; it feems, however, not unreasonable  
 “ to suppose, that the intellectual powers of our  
 “ exalted Lord have been continually extending,  
 “ that he is acquainted with all the spiritual con-  
 “ cerns of his Disciples, and that he is still em-  
 “ ployed in some way or other for the benefit of  
 “ his church.” Of the continual extension of our  
 Lord’s intellectual powers, I fay nothing; for I  
 know nothing: I perceive no proof, or even inti-  
 mation of the fact in the Scriptures. But I see  
 not what doubt can reasonably be entertained  
 respecting the continuance of his mediatorial king-  
 dom to the present time: for this kingdom can  
 hardly be said to subsist at present, if our Lord  
 has no longer any personal concern in the regu-  
 lation of it. To me it appears as certain that he  
 is now the King of his Church and People, as  
 that he will hereafter be the Judge of all Men.  
 But be this as it may, it is granted that he was

\* Page 201. † Page 210.

King during the Apostolical age, and that he is ordained to be the Judge of Quick and Dead. And when I consider the vast powers requisite for the due discharge of both these offices; that his office of King, supposes an intimate acquaintance with all the spiritual concerns of all his Disciples every where, and power to protect and relieve at one and the same instant, thousands dispersed abroad throughout the world—that his office of Judge implies a power of bringing into light the most secret transactions, and of discerning and laying open the thoughts and intentions of the heart, and that, not in a single instance merely, but in the case of the many Myriads, who have ever lived upon the face of the earth: When I consider these things, I cannot help asking myself, how the powers requisite for these things can be possessed by a mere Man? A Man, let his intellectual powers be ever so extended, is still but a Man; nor will the greatest possible extension of these powers, superadd to him the attributes of divinity: and nothing short of the attributes of divinity, can be a sufficient qualification for that Man to whom God hath given to be head over all things to his church, and by whom he will hereafter judge the world in righteousness. That the Logos incarnate is the man appointed to these offices, though mysterious doctrine, is still credi-

ble. I can conceive that the divine Logos assumed our nature, and still retained the attributes of divinity: for great as the mystery confessedly is, yet it involves no impossibility, or contradiction, or inconsistency. But I cannot conceive that intellectual powers, such as I myself possess, however greater in degree, or however greatly enlarged, are powers sufficient for the Lord of the Christian church, and the Judge of all the earth: and to suppose that a mere man is possessed of the attributes of divinity, such as might be a sufficient qualification for these offices, is a contradiction in terms. In whatever light I view the subject, your doctrine appears to be encumbered with difficulties ten thousand times more and greater than the doctrine of the incarnation. Indeed the latter is only mysterious, but the former is impossible: our present Lord, and future Judge, may be truly a Man, but cannot be simply a Man: for simple humanity is, as I trust I have sufficiently shewn, absolutely inconsistent with the powers necessary for the due discharge of these offices. What remains therefore, but either that you still further curtail your already scanty Creed, or that you renounce Unitarianism altogether. For I see not how Unitarianism can possibly consist with the belief, that Christ ever was the King of his church, or ever will be the Judge of the world.

If I have succeeded in shewing that the Lord Jesus, though truly a Man, is not simply a Man, but is in nature *more*; that he is in truth the divine Logos, who assumed our nature, in which he now sitteth at the right hand of God, invested with the highest authority over the whole creation, and in which he will hereafter return to judge the world in righteousness; the *lawfulness* of paying to him divine honours, and of worshipping the Lord with holy worship, will hardly be doubted: and the only question is, Do the Scriptures authorize such honours and worship? We contend that they do: and in order to establish this point, I shall be required to examine only a few of the passages, usually brought for this purpose.

John v. 22. 23.

“The Father judgeth no man; but hath committed all judgement unto the Son; that (*iva*)  
 “all men should honour the Son, even as (*καθως*)  
 “they honour the Father.”

You tell us that “agreeably to a common use  
 “of *iva* in the New Testament, (see John ix. 3. 39.)  
 “it may here express the consequence, rather  
 “than the object, of judgement being committed  
 “to the Son.”\* And you further tell us that  
*καθως* “may, with strict propriety, be rendered

\* Letters, page 216, note. §

“*since*, (compare ch. xvii. 2.)\* Your sense of the passage may, I imagine, be thus expressed: ‘The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgement to the Son; consequently all men ought to honour the Son, since they honour the Father.’ It is hardly worth your while to contend for a rendering, which most assuredly is not the true one, and, even if it could be established, would not serve your purpose. Be the meaning of *ἵνα* and *καθως* what it may, it is most clear that honour is to be rendered to the Father, and that honour is also to be rendered to the Son; and since the word in the original is the same in both cases, it must have in both the same meaning: for surely we cannot understand from the text that, since we render honour of one kind to the Father, we ought to render honour of another kind to the Son. The meaning therefore will still be, that men ought to render the same honour to the Son, which they are accustomed to render to the Father.

But, Sir, as I before observed, your sense of the passage is not the true sense; nor will the places, to which you have referred in support of it, bear you out. I have looked into them in vain for the meaning which you give to *ἵνα* and *καθως*. I cannot perceive, in either of them, that

\* Page 216.

*iva* is *consequential*, or that *καθως* is *causal*. But were it otherwise, John xvii. 2. could have no influence in determining the meaning of *καθως* in the text, which is essentially different in point of form. In the latter, *καθως* stands before the last clause of the sentence, subjoining it to the preceding clause; which is itself subjoined by *iva* to that immediately preceding: whereas, in John xvii. 2. *καθως* stands before the principal clause, to which the following clause is subjoined by *iva*. Upon the whole *iva* in the text, as in most other places, clearly denotes the final cause; *καθως* also retains its general force, which you rightly state to be *likeness*; and the meaning is ‘God hath committed all judgement to the Son, *in order that* all men should honour the Son, *in the same manner as* they honour the Father.’

You admit that “the too common interpretation may be justified as far as the meaning of ‘the particle is concerned;” but you affirm that “it is unscriptural.”\* You have not told us what this *too common* interpretation is; but from what follows, I suppose it to be the same which I myself have adopted. For thus you proceed, “Any one may satisfy himself that it is not required by the original, by turning to Luke vi. 36. where we find this injunction, ‘Be ye there-

\* Page 217.



“ fore merciful, as *καθως* your Father is merciful;’  
 “ and after he has weighed this expression, may  
 “ he not justly be surprized that you, Sir, who  
 “ must know the force of the original, and may  
 “ reasonably be supposed to found your decisions  
 “ upon it, and not upon the common translation,  
 “ should derive the following inference from this  
 “ text, “ And thus it appears that our Lord  
 “ claimed to himself the same honour which men  
 “ were accustomed to pay to the Father,” (Pref.  
 “ p. 37.”) It is manifest that when I say ‘ our  
 Lord claimed to himself the *same* honour,’ you  
 suppose me to mean that he claimed honour,  
*equal in degree* to that which is paid to the Father;  
 and that I derive this opinion, not from the Greek  
*καθως*, but from the English *even as*. You there-  
 fore refer to Luke vi. 36. to prove that *καθως* does  
 not signify *equality in degree*. True, Sir, it has  
 not necessarily this signification, any more than  
 our English word *same*: You cannot be ignorant  
 that there is such a thing as *sameness in kind*; a  
*sameness*, founded upon an agreement, or, if you  
 please, a resemblance, in all essential circumstances.  
 But things which are the same in kind, are not  
 always equal in degree: they may be, and under  
 certain circumstances they will be; but they are  
 not necessarily so. Thus for instance, God is said  
 in holy Scripture to act towards men with love

and mercy: and men are called upon to conform to his example; with which, if they comply, they also act towards each other with love and mercy. Here the acts are unquestionably the same in kind: but are they equal in degree? It were blasphemy to say so. Man is an ignorant, dependent, sinful creature: God is all-wise, all-powerful, and all-good. Here then is necessarily an inequality in degree. But it is otherwise where the agents are the same, or where their powers are equal. Men are bound, as well by the dictates of nature, as by the precepts of revelation, to honour God in the highest possible manner, and with the greatest possible service: and we learn from this passage of Scripture, that men are to “honour the Son, as they honour the Father:” that is, they are to pay to the Son, honour the same in kind, as they are bound to pay to the Father. Here the agents are the same, and consequently the powers are equal in both cases. Why then may not, I might say, why must not the honour which is the same in kind, be also equal in degree? I see, therefore, no reason why I should retract my former opinion, even in the sense in which you understand it. Be assured, however, that I have not been inattentive to the following friendly remonstrance: “Let me intreat you, Sir, before you repeat such a strong assertion, to observe well those passages

" which I have quoted in p. 112-120. and the  
 " many others of similar tendency which your  
 " acquaintance with the N. T. must recall to your  
 " recollection: possibly you may be led by them  
 " to the conviction that your inference is totally  
 " unfounded, and to adopt the sentiment of  
 " Bishop Bull, that, according to the Scriptures,  
 " all prayer should be directed to God only." I  
 have read with attention the passage in your book  
 to which you refer me: the result is, that I find  
 there much irrelevant matter; some things to  
 which I cannot assent, and nothing which leads  
 me to suspect in the least that my inference is ill-  
 founded. As for the sentiment of Bishop Bull,  
 which you invite me to adopt, and which you  
 now bring forward the second time,\* I would  
 willingly have enquired into its real meaning, if  
 you had given me an opportunity. You have  
 cited the passage without any reference, and I  
 know not in what part of his works it is to be  
 found. But you must allow me to observe, that  
 from the manner in which it is brought forward,  
 both here, and in page 214, any ordinary reader  
 would be apt to suppose, that in the judgement  
 of this learned Prelate, all prayer to Jesus Christ,  
 is unscriptural. If any one, into whose hands  
 this work may fall, should have formed such an

\* See page 214.

opinion, I beg to assure him that it is wholly without foundation. I have now before me a treatise by Bishop Bull, printed among his Latin works,\* in which he expressly maintains from this very text, (John v. 23.) that we are bound to pay the same service and honour to the Son which we ascribe to God the Father. And because prayer is a service unquestionably due to the Father, he infers that it is also due to the Son. †

Acts vii. 59.

“ And they stoned Stephen, calling upon *God*,  
“ and saying; Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.”

It is to be observed, that the word *God*, (printed in the common version in *Italics*,) is not in the original; and it appears, from the words immediately following, that the person called upon is the Lord Jesus. You admit that “ here

\* *Primitiva et Apostolica Traditio de Jesu Christi Divinitate*, cap. vi. § 12. page 392.

† Since writing the above, I have found the passage of Bishop Bull, which has given rise to this discussion. That the reader may judge of the fairness with which the *sentiment* of the learned Bishop is cited upon the present occasion, I will transcribe the whole passage: “ *Whereas*, in the first and best ages, the churches of Christ directed all their prayers, according to the Scripture, to God only, through the alone mediation of Jesus Christ; the liturgy of the present church of Rome, is interspersed with supplications and prayers to Angels and Saints, the unwarrantableness whereof I have above sufficiently shewn.” *Answer to the Bp. of Meaux's Queries*, page 88. There is, we perceive, a mode of quotation by which the very pillars of Orthodoxy may be made to support the Unitarian cause.

“ is an express address to Jesus;”\* but you are convinced that it is not a precedent for prayer to him, for three reasons: 1. Because the Martyr having a little before been favoured with a personal manifestation of Jesus, addressed his exalted Lord as actually present with him. 2. Because “ he spoke of him (v. 56.) as distinct from God, “ and as the Son of Man, and therefore he could “ not regard him as the object of prayer.” 3. Because “ his posture, when addressing Jesus, was “ not the posture of prayer, which he actually employed immediately after, when praying to God,” (v. 60.) From these reasons we are to conclude, that this supposed *prayer* is no such thing, but an address; that here is no invocation, but a mere verbal application from the Martyr to his exalted Lord. But look at this address, and upon the face of it, it is of the petitionary kind; and when we further consider the meaning of *ἐπικαλεσθῆναι*, that it never signifies simply *to speak to* or *address*, but frequently *to call upon* or *invoke by prayer*, and that no other of its meanings is applicable to the present place, we shall not hesitate to affirm, that this petitionary address is a devout supplication; that the dying Martyr does not merely speak to his exalted Saviour, but calls upon him and prays that he would receive his parting soul.

\* Page 218.

But it seems that this must not be accounted a prayer, first, because the Martyr considered Jesus as actually present with him. Let us see exactly how this matter stands. We read that while the Martyr was yet before the council, "he, being  
 " full of the Holy Ghost, looked up stedfastly into  
 " heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus  
 " standing at the right hand of God." It is plain that the glorified Jesus appeared visibly to Stephen: but how can he be said even then to have been personally present with him? The heavens, indeed, were opened to his view: but he still continued upon earth. But it was not now that the words in question were uttered. It was not till after he had been condemned for blasphemy, cast out of the city, and hurried to the place of execution, and his malignant enemies were in the act of executing upon him the unjust sentence which had been pronounced against him. And after all, I am unable to conceive, how the visible appearance or even the actual presence of our Lord, could make any essential difference in the case. If the actual sight of the Saviour, in a state of exaltation, can justify the invocation of the dying Martyr, why may not the dying Christian, who, with the eye of faith, (which is the evidence of things not seen,) always beholds the glory of his Saviour, put up to him a similar request? and, if upon this

occasion, why not upon any other? How then can it be said that the invocation of Stephen is no precedent for prayer to the glorified Jesus? But we are told, secondly, that the words of Stephen to the glorified Jesus, were no prayer, because he did not regard Jesus as the object of prayer, having before spoken of him "as distinct from God, and "as the Son of Man." That the blessed Martyr should speak of his Saviour as the *Son of Man*, is not to be wondered at, since it was the title by which our Lord spake of himself, when he was in a similar situation before the council. "Hereafter shall the *Son of Man* sit at the right hand of the power of God."\* And it is remarkable that the Council seem to have understood this title to be equivalent to one apparently much higher, for they immediately asked, "Art thou THEN the Son of God." And the Council, before whom St. Stephen stood, appear to have been much of the same opinion. The titles, which St. Stephen applied to Christ, are applied by us all; we speak of him as distinct from the Father, and as the Son of Man, now at the right hand of God: that is, as the Logos incarnate, now in a state of glory and authority. And the question is, whether, being such, he is the object of prayer. We contend that he is, from the example of St. Ste-

\* Luke xxii. 69.

phen, who, in his dying moments, prayed, saying, "Lord Jesus receive my spirit." Your third reason contains two assumptions: first, that St. Stephen was not praying, because he was not kneeling; secondly, that the Lord to whom he prayed, when actually expiring, is not the same Lord, the Lord Jesus, to whom he had before commended his spirit. As these positions neither are nor can be proved, I may dismiss them without further consideration. In conclusion, you plainly intimate, that the example of the Martyr ought to be of no authority, even if it could be proved that he prayed to his glorified Saviour, upon the ground that it would be "in opposition to the precepts and "example of Jesus on this important point." That we are not authorized to offer up prayer to Jesus, by his own example, I admit: for I am free to confess that I know not of any instance recorded in Scripture of his having prayed to himself, either before or after his glorification. But I know of no *precept* to the contrary. He told his Disciples, 'All power is given to me in heaven and in earth;'\* but where has he forbidden them to put up their petitions to him, that he would exercise this power for their benefit, and in their behalf? Rather is not this included in that express declaration, "The Father judgeth no

\* Matt. xxviii. 18.



“ man, but hath committed all judgement to the  
 “ Son, that all men should honour the Son, even  
 “ as they honour the Father.”\* If, after all, you  
 should still account the practice erroneous, you  
 must permit me to say, that I am content to err  
 with that blessed Martyr, who had been favoured  
 with the personal view of his glorified Saviour,  
 and of whom it is expressly said that he was “ full  
 “ of the Holy Ghost.”†

Acts ix. 14.

“ And here he hath authority from the chief  
 “ priests to bind all that call on thy name.”

1. Cor. i. 2.

“ To them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus,  
 “ called to be Saints, with all that in every place  
 “ call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord,  
 “ both theirs and ours.”

The phrase *επικαλεισθαι το ονομα* you contend may  
 be rendered either *to call on the name* or *to be called  
 by the name.*§ That it has the former sense both  
 in the LXX. and also in the New Testament, is  
 not denied. But it may be asked, Where has it the  
 latter sense? I answer, no where, as far as I know.  
 You suppose, indeed, that no one who under-  
 stands the Greek language, will deny that this  
 second rendering is fully justified by the original.‡

\* John v. 22. 23. † Acts vii. 55. § Letters, page 221.

‡ Ibid. note.\*

But for my part, I am at a loss to discover upon what ground the phrase is affirmed, to be capable of this rendering. I cannot find that the middle verb *επικαλεσθαι*, followed by an accusative, is ever used in more than two senses, namely, *to call upon*, and *to appeal to*. And since the latter sense cannot have place in the passages under consideration, I hesitate not to say, that these passages are rightly translated in the public version. Still you contend, that “if the former rendering be preferred, it remains to be shewn, that it denotes “that the first Christians invoked Jesus in prayer.” That the phrase implies such invocation, is manifest from the LXX. where it occurs in this sense in a variety of passages.\* Also from 2. Tim. ii. 22. “With them that call upon the Lord out of “a pure heart;” and Rom. x. 13. 14. “Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord, shall “be saved. How shall they call on him in “whom they have not believed? and how shall “they believe in him of whom they have not “heard?” Where it is manifest that *to call upon* is distinct from, and consequent upon, *believing*, and unquestionably means *to worship*, and *invoke in prayer*, which indeed you do not deny. And what else can be its meaning in the passages, under con-

\* See Gen. iv. 26. xxvi. 25. xxxiii. 20.—1. Sam. xii. 17. 18. —2. Sam. xxii. 4. 7.—1. Chron. iv. 10. xvi. 8. In the book of Psalms frequently. Is. lv. 5. lxiv. 7.—Jer. x. 25. ccc.

sideration, it remains for them to shew, who are dissatisfied with this sense. Till this is done, I shall continue to think, that we have in them a plain intimation, that in the Apostolical age, the worship of Christ was the distinguishing character of those who embraced his religion.

Rom. x. 13.

“Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord, shall be saved.”

There is no dispute about the meaning of this passage, which is allowed to imply prayer. The only question is to whom do the words refer? Your opinion is thus expressed. “The passage is a quotation from Joel ii. 32. where it unquestionably refers to Jehovah; and I see nothing in the connexion, which requires the supposition, that the Apostle did not use it with the same reference.”\* On the other hand I contend that the Apostle applies to Christ the words which the Prophet originally spake concerning Jehovah. I know not that any thing more is necessary to be done in support of this opinion, than to state the whole passage at length, and to request the reader, after an attentive perusal of it, to judge impartially between us. “This is the word of faith which we preach, that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in

\* Letters, page 224.

“ thine heart that God hath raised him from the  
 “ dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart  
 “ man believeth unto righteousness, and with the  
 “ mouth confession is made unto salvation. For  
 “ the Scripture saith, whosoever believeth in him,  
 “ shall not be ashamed. For there is no differ-  
 “ ence between the Jew and the Greek; for the  
 “ same Lord over all is rich unto all that call  
 “ upon him. For whosoever shall call upon the  
 “ name of the Lord, shall be saved. How then  
 “ shall they call on him in whom they have not  
 “ believed? &c.”\*

1. Cor. i. 3.

“ Grace be unto you, and peace from God  
 “ our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.”

This passage you thus explain. “ In this and  
 “ similar benedictions, grace *χρησις* obviously de-  
 “ notes all those blessings which are communi-  
 “ cated by the Gospel. Jesus was the agent by  
 “ whom God dispensed these blessings, and in the  
 “ Apostolical age, he was appointed to commu-  
 “ nicate those extraordinary powers by which they  
 “ were most widely extended. I understand the  
 “ Apostle to say, ‘ May ye all possess the gracious  
 “ blessings of the Gospel, and that peace which  
 “ follows the sincere reception of it.’† Your  
 comment upon the Apostle’s words is not com-

\* Rom. x. 8. 14. † Letters, page 228.

plete : for it says nothing of the source from which the blessings implored, are affirmed in the text to proceed. But by your silence respecting this point, you have avoided saying any thing inconsistent with what you had just before asserted, respecting the agency of Jesus Christ, in the dispensation of Gospel blessings; of which the passage before us says not a word, but rather the contrary. It is not from God the Father *by* the Lord Jesus Christ, but from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ. There is nothing of agency in this form of expression: there is association, and the words imply a community of power, in bestowing the blessings of the Gospel. How is this to be reconciled with the Unitarian hypothesis? The persons for whom the blessings of grace and peace are here implored, are those of whom we have already spoken; namely, "all, who in every place, call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord." And the benedictions now before us are a strong confirmation (if any confirmation were wanting) that the sense already given to the above phrase is the true one; that the primitive Disciples were wont to invoke Christ in prayer. For to whom under the Gospel should prayer for the blessings of the Gospel be addressed, but to him from whom these blessings proceed? But the blessings of the Gospel proceed both from God

“not therefore justified in employing any language which implies them.” That the Lord Jesus, during the Apostolical age, was invested with large powers, which he exercised for the government of the church, you readily admit: but that these powers still continue, and that he has now any direct and personal concern in the regulation of his spiritual kingdom, is with you a matter of great doubt. This is a favourite position which you very frequently introduce. The position itself does not, in the least, bear upon the principal point in question. For if Jesus ever possessed such vast powers, and if in consequence of the blessings which were at his disposal, it ever was lawful to pray to him for them, be the case at present what it may, yet his ever having been the object of prayer cuts up your hypothesis by the roots. But, Sir, what ground is there to suppose that the Saviour is not now, as in the Apostolical age, the bestower of Gospel blessings upon his people? Do the Scriptures any where say that his kingdom is now at an end? This is not pretended: why then should we express any doubt respecting its continuance. We are told, indeed, that Christ shall one day give up his mediatorial kingdom, but not until the last enemy, death, shall be destroyed; and the destruction of death will then only be effected, when the bodies of all

those who have been subject to the dominion of death, shall have been raised: and we may well interpret these words of our Lord, "Lo, I am  
 " with you always, even to the end of the world,"  
 to have been spoken with reference to this event. But supposing that the Scriptures had been totally silent respecting the continuance of Christ's kingdom, still we should have had no right to express any doubt upon the subject: It would have been much more reasonable to conclude, having no intimation to the contrary, that the Saviour is still in possession of his mediatorial kingdom, that he still dispenses his manifold gifts of grace, not those miraculous gifts which the exigencies of the church required in the Apostolical age; but gifts no less suitable to the present exigencies of the church; and that he will continue the exercise of his authority, till the final consummation of all things; 'till his enemies shall all be subdued, and his saints made perfect in glory. But as I before observed, the continuance of our Saviour's power bears not upon the point in question. Of this you seem to be aware; for you thus conclude. "Be the precise import however of this devout  
 " wish of the Apostle what it will, it is not prayer  
 " to Jesus, and in no way authorizes prayer to  
 " Jesus, and that is all which immediately con-  
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that Jesus Christ himself would comfort and establish the Theſſalonians, and devoutly praying that he would do ſo, the diſtinction is very trifling: indeed, it may be called a diſtinction without a difference. And when to this we add that prayer for Goſpel bleſſings is with peculiar propriety addreſſed to him, at whoſe diſpoſal theſe bleſſings are, how can it be ſaid that this paſſage in no way authorizes prayer to Jeſus.

You are yourſelf an advocate for aſcribing glory to the Saviour; and therefore I need not touch upon the texts relating to this point.

In the preceding examination, I have confined myſelf chiefly to the paſſages, which I had myſelf adduced in the Prefervative, in ſupport of the doctrine in queſtion. But you are not ignorant that there are many others of the ſame kind, all proving the ſame point, and all in my judgment authorizing in the fulleſt manner the divine worſhip of Jeſus. And yet with all theſe paſſages before you, you can, notwithstanding, confidently pronounce, that “there is not one precept in favour of it, not one certain example of prayer to Jeſus, not one inſtance of the direct addreſs of praife to him, when not ſenſibly preſent!”\* Even the difficulty under which you manifeſtly labour, in your attempt to reconcile many of

\* Page 230.

these passages to your own system, should have prevented such positive assertion. Such, however, is the manner in which you choose to consider the subject; and considering it thus, you add, “it appears to me almost incredible, that the express, unambiguous, and continual directions of the Old Testament, the express and unambiguous declarations and uniform example of our Saviour himself, and the precepts and practice of the Apostles, have not prevented thinking and conscientious persons from offering religious worship to any Being, except to him respecting whom our Saviour himself says, “Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and to him only shalt thou offer religious service.”\* That the Old Testament contains express unambiguous and frequent directions, commanding the worship of the true God, and forbidding the worship of Idols and false Gods; that our blessed Lord, in the days of his humiliation, himself prayed and commanded his Disciples to pray to his God and Father; that the Apostles in this respect followed the example of their Lord; and lastly, that our blessed Saviour, when tempted by the Devil, to fall down and worship him, rejected the solicitation by the precept which forbids the worship of any but the true God, we readily admit. But what has all

\* Page 231.

this to do with the point in dispute? If, indeed, we were to come to the examination of the Scriptures, with a prepossession upon our minds, that the Saviour is a Man, and nothing more, then perhaps these topicks might furnish an argument against the worship of Christ. But this is not our way. We choose to take our views from the Scriptures, rather than make the Scriptures bend to our views. We plainly perceive that the divine nature of Jesus Christ is asserted in the Scriptures, as explicitly and unambiguously as the human nature. It is not, therefore, to us a matter of wonder, that he is represented as the object of religious worship: on the contrary, we derive from hence the strongest confirmation of his divinity. You contend that we are commanded to worship God, and are forbidden to worship any other. This we agree is the plain doctrine of the Scriptures. But we contend, in our turn, that the Scriptures authorize the worship of Jesus Christ, and we argue that since Jesus Christ is the object of religious worship, it follows that he is truly God.

Upon the whole, Sir, in concluding this part of my subject, I may fairly borrow your own language, and can sincerely say, that I rise from the investigation, to which you have led me with increased and decided conviction, that Unitarianism is NOT the religion of the Gospel.

I NOW proceed to the second great branch of the Unitarian doctrine, which respects the office of Christ. Under this head our attention is principally called to the efficacy of Christ's death, and to its importance in the Gospel scheme of redemption. Upon this point we differ from you most widely: for while *we* strenuously assert the doctrine of atonement by the blood of the Saviour, there is no doctrine which *you* more vehemently assail. I have already expressed my surprize, that you should continue to deduce from this doctrine (commonly called the doctrine of *satisfaction*) pernicious effects and consequences, which I had fully shewn could be imputed only to an abuse of the doctrine, and not to the doctrine itself. In contrasting this doctrine with Unitarianism, you had thus expressed yourself, "Is it less consoling  
 " to the broken heart to believe that He who is  
 " love, because He is love, sent his Son to offer  
 " forgiveness upon repentance, than to believe  
 " that because the justice of God the Father could  
 " not be satisfied without a sacrifice of infinite  
 " value, God the Son took upon him human na-  
 " ture, and by his sufferings as man, made atone-  
 " ment for the sins of men? Is forgiveness less  
 " valuable as freely offered by the mercy of God,  
 " through the medium of one who was, in all  
 " respects, like unto his brethren, than as pur-

“ chased from the inexorable justice of the Father, “ by the vicarious sufferings of the Son?”\* This I called a *gross* misrepresentation of the doctrine of satisfaction:† nor is there in any thing in your book which has at all tended to make me alter my opinion. Only I request you to observe, that I apply the epithet ‘gross’ to the *representation*, not to the *person representing*. A man may misrepresent the sentiments of another very innocently and unintentionally, nevertheless the misrepresentation itself may be a very gross one. You indeed endeavour to vindicate your representation by producing passages from certain writers, (some of whom I now hear of for the first time,) in which the objectionable expressions are to be found. But why is this done? I never absolutely denied that such passages could no where be found: for though I asked who ever dreamed that “ the justice “ of God was inexorable? or that this inexorable “ justice could no otherwise be satisfied than by a “ sacrifice of infinite value?”§ yet I immediately add; “ If expressions to this purpose should “ unhappily have fallen from any advocate of the “ doctrine of satisfaction, let it, I pray you, be “ accounted an error of the individual, for which “ the Orthodox in general are not answerable:” thus intreating for my doctrine the same favour,

\* Disc. page 30. † Pres. page 20. § Ibid.

which you had required for your Unitarianism, and which I had not denied. And presently after, I disclaim, on the part of the established church, all responsibility for the opinions of her members; declaring that the doctrines of the church are to be learned, not from the writings of individuals of her community, however eminent; but from her articles, her liturgy, and her homilies. If in these or in any of them, you had found the opinions which I disclaim, you would then have been justified in your present mode of treating the subject. But since this has not been done, or even attempted, why thus earnest in your search after abuses? and more especially why make my name the vehicle of bringing these abuses before the public? I might, were I so disposed, easily collect, from Unitarian writers of the lower class, sentiments which would shock the pious reader, and make him turn away with disgust. But I disdain such an employment: the opinions of my more sober and dispassionate opponent, as he himself represents them, are fully sufficient for my purpose, without seeking to bespatter them with filth, raked from the jakes of Unitarianism.

In quoting my statement of the doctrine, you omit a very important part. Thus you give it: "The eternal Son of God,—by an offering of his  
" own blood, averted from us the divine wrath,

“ and obtained for us God’s favour and accep-  
 “ tance.”\* Some of your readers may be led to  
 suppose, that, according to my doctrine, the blood  
 offered was, not the blood of a human, but of a  
 divine Being. To prevent such a supposition, the  
 whole passage should have been quoted. It runs  
 thus, “ We believe that the eternal Son of God  
 “ assumed our nature, and *in that nature* became  
 “ the sacrifice for our sins, and by an offering of  
 “ his own blood, averted from us the divine wrath,  
 “ &c.”† It is plain that the doctrine thus simply  
 stated, is properly the doctrine of atonement or  
 reconciliation: the reason of its being also called  
 the doctrine of satisfaction, I proceed immediately  
 to state, “ And because Christ, by dying for us,  
 “ appeased the divine wrath, and removed every  
 “ obstacle in the way of our complete reconcilia-  
 “ tion to God, therefore, we say, that he made  
 “ satisfaction for our sins. And more particularly  
 “ because he was set forth to be a propitiation,  
 “ in order that the divine Lawgiver might extend  
 “ mercy to his offending creatures, without im-  
 “ peachment of his justice, therefore, we further  
 “ say, that the death of Christ satisfied the justice  
 “ of God.” This, as I conceive, is the doctrine  
 of our church; nor have you shewn the contrary:  
 and it is the doctrine which I undertook to prove

\* Letters, page 269. † Pres. page 20.



from the Scriptures. But it seems you object to the language in which I have stated this doctrine: “It is to be regretted,” (you say,) “that you did not avoid expressions which are completely unscriptural, (such as “that the eternal Son of God,—by an offering of his own blood, averted from us the divine wrath, and obtained for us God’s favour and acceptance;” and that “Christ by dying for us appeased the divine wrath;”) and also that in stating your opinions, you had delivered them, not in what you acknowledge to be figurative language, but in such simple literal expressions as would have conveyed to the mind of an English reader, with common cultivation, precisely your idea, as to the efficacy of the death of Christ.”\* There are then two objections to the language which I have employed upon this occasion; 1. It is not scriptural: 2. It is figurative. As to the first objection, whether the several sentences are to be found *totidem verbis* in the Scriptures, I will not enquire; for it is not at all material. But sure I am that the doctrine expressed by them is to be found there; and so I think it will appear to every unprejudiced person, who shall duly consider the passages adduced in the Prefervative, to prove the doctrine as above stated: and that is the principal thing to be attended to.

\* Letters, page 269.

The second objection is that my language is *figurative*, and you expressly declare, that I myself acknowledge it. But I ask, where have I done this? I know of no such acknowledgement; and most assuredly I never intended to make any such. I have, indeed, called language of this kind, *analogical*; and have stated that, in speaking of heavenly things, we must employ such language, for we have no other by which to convey our meaning: and if so, how I could deliver my opinion, in what you call simple literal expressions, I know not. But, Sir, it appears to me, that you confound *analogical* with *figurative*, or rather *metaphorical* language, and account them one and the same.\*

\* As much of what I have to offer in defence of the doctrine, for which I contend, depends upon this distinction, between *metaphorical* language and *analogical*, it may not be amiss to declare in this place what I conceive to be the nature of each, and in what the difference between them consists.

In both metaphor and analogy there is the transfer of a name from the thing to which it properly belongs, to some other thing, on account of some circumstance which is common to the two: and when this common circumstance is an attribute of the things from and to which the name is transferred, simply, and without reference to any other thing, then the name transferred is metaphorical: but when it serves as the foundation of two similar relations, it is analogical. Ex. gr. 1 We call a courageous man a *Lion*. A *Lion* is *properly* an animal, whose characteristic quality is courage. And the man, to whom the name is transferred, possesses the same quality in an eminent degree. Courage, therefore, is the common circumstance, on account of which the name is transferred. But this quality is simply an attribute inherent in the things from and to which the transfer is made, and is not to either the ground of a relation to any other thing: therefore, the expression is *metaphorical*. 2. We call that

But this must not be done. If I were to speak of the *head* of a nail, or the *leg* of a table, or the *foot* of a mountain, you would hardly call this language *figurative*; and yet it is not *literal*; it is strictly *analogical*, and is so called because it is in each instance founded upon an analogy, as pure as that which part of a table, by which it is supported, its *leg*. A leg is *properly* that part of an animal which serves as its support. And that to which the name is transferred, is also the support of the thing to which it belongs. The *being a support* is, therefore, the common circumstance, on account of which the name is transferred. But this common circumstance is an attribute of the things from and to which the transfer is made, not simply, but with reference to something supported. And between the thing supporting, and the thing supported, there is a manifest relation: and since there is in this respect the same relation between that which supports a table, and the table supported by it, as between the leg of an animal, and the animal whose leg it is, therefore, the common circumstance is in this instance, the foundation of two similar relations: consequently, when we speak of the leg of a table, the expression is *analogical*.

In metaphor, the common circumstance, however essential to the thing from which the name is transferred, and characteristic of it, is frequently an adventitious circumstance in the thing to which the transfer is made, and was, perhaps, acquired very accidentally. Consequently metaphorical language will frequently be used 'by way of allusion' merely, and not to declare the true and real nature of the thing denominated by it. Thus a courageous man, is not really, in any respect, a Lion, not even in respect of that on account of which the name is applied: he possesses, indeed, in an eminent degree, the quality which is characteristic of a Lion: but his nature is, notwithstanding, as distinct from that of a Lion, as is the nature of him, who possesses this quality in a degree insufficient to give him this denomination. But it is otherwise in analogical language; which always declares the true and real nature of the thing to which it is applied, in the respect in which it is applied. Thus the leg of a table is, in respect of the support which it affords, as truly and really a leg, as is the leg of an animal.

the mathematician intends, when he affirms of four *magnitudes*, that the first has to the second the same ratio which the third has to the fourth.\* For that by which the table is supported, has to the table, *in respect of such support*, the same relation, which the leg of an animal has to the animal: and, on account of this analogy, the support of a table is called a *leg* also: and so of the rest. Hence we see that even corporeal things are not without analogical names: but such names are more common in the case of things intellectual: for, without intending a figure, we speak of a *sharp* wit, a *rough* temper, a *solid* judgement, &c. &c. all expressions manifestly analogical. Of the same kind is the language which we employ, in speaking of things divine and heavenly; only in this case, this is the only language which we can employ; for, as I before observed, we have no other. The things themselves are so far removed from us, and from the things with which we are conversant, that we can never, in our present state, adequately conceive them; and it is only from analogical language, founded upon relations among earthly things, similar to those which these heavenly things bear to each other, that we are able to form even an imperfect con-

\* "Ratio is a mutual relation of two magnitudes of the same kind to one another, *in respect of quantity*." Elements of Euclid B. v. Def. 3.

ception of them. In the holy Scriptures many of the affections of human nature are attributed to God; such as love, hatred, desire, anger, &c. Now we know that the Deity is without passions; and therefore, these expressions must not be taken literally; yet they are not without meaning. You may call the things expressed, modifications of benevolence,\* or whatever else you please: still the names plainly indicate that there are in the Deity, attributes which have to the Deity the same relation which the human affections, expressed by these names, have to man. Though, therefore, the *anger* of God is not literally anger, it is something corresponding with it; something which causes the rejection from his favour of whatever is offensive to his nature and perfections; and therefore is to God what anger is to man. And that, which takes away the occasion of the offence, and makes the rejected thing to be again received, may be said, in the same analogical sense, to propitiate God, to appease, or avert the divine wrath, and to obtain for the thing rejected, God's favour and acceptance. And thus it is in the case before us: Man, in a state of innocency, was an object of favour: but the pollution, which sin brought upon his nature, made him unfit for communion with a pure and holy God; and he

\* See Letters, page 270.

became an object of wrath. But it pleased God, of his infinite love to mankind, to provide a way, by which this unfitness might be removed, and all the evils, introduced by sin, might eventually be repaired. This gracious purpose God was pleased to effect, by sending into the world his own Son; who, having assumed our nature, died for our sins; and by this act of love and mercy, caused us, who were by nature *children of wrath*, to become the *children of grace*. Hence it is, that in the analogical sense above spoken of, we attribute to the blood or death of Christ, the power of propitiating God; of appeasing, and of turning away from us, the divine wrath; and of obtaining for us the divine favour and acceptance. And in so speaking, we are persuaded that we express ourselves in conformity with the true intent and meaning of the holy Scriptures.

I am not aware that the meaning of the above expressions is at all obscure; nor should I have troubled you with the foregoing explanation, if the doubt which you first expressed, and the complete misinterpretation which you afterwards gave, had not in a manner called for it. Your understanding of my meaning is thus expressed: “Taking into account the whole of what you have said, I understand you to mean, that the death of Christ, *altogether independently* of any thing

" else that he did or taught, effected a change in  
 " the divine disposition towards man; and *of itself*,  
 " by its *immediate efficacy*, has the power of sancti-  
 " fying the offender."\* You immediately add,  
 " If this be your idea, and I imagine it is the pre-  
 " vailing one, we are here completely at issue."  
 I presume I am here to understand you *literally*.  
 You would hardly, upon such an occasion, speak  
*figuratively*; and with *analogical* language, you  
 appear to have been but little, if at all, conver-  
 sant. Know then that *literally* I cannot ascribe a  
 change of disposition to that all perfect Being  
 ' with whom is no variableness neither shadow of  
 turning.' Nor does *propitiation*, or any other of the  
 expressions above mentioned, rightly understood,  
 imply any such change. Again; the word  
 " sanctifying" is a very ambiguous one, and I  
 cannot say in what sense you expect me to take it.  
 If by " sanctifying the offender," you mean that  
 the death of Christ has an immediate effect in  
 purifying and cleansing the offender from that sin-  
 ful pollution which made him offensive to God,  
 and of procuring for him access to God, in this  
 life, and the hope of everlasting glory hereafter;  
 such an effect I do ascribe immediately to the  
 death of Christ: but if you mean that the death of  
 Christ, of itself, and independently of any thing

\* Letters, page 269.

which he did and taught, has the power of effecting a moral change in the offender himself; this is no part of my doctrine, nor can any thing which I have said respecting the sanctifying influence of Christ's blood, be justly interpreted in any such sense. In favour of my view of the doctrine of atonement, you make one important concession, you allow that it does not "tend to destroy the scriptural foundation of Christian practice."\* Still you consider it as "unscriptural, and calculated to give very erroneous ideas as to the divine character, which where fairly imbibed, must check those affections of love to God, which Jesus has pronounced our highest duty."† What these erroneous ideas are, you do not state. I am, therefore, left to collect them from other parts of your book, where you impugn the doctrine of atonement on this very account; presuming that where you make no exception in favour of my view of the doctrine, it is, in your opinion, still open to all the objections, which you charge upon what you suppose to be the common doctrine.

What you regard as the Scripture-doctrine of redemption, you state in thirteen articles: in the first nine of which you meditate the overthrow of a propitiation for sin, in order the more readily to substitute in its place your own scheme of redemp-

\* Page 268. † Ibid.



tion. You lay the foundation of your argument in the benevolence of the Deity, of which you affirm justice, and also anger, to be mere modifications or branches. "The Scriptures," you tell us, "represent God as essentially *good* and *merciful*: and though they also represent him as *just*, " nothing appears throughout the whole to countenance the belief that the exercise of his justice in any way limits the exercise of his *benevolence*. " In fact, in a perfect Being, justice can only be " a modification of benevolence, &c."\* And then follows a kind of metaphysical dissertation upon the divine attributes. But a better acquaintance with the nature of language, would have taught you that such a dissertation, however ingenious, might well have been spared, to the great ease of yourself, and to the no great loss of your readers. At length you proceed thus: "The " language of many, however, (and their ideas, " if these accord with their language,) respecting " the divine justice and mercy, often represents " those attributes as at variance, and by laying an " undue stress upon what they consider as the dictates of the justice of God, they limit his benevolence, and speak of him almost as if he were " a gloomy tyrant."† You here, as I conceive, allude to the supposed inexorable justice of God;

\* Art. 1. page 270. † Page 273.

which could not be satisfied without a sacrifice of infinite value: an error which you formerly appeared to charge upon the doctrine in general, but which you now limit to certain individuals, who hold the doctrine. But with this we have nothing to do. Our doctrine countenances no such erroneous idea of the divine character: on the contrary, it most beautifully illustrates the position of the Apostle, with which you oppose these errors, viz. God is love.\* You next proceed to lay down a position from which I suppose no one ever thought of dissenting; namely, that “the benevolence of God does *not* prevent him from forgiving sins:” and having already determined that divine justice and benevolence are one and the same thing, differing in name only, not in reality, you declare the grand question to be whether God consistently with this attribute *can* forgive sins without a satisfaction.† And in order to secure a determination of the question in favour of Unitarianism, you proceed to set forth the method of God’s forgiveness, as it is taught in the Old Testament, and the ground of man’s acceptance, as it is declared, both in the Old Testament and in the New; declaring in effect, that God may forgive, when man repents; and that nothing is required in order to man’s acceptance, but obedi-

\* 1. John iv. 8. 16. † Art. 2. page 274.

ence to the will of God.\* But, Sir, you will permit me to observe, that according to our view of the doctrine of atonement, no question can arise respecting the power of God to forgive sins without a propitiation, if he had thought fit; or concerning his right either to make repentance the condition of forgiveness, or to forgive the sinner when he repents. We talk not of what God *can* do, or *cannot* do; but we leave the measures of his providence to be regulated agreeably to the dictates of his own will. We should rather enquire what he hath done; whether, for reasons, which we, perhaps, cannot fathom, he has been pleased to appoint a propitiation for sin: This is the true question; and this question you appear in some measure to meet, when you declare that nothing is required in order to man's acceptance, but obedience to the will of God.

In proof of this position, you have recourse in the first place, to the Old Testament, throughout the whole of which you declare that "obedience to the divine will is represented as essentially necessary to obtain acceptance with God, and nothing is said which justifies the belief, that any thing additional is requisite to render that obedience acceptable to him."† By *acceptance* in this place you cannot mean the original accep-

\* See Art. 3-6. † Art. 4. page 275.

tance of the Israelites, as the peculiar people of God; for with this, their obedience had nothing to do. Nor can you refer to their recovery of God's favour and re-admission into his presence, after having been excluded on account of some pollution or other legal incapacity; for this is expressly ascribed to the atonement made by the priest with the appointed sacrifice. I suppose, therefore, that you here refer to the obedience required of the Israelites, after they were become the people of God, and to the favour with which God had promised to regard such among them, as were obedient to his will; an obedience and acceptance with which the doctrine of atonement does not interfere. Against the latter position, namely, "nothing is said which justifies the belief that any thing additional is requisite to render that obedience acceptable to him," the sacrifices and ceremonies, appointed and enjoined under the Old Testament, appear at first view to furnish an objection. You therefore proceed to speak of these sacrifices; but not very explicitly, nor in a way which indicates a clear and distinct acquaintance with their nature and intention. Among other things you say, "It is never represented that these institutions had any efficacy in themselves considered, that they could of themselves remove guilt, and restore men to the favour of

“ God.” Perhaps not of *themselves*, and in *themselves* considered: but had they no efficacy by the appointment of God? Is there no meaning in these words? “ The life of the flesh is the blood: I have given it you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul.”\* Again, you say, that “ the language of the authorized instructors of the Jews, is too explicit to allow of the idea, that they were designed to supersede the grand duties of piety and virtue, or to render the discharge of these valuable in the sight of God.”§ No one, as far as I know, ever thought that they were instituted with any such design: and your attempt to illustrate this position by Ps. li. 16. shews that you do not enter into the full meaning of the Psalmist, or rightly consider the occasion on which the words were uttered. When the Psalmist, says, “ Thou desirest not sacrifice,” you tell us that he obviously refers not to the sacrifices enjoined by the Mosaic ritual, but to sacrifices offered with the idea of atoning for immorality.” Rather he acknowledges that the Mosaic ritual had prescribed no sacrifice by which an offender could be delivered from blood-guiltiness. The words have an immediate reference to his own particular case. The

\* Lev. xvii. 11. § Page 276.

Pſalm, in which they are contained, was composed after the death of Uriah, the Hittite, who had been foully murdered by the contrivance and order of David; and after Nathan had repreſented to him the greatneſs of his ſin, and the greatneſs of the divine anger, on account of it. He, therefore, prays for deliverance from the guilt of that blood with which his conſcience was ſtained, and for re-admiſſion into the favour of God. He well knew that in the caſe of ſuch a preſumptuous ſin as that of which he had been guilty, no ſin-offering would be accepted, becauſe none had been appointed. He therefore, ſays, (with reference as I before obſerved to his own caſe,) “Thou deſireſt not ſacrifice, elſe would I give it, thou delighteſt not in burnt offering.” Nothing, therefore, remained to him, but to plead his contrition, and to throw himſelf upon the mercy of God. “The ſacrifices of God are a broken ſpirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not deſpiſe.” I have been anxious to give the true ſenſe of this paſſage, becauſe it is no uncommon thing with Unitarians to abuſe it to a purpoſe quite foreign from the intention of the Pſalmiſt.

You next proceed to the New Teſtament, and obſerve of the declarations both of our Saviour and of his Apoſtles, that they are to the ſame

purpose as those contained in the Old Testament. Speaking of our Saviour, you say, that "he re-  
 "presents obedience to the will of God, as what  
 "is requisite to obtain his acceptance."\* If you  
 mean that obedience to the will of God, is requi-  
 site, in order to our *final* acceptance, this is a  
 position, not in the least inconsistent with the  
 doctrine of atonement. You proceed to assure  
 us, in the next sentence, that "he does not give  
 "the slightest intimation that our obedience is  
 "accepted, in consequence of any thing which he  
 "himself might do or suffer for us." I see not  
 how this position is to be reconciled with our Sa-  
 viour's own words, at the institution of his last  
 supper: "This is my blood of the New Testament,  
 "which is shed for many for the remission of  
 "sins,"† *εις αφεσιν*, in order to the remission. For  
 if our Saviour here declares that his blood was  
 shed in order that our sins might be forgiven, how  
 can it be said that he does not give the slightest  
 intimation that our obedience is accepted, in con-  
 sequence of any thing which he himself might do  
 or suffer for us?

Again; speaking of the Apostles, after stating  
 that "they represent obedience to the command-  
 "ments of God, as necessary in order to obtain  
 "acceptance with him;" you immediately add,

\* Art. 5. page 277. † Matt. xxvi. 28.

“and they give no intimation that faith in the efficacy of the death of Jesus, is necessary for that purpose, nor that it was the death of Jesus, which renders our imperfect obedience acceptable to God.”\* You acknowledge, indeed, presently after, that they “lay the utmost stress on faith in Jesus:” and in order to shew that the faith, upon which they lay so much stress, has some reference to atonement, and to the efficacy of Christ’s death, I shall content myself for the present, with referring to two passages: 1st. the declaration of St. John,† “God sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins;” and 2dly, the exhortation of St. Paul to the Elders of the church of Ephesus, “Feed the church of the Lord which he hath purchased with his own blood.”§

Having already laid down that God, under the Old Testament, *could* forgive the penitent sinner without a propitiation, you now proceed to the method of forgiveness under the New Testament, and assail the doctrine of atonement upon the ground that it limits the divine benevolence, and makes more to be required in order to forgiveness now, than was required under the former dispensation. Hence you argue that such a doctrine

\* Art. 6. page 277.

† 1. John iv. 10. Is this comprehended among the objects of Christ’s mission, enumerated in Letters, page 29.

§ Acts xx. 28.



cannot make part of a “dispensation, which is so clearly and repeatedly stated to have had its origin in the free mercy of God.”\* Accordingly, upon enquiry, you find that it does not; and you cannot, in any part of this dispensation, from the baptism of John, to the preaching of the Apostles, after they had received the holy spirit, discover any appearance of any such thing, but quite the contrary.

In the first place you find “that in the object of John’s baptism, and in those declarations of Jesus Christ, which preceded his death, there is nothing to authorize the belief that the divine justice would no longer allow the *free* exercise of mercy to the repentant sinner; that now a satisfaction must be offered for the sins of men, before they could obtain forgiveness; that now God must be appeased, or rendered propitious to his guilty creatures, by the sufferings of an innocent and divine person,—but, on the contrary, the benevolence of God is represented as complete and unlimited; his mercy as unrestrained, and independent of all external causes, except the moral quality of its object; and his forgiveness as ready to be *freely* bestowed whenever the sinner complied with the condition of pardon, a change of heart and life.”† The

\* Page 278. † Art. 7. page 279.

charge insinuated in the preceding quotation, if well-founded, would be a very serious one. It implies nothing less than that the doctrine of atonement represents God as less forgiving under the Gospel, than he had declared himself to be under the law: that it arrests the power of God, limits his benevolence, and restrains his mercy. And upon what is this charge founded? Even upon this; the supposed inconsistency of an atonement for sinners, with the *free* exercise of the divine mercy. The argument is, If the death of Christ has any efficacy in procuring the pardon of sin, then God cannot be said to bestow forgiveness *freely*. It will assist us in forming a right judgment of this matter, if we enquire into the meaning of the word 'freely;' which, in its present connection, may, as I conceive, be taken in two senses, according as it is made to refer to the *thing given*, or to the *Giver*. If it refers to the thing given, then that is bestowed freely, which is not due to the party receiving, but is a gift flowing merely and spontaneously from the bounty of the Giver. If it refers to the *Giver*, then such Giver bestows *freely*, when he is uninfluenced by any outward consideration, but bestows without restraint, limitation, or reserve. It is manifest that you take the word in the latter sense. Nevertheless, you speak of forgiveness, "as ready

“to be freely bestowed whenever the sinner com-  
 plied with the condition of pardon;” and you  
 further represent a change of heart and life, “as  
 the condition upon which pardon is to be be-  
 stowed.” So then forgiveness of sins is bestowed  
*conditionally*, and yet *freely*! What a contra-  
 diction in terms! Again; you represent “the  
 benevolence of God as complete and unlimited,  
 and his mercy as unrestrained and independent  
 of all external causes:” you except, indeed, one  
 external cause, viz. the moral quality of the ob-  
 ject, which, however, in your opinion, is no  
 obstacle to the free exercise of the divine mercy.  
 But when the Satisfactionist, as he is called, puts  
 in a similar exception in favour of the death of  
 Christ, you immediately turn about, and exclaim  
 that if so, then God cannot be said to bestow for-  
 giveness *freely*. And thus there are two excep-  
 tions, one proposed by yourself, the other by the  
 Satisfactionist: both equally affecting the position  
 with which you set out: And yet according to  
 your statement, your own exception is perfectly  
 consistent with the freedom with which God exer-  
 cises mercy, whereas the other completely over-  
 throws it! This glaring absurdity might have  
 been avoided if you had taken the word *freely* in  
 the other sense proposed, and had understood it in  
 opposition to *debt* or *desert*. And to this sense you

would probably have been led, if, instead of following the track marked out by former writers on the same side, you had consulted the original of Rom. iii. 24. "Being justified freely (*δωρεαν*) by his "grace, through the redemption, that is in Christ "Jesus." And from hence you might further have learned, that the method of God's proceeding in pardoning sinners, is not more inconsistent with the free exercise of mercy than the condition upon which forgiveness is bestowed. We cannot pretend to desert of any kind: therefore our recovery from a state of sin and subjection to death, is to be attributed solely to the love and mercy of God. Hence we are said to be "justified freely by "his grace." Nor is the pardon the less free, either because it comes to us "through the redemption, "that is in Christ Jesus," or because the penitent alone will enjoy the benefit.

As in the declarations of Jesus before his death, so neither in his discourses to his Disciples, after his resurrection, can you find any thing "which "intimates that his death had been a satisfaction "to divine justice, and that it was in consequence "of his death that the divine mercy could now be "extended to sinners."\* It is plain that you here take the word satisfaction in your usual sense, and suppose, that according to the doctrine of atone-

\* Art. 8. page 280.

ment, mercy *could* not have been extended to sinners without such satisfaction. But as this is no part of the doctrine for which I contend, I should have passed it over without further remark, were it not that I wish to notice the manner in which you illustrate and apply to your purpose, Luke xxiv. 47. Referring to this text, you say, “when “he” (namely our Lord) “authorized his Apostles “to proclaim remission of sins among all nations, “he does not in any way connect it with faith in “the merits of his death, but simply with *repentance*. He does, indeed, in the preceding verse, “speak of the necessity of his sufferings and resurrection, to the due fulfilment of the prophecies, “respecting the Christ, in the Scriptures of the “Old Testament: but he does not say one word “which intimates that his death in any sense rendered God placable, or gave repentance its efficacy, or enabled God to extend mercy to the “penitent; but merely says, ‘And that in his “name,’ that is by his authority, ‘repentance and “remission of sins should be proclaimed to all “nations, beginning at Jerusalem.’” Let us take this text in connection with the two preceding verses. “Then opened he their understanding, “that they might understand the Scriptures; and “said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it “believed Christ to suffer, and to rise from the

“ dead the third day, and that repentance and  
 “ remission of sins should be preached in his name  
 “ among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.”  
 You have clearly mistaken both the intention of  
 the speaker, and the connection of the things spo-  
 ken. For it is manifest that our Lord is not here  
*authorizing* the Apostles to preach the doctrines of  
 repentance and remission of sins to the nations;  
 he is merely reciting the substance of the prophe-  
 cies, which declared that such doctrines should  
 be preached to the Gentiles. It is also manifest  
 that our Lord does not connect remission of sins,  
 “ simply with repentance ;” but he connects the  
 preaching of both these to the Gentiles, with the  
 sufferings and death of the Christ. Your opinion  
 is, that our Lord here “ speaks of the necessity of  
 “ his sufferings and resurrection, to the due fulfil-  
 “ ment of the prophecies, respecting the Christ in  
 “ the Scriptures of the Old Testament.” What pro-  
 phecies are we here to understand? Those relating  
 to the sufferings and resurrection of the Christ? If  
 so, your argument runs thus, The Prophets have  
 declared, that the Christ should suffer and rise again:  
 therefore, the sufferings and resurrection of Christ  
 were necessary, in order that these prophecies  
 might be fulfilled. This is an argument for the  
 sufferings and resurrection of Christ, upon which  
 I do not remember that you have before touched.

If you mean that the sufferings and death of Christ, were necessary to the fulfilment of the *remaining* prophecies, concerning the Messiah, this accords exceedingly well with what I conceive to be the true meaning of the passage. The prophecies, to which our Lord refers, concern both the sufferings and resurrection of the Messiah, and also the preaching of repentance and remission of sins to the Gentiles. The sufferings and resurrection, of which the Prophets spake, were now past; the preaching to the Gentiles was not yet begun, but was to follow, as the proper consequence of the former. And this dependence of the preaching to the Gentiles, upon the sufferings and resurrection of the Christ, is also implied in the declaration, that repentance and remission of sins were to be preached *in his name*: by which, I understand, not ‘by his authority,’ but in and through him who suffered and rose from the dead. It is further implied in this expression, that the preaching of the Apostles was to be accompanied with an invitation to the nations, (beginning from Jerusalem,) to believe in Christ, and to embrace the Gospel; intimating that it is only by him “who was delivered for our offences, and was raised for our justification,” and through faith in his name, that the Gentiles are in a capacity of turning to God, and of obtaining remission of sins. In

confirmation of this interpretation, let it be considered that such was afterwards the preaching of the Apostles, as appears from the book of their Acts. Thus St. Paul, at Antioch, after insisting upon the sufferings and resurrection of Christ, thus addresses, first the Jews and Profelytes, and afterwards the Gentiles themselves, “ Be it known  
 “ unto you, therefore, men and brethren, that  
 “ through this man is preached unto you the for-  
 “ giveness of sins; and by him all that believe, are  
 “ justified from all things, from which ye could  
 “ not be justified by the law of Moses.”\* And to the same purpose speaks Peter to Cornelius, and his Gentile friends, after having insisted upon the same topicks; “ To him give all the Prophets  
 “ witness, that, through his name, whosoever  
 “ believeth in him, shall receive remission of  
 “ sins.”† And can it after this be said, that our Saviour does not in any way connect his death and faith in him who died, with remission of sins?

We could not expect that the Disciples would be found to teach a doctrine different from that of their master. We were, therefore, prepared to be told, that “ the Apostles, *after* the ascension of  
 “ Jesus, and the reception of the spirit, in no case  
 “ intimate that God could not consistently with  
 “ his justice forgive sins without the satisfaction

\* Acts xiii. 38. 39. † Acts x. 43.



“ made by the death of Christ, or even that he  
 “ forgives sins for the sake of Christ, or of what  
 “ he did and suffered for us,—but on the contrary  
 “ their declarations perfectly harmonize with  
 “ those of Moses and the Prophets, of the Baptist  
 “ and our Saviour: they represent God as *freely*  
 “ pardoning the truly penitent, and a change of  
 “ heart and life, as the condition on which the  
 “ mercy which he had authorized Jesus to offer,  
 “ would be extended to the sinner.”\* As in all-  
 this there is nothing new which requires remark,  
 I shall do no more than refer to what I have al-  
 ready said upon the same points.

Having by the foregoing observations prepared  
 the way for the rejection of our doctrine, and for  
 the reception of your own, you next proceed to  
 state what you regard as the Christian scheme of  
 salvation. You enter upon this part of your sub-  
 ject, with the following words, “ I have already  
 “ (see p. 29. 30.) mentioned my opinion as to  
 “ the grand purpose of the work, which was af-  
 “ signed to our Saviour; and for this I request the  
 “ re-consideration of our readers: it may, how-  
 “ ever, be desirable to state the subject in a some-  
 “ what different manner.”† Hence it appears  
 that the doctrine about to be unfolded, in the  
 subsequent articles, is only a restatement in ano-

\* Art. 9. page 282-284. † Page 286.

ther form of your former opinion: and it is obvious that this opinion is not entitled to our regard, unless you can clearly make out that the death of Christ has no other intention, in the Gospel scheme of redemption, than that which you assign to it. I shall not, therefore, trouble our readers with any remarks upon the intermediate articles; but shall proceed immediately to the consideration of this important point, which is in truth the hinge upon which the whole controversy turns.

Concerning the *importance* of the death of Christ, there is not, it seems, any question,\* the only point to be considered, is its efficacy; concerning which you state *two* cases, and affirm that one of them must be adopted; “either our Lord’s death  
 “ must have had its efficacy, wholly, or in part,  
 “ out of the usual order of providence, directly  
 “ producing, without any intermediate agency,  
 “ some change in the divine disposition or pur-  
 “ poses towards mankind;—or it must have been  
 “ a means operating according to the usual order  
 “ of providence, and, in the then circumstances,  
 “ necessary to promote the purposes for which he  
 “ came from God.” Of course the former is the supposition of those who hold the doctrine of atonement, the latter of the Unitarians: and I could expect no other than to be told that the

\* Art. 13. page 295.

former derives no plain positive support from the Scriptures, whereas, the latter is the pure "scriptural view of the subject." I have already entered a caveat against the supposition that the doctrine of atonement implies any actual change in the disposition of that God, who, in his nature, is unchangeable. The Scriptures, indeed, among the other affections of human nature, ascribe to the Deity repentance, representing him as sorry for what he had done, and as determining in consequence to destroy his own work.\* But this language is completely *analogical*; and means only that the world, in consequence of its wickedness, experienced from its maker the same rejection and loss of favour, as usually results from the repentance and sorrow which a human benefactor feels, when he discovers that he has been cherishing an unworthy object. In the present case, however, I perceive no difficulty which calls for even this solution. For if the Gospel scheme of salvation originated in the free love of God to men, what ground is there to impute to God any change in his disposition towards men, on account of our redemption and its consequences? I therefore object to our being comprehended in your first case, which certainly does not truly state the efficacy which we ascribe to the death of Christ.

\* Gen. vi. 6, 7. See also 1. Sam. xv. 11. and 2. Sam. xxiv. 16.

In your second case I cannot be comprehended, because that, as I learn from yourself, includes none but Unitarians, persons, who hold that the death of Christ was not necessary, because it made part of the original plan of man's redemption, and without which the whole could not be what it is; but was merely rendered necessary, by "the then " circumstances " But let me follow you in your argument. " The best way of ascertaining the " importance of any fact often is, to consider what " important results would have been prevented, " and what injurious consequences would have " followed, if it had taken place."\* And then you illustrate this position by appropriate instances. But let us not be led away, either by the position itself, or by its illustration, from the true point in question. I understood you to say, just now, that the *importance* of the death of Christ, is a thing in which we are all agreed; and that its *efficacy* is the only point in dispute. But I am not aware that the efficacy of Christ's death, can be ascertained by the mode of proceeding, which you propose. You, however, think otherwise: for thus you proceed, " It will assist in leading us to the truth, " as to the efficacy of our Saviour's death, if we " pursue the consequences, which, in the then " circumstances, (and it were useless to consider

\* Page 296.

“ any other,) would have followed from his not  
 “ submitting unto death; and if it appear that in  
 “ those circumstances, Jesus could not have  
 “ avoided death, without either on the one hand  
 “ destroying the authority of that message of par-  
 “ don and everlasting life which he came to  
 “ bring, or at least without preventing the *exten-*  
 “ *sive* reception of the offered blessings,—or, on  
 “ the other, altogether deserting the purposes for  
 “ which he was sent—we can have no difficulty  
 “ in accounting for the frequency and earnestness  
 “ with which his death is dwelt upon by the N. T.  
 “ writers, nor for the fact, that the benefits arising  
 “ from his glad tidings, are sometimes ascribed  
 “ to his death.” By the expression “the then  
 “ circumstances,” I suppose you mean the situa-  
 tion of our Saviour, at the very time when he sub-  
 mitted unto death; taking into the account both  
 the message which he had delivered, and also the  
 persons, to whom he had delivered it; namely,  
 the people in general, and his own Disciples in  
 particular: and when you tell us that “it were  
 “ useless to consider any other” circumstances, I  
 suppose you intend to include among these useless  
 circumstances, any effect, which, in the original  
 plan of man’s redemption, the death of Christ  
 might be designed to produce. Now let us sup-  
 pose that there was such an effect; let us suppose,

for instance, that the blood of Christ, was originally designed to sanctify and consecrate to the service of God the persons who should embrace the proffered mercy: I would ask, how can we possibly be led to this effect of the blood of Christ, by attending only to the circumstances existing at the time when he was about to suffer, and to the consequences, which in those circumstances, would have ensued, if he had not submitted unto death. Let it be granted that in “the then circumstances,” he could only have avoided death by one of the four ways which you enumerate, and that from each would have ensued the consequences which you state—it follows that, in order to prevent these consequences, his submission unto death became highly fitting and expedient, and perhaps, with respect to himself, unavoidable: and this is the utmost to which we can be led by pursuing the mode proposed: by it nothing can be obtained respecting the effect which the blood of Christ was designed to produce, in the original plan of man’s redemption. Since then your whole argument must in its own nature be insufficient, and cannot possibly prove the point to which it is applied; I shall not trouble either myself or our readers with it in detail, nor shall I notice the reflections at the conclusion, nor the censure which you pass upon those who found

their doctrines upon the literal interpretation of the Scriptures:\* none of which I am persuaded would have found a place there, if you had duly attended to what I had advanced in the *Preservative*, respecting Scripture analogies; and had been aware that *analogical* language is not to be classed with that which is merely *figurative*, or rather *metaphorical*.

There still remain to be explained, or rather to be tortured into an Unitarian sense, the passages of Scripture, in which, as we contend, the doctrine of atonement is contained.

You enter upon this part of your subject, with the following words: “ Before I proceed, I  
 “ must just refer to the singular mode of proof  
 “ which you have adopted, respecting the doc-  
 “ trine of atonement, as commonly received.  
 “ You could not, Sir, be ignorant of the great  
 “ deficiency in evidence as to the *Apostolical* au-  
 “ thority of the Epistle to the Hebrews; yet you  
 “ make the reasonings of the Writer, the basis of  
 “ your argument, and explain other passages by  
 “ them. Now this allow me to observe, is pre-  
 “ cisely the way to obscure the truth. If the  
 “ Gospels, the Acts, and the undisputed Epistles  
 “ of Paul, Peter, and John, do not contain this  
 “ doctrine, while such uncertainty hangs over the

\* Page 305.

“genuineness of the Epistle to the Hebrews, its metaphors and allusions,” (ANALOGIES if you please, Sir,) “cannot be admitted in proof of the doctrine; its evidence may be employed as a corroborative, but never as an independent ground of argument.”\* Before I controvert the opinions of my opponent, I like to look around me, and see how far I am justified in my mode of proceeding upon the ground which he thinks fit to allow me. I will, therefore, for argument’s sake, suppose that the Apostolical authority of the Epistle to the Hebrews, is not to be satisfactorily proved: let me now enquire what use I may fairly make of this Epistle, in the present argument. I will state the kind of authority which you give to it in your own words. “By whomsoever the Epistle to the Hebrews was written, it was very early known in the Christian church: and though from the deficiency of evidence in favour of its having been written by an Apostle, it cannot be regarded as by itself authoritative, yet it serves as a testimony relative to the opinion of the Jewish believers, at the time it was written.”† I think I may be satisfied with this concession. I am at liberty to assume, that the doctrines contained in this Epistle, were believed by the Jewish Christians, and have,

\* Page 307. 308. † Letters, page 67.



therefore, only to enquire, at what time it was written. You admit that it was known very early in the Christian church: and it cannot be doubted that it was written before the breaking out of the Jewish war, which terminated in the destruction of Jerusalem. There are passages in the Epistle itself which clearly shew that the Temple was then standing, and that the service of the Temple was regularly performed: for the priests and sacrifices are spoken of in the present tense. As ch. viii. 4. "For if he were on earth, he should not be a priest, seeing that there ARE priests that offer gifts according to the law:" and ch. xiii. 10. "We have an altar of which they have no right to eat which SERVE the tabernacle." These are cited by Lardner: to which I beg to add, ch. ix. 6. 7. "Now when these things were thus ordained, the priests *went* [Gr. εἰσιεσιον εο] always into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the service of God: but into the second, the high priest alone, once every year, not without blood which he *offered* [Gr. προσφέρει OFFERS] for himself, and the sins of the people." Also ch. x. 1. "For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices, which they *offered* [Gr. προσφερουσιν OFFER] year by year, continually make the comers thereunto

“perfect:” and again v. 11. “Every high priest  
 “STANDETH daily ministering and offering of-  
 “tentimes the same sacrifices which can never  
 “take away sins.” From these passages we may,  
 I think, fairly infer, that as yet there had been no  
 interruption to the service of the Temple; and  
 consequently that the Epistle was written before  
 the siege of Jerusalem; that is, before the year 67,  
 at the latest. But let it be remembered that the  
 Apostles, or at least the greater part of them were  
 at this time living. Hence it follows, that this  
 Epistle bears testimony to the belief of the Jewish  
 Christians during the Apostolical age, and conse-  
 quently to the doctrines taught by the Apostles;  
 for no other could be the prevailing doctrines in  
 those early times. Now let us suppose that there  
 are passages “in the undisputed Epistles of Paul,  
 “Peter, and John,” which, in one sense, teach  
 the doctrine for which I contend; but, neverthe-  
 less, may be taken in another sense; since the  
 Epistle to the Hebrews, “by whomsoever it was  
 “written,” contains doctrines not different from  
 those which were taught by the Apostles, I insist  
 that I am fully justified in employing this Epistle,  
 not only as a corroborative, but also in the way  
 of comment or exposition; and may, therefore,  
 if I think fit, bring forwards its doctrines in the  
 first instance, in order that the sense of the sup-

posed doubtful passages, in the undisputed Epistles, may be clear and intelligible at first sight. Consequently, even upon this ground, the mode of proof which I have adopted, ought not to be accounted "*singular*;" much less can it be said that it "is precisely the way to obscure the truth:" on the contrary, I know not in what way the truth can be better illustrated.

But let us enquire whether the evidence, as to the Apostolical authority of the Epistle to the Hebrews, be so greatly defective as you represent it; and whether the reasons assigned, be sufficient to warrant the very strong language which you employ upon this occasion.

Upon turning back to the thirteenth page of your book, I find you (in a note) maintaining that it cannot be satisfactorily shewn that the Epistle to the Hebrews was written by an Apostle. And thus you argue, "That it cannot, must I think  
 " be obvious to every one who fully examines the  
 " evidence for its genuineness.—On this point the  
 " reader is referred to Marsh's *Michaelis*, vol. iv.  
 " p. 245, &c. I do not think that *Michaelis* has  
 " allowed its full weight to the evidence for the  
 " genuineness: yet taking into account the great  
 " deficiency of historical evidence, till we pass  
 " the times of Origen, (near the middle of the  
 " third century,) the historical evidence against it,

“ and the material differences which are observable between both the *language* and the *manner* of this Epistle and those of the acknowledged Epistles of Paul, I think it more probable that this Epistle was not written by Paul: and even leaving out of account the *internal* evidence, the genuineness of the Epistle appears to me involved in great uncertainty.”

Hence it plainly appears, that in your opinion, we have not sufficient ground to believe that the Epistle to the Hebrews was written by St. Paul: and the reasons which you assign for this opinion, are the three following, which you state generally.

1. The great deficiency of historical evidence, till we pass the times of Origen. 2. The historical evidence against it. 3. The material differences which are observable between the *language* and *manner* of this Epistle, and those of the acknowledged Epistles of Paul. I will examine the validity of each of these reasons, beginning with the first.

That this Epistle was known and approved very early is manifest from the allusions to it and the quotations from it, in the first Epistle of Clement Romanus to the Corinthians, which was written in the first century, probably before St. John's Gospel. Irenæus, who flourished near the middle of the second century, has similar allusions

and quotations in his work against the Heresies. And we are told by Eusebius,\* that in another work, at that time extant, but now lost, he expressly mentions the Epistle to the Hebrews, and makes from it many extracts. It is not however said, that Irenæus quoted this Epistle expressly as St. Paul's. But Clemens Alexandrinus, who flourished before the conclusion of the same century, quotes it as St. Paul's very frequently, and, in a passage cited by Eusebius,† expressly affirms that it was written by St. Paul. He adds other circumstances of great importance in the present controversy, namely, that "it had been written " to the Hebrews, in the Hebrew language; but " that Luke very carefully interpreted it in the " Greek language for the use of the Greeks;" and this he states as the reason " why the same kind " of stile is found in this Epistle, and in the Acts " of the Apostles." He goes on to observe, that " the inscription, " Paul an Apostle," is very properly omitted: For says he, " writing to the " Hebrews, who were prepossessed with an unfavourable opinion of him, and were suspicious " of him, he very prudently did not disgust them " at the outset by putting his name." He further relates what he had heard from his master Pantænus, " Moreover, as the blessed Presbyter used

\* Eccles. Hist. lib. v. c. 26. † Eccl. Hist. lib. vi. c. 14.

“ to say, since our Lord, the Apostle of the Al-  
 “ mighty, was sent to the Hebrews, Paul, who  
 “ was sent to the Gentiles, does not, through mo-  
 “ desty, inscribe himself the Apostle of the He-  
 “ brews, both out of respect to our Lord, and  
 “ also because, being the Preacher and Apostle  
 “ of the Gentiles, his writing to the Hebrews was  
 “ not strictly within his province.” Such is the  
 account which Clement, as cited by Eusebius, in  
 the place above referred to, gives of this Epistle :  
 but neither here, nor in any other part of his  
 works, as far as I find, does he give the slightest  
 intimation of even a suspicion entertained by any  
 one, that any but St. Paul was the author. So  
 that, as far as appears, its genuineness was never  
 called in question, but it continued an undisputed  
 Epistle of St. Paul, to the very conclusion of the  
 second century. It appears, however, that about  
 this time, some among the Latins began to enter-  
 tain a doubt respecting this Epistle. But this  
 doubt did not proceed from any tradition, or  
 other external evidence, giving the Epistle to ano-  
 ther, or even denying it to be St. Paul’s, but from  
 those very phenomena in the Epistle itself, which  
 had before been noticed by Clement, namely, its  
 differing in style from the other Epistles of St.  
 Paul, and the omission of the Apostle’s name and  
 title at the beginning. The first person upon re-

cord, as far as I can find, who denied this Epistle to be St. Paul's, is Tertullian, who, in his treatise de pudicitia, (written as Cave conjectures between the years 199 and 209,) ascribed it to Barnabas: and afterwards in his work against Marcion, (written after his fall into heresy,) expressly denied that St. Paul was the author. He was followed by Caius, a Presbyter of the church of Rome, who flourished soon after the commencement of the third century; of whom Eusebius relates\* that there was then extant, a disputation of his against Proclus, in which "he mentions only thirteen Epistles of the divine Apostle, not enumerating the Epistle to the Hebrews among the rest." Eusebius adds, that "even now" (that is about a century after) "this Epistle is not thought by some of the Romans to be the Apostle's." Origen, who flourished somewhat later in the same century, (viz. about the year 230,) speaks of some, who rejected this Epistle as not being St. Paul's:† and in a passage cited by Eusebius,§ from his Homilies on this Epistle, he declares his own opinion; saying that "the stile of the Epistle to the Hebrews has not that rudeness of speech which belonged to the Apostle, who confesses of himself that he was

\* Eccles. His. lib. vi. c. xx. † Opera T. 1. page 20. Ben.

§ Eccles. Hist. lib. vi. c. 25.

“rude in speech, that is in expression; but in its  
 “composition is purer Greek, as every one will  
 “allow, who is a judge of the difference of styles.  
 “Again, he says, that “the sentiments of this  
 “Epistle are admirable, and not inferior to the  
 “acknowledged Apostolical writings; and to the  
 “truth of this every one will assent, who applies  
 “himself to the reading of these writings.” He  
 afterwards proceeds to account for the difference  
 of style observable in this Epistle. “My opinion,”  
 says he, “is this; the sentiments are the Apostles,  
 “but the language and composition is of some  
 “other, who recorded the Apostle’s sentiments,  
 “and as it were illustrated with Scholia the things  
 “spoken by his master. If, therefore, any church  
 “receives this Epistle as Paul’s, let it be com-  
 “mended on this very account: for it was not  
 “without reason that the old Fathers delivered it  
 “down to us as Paul’s. But as to the person who  
 “wrote\* this Epistle,” (that is, who composed  
 the words in which the sentiments are expressed,)  
 “the truth is known to God. Of the accounts  
 “which have come down to us, some say that it  
 “was Clement, who became Bishop of Rome;  
 “others, Luke, who wrote the Gospel and the

\* Gr. γράζας. That this word does not necessarily denote  
 the *original writer* or *author*, (in which sense it is here taken  
 by Michaelis, in his introduction to the N. T. vol. 4. page  
 247.) see Rom. xvi. 22.



“ Acts.” In the above quotation it is manifest that Origen ascribes to St. Paul the matter only, not the form of the Epistle: but this he thinks a sufficient recommendation of it to any church to receive it as St. Paul’s. Accordingly he received it himself, and frequently quotes it as St. Paul’s; and sometimes in a way which deserves to be noticed. Thus in his treatise against Celsus, after citing Heb. v. 12-14. “ When for the time ye ought  
 “ to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you  
 “ again, which be the first principles of the oracles  
 “ of God; and are become such as have need of  
 “ milk, and not of strong meat. For every one  
 “ that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righte-  
 “ ousness:”—he immediately adds: “ He who wrote  
 “ this is the same Paul who said to the Corinthians,  
 “ I have fed you with milk, and not with meat,  
 “ &c.”\* In like manner, in his Philocalia, he brings together Heb. viii. 5. and 1. Cor. x. 11. as the words of the same Apostle: and again in another place, Heb. xii. 22. 23. and Gal. iv. 6. By this mode of quotation, Origen clearly manifests, not a mere acquiescence in the general opinion, but a firm conviction in his own mind, that this Epistle was the genuine work of the Apostle St. Paul. I am not called upon to go beyond the times of Origen: nevertheless, it may not be amiss

\* 1. Cor. iii. 2.

to mention Eusebius himself, (who, as it was hinted above, flourished near the beginning of the fourth century,) because, from the extracts which he made from preceding writers, he appears to have thought the question, respecting the Epistle to the Hebrews and its author, of great importance, and to have examined it with great attention: and therefore his own testimony is of no inconsiderable value, on account of the superior advantages which he enjoyed of ascertaining the truth. But his testimony is decidedly in favour of the genuineness of this Epistle. Speaking of the Apostolical Epistles, he says expressly, "There are fourteen Epistles of Paul, manifest and certain;"\* he adds, indeed, "it ought not to be passed over, that some have rejected that to the Hebrews, saying, that it is denied to be Paul's, by the church of Rome." But the authority of that church did not cause him even to waver in his opinion: on the contrary, it appeared of no weight whatever, compared with the unanimous voice of all the Greek Fathers, from the beginning, who all concurred in ascribing this Epistle to St. Paul: he therefore affirmed boldly and unhesitatingly, "There are fourteen Epistles of Paul, manifest and certain."

It may not be improper to add, that this una-

\* Eccles. Hist. lib. iii. c. 3.

nimous voice of the Greek Fathers, appears to have had no less weight with Jerom, who flourished towards the conclusion of the same century; and seems to have preserved him from the opinion, which commonly prevailed in the Latin church, of which he was one of the brightest ornaments. "Our people must be told," says he, in his Epistle to Dardanus, "that the Epistle to the Hebrews, is received not only by the churches of the East, but by all the Greek Ecclesiastical writers in times past." Sometimes, indeed, he appears to speak doubtfully of this Epistle: but on such occasions he is giving not so much his own opinion, at least his own mature opinion, as that of the church to which he belonged. Thus in his catalogue of Ecclesiastical writers, he tells us that "the Epistle to the Hebrews is not thought to be his (i. e. St. Paul's) on account of the difference of stile and language." Such confessedly was the prevailing opinion in the Latin church, and the principal reason upon which this opinion was founded. But that this had no weight with him is manifest from the manner in which he proceeds to speak of the person to whom the Epistle had been ascribed; who was "either Barnabas, according to Tertullian, or Luke the Evangelist, according to some, or Clement, afterwards Bishop of Rome, who, as they say,

“being associated to Paul, set down and dressed  
 “in his own language the Apostle’s sentiments,”  
 which last sentence may refer either to Clement  
 alone, or to which ever of the three the Epistle  
 should be attributed; and serves to shew the real  
 share, which, according to tradition, such person  
 had in its composition: the form only was his, the  
 matter was the Apostle’s. He then states another  
 reason why this Epistle was not thought to be St.  
 Paul’s: namely, because “he was writing to the  
 “Hebrews, and on account of their dislike of him,  
 “had omitted his title at the beginning. He had  
 “written most fluently as a Hebrew, to the He-  
 “brews, in Hebrew, that is, in his own dialect.  
 “But those things which had been eloquently  
 “expressed in the Hebrew, were more eloquently  
 “expressed in the Greek translation.” And this  
 he states as “the reason why it appears to differ  
 “from the *other* Epistles of Paul.” It is plain  
 that Jerom himself perceived no weight in the  
 objections usually brought against this Epistle;  
 and therefore, as Lardner observes, he readily  
 received it as Paul’s.

Nor was this Epistle disowned by all the La-  
 tins, even before the time of Jerom. It is true,  
 Tertullian rejected it; nor has Cyprian quoted it;  
 but these excepted, the principal of the Latin  
 Fathers, Hilary, Optatus, Ambrose, frequently

cite it as St. Paul's. And after Jerom, all objection seems to have been gradually withdrawn, till at length the Epistle to the Hebrews was universally received and acknowledged by the whole Christian church to be the genuine work of St. Paul. It should be added, that of those who denied the Epistle to be St. Paul's, many, nevertheless, did not refuse to acknowledge its divine authority.

I am aware that some of the evidence above adduced, is differently put by the learned Michaelis, to whom you refer those who propose fully to examine the evidence for the genuineness of this Epistle:\* and yet in the very next sentence, you acknowledge, that in your opinion, Michaelis has not allowed its *full weight* to the evidence for the genuineness! But, Sir, I go further, and without hesitation assert that he has absolutely *misstated* the evidence. He commences his enquiry concerning the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, with observing that "historical evidence  
 " in the strict sense of the word, or considered as  
 " testimony to a matter of fact, we have none on  
 " this subject; and the opinions of the most celebrated Ecclesiastical writers, are so far from being uniform, that while some received it, others,  
 " nay, whole churches rejected it, as not being the

\* See the above quotation from page 13.

“ work of St. Paul.”\* In order to ascertain what we are to understand by ‘historical evidence’ in questions of this kind, I shall refer to Michaelis’ own judgement, as it is given in the place where he is citing the “*testimonies* of the ancients, relative to an Hebrew original of St. Matthew’s Gospel.” “As our present question is historical, the decision of it must principally depend upon the testimony of ancient writers. It is true that, if we take the testimony in the strictest sense of the word, so as to denote the evidence of persons who were contemporary with St. Matthew, we shall not be able to produce any on this subject. But, where Ecclesiastical history fails us in the first century, we must be contented with the accounts which come the nearest to that period: and for the sake of brevity, I must beg leave to use the terms ‘witness’ and ‘testimony,’ though the fact for which I quote the authority of ancient writers, did not lie within their own actual experience. Maius, indeed, objects that we ought not so much to examine what the ancients have reported, as whether they have reported the truth. But this objection is totally useless; for these reports alone can determine, what is the truth.”† Up-

\* *Introd. to the N. T.* vol. iv. chap. 24. § 15. page 245.

† *Introd.* vol. iii. chap. iv. § 4. page 116.

on this authority I shall take the liberty of calling by the name of 'historical evidence' relative to the Epistle to the Hebrews, and its author, those reports of the ancients, which I find either in their own writings, or in the writings of others, near their own time; those reports especially which were in being, when as yet no doubt appears to have been entertained respecting the author of this Epistle.

It is acknowledged that Clement of Rome who was contemporary with the Apostles, and Irenæus who was contemporary with the Disciples of the Apostles, have both cited this Epistle. It is true, they neither of them, as far as I know, cite it as St Paul's; but their citing it at all is a proof that the Epistle is as ancient as the times of the Apostles, and that from the very first, it was held in high estimation. Of the ancient Fathers, whose works have come down to us, Clement of Alexandria is, perhaps, the first who has expressly ascribed this Epistle to St. Paul. But if we consider that the time when Clement lived, is not so far removed from the Apostolical age as to make it a matter of difficulty, with the monuments then remaining, to trace any particular fact up to the Apostles; and that Clement (as he himself tells us) was a man who especially applied himself to this work, and was intimate with those who possessed

the true tradition of the Apostolical doctrine, we cannot refuse to the things which he relates respecting the Apostles and their Acts, the name of 'historical evidence.' When therefore Clement frequently cites this Epistle as Paul's; and not only so, but expressly asserts it to be the work of that Apostle, what is this but historical evidence of a very early date? And when we further call to mind, that Clement professes to have derived his information from his master Pantænus, (of whom it is said that he was instructed by those who had seen the Apostles,\*) does it not become 'historical evidence' of a still earlier date?

But Michaelis observes, that Clement, when he ascribed this Epistle to St. Paul, "at the same time obviated the objection derived from the difference of style, by saying, that the Apostle wrote it in Hebrew, and that the Greek is only a translation."† Were this so, the declaration of Clement would nevertheless be 'historical evidence;' and it might be said in this case that he was bearing testimony against a false opinion which was beginning to prevail. But it is said without proof. After carefully reading the passage referred to,§ I can find in it nothing which

\* See Cave Hist. lit. vol. i. p. 51. † Introd. vol. iv. page 245.

§ See the passage above quoted from Eusebi. Eccles. Hist. lib. vi. cap. 14.



favours of objection, or of answer to an objection: Clement is merely stating an obvious phænomenon in the Epistle to the Hebrews, without, as far as appears, the least suspicion that this phænomenon had ever been construed into an objection against St. Paul, as the author. But according to Michaelis, Clement is not to "be considered, in this instance, as bearing testimony to a matter of fact," but as delivering an opinion. And respecting the things which Clement relates from Pantænus, Michaelis also observes, "This again is rather opinion than testimony." That there is, in this instance, opinion mixed with testimony, I readily grant: and these should carefully be distinguished. The facts to which Clement bears testimony are these: 1. That Paul is the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews: 2. That it was originally written in Hebrew: 3. That it was translated into Greek by Luke. For thus much the declaration of Clement is 'historical evidence;' since, as I have already shewn, no objection can be taken against it from the length of time which had intervened, since the facts attested. But the reason assigned for the difference of style between this, and the other Epistles of St. Paul, and also the reason why the Apostle omitted to prefix his name and titles, may perhaps, be mere opinion, and not testimony to a matter of fact.

It is, however, admitted that Clement ascribed this Epistle to St. Paul. But, says Michaelis, “Origen, the celebrated scholar of Clement, entertained a different opinion on this subject, and consequently must have considered what was asserted by Clement and Pantænus likewise, as mere opinion, and not as historical evidence. The words of Origen, which are quoted by Eusebius, in his Ecclesiastical History, B. vi. ch. 25. are to the following purport: ‘In my opinion the matter was from St. Paul, but the construction of the words from another, who recorded the thoughts of the Apostle, and made notes as it were of what was said by his master.’ Of this last sentence the original is as follows, ἡ δὲ φρασις καὶ ἡ συνθεσις, απομνημονευσαντος τινος τὰ αποστολικά, καὶ ὡσπερὶ σχολιογραφησαντος τὰ εἰρημενα ὑποτὰ διδασκαλῆ. Unfortunately Michaelis has not hit upon the true sense in which Origen used the word σχολιογραφησαντος; and hence has arisen much of his misconception of this learned Father’s meaning and opinions. Taking the verb σχολιογραφῶ in what is apparently its general meaning, to *write notes upon obscure passages*, he conceives the above words of Origen to warrant the following deductions. “According to Origen, then, the Epistle to the Hebrews was not written by St. Paul, in any sense whatsoever, nei-

“ ther in Greek nor in Hebrew: for in his opini-  
 “ on, the sentiments only were those of the Apof-  
 “ tle, but the clothing in which those sentiments  
 “ were conveyed was the work of one of his  
 “ Difciples, who noted the doctriues which he  
 “ had heard delivered by his mafter, and made as  
 “ it were commentaries on them.—Further, Ori-  
 “ gen’s words by no means imply that St. Paul  
 “ even ordered the Epiftle to be written: and,  
 “ indeed, if he had, it is probable that a faluta-  
 “ tion would have been fent to the Hebrews, in  
 “ his name.” So then, according to Michaelis,  
 Origen’s words imply no more than that the doc-  
 trines contained in the Epiftle, are doctriues which  
 St. Paul had taught; but that the Epiftle itfelf is  
 not the Epiftle of St. Paul, who had no concern  
 in it as an Epiftle; that its origin was this; one of  
 St. Paul’s Difciples, who had heard him deliver  
 thefe doctriues, took them down in writing, made  
 notes upon the obfcure paffages, and at length  
 worked up the whole in the form of an Epiftle,  
 which he entituled an Epiftle to the Hebrews, and  
 all this without the Apoftle’s concurrence, who  
 probably did not even order fuch an Epiftle to be  
 written. This, furely, was not Origen’s meaning;  
 nor can any fuch meaning be put upon his words  
 rightly underftood. The words *απομνημονευω* and  
*σχολιογραφω* which Origen here employs are de-

scriptive of a practice common in the schools of the ancient Rhetoricians, who accustomed their scholars to recite the doctrines which they themselves had delivered, not in the very words in which they had been delivered, but in other words, which would not barely express the meaning, but would at the same time illustrate and explain it: By this practice the master could readily discover whether the student depended solely upon his memory, or whether he really understood the things which had been taught. To this practice Origen alludes in the passage before us. He tells us that in his opinion the sentiments are the Apostle's; but that the person who committed these sentiments to writing, did not express them in the Apostle's own words, but recited them in other words, explanatory of the meaning, after the manner of students in the schools of the Rhetoricians. And if this be the whole of the meaning, the passage itself affords no ground whatever for the very loose opinion respecting this Epistle, which Michaelis has ascribed to Origen: the utmost which can be inferred is, that the Epistle, in its present form, is not so compressed and obscure as when it first proceeded from the Apostle, but that the Apostle's meaning is expressed more fully and clearly. It is to be observed, that Origen is here accounting, in a way somewhat different from Clement, for the

difference of style observable in this Epistle. This is in both, not historical evidence, but mere opinion. But the opinion of Origen applies solely to the Epistle as we now have it; and not to the original as it was delivered by St. Paul: consequently nothing is here said respecting the language of this original, whether it was given in Greek or in Hebrew. It cannot, therefore, be inferred from this passage, that the opinion of Origen, upon this point, was different from that of Clement; or that he considered what was asserted by Clement and Pantænus, respecting this point, as mere opinion, and not historical evidence. Clement is of opinion, that the difference of style and language observable in this Epistle, arises from its being a translation from the Hebrew into Greek: I see nothing in Origen which is in the least inconsistent with this, but only something which modifies it. For if a translation, it must, agreeably to Origen's opinion, have been a translation of a peculiar kind; not a translation which merely expresses the sense of the original, but one which, while it expresses, at the same time elucidates and explains the sense.

Michaelis next quotes the words of Origen immediately following those upon which he had just been commenting. These he gives in the original. Of the first sentence (which is sufficient

for my present purpose) I have already given the following translation, “ If therefore any church  
 “ receives this Epistle as Paul’s, let it be com-  
 “ mended on this very account; for it was not  
 “ without reason that the ancients have delivered  
 “ it down to us as Paul’s.” Upon these words Michaelis observes; “ From this passage it appears,  
 “ that Origen, though he himself did not believe  
 “ that St. Paul wrote the Epistle to the Hebrews,  
 “ by no means disapproved of those, who re-  
 “ ceived it as the work of St. Paul, because, as he  
 “ had said before, the sentiments were those of the  
 “ Apostle.” Origen most certainly did not believe that St. Paul put together the words in which the Epistle is expressed; but it does not cease on this account to be his Epistle. The book which is now before me, professes to be the work of Michaelis; and rightly so, but not in the form in which I have it. The words unquestionably are not his; they are the words of Dr. Marsh, who clothed the thoughts of Michaelis in his own language, and has probably in very many places expressed the sense more fully than the original, in order to illustrate that, which, if literally translated from the German, would be obscure to an English reader. But notwithstanding this, I do not account it one jot the less the work of Michaelis. The case of the Epistle to the Hebrews is very

similar. The words are not the words of St. Paul; they are the words of some other, who clothed the Apostle's thoughts in his own language, and illustrated the sense. But notwithstanding this, Origen did not *disapprove* of those who received it as the work of St. Paul. But why did he not *disapprove*? "Because, says *Michaelis*, "as he had said before, the sentiments "were those of the Apostle." But what does *Origen* say? he has assigned a different reason, which *Michaelis* has thought proper to pass over without notice. These are his words, "If there-  
 "fore any church receives this Epistle as Paul's,  
 "let it be *commended* on this very account: FOR  
 "it was not without reason that the ancients  
 "(οἱ ἀρχαῖοι ἄνδρες) have delivered it down to us as  
 "Paul's." I think I need go no further. There is contained in this last sentence of Origen, a piece of historical evidence which gives a death blow to the argument of *Michaelis*, and fully establishes the authenticity of the Epistle to the Hebrews. For here we have the express testimony of Origen, that up to his own time, namely, the beginning of the third century, there had been a constant tradition in the church, that the Epistle to the Hebrews was the genuine work of St. Paul.

I think, Sir, that I have now fully answered the first reason upon which you ground your opi-

nion, that the Epistle to the Hebrews is not the work of St. Paul; and have shewn, that the supposed great deficiency of historical evidence, till we pass the times of Origen, is mere assertion; and that the fact is otherwise. Your second reason is, "the historical evidence against it." Now, Sir, I know of no historical evidence whatever against the genuineness of the Epistle to the Hebrews. I know, indeed, that about the beginning of the third century, some persons began to doubt whether this Epistle really were the work of St. Paul; and I am not ignorant that many, especially among the Latins, absolutely rejected it. But those who did so, never professed to derive any support from tradition, or from testimony of any kind; but argued entirely from certain Phænomena in the Epistle itself, which in their judgment were inconsistent with the supposition that St. Paul was the author. But this is not historical evidence; it is opinion merely: it is moreover opinion which was opposed with effect by the most learned of the contemporary Fathers: being weighed in the balance, it was found wanting: and the consequence was, as might be expected, it could not stand: even in the Latin church, from the time of Jerom it declined most sensibly, and, after languishing for some time, it completely died away. And now in the nineteenth century,



shall this short-lived opinion be revived, and dignified with the name of *historical evidence*? What an abuse of words!

Your third and last reason is taken from the Epistle itself, which, as you assert, materially differs both in *language* and in *manner* from the acknowledged Epistles of St. Paul. The first of these differences, that of *language*, was the chief ground upon which the Latin Fathers depended, when they denied this Epistle to be St. Paul's. They perceived that the sentences are not constructed in St. Paul's usual manner, and that the diction is more copious and full. This is *apparently* an objection of considerable force: but, as we have seen, it did not weigh with any of the learned Fathers of the Greek church, against the positive historical evidence on the other side: and they were of opinion that the objection might be obviated without having recourse to the very violent proceeding of their Latin brethren. A sufficient, and probably the true cause of the great copiousness and fluency observable in this Epistle, was first pointed out by Origen; and if we combine with his opinion, the declaration of Clement of Alexandria, that the Epistle, in its present form, is a translation from the Hebrew, we shall, I think, be able to obviate the whole objection in a way much more satisfactory than any which has

been proposed in modern times. That the Epistle to the Hebrews was originally written in the language of that people, is a thing not only highly probable in itself, but also confirmed by historical evidence. I therefore assume as a fact, that there was a Hebrew original; which original the Apostle either wrote with his own hand, or more probably, as his manner usually was, dictated to one of his attendants; and that this Hebrew original was afterwards translated into Greek. But that the Greeks might have the full benefit of this truly valuable Epistle, such a translation as Origen describes, became in a manner necessary. For it is so replete with Jewish learning, that in the compressed form in which it was delivered by the Apostle, it could hardly have been intelligible to the Greek Christians; and therefore the translator did not confine himself to a strict rendering of the original, but illustrated the sense as he went along by a fuller expression. And all this we may well suppose to have been done with the concurrence and approbation, perhaps, by the order of the Apostle himself. Who this translator was, is not certainly known. Origen tells us that the Epistle, in its present form, was ascribed by some to Clement Bishop of Rome, by others to Luke the Evangelist. But says Michaelis, “neither of these contradictory accounts, can be true; for the

“ style of the Epistle to the Hebrews, is neither  
 “ that of St. Luke, nor of Clement of Rome.”  
 Against this opinion of Michaelis, I may set the  
 opposite opinion of Clement of Alexandria in the  
 one case, and of Eusebius in the other: the former  
 of whom was of opinion that the same kind of  
 style is found in the Epistle to the Hebrews, and  
 in the Acts of the Apostles;\* and the latter per-  
 ceived a resemblance between this Epistle and the  
 second Epistle of Clement to the Corinthians.†  
 It is not improbable that both Clement and Luke  
 were concerned in this Epistle, the one as the  
 Apostle’s Amanuensis, the other as Translator:  
 and hence might arise the supposed contradictory  
 accounts to which Michaelis refers. Of these two  
 I think it most probable that Luke was the trans-  
 lator, both because he is expressly named as such  
 by Clement of Alexandria, and also because this  
 Epistle and the books of Luke, have words and  
 phrases in common, some of which are rarely,  
 others never found in any other book of the New  
 Testament. The following instances have been  
 observed: *Ευλαδεια pietas*, Heb. xii. 28. *ευλαδης*  
*pius*, Luke ii. 25. Acts ii. 5. viii. 2.—*Μαρτυρω απ-*  
*προβο*, Heb. xi. 2. 4. 5. and Luke iv. 22. Acts vi. 3.  
 x. 22. xvi. 2.—*Ἡγεμενος, a Ruler*, Heb. xiii. 7. 17.

\* Eus. Eccles. Hist. lib. vi. cap. 14.

† Eus. Eccles. Hist. lib. iii. c. 38.

24. and Luke xxii. 26. Acts xiv. 12. xv. 22.—*Αρχηγος* a *Beginner* or *Author*, Heb. ii. 10. xii. 2. and Acts iii. 15. v. 31.—*Χρηματιζομαι* to be taught by revelation, Heb. viii. 5. and Luke ii. 26. Acts x. 22. See Matt. ii. 6. 12.—*Εἰς το παντελες* Heb. vii. 25. and Luke xiii. 11. Also the preposition *προς* to signify *of* or *concerning*, Heb. i. 7. iv. 13. and Luke xviii. 1. Also St. Paul appears sometimes to use this preposition in the same sense: see Rom. viii. 31. x. 21. To this we may add the confession of Michaelis, that the speeches of St. Paul, in the Acts of the Apostles, chap. xvii. 22-31. xxiv. 10-21. xxvi. 1-21. are recorded in language equally good and fluent with that of the Epistle to the Hebrews:\* and if a critical eye can still discern any difference, may it not fairly be accounted for from the peculiar circumstances in which Luke, as a translator, was placed? But, however this be, I think enough has been said to shew that no objection can fairly be taken against St. Paul, as the author of this Epistle, from the difference of style and language.

But we are also told that a material difference is observable between the *manner* of this Epistle, and that of the acknowledged Epistles of St. Paul. I know not whether by the *manner of this Epistle*, I am to understand the manner generally, or

\* Introduction to the N. T. ch. xxiv. § 14. p. 242.

merely the omission of the name and title, at the beginning. If it be intended that St. Paul's usual manner of writing is different; I answer, so is his argument; so is his relation to the persons whom he addresses. The tone and manner of the same person will naturally vary with the subject and the occasion. It will not be the same when he instructs the ignorant, as when he confutes the gain-fayer: it will not be the same when he rebukes with the authority of a ruler, as when he entreats with the affection of a brother. The Apostle truly describes the character of this Epistle, when he calls it 'the word of exhortation,' which he beseeches the Hebrews to 'suffer,' or bear patiently. In writing to them, he was writing to a people not immediately committed to his charge: for other of the Apostles exercised over them that authority which he exercised over the Gentiles, whose Apostle he peculiarly was. And this he virtually declares when he reminds them of their duty to those who had the charge of them. "Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken to you the word of God: whose faith follow."\* And again, "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account."† And hence probably

\* Heb. xiii. 7. † Heb. xiii. 17.

the reason why St. Paul, in writing to the Hebrews, omitted at the beginning his name and title. He was writing to a people over whom he had no spiritual authority; and lest he should be thought to assume a power to which he had no claim, he addresses to them the word of exhortation, without even entitling himself, Paul an Apostle. This reason was first suggested by the ancients; and it appears to account for the omission of the Apostle's name and title, in a manner perfectly satisfactory. But after all, the objection itself is of no great weight. It will not surely be contended that a man can never have a reason for departing from his usual practice, on any occasion whatever: and if any other man, why not Paul, upon the present occasion? It is, moreover, worthy of remark, that among the arguments which have been taken from the Epistle itself, no one has ever been hardy enough to say, that it contains any thing unworthy of St. Paul, or contrary to sound Apostolical doctrine. Indeed, such an argument would carry with it its own confutation. For if the doctrines which it contains, had not been agreeable to those which St. Paul and the other Apostles were accustomed to teach, it could never in those early times have been ascribed to St. Paul, or received into the Canon. And as on the one hand there is nothing in the Epistle

which makes it improbable to be St. Paul's, so on the other there are many things which naturally point to him as the author. Thus the contents of the Epistle are peculiarly suitable both to the circumstances of the Apostle, and to the situation of the Hebrews; there is in many places a strong agreement between this and the acknowledged Epistles of St. Paul, in matter and sentiment, and sometimes even in language: especially in the conclusion there is a remarkable agreement. These are things well known and acknowledged; and therefore I need not insist upon them at large.

I have been thus led into a fuller examination, than I at first intended, of the reasons which you assign for "the great deficiency in evidence as to the Apostolical authority of the Epistle to the Hebrews." It has been seen that these reasons are partly internal, and partly external. Upon the internal reasons, or those derived from the Epistle itself, you do not seem to place much dependence: for you say, "Even leaving out of account the *internal* evidence, the genuineness of the Epistle appears to me involved in great uncertainty." But were it otherwise, I trust I have fully shewn their insufficiency: and as to the external reasons they are, as I have also shewn, wholly imaginary; for there is no historical evidence whatever *against* the genuineness of the

Epistle, but mere opinion, founded upon the very reasons which have above been shewn to be insufficient. And again there is no want of historical evidence *for* the genuineness of the Epistle, in the times preceding Origen, as Origen himself testifies. I trust it will not now be thought presumption in me to say, that I have drawn aside the veil which has been made to hang over the origin of this Epistle; and have exhibited its Apostolical authority in clear and open view. I shall therefore continue, as before, to draw my proofs from this Epistle, with as great freedom as from any other part of the sacred volume; being well assured that even if I make it the basis of my argument, I shall be in no danger of obscuring the truth. I now return to the doctrine of atonement.

In your attack upon this doctrine, you work by the same exterminating process as before, in the case of Christ's supra-human nature. You begin with the historical books of the New Testament,\* and having attempted to explain away the few notices of this doctrine which occur in these, (many could not be expected to occur,) you proceed to what you call the undisputed writings of the Apostles;† and having explained them in the same manner, you come at length to the Epistle to the Hebrews; your explanation of which you

\* Page 308-313. † Page 314-328.



preface with these words; "As no expressions occur in the Revelation, which have not been already considered, I may now observe, that with the exception of those found in the Epistle to the Hebrews, I have examined all the phraseology respecting the death of Christ, which appears to oppose what I have stated as the Scripture-doctrine of redemption by Jesus Christ: and that, as nothing has occurred in the undisputed writings of the Apostles, which in any way really opposes it, I cannot admit that what may be found in that Epistle, ought to be allowed to decide against that doctrine, even if it appeared positively inconsistent with it."\* In answer to the position contained in this last sentence, I must be allowed to repeat, that since, agreeably to your own acknowledgement, this Epistle is an evidence of the belief of the Christian church in Judea, during the age of the Apostles, it may fairly be applied to determine the sense of such doubtful passages, relating to the subject before us, as may occur in the historical books of Scripture, and in the undisputed Epistles. But what may and ought to be done upon this ground only, must be done, if, as I think I have sufficiently shewn, no doubt what-

\* Page 328.

† See page 67. See also a similar acknowledgement respecting the Epistle of St. Jude, page 72.

ever can reasonably be entertained respecting the authenticity and canonical authority of this Epistle. If therefore, it shall appear that the doctrine contained in this Epistle is inconsistent with what you have stated as the Scripture-doctrine of redemption by Jesus Christ; and if the passages, in the other parts of the sacred volume, which you have attempted to explain away, do in their plain and obvious sense, either directly assert, or indirectly support the same doctrine, the conclusion is inevitable, that what you have stated as the Scripture-doctrine, is truly and properly your own, or the Unitarian doctrine, and not the doctrine of the Scriptures. I shall, therefore, begin as before, with the Epistle to the Hebrews.

In the note G. at the end of your volume, I find some animadversions upon the first thing which I had deduced from this Epistle; namely, that the Mosaical dispensation “was ordained “solely for the purpose of typifying and prefiguring a better state of things to follow.”\* This you call ‘my opinion,’ which you do not controvert, any otherwise than by setting in opposition to it the counter-opinion of Dr. Sykes, who tells us, that “a type is what by the appointment “of God prefigures something future: it is what “adumbrates, or is designed by God to adum-

\* Preservative, page 25.

“brate something else.”\* He does not think that  
 “there were no instances of types as signifying  
 “prefigurations of future events:” on the con-  
 trary, he affirms that “there are many such in  
 “the Scriptures.” But says he, “in no place  
 “where this word occurs throughout the New  
 “Testament, does it ever signify, or at least it  
 “cannot be *proved* to signify that any thing in the  
 “law was *designed* to *shadow out*, or to *prefigure*  
 “Christ, or his kingdom.”† It appears then that  
 the objection is, not to my calling the Mosaical  
 dispensation a type or figure of a future dispensa-  
 tion, but to my asserting that it was ordained for  
 this express purpose. In confirmation of this  
 opinion, I had asserted than in the Epistle to the  
 Hebrews, the Mosaical dispensation is expressly  
 called ‘the example, the pattern, the shadow,’ of  
 the better dispensation to follow; and I think that  
 these names give us an intimation at least of the  
 purpose for which the Mosaical dispensation was  
 ordained. But if I should be told that this is not  
 sufficient; that these names declare merely what  
 the dispensation is, not what it was originally  
 designed to be, I would refer to Heb. viii. 5.  
 “Who” (namely, the legal priests) “serve unto  
 “the example and shadow of heavenly things;  
 “as Moses was admonished of God, when he was

\* Page 358. † Page 359.

“ about to make the tabernacle : For, see, says he, “ that thou make all things according to the pattern (*τυπον*) shewed to thee in the mount.” I know not whether this is one of the places which Dr. Sykes has examined : if it be, I think he can hardly have ventured to deny, that the *tytē* of the tabernacle shewn to Moses in the mount, was purposely designed to be the pattern or model according to which the real tabernacle was to be made : and the service of the priests, in the earthly tabernacle, is here said to have a similar intention ; and was, therefore, designed purposely to typify and prefigure the service of the heavenly tabernacle. But I hardly think this a point of any great importance ; it is sufficient for our argument to assume that the legal dispensation *is* the type, the pattern, the example, the shadow, of the Evangelical :

My next assertion is, that the Apostle’s intention in this Epistle, was to shew the superiority of the Christian dispensation above the legal, “ by a comparison of the two in their corresponding parts.”\* You express the intention somewhat differently ; saying, “ It was the writer’s object to shew, that whatever there was of excellence in the Jewish ritual, there was something similar to it of equal, or superior value, in the Christian

\* Preserv. page 26.

“system.”\* This, Sir, is not quite accurate. Instead of ‘something similar to it,’ I propose to read ‘something corresponding with it:’ for without some such alteration this sentence is not consistent with another which follows almost immediately, in which you propose to explain “those  
 “ (*analogies*) which appear to give some counte-  
 “ nance to the idea that the death of Christ, con-  
 “ sidered as a sacrifice *corresponding* to those of  
 “ the law, rendered God propitious.” But then we must hear no more of the Apostle’s employing “Jewish modes of interpreting Scripture:” especially you must not talk of his dwelling “upon  
 “ single and obscure points of resemblance;” because analogy does not consist in single points having a resemblance to each other, but in corresponding points being in similar relations: For  
 “ analogy is the similitude of ratios.”†

Of the points, in the two dispensations, which are said in this Epistle to correspond with each other, I particularly mentioned these two; namely, the office of Christ with that of the legal high priest, and the blood of Christ with that of the legal victims. But I perceive that I have still much to do respecting Christ’s priestly office; many mistakes to rectify, much misapprehension to remove. In the following passage you treat

\* Letters, page 331. † Elements of Euclid, B. v. Def. 2.

this office with no great respect, and rather recommend the total omission of it out of the Christian system: “It is a most remarkable circumstance that he should have been truly and properly a priest, and should really and literally have exercised the office without his having known it, or at least without his ever intimating any thing of the kind. And if he were a priest only figuratively, and is spoken of as such, solely in reference to the Jewish ritual, and to remove Jewish prejudices, surely those who regard the religion of Jesus as a spiritual service, free from ‘the weak and beggarly elements’ of the Mosaic ritual, cannot be blameworthy in making such a figurative representation no part of their system, inasmuch as the reality makes no part of Christianity. There was great propriety in thus representing our Saviour to the Jews: but it strikes me, that to the imagination of a Christian, it is rather derogatory from the dignity of our Lord’s office, to speak of him under this character.”\* It cannot fail to be observed, that the whole of this reasoning proceeds upon the false supposition, (which I have already had such frequent occasion to notice,) that language, if not *literal*, is of necessity *figurative*, and the argument is, that if Christ be a priest only *figuratively*, he is

\* Letters, page 329.

not a priest *really*. But where the premises are false, the conclusion cannot be safe. Thus you proceed: "The office of Jewish high priest, and that of our Saviour, fully agree but in these two leading points,—both were supreme under their respective dispensations, and both had the ministry of reconciliation communicated to them; but it will not be found that the high priest effected any *spiritual* deliverance, that he removed *moral* impurities, that he gave to men those glorious hopes and prospects, which, in millions of instances, have enabled the Christian to triumph over sin and death; it will not be found that he abolished death, and redeemed them from iniquity; nor that any thing which God wrought in or by him, nor any thing which he did or suffered, assured to men such blessings as we enjoy through our Lord Jesus Christ."\*

It is, Sir, most true, that the high priest did not effect a spiritual deliverance, did not remove *moral* impurities, in a word did not procure for men any of those blessings which we enjoy through our Lord Jesus Christ. And it is necessary to my own argument that he should not have done these things: for if he had, where would have been the difference between the law and the Gospel? between the type and the antitype? between the

\* Page 330.

representation and the thing represented? But, Sir, did he do nothing corresponding with these things? Did he not effect a *legal* deliverance? Did he not remove *legal* impurities? Did he not procure for the worshippers of the tabernacle *legal* blessings? This is all for which I contend;\* and upon these

\* I am not ignorant that some very able and zealous defenders of the doctrine of atonement, ascribe to the legal sacrifices a higher efficacy than I am disposed to do. I will, therefore, take the present opportunity of saying a few words in vindication of my own opinion.

It will not be denied, that outward uncleanness, arising from certain diseases, and certain acts relating solely to the body, are declared by the law to be of so defiling a nature, as to render a person unholy, and unfit to appear before God. It will also be acknowledged, that certain violations of the divine law committed ignorantly, which accordingly had in them nothing immoral, nevertheless subjected the sinner to the same unholiness, and loss of God's favour, as the bodily sins above mentioned. And it is equally undeniable that the appointed way, by which he, who was in a state of legal uncleanness, or had sinned through ignorance, could recover the divine favour, and be re-admitted to his religious privileges, was by a sin-offering or sacrifice of atonement.

All this will be admitted; but it will at the same time be contended, "that there were other sacrifices strictly *propitiatory*, being ordained to avert the displeasure of God, from "the (wilful) transgressor, not only of the ceremonial, but "in some cases, even of the moral law." When it is said "that there were other sacrifices *strictly propitiatory*," it is implied that these, of which we are speaking, were *not* strictly propitiatory. But this is mistake: for that is propitiatory, which places in a state of reconciliation with God; or makes a thing to be acceptable to God, which before was displeasing to him, and was cut off from his presence: and since these sacrifices had unquestionably this efficacy, they were strictly propitiatory. And it has not without reason been affirmed, that the sacrifices offered in the alleged cases of wilful transgression of the moral law, had no higher efficacy. These cases are two. The first is that of a person who had unlawfully retained in his possession the known property of another man,



and similar correspondencies all the analogies in the Epistle to the Hebrews are founded. You propose to lay aside all these; and, if we must have a *figurative* representation, "let us" you say "rather speak of him, as he spoke of himself, as the second is that of a person who was found to have had criminal connection with a betrothed bond-maid. 1. "If a soul sin, and commit a trespass against the Lord, and lie unto his neighbour, in that which was delivered him to keep, or in fellowship, or in a thing taken away by violence, or hath deceived his neighbour, or have found that which was lost, and lieth concerning it, and sweareth falsely; in any of all these things that a man doeth, sinning therein: then it shall be, because he hath sinned, and is guilty, that he shall restore that which he took violently away, or the thing which he hath deceitfully gotten, or that which was delivered him to keep, or the lost thing which he found, or all that about which he hath sworn falsely; he shall even restore it in the principal, and shall add the fifth part more thereto, and give it unto him to whom it appertaineth in the day of his trespass offering. And he shall bring his trespass offering unto the Lord, a ram without blemish out of the flock, with thy estimation, for a trespass offering, unto the priest; and the priest shall make an atonement for him before the Lord; and it shall be forgiven him for any thing of all that he hath done in trespassing therein. Lev. vi. 2-7. 2. "And whosoever lieth carnally with a woman, that is a bond-maid, betrothed to a husband, and not at all redeemed, nor freedom given her; she shall be scourged;" [Heb. there shall be a scourging: i. e. both shall be scourged,] "they shall not be put to death, because she was not free: and he shall bring his trespass offering, unto the Lord, to the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, even a ram for a trespass offering: and the priest shall make an atonement for him, with the ram of the trespass offering, before the Lord, for his sin which he hath done; and the sin which he hath done, shall be forgiven him." Lev. xix. 20-22.

It was said above, that bodily uncleanness, and sins of ignorance, were sufficient to render a man unholy, and to cut him off from communion with God. And if so, then it cannot be denied that all wilful transgression of the divine law,

“the good shepherd, who laid down his life for the sheep.”\* It is plain that our Lord here speaks of himself analogically: and his reasoning of himself is, as far as the analogy goes, most beautiful and striking. As this is an example of whether ceremonial or moral, must produce the same effect. In the case of great and presumptuous sins, no atonement was provided; but excision was the appointed punishment. In the case of the smaller sins above mentioned, an atonement was appointed: and if nothing more had been required, it might have been contended, not only that the sin-offering averted the divine displeasure by purifying the offender, from the legal uncleanness which his sin had brought upon him; but also that it “expiated the guilt of the sin in such a manner as to avert the punishment of it from the offender.” But more was required: for the offender subjected himself to a penalty or a punishment. In the case of the unjust detainer of the goods of another, he was compelled not only to restore the thing detained, but also to add thereto one-fifth more: and in the case of criminal connection with a betrothed bondmaid, he was to be scourged: nor was the atonement to be made for him before he had submitted to the sentence of the law. It follows, that the sacrifice of atonement was not offered to deliver the offender from the punishment of his immorality; but for his reconciliation with God, and in order to restore him to those religious privileges, which, by his offence, he had forfeited: that is, it was offered with the same intention, and its efficacy extended just as far, as the sacrificial atonements for ceremonial offences and sins of ignorance: and, therefore, it was no otherwise propitiatory.

But were it otherwise, it would not affect the present argument, which is concerned with those sacrifices only, with which the death of Christ is expressly said, in the Epistle to the Hebrews, to be analogous: and these are the offering of the high priest on the day of expiation, and the ashes of the burnt heifer, mentioned in the nineteenth chapter of the book of Numbers. There is no pretence to say, that the latter of these had any other intention than *legal* sanctification; and that there is no ground to ascribe a higher efficacy to the offering of the high priest, I have shewn at large in my Bampton Lectures, sermon iii. to which I refer the reader.

\* Page 310. See also page 309.

your own bringing forward, I will examine it somewhat at large, in order that the true force of reasoning by analogy maybe better understood. It is plain that here are two relations, that of Christ to his church, and that of the shepherd to his flock; the corresponding terms are the two antecedents, Christ and the shepherd; and the two consequents, the church and the flock: and the analogy runs thus; as the shepherd is to his flock, so is Christ to his church. But the shepherd is the guardian and protector of his flock: therefore, Christ is the guardian and protector of his church. But the shepherd is not always true to his trust: if he careth not for the sheep, he will run no hazard in their defence; when 'he seeth the wolf coming,' he 'leaveth the sheep and fleeth, and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep:' Not so the good shepherd; he careth for the sheep, and even 'giveth his life' for them. But says our Lord, 'I lay down my life for the sheep.' Hence we perceive at once to which of the two classes he belongs, and how justly he says of himself, 'I am the good shepherd.'\* It appears then that by this representation we are taught the great love of Christ for his church, it was for this purpose that it was introduced; and more than this the analogy does not teach. Concerning the end

\* John x. 11-15.

of Christ's death, we learn from it nothing particularly: we may, indeed, collect from it generally, that he died in order to deliver his church from danger, but we learn nothing concerning the nature of this danger, the manner in which the deliverance was effected, or even whether it was effected or no: for the good shepherd might lose his life in defence of the sheep, and yet, after all, not be able to deliver them. Let us not expect more from this representation, than it was intended to teach. I confess that I cannot learn from it that particular end of Christ's death for which I contend: but let me, Sir, observe, that neither can you learn from it any of those ends of which you have already spoken, such as, the assurance of Gospel blessings, the revelation of a state of retribution, &c. nor that of which you presently after speak when you affirm of Christ, that "he was the mediator of the new covenant, and *died to ratify it.*"

I shall now proceed to state more distinctly the doctrine delivered in the Epistle to the Hebrews, respecting the priesthood and offering of Christ.

In the ninth chapter the Apostle begins with describing the old tabernacle, consisting of two parts, separated from each other, by a veil or curtain; of which the outer part was called the *sanctuary* or the *holy*, and the inner part the *holiest*

*of all.* He also describes generally the manner in which each part was furnished. He then describes the ministry of the priests in each part; and dwells particularly upon the ministry of the high priest in the inner tabernacle on the great day of expiation, the intent of the service which he there performed, and the superior efficacy of the corresponding ministry of Christ in the heavenly tabernacle. Of this latter passage (v. 6-15.) the following is the public version. “Now when  
 “ these things were thus ordained, the priests went  
 “ always into the first tabernacle, accomplishing  
 “ the service of God. But into the second went  
 “ the high priest alone once every year, not with-  
 “ out blood, which he offered for himself, and for  
 “ the errors of the people: the Holy Ghost this  
 “ signifying, that the way into the holiest of all  
 “ was not yet made manifest, while as the first  
 “ tabernacle was yet standing: which was a figure  
 “ for the time then present, in which were offered  
 “ both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make  
 “ him that did the service perfect, as pertaining  
 “ to the conscience; which stood only in meats  
 “ and drinks, and divers washings and carnal ordi-  
 “ nances, imposed on them until the time of re-  
 “ formation. But Christ being come an high  
 “ priest of good things to come, by a greater and  
 “ more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands,

“ that is to say, not of this building; neither by  
 “ the blood of goats and calves, but by his own  
 “ blood, he entered in once into the holy place,  
 “ having obtained eternal redemption for us. For  
 “ if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes  
 “ of an heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth  
 “ to the purifying of the flesh; how much more  
 “ shall the blood of Christ, who, through the eter-  
 “ nal spirit, offered himself without spot to God,  
 “ purge your conscience from dead works to serve  
 “ the living God?” That there are errors in the  
 above version,\* I am ready to grant; but they are

\* Perhaps the following rendering may more exactly express  
 the sense of the original. ‘ 6. These things having been thus  
 ‘ ordained, the priests go continually into the first tabernacle,  
 ‘ accomplishing the divine services. 7. But into the second the  
 ‘ high priest alone, once a year, not without blood, which he  
 ‘ offers for himself, and for the sins of the people: 8. The holy  
 ‘ Ghost signifying this, that the way of the holies has not been  
 ‘ plainly revealed during the continuance of the first tabernacle.  
 ‘ 9. 10. Which is a figure up to the present time: in which are  
 ‘ offered gifts and sacrifices, (things imposed until the time of  
 ‘ reformation,) which sacrifices cannot as pertaining to the  
 ‘ conscience make him perfect, who worshippeth only the  
 ‘ meats and drinks, and various washings and ordinances of the  
 ‘ flesh. 11. But Christ, the high priest of the future good  
 ‘ things, being now come, through the greater and more per-  
 ‘ fect tabernacle, not made with hands, (that is to say, making  
 ‘ no part of this creation.) 12. Neither by the blood of goats  
 ‘ and of calves, but by his own blood, entered once into the  
 ‘ holies, having obtained eternal redemption. 13. For if the  
 ‘ blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer, sprink-  
 ‘ ling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh;  
 ‘ 14. How much more shall the blood of Christ, who, through  
 ‘ the eternal spirit, offered himself without spot to God, purge  
 ‘ your conscience from dead works, in order to your serving  
 ‘ the living God?’

not of such a nature as to pervert or even obscure the main sense, as far as concerns our present enquiry, respecting the correspondencies in the two dispensations, and the superior excellency of the Christian dispensation. It is manifest that the *holy of holies* into which the high priest entered, is here made to correspond with the *heaven* into which Christ ascended; the office of the high priest in the earthly tabernacle, with that of Christ in the heavenly tabernacle; the blood of the legal victims, with the blood of Christ; external uncleanness, with the defilements of the conscience; the purification of the body by the offering of the high priest, with the purification of the conscience by the offering of Christ. The superior excellency of the Christian dispensation is stated in several particulars. 1. The offering of the legal high priest was temporary; it sanctified the people, and consecrated them only for a year; and on every return of the appointed day, the ceremonies were repeated:—but the offering of Christ was once for all; he entered in once into the holy place, and by the offering which he then made he obtained, not a temporary, but an eternal redemption. 2. The legal high priest offered the blood of brute creatures:—but Christ offered his own blood. 3. The blood offered by the legal high priest cleansed only the body of the wor-

shipper from outward impurities; its effect reached not to the conscience; it could not remove the guilt of moral sin:—but the blood of Christ purifies the conscience, and washes out the stain of even *mortal* sins. 4. The blood of these legal offerings sanctified and consecrated to a ceremonial service only, consisting of meat-offerings and drink-offerings, and ablutions of various kinds and institutions, relating merely to the outward man:—but the blood of Christ sanctifies and consecrates to the pure and spiritual service of the living God. And the whole implies that as bodily uncleanness rendered the Israelite unfit for the ceremonial worship of the tabernacle, and cut him off from access to God, and communion with him, till the appointed purification entitled him to his religious privileges; so the defilement of the conscience incapacitates a man for the spiritual worship of the Christian church; and it is only through the blood of Christ which cleanseth us from all sin, that we have access to God, and become qualified for communion with him. All which is briefly, but beautifully expressed in the concluding part of the above passage. “If the blood of bulls and  
“of goats, and the ashes of an heifer, sprinkling  
“the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the  
“flesh; how much more shall the blood of Christ  
“purge your conscience from dead works to serve  
“the living God?”



Such is the true doctrine set forth in this Epistle, respecting the death of Christ, and its efficacy. And it will not now be difficult to point out and remove your misapprehension of the Apostle's meaning, in the several places upon which you have thought fit to comment. Of these in their order.

Heb. vii. 27.

“ Who needeth not daily, as those high priests,  
 “ to offer up sacrifices, first for his own sins, and  
 “ then for the people's: for this he did once when  
 “ he offered up himself.”

Upon this passage you thus comment.\* “ Here  
 “ for the first time the writer brings in the death  
 “ of Christ, in direct reference to the Mosaic  
 “ ritual; and it is to shew that it was unnecessary  
 “ for him to offer sacrifices *daily*: for since our  
 “ high priest (v. 28.) was perfected (τετελειωμενον)  
 “ for ever, perfected τελειωθεις by sufferings, (ch. v.  
 “ 8. 9.) one such sacrifice was sufficient. The sa-  
 “ crifices of the law cleansed the high priest from  
 “ his ceremonial defilement; the sufferings of Christ  
 “ completed the perfection of his moral character.  
 “ This is here the point of resemblance, and the  
 “ writer carries it no further: for he does not, in  
 “ what here follows, make any allusion to the second  
 “ object of the legal sacrifices ‘ for the sins of the

\* Page 331.

“ people.” In this passage you make the sufferings, by which Christ’s moral character was completed, to correspond with the sacrifices, by which the high priest was cleansed from ceremonial defilements; consequently the voluntary submission of Christ to these sufferings, is that offering of himself, which corresponds with the high priest’s offering of the sacrifices by which he was cleansed: But if so, then the sacrifice must have been offered before the death of the victim; contrary not only to the established practice in all sacrifices, but also to the Apostle’s declaration respecting the offering of Christ.

The reason which you assign for the sufficiency of one such sacrifice, (that is, if I rightly understand your phrase, the reason of its not being necessary that Christ should devote himself to death more than once,) is, because he was perfected for ever by sufferings, that is according to your own explanation, because his sufferings completed his moral character. But this explanation is founded upon a mistake: you imagine that the verb *τελειωω* is used in the places to which you refer in the sense of to *perfect*, or *make complete*. But this is not its signification in any of the places in this Epistle, which refer to the priesthood of Christ, where it has the same meaning as in the Greek version of the Old Testament, when it is

used with reference to the legal priests, where it signifies to *consecrate*: and thus it is actually rendered by our translators in v. 28. of this chapter, “Who is *consecrated* for evermore:” a rendering which needs no amendment.

The intention of the high priest’s offering according to the Apostle, was twofold: he offered for his own sins, and then for the sins of the people. You select the former of these as the point of resemblance between his offering and that of Christ; and will not allow that the sufferings of Christ had any relation to the sins of the people. Another person, not without reason, might select the latter as the true point of resemblance, and might say, that as Christ was perfect and without spot, he needed not to offer for his own sins. But the Apostle means no more than to contrast generally the temporary effect of the high priest’s offering with the perpetual effect of the offering of Christ. He tells us that the incapacity under which the high priest laboured of executing his office, and the incapacity under which the people laboured of performing to God an acceptable service, was not removed by one offering for ever; but he was obliged to repeat the appointed offering daily, that is, on every day of expiation, for his own reconsecration, and in order to sanctify the people. But Christ was consecrated for ever, and

his church was sanctified for ever by a single offering: therefore it was not necessary that he should offer more than once.

Heb. viii. 3.

“For every high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices: wherefore it is of necessity that this man have somewhat also to offer.”

Upon these last words, you observe,\* “The necessity is obviously the necessity of legal fitness: if Christ had not somewhat to offer, he could not have been said to fulfil the office.” I am not sure that I rightly understand your meaning; nor do I perceive how the expression ‘legal fitness’ applies to Christ. I know of no legal fitness which is necessary to him. The meaning of the Apostle is sufficiently plain. He virtually ascribes to Christ, upon his ascension into heaven, an office corresponding with that which the high priest under the law discharged in the earthly tabernacle; and he argues that Christ having such a priesthood, must of necessity do that, for the doing of which the legal high priest was expressly ordained: because the legal high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices, it is of necessity that this high priest have also somewhat to offer.

You thus proceed, “This verse appears to assign a reason for what may be considered as

\* Page 332.

“ implied in v. 1. (comp. ch. i. 3.) he offered his  
 “ sacrifice, and then ascended to heaven: the  
 “ succeeding verse assigns the reason for his not  
 “ exercising his priesthood on earth.” I know  
 not where it is said that Christ offered his sacrifice  
 before he ascended to heaven. The first verse of  
 this chapter makes the ascension to precede the  
 offering: nor is it otherwise said in the third verse  
 of the first chapter: where the Apostle declares  
 that “ when he had by himself purged our sins,”  
 he “ sat down on the right hand of the Majesty  
 “ on high.” This merely makes the offering for  
 sin to precede the session at the right hand of God:  
 But the latter was unquestionably subsequent to  
 the ascension: and why not the former also? And  
 in truth that it was so, is acknowledged by your-  
 self, when you say that “ the succeeding verse  
 “ assigns the reason for his not exercising his priest-  
 “ hood *on earth.*”—In the remarks which follow,  
 you state generally the principles upon which you  
 proceed, in explaining the Apostle’s language in  
 this Epistle: and therefore, these remarks demand  
 attention. They are thus introduced: “ In this  
 “ chapter the writer declares that the covenant of  
 “ which Jesus is the mediator, is a better cove-  
 “ nant than the old one; and having established  
 “ this, in the next chapters he shews its superior  
 “ efficacy in moral purification.” You here

ascribe to the new covenant the power of effecting moral purification: but you do not ascribe to the old covenant the power of removing ritual impurities; you more accurately ascribe this effect to the appointed sacrifices which were offered for this purpose, while the old covenant was in force: and we might reasonably expect that the power of effecting moral purification is to be ascribed to something which has the same relation to the new covenant, as these sacrifices have to the old. But no such thing; for let us hear: “The ritual sacrifices, he clearly states, had no further effect than to remove ritual impurities; and they were merely imposed (comp. Gal. v. 1.) till the time of reformation, *διορθωσις* (ch. ix. 10.) when the right way of spiritual deliverance should be declared—till that covenant should be brought into effect, which was ratified by the blood of Jesus. Now as that covenant had for its object, spiritual repentance and holiness on the one hand, and merciful forgiveness on the other, the writer with great justice represents the voluntary sacrifice, by which it was ratified, as of infinitely greater importance, than those, which were the appointed means of removing legal disqualifications merely: and without any violence to truth, he speaks of it as procuring those blessings, which, in then existing circumstances,

“ could not have been assured to us without it.” It appears then that the legal sacrifices were so far effectual as to remove ritual impurities; or as you afterwards express it, of removing legal disqualifications. And they were the *appointed* means of effecting this purpose: they derived this power from the appointment of God; and their efficacy was direct and immediate. But what similar efficacy does the blood of Christ possess? What disqualifications, what impurity is it the appointed means of removing by its own direct and immediate influence? I do not perceive that you ascribe to it any such efficacy. Where then is the correspondence, which is essential to the Apostle’s argument? You assert, indeed, that the new covenant was ratified by the blood of Jesus: but you do not pretend that it was the *appointed* means of effecting even this purpose: it became so accidentally and eventually. Let me remind you of your former statement of this matter; namely, that in the course of our Lord’s ministry, such circumstances occurred, as rendered it impossible for him to secure the great end of his mission, any otherwise than by submitting to death; which, therefore, he did voluntarily: and his voluntary submission to death you call a *sacrifice*: and it was the sacrifice by which the new covenant was ratified, not because it was expressly appointed for

this purpose, but because by the mere course of events it became the means of assuring to us the blessings of this covenant: and that which in this accidental way became the means of *assuring* these blessings *to* us, and nothing more; you boldly affirm, may, without any violation of truth, be said to have actually *procured* them *for* us!

Heb. ix. 12.

“Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood, he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.”

This passage you cite and explain as follows:\*

“Christ—entered once for all into the most holy place, not by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood,” yielding up even his own life to accomplish the will of God, concerning mankind, thus ‘having obtained an eternal redemption,’ a deliverance not from the present penalties and incapacitations of the law, but ‘eternal salvation TO ALL WHO OBEY HIM,’ ch. v. 9.”

The Apostle in this place speaks of Christ’s entrance into the most holy place, that is into heaven, with his own blood—you speak of his yielding up his own life to accomplish the will of God, concerning mankind; which, in my apprehension, are two very different things, and are not to be

\* Page 333.



referred either to the same time, or to the same place. And in speaking of the eternal redemption, or deliverance which he obtained, you tell us for whom the deliverance was obtained, namely, for all who obey him; and from what the deliverance is not, namely, that it is not "from the present penalties and incapacitations of the law," but from what it is, you do not tell us.

Heb. ix. 13. 14.

"For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh; how much more shall the blood of Christ, who, through the eternal spirit, offered himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God."

The following is your comment upon this remarkable passage.\* "For if the sacrifice of *bulls* and *goats* was the appointed means of removing legal impurities; 'how much more shall the blood of the Christ,' a rational Being holy and obedient to God, 'who, through the eternal spirit,' under the guidance of the spirit of God, 'with a full acquaintance with his will and desire to obey it, offered himself spotless unto God,' devoted even his life, though himself free from guilt, to accomplish the gracious purposes of

\* Page 333.

“ God, towards mankind, to assure to them the  
 “ hope of pardon and everlasting life,—how much  
 “ more shall such a sacrifice ‘ cleanse your con-  
 “ science from dead works,’ from evil desires and  
 “ dispositions, and the dread of punishment for  
 “ past sins, ‘ so as to serve the living God.” Here  
 “ you plainly declare that “ the sacrifices of *bulls*  
 “ and *goats* was the appointed means of removing  
 “ legal impurities;” but you do not say that the  
 sacrifice of Christ was the appointed means of re-  
 moving, or that it actually did remove impurity  
 of any kind. It is also to be observed, that in  
 this place again you make the offering of Christ  
 to be the devoting of ‘ his life to accomplish the  
 gracious purposes of God, towards mankind:’ and  
 to this act of his you ascribe an indirect and re-  
 mote efficacy in cleansing ‘ the conscience from  
 evil desires and dispositions;’ but in washing out  
 the stain of sin, and in cleansing the conscience  
 from pollution and guilt, it does not appear from  
 your representation that the blood of Christ has  
 the least efficacy of any kind, either direct or in-  
 direct, immediate or remote. Where then is the  
 analogy?

Heb. ix. 15.

“ And for this cause he is the mediator of the  
 “ New Testament, that by means of death, for  
 “ the redemption of the transgressions, that were

“under the first testament, they which are called  
 “might receive the promise of eternal inheri-  
 “tance.”

“Concerning this verse, you observe, that in  
 it “the writer distinctly states the grand purpose  
 “of the death of Christ:—viz. that those who are  
 “called, to whom the blessings of the Gospel are  
 “offered, and by whom they are accepted, might  
 “receive the promise of an eternal inheritance.”\*  
 How the death of Christ effected this purpose you  
 proceed to state: “The death of Christ ratified  
 “the new covenant;—and in then existing cir-  
 “cumstances, its blessings could not have been  
 “assured and extended without it.” Were I  
 disposed to admit that the death of Christ had the  
 effect which you here ascribe to it; namely, that  
 it ‘ratified the new covenant,’ I should still con-  
 tend, that since the ratification of an instrument,  
 is the thing of all others of the greatest importance,  
 being that upon which the validity of the whole  
 depends, it, if any thing, must require that the  
 means of effecting it be appointed and determined.  
 But according to your representation, the ratifica-  
 tion of the new covenant made no part of the  
 original plan, no sacrifice was previously appointed  
 in order to effect it, and it was effected at last by  
 the mere casual concurrence of circumstances.

\* Page 334.

But, Sir, I am inclined to think, that the position itself is unscriptural and unwarranted: for I am not aware that the divine covenants require, or receive, any ratification beyond the mere declaration of the will of God. It is true, in the case of the old covenant, when the will of God was formally declared, sacrifices were offered, the blood of which is expressly called ‘the blood of the covenant,’ or ‘testament.’ But Moses, the mediator, did not by these sacrifices ratify, or give validity to the covenant; he rather, (as we shall see presently,) dedicated it, and gave it operation. But let us attend to the Apostle’s reasoning.

The passage more immediately under consideration (v. 15.) is connected with the preceding verse, in which it is declared, that the blood of Christ can cleanse the conscience from *dead* works. “And,” proceeds the Apostle, “for this cause,” (that is, because the blood of Christ has this power of cleansing the conscience from the pollution of death-working sins, therefore,) “he “is the mediator of the New Testament;” he is the intervening person appointed to declare and attest a New Testament, in which is contained “the promise,” (not as in the former Testament of a *temporal*, but) “of an eternal inheritance.” In order that we may see more clearly the connection, let us attend to what the Apostle says,

concerning the manner in which Moses, the mediator of the former Testament, declared and attested it, and what and of what kind was the service which he then performed. It follows at the eighteenth verse, "Whereupon neither the first testament was *dedicated* without blood. For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and of goats, with water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book and all the people; saying, This is the blood of the testament which God hath enjoined unto you. Moreover, he sprinkled with blood both the tabernacle, and all the vessels of the ministry. And almost all things are by the law purged with blood, and without shedding of blood, is no remission." Hence it appears, that the blood of the sacrifices, by which the Old Testament was dedicated, was, not simply the blood of *attestation*, but the blood of *purification*. And in this respect the New Testament exactly corresponds with the Old, as the Apostle testifies in the very next words: "It was, therefore, necessary that the *patterns* of things in the heavens, should be PURIFIED with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these."

You are pleased to remind your reader, that

“ the rendering of διαθήκη *covenant*, by the word  
 “ *testament* in the public version, greatly obscures,  
 “ and, indeed, perverts the sense of the writer.”  
 Notwithstanding this memento, I have ventured  
 to adhere to the rendering of the public version.  
 Nor can I agree with you, that this rendering ob-  
 scures, much less perverts the sense: on the con-  
 trary, I am of opinion, that the sense is not merely  
 greatly obscured, but even totally annihilated by  
 the rendering for which you are an advocate;  
 namely, *covenant*. The original word διαθήκη pro-  
 perly signifies *disposition*; and is frequently used by  
 profane authors, to denote a *testament*, or that  
 disposition of a man’s effects, which, by his own  
 appointment, is to take place after his decease.  
 By the LXX it is sometimes used to denote a  
*covenant*; because it is the word by which they  
 have rendered the Hebrew ברית; which word is  
 sometimes used by the sacred Writers, to denote  
 the act of two or more persons meeting and agree-  
 ing upon terms, and mutually binding themselves  
 to the performance of their agreement; which is  
 a *covenant* properly so called: but it is more com-  
 monly used to denote ‘ the act of God binding  
 himself to the performance of some promise made  
 to persons whom he has called and selected as the  
 objects of his favour;’ than which hardly any  
 thing can be further from a *covenant*. There is

in it nothing of compact, nothing of that mutual agreement, which is essential to a *covenant*: the whole disposition is God's, proceeding solely from him, and established solely by him, not, as in the case of covenants, for the mutual benefit of both parties; but for the sole benefit of man, and in order to convey to him a gift. It is true, there is in the divine Berith, as in human covenants, an obligation; but it is an obligation, deriving its whole force from one side only. In order that "the called" might be more assured of God's gracious intentions towards them, God is represented as binding himself to the performance of his Berith, and his authority, not a mutual agreement, binds man; on the part of man there is acceptance merely. It is also to be observed, that in speaking of the divine Berith, the same language is used, as was anciently used in speaking of human covenants. Thus when God is said to have 'made a covenant with Abraham;'<sup>\*</sup> the original word **ברת**, rendered *made* literally signifies *cut*; in allusion to the mode of making covenants anciently in use, by cutting in twain a calf, and passing through the midst of it.† Also (as in the instance above given) the Berith is frequently said

\* Gen. xv. 18.

† See ver. 10. of this chapter, and Jer. xxxiv. 18. See also Exod. xxxiv. 27. Deut. v. 2.

to be made *with* the called; to be established between God and them; and they are said to pass into the Berith of Jehovah; and immediately upon the establishment of the Berith, there subsists between God and them, a nearer connection than before.\* In all this, there is the appearance of something federal: but it is in the form, not in the matter: in the disposition itself there is nothing federal: and, therefore, neither the Hebrew ברית, nor the Greek διαθήκη means a *covenant*, properly so called.

But while these divine dispositions are federal in nothing essential, there is no essential point in which they do not correspond with a *Testament*. In a Testament the whole disposition is the Testator's; proceeding solely from him, and established solely by him, for the benefit, not of himself, but of some person or persons selected and nominated by him. Such also is the Berith of Jehovah: and therefore, to speak, as we usually do, of 'the Old and New Testaments,' is much more significant, and much less liable to mistake, than to call them 'the Old and New Covenants.' And in the place more immediately under consideration, I contend most strenuously that *Testament* is the proper, and the only proper rendering. The effect of a Testament is, that the person nominated by the Testator.

\* Deut. xix. 12. 13.



is his *heir*, who, after the death of the Testator, becomes entitled to the property bequeathed, as an *inheritance*. And this is the very ground upon which the Apostle builds an analogy, in order to shew the validity of the title which ‘they, who are called,’ have to the promised inheritance. For thus he argues, “When an inheritance is claimed under a Testament, it is necessary that the death of the Testator be pleaded and set forth. For a Testament is valid after men are dead; but it hath no strength at all, while the Testator is living.”\* Of the divine disposition in which the promise is contained, Christ is the mediator, by whom it was declared, and by whom it was attested. He therefore is, to this disposition, what the Testator is to a Testament: and the analogy shews, that the death of Christ gives to the called a title to the promised inheritance, as valid as is that of an heir to an inheritance bequeathed to him, after the death of the Testator who bequeathed it. This is the whole force of the analogy; it refers to the validity of the title merely; and has nothing to do with the means by which the title became valid, which is different in the two cases. The death of the Testator makes way for the heir, by removing from the possession a person who had a stronger title;

\* Heb. ix. 16. 17.

but the death of Christ, by removing certain disabilities and incapacities from the called themselves. And this the Apostle intimates in this very place, when he speaks of the death of Christ, as having for its immediate end, “the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first Testament:” where by ‘transgressions’ I understand him to mean those presumptuous violations of the divine law, which were inexpiable under the first Testament, in opposition to *legal* sins, or those for which the law had provided an expiation.

I trust it is now sufficiently apparent, that the ‘idea’ upon which the Apostle dwells in the intermediate passage, between the fifteenth verse and the twenty-second, is not that which you suppose, namely, that “the death of Christ ratified the new covenant;” and that “in then existing circumstances, its blessings could not have been assured and extended without it.” And when he afterwards “states the fact, (v. 22.) that, in the Mosaic institutions, almost all things were purified by blood, and that there was no instance of remission of ritual offences without the shedding of blood;” he states it not as an independent fact, with which the subject of Christ’s death had no concern; but as a circumstance with which the whole of his argument was intimately concerned: for it does not, as you represent the case,

merely “lead him to remark that there was a  
 “peculiar fitness, that, in the new dispensation,  
 “purification should be made with superior sacri-  
 “fices;” but he actually infers from it, that since  
 the heavenly things themselves were better than  
 their patterns, it was necessary that they should  
 be purified with better sacrifices. These things  
 you touch but slightly, permit me, therefore, to  
 place before you, the whole of the following  
 passage:\* “It was therefore necessary that the  
 “patterns of things in the heavens should be pu-  
 “rified with these; but the heavenly things them-  
 “selves with better sacrifices than these. For  
 “Christ is not entered into the holy places made  
 “with hands, which are the figures of the true; but  
 “into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence  
 “of God for us: nor yet that he should offer  
 “himself often, as the high priest entereth into  
 “the holy place every year, with blood of others;  
 “for then must he often have suffered since the  
 “foundation of the world: But now once in the  
 “end of the world hath he appeared to put away  
 “sin by the sacrifice of himself.” It is manifestly  
 agreeable to the whole tenor of the Apostle’s ar-  
 gument, that by “putting away sin,” we are here  
 to understand purifying the sinner from the stain  
 and pollution which he had contracted: it is the

\* Heb. ix. 23-26.

guilt of sin, not its power, which Christ took away by the sacrifice of himself. You, therefore, do not give the true sense of the passage, when you teach, that 'to put away sin' means "to give every suitable aid and encouragement in the acquisition of holiness in heart and life."\*

Heb. x. 14.

"By one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified."

For the force of these words we are referred to v. 1. 2. and 11. and are told that "the writer there argues from the continued repetition of the legal sacrifices, that their efficacy was limited and temporary, and that they could not give those who offered them a complete assurance of forgiveness: on the contrary, the death of Jesus ratified a perpetual covenant, by which God promised that he would no more remember the past sins and iniquities of those, who complied with the terms of that covenant. There was, therefore, no need of more sacrifices; since those, who, by their belief in Jesus, were brought into a state of spiritual privilege, who thus were sanctified, obtained a complete assurance of forgiveness, by means of his one offering."† That the continued repetition of the legal sacrifices is a proof that their efficacy was

\* Page 335. † Page 336.

merely temporary, is rightly stated: of course, if any, they could give only a temporary "assurance" of forgiveness to those who offered them," or rather to those for whom they were offered. But I see no reason to suppose that the assurance which they gave, was not, during the time of its continuance, complete. Indeed, I do not perceive, that an assurance of forgiveness makes any part of the Apostle's argument. He tells us, that the sacrifices by which the priest and people, and the whole legal economy, were purified and sanctified, had no power to take away sin for ever; and this he argues from the continual repetition of them: for if they had possessed such a power, the people, knowing themselves to have been purified for ever by one offering, would have felt no want of a repeated cleansing, and so the sacrifices would have ceased to be offered. But this not being the case, there was a remembrance again made of sins every year.\* But with the sacrifice of Christ, it was otherwise. There needed only one offering; and they who were sanctified by that one offering, were purified for ever, and wanted no further cleansing.† I see nothing here concerning the ratification of a perpetual covenant, or a complete assurance of pardon. The Apostle is speaking of the actual remission of sins, of their being so com-

\* Heb. x. 1-3. † 11-14.

pletely taken away by the offering of Christ, that they will never more be had in remembrance in the sight of God. And this shews that 'forgiveness is obtained by the death of Christ,' not, as you suppose, by its being the means of assuring and extending the blessings of the Gospel, nor by affording every suitable aid and encouragement in the acquisition of holiness in heart and life; but by actually taking away sins; by purifying the conscience, and cleansing it from that defilement, which, while it remains, completely disqualifies for the service of God; and, if not removed, would for ever have excluded from his presence and favour.

In the *Preservative*, speaking of the high priest's offering in the holy of holies,\* I stated, that the nature and intention of the service in which he was engaged, evidently shews that he was a mediator or intercessor between God and the people, to both of whom the service which he performed in the inner tabernacle, had respect." As you have neither denied the position itself, nor called in question the foundation upon which it is built, I conclude that it is unobjectionable. You will, therefore, allow me to express my surprize, that you should refuse to acknowledge a corresponding office in our Saviour Christ. Thus you

\* Pres. page 29.

argue, "That his being styled *mediator*, has no-  
 " thing to do with the doctrine of atonement, is  
 " obvious from Gal. iii. 19. where Moses is spo-  
 " ken of as a mediator, inasmuch as he was the  
 " medium of divine communication as to the old  
 " covenant. For the same reason Jesus is called  
 " mediator. He was God's minister between Him  
 " and sinful man, delivering the Gospel, or the  
 " word of reconciliation to mankind, as Moses  
 " delivered the law to the Jews."\* But, Sir, let  
 me ask, might he not be such a mediator as you  
 describe Moses to have been, the minister of God  
 to man; and at the same time, such a mediator as  
 the high priest was, appearing before God in be-  
 half of men? The two are by no means incom-  
 patible. And let me further ask, had the media-  
 torial office of Moses nothing to do with atone-  
 ment? What then mean these words of the Apost-  
 le? "When Moses had spoken every precept to  
 " all the people according to the law, he took  
 " the blood of calves and of goats, with water,  
 " and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both  
 " the book, and all the people; saying, This is  
 " the blood of the Testament which God hath in-  
 " joined unto you. Moreover, he sprinkled with  
 " blood both the tabernacle, and all the vessels of  
 " the ministry, and almost all things are by the

\* Page 337.

“law *purged* with blood, and without shedding of blood, is no remission.”\* I infer from hence that Moses, as mediator of the former Testament, did not merely communicate the purpose of God to the Israelites; he also dedicated the Testament itself; and I infer further, that our Saviour Christ is not the mediator of the New Testament, solely because he delivered the Gospel to mankind, but also because, as Moses purified the patterns of things in the heavens, with the blood of the appointed sacrifices, so Christ purified ‘the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices,’ even with his own blood.†

I have now, I believe, considered every thing of importance in your remarks upon this beautiful and truly valuable Epistle; and have shewn that you labour under much misapprehension respecting the priesthood and offering of Christ; and that in consequence you have frequently misinterpreted the Apostle’s meaning. We have seen that your misapprehension of the priesthood of Christ relates chiefly to the place where he made his offering, and to the time when he made it. From the Apostle we learn, that as the legal high priest appeared with his offering before God, in the holy of holies; so Christ, our high priest, after his ascension into heaven, appeared for us in the pre-

\* Heb ix, 19-22. † See verse 23.



fence of God, and there made his offering. But you maintain that he made his offering while he was yet upon earth; and that it was then made, when he voluntarily submitted to death, in order to assure and extend the blessings of the Gospel: Hence the offering must have preceded the death of the victim: whereas the Apostle teaches that Christ's was an offering of *blood*, corresponding with that of the high priest in the holy of holies, which consisted of the blood of victims, which had been previously slain. With respect to the efficacy of Christ's offering, the utmost which you ascribe to it is, that it *may* be the means of taking away sins, by inducing men to cultivate holiness. But the Apostle ascribes to it a positive and immediate efficacy, and affirms that as the legal offerings took away sin in a legal sense by purifying the body, and sanctifying to the worship of the tabernacle; so the offering of Christ takes away sin in a moral sense by purifying the conscience, and sanctifying to the spiritual worship of the living God.

I shall now proceed to consider your interpretation of the other passages of Scripture, which are cited in the Preservative.

Eph. v. 25. 26.

“Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it [Gr. that he might sanctify it having cleansed it] with the washing of water by the word.”

In this passage *the washing of water* is commonly understood of the sacrament of baptism; and *the word* is supposed by Chrysoſtom, and many of the Fathers, to mean the preſcribed form in which baptism is adminiſtered; ‘In the name of the Father, &c.’ You render the words thus,\* “that “having cleaned it by the waſhing of water, he “might ſanctify it by the word:” and you obſerve of the paſſage thus rendered, that it “brings into “view what the common rendering conceals, the “means of ſanctification.” But, as if aware that this interpretation would not readily be acquieſced in, you immediately add; “Since, however, his “obedience unto death was, in then exiſting cir- “cumſtances, neceſſary in order to give effect to “his word, (or doctrines,) his death may be ſaid “to be the means of ſanctification.” By ſanctification you plainly mean what you elſewhere call ‘holineſs in heart and life,’ of which the death of Chriſt, according to your own ſtatement, is not properly the *means*, but the indirecſt and remote occaſion. But of *ſanctification* in another ſenſe, as it ſignifies ſeparation from common uſe, and dedication to the ſervice of God, the death of Chriſt is the direcſt and immediate cauſe, and may, therefore, properly be called the means. And ſuch is the ſanctification of which the Apoſtle

\* Page 322

speaks in this passage. The same is also the meaning in Heb. x. 10. where we are said to be ‘*sanctified* through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ.’ And in much the same sense in Tit. ii. 14. Christ is said to have given himself for us, that he might—purify to himself a peculiar people.

1. John i. 7.

“ If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth us from all sin.”

You observe, that “ this last clause is so frequently quoted separately from its connection, that it is perhaps often forgotten in what case the blood or death of Jesus becomes the means of our deliverance and purification from sin; if we walk in the light.”\* It is manifest that by ‘ deliverance and purification from sin,’ you mean *sanctification* in your former sense of that word: so that according to you, the meaning of the Apostle is, If we walk in the light, *then*, or in *that case*, ‘ the blood of Jesus Christ *cleanseth* us from all sin.’ If such had been the Apostle’s meaning, he would doubtless have written not *cleanseth*, but *hath cleansed*. But such was not the Apostle’s meaning; as will appear more plainly.

\* Page 322.

if we consider the occasion of this Epistle; which upon the face of it is *polemical*; and, as I have already had occasion to observe, was written to oppose the errors of the Gnostics. It was a leading tenet of these Heretics, that the body is a mass of corrupt matter, within which the soul is shut up, as in a dark prison. And they held that Christ the Son of God, came into the world to deliver men from this darkness, by illuminating their minds with the knowledge of God. They boasted that they alone were in possession of the true doctrine, unmixed and uncontaminated: that the doctrine delivered by the Apostles, was not pure, but was intermixed with legal precepts of no force or obligation:\* for they maintained that there was no difference in human actions, and that no action was in itself sinful, or at all interrupted the communion of the illuminated soul with God. And by thus making Christianity to consist wholly in knowledge, and not at all in practice, they destroyed the sanction of moral obligation, and gave a loose to all the boisterous passions of our nature. And accordingly we find that while some among them exercised the greatest severities, in order to detach, as much as possible, the rational soul from all connection with impure matter, there were others, more voluptuously inclined, who

\* Iren. adv. hæret. lib. iii. c. 2.

indulged without restraint in the grossest immoralities.\* These impious and extravagant opinions the Apostle opposes, by declaring on the other hand, that no one can be said to have fellowship with God, who indulges sinful propensities, and is guilty of immoral practices; and that it is only by 'walking in the light, as he is in the light,' that 'we have fellowship one with another,' God with us, and we with God. But lest it should be thought that 'to walk in the light, as God is in the light,' implies sinless perfection; and consequently, that by committing sin, a man would forfeit his privilege of communion with God, the Apostle proceeds to observe, that the Christian's perfection consists, not in an absolute freedom from sin, (a state unattainable by any man,) but in being cleansed by the blood of Christ from the pollution of sin. It is thus that the blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin: and hence he is said in Rev. i. 5. to have 'washed us from our sins in his own blood.'

Matt. xxvi. 28.

"This is my blood of the New Testament,  
"which is shed for many for the remission of sins."

In commenting upon this passage, you observe, that "the blood of the new covenant must mean  
"the blood shed to ratify the new covenant; and

\* See Mosheim's Eccles. Hist. vol. 1. page 137.

“ as the grand purpose of the new covenant was  
 “ to redeem men from their iniquities, to turn  
 “ them ‘ from the power of Satan to God, in order  
 “ that they might receive forgiveness *αφεσις* of sins;’  
 “ it is said that the blood of Jesus was shed *εις αφεσις*  
 “ *αμαρτιων* with a view to the remission or for-  
 “ giveness of sins.”\* Respecting the ratification  
 of the new covenant, by the blood of Christ, I  
 must refer to what I have already said in page 240.  
 The words of St. Paul, Acts xxvi. 18. ‘ to turn  
 them from the power of Satan unto God,’ you un-  
 derstand to mean ‘ to turn them from the ways of  
 sin to the practice of righteousness;’ and they are  
 manifestly introduced here for the purpose of shew-  
 ing that *αφεσις forgiveness*, is the direct and immedi-  
 ate consequence of this reformation of life and man-  
 ners: and that, therefore, the death of Christ does  
 no more than prepare the way for forgiveness, by  
 promoting that reformation of which forgiveness is  
 the consequence. And thus the reader is led on to  
 suppose that ‘ with a view to the forgiveness of sins,’  
 is the true rendering of *εις αφεσις αμαρτιων* in the text.  
 But the preposition *εις* has not the force which you  
 here assign to it, either in this or in any other  
 place, as far as I know. It very frequently de-  
 notes the *final cause*; and such is its force in this  
 place. “ This is my blood of the New Testament,  
 “ which is shed for many, for, that is, *in order to*

\* Page 312.

“the remission of sins.” And thus, contrary to your assumption, the remission of sins is the direct and immediate consequence of the death of Christ. Nor is this sense at all at variance with the above recited words of St. Paul; which relate to the turning of the Gentiles from Idolatry to the profession of the true God, that they might *receive* remission of sins and inheritance among them, that *are* sanctified (*τοῖς ἡγιασμένοις*;) of which in their former state they were incapable: nor hath any other way been revealed by which they, “who were sometimes far off, are made nigh,” but the blood of Christ.\* In the passage under consideration there is a manifest reference to the blood of the Old Testament, mentioned in Exod. xxiv. 8. so called, because it was the blood by which the Old Testament was dedicated and carried into effect. For the people being sprinkled with this blood, were purified and sanctified, and became the people of God. In like manner the New Testament was not dedicated without blood: But the blood of this Testament was no other than the blood of Christ himself, (hence called “the blood of sprinkling,” †) “which was shed for many for the remission of sins.”

Rom. iii. 25.

“Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood.”

\* See Eph. ii. 13. † Heb. xii. 24. and 1. Pet. i. 2.

You observe, that in this passage, “the Apostle, employing a most beautiful allusion to the Mo-  
 saic ritual, represents Jesus as a mercy-seat  
 ἱλαστηριον (to all who complied with the terms of  
 Christian redemption,) sprinkled with his own  
 blood.”\* Christ is represented both as a priest,  
 and as a sacrifice; as a priest making reconcilia-  
 tion, and as himself the sacrifice with which re-  
 conciliation is made. But I know not that he is  
 ever represented as the mercy-seat, or the place  
 where the priest makes reconciliation; nor, as far  
 as I know, is it ever said, that he sprinkled him-  
 self with his own blood. It is true, ἱλαστηριον signi-  
 fies a propitiatory or mercy-seat: but ἱλαστηριος sig-  
 nifies a propitiator or reconciler. This I doubt  
 not is the word which the Apostle employs upon  
 the present occasion, and so it ought to have been  
 rendered. Accordingly he represents Christ as the  
 person who propitiates, or makes reconciliation  
 with his own blood; that is, as performing the  
 same office, which he ascribes to Christ, Heb. ii.  
 17. where he is called “a merciful and faithful  
 high priest, in things pertaining to God, to make  
 reconciliation for the sins of the people.”

Rom. iv. 25.

“Who was delivered for our offences, and  
 was raised again for our justification.”

\* Page 282, note.\* See also page 30.



In the *Preservative*, I introduced this passage,\* in opposition to the language which you had held in your *discourse*, respecting the death and resurrection of Christ.† You now express yourself somewhat differently. To *attest* is no longer brought forward, as the *end*, either of the death or of the resurrection of Christ. And though they are both called *attestations*, yet they are attestations to one and the same thing, namely, ‘to the covenant of mercy and life;’ and the former is called ‘the attestation of Jesus,’ the latter ‘of God himself.’‡ In what sense you understand the first clause of this passage, has been already sufficiently stated: how the resurrection of Christ had efficacy in our justification, you thus explain. “The  
 “Apostle says, 1. Cor. xv. 17. ‘But if Christ hath  
 “not been raised up, your faith is vain, ye are  
 “still in your sins,’ you have no adequate ground  
 “to hope for the blessings of pardon and everlasting  
 “life, as offered by him: if he were not raised up,  
 “he was not the Son of God, his declarations  
 “had not divine authority, his death sealed no  
 “covenant of free mercy and forgiveness, your  
 “condition is forlorn, as it was before your faith  
 “in Jesus gave you those inspiring hopes, by  
 “which the power of sin, and the fear of death,

\* *Preserv.* page 11. † *Discourse*, page 6.

‡ *Letters*, page 315.

“ have been overcome, and yourselves thereby “ made fit to be partakers among the saints in “ light.”\* I perceive in all this no explanation of the text. There is nothing here which tells me, what efficacy the resurrection of Christ has in our justification, or why it was necessary for that purpose. Justification is in holy Scripture frequently used in a forensic sense, being put in opposition to condemnation. “ It is God that “ justifieth, who is he that condemneth?”† And such is its meaning in the present instance. Christ “ was delivered for our offences:” that is, he died for us, that we might escape condemnation: “ and “ was raised again for our justification,” that we might be absolved from guilt, and accounted righteous. And hence the Apostle declares, “ If “ Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are “ yet in your sins,”‡ ye have no ground to expect through him the great blessing of the New Testament, forgiveness of sins; the very foundation of which is that Christ, who ‘ was delivered for our offences,’ ‘ was raised for our justification.’ Under the law the victims intended for sin-offerings, must be slain; but the blood must also be offered by the priest, in order to give effect to the sacrifice. In like manner the resurrection of Christ was necessary, in order that his death might be

\* Page 214. † Rom. viii. 33. ‡ 1. Cor. xv. 17.

effectual to the salvation of sinful man. If he had only died, if he had not also been raised from the dead, he could not have ascended into heaven; he could not have appeared for us in the presence of God; he could not, as our great high priest, have made his offering in the holy of holies; he could not by this offering have cleansed and sanctified his church; and as a consequence of all this, we should still have been in our sins.

Rom. v. 10.

“ If when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.”

The preceding verse runs thus, “ Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.” Taking the two verses in connection, you observe, “ This passage is a remarkable one: in the first place it shews that justification, and final salvation, are two distinct things; and secondly, that the Apostle considered the life of Jesus, his being raised from the dead, as the chief means of salvation.”\* That justification and *final* salvation, are two distinct things, no one I believe ever doubted. To be *justified*, is to be accounted righteous: and so are all they whose sins are for-

\* Page 315.

given. For whom God forgives, them he looks upon as righteous; he remembers their sins no more; they are in his sight as though they had never offended. Hence the pardon of sin is frequently called the righteousness of God: it is that righteousness without works which is imputed to believers. *Salvation* is properly *deliverance*; but by final salvation, we commonly understand, not merely deliverance from wrath or punishment, but further, admission to the enjoyment of everlasting blessedness. But the salvation of which the Apostle speaks is deliverance from *wrath*; and his argument is this: If when we were sinners, Christ submitted to death, in order that our sins might be forgiven, and God be reconciled unto us; much more, being thus placed in a state of reconciliation, shall be saved by him from wrath, now that he is risen from the dead. For “who shall lay any thing  
 “ 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.”\*

1. John ii. 1. 2.

“ If any man sin, we have an advocate with  
 “ the Father, Jesus Christ, the righteous: and he  
 “ is the propitiation for our sins.”

\* Rom. viii. 33, 34.

Concerning the first branch of this passage, you observe, that “if the appellation *advocate*, given by the Apostle John, prove any thing respecting the efficacy of our Saviour’s present interposition in rendering God merciful,” it proves too much —that the *death* of Christ had not the efficacy assigned to it.\* An *advocate* is one who appears in behalf of a person accused, and pleads for him that he should not be pronounced guilty. This appellation, when applied to Christ, must be taken, not literally, but analogically; and serves, like that of *high priest*, to instruct us in the nature of Christ’s office, and of the work which he undertook for us. Even the legal high priest was, analogically, an advocate for the Israelites; he appeared for them in the presence of God, where he interposed in their behalf, and interceded for them that God would not hold them in sin, but would be reconciled to them, and take them again for his people. In like manner Christ, analogically speaking, is our advocate with the Father; for he ascended into heaven, that, by his interposition in our behalf, he might make reconciliation for our sins: and the all prevailing power of his intercession is thus expressed by the Apostle; “Wherefore he is able to save to the uttermost them that come unto God by him, seeing he

\* Page 337.

“ ever liveth, to make intercession for them.”\* But let it not be said that the efficacy of this work of Christ, in our behalf, proves that his death “ has not the efficacy, which has been assigned “ to it.” As well might it be said that the efficacy of the high priest’s ministry in the holy of holies, is a proof of the want of efficacy in the blood which he offered. Who does not at once perceive the futility of such reasoning? The blood has all the efficacy which has been assigned to it; but not till it has been offered by the high priest. In like manner it is Christ’s appearing for us in the presence of God, which applies to us the benefit of his death.

In conjunction with the latter part of this passage, “ he is the propitiation for our sins,” you bring forward a parallel place in this Epistle, ch. iv. 10. “ Herein is love, not that we loved God, “ but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the “ propitiation for our sins:” and you observe, that “ this last passage, (as well as several other parts “ of the Epistle,) so clearly proves that Jesus by “ being a *propitiation* or *reconciliation* ἰλασμός, did “ in no way make God merciful or propitious, “ that one cannot but wonder that Christians “ should ever have adopted ideas so derogatory “ from the divine character.”† If by ‘making

\* Heb. vii. 25. † Page 325.

God propitious,' you mean 'effecting a change in the divine mind,' I have already said that we intend no such thing. But we are taught in Scripture, that 'the wrath of God is revealed from heaven, against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men,' and we believe that Christ, by being the propitiation for our sins, placed sinful man in a state of reconciliation with God. How this belief at all derogates from the divine character, I am at a loss to perceive; on the contrary, I can hardly imagine any thing which more strongly illustrates the love of God than this act of grace.

You think it probable that the term *ἱλασμός* *propitiation*, has 'an allusion to the propitiatory sacrifices of the Mosaic ritual:' but you are of opinion that "in order to render the term any proof of the doctrines of satisfaction, vicarious punishment, &c. two things must be shewn. 1. That the Apostle intended to represent the death of Christ as really a propitiatory sacrifice like those under the law: and 2. that those propitiatory sacrifices made satisfaction for sin, or rendered God propitious to men, &c. Now neither of these is the fact."\* With the doctrine of satisfaction, in your sense of the expression, and of vicarious punishment, I have nothing to do. I am concerned only with the doctrine of atone-

\* Page 325.

ment. But as this doctrine is not unaffected by your argument, I suppose that you intended to include it under your &c. I shall, therefore, proceed with my remarks. The first thing which you deny is, "that the Apostle intended to represent the death of Christ as really a propitiatory sacrifice, like those under the law." If by *really*, you mean *literally*, I will not dispute the point with you. But *reality* is not only not inconsistent with *analogy*, but is even requisite to it: for in an analogy, all the circumstances concerned, both the things related, and also the ground of the relation between them, are all *real*. I therefore contend, that Christ, by dying for our sins, became really a propitiatory sacrifice. This you deny to be the fact; for the following reason, "If Christ agreed with the propitiatory sacrifice in one circumstance: viz. in placing the offender in a state of reconciliation with God, he differed from it in many others." And then in a note, you cite from Dr. Sykes, a long list of differences, with which, as they are all beside the point in question, I shall not fill my page. It is sufficient for me, that the circumstance in which you acknowledge an agreement, is the very one upon which the analogy is founded, and from which the similitude of the relations is derived. Let us examine the sufficiency of such an agreement in a very



familiar instance. The table, upon which I am now writing, is supported by a *leg*: so I call it, and you, I doubt not, call it by the same name: and I suppose you will further agree with me in maintaining, that though not a *leg* strictly and literally, it is, nevertheless, something *real*. But suppose some one was to arise, and argue against us, thus; What you call a *leg*, is not *really* so: for though it agrees with a leg in one circumstance, viz. in being the support of that to which it belongs, yet it differs from a leg in many others: it has, for example, neither skin nor bone; neither muscle nor joint; nor can the table, by its assistance, walk about the room;—should we not immediately exclaim, what is all this to the purpose? in respect of the support which it affords, it is to the table, what a leg is to its body; and we want no more: for being thus similarly related, it is analogically a leg: and whoever contends that a relation in one respect, is not sufficient in order to the grammatical analogy of which we are speaking, might as well deny, that the first of four magnitudes is to the second, as the third is to the fourth, because there is no other relation between the antecedents and their consequents, but in respect of quantity only. And just so it is in the case before us: the death of Christ under the Gospel, and the propitiatory sacrifices under the law, however they

differed in other respects, it matters not, agreed in this; namely, in placing sinful man in a state of reconciliation with God: consequently, regard being had to this circumstance, as the propitiatory sacrifices are to the law, so is the death of Christ to the Gospel: therefore, the death of Christ, is analogically a propitiatory sacrifice.—The second thing which you deny is, “that the propitiatory sacrifices under the law made satisfaction for sin, or rendered God propitious.” For your denial you assign this reason, that none of them “imply a *vicarious substitution*.”\* Now, Sir, I am not aware that vicarious substitution is necessary, in order to make satisfaction, even in your sense of the word; certainly not in mine. But as far as I can judge from the tenor of your argument, you are of opinion that the correspondence of the death of Christ, with the propitiatory sacrifices under the law, cannot be made a proof of the doctrine of atonement, unless it can be shewn that these sacrifices rendered God propitious by removing, not legal sins merely, but sins in a moral sense. But I have already shewn, not only that this is not necessary; but also that my own argument requires, that the legal sacrifices with which we are concerned, should remove only legal sins, and be no more than the means of restoring to

\* Page 326.

legal privileges. But I need not repeat what I have already advanced upon this subject.

Enough, I trust, has now been said of the priesthood and offering of Christ: and from the whole it must, I think, be manifest, that the death of Christ has an efficacy corresponding with that of the propitiatory sacrifices under the law, with respect both to God and to men: that with respect to men, it is the means of purification and sanctification; and with respect to God, the means of propitiation: that is, in other words, Christ, by his death, made atonement to God for sinners; or to adopt your own language, hath placed sinful man in a state of reconciliation with God.

I know not that any thing further is wanting to illustrate the other analogies. It can now hardly be misunderstood in what sense the death of Christ is considered in Scripture, as a *ransom*, a *price*, and a *punishment*; and how, being so considered, it becomes to us the immediate cause, or the means of deliverance. Nevertheless, as there is something in your remarks upon the death of Christ, considered as a *ransom*,\* which, though virtually explained already, may be thought to require further notice, I shall trouble you with a few observations upon this part of your work, in

\* Page 310.

the hope that what I have to offer may tend to the further illustration of the whole subject.

Matt. xx. 28.

“The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.”

1. Tim. ii. 6.

“Who gave himself a ransom for all.”

In order to account for the application of this term *ransom*, to our Saviour's death, you have recourse to the view which you have been accustomed to take of his death, and of the ends for which he died. Thus you state the matter. “Jesus came to bring pardon and everlasting life, by Gospel promises and declarations to redeem men from iniquity; to assure and extend the blessings which he brought, he gave up his life; he could not otherwise have completed the grand scheme of spiritual redemption or deliverance, of which he was appointed the mediator. He procured for us, then, the possession of those blessings by means of his death; and it was, therefore, our ransom or means of deliverance. I do not know how to express my own sense of the importance and value, and to us, the merit of his death, than by this, his own representation of it. It was, as we have already seen, the necessary means of our deliverance, yet was

“*voluntary* on his part; it was our *ransom*.”\* That the insufficiency of every such statement may be more apparent, I will employ a familiar illustration. Let us suppose a ship in its course to encounter a storm so violent, that the master, in order to a successful prosecution of his voyage, found it necessary to put into some port to refit; and let us suppose that he there found a number of captives, whom he was moved by compassion to release. Will you affirm that the *storm*, or the *putting into port*, was the necessary means of the deliverance of those captives, and their ransom? Yet so it was according to your mode of arguing. If the storm had not arisen, the master would not have put into that port, and so those captives would not have been delivered. Would you hesitate to answer, The storm, indeed, gave occasion to the putting into that port; and the putting into port gave occasion to the deliverance of the captives; but it is an abuse of words to call either on this account the *means* of their deliverance, or their *ransom*; a name which can be applied to nothing but the price actually given for the deliverance. When therefore, Christ is said to have given his life a *ransom*, this can mean no other than that his life, analogically speaking, is the *price of redemption*.

\* Page 310. 311.

But thus you object to our assigning this meaning to the word *ransom*, when applied to Christ. “If any imagine that it was literally speaking, the price paid to some one for our deliverance, I have only to say, that they must consistently maintain that the price was paid to God: but the Scriptures declare, that we are redeemed by the blood of Christ, *from* our vain conversation, (or conduct,) and by his death reconciled *to* God, (1. Pet. i. 18. and Rom. v. 10.)\* And upon a similar occasion speaking of the death of Christ, you say, “that it was not literally a price, is obvious: for this would imply a *feller*, and assuredly we were not ‘bought’ from God, but ‘to God.’† (See Rev. v. 9.”) That the death of Christ was not *literally* a price, we contend as well as you: it was *analogically* a price: and surely you will not contend that because a price, *literally* taken, implies a feller, therefore, it also implies a feller, *analogically* taken. If so, such must be the case in every other instance; and every analogical word must imply the same, as it implies literally: because for example, my own leg implies a thigh, therefore, the leg of my table must have a thigh attached to it: and because a *head* implies brains, therefore there must be brains in the head of a *nail*. I have already said that the relation, with

\* Page 311. † Page 319.

which we are concerned in analogical language, is, like the mathematical ratio, not a relation in every respect, or in any respect whatever, but in a certain respect, either actually given or implied: nor have we any thing to do with any other.

Towards the conclusion of your work, I find a series of observations upon certain abuses of the doctrine of atonement; chiefly satisfaction and vicarious punishment; words which, in your sense of them, imply, the former, that God demanded and insisted upon rigid and full compensation for the sins of men; the latter, that Christ was actually substituted in the place of sinners, and by dying upon the cross, literally underwent, in their stead, the punishment of their sins. But I beg to remind you, that the abuses of a doctrine, are no argument against the doctrine itself: and, since the doctrine for which I contend, is not chargeable with these abuses, you are in this part of your work no antagonist of mine, but are fighting against some unknown person, who is nothing at all to me. Having, therefore, no call to engage on either side, I shall quietly sit down an unconcerned spectator of the fight.

I cannot take my leave without requesting you not to consider as personal any thing unpleasant which you may discover in the preceding pages. I should have been false to the cause of truth and

religion, if I had not done my utmost to detect erroneous interpretations, and weak or irrelevant arguments; and if, having detected them, I had not exposed them with firmness, and without a childish fear of giving offence. At the same time I feel it my duty to conduct myself in so doing, with temper, and without acrimony. And thus it has been my endeavour to conduct myself. If therefore, you should discover any thing in which I may appear to have acted otherwise, I request you to believe that it proceeded inadvertently from the pen, and not designedly from the heart.

It would, I confess, afford me the truest satisfaction, if what I have advanced in the preceding pages, should be the means of making you less tenacious of your Unitarianism, and less hostile to a doctrine, which, being unhappily viewed in a false light, you continue to "oppose, as unscriptural, injurious to the divine character, and baneful in its moral tendency."\* As to the latter objection, I beg leave to call to your recollection, your own confession, that the doctrine of atonement, as it is represented in the *Preservative*, does not tend "to destroy the scriptural foundation of Christian practice."† I may boldly add, that in the encouragement, which it gives to the sinner, to repent and turn to God, and to do works

\* See Page 338. † Page 269.

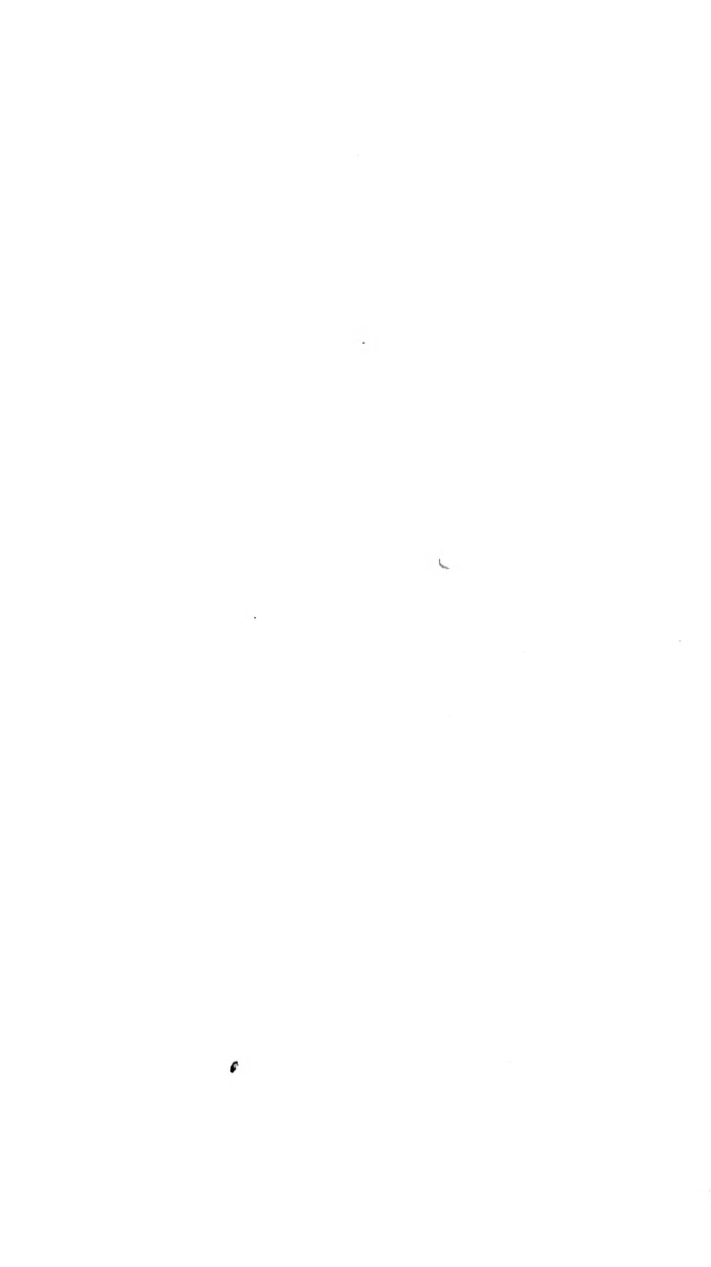


meet for repentance, it leaves the Unitarian doctrine behind, at an immeasurable distance. That it is neither unscriptural, nor injurious to the divine character, I am myself most thoroughly persuaded, and have endeavoured faithfully to set forth the grounds of my own persuasion for the benefit of others. After all, I am sensible that I am an humble instrument in the hands of God. It is through his blessing alone, that I can hope to stop the progress of heretical opinions, or to fix those who are wavering in the faith. May it please him "to bring into the way of truth all such as have erred and are deceived."

Though personally unknown to you, yet, having from report, been taught to conceive highly of your character, I beg to conclude with assurances of sincerest esteem and respect.

N

*F I N I S.*



# TEXTS

ILLUSTRATED OR VINDICATED.



<p><b>Gen.</b> i. 3. .... 64            ii. 5. .... 72            xv. 18. .... 243</p> <p><b>Exod.</b> iii. 14. .... 75            xxiv. 8. .... 259</p> <p><b>Lev.</b> vi. 2-7 ..... 221            xvii. 11..... 161            xix. 20-22. .... 221</p> <p><b>Psal.</b> li. 16. .... 161            xc. 2. .... 72,76</p> <p><b>Jer.</b> xxxiv. 18. .... 243</p> <p><b>Ez.</b> xxviii. 2. 9. .... 59</p> <p><b>Wisd.</b> vii. 26. .... 106</p> <p><b>Matt.</b> i. 20-23..... 31            iv. 10. .... 143            xvii. 2. .... 87            xix. 26. .... 78            xx. 28. .... 272            xxiii. 15. .... 66            xxvi. 28. .. 163,257            xxviii. 20... 118,141</p> <p><b>Mar.</b> ix. 2. .... 87            xvi. 12. .... 87</p> <p><b>Luke</b> i. 35. .... 33            vi. 36. .... 125            xxii. 69..... 131</p>		<p><b>Luke</b> xxiv. 47. .... 169</p> <p><b>John</b> i. 1-14. .... 47            — 1. .... 54            — 3. .... 63            — 10. .... 64            — 14. .... 66            iv. 26. .... 67            v. 22,23. .... 122,133            viii. 58. .... 67            x. 11-15. .... 223            xiii. 19. .... 63            xvii. 5. .... 77,118            xx. 31. .... 45</p> <p><b>Acts</b> vii. 59. .... 128            ix. 14. .... 133            x. 33-44 ..... 14            xx. 28. .... 13,164            xxvi. 18. .... 259</p> <p><b>Rom.</b> iii. 24. .... 168            — 25. .... 259            iv. 25. .... 260            v. 10. .... 263            viii. 33. 34. .... 264            ix. 5. .... 107            x. 13. .... 135</p> <p><b>1. Cor.</b> i. 2. .... 133</p>
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1. Cor. i. 3. ....	136	Heb. viii. 5. ....	215
viii. 4-6. ....	42	ix. 6-15. ....	225
xv. 17. ....	262	ix. 12. ....	236
— 24. ....	104	— 13, 14. ....	237
Gal. iv. 4. ....	33	— 15. ....	238, 246
Eph. i. 3. ....	102	— 16, 17. ....	245
— 10. ....	95	— 18-23. ..	241, 251
ii. 13. ....	259	— 23-26. ....	247
v. 5. ....	104	x. 1. 2. 11. 14. .	248
— 25. 26. ....	253	— 10. ....	255
Phillip. ii. 5-8. ....	81	xii. 24. ....	259
Col. i. 15-17. ....	88	xiii. 7. 17. ....	209
2. Thess. ii. 16-17. ....	138	1. Pet. i. 2. ....	259
1. Tim. i. 4. ....	48	2. Pet. iii. 8. ....	80
ii. 6. ....	272	1. John i. 7. ....	255
Tit. ii. 13. ....	100	ii. 1. 2. ....	264
— 14. ....	7, 255	— 22. ....	46
Heb. i. 3. ....	105, 253	iv. 3. ....	19
— 8-10. ....	98	— 10. ....	164, 266
ii. 17. ....	260	— 14. 15. ....	19
vii. 25. ....	265	— 15. ....	46
— 27. ....	229	v. 1. ....	46
— 28. ....	231	2 John 7. ....	19
viii. 3. ....	232	Rev. i. 5. ....	257

To the observations in page 150, 151, note,\* concerning the nature of analogical language, as it respects things, the reader is requested to subjoin the following :

Not only *things* themselves, but also their *attributes*, are capable of these tralatitious names, both *metaphorical* and *analogical*: But there is this difference between them; in the case of metaphorical language, the attributes, from and to which the name is transferred, do not correspond; but the former is (if I may so speak) of larger extent than the latter; so that the name transferred does not truly set forth the nature of the attribute denominated by it, but implies more than the attribute itself comprehends, or than can be attributed to its subject. Whereas, in the case of analogical language, the two attributes are of equal extent, and so correspond as to be in similar relations to their respective subjects. Ex. gr. 1. We speak of a *thirsty* land. *Thirst* is properly the attribute of an animal; and implies a painful sensation arising from the want of moisture, and occasioning an eager desire of drink. Both the subjects, the land which is denominated thirsty, and the animal which is really so, have, in common, a dryness which disposes them to receive moisture with readiness: but the name *thirst*, implies more than this: it implies a painful sensation

with which the dryness of the land has nothing to do, and of which the land itself is incapable: Therefore, the two attributes do not correspond, and the name is metaphorical. 2. We speak of a *solid* judgement. *Solidity* is properly a material attribute; and in common language, those bodies are called *solid*, which are deep, compact, and firm, in opposition to such as are superficial, loose, and weak. But there is an intellectual depth and firmness, corresponding with this attribute of body, and having the same relation to mind which that has to matter. In consequence of this relation, the name is transferred from the material attribute, of which it is properly significant, to its corresponding intellectual attribute. And it is obvious, that in this analogical use, it is as much significant of something *real*, as in its literal and proper use.

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### CORRECTIONS.

- Page 47, line 28, *read* Only-begotten.  
51, 17, *for* man *read* flesh.  
54, 17, *read* ἀρχη.  
86, 15, *read* adapting.  
98, 8, *read* ἀπαργυρον.  
144, *lest*, *for* religion *read* doctrine.  
146, 16, *for* denied *read* asserted.  
146, 4, *delete* the first an.  
176, 13, *read* if it had *not* taken place.  
196, 15, *read* at the same *time*.  
215, 15, *for* than *read* that  
219, 21, ברת, *the* initial letter *should* be Capt.

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