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REMARKS

ON THE

UNITARIAN BELIEF:

WITH A LETTER

TO A UNITARIAN FRIEND

ON

THE LORD'S SUPPER.

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BY NEHEMIAH ANS.  
*Pastor of the First Church of Christ in Cambridge.*

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## ADVERTISEMENT.

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The first part of this book was originally a Review of a Treatise "On the Formation of the Christian Character; addressed to those who are seeking to lead a Religious Life,—By Rev. Henry Ware, Jr., Professor in the Divinity School, Cambridge." The article was written as the most convenient method of complying with the request of several friends that the Book, which had been placed in the hands of many of their acquaintances, should receive some notice. Whilst the Book commends itself by its simplicity of thought and expression, and by the unaffected seriousness which pervades it, the deficiency in its directions is not so manifest to those in whom religious interest is accompanied with a confiding feeling, which oftentimes prevents discrimination. Being requested to reprint the Review, the writer has given it its present form, with the addition of Remarks on a Tract by the same Author, called, an 'Outline of Scripture Testimony against the Trinity.' It was thought important to enlarge upon the latter subject, and to present the objections to the Doctrine by means of some Unitarian Treatise; but if a better Tract, by another, could have been found, it would, for obvious reasons, have been adopted.

That part of the book which treats of the Lord's Supper, will explain itself.

*Cambridge, August 14, 1832.*



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## INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.

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### Importance of the Subject.—Test of a Religious System.

John Bunyan was not aware of the great work to which God had appointed him, when he was thrown into Bedford Prison. To that confinement we are indebted for the Pilgrim's Progress, which perhaps would never have been written but for the Author's interruption in the active duties of the ministry. The persecuted and imprisoned saint proved that the word of God is not bound. The little Book written in the solitude of a cell, has cheered a multitude whom no man can number on their way to glory. The Pilgrim's flight from the wrath to come, the anxiety of his soul till he had dropped his burden at the cross, his various conflicts, temptations, dangers, joys, with

all the variety of his experience, till he reached the celestial City, will be read with thrilling interest by his fellow Pilgrims to the end of time.

The Pilgrim's Progress has probably done more than any other uninspired book to guide Christians to heaven. One great cause of its usefulness is its allegorical manner, which renders it most attractive to children; so that the nature, dangers, and all the peculiarities of a religious life are treasured in their memories, long before they have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the Pilgrim's hope. We remember that when we were young, he was the envy of the rest of the children, who had been before hand with them in secreting Pilgrim's Progress on Saturday afternoon, that he might have it for his Sunday's reading.—The "Rise and Progress," the "Guide to Christ," the "Come and Welcome to Jesus Christ," and other books of the like nature, are of immense importance to the church, in forming the religious character of young Christians, and bringing many sons and daughters to her privileges in this world, and hereafter to glory.

The book before us was written for a similar

object. In our community, the number of those who are seeking to lead a religious life has of late been greatly increased. The spirit of religious inquiry has not been confined to those congregations, where the instructions are of such a nature as are usually followed by revivals of religion. An interesting portion of other congregations, by their intercourse with friends of a different persuasion, and by the pervading influence of religious interest, have had their thoughts turned upon their souls. This book was issued at a time of peculiar attention to the subject of religion, and as a guide to those who ask, "What must we do to be saved?"

We have read the work with uncommon interest, as well from the reputed character of the Author who stands high in the clerical order of his persuasion, as from the important object of the book itself. It is intended to be placed in the hands of one, at the time when he is interested in the salvation of his soul, and everlasting consequences are depending upon the direction which may then be given to his feelings. Those who have themselves been in such a state, and have seen what awful in-

terests are in suspense during those hours when the soul is susceptible of the slightest influence, and those of us who are conversant with minds in this turning of the tide which flows through eternity, can feel that a book for such a purpose should contain nothing but the eternal truth.

There is another reason why it has attracted our attention. Such a book presents the best possible means of judgment, in regard to the religious system which forms its basis. Here is the result of a minister's religious belief, the practical fruits of the system of doctrine which he holds forth to men as the word of life. That which makes a system of religion of any importance may be expected to be set forth in such a book as this ;—we mean its tendency to promote the present and future welfare of the soul. If the teachers and followers of this system had designated one of their number to exhibit its practical excellency, and the internal evidence of its being the power and wisdom of God to salvation, we believe that the Author of this book would have been selected, and that this book is such an one as he would have written for that purpose.

## CHAPTER I.

Human depravity.—Difficulties of Unitarianism.—Cause of irreligion in the young.—The reason why a child does not love God.—Unitarian definition of ‘a Christian.’—Superficial conversion.—Proof of Regeneration from facts.—Regeneration suited to the wants of the sinner.—Power of Regeneration.

After a careful, and we trust candid examination of the book, our judgment is, that however it may abound in excellent prudential maxims, it can never turn an inquirer into the way of life. We view it to be defective, first of all, upon the great and fundamental subject of *the natural character of man*. The disease of the soul is overlooked ; and as a physician’s prescriptions are all wrong, if he has erred respecting the nature or even the extent of the disease, so the directions which are here given will be found inefficacious to the cure and salvation of the soul.

The title of this book would more properly

have been "An Essay on Moral Culture." It does not recognize the alienation of the soul from God ; but commences with directions for the attainment of a spiritual mind, without informing the reader that he has by nature a 'carnal mind, which is enmity against God, and is not subject to the law of God, nor can be.' The complaint might justly be made in this case as of old, 'The hurt of the soul is slightly healed.' A great philosopher has remarked, that error is apt to be inconsistent with itself. We feel this to be the case in what is said in treating upon this point.

"There is an animal life, and there is a spiritual life. Man is born into the first at the birth of his body ; he is born into the second when he subjects himself to the power of religion, and prefers his rational and immortal to his sensual nature. During his earliest days, he is an animal only, pursuing like other animals, the wants and desires of his body, and consulting his present gratification and immediate interest. But it is not designed that he shall continue thus. He is made for something better and higher. He has a nobler nature and nobler interests. He must learn to live for these : and this learning to feel and value his spiritual nature, and to live for eternity ; this change from the animal and earthly existence of infancy, to a rational, moral, spir-

itual existence,—this it is to be born into the spiritual life.”

Turning to a subsequent chapter, where the inquirer is spoken of, it is said—

“ He looks back to the early and innocent days, when, if his Saviour had been on earth, he might have taken him to his arms, and said, ‘ Of such is the kingdom of God.’ But, alas! how has he been changed! He has parted with that innocence, he has strayed from the kingdom of heaven, he has defiled and lost the image of his Maker.”

We cannot understand how the Saviour could have declared that such beings as those who are represented as in animal life were fit subjects for the kingdom of heaven, if such a change is necessary, as the author inculcates, into a spiritual life. The difficulty presented by these two passages arose from the author’s belief in the original purity of the soul, and his endeavors (which in no case have proved successful upon this system,) to account for the unfailing aberration of man from God, as life advances. The reason why the soul does not awake in the likeness of its Maker at the dawn of its conscious life, is stated to be as follows.

“ As soon as he can love and obey his parents,

he can love and obey God ; and this is religion. The capacity of doing the one is the capacity of doing the other.

“ It is true, the latter is not so universally done as the former ; but the cause is not, that religion is unsuited to the young, but that their attention is engrossed by visible objects and present pleasures. Occupied with these, it requires effort and pains-taking to direct the mind to invisible things ; to turn the attention from the objects which press them on every side, to the abstract, spiritual objects of faith. Hence it is easy to see, that the want of early religion is owing, primarily, to the circumstances in which childhood is placed, and, next, to remissness in education. Worldly things are before the child’s eye, and minister to its gratification every hour and every minute ; but religious things are presented to it only in a formal and dry way once a week. The things of the world are made to constitute its pleasures ; those of religion are made its tasks. It is made to feel its dependence on a parent’s love every hour ; but is seldom reminded of its dependence on God, and then perhaps only in some stated lesson, which it learns by compulsion, and not in the midst of the actual engagements and pleasures of its little life. It partakes of the caresses of its human parents, and cannot remember the time when it was not an object of their tenderness ; so that their image is interwoven with its very existence. But God it has never seen, and has seldom heard of him ; his name and presence are banished from common conversation, and inferior and visible agents receive the gratitude for

gifts which come from him. So also the parent's authority is immediate and visibly exercised, and obedience grows into the rule and habit of life. But the authority of God is not displayed in any sensible act of declaration: it is only heard of at set times and in set tasks; and thus it fails of becoming mingled with the principles of conduct, or forming a rule and habit of subjection.—In a word, let it be considered how little and how infrequently the idea of God is brought home to the child's mind, even under the most favorable circumstances, and how little is done to make him the object of love and obedience, in comparison with what is done to unite its affections to its parents; while, at the same time, the spirituality and invisibility of the Creator render it necessary that even more should be done;—and it will be seen that the want of an early and spontaneous growth of the religious character is not owing to the want of original capacity for religion, but is to be traced to the unpropitious circumstances in which childhood is passed, and the want of uniform, earnest, persevering instruction.”

This seems to us entirely unsatisfactory. Since the mind of a child does not immediately recognize the authority of God, as soon as the parent has made it intelligible, we cannot resist the conclusion that the child is destitute by nature of the love of God. It would not be so, were it not for “one man's disobedience.” But further. To attribute the irreligious spirit

which appears in the young to neglect in their education, seems manifestly erroneous. Pious parents have made the experiment, times without number, watching the first indications of moral action to pour in the holy influence of religious authority, the love of God, and especially the love of the Saviour. The result has not been such as to prove (according to the fair inference from the author's meaning) that all which is necessary to ensure a religious character in men is faithful early instruction. But then the author says, there is another reason to account for this, viz: the abstract nature of God and of the motives of religion. If God could be made as real to the child's mind in his benevolence, in his love of purity, as the earthly parent, it would be otherwise. We ask, How is it that influence of an abstract nature in other things has so great an effect upon a child? You may fill the soul of a boy with the love of military glory, though he never saw the brave man whose deeds you rehearse; and how is it that he is susceptible to such influence, as abstract as the character and love of God? Why is it that you can set his soul on fire with love to great and good men whom he has

never seen, so that the effect of his early feelings lasts till death, when all that is said by the persuasiveness of a mother to wake up in his mind the love of God, produces wearisomeness and is soon forgotten? But we think it a mistake to represent the idea of God and his authority as of an abstract nature, when entertained by a child. He shows by his questions, such as, 'Where does God live? Can he hear me speak?' that he always impersonates the Deity in his thoughts, so that if he had that in him which a holy being possesses, as we see he has an innate susceptibility to impression from the character of great men, the character and authority of God would immediately establish him in a religious life. The first man *was* thus susceptible to the authority of God, but gave his selfish feelings the predominance over it; and ever since, though that authority is brought near to the hearts of the young, they follow his example, and in consequence, as the Bible tells us, of his transgression, are disinclined to the service of God, and love the creature more than the Creator. Hence the dark and dreadful picture in the Bible of the natural character of man, a character possess-

## 16 *Unitarian Definition of a Christian.*

ed by every descendant of Adam, and constituting the necessity of that change which Christ has said must be experienced in order to see the kingdom of God. Our Author seems compelled to acknowledge the necessity of a change; but how it happens that *every one* comes into a condition which forms so sad a contrast to his "early and innocent days," we are not informed; still, it is taken for granted that every one, who can possibly come to this book as an inquirer, has "a sense of sin, and the feeling that his heart is not pure, that his thoughts, dispositions, appetites, passions, have not been duly regulated, that he has lived according to his own will and not that of God." It is certainly interesting to see how candid men will frequently admit *the fact*, while at the same time they oppose *the doctrine*, of universal depravity.

The inquirer is now directed to proceed in the attainment of true religion, with an insufficient knowledge of his condition and wants as a sinner.

"What you are to seek, therefore, is, under the guidance of Jesus Christ, to feel your relation to God, and to live under a sense of responsibility

to him; to cultivate assiduously those sentiments and affections which spring out of this responsible and filial relation, as well as those which arise out of your connexion with other men as his offspring; to perform all the duties to Him and them, which appertain to this character and relation; and to cherish that heavenward tendency of mind, which spring from a consciousness of possessing an immortal nature. He who does all this is a religious man, or, in other words, a Christian."

Such efforts before regeneration are like "the climbing of a sandy way to the feet of the aged." The first part of these directions lead to that sentimentality which is a popular substitute for true religion, and "the consciousness of an immortal nature," as a motive of action, only to a cold, philosophic, lofty pride. Many an amiable friend have we known, who has sought for peace as here directed; but whose experience was like that of Paul before his conversion.\* We have heard such an one complain, after all his endeavors to live an upright life, that God still seemed to him at a great distance. There was no "nearness of access." He thought that he loved God, and wondered

\* Rom. vii. 9, to the end. See a Sermon of Jeremy Taylor's, showing that Paul here describes a state of unregeneracy and not the *Christian* conflict as generally supposed.

## 18 *Proof of Regeneration from Facts.*

when told that he was mistaken. But now he sees, that the love which he once had for God was the same which he feels towards natural scenery, when the waterfall, or mountain, or sea, awakens emotions of beauty or grandeur. The reason of the difference in his feelings is, he has undergone a more thorough change in his soul than could be realized from his former efforts. It is evident that the respected author of the book before us disbelieves in the necessity of such a change, that he does not profess to have experienced it himself, and that, in his view, nothing is necessary to establish the soul in holiness, but the culture of the moral virtues and a strict endeavor to live a correct life.

Leaving out of view, the scriptural argument, we call the attention of the reader to an argument from facts. From the earliest age when religious experience was recorded, to the present day, we find a great multitude, speaking of a remarkable and instantaneous change in their religious feelings. In some, it occurred after a long and wearisome struggle; in others, as in the case of the jailor at Philippi, it was preceded by a short period of anxiety.

‘There was a time,’ they say, ‘when a divine influence seemed to be exerted upon us to which we remember no parallel in our previous existence. Suddenly we saw, in a most affecting manner, the evil of sin, the holiness of God, our desert of hell, and our need of the atonement of Christ; our stubborn wills were broken, and we accepted the mercy of the Gospel, as sinners who deserved to die. Immediately there fell from our eyes as it had been scales; a state of mind succeeded, in some cases of calm and delightful meditation, in others of elevated and joyful emotions; and a sense of God’s love, of safety through Christ, a hatred of sin, and desire of holiness spread through the soul, and lives there to this day.’—Examine the religious history of the thousands of evangelical Christians from the Apostles to our time, and you will find that they all speak of this remarkable change and of such feelings as flowing therefrom. Read the memoirs of Howe, Bates, Owen, Edwards, Cowper, Chalmers and hundreds of others, and you will not fail to find in each case a recognition of these feelings. The same is true of those who were educated in a disbelief of this change;

of which Chalmers is a remarkable instance, who now preaches the faith which he once destroyed. It has occurred in our community, as we all know, amongst those who were so situated as to imbibe prejudices against evangelical sentiments, and were once zealous defenders of an opposite faith. You cannot say that the phenomenon is owing to any peculiarity of time, or place, or circumstance: for it is observed in every generation, in almost every congregation of nominal Christians amongst us, and now follows the preaching of evangelical Missionaries in the South Sea Islands and amongst the Greenlanders.\* You *cannot* say, therefore, that this change is experienced only by men of some particular persuasion, or is confined to certain degrees of latitude. You *must not* say that it is fanaticism; for we profess to be as capable of judging of matters relating to our own consciousness, as our friends. There are men who have recorded their experience upon this subject, after mature reflection, whose intellect stands side by side with the great minds of the earth. You will not as-

\* See the Journals of the Missionaries of the London Missionary Society in the *Missionary Herald* for 1831—2.

sume to say that many of the Laymen, who adorn the several learned professions in our cities, are incompetent to testify to the reality of this change. Their testimony upon matters of experience would be relied upon in any court of justice, and no jury would hesitate to make it the foundation of a verdict. What then can be said of this change by one who disbelieves in its reality? All which he *can* say is, 'I have never experienced it myself.'

If the reader is one who is seeking to lead a religious life, and has read the book under consideration, and felt that it did not describe his case, or help him to the attainment of that for which he has labored, we think that we can show him a more excellent way. If we could succeed in disabusing him of the impressions which he has received relating to the subject of Regeneration, we believe that he would be fill with admiration at the provision which it makes for his wants, as a sinful, erring man. To those who are desirous of attaining to the likeness of God, there is an assistance promised, and a radical change effected, of which we should suppose they would be glad to avail themselves. Indeed, the prejudices against the

subject of Regeneration are most unkind. It contains the only sure foundation of success in the conflict with sin. Instead of the wearisome, fruitless, unsatisfying, painful strife which some persons now endeavor to maintain, they may, by regeneration, be made free from the law of sin and death. By this change the whole current of affections is turned, and to him who has experienced it, life is not, as before, a constantly distressing effort to urge his way against a stream which sets towards a sinful and ensnaring world. If you would see clearly the evil of sin and the beauty of perfect holiness, you must have this change. If you would feel the power of religious motives, the joy and peace which passeth all understanding, you must have this change. 'We speak that we do know and testify that which we have seen?' We tried the course prescribed in this book through weary years, but, except when conscience had become stupified by worldliness, and the reasonable fears of a destitution of meetness for heaven were lulled to sleep, we found no rest. This has been the experience of multitudes who at last were born of the Spirit.

## CHAPTER II.

Necessity of conviction of sin.—A fact.—Unitarian directions to an anxious sinner.—Encouragement of false hope.—Effect of Evangelical Terms.—Unitarianism without a Saviour.—Unsuited to the poor.—The religion of the few.—Deficiency in its appeals to human nature.—The Evangelical system.—Its effect upon the feelings.—True dignity of human nature found in this system.—Power of Evangelical preaching.

Regeneration is necessarily preceded by conviction of sin. As the soul is active and not passive when regeneration takes place, and as the change is a voluntary exercise of the faculties in turning from sin to holiness, we never turn until such conviction has been felt. It is not strange, therefore, that the book before us, having failed to give the reader a true and scriptural account of his wretched and lost condition as a sinner, should omit to speak of this change as a necessary part of religious experience, or as essential to salvation. The inquirer is

taught that he is an imperfect, erring man, inclined to receive impressions from the things which are seen and temporal rather than from those which are unseen, and that his great endeavor must be to form a habitude of living in the contemplation of spiritual realities, and with an impression of the superiority of the soul to the body. To obtain this "is to be a Christian."!

Some time since, a young friend, of amiable feelings, and in the judgment of her liberal connections, a Christian, was made to feel that such directions as are here given, and all her corresponding efforts, did not satisfy the wants of her soul. She was convinced that there was need of something more than she had yet experienced in order to prepare her for heaven. Prayer and the serious perusal of the Scriptures, accompanied with earnest desires to know the truth, soon produced a most pungent conviction of sin. She told her feelings to her young friends, and they were astonished that so exemplary and excellent a person should feel anxiety respecting her character in the sight of God. They could not understand what she meant by representing herself as a

great sinner, for they had considered her as a pattern of virtue. They asked one and another, what made her weep so much; and at last concluded that her mind was impaired by some unknown cause, and advised her to seek relief from a voyage!! Soon, however, she came to them with a countenance full of heaven, and said, 'I have found Christ;' but this language was as unintelligible to them as her previous distress. This is one case out of the multitudes which occur in our congregations almost every month. Under the preaching of evangelical religion, these instances of deep conviction are frequent; but to those of an opposite system they are a stumbling block and foolishness. No one could receive conviction of sin by reading the book before us. We are here taught that we are imperfect and frail, and this is all. Nevertheless we were surprised to find allusions made to individuals in such a state of anxiety as we have described, and could not account for it, until we remembered that we had seen members of other congregations than our own in this state, in consequence of occasionally listening to evangelical instructions, or the faithful admonitions of evangelical

friends ; and that the book had been frequently given to members of our own societies, who were alarmed for the safety of their souls. The manner in which the whole subject of religious anxiety is treated is well adapted to allay the fears of the inquirer, while it seems to approve of them, and then it directs his eyes away from "the sinner's hope," to his own efforts after moral culture. "If a person" it is here observed, "is in this state of mind, he is to be congratulated upon it."

"We are to be thankful to God in his behalf, that another immortal soul is awake to its responsibility, and seeking real happiness. We would urge him to cherish the feelings which possess him ; not with melancholy despondency ; not with superstitious gloom ; not with unmanly and unmeaning debasement ; but with thoughtful, self-distrusting concern, with deliberate study for the path of duty, and a resolute purpose not to swerve from it.

"Remember that much depends, I might say, every thing depends, on the use you make of this your present disposition."

The anxious inquirer is then directed to "avoid every pursuit, engagement, company, inconsistent with" his anxiety. "Say nothing of your thoughts and feelings to any but one

or two confidential friends." "Apply therefore to your minister." "In this manner, feel your way along quietly, silently, steadily." "Be anxious to establish yourself firmly in the power of godliness, before you exhibit its form." Especially, "Do not spend too much time in public meetings." "It is at times a higher duty to attend to your family." "'Ye wives be in subjection to your own husbands.'" Thus "form your character in private." The chapter immediately succeeding points out "The Means of Religious *Improvement*," viz. Reading, Meditation, Prayer, Hearing the Word, and the Lord's supper.

In all these directions, there is not one which is not, in its place, important. But oh, how insufficient they are to the wants of an awakened sinner! We are not surprised that it was thought necessary to publish a tract, vindicating this system of Religion "from the charge of not going far enough." The words of Dr. Watts came forcibly to our minds :

"Not the most perfect rules they gave  
Could show one sin forgiven."

The Saviour of sinners is not mentioned in these directions! There is, however, so much

said respecting religious anxiety, apparently to encourage and deepen it, that an awakened sinner, meeting with sympathy in his distress, might possibly be induced to rely upon these directions, though they would be to him for a support only as a bruised reed. We sincerely believe that the author wrote with an honest intention to direct the inquirer according to the light which was in him; that he spake that which he knew and testified those things which he had seen; but there are other things, essential to salvation, which, judging from this Book, he did not know and had not seen; and therefore could not be expected to testify, as Cecil says, beyond his experience. If conviction of sin has taken deep hold of an inquirer, we do not apprehend any danger from his perusing these directions; they will be to him like the advice of one who turned "Pilgrim" aside to seek help from Mr. Legality; but as Pilgrim passed near a mountain at the entrance of the town, the lightnings flashed out before him, and the mountain and earth heaved, and a voice as from the Law, cried, 'The soul that sinneth shall die,' and drove the trembling sinner once more to seek refuge from the Cross.—To one, however, who

had received only slight impressions of his sinfulness, we should fear the book would in this respect be a voice crying, *Peace, Peace.*

In order to a faithful discharge of the duty which we have undertaken in reviewing the book before us, we are obliged to refer to another circumstance which makes it, in our opinion, of an injurious tendency. The author by interweaving Orthodox terms into his composition, gives it a savour of evangelical piety. Having attended upon Unitarian preaching for a period of four years, we have several times listened to Sermons, in which terms and phrases such as we all knew to be peculiar to another denomination of Christians were so frequent, that there was often an interchange of significant looks amongst a portion of the hearers during the service ; and the inquiry was made more than once, in a very serious manner, whether the preacher was changing his sentiments. From all we have heard, we have no doubt that such a manner of writing does injury, as well as good ; the first, by deceiving, (we do not say, *intentionally*) those who cannot discriminate, and infusing error into their minds with a seasoning of truth : and the second, by unconscious-

ly awakening so much solemnity and fear in the minds of hearers, that a greater number of them have been compelled to leave their place of worship and seek relief to their disturbed consciences from evangelical ministers, than has been the case under the more liberal and tasteful exhibitions of the Gospel. The author in the book before us, uses intimations of the future eternal punishment of the wicked, which we must presume grew out of his actual belief in that awful truth, and were not inserted merely to make the style pathetic and impressive. He says, for instance, as the effect of irreligion, "the soul enters eternity without having secured its salvation." p. 14. "They wish to be assured *that their souls are safe.*" p. 25. "Will be left to *perish in their sins.*" p. 30. "Speechless and hopeless," in the judgment. p. 35. "You will do your soul an *everlasting injury.*" p. 41.—It is well known that the great majority of this denomination reject the doctrine of the eternal punishment of the wicked. We must conclude from these expressions, which no considerate or serious man would use lightly, that the author differs from his brethren upon this point. If this be the case, and the reader is

made to believe that the soul who goes into eternity "without having secured its salvation" must be "hopeless" forever, how affecting is it to find that the book provides no Saviour from this wrath to come but moral culture, and, to him who is without Christ, the uncovenanted mercy of God.

We come now to state our great objection to this book, and to the system of religion upon which it is based, viz, that *it contains no Saviour*. We feel it to be *without Christ*. We were astonished to find how few allusions there were in this book to the Saviour. Nothing is said of Christ, as we have shown, at the time when the soul oppressed with guilt and danger feels its need of a friend. The sinner is directed to be a philosopher, and by retiring into himself and forming good resolutions, to fix the religious principle deeply, and attain to a spiritual mind. Socrates perhaps might have appreciated these directions, had he been in such a state of mind, and might have practised upon them; or any one else, who had habituated himself to reflective acts, and by discipline had become *esoteric* in his mental habits, provided, however, that his conviction

of his inability to work out his own righteousness were not so great as to force from him the pathetic cry, 'O that there were a days-man or Mediator betwixt us, who might lay his hand upon us both!' If we have not mistaken the prevalent character of our world, and the wants of human nature, such a religion is not adapted to be universal. When Christ, said, "To the poor the Gospel is preached," he had in mind, without doubt, the schools of philosophy, in which the benefits of wisdom were shut up from common people; and the excellency of his religion, and the great sign by which he gave the Baptist to know that it came from heaven, was, that it was suited to the apprehension of the uninstructed. We defy an angel from heaven so to preach this system to a poor man scripturally convinced of his sins, as to dry one tear, light up one ray of hope on his face, or put the new song into his mouth. It is a cold abstraction. We have ourselves proved its inability to bless the soul. If any one says that it has made him happy, we will engage to produce the same sensations which he calls happiness, by reading to him from the *Theory of Moral Sen-*

timents, or from the Excursion, or by showing him the sunset, or procuring the performance of his favorite music. The sublime contemplation of God is not religion; nor the philosophical admiration of the character of Jesus; nor the sentimental love of virtue, more properly called pride of character. The world at large are not capable of such happiness. Now if Paley's grand a priori argument for a revelation be true, namely, that we may suppose that a benevolent God would have given that which men so much needed, we may with strict propriety extend it and say, If a benevolent God gave a revelation, it must be one which is adapted to the majority of mankind. But the majority of men cannot, and (so long as the pursuit of the arts of life is necessary) will not intellectualize or be sufficiently contemplative, or so refined in their perceptions of moral beauty, as to understand and feel this religion. It needs incarnation. Man wears flesh and blood, and is not capable of being so etherealized out of those principles which belong to his compound nature, as to be affected by those truths and sentiments alone which have experienced a moral sublimation. We see this in the ap-

### 34 *Need of Appeals to Human Nature.*

pointment of the rites and ceremonies of the Jewish religion, which were in merciful condescension to that principle of our nature, which requires sensible objects to make an impression upon us. It is a very illiberal notion of Judaism, that its ritual was wholly of a gross and low nature, because it was addressed to sense. We need it. Else why did the *visible* symbol of the Almighty's presence rest at the door of the tabernacle? Why was not the moral law written in the stars and flowers, and breathed into the soul by summer winds, like this modern religion, instead of the glory of God descending upon Sinai, with the voice of a trumpet and the sound of words? It will be said, perhaps, that such manifestations were necessary in the infancy of the world, and amongst a rude people. But mankind, with all their improvements in knowledge and cultivation, have not lost their susceptibility to impression through the senses; else the voice of the living preacher, and dramatic representations, and the thousand ceremonies which men throng to behold, had given place to silent contemplation.

Is it still said that it was the object of the

Most High entirely to dispense, in his intercourse with men, with all appeals to the senses? We do not believe it. The Apostle says that these things were only "a shadow" of the coming dispensation. Of course, there must be as much substance in the antitype, as in the shadow; but according to the book before us, Christianity itself is only a shadow, a spirit, no tangible shape, all etherealized, airy, beautiful, and sentimental. But where is that principle of human nature, which craves impressions from sensible objects? This religion overlooks it, and therefore it is not a religion suited to human nature. Is it asked, what have you in your system which marks it as superior in this respect to ours? We reply, "The word BECAME FLESH." This is the grand central truth of our religion: *God in Christ*. It is not God, the Infinite Spirit merely, pervading heaven and earth, whom no man hath seen at any time: it is God in Christ, wearing human nature like a soft cloud on the brightness of his Godhead, and putting forth before his awful majesty the sympathies and feelings of a man to attract our feeble and sinful spirits. An unbeliever must certainly acknowledge this

to be a wonderful provision of Jehovah for our benefit, if it were only true, and to us *it is all true*. Christ comes to us as a friend and brother of whom we are not afraid; and still when we commit the keeping of our souls to him, we feel that the fulness of the Godhead is in him; so that God comes to us, not as a "Divine *Idea*," or a Great spirit, but as the man Christ Jesus. We have been rebuked so often for making a parade (as it is called) of our religious feelings, that we shall not attempt to describe the joy which fills the soul, when the character of God is presented for the first time to a sinner in this light. If, however, the reader is one who is dissatisfied with that faith which provides no Saviour, (except as the word is used metaphorically) we can assure him that God (literally) in Christ, affords a consolation for which he will seek elsewhere in vain. We cannot be dispossessed of our belief, when it is incorporated with our consciousness. We read Greek quotations from Justin Martyr and Plato, and books upon (against) the Logos, intended to shew us the folly of our faith—with an assurance that "we know whom we have believed." This faith meets the wants of our

whole nature by addressing us, not as pure, intellectual, spiritual substances, but as *men*, with feelings and passions which cannot be satisfied, as God has constituted them, without an incarnation of religion, something brought near to the senses, which we can, as it were, “see with our eyes, and look upon, and our hands handle.\*” The other system goes back to Aristotle, and makes God like the vast, secret power, which gives motion to a machine ; and judging from many of their most accomplished writers, they love Him, not personally, but through his works, and are obliged “to look through nature up to nature’s God ;”—whereas by worshipping and loving “God in Christ,” we become acquainted with God first of all, and look through Him to His works. When we think of heaven, there is Christ wearing our glorified nature in union with the divine : and how is it possible for man to be brought nearer to God? Let those who talk so emptily of the dignity of human nature come and learn this great truth, if they would see *how truly great man is*. Then we remember that this exalted Saviour is not only our example, teacher ; but, “he

\* I John i. 1.

died for us," and "delivered us from the wrath to come." His blood, His stripes, His cross, His dying agonies mean something with us; they go to our hearts; they fill our souls with joy which is unspeakable and full of glory. When we speak of his *sufferings*, we are not obliged to *slip the word in* merely because the Bible uses it, and pass over it hastily; we dwell upon those sufferings, and rest all our hopes there, and are not ashamed of the cross. Observe the following allusion to Christ in the book before us.

"And it is not to the example alone of the Saviour that you are to have reference in your prayers. You are also to regard him as the Mediator through whom they are to be offered. It belongs to the system of our religion, that the thought of its Founder should be associated in the minds of its disciples with all that they are and do; with their sense of obligation, and their sentiments of piety."

It chills the soul, to think that when we come to God in prayer, we are directed to ask for blessings because Christ was the Founder of our religion. This is like feeding on dew. It is indeed a beautiful thought to carry with us in prayer, that Christ was the great Founder

of our religion,—but if we are not wholly ignorant of human nature, no one is capable of deriving pleasure from it, but those who can also understand and relish Alison on Taste, or Burke on the Sublime and Beautiful; and how large a proportion does such a class bear to the community? This religion is too scholastic and subtile to reclaim a lost world to God. Could you make a poor heathen in his ignorance love God by such means? No wonder that the plan for missionary enterprise among the promoters of this system, has been to make civilization and the arts and sciences the pioneers of their religion; but then it would take years of “moral culture” to make a Hottentot sufficiently sentimental to understand it. See the power of the opposite faith. A heathen in India had driven nails into his sandals, and had walked several miles on the sharp points to appease his conscience. Faint with the loss of blood and exhausted with pain, he drew near to a little group who were listening to one of our missionaries beneath a tree. He was preaching from these words—‘And the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.’ The heathen leaned upon his staff, in fixed atten-

## 40 *Power of Evangelical Preaching.*

tion, till at length he cried out, ‘This is just what I want—just what I want ;’ and threw away his bloody sandals in the presence of the natives, and embraced Christianity. Oh what power is there in atoning blood to affect the soul ! and what sensations are those, when instead of thinking of Christ as a “public exemplar,” and “Teacher,” we can say, “He *loved* ME, and *gave himself* for ME.”

## CHAPTER III.

Prayer.—Unitarian directions.—The Mediator.—Unitarianism excludes the Mediator.—How the Father is greater than Christ.—The Unitarian at the Sacrament.—Reason for Promiscuous Communion.—Conclusion and Review.—Danger of Reliance on Good Men.—Excellencies of Mr. Ware's Treatise.

The next thing which we observe in this book, is the very peculiar manner in which the subject of prayer is treated. There are directions given such as we had never before seen. The very nature of prayer requires that it be spontaneous. But the sentences which follow made us feel that the religion which this book teaches does not inspire the soul with such emotions as David expresses when he says, 'As the hart *panteth* for the water brooks, so pants my soul after thee, O God.'

"First of all, when the hour has arrived, seek to excite in your mind a sense of the divine presence, and of the greatness of the act in which you are engaging. Summon up the whole energy of your mind. Put all your powers upon the stretch." "In this way make an effort after a devout temper."

We need nothing more to convince us of the insufficiency of this system, as it regards the life of piety in the soul. These rules will be in vain so long as the soul is destitute of the love of God; and where the love of God exists, they will be useless. We conceive it to be easy for a minister of this religion, and for a few of the more serious amongst its followers, who spend their lives in sober contemplation, to practice secret prayer; but the very fact that such prescriptions as those above quoted are given, shows, we should fear, that, as a general thing, those who embrace this religion, find prayer a toilsome exercise. With us, the first evidence of piety is the almost involuntary pouring forth of the soul before God. This was adduced by the Saviour himself as the proof of Paul's conversion—"Behold he prayeth." Did Ananias need to give the young convert rules for obtaining a devout spirit, or direct him to "make an effort after a devout temper?" We judge no man upon the subject of secret prayer; we dare not look into that place of which Christ has commanded that the door be shut; we reason merely from the directions which it was deemed necessary to give

in such a book as this, intended as an assistant in forming the religious character. We should never give such rules to young Christians in our congregations. If we perceived that they were in a state that called for them, we should preach to them from a solemn question which was asked to try the spirit of a suspected self deceiver, 'Will he always call upon God?' We teach that there is no such test of real religion as the inquiry, 'Do you love secret prayer? Is it easy or constrained?' If the latter, all 'efforts after a devout temper' when the hour has arrived, we should fear would be without effect.

This system of religion presents another great difficulty. The Bible makes a Mediator necessary in order to acceptable prayer. In the book before us, as already quoted, Christ is spoken of once as Mediator, as an Advocate, and as Intercessor. It always seems to us as if the writers upon this system were troubled, when obliged to speak of Christ in these offices. We cannot see why they might not entirely dispense with these names. For if God requires no atonement for the forgiveness of sin, and no atoning Saviour on whose account we

may be accepted and pardoned, what need is there of an Advocate to "appear in the presence of God for us?" And if Christ has done nothing which God looks upon as the ground of a sinner's salvation, with what propriety can he be called an Intercessor? Does the man Christ Jesus plead, to make the Father propitious? This is too much like old, misrepresented Calvinism. Our system makes these terms of great meaning. Christ having atoned for our sins, may with great propriety and beauty be called our Advocate; for when a penitent pleads for mercy, the remembrance of what Christ has done constitutes the reason why that sinner should be forgiven. Thus Christ is our Advocate; just as if, in the legal sense of the word, he produced such considerations from the law of God, and from the fact that he had become the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth, that God can justify and yet be just. And thus, in like manner, when a sinner acknowledges his guilt, and strict justice requires his punishment, Christ, having done that which enables the Lawgiver to suspend the operation of the law, is to the soul what an *interceding friend*

would be in the time of peril. But how unmeaning the terms, if no atonement is admitted! What is the advocacy of Christ "the Teacher," Christ "the Exemplar?" Suppose that a king should send an officer of state to proclaim his clemency to a number of rebels, and having set before them the benefits of subordination and good government, they should repent: does this officer become their advocate and intercessor by what he has done? Or, in other words, does the fact that he has been on an embassy constitute the great reason why they should be forgiven? Surely not. But, if he had paid a ransom for these men from his own resources, and had a place at court to see that their pardon, whenever they applied, was signed and sealed, he might well be called their advocate and intercessor. But it will be said in reply, Christ is our Mediator, because he was the *internuntius* between God and man. True, when he was on earth; but now that his work on earth has ceased, of course, according to this system, *his Mediatorship has expired!* But our views of the Mediatorship of Christ are more in consonance with those of the Bible, which represents that "he ever liv-

*eth*" for this purpose, and that he will not cease to administer between God and man, till the end:—when he will give up the mediatorial kingdom, and no such distinction will any more be known between God as Lawgiver and Christ as Mediator, but the purposes of redemption being accomplished, God, the undistinguished Deity, will fill every relation to the universe, and be "All in All." We observe here, that our views of the mediatorship render it easy to explain every passage which speaks of the inferiority of Christ to God. So that when he says, "The Son can do nothing of himself but what he seeth the Father do;" and, "I can do nothing without the Father," we are warranted by the context to understand him as saying, that their will and purposes are inseparable, and not that he is an inferior being. 'You say,' addressing the Jews, 'that I speak these things in my own name, and dishonor God; I hereby profess my subjection to God in the work in which I am engaged, and own him as my superior in the kingdom of grace.' Would a mere man have dared to say, 'My Father is greater than I?' There is not a passage in the Bible respecting Christ which

we cannot easily explain, retaining our present views of him ; every thing is obvious and natural on the supposition of his two natures ; but rejecting his deity, we are troubled on every side with passages which speak of a pre-existent nature, divine attributes, and the atoning efficacy of his blood. Amongst conflicting systems of philosophy, men choose that which explains the greatest number of existing phenomena. As philosophers, then, we embrace the Evangelical System.

We have often asked, with what feelings our friends of this religious persuasion celebrate the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper ? With their views of Christ, it would be to us a mere matter of sentiment, provided we could keep out of mind the awful significancy of the symbols. We should prefer that the minister would dispense with these symbols, and read those parts of the Saviour's history which present the moral beauty of his character. Or, it would be interesting, if he would bring before us his pure precepts, and let us spend the time of Communion in meditating upon some one of them, to make it the rule of our life till the next Sacramental season. All this we might

and should be willing to do "in remembrance" of Him, if we had their views of Christ. But oh! that blood! that blood! The awful consciousness of a mysterious meaning in it which we did not believe, but which ever and anon would wake up in the soul, would fill us with agony. And that broken body! Oh! there is something here, we should say, more than precept and example. 'This blood,' a voice would whisper, 'was shed for many, for the remission of sins.' This ordinance, so impressive and sublime from its very simplicity, must be something more than to remind us of a Martyr to the cause of truth. And then passages of corroborating import would come into the mind; how that "he *died for us*, that we might not perish, but have everlasting life;" that "he delivered us from the wrath to come;" that in him "we have redemption *through his blood*;" and there would be a constant effort during the whole service to persuade conscience that these passages were all 'figurative.' Thus the communion season would always be anticipated with feelings of no pleasant nature, till we had seared ourselves against the love of Christ.—Gladly would we be excused from

bringing forward a passage in the book before us relating to this subject. We wonder that it could have been written ; but we should suppose that it would remove every remaining doubt in the mind of a serious inquirer respecting the ability of this system, to satisfy the soul. The writer is speaking of the opportunity which the Communion season affords for contemplative worship.

“Many persons, I am aware, find it difficult so to control their minds as to render these silent moments profitable. But to such persons the very difficulty becomes a useful discipline, and the occasion should be valued for the sake of it. To aid them in the use of it, and to prevent its running to waste in miserable listlessness and idle roving of the mind, it might be well that they should have with them some suitable little book of meditations and reflections, which they may quietly consult in their seats, as guides to thought and devotion.”

What a secret is here betrayed respecting the feelings of communicants under this system ! But is it strange, when we consider that the Sacrament with them must of necessity be a disproportionate and overacted representation of the “Teacher ?”

It has been a great object with some minis-

ters of this persuasion to open the doors of the church, and invite the whole congregation to the communion. We do not wonder at this. We should do the same, if we were ministers of that religion. The sacred and awful rite would oppress us with a sense of something mysterious and supernatural. As our views of Christ and love to his atoning character would not be proportioned to the impressive greatness of the scene, it would be a relief to have it made only a common service, by which all its mystery would be removed, and we released from the responsibility of doing that by ourselves, which would be easier to bear when shared by a multitude. Thus the ancient chieftain who entered the recesses of a temple with a small band, was overawed by the silence and imposing solemnity of the scene, and was not at ease till he had brought in his troops, and thus relieved himself from his dread of the place, by the sight of a multitude and the voice of festival.\*

Such is the tendency of this system—such its want of adaptation to the nature of man,

\* This subject is considered more at length, at the close of the Book.

its inability to redeem a fallen world, to comfort and bless the soul. Its "scanty creed," leaves unexplained a great portion of that word of God which, it is boasted, is their only creed. It dishonors Him who is *worthy* "to receive power and riches, and wisdom and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing." It is deficient in breathing a spirit of prayer into the soul; and the great Memorial of Redeeming Love is brought before the mind with such feeble influence, that extraneous means are sometimes necessary to prevent "the miserable listlessness" of a communicant's feelings! Reader, is this your faith? Are you sure that the 'Corner Stone' is in the foundation of your building for Eternity? And are you ready for the rains to descend, for the floods to come, and beat upon your house? We know how common it is to evade these questions when put by a friend, and to quiet conscience and the rising doubt, by pointing to the excellent characters of a few who preach this system, saying, 'Do you believe that *such an one* is not a Christian?—and *that man*—look at his life! Go with us and hear his solemn sermons, and melting prayers! I am willing to risk my

soul wherever he considers it safe to rest his hopes? Therefore, you are in dreadful danger. Your minister is your idol—we fear, your life-boat, which you cling to instead of Christ. You are going to heaven, because he who preaches the faith which you embrace is such an affectionate, serious, engaging minister! But it is written, “Every one of us shall give account of *himself* to God.” Besides, your minister may not be a fair specimen of the tendency of the system which he preaches. “There are instances, a physician has just told me, of persons who had been crowded together in prisons so ill ventilated as to breed an infectious fever, yet having themselves escaped it, from the gradual adaptation of their constitutions to the noxious atmosphere which they had generated. This avoids the inference so often drawn as to the real harmlessness of apparently mischievous doctrines from the innocent lives of the men with whom they originated. To form a certain judgment concerning the tendency of any doctrine, one should rather look at the fruit it bears in the disciple, than in the teacher. For he only made it; they are made by it.”

The Book is written with unaffected simplicity and ease; exhibits the most amiable feelings; contains many precepts of wisdom which we could wish were in the heart of every Christian; and in many respects affords a good model for a book of a similar nature, founded on the essential truths and doctrines of the Gospel. The fact that it has gone through five editions\* shows the great demand for practical instruction occasioned by an all pervading interest on the subject of Religion; and he who with the good taste and talent of this book shall combine the more interesting and thrilling views of Evangelical Religion, for the inquirers of this age, will from heaven read his name with that of Bunyan, and Baxter, and Doddridge; and be surrounded there with multitudes who will call him blessed.

\* Since writing the above we have seen an advertisement of the 7th Edition.

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DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY.

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## CHAPTER IV.

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### DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY.

Introductory Remarks.—Mystery.—Fundamental Objection.—Use of Unessential Terms.—Questions to a Trinitarian. The truth may be divine—but the name human.—Proof by illustration.—Mode of Teaching in the Bible.—Too much evidence required.—Christ had a human body and soul.—Connection with the Deity.—Necessary dependence on God.—Prayers of Christ.—Limited knowledge.—Fear of making Christ a deceiver.—Christ before Abraham.—Questions to a Unitarian.—The two natures in Christ.—Mystery admitted to be no objection.

It was our intention at first to enlarge the former part of these 'Remarks' by inserting several pages upon the subject of the Trinity. But as this is the subject which interests the mind of almost every one at the time that he is

an inquirer for the truth, it was thought best to arrange what might be said upon this topic by itself. In order that the objections to the doctrine may be exhibited as fairly as possible, we have selected No 58. of the 1st Series of Unitarian Tracts, called an '*Outline of the Testimony of Scripture against the Trinity*', by Rev. Henry Ware, Jr., as presenting these objections with a good degree of conciseness and plausibility.

This Tract is the substance of an Address delivered before the Unitarian Association of York County, Maine. On many accounts it is one of the best efforts to disprove "the doctrine of the Trinity" which we have lately seen. The Author makes no appeal to popular prejudice, builds no argument on the authority of great names; vaunteth not himself and is not puffed up because the gifted mind of a Milton or a Newton or a Locke failed to discover the doctrine, but goes directly like a good Protestant to the only and sufficient rule of faith and practice. Here we are glad to meet him. Had we any of those feelings which the mere mention of this controversy, like the voice of a war-trumpet usually inspires, we

should in the present instance certainly obey the command, Put up thy sword into the sheath. For though the 'Calm Inquiry' was in many respects a misnomer, there is something in that name extremely befitting this subject. We are glad that in this Tract which we now undertake to answer there is nothing to move unpleasant feelings on either side. It is true the author frequently relies upon an emphatic No! to settle a point, and sometimes feels satisfied that a thing is 'Impossible—certainly impossible:—'—but this arises from a commendable earnestness in his subject, and we hope to be able to show that some things are not quite so impossible as he supposes.

The Author begins by saying that his reason for not believing the doctrine of the Trinity is

“Not because the doctrine is a *mystery*—that is, if you mean by mystery something which we cannot fully understand or explain. This circumstance may create a difficulty in many minds; but notwithstanding this, if we found it testified to in Scripture, as an unquestionable and essential doctrine, we should not hesitate to believe it, any more than we hesitate to believe that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, or that God foreknows all things, and that yet man is a

free agent. We only ask for PROOF that it is taught in the Bible. We have looked for it, and do not find it. Therefore we cannot believe it."

We are very glad that the opposers of this doctrine are willing to drop the argument of mystery and mysticism, so unsatisfactory to men of sense, and all sufficient for the use of passionate and prejudiced minds. The foregoing paragraph is an uncommon instance of fairness, which appearing as it does on the first page of the Tract secures to the author the reader's best feelings.

The grand proposition with which the writer begins his Treatise is this; '*We do not find in Scripture that God is revealed to be three.*' This we consider a most unfortunate proposition; for every enlightened Trinitarian will, in a certain sense, immediately subscribe to its truth. For we are willing to adopt the precise words of the Tract and say,

"The words Trinity—triune—Jehovah-Jesus—God-man—are not in the Scriptures. We nowhere find the expression *God the Son*, but always the *Son of God*; nowhere *God the Holy Spirit*, but the *Spirit of God*, or the *Holy Spirit*.

The expressions first person, second person, third person, three persons, are not found."

The following sentences, however, contain, we think, a false assumption and then an inconclusive inference. The italics are ours.

"Now if the very words, *which are necessary to express the doctrine*, are not in the Scriptures, how can we suppose the doctrine itself to be there? If the sacred writers meant to teach this doctrine, *how is it possible they should not sometimes have used the words which are now used in regard to it?*"

The word Trinity was invented by Theologians for the sake of convenience. It prevents circumlocution. The fact that it is not a Scripture word proves as much as the fact that the terms, 'Sacrament,' 'Perseverance of the Saints,' 'Omniscience,' 'Unity of God,' are not in the Bible. The word Trinity is no more necessary to *the doctrine*, than the term "Perseverance of the saints" is to the truth which it symbolizes. Should any man deny the "Perseverance of the Saints," and say, "We nowhere find the expression:" it would be deemed a sufficient answer that the doctrine is unequivocally revealed, though this precise form

of expressing it is not used. We inquire then whether it is necessary to find that a conventional term is used in Scripture before we admit the doctrine which it conveys?

We have said, in the words of the Tract, we do not find that God is revealed to be Three. We do indeed find that THREE are revealed to be GOD: that the SON has the same divine attributes with the FATHER, that the Holy Spirit is represented with personality and as exercising divine offices; but that there are three persons in the Godhead we admit is not said from the beginning to the end of the Bible. Satisfying ourselves that Christ is Supreme God, and the Holy Spirit equal, and in the same manner, divine, we leave the whole matter where the Bible leaves it, and would prefer, if it were possible, never to use or hear the words persons, subsistencies, or distinctions. These are not essential to the admission of the fact of the equal Deity of Father, Son, and Spirit. When it is said therefore that these terms are not found in the Bible, the proof of the Deity of Christ and of the Holy Spirit is not invalidated.

But it will be said, if you believe in the equal deity of Father, Son, and Spirit, you believe in three Gods. We reply, we believe in the divine unity as much as our friends who have improperly assumed the name of Unitarian. We believe that there is one God, and that there is none other but he. It will then be asked, how can the Father Son and Spirit each be divine, and yet there be but one God? The attempts of Trinitarians to answer this question, has given rise to the use of the words Trinity, persons, hypostasis, essence, distinctions, which, if they had confined themselves to the mode of teaching in the Bible, would never have been used. We should no more think of answering such a question than a missionary would undertake to answer the following question proposed by a native, How can your God be in all places at one and the same time. The fact is all that we are concerned to know.

It would have been much more satisfactory, therefore, if the author, instead of directing his arguments against the dogmatic form of the doctrine assumed merely for concise statement

in controversies and creeds, had said, I do not find that Christ or the Holy Spirit are revealed in the Bible to be divine. No one we believe will say that we are quibbling about the word Trinity; it is not so; we are obliged to notice the subject in this way because superficial readers lay great stress on the fact that the word is not found in the Bible. We never thought that it was in the Bible. We knew the fact when we formed our belief; it is not essential therefore to an admission of the deity of Christ and of the Holy Spirit. We prefer to treat the subject after the manner of the sacred penman who as we think give abundant proof of the deity of the Son and Spirit, and then leave us to our own inferences respecting the mode of the divine existence.—So that the first argument is wholly irrelevant to the deity of Christ and of the Holy Spirit.

But it will be said, 'If you believe that the Son and Spirit are divine, you *must believe* that God is three in one, whether you choose the word Trinity or not. But that God is Three in one, we do not find revealed?' Suppose that we should say, 'You assert that God is every where present at one and the same

time. If so, you must believe that God is an indivisible essence; but that God is an indivisible essence we find nowhere revealed in the Bible.' The proper reply would be, That God is an indivisible essence is only a necessary deduction from our belief in his Omnipresence; the latter is the main truth; having established this you may infer at your pleasure that there is an indivisible essence, hypos-tasis, or by whatever name you please to express his nature. Suppose however that we should then publish a book against the Omnipresence of God and make in the first argument, 'We nowhere find it revealed in the Bible that God' *is an indivisible essence!*

The second argument of the Tract, is, that while the doctrine of the Trinity is nowhere stated in express terms, that of the sole divinity of the father is taught in language the most explicit and direct. The writer proceeds:

"There are only three texts which speak of the Father, Son, and Spirit in formal connexion, and neither of these declares them to be three equal persons in the Divinity. Now is it possible this should be the case if the doctrine were true? Is it possible that the Apostles should

never name them together but three times, and then not speak of their being one God!"

We consider it a sufficient answer to this inquiry to say that the very fact of their being named together, in such passages as are here referred to, affords a very high degree of probability that they are equally divine. We cannot account for it that the man Christ Jesus, and 'Divine Influence' should be associated with the name of Jehovah in the form of Baptism and in the Apostolic benediction, upon any other supposition.

"But does it (the form of Baptism) say that they are three persons? No, it does not say that they are persons at all. Does it assert that they constitute one God? No."—all which we consider a better specimen of rhetorical than of logical reasoning. We must regard the manner in which the writers of the Bible communicate the most important truths. Do they ever philosophize? Do they in any one instance explain the mode? Do they ever attempt to exhibit a truth in its metaphysical or supernatural relations? If Paul had explained the mystery of the resurrection, or had employed the 9th of Romans to show

the consistency of election and free agency, there would have been more reason than at present for the inquiries above quoted. If therefore we can show that Christ is divine and that the Holy Spirit is divine, there will be no reason, considering what has just been said, to complain that the Apostles did not teach systematic Theology. They knew that the knowledge of the *mode* was not essential to salvation. But if it be asked why did they not simply say in a brief clause—these Three are one God, we reply, this is not the manner in which the knowledge of the divine existence is communicated. The Jews said to Christ, How long dost thou make us to doubt? If thou be the Christ tell us plainly. Here the same wish was expressed respecting his Messiahship which men now entertain respecting his Godhead. But Christ referred the Jews to his works that they might make their own deductions respecting his Messiahship, and we are to search the Scriptures and draw the inference in regard to the existence of the Godhead for ourselves.

In presenting our views of the nature of Christ, we observe

## I. THAT CHRIST HAD A HUMAN BODY AND A HUMAN SOUL.

It is a remarkable fact that many of the arguments in this Tract against the deity of Christ are founded upon passages which assert that he was man! The same is true of another Tract called, 'One hundred arguments against the Deity of Christ,' of which a surprising number are used to show that he was really a man. Now who but the Docetæ ever doubted that Christ was really a man. Do our friends think that we are disbelievers in the human nature of Jesus? We must be forgiven if we are sometimes conscious of a rising feeling of impatience as we read books of professed arguments against the Deity of Christ and find so many of them constructed to prove this essential point in our system.—The first part of our proposition, that Christ had a human body, is as certain as any revealed or traditionary truth. It is said of him in his early years that he grew in stature; he walked, spake, slept, like men. When he rose from the dead he said to his disciples, Handle me and see, for a spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see me have. He then called for

food and they gave him a piece of broiled fish and an honey comb, and he did eat before them—for what purpose?—to convince them that he was not a spirit but the same man Christ Jesus as before his death. The Apostle John, it is supposed, wrote his first Epistle against the Menandrians who denied the reality of the flesh of Christ, and said that it existed only in appearance. He says, Our eyes have seen, our hands have handled—the Word of life.—That Christ had a human soul is beyond all reasonable doubt. Whatever else may have been conjoined with it, he had a proper human soul. For it is said that he increased in wisdom, like other children, as he grew in years; which could not have been said on any other supposition than that his mind was in every respect human. The idea that an angelic spirit or the pre-existent Logos occupied the place of a human soul in his person is therefore out of question. This is confirmed by the fact that during his agony in the Garden an angel descended to strengthen him. The co-existence of Deity in his person would not necessarily affect the properties of his human mind, any more than immediate

inspiration from the Almighty confused the properties of a Prophet's mind. Such a union could not impart eternity, omnipotence, omniscience or self-dependence, without destroying his human identity. With our friends of the opposite persuasion we must believe, and that too very strenuously that he was like one of us, except that he was without sin. For how could we look to him as an example if he were not truly a man? How could it be said that he was tempted in all points as we are, or how would this encourage us if any union of Deity in his person shielded him from the ills to which we are subjected, or rendered him less accessible by temptation. We repeat it 'We love the *Man* Christ Jesus.' We have no Mediator suited to our necessities, unless Jesus be in these respects our brother. Accordingly we love to contemplate him while on earth, as seeking out, like us, and enjoying private friendships, for it is said that Jesus loved Mary and Martha and their brother Lazarus. So that our belief of the union of Deity in his person does not prevent us from regarding him still as man. It follows

II. That *as man he must have felt dependence upon his Father.*

Unless it can be shown that it would be impossible for the Deity to exist in connexion with a human mind without destroying its identity, it must follow that the human mind of Christ must have retained its own consciousness notwithstanding its union with the Godhead. Here is the grand mistake of Unitarianism. It is assumed that for Deity to co-exist with the soul of Jesus, must be to destroy the identity of the human soul. Until this is *proved*, no objection is of any force against the union of two natures in the person of Christ. We infer therefore, that the Saviour must have been conscious of his dependence upon God. How could this dependence be expressed but by prayer? It is adduced as a proof against the Deity of Christ that he prayed to God.

“Now that he was *at prayer* proves that he could not be God—for God never prays.” p. 7.

We should think it strange indeed, believing as we do that Christ was a man like us, to find that he did *not* pray. In order to make this argument of any value, it must first be

proved that the Deity could not co-exist with the mind of the Saviour without imparting omnipotence and self-dependence. When this is done we will admit that there is one objection at least to the union of two natures in the person of Christ. It follows

III. THAT LIMITED KNOWLEDGE MUST HAVE BEEN INCIDENT TO THE HUMAN NATURE OF JESUS.

This must be acknowledged unless the union of the human and divine natures could not have existed without the communication of omniscience. Unless this can be shown we are able to explain satisfactorily the celebrated passage in which Christ says that he did not know the day or hour of the destruction of Jerusalem. We will place this point before the reader in as strong light as possible by showing the stress which is laid upon it by Unitarians, to disprove the Deity of Christ.

“This assumption is, that Jesus Christ possessed two perfect natures, the human and the divine; and that he sometimes speaks and acts as man, and sometimes as God.”

“The assertion is, that our Lord speaks and acts sometimes as God and sometimes as man. Accordingly when we argue thus—‘he declares

that he does not know the day or the hour—he says he can do nothing of himself—he prays to God;’ it is then replied, ‘He says these things *as man*; he does not *as man*, possess supreme power, or know the future; and *as man* he prays; but still *as God* he is omnipotent, and omniscient, and asks no blessing from on high.’ Now this assertion may support the doctrine of the Trinity, and may evade certain difficulties which Scripture throws in its way; but does it not create a more serious difficulty than it removes? Let any man candidly examine the subject, and say whether it do not. For—I speak it reverently, and my hand trembles as I write—does it not attribute to our Lord a very strange way of speaking, and something of a deceptive manner; to say that he *does not know* when he really does, and that he *cannot do* what he has infinite power to do? For, if he were God, it would not be *true* that he did not know the future; it would not be *true* that he did not his own will, and did not work miracles of himself. And therefore I beg to ask—in the name of all that is reverent and good—whether we can find it in our hearts to advocate a doctrine, which can be supported only on a supposition which exposes the blessed Jesus to the charge of untruth and deception.”

We add to this a passage, much celebrated by Unitarian writers, found in Emlyn’s Tracts,

“To suppose that Christ knows the day of Judgment with his divine nature while he is ignorant of it in his human nature, is charging

him with an equivocation similar to that of a person who, conversing with another with one eye shut and the other open, and being asked whether he knew him should answer that he saw him not; meaning, with the eye that was shut; though he still saw him with the eye that was open. A miserable evasion, which would not save him from the reproach of being a liar and a deceiver." p. 18.

All this is capable of a very easy refutation; and not only so, but will leave a Unitarian in a sad dilemma. In the eighth of John, Christ says to the Jews, Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day, and he saw it and was glad. Then said the Jews unto him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham? Jesus answered and said unto them, Verily, verily I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I AM. The Unitarian interpretation of this verse, is, "Before Abraham was, I existed as Messiah *in the divine decrees.*" This was no more true of the Messiah than of any other person. The objection of the Jews was, that he was not yet fifty years old; but to reply that though this was true, nevertheless he was *predestined* before Abraham was brought into existence, would have been nothing to the pur-

pose. The present tense is frequently used by the Evangelist for the imperfect; the literal translation as admitted by all must be, "Before Abraham was, I was." What is the fair inference from such an expression? Could it mean any thing but pre-existence, without charging Christ with equivocation, and an intention to deceive. Take then the assertion of Christ that he existed before Abraham, and we have a case similar to that which has occasioned the strong language of the two writers just quoted. For, was not the Saviour "born in Judea in the days of Herod the King?" Then if he existed before Abraham must it not have been in a superior and pre-existent nature? But how could it be proper for Christ to assert any thing of one nature which was not true of the other? Was he for this "a liar and deceiver." Is the blessed Jesus, then, guilty of "untruth and deception?" How will a Unitarian solve the difficulty; and is it not as great as the passage presents in which he declares that he did not know the day or hour of a coming event?

Since the human and divine nature must have existed together, if at all, with-

out a confusion of properties, the human mind of Christ without doubt was subject to the same changes of feeling which are felt by the Christian. Sometimes the latter is sensible of the presence of God filling him with joy which is unspeakable and full of glory. At other times even though unconscious of any special alienation of his heart from God, as the cause, he is in darkness. This arises in a great measure from the inability of the human mind to sustain sensations of high pleasure for a long time without exhaustion and consequent depression. When we read that the Saviour spent whole nights in prayer, that he went alone to pray, we can have no doubt that he had the same feelings with Christians for whom "the spirit maketh intercession with groanings which cannot be uttered." This is confirmed when we read that he was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; for if this be true, it is certain that he could not always have felt the power of a conscious union with the Deity. To say that he did, would be to deny that as man he was not tempted in all points as we are. But that he frequently had this consciousness in all its strength, and in such a manner as to speak of

himself as though Deity and humanity were intermingled so as to make, as it were, one consciousness, cannot be doubted unless we set aside every good principle of interpretation. An instance of this is found in his own description of the last judgment. The 'man of sorrows' could never have represented himself as the judge of millions of spirits, an office requiring omniscience and infinite wisdom, except in the strong consciousness that he was divine. Another instance is found in his declaration that 'where two or three are gathered together in his name he is in the midst of them,' and, 'lo! I am in the midst of you always, even unto the end of the world.' The instances are very frequent in which the Apostles speak of him in a manner which can be applicable only to his superior nature. "By whom also he made the worlds." This could not be true of the Nazarene! "By him were all things created that are in heaven and in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities or powers," (by which expressions we evidently are led to different ranks of the heavenly hierarchy.) "All things were created by him and for

him ; and he is *before* all things and by him all things consist. We appeal now to every candid reader, In what way will you dispose of this testimony ? Shall it be set aside ?— or will you acknowledge that though it involves a great mystery there is no way of being consistent and reasonable without admitting the conclusion which lies upon the very face of the testimony. In regard to the mysteriousness of the union of two natures in one person, and of the fact that many things are said of the whole person which can be true only of a part, it is said on the first page of the Tract,

“ This circumstance (mystery) may create a difficulty in many minds ; but notwithstanding this, if we found it testified to in Scripture, as an unquestionable and essential doctrine, we should not hesitate to believe it, any more than we hesitate to believe that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, or that God foreknows all things, and that yet man is a free agent.”

Now in regard to the celebrated passage in which Christ says that he did “ not know the day or the hour,” what reasonable objection is there to saying that as man he did not know it, when there are such proofs of his having

said many things which could not be true of him as man, but only on the supposition of his having a superior nature? The reason why this fact was withheld from the Mediator perhaps it would be difficult to ascertain. There is another passage of a like nature. Mark xi. 12. "And on the morrow, when they were come from Bethany, he was hungry, and seeing a fig-tree afar off having leaves, he came, if haply he might find any thing thereon; and when he came to it, he found nothing but leaves." It may well be asked, "If he were divine, how was it that he did not know that the tree was barren?—for the passage evidently conveys the idea of disappointment at finding a barren instead of a fruitful tree. We might as well ask, IF HE WERE DIVINE HOW COULD HE BE HUNGRY?—for the union of the Deity would not necessarily impart omniscience any more than remove hunger and thirst. Now just admit with us, that Christ was entirely a man, and still that Deity was united in his person and every difficulty is solved. It is more difficult for an unbeliever in the Deity of Christ to explain those passages which intimate a superior nature, than for us to explain

those passages which imply a limitation of knowledge. More than this; could Christ according to the known laws of identity and consciousness, be God and man united without saying and doing many things having respect only to one part of his complex person?\*

It is said that there are only two texts which speak of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, in formal connexion. To this we reply, since it was not the object of the Bible to present the truths which it reveals concerning the Godhead in a systematized form, we should have been satisfied if the Father, Son, and Spirit had been mentioned together but once in all the Scriptures. Once, we should have expected it, viz. in the form of Baptism. As Baptism is initiatory of the subject into the dispensation of Him whose name it bears, we should expect, believing as we do in the equal Deity of Father, Son, and Spirit, that when a person is brought by Baptism under the dispensation of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,

\* "It is absurd and very irreligious presumption to say, this cannot be. If a worm were so far capable of thought as to determine this or that concerning *our* nature; and that such a thing were impossible to belong to it, which we find to be in it;—we should trample upon it. More admirable divine patience spares us." *Howe's 'Possibility of a Trinity in the Godhead.'*

their names would be conjoined. Accordingly we find that this is the case. Then if we find proof of the Deity of the Son—and Spirit,—we are satisfied though their names may not in another instance be joined in formal connexion.\* But it is a mistake to say that there are only two passages in which they are named together. The following passages are instances. “For through Him (CHRIST) we have an access by one SPIRIT, unto the FATHER?” (Eph. ii. 18.) Another instance is in the account of the Saviour’s baptism. (Matt. iii. 16, 17.) Another, in the promise that the FATHER would send the HOLY GHOST in CHRIST’S name. (John xiv. 16, 17.) Again it is said that “GOD anointed JESUS of Nazareth with the HOLY GHOST.” (Acts x. 38.) The SPIRIT of HIM that raised up JESUS.” (Rom. viii. 11.) “Now I beseech you, brethren, for the LORD JESUS

\* We may here add, what an unmeaning form is that of Baptism unless the Son and Spirit, as well as the Father, be divine! If the Son be merely a human teacher, and the Holy Spirit “divine influence,” the sacred form becomes a mere metaphorical expression. It is understood by Unitarians as follows: “I baptize thee into the name of the Father, and of the religion which his Son came to establish, and of divine influence, Amen!” This principle of interpretation carried through the Bible, would make its truths spiritless by turning personality in every case into metaphor.

CHRIST'S sake, and for the love of the SPIRIT that ye strive together with me in your prayers to GOD for me." (Rom. xv. 30.) "In whom (CHRIST) ye also are builded together for an habitation of GOD through the SPIRIT." (Eph. ii. 22.) "Who (CHRIST) through the ETERNAL SPIRIT offered himself to GOD." (Heb. ix. 14.) "Elect according to the foreknowledge of GOD the FATHER, through sanctification of the SPIRIT unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of JESUS CHRIST." (1 Peter i. 2.) The reader will doubtless recall many similar passages. We wonder at the confident assertion of the Tract.

## CHAPTER V.

Humiliation of the Word as Mediator necessary.—Reason of his Professed Inferiority to the Father.—One God, and one Lord.—Charge of Blasphemy a Proof of Deity.—The Jews accused him of making Himself God.—The Messiahship implies Divinity.—Christ worshipped in Heaven.—Whether the Deity suffered.—Questions answered.—Stephen worshipped Christ.—Paul and the early Christians worshipped Christ.—Feelings of a worshipper of Christ.

The writer proceeds to say that there are several texts which assert in the most direct and absolute manner that the Father alone is God.

1 John xvii. 3. "That they may know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent."

It might be enough that we should oppose to the conclusion drawn from this passage, another of a similar nature. It is said of the Father, "Who is the blessed and *only* Potentate, King of Kings and Lord of Lords." But

in Revelation it is said of Christ, "He hath upon his vesture and upon his thigh a name written, King of Kings, and Lord of Lords."

But again. It is an essential part of our belief concerning Christ that whilst on earth, though united with the Deity, he was in a state of humiliation—that he assumed an inferior rank for the purposes of the Mediatorship. It will be asked, Can humiliation be predicated of the immutable divine nature? We reply, there is humiliation in every act of divine condescension as well as in the incarnation. The latter is no more inconsistent with the immutability of the Deity than the former. Our belief upon this point is expressed in Phil. ii. 6. "Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, (or according to Grotius and others, "did not make it a matter of triumph, or display; or ostentatiously retain it,") but made himself of no reputation and took upon him the form of a servant." His Deity was veiled, and whilst on earth engaged in the work of redemption, he assumed [the office of servant, and constantly acknowledged his accountability to the Father. Supposing it to be true

that he was God and man, appearing on earth for the purposes of a Mediator, was not his expression of inferiority and of subjection to the father precisely what we should expect? Suppose that he had always proclaimed himself the Supreme God; how could he have attracted sinners to himself as their Mediator? It was indeed necessary that his divine glory should be veiled; and every manifestation of that glory should be viewed in the light of an exception to the leading purposes of his office as Mediator. Besides, appearing as he did in the form of a man, a recognition of his dependence upon God, of his authority as derived from him was perfectly proper to show that God and he were united in the work which he came to do. All the passages, therefore, which speak of his subjection to the Father, so far from militating with our belief of the Saviour's Deity, are absolutely necessary to the establishment of the purpose for which he became flesh. 'According to our views of scriptural truth, it is peculiarly the official character of the Father to sustain the legislative and rectoral honors of the Deity, and to be the primary Author of all the acts of authority, power and

grace by which the Deity is made known to men.' The passage now under consideration is therefore in strict accordance with this arrangement of the government of God. 'The nature of the occasion plainly requires that he should speak of himself in his official and delegated capacity ?' \*

There is another consideration which seems to us conclusive. One great object of Christ was to convince men that he was divinely commissioned. There were two ways in which he could prove this union in purpose with the unseen God. First, by giving proof on all occasions that the Deity was conjoined in his person. But this for the reason just stated he did not see fit to do. The only remaining method was by appealing like any other man, to the Father, in confirmation of all which he had said and done. This method was employed, as he himself expressly says, for the sake of those who were about him. On one occasion when he had appealed to the Father to glorify His name, there came a voice from heaven ; and Jesus said, ' this voice came

\* Smith's Script. Test. ii. 323.

not for my sake, but for yours, that ye might believe.' The sole object of this prayer from which the passage now under consideration is taken is declared by Christ to be for the sake of his disciples. "And these things I speak in the world, for their sakes, that they may believe that thou hast sent me." We see, therefore, that all his appeals to the Father, in which he expressed his subjection to him were for the confirmation of his disciples, or the conviction of his enemies. There was no other way in which these effects could have been produced, but by the constant declaration of the union of Deity with his person; which, as we have shown, he did not see fit always to proclaim. Our argument therefore is this: if Christ were God and man, it was indispensable that as Mediator he should always assert his dependence upon the Father, as the only way of proving that he was divinely commissioned,—unless he saw fit to publish and prove the mysterious union, which as well as the fact that he was the Messiah, we find that he left the world to *infer* from the Scriptures, and from his works, more frequently than from his open declarations.

Another passage adduced to prove that the father only is God is 1 Tim. ii. 5. "There is one God the Father of whom are all things:— and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things." 'This text is very positive. It declares that Jesus is Lord, but that the father only is our God.' p. 7.

A very erroneous conclusion. The writer seems to infer that the term 'Lord' is inferior to 'God.' This is a mistake. The term Lord was applied by the Greeks to their *Supreme* deities. The expression (*κυριος*, Lord) denotes dominion. Now if the father alone is God, according to the inference from this text, then Christ alone is *Lord*; that is, the Father has no dominion.

Several passages are frequently quoted to prove that the manner in which Christ is usually spoken of show that he was not God.

"Take his testimony concerning himself. 'I came not to do mine own will'—of course not; because he could have no separate will from the Father. 'I can of mine own self do nothing;' because the Father and Son are so intimately united that they cannot act apart. All these expressions were used, as the context

shows, to prove that he was not an impostor, but in union with God.

One of the greatest proofs of the deity of Christ is suggested by an argument brought forward in this Tract to disprove it. We ask the reader's attentive consideration of the following passage: Mark xiv. 61, 2, 3; "Again the High priest asked him, and said unto him, Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed? And Jesus said, I am; and ye shall see the Son of man on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven." Then the High Priest rent his clothes, and saith, what need we any further witnesses? Ye have heard the blasphemy.—And they all condemned him to be guilty of death."

Every one knows that the term Christ is only another name for 'Messiah,' and that the Messiah had been the object of long and earnest expectation among the Jews. Christ, in the presence of the Jewish council assumed to be the Messiah, and in doing this was immediately condemned for blasphemy. Now let it be explained under what pretence they could accuse him of *blasphemy*, if the Messiahship did not include *divine* attributes. Blasphemy,

according to Schleusner, is arrogating and taking to one's self that which belongs to God. But if the Messiah was expected to be merely a human being, how could he have been condemned on the spot for blasphemy,—when he laid claims to something which involved only human attributes? The crime, however, was so dreadful that the High Priest '*rent his clothes.*'

Yet in the mere assertion that he was the Messiah they found sufficient reason for his condemnation. 'Ye have heard the blasphemy:—what think ye? And they all condemned him to be guilty of death.'

On a previous occasion the Jews came to Christ, and said, 'How long dost thou make us to doubt? If thou be the Christ tell us plainly.' Some things which Christ said in reply involved an assertion of his Messiahship, and they stoned him, saying that it was 'for blasphemy,—and because thou being a man makest thyself God!'

Another passage further illustrates this point. Christ said to his disciples, 'Whom do ye say that I am.' Peter answered, 'Thou art the Christ the Son of the living God.' The Sa-

viour replied, 'Blessed art thou Simon Barjona, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.' But surely if the term 'Christ the Son of God,' implied nothing more than his being a messenger divinely commissioned, Peter did not need *inspiration* to teach him that which was so plainly proved by the miracles! But it would seem that there was a high mystery in the Messiah's character, from the fact that Christ ascribed Peter's knowledge to supernatural influence. If all this be true, if the Messiahship implied such attributes and powers that a false assumption thereof was blasphemy, if a true knowledge of the Messiah was the special gift of God, it follows that to confess Jesus to be the Christ involved an acknowledgment of the most important nature. We shall undertake to show in the proper place that the ancient prophecies of the Messiah in the Old Testament, designated him as a divine person. If this can be proved, would not the confession that "Jesus is the Christ," be equivalent to a confession of his deity? Hence the argument in the Tract before us, drawn from 'the terms of faith required of his disciples,' may be turn-

ed into a direct proof of the deity of Christ.

“Remember the confession of Peter—‘Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God;’—and with this Jesus was satisfied. Remember the confession of Martha—‘I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God;’—and he required no more.”

And for a very good reason, viz; that this confession implied every thing which was predicted of the Messiah by the ancient Prophets.

From what has been said upon this point we derive a satisfactory answer to the next argument in the Tract, from the devotional character of the New Testament.

“When Paul was converted, he must have passed—supposing the Trinity to be a christian doctrine—from believing Jesus a blasphemous impostor, to believing him the Lord Jehovah. Is there the least hint of such an amazing change?”

The fact which is related of him, that straightway he preached in the synagogue that Christ was the Son of God, is something more than a ‘hint’ of such an amazing change. If Christ were a Great Teacher, the enraptured feelings of the Apostle expressed in the glowing language of his Epistles are bombastic rhapsodies. But it is evident that the devo-

tional character of the New Testament occasions great embarrassment to the writer of the Tract. He says

“Honor is doubtless ascribed to the Saviour in terms of gratitude, love, and rapture. It could not be otherwise. How could they, who had seen him, avoid it, when we, who have not seen him, are constrained to love him, and through our faith in him to rejoice with joy unspeakable? Ascriptions of gratitude and honor to the Saviour, who will not render? But this does not prove him to be the Almighty God. When the company around the throne are represented in the Apocalypse as uttering a new song of blessing and honor and glory to *Him who sits on the throne*, and to the Lamb, it can never be understood that they attribute divinity to the Lamb; much less that he is the same being with him who sits on the throne,—for he is standing *in the midst of the elders*, and is praised because *he was slain*. This is not a description suitable to God.”

The Author has here fallen into a very important mistake which may be corrected by consulting the passage in the Greek Testament, or even by a more attentive consideration of the passage in the English Bible. The term ‘*εν μεσω των πρεσβυτερων*,’ ‘*in the midst of the elders*,’ cannot mean ‘*one of their number*,’ but ‘*surrounded by*’ the el-

ders. How could the Lamb be 'in the throne,' and 'one of the throng,' at the same time? We are persuaded that the author upon reflection will correct this mistake. But he adds,—  
'And is praised because *he was slain*. This is not a description suitable to God!

It would be difficult to say whether surprise or grief predominated upon reading the foregoing sentence. It seemed so exceedingly unworthy of a candid man, and of one who could not be ignorant of our belief, and therefore such an affecting instance of a determination to push an argument which has been so frequently disarmed of its force, that we had concluded to pass it by without any further remark. It is an unwelcome task to lay disingenuousness to the charge of a writer; and if we had not accidentally met with the following passage by Dr. John Pye Smith, we should have refrained from giving utterance to the solemn and awful truths which he has here written.

"The assertion that, because Christ suffered and was slain, "therefore he is not God, nor entitled to divine honors, is to the last degree weak and disingenuous. Those who employ this ob-

jection cannot but know the doctrine which they oppose to be essentially different from the representation, which, for their own purposes they choose to make it. They cannot be ignorant, or, if they are, it is little to their credit as controversialists, that according to the doctrine under discussion the Divine Nature of our Lord is unchangeable and incapable of suffering; and that it was as man that he bore our griefs and carried our sorrows. But we have yet to learn that there is any incongruity in loving and praising the Eternal Word, for the infinite benefits derived from the sufferings of the nature which alone had a capacity to suffer: when the fact is, that he assumed that nature, for the express purpose of obedience and suffering; and that the efficacy of its sufferings, in promoting the salvation of man, is derived from its mysterious but unconfused union with the Deity. All the results of the stupendous act by which the Redeemer "became flesh and dwelt among us," are properly referred to the original condescension and benevolence of that act. The fact therefore of "the Lamb being slain and redeeming us to God by his blood" is a perfectly proper foundation of homage to Him, who, though he could not die, took the nature which could and did. It is reasonable and right thus to celebrate "the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot unto God." If our unhappy opponents are resolved to reject this doctrine, if they choose to treat it with contempt and scorn,—at least they ought to refrain from misrepresenting it."

Perhaps it is unnecessary to say that the Tract before us is perfectly clear of any expressions of contempt or scorn; but how often has the blood within us almost ceased to flow as we have read, in modern periodicals, questions upon this awful theme uttered in the spirit of low, contemptuous and reckless infidelity. "Did God die?" "Was the blood of God spilled?" "Did the Almighty God suffer upon the cross?" In such questions, uttered with great excitement, lies the chief defence of many, who manifest the rancorous feelings engendered by controversy to a degree which must forever prevent the reception of the truth in the love of it. A calm, dispassionate mind, we think, must be entirely satisfied by the foregoing passage from Dr. Smith, that the argument of absurdity is wholly out of place here. "We love and worship the Word 'who was God,' because though He could not die, He took the nature which could and did." Are we irrational for this? We think that 'the four and twenty elders,' and the 'great multitude whom no man can number,' answer, No!

Let us attend further to the passages in Revelation which represent Christ as receiving divine

worship in heaven. "And I beheld and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne, and the beasts and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands, saying with a loud voice, Worthy is THE LAMB that was slain, to receive power and riches and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and blessing." Chap. v. 11, 12. Compare this with chap. vii. 11, 12. "And all the angels stood round about the throne and about the elders, and the four beasts, and fell on their faces and worshipped GOD, saying, Amen: Blessing and glory and wisdom, and thanksgiving and honor and power and might, be unto our GOD forever and ever, Amen." The only difference between these ascriptions, the one rendered to THE LAMB, and the other to OUR GOD, is, that in the former, the term 'riches' is used, but not in the latter: and in the latter we find the word 'thanksgiving,' but not in the former. The ascription to the Lamb, however, is itself an act of thanksgiving; and now if Christ is not worshipped in heaven, there is no proof that worship is paid to the Father.

There are other instances in which divine

worship is paid to Christ. John xx. 28. "Thomas answered and said unto him, 'My Lord and my God!'"

Upon this passage we remark

I. *That it was addressed to Christ.* The Unitarian supposition that it was uttered by Thomas with his eyes directed to heaven, is rendered impossible by the words 'to *Him.*' Another supposition, that Thomas, addressed the first part of the exclamation to Christ, and then lifted his eyes to heaven and said, 'My God!' is distinguished more by ingenuity, than good sense. For

II. *It could not be an expression of surprise.* Those who use this explanation certainly forget the awful reverence which a Jew had for "the Name," as it was called by way of eminence. The use of that name in the manner here suggested, would have been, in a Jew, irreverent in the extreme. It would not have passed without a solemn rebuke from Christ. There is a moral certainty against this explanation. No one would have thought of it were it not for the profane and (which is no better) the rhetorical use of the name of

the Deity ; an instance of which, let it be observed, is not to be found in the Bible.

Here, then, is an instance in which Christ is addressed in an act of worship as God. The consciousness of a union in his person of Deity with human nature, was the only reason which could lead him to receive such an act of worship with approbation. Would Christ, always jealous for his father's honor, have suffered any one to use such language towards him unless he were divine ? When John, in the Revelation, fell down to worship at the feet of the angel, how immediately was he prevented. "See thou do it not, for I am thy fellow servant—WORSHIP GOD."

Another instance of worship, is found in the last words of Stephen the first Christian martyr. "And they stoned Stephen, invoking, and saying Lord Jesus receive my spirit." Here is a dying man, full of the Holy Ghost, and of course under no mental delusion, commending his spirit to Christ. If Stephen had the feelings towards the Saviour which Priestly and Belsham and modern Unitarians express, would he not have chosen to commend his spirit to THE ONE GOD rather than to 'the man Christ

Jesus.'—But it is said, "This is the only instance of the kind in the Bible." It is indeed the only one, "but it is *all*." Stephen is the only saint whose death is recorded in the New Testament, and he worshipped Christ in his last moments. Then read the rolls of martyrology, and you will find that it was common for the early Christians, as for those of the present day, to commend their departing spirits with raptures of joy into the hands of Christ.

The 7th, 9th vs. 2 Cor. xii, contain another instance of worship paid to Christ. "There was given to me a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. For this thing I besought *the Lord* thrice, &c. And he said My grace, &c. Most gladly therefore will I glory in mine infirmities that the *power of Christ* may rest upon me." Even Mr. Belsham admits that these three acts of worship were paid to *Christ*, and at the same time endeavors to evade the conclusion to which they lead by a strange conjecture.

"The person to whom he prayed was Christ, who had promised to remain to the end of the

age, who had repeatedly appeared to Paul, in person or in vision, and to whom the Apostle applied on some occasion when it is evident that his Master was sensibly present with him, for he cites the very words of our Lord's reply. But this is no warrant to others who are not indulged with the same privilege." *Calm Inq.* p. 374.

This supposition, which abounds in gratuitous assumptions, evidently does not help the case. For whether Christ were present or absent, such prayers for spiritual blessings were either idolatrous, or an acknowledgement that Christ was properly an object of religious worship, and therefore divine.

Another proof which abundantly establishes the fact under consideration, is, that Christians in the days of the Apostles were designated by this circumstance, that *they called upon the name of the Lord*. That the expression to "call upon the name of the Lord," denotes religious worship may be seen by referring to a Concordance. "Abraham builded an altar and called upon the name of the Lord." "Arise and call upon thy God;"—with other instances of the use of the term, which it would be tedious to quote. Some have said without much reflection, that this expression means that the early disciples *were called after* the name of

Christ. i. e. Christians. Such a translation is not warranted by Scripture usage. 'The form of the verb used in these passages ordinarily implies invocation and worship. 'The word is used in reference to the last prayer of Stephen. Instances in which Christians are designated by the above named circumstance are as follows. 1 Cor. i. 2. 'Unto the church of God—with all that in every place to *call on the name* of Jesus Christ our Lord.' Grace be unto you, &c. Acts ix. 14. 'And here he hath authority from the chief priests to bind all who *call on thy name.*' 21 v. 'But all that heard him were amazed, and said, 'Is not this he that destroyed them who *called on this name* at Jerusalem?' 2 Tim. ii. 22, Follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that *call on the Lord* out of a pure heart.' Rom. x. 11. 'Whosoever shall *call on the name of the Lord* shall be saved.' Acts xxii. 16. And now, Why tarriest thou? arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, *calling upon the name of the Lord.*

In view of all this proof that religious worship is paid to Christ shall we conclude with the Tract, that the New Testament reserves all

supreme worship for the Father? Is it correct to say, after the partial views given by Unitarians of this subject, "Such is the devotional character of the New Testament?"

But another difficulty presents itself. The Jews were jealous for the unity of God. If the Apostles taught that Christ was to be worshipped, would it not have excited great opposition? Would it not have been argued that the unity of divine worship was destroyed by the introduction of another object of adoration? But it is said that there is no trace of any such controversy. Hence it is inferred that Christ could not have been held up to the Jews as an object of religious worship. Either this or another inference may be drawn from the alleged absence of controversy upon the subject, viz: that the Jews no more than ourselves, who are as strenuous as they for the doctrine of the divine unity, felt that the admission of the deity of Christ was inconsistent with a belief in one God. If they did, is it not reasonable to suppose that the plain instances of religious worship which we have shown were paid to the Messiah, would have excited their opposition? Would they not have ranked the Apostles with the

idolatrous heathen?—It is remarkable, however, that the only opposition to the Apostles on this ground was made by the heathen themselves, who said, “He seemeth to be a setter forth of strange Gods—because he preached unto them JESUS and the resurrection.” Without doubt, therefore, the Jews in the days of the Apostles were so well convinced that the Messiah was predicted as a divine person, that they labored only to prove that Jesus was not the Christ, knowing that if he were, his claims, as advanced by Paul, to religious worship were just.

We beg leave, in this connexion, to say to those who assert that if we worship Christ, we depart from the unity of divine worship, that there is nothing so good as experience upon this subject. We can safely promise every one, if he will relinquish his hopes of salvation which may now rest on his own good works, and believe as we do, on the Saviour, ‘which delivered us from the wrath to come,’ that he will never be troubled with Polytheism in his prayers, any more than the heavenly hosts who bow down with the same ascriptions “to God” and “to the Lamb.”

## CHAPTER VI.

Ignorance of the Disciples.—Their conduct towards Christ.—Feelings of the Israelites and of the Disciples compared.—Effect of the Saviour's character on the Apostle John.—Conduct of Judas.—Alledged denial by Christ of His Deity.—Remarks on a difficult Passage.—Proof of the Deity of Christ at his Trial.

It is asserted that the apparent ignorance of the disciples in regard to the Deity of their master, is a proof that he was not divine. It is evident that they were for a long time most strangely ignorant of his character. Imbued with Jewish expectations of a temporal kingdom, it was hard for them to understand that his kingdom was not of this world. How often is it said of them, "they understood not his words." Behold the mother of Zebedee's children coming with two of his disciples, her sons, and one of them even the beloved disci-

ple, and asking Christ, evidently by their permission, for high appointments in his temporal kingdom.—As the Saviour went with two of them to Emmaus, after his resurrection, He said, “O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken.”—As he sat at meat, “he upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart because they believed not them which said that he had risen.”—And even when he was leading them out as far as to Bethany, holding his last conversation with them, they said, “Lord, wilt thou not at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?” It was told them that when the Comforter which is the Holy Ghost should come, he would lead them into all truth. Accordingly, we find that the character of Christ and of his kingdom, was not revealed to them at once, but by degrees; and this accounts for the striking fact that the clearness with which these great truths are exhibited in the New Testament is graduated by the dates of their successive writings—the later books—and the last more than all abounding in full disclosures. It is remarkable that whilst the Apostles were promised that the Holy Ghost should teach them, and

were therefore favored with Inspiration, they at the same time directed their hearers to search the Scriptures; and testified of the Bereans that they “were more noble than those of Thessalonica, because they searched the Scriptures daily whether those things were so.” Hence we see the meaning of many passages in which Christians are exhorted to “GROW in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour JESUS CHRIST.” “The God of our Lord Jesus Christ—give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the *knowledge of him.*” “Till we all come in the unity of the faith and of *the knowledge of the Son of God.*” “That ye may be able to comprehend with all saints—and *know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge.*”

But it is said that

“*The manner in which the disciples conducted themselves toward their master,* is a certain proof to the same point. Conceive that they supposed him to be the Infinite Jehovah, the God of their fathers, whom they had been adoring from their childhood in the strong and awful reverence of the Mosaic worship; and could they have lived and conversed with him freely as they did? Could Peter have rebuked and denied him—Judas betrayed him—and all forsaken him? Im-

possible—perfectly impossible. Their whole intercourse with him must have worn a wholly different complexion. It is not in human nature to have lived with one whom they knew to be God, and yet to have conducted themselves as if he were not.”

We think that the writer has mistaken human nature entirely in this supposition. There is overwhelming proof in the Old Testament that this inference is altogether unwarranted. Did not the Israelites in the wilderness know that the Angel of the Covenant dwelt in the cloud and pillar which guided their journey? Were they not told in the most impressive manner, (Ex. xxiii. 21.) to “BEWARE of him, and obey his voice—for he will not pardon your transgressions?” Yet this solemn warning did not prevent them, as the apostle expresses it, from “tempting Christ.” Now, if the mysterious agency of this supernatural being, who was before their eyes constantly, in terrible grandeur, could not impress and overawe their minds, the presence of “a man of sorrows,” “despised and rejected of men,” would not affect the disciples, in the manner here supposed, whatever might be their apprehensions of his union with a higher nature.—

Is it not also true, that the very presence of Jehovah, in the imposing character of a God of judgment as well as of mercy, failed to restrain Israel from sin? Did they not make a golden calf and worship it, within the very sound of His voice, and when "Mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, and the whole mount quaked greatly?" We verily believe that even a constant manifestation of Jehovah's presence would not restrain man from sin; and if not from sin, certainly not from that freedom and familiarity of conduct which always follows when the restraint produced by awe is removed. Now, take the case of the disciples. In the first place, it is not true, as the writer of the Tract would suppose, that as soon as they heard of Christ and attached themselves to his person, the full blaze of the Godhead of the Son must have fallen upon their minds. We all perhaps feel that it would be impossible for us to have lived with Christ, believing him to be God and man, without such an effect as the writer describes. It must be remembered, however, that the feelings of an intelligent, educated, Christian Gentile are not the standard by which to judge those of a Jewish fisher-

man. Place eleven rude, illiterate men, like Matthew the publican, and Simon and Andrew, and Judas Iscariot in the company of a greatly intellectual but humble man, with no imposing show of authority about him—in short, just such a man as Jesus of Nazareth, and would they feel his mind? Would the strength of natural habits, and vulgar familiarity always be restrained when the first novelty of his presence was over? The suspicion that he was divine as well as human, would have no effect upon such men;—as we have shown from the conduct of the Israelites;—and as the heart and life of every Christian will testify who has tasted the bitterness of a departure from God, even when He has given him the most affecting proofs of his presence and love. But the Apostle John was a different man from the eleven. The life of this apostle prefixed to the Commentary upon his Gospel by Prof. Tholuck, exhibits this in a most interesting manner. John, unlike many of the rest, was accustomed to other society than that of ordinary minds. It is said of him that he was ‘known to the High Priest.’ From the fact that his father had “hired men” in his employ, and

that his mother Salome 'bought sweet spices' to embalm the Saviour, and that John took the mother of Jesus 'to his own home,' there is reason to think that his rank in life, or at least his means, were by no means common. But if it be said that the Jewish Council before whom he and Peter were summoned, 'perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men,' we must remember that in the opinion of that Council, all men were unlearned and ignorant, who were not versed, like themselves, in Rabbinic lore. His employment as a fisherman, leading him to spend whole nights upon his beautiful native lake, under the evening sky of Judea, contributed greatly to a contemplative habit, and gave him that exquisite beauty of character seen in his writings. How different must have been the effect of the Saviour's character on such a mind! And where in the Gospel History do we meet with an instance in which John demeaned himself towards his Saviour otherwise than with perfect propriety? What impression did the character of Jesus make on him? The very first words of his Gospel are, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God,

and the Word WAS GOD!" His soul seems to be full of the glorious truth, so that the first words which he uttered to the world are respecting his divine Saviour.—But who are those referred to in the Tract as the men on whom the character of Christ produced no impression? They are the very men whom we should have supposed His character would have failed to inspire with awe. One was the headstrong Peter, a man, by nature, of animal impulses, whom Satan thought that he could sift like wheat. The other is Judas Iscariot, whose character we should think would prove the truth of entire depravity rather than any thing else. Is it still said, that if Judas knew that Christ was divine he could not have betrayed him? How was it then that Satan and his angels, amidst the very glories of heaven, could rebel against Jehovah? If this were possible, is there any "impossibility" in the conduct of Judas?

There is a passage in the New Testament quoted by Unitarian writers with great exultation, as an undeniable proof that Christ asserted that he was not divine.

“And yet, strange to say, this explanation, which satisfied his enemies, has not prevented his followers from still insisting to repeat the charge which he refuted—that he, being a man, made himself God.”

Let us examine the context. “My sheep,” said Christ, “hear my voice—and I give unto them eternal life, and none is able to pluck them out of *my* hand. My Father which gave them me is greater than all; and none is able to pluck them out of my *Father's* hand. I and my Father are one. Then the Jews took up stones again to stone him—saying, For a good work we stone thee not, but for blasphemy; and because that thou being a man, makest thyself God.” Here the Tract subjoins, “To this he replied by a positive denial, and by a full explanation cleared himself of the charge, saying that he claimed to be only the Son of God.” To this we reply, His declaration that he was Son of God or Messiah, as we shall presently show, amounted to a declaration of his deity. But leaving this out of the question for the present, the ‘positive denial’ which is found so readily in this passage, we must confess, is beyond our discernment. The reply of Jesus, we believe, was merely this;

that they were rash in their judgment, in their treatment of Him who, to *say the least*, deserved *as much* honor as the ancient rulers of Israel, who also were divinely commissioned. More than this, the passage does not express, and for the reason which will presently be offered. Consider three things; first, that a *man*, however honored of God should say that God and he were one! How unsatisfactory to insert by way of explanation, 'one in purpose.' The context requires that the meaning should be 'one in power,' for he said that his own hand, as well as his Father's, was able to defend his sheep, which would give his followers no encouragement except upon the supposition of equality in power between him and God. Secondly, Is it not strange that Christ, if he were not divine, should have given the Jews a second occasion to say that his words implied an assumption of equality with the Father? Why did he not speak plainly on a former occasion, and forever prevent them and all succeeding generations from a mistake upon this subject? How anxious were Paul and Barnabas to repel the mistaken homage of the men of Lystra. How earnest the language of the

angel, when he forbade the attempt of the apostle to do him worship. The reply of Jesus to the Jews *failed to satisfy them*, for it is said, "Therefore they sought again to take him, but he escaped out of their hands." But, thirdly, if it be asked, Why did not Jesus declare openly, 'I am God,' we reply, For the same reason that he charged his disciples to tell no man that he was the Christ. No one acquainted with His history, has failed to observe that He left the world to draw the evidences of His Messiahship more from his works than from his positive assertions; and if there was a good reason for withholding such assertions respecting his Messiahship, there was a stronger reason for the manner in which he saw fit to teach his deity. If Christ had made an open declaration of his deity on this occasion, he would have departed from the course of conduct which he generally pursued. Reasoning from the analogy of his life, the manner in which he treated the subject was just what might have been expected. Whilst he vindicated himself from the charge of an unwarrantable assumption of honor by saying that the proofs of his divine mission entitled him at least to as much reverence as their ancient judges, he referred them to his works and

words, and on a former occasion to the Scriptures, for the evidence respecting his person, "that ye may believe that the Father is in me and I in him." This last phrase, equally mysterious with the other, roused their indignation the second time, but he escaped out of their hands. Now, to say that this explanation "*satisfied his enemies,*" is taking a remarkable liberty with facts and language.

Another proof that Christ was not divine, is said to be the fact, that, when arraigned, and his enemies were anxious to find cause of death in him, they never charged him with claiming to be divine.

"Now if he had ever claimed, in any way, to be Almighty God, or had given any intimation that he desired to be so considered, would they not have remembered it against him at such a moment? And as they were entirely silent concerning it, is it not certain that he could never have made any such claim?"

The answer is easy. Had not the Jews, on two previous occasions, (just considered,) accused him of "making himself equal with God?" Then why was not this accusation urged? Were all the individuals dead who were witnesses of the scene when he was near being stoned? Or is it possible that such an awful crime could have been forgotten? Then why

was it not urged? It is as difficult for a Unitarian as for us, to answer the question. If he had "cleared himself from the charge," they would not have taken up stones again to stone him, after his explanation, so entirely "*satisfactory*." The reason is obvious. It is evident that the Jews lost sight of every other consideration, in their feelings upon the question whether Jesus was the true Messiah. The great question by which the High Priest urged him to a criminal confession was, "Art thou the Christ?" The trial turned on this question—and he was condemned for blasphemy. A Unitarian is here thrown into a dilemma. He must admit that Christ was divine, or that his crucifixion was just. The Jewish Lawyers, assembled in that High Court, with the laws before them against blasphemy, containing a careful definition of the term, declared, in answer to the appeal of the High Priest, "Ye have heard the blasphemy, what think ye?"—that he was "guilty of death." Blasphemy is profaning the name of God, or taking to one's self that which belongs to God. Then if Christ was not divine, he was a blasphemer, and deserved to die. We see not how any one can avoid the inference.

## CHAPTER VII.

The Angel of the Covenant was Jehovah.—The Angel of the Covenant was Christ.—The Messiah's Nature Eternal.—Divine names applied to the Messiah.—If Christ was the Messiah he was Divine.—Christ the Creator of all things.—Omniscience ascribed to Christ.—Divine Worship paid to Christ.—Names of God applied to Christ.—Unfair Argument from Controversy against the Deity of Christ.

We now invite the attention of the reader to the more Positive Proof of the Deity of Christ. We have frequently referred, in the course of these remarks, to the alleged fact, that the Messiah was predicted as a Divine Person. We begin with the proof of this point.

Every reader of the Bible well knows that there was a supernatural Being employed through the whole of the Old Testament dispensation under the name of "the Angel of Jehovah." He seems to be the vicegerent of the old dispensation, hence he is called "the Angel or Messenger of the Covenant."

In Malachi, the closing book of the Old Testament we find this passage, "Behold I send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me, and the Lord whom ye seek,

shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger (or angel) of the covenant, whom ye delight in, behold! he shall come, saith the Lord of Hosts." Mal. iii. 1. This verse evidently contains a prediction, first, of John the Baptist, and secondly, of Christ. The last verses of this Book make it certain that the first person here named is John. "Behold I will send you Elijah the Prophet, before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord," &c. Mal. iv. ult. To these verses the disciples of Christ evidently referred when they said, "Why then say the Scribes that Elias [Elijah] must first come? Christ said, "Elias is come already. Then the disciples understood that he spake unto them of John the Baptist." Again, speaking of John, Christ said: "And if ye will receive it, this was Elias who was for to come." That the second person spoken of in this passage, viz.: "the Lord whom ye seek even the Messenger of the covenant," is Christ, we learn from the following works of Zacharias the father of the Fore-runner. "And thou, child, shalt be called the Prophet of the Highest; for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways."

John himself declared that he was the forerunner of Jesus. Two things are evident in this passage from Malachi. First, that the Messenger (or angel) of the covenant is the Lord Jesus,—and secondly, that he is called by the Divine name, “The Lord.” The word thus translated is the same used in Ex. xxxiv. 23. “Thrice in the year shall all your men children appear before the LORD God, the God of Israel;” and in Is. i. 24. “Therefore, thus saith THE LORD, the Lord of Hosts, the mighty One of Israel.” Here then we have opening before us an argument which is well worthy of the most attentive consideration.

The following fact will be made to appear from the passages which we shall now quote, viz.: that *this Angel is represented in the Old Testament as distinct from Jehovah, and at the same time as Jehovah himself.*

The angel of Jehovah appeared to Hagar in the wilderness and said, Gen. xvi. 10, “I will multiply thy seed exceedingly.” In three other verses in the same chapter, it is said that the angel of the Lord addressed her.—And Hagar called the name of JEHOVAH that spake unto her, “Thou GOD seest me.” Gen. xvi. 13.

Three men came to Abraham on their way to Sodom. One remained behind, and talked with Abraham; but the account of this interview is introduced as follows. Gen. xviii. 1. "And *Jehovah* appeared unto him in the plains of Mamre: and he sat in the tent door in the heat of the day." Again, as the patriarch was offering up Isaac, Gen. xxii. 11, "The angel of *Jehovah* called to him out of heaven,—and said, now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son from ME." And again, (15 v.) "The angel of the Lord called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time, and said, "BY MYSELF have I sworn—that in blessing I will bless thee."

Gen. xxxi. 11. "And the angel of God spake unto me in a dream saying, Jacob. And I said, Here am I. And he said, I am the GOD OF BETHEL where thou anointedst the Pillar!"

Gen. xxxii. 24. "And Jacob was left alone and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day. (30 v.) And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel—for I have seen GOD face to face." Now compare with this, Hos. xii. 4. "Yea, he had power over

the *angel* ; and prevailed :—he found him in Bethel, and there he spake with us, even JEHOVAH of Hosts, JEHOVAH is his memorial.”

EX. iii. 2. “And the *angel of Jehovah* appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of the bush.—And when the Lord saw that he turned aside to see, God called to him *out of the midst of the bush*, and said Moses, Moses. And he said, Here am I. Moreover, He said, I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look upon God.” Yet it is said in the second verse that this was the *angel* of Jehovah ! When Moses was taking his leave of Israel, and blessed the twelve tribes, he supplicated for Joseph, “the good will of Him who dwelt in the bush.” This is in remarkable coincidence with the blessing of Jacob upon the same tribe. “And he blessed Joseph, and said, “God, before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac did walk, the God which fed me all my life long unto this day, the *Angel* which redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads.”

There is another passage more striking than all. We know that he who gave the Law on

Mt. Sinai was Jehovah. Indeed it is certain that if it was not He, there was no appearance of the Most High God during the Old Testament dispensation. But in Acts vii. 38, speaking of Moses, Stephen says, "This is he who was with the church in the wilderness, with THE ANGEL WHO SPAKE TO HIM IN THE MOUNT SINAI."

It is probable that some with whom one portion, at least, of the book of God has lost credit, will say that we are here making an "Injudicious use of the Old Testament."\* The only way to avoid the solemn and important inference from the passages now quoted, is to reject the authority of this part of the Bible. The evidence is full, that there was a mysterious being under the old dispensation, called, as the term might properly be translated, THE ANGEL JEHOVAH. He swears by Himself. He never introduces his message, like angels or Prophets, with, "Thus saith the Lord," but speaks in his own name. There is no other instance of the kind in the Bible. Perhaps it may be said, "This angel was only a symbol of Je-

\* The Christian Examiner, the leading Unitarian publication, sometime since contained an article with the above title!

hovah's presence;"—we reply, that all the qualities of a moral Being are applied to him. Furthermore, he is sometimes represented as a distinct being from Jehovah, and again, as Jehovah himself. Some will say, this is impossible—it is plainly contrary to reason—it is a mystery; but in the excellent words of the Tract before us—

“This circumstance may create a difficulty in many minds; but notwithstanding this, if we found it testified to in Scripture, we should not hesitate to believe it, any more than we hesitate to believe that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, or that God foreknows all things, and that yet man is a free agent. We only ask for PROOF that it is taught in the Bible.”  
p. 1.

We have already proved that this ANGEL was the Lord Jesus Christ. Doubtless by him, as the WORD, most of the Divine communications were made to men. It was he who gave the law on Mount Sinai. There is abundant proof that he was Jehovah of Hosts.

Our next position is, that *the Messiah was predicted as an Eternal Being*. Micah v. 2. “But thou Bethlehem Ephrathah, though thou be little amongst the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me, that is

to be ruler in Israel, WHOSE GOINGS FORTH HAVE BEEN FROM OF OLD, FROM EVERLASTING."

The Eastern mode of expressing a person's age, was, that "he was *the son of* so many years." The literal translation of Gen. vii. 6. is, "And Noah was *the son of six hundred years.*" Then what must be the meaning of a name given to Christ in Is. ix. 6. THE FATHER of *Eternity*! Compare, also, Ps. cii. 25, with Heb. i. 10.

We shall show, in the next place, that the *Names of God* are applied in the Old Testament to the Messiah.

Is. vi. Here is a description of Jehovah's appearance in the temple to the Prophet. His train filled the temple. The Seraphim were crying one to another, 'Holy, Holy, Holy is Jehovah of Hosts.' The posts of the door moved at the voice, and the house was filled with smoke. The Prophet cried, "wo is me!—for I am undone—for mine eyes have seen the king, JEHOVAH of Hosts." Jehovah then gave him a message which is quoted in the xii. of John as follows. "But though He (CHRIST) had done so many miracles, yet they believed

not on Him, because that Esaias said again"—(here follows the message which Isaiah was commanded to deliver to the Jews during the scene in the temple.) The writer adds, "These things spake Elias when he saw *His* glory and spake of Him." The antecedent here is CHRIST. It was Christ, then, whom the Prophet saw, "high and lifted up, whose train filled the temple; before whom the Cherubim and Seraphim cried, Holy, Holy, Holy is JEHOVAH of Hosts!"

Is. ix. 6. Speaking of Christ—"and his name shall be called—the MIGHTY GOD."

Ps. xlv. 6. "Thy throne, O GOD, is forever and ever." This is applied by the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, to Christ. Some, acknowledging this, say that the proper translation is—"God is thy throne forever and ever"—a rendering (to say nothing of the liberty taken with the Greek) which is, by the nature of the case, exceedingly improper. God is called a tower, shield, rock of defence; and by *these* terms an idea of strength and honor is conveyed to the mind. But a throne derives all its honor from the person who sits upon it—therefore, to say that Jehovah is the seat of a

created being is every way a violation of propriety.

The testimony of the Old Testament, therefore, respecting the Messiah is, that he is ETERNAL in his nature; and that he is SUPREME GOD. The names of the Most High are given to him in their highest application.

Suppose, now, that the Apostles could prove that Jesus was the Messiah—would it not follow that Christ was divine? Was it not the shortest way for them to prove the deity of Jesus, to show that he was “the Christ?” Of what consequence is it to know whether the body of the Jewish nation expected a Divine Messiah, considering that their minds were blinded, and their notions of his kingdom were of so unworthy a nature? Is not ‘the law and the testimony’ our proper source of information? and judging from the evidence drawn from it, Reader, “what think you of Christ?”

But let us examine the testimony of the New Testament. Christ is here represented,

I. As the CREATOR of all things. Col i. 16.  
“By Him were all things created that are in heaven and in earth, visible and invisible,

whether they be thrones or dominions, or principalities or powers; (the different orders of spiritual beings;) all things were created by him and for him—and by him do all things consist.”

Heb. i. 10. “Of old hast thou laid the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the work of thy hands.”

It is to be observed that the great argument upon which Jehovah relies to prove that He is God, in opposition to heathen deities is, that HE made the heavens and the earth. But this same creative power is here ascribed to Christ. That Christ was not employed as ‘*the instrument*’ by which creation was brought into existence is proved from Is. xliv. 24. “Thus saith the Lord thy Redeemer—I am Jehovah that maketh all things; that stretcheth forth the heavens *alone*; that spreadeth abroad the earth *by myself*.” Therefore when it is said, “By whom also He made the worlds,” the only possible inference is, that Christ is in union with the Godhead, and that the work of creation was assigned to Him. For confirmation of this, take the following passages—“and the WORD was GOD.”—“All things were made by *Him*, and without Him was not anything made that was made.”

II. OMNISCIENCE *is ascribed to Christ.*

“The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked—who can know it? I, Jehovah, search the heart and try the reins of the children of men.”

Compare Rev. ii. 23. “All the churches shall know that I AM HE that searcheth the reins and heart.”

If we receive the account which Christ himself has given of the last judgment, we cannot believe that it is merely a finite being who is to judge the millions of quick and dead. “Before him shall be gathered all nations, and he shall separate them *one from another*, (observe the particularity of the expression) *as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats.*” The difficulty presented by this argument from the last judgment, is sometimes met by the celebrated principle of Unitarian interpretation, which gives a general, remote signification, to a particular assertion or fact. Applied to this case it would make it appear that *Christ* will not appear at the judgment, but *Christianity*; that all the representations of His coming to judge the world signify that *men will be judged by the principles of his religion!* It is

of no use to oppose to such an interpretation, the words of Scripture, which say that “*The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout ;*” and numberless passages which denote the personal appearance and agency of Christ at the judgment. They are all set aside by this fearful libertinism of interpretation, which, having gained possession of the mind, turns aside the point of every argument, and makes the Bible mean anything or nothing, as the case may happen to require. The fact, however, that the only way of avoiding the inference of Christ’s omniscience, from the circumstance of his being the judge of the world is to deny the plain declarations of the Bible, shows that there is great force in the argument, as indeed all must admit.

III. DIVINE WORSHIP is paid to Christ as we have already proved, chap. v.

IV. The NAMES of God are applied to him in the New Testament, as well as in the Old.

1 John v. 20. “We are in him that is true, even in his son Jesus Christ. This is the TRUE God and eternal life.” That this is spoken of Christ is rendered certain by the fact that the term ‘Eternal Life’ is always applied to Christ, and never to the Father.

Rom. ix. 5. "Of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, GOD blessed forever. Amen." This, like every other passage which proves the Deity of Christ, has been provided with a different interpretation, which is wholly at variance with the rules of interpretation. Irenæus, Tertullian, Cyprian, Athanasius, Gregory the Nyssene, and Chrysostom, quote this passage as an undeniable proof of the Deity of Christ.

"Titus ii. 13. Looking for the blessed hope and the glorious appearance of OUR GREAT GOD AND SAVIOUR, Jesus Christ." This is the reading required by the idiom of the Greek language.

Rev. xxi. 7. "He that overcometh shall inherit all things, and I WILL BE HIS GOD, and he shall be my son!"

In view of these passages, which, after all, are only an "OUTLINE of the Scripture Testimony" in favor of the Deity of Christ, the reader can judge whether the evidence of this doctrine is found only in dark places, which have "tried the skill of Interpreters." If they are "*dark places*" to any one it is because they have been confused by "the skill of interpreters" who

have "tried" to sink their credit. It is said that we resort to inferences and the collation of different passages to prove this doctrine, instead of relying on individual assertion. In the first place, this is not true; the first chapter of John's Gospel stands at the head of a class of passages which contain absolute assertions of this doctrine; and secondly, if we pursued this course in reference to all the passages upon this subject, as we do with some, it is in accordance with the instruction of Christ; "Search the Scriptures; for they are they which testify of me." But the controversy which has thrown darkness upon this doctrine has been used as an argument against it. Unitarians have involved the plainest passages in dispute,—an instance of which is found in the history of Rom. ix. 5. "God blessed forever," a passage which has been through the Inquisition of criticism, and every species of torture exercised upon it to make it speak a different language. In replying to their opponents, Trinitarians have been obliged to commence with the first principles of interpretation, and have followed them through the mazes of their ingenious arts, and then have been rewarded

with the following reply : ‘ If it costs so much to prove the doctrine, is there not presumptuous evidence that it is not from God ?’

The truth lies on the face of the Bible. Two things prove it. It would be inconsistent with the goodness of God to give us a revelation with the truth hid, and deception on its face, so that the majority of mankind, unaccustomed to critical investigation, should be misled by the obvious meaning. The second proof is from fact. The humble and pious poor in every age of the world, whose minds have never been perverted by false reasonings, nor perplexed with various readings, nor dazzled by new translations, have generally been believers in the Deity of Christ. “ To the poor the Gospel is preached.”

## CHAPTER VIII.

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### DEITY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

‘Whether there be any Holy Ghost.’—The Unpardonable Sin.—Names of God applied to the Holy Spirit.—Divine Attributes.—Are not ‘the Seven Spirits before the Throne,’ the Holy Ghost?—Sublimity of the Doctrine of the Trinity.—Society in the Godhead. An Extract.—Faith is not Credulity.—Christ a Stumbling Block.—Advice to an Inquirer.

We shall now endeavor to present, as concisely as possible, the proof of the personality and Deity of the Holy Spirit. We begin with a passage which is used as an argument against it.

We are told, Acts xix., that Paul found certain disciples at Ephesus, to whom he said, “Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost. The Tract inquires,

“How is this? The Holy Ghost a person in

the Godhead, equal with the Father, and essential to salvation to know him, and yet these disciples never heard of him? Impossible—and therefore impossible that it should be a third person in the deity, distinct from the Father, and equal in power and glory.”

The passage here quoted is an impregnable proof of the personality and Deity of the Holy Ghost. It is observable that in a short paragraph in the Tract, three different meanings are given to the term Holy Spirit. “It signifies—*divine influence*.”—“The Holy Spirit is *the Spirit of God*.”—“The Spirit of God is *God himself*.” Substitute each of these definitions in the place of the term Holy Spirit in this passage from the Acts: “Have ye received *divine influence* since ye believed?” “We have not so much as heard whether there be any *divine influence*!” Is this credible? Again: “Have ye received the *Spirit of God* since ye believed?” “We have not so much as heard whether God has a Spirit.” Now if there were no Spirit of God, or no Holy Ghost, of course Paul would not have asked the question. The only rational explanation is that the Holy Ghost belongs to the Godhead, but

that these disciples had not received the knowledge of this mystery; for to say that they had never heard of such a thing as "divine influence," or, that "God is a Spirit," is contradicted by the fact that they were John's disciples. No one can doubt that, in the Apostolic age, the gift of the Holy Ghost included miraculous powers; for as soon as these disciples received the Holy Ghost, "they began to speak with tongues and prophesied." But to say that because such signs and wonders follow the descent of the Spirit, therefore, the term Spirit means *only* "signs and wonders," would be an unwarrantable use of metaphor, and at the same time is contradicted by facts. For the influence of the Holy Ghost is declared by Christ in the third chapter of John, to be indispensable in order to "see the kingdom of God." No one, we believe, would say, that the meaning of Christ is "Except a man *receive the gift of tongues*, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God,"—for—who then could be saved?

Our next argument is that unless the Holy Spirit be a person, the New Testament abounds in tautology. If the Spirit of God is "God

himself," or "divine influence," how shall we understand such passages as the following.

"God anointed Jesus Christ with the Holy Ghost and with *power*." "The God of peace fill you with all joy—that ye may abound in hope through the *power* of the Holy Ghost." "Though mighty signs and wonders through the *power* of the Spirit of God."

In such passages and many others, the Spirit of God is represented as an agent—distinct from God, and as the *author* of spiritual gifts.

Another argument is found in the form of Baptism, in which the term Holy Ghost cannot mean "God himself," without absurdity, nor "divine influence," without giving rise to a question of propriety, which no man can answer. There is immense weight in the fact, that the name of the Holy Ghost is used with that of the Father in the solemn form of initiation into the Christian religion. Observe, it is the term "Father," not "God," which is here used. Does not this imply a distinction in the Godhead? If the Son and Spirit were not divine, would not the formula have been, "in the name of God and of his Son," &c.

THE UNPARDONABLE SIN is a proof of the

personality and deity of the Holy Ghost. “ *All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men : but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven him ; but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come.*”\*

There is no passage in the Bible which fills us with greater solemnity. There is a mystery here which perplexes the mind until we admit the deity of the Holy Ghost. “ There is a sin unto death.” He who commits it, “ hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation.” But if the Holy Ghost is only another name for God, there is no meaning in this awful annunciation. If the Holy Ghost is ‘divine influence,’ let it be explained why blasphemy against God himself is pardonable, but, committed against the influence or an attribute of God, “ hath never forgiveness !”

Admitting that the Holy Ghost is divine,

\* Matt. xii. 31, 32.

there is no difficulty upon the subject. When the atonement and all the extraneous motives which can reach the soul have failed to bring the sinner to repentance, God the Spirit strives with him, convinces him of sin, takes of the things of Christ and shows them unto him. The agency of the Holy Ghost is a provision of mercy superadded to the influence of all other motives coming from the character of Jehovah, the love of Christ, the worth of the soul, and from eternity. Then, if a sinner blasphemes this divine Agent, who comes by the unspeakable forbearance and love of God to plead, he has sinned against the last effort which can be made to save him. The rejection of the cross of Christ is not an unpardonable sin; but for a sinner to "resist the Holy Ghost" by open blasphemy, is to refuse subjection to the most amazing effort of God's omnipotent compassion, and count himself unworthy of eternal life. He "*hath done despite to the Spirit of Grace.*"

Another proof is this: that all the attributes and actions of a moral agent are ascribed to the Holy Ghost. This is done when figurative language and metaphor are inadmissible.

It is said "The Comforter which is the Holy Ghost shall guide you into all truth." The Comforter which the Father shall send in my name." "The Spirit said unto Peter." "The Spirit caught away Philip." "We essayed to go into Bythinia, but the Spirit hindered us." "It seemed good to the Holy Ghost and unto us." "He that searcheth the heart knoweth what is *the mind of the Spirit.*" "Now the Spirit *speaketh* expressly." "The Holy Ghost thus signifying." "Ye do always resist the Holy Ghost—as your fathers did, so do ye." Here the attributes and actions of a person are plainly ascribed to Him.

Again. Divine *names* are given to the Holy Spirit. "Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie unto the Holy Ghost; thou hast not lied unto men but unto God." "Men and brethren, this Scripture must needs be fulfilled which *the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake* before concerning Judas." Compare the following passage.—"They lifted up their voice to God with one accord, and said, Lord, thou art God, which hast made heaven and earth and the sea; *who by the mouth of thy servant David hast said.*" In

one passage it is the Holy Ghost which speaks by the mouth of David, and in the other it is the "Lord God." It may follow that these names are synonymous.

Again. *Divine Attributes* belong to the Holy Ghost.

(1.) **ETERNITY.** "How much more shall the blood of Christ, who, through the **ETERNAL SPIRIT** offered himself without spot to God."—Heb. ix. 14. (See Dr. Doddridge's note on this passage.)

(2.) **POWER, WORKS AND OFFICES.** All the signs and wonders in the New Testament of a miraculous kind are ascribed to the Holy Ghost. God only has power to suspend the laws of nature; but if any one replies, 'The Holy Spirit is this power in exercise,' let him translate such a phrase as this—"Through the power of the Holy Ghost."—It was the Holy Ghost who appointed and directed the Apostles. "The Holy Ghost said, 'Separate **ME** Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.'" "So they being sent forth by **THE HOLY GHOST**, departed." "Take heed therefore—to the flock over which **THE HOLY GHOST** hath made you overseers." The

expressions, 'Born of God,' and 'Born of the Spirit,' are used interchangeably. To the Holy Ghost as a person, is ascribed the work of convincing, enlightening, regenerating, and sanctifying the soul of man.

Again. Whilst the noun which is translated "Spirit" is neuter, masculine pronouns are used with it. "HE shall teach you all things." "HE shall testify concerning me." "When HE shall come he shall glorify me." We may safely say that unless the Holy Spirit is a person and not merely an attribute, such a form of expression would not be used, inasmuch as the plain, narrative style, and the absence of all metaphor in such passages, prevents the supposition of a personified attribute.

One more remark shall close this part of the subject. Every reader of the Bible knows that the number *seven* is used, especially in the Revelation, to denote *completeness* or *perfection*. For instance, "Seven troubles" denote complete distress; "Seven times purified," the complete refining of gold; "Seven spirits" convey the idea of consummate depravity. So "the perfection of the divine government is described by the symbolical agency of seven

angels, seven seals, seven plagues, seven vials, seven trumpets, seven thunders; and the perfection of HONOR and WISDOM in Christ, as exercised in the protection and government of his Church, is represented by "seven horns and seven eyes."\*

With this in view, consider the introduction of the Revelation. "John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace be unto you, and peace from Him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from THE SEVEN SPIRITS WHICH ARE BEFORE HIS THRONE, and from *Jesus Christ*."—To us who believe in the Deity of the Holy Ghost, there is no doubt that this expression represents the fullness of His perfection who lives in unity with the Father and the Son. He is "before the throne," to denote omniscience; hence the numberless passages which speak by way of eminence of this attribute in the Holy Ghost. "Whither shall I go from thy SPIRIT or flee from thy presence?" "The SPIRIT searcheth all things, even the deep things of God."

We have only to say that the proof of the

\* J. P. Smith.

Personality and Deity of the Holy Ghost is precisely of the same nature with that of the Deity of Christ, and that they must stand or fall together.

We are aware that many of our friends wonder how it is that we derive any pleasure from such a doctrine as that of the Trinity which, in their view, destroys the harmony and beauty of the divine character. It may seem strange, but in our view, there is no part of worship which fills the soul with higher emotions of sublimity than when the whole congregation unite in the Doxology to the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. As a matter of sentiment or taste, if for no other reason, we should prefer a belief in the doctrine of the Trinity. There is a grandeur in the conceptions to which it gives birth, unequalled in the contemplations of any other system. We have these *in addition* to the feelings which arise in thinking of the Unity of God ; for this still remains to us in all its appropriate grandeur, whilst the thought of *society* and *intercommunion* in the Godhead is inexpressibly delightful. When some of our friends, who occasionally attend our worship, turn

away their faces or keep their seats during the majestic Ascription, we cannot but wish that we could impart to them feelings, which perhaps they would call mysticism, but which are as much superior to their own feelings (we know *them* by experience) as the emotions occasioned by the sight of a Gothic cathedral are to those from looking upon a beautiful but solitary shaft. (We may add, there is *unity* in the former of these as well as in the latter.) If any one feels the *speculative* question of Nathaniel rising within him, all that we would say, is, in the *experimental* language of Philip, "COME AND SEE."

It gives us the highest pleasure, that we can now trace back a thought here suggested, to the mind of the venerable and lamented Dr. Samuel Worcester. The writer may be excused for giving way to the emotions which arise from the recollection now bursting upon him, that the man who wrote the following paragraph sprinkled upon him the Holy Sign of consecration to the TRINITY. My Father! my Father! the chariots of Israel, and the horsemen thereof! What ineffable joy is thine, in the contemplation, "face to face," of Him,

whose character as Jehovah, Father, Son, and Spirit awakened on earth the feelings here expressed!—If it is so delightful to find that some view of God which for a long time has imparted pleasure to the mind, but has been so incorporated with ourselves as to suggest no trace of its origin, was conveyed to the mind by another, how blissful from similar discoveries, the society of just men made perfect—and then (we speak it in the dust) how ineffable the intercommunion of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost!

“In the most Holy Three in One, we see what can never be seen in a single Divine Person:—we see a SOCIETY, infinitely perfect and blessed. When we turn our thoughts from the Trinity to one Divine Person, inhabiting eternity in solitary existence, we find it impossible to conceive how he can be happy. We can form no conception of happiness without love, nor of perfect happiness where love has not an adequate object. But the most exalted creatures are infinitely below the Deity; the whole created universe is as nothing in comparison with him. If then he existed in one solitary person, where could he find an adequate object of infinite love, and how could he be infinitely happy?—When we contemplate the Trinity, a far different view is presented to our minds. GOD IS LOVE. The three adorable

Persons, unlimited in all perfections and excellencies, inhabit eternity together; DWELL EVER-LASTINGLY IN EACH OTHER, IN MUTUAL, PERFECT, UNMEASURABLE LOVE. Thus infinitely happy themselves, they unitedly delight in communicating happiness to their creatures. Their OWN SOCIETY OF BOUNDLESS LOVE and boundless happiness, is the archetype and centre of that holy, and blessed, and numberless fellowship of angels and of the redeemed from among men, who are to be "gathered together in one," around the throne of everlasting glory, with immortal joys, and unceasing praises.—Call this, Sir, mystery, mysticism, or what you please;—it is a theme on which my mind delights to dwell; and which I cannot exchange for the SOLITARY DEITY, and the PHILOSOPHICAL HEAVEN of Unitarians."—*Third Letter to Rev. W. E. Channing; by Samuel Worcester, D. D. Pastor of the Tabernacle Church, Salem.*

There are many who are for a long time troubled with difficulties respecting the character of Christ, and the doctrine of the Trinity. The cause is twofold.

First. They have not learned that there are difficulties in these subjects inexplicable by any created intellect. But because these difficulties occur to their minds, and not being able to solve them, they reproach themselves with unbelief: whereas Gabriel can do no more than

bow down and confess that "Great is the mystery of the Divinity."

Secondly. They have not learned where, in the regions of knowledge, reason must stop and send faith for all which is beyond that limit. There is such a limit; and there the soul must be contented with, "Thus saith the Lord." It is an enviable state of mind in which a man can rest satisfied with the declaration of Jehovah, and believe as firmly on such evidence as if he could make every thing plain to reason, or have the evidence of his senses upon the subject. "Blessed are they who have not *seen* and yet have believed." Men call this credulity. The Apostle John however makes mention of it with approbation. "He that believeth hath the witness in himself."

When a man once becomes willing to believe all which he finds in the Bible respecting Christ, and makes his faith depend not on the question whether he can comprehend, but whether God hath spoken, his soul is at rest. God in Christ becomes to him a whole firmament of glories, which the soul reads and adores with increasing wonder.

No subject of religious knowledge is the occasion of so much perplexity and scepticism as the character of Christ. The reason is, men are not willing to take simple statements of truth, because they cannot reconcile them with their pre-conceived opinions. There is a deeper reason. Admit the deity of Christ, and the atonement follows, and thence, the entire alienation of the soul from God and justification, not by moral or *natural* goodness, (for some plead *amiable instincts* as the ground of salvation,) but by faith in a Redeemer. This is too much for us with our natural pride of heart. What words of truth were those of old Simeon as he looked upon the infant Saviour, "This child is set for the FALL and the raising of many in Israel and for a sign which shall be spoken against. "And God says, "Behold I lay in Zion—A rock of offence—and he that believeth shall not make haste." Christ crucified is now "a stumbling block and foolishness." But it is amazing to see with what lightness and scorn, many treat this awful subject. How seldom do men remember that it is written—"No man knoweth who the Son is but the Father." The character of

Christ is a depth which God only can fathom !

Having ourselves been perplexed by this subject of the Trinity, we can sympathize with those who meet with the same difficulties in their search for the truth ; and at the same time would propose a method of relief. It may be comprised in a few sentences.

1. Make it your sole inquiry, what saith the Scripture ?

2. Collect all the passages which refer to the character of Christ, and inquire whether he was not in all respects A MAN

3. Having settled this point, ascertain whether there is proof that he existed before he came on earth.

4. Inquire whether the names, titles, works, offices, attributes, and worship of Jehovah are ascribed to him.

5. Consider then whether Deity could exist in union with human nature, without necessarily imparting Omniscience on self dependence. If this is the case, limited knowledge, and dependence on God expressed by prayer no more prevent the supposition of the union of Deity in his person than hunger and thirst.

6. Remember that if the Bible teaches the

deity of Christ, and of the Holy Spirit, it is not necessary to find the word Trinity in Scripture in order to believe all which the Bible makes essential to salvation. The term 'Unity of God' is not found in the Bible, and but few, if any, of those conventional terms, employed merely to prevent circumlocution. Finally, Remember that the question, "What think ye of Christ," is of immense importance to sinful man. It involves the question respecting the only way under heaven given amongst men, whereby we must be saved. A mistake respecting the character of Christ is fatal. "HE THAT HATH NOT THE SON THE SAME HATH NOT THE FATHER."

## CHAPTER IX.

On the Subject of THE SACRAMENT. Addressed to a Unitarian Friend.—Introductory Remarks.—Reasons assigned for joining a Unitarian Church.—The Lord's Supper made known by Christ himself to Paul.—The Lord's Supper, a proof of the Atonement.—Object of the death of Christ.—Singular Interpretation upon this subject.—Its absurdity.—Common sense Interpretation.—First impression in reading Proof Texts.—“The word Atonement used but once in the Bible.”—If Christ were only a man he would not have established the Sacrament.—Inconsistency of Christ upon the Unitarian Scheme—and Impropriety of the Symbols.—Eating unworthily.—Feelings at the Last Day if the Atonement be true.—The Atonement believed to be essential to salvation.—CONCLUSION.—Influence used to persuade men to join the Church.—Plausible arguments.—Fearful Responsibility of a minister.—THE UNITARIAN RELEASED FROM AN OBSERVANCE OF THE LORD'S SUPPER.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Having understood that you have lately been urged to join the Church, and that you now have the subject under consideration, I take the advantage of your request that I would always write freely, to express my views upon it.

The Church into which you are invited, is

known and acknowledged to be a Unitarian Church. I have understood that you expressed a reluctance at the step which you were urged to take in connecting yourself with a Church whose principles are so entirely at variance with those in which you were educated. It was said to you that though your parents lived and died in the Evangelical belief, you are under obligations to inquire for yourself. This no one will deny; for a blind faith is bigotry. But when those whom we love and respect have left their dying testimony to the power of their faith, we should proceed with caution in relinquishing it for another. Free inquiry is the charmed word of modern times. The bonds of filial reverence and love are frequently broken, through fear of man—and of being thought unable to think for one's self. A son of pious parents who was tempted by new associates to join a more fashionable religious society, in doing which he would have renounced that Divine SAVIOUR to whom the dying father of this youth commended his departing spirit, was met by a pious man, who said, "Thine OWN FRIEND and thy *father's* FRIEND forsake not."

When you expressed your fear that you

were not prepared for the solemn act of coming to the Lord's table, you were told that it was as much your duty to do this as to attend public worship; that it was superstitious to regard the former with more reverence than the latter. When you said that your religious opinions were not entirely fixed you were told that you could examine religious subjects and form your religious opinions after joining the church, as well as before; that to partake of the Sacrament could not be "Sectarian;" and in short that you would be as free to think and act for yourself afterwards as now.

Let me invite your attention to a few considerations which may assist you in coming to a conclusion upon this most solemn and important question.

THE LORD'S SUPPER was a subject of special revelation by Christ to the Apostle Paul. He says, "*For I have received of the Lord Jesus that which I also delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread.*"\* This is a remarkable circumstance. It is confirmed by his own declaration, Gal. 1: 11, 12, "But I certify

\* 1 Cor xi. 23.

you, brethren, that the Gospel which was preached of me, is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it *but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.*" It shows that the Lord's Supper was not intended merely for the twelve disciples, for Paul was not one of them; and, that it was not to be confined to the Jews: for Paul was the Apostle to the Gentiles.

"The Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread; and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat, **THIS IS MY BODY WHICH IS BROKEN FOR YOU**; this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup when he had supped, saying, This cup is the **New Testament IN MY BLOOD**; this do, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye do eat this bread, and drink this cup ye do shew forth **THE LORD'S DEATH** till he come. Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread or drink this cup of the Lord unworthily shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord."

You see from this account that the two symbols used in the Lord's Supper represent,

the one, his body, and the other his blood; that the event of which the ordinance is commemorative is **THE LORD'S DEATH**. and that it was established "in remembrance" of Him.

It will be my object to show that **THE SACRAMENT IS A PROOF OF THE ATONEMENT AND DEITY OF CHRIST**.

That the **BODY** and **BLOOD** of Christ are terms synonymous with an atonement, may be seen from Heb. x. 5. "Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldst not, but a body hast thou prepared me: In burnt offering and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure. Then said he, Lo I come to do thy will, O God.—By the which will, we are sanctified through the **OFFERING OF THE BODY OF JESUS CHRIST** once for all." Again: ix. 11. "But Christ being come an High Priest—neither by the blood of goats and calves, but **BY HIS OWN BLOOD** entered in once into the holy place having obtained eternal redemption for us. For if the blood of bulls and goats sanctifieth &c. How much more shall the blood of Christ, &c.?" Once more: x. 26.—'Now in the end of the

world he hath appeared to put away sin by  
THE SACRIFICE OF HIMSELF.’

Nothing is more evident than that the body and blood of Christ are here represented as taking the place of sacrifices under the Old Testament dispensation. So that we have only to ascertain the object of sacrifices and the shedding of blood under that dispensation, and we shall find what is meant by the sacrifice of Christ. We are told that all these ancient sacrifices were types of the “Lamb of God,” “The High Priest went alone once every year, not without *blood*, which he offered for himself and *for the sins of the people*; The HOLY GHOST this signifying, that the way into the Holiest of all was not yet made manifest.” Then follows what is said of Christ and the offering of *his own blood* to obtain eternal redemption. We know that many, with a singular disregard of the principles of interpretation say, that the blood of Christ means *his willingness to seal the truth of his doctrines with his death*; so that the splendid and imposing array of altars, the thousands of rams, and the sacred priesthood, meant nothing but the *sincerity* of Christ;

and the great show of ordinances prefigured this truth, *that Christ, a human teacher, would die in defence of his precepts.* To adopt such an interpretation, I must do as much violence to conscience as I should to plain reasoning and the Bible.

In the Epistle from which the account of the Lord's Supper is quoted, the writer again speaks of a truth which he had received by immediate revelation from Christ. "For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that *Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures.*" The term Scriptures here means the Old Testament, for the New Testament was not yet written. The testimony of the Old Testament therefore, is, that Christ was to die "for our sins." The obvious meaning of this expression is, 'He died that our sins might be forgiven.' This is confirmed by another passage. "In whom we have redemption *through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins.*" In order to avoid the conclusion from this passage that Christ's death was for the purpose of an atonement, it must be interpreted as follows; "In whom we have" '*instructions to lead us into the*

*practice of virtue ;—those instructions being confirmed by his death' !* What a body of criticism we should have if a man should go through the Greek and Roman Classics, and then through the Old English Poets and Prose writers, and dilute their literal meaning into paraphrases like this. No reliance could be placed on the words of another if such a style of interpretation as men now practice upon the Bible should be introduced into common life. The commercial world would go to ruin if advices from Europe to America and from America to Europe should be translated on these principles. In time of war, suppose that one General should write to another, his enemy, and say, "The prisoners shall not be exchanged. If redeemed, it must be by the *blood* of your army." Applying modern interpretation to such language, the commander and his men, if they wished to redeem their fellow-soldiers must turn preachers, and publish moral precepts, and then if any one doubted them, die. Who would trust to such redemption !

To find the meaning of the Bible, we must apply the same rules as in the interpretation of

other books, viz: the rules of common sense. One such rule, agreed upon, though, unhappily, not reduced to practice by all critics, is, to give a *literal* meaning to a passage, unless the connection absolutely forbids it. By this rule you read periodicals, and the news of the day; it is plainly founded in the common sense of mankind. You take a passage just as it is written, and adopt the meaning which lies on the face of it; unless there is reason to think that the writer is mistaken, or is using irony, or purposely uses metaphors;—the object and limits of which, in good composition, are always discernible. No book has ever been the subject of such unnatural criticism as the Book of God, and no parts of it have been so blurred as those which reveal the atonement. Suppose that you should now open the Bible for the first time, what would be your impression on reading the following passages:

‘I delivered unto you first of all, that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures.’

‘In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins.’

‘The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.’

‘For when we were without strength in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die, yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love towards us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us. Much more then being justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.’

‘—When we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son.’

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

Suppose that after reading these passages you should read the account of the institution of the Sacrament. The expressions, ‘This is my body which was broken for you’—‘This cup is the New Testament in my blood, which was shed for many for the remission of sins,’ would leave no doubt on your mind that the Sacrament was commemorative of the atoning death of Christ.\*

\* I will here add, How idle it is to alledge that the word ‘atone-

There are several subsidiary considerations which show that the Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper proves that the death of Christ was for an atonement.

Let us suppose that Christ was only a Human Teacher. He came, therefore, to make known the will of God to men, to set them a perfect example, amongst other things, of meekness and humility. He discountenanced ambition, and every thing which might tend to encourage it. On one occasion, it is said by Unitarian writers, he was so fearful lest the honor which belonged to God only should be given to him, that he corrected a scribe who called him “Good Master.”—“Why callest thou me good?—there is none good but one, that is God.” So jealous was he for the honor of his Father—so careful that He only should

ment’ is not found but once in the New Testament, and that even there the word might have received a different translation! You can doubtless recal words by which you designate objects of great importance;—words, without which it seems to you, it would be impossible to transact the common affairs of life. Those words, however, are unknown to other nations, whilst the objects expressed by them are in familiar use. The word ‘atonement’ conveys to the mind of a believer in the propitiatory death of Christ no more than the expressions of Paul, “Christ crucified,” or, “the Reconciliation.” Johnson says that the word ATONE is made from the words *at one*: if so, Paul had the same idea which we express by this word, in the following verse: “If when we were enemies we were *reconciled (or at-one-ed)* to God by the death of his Son.”

be revered. But behold his inconsistency. Just before he dies, he calls his followers together, institutes an ordinance which he commands them to observe, and then transmit through all time, down to his second coming—the sole object of which is to remind the world of himself! There is not a word said of the Father. Churches are formed over the earth, multitudes are added to them, who assemble together at stated times to remember *the man Christ Jesus*. If such conduct is not stamped with inconsistency, we have no sense whatever of the meaning of that word. But it is said, ‘He did this merely to recall to the minds of men his excellent precepts, and make them value his religion.’ This, in the first place, is not true; for the object of the sacrament as declared by himself, is wholly personal—“Do this *in remembrance of ME.*” Besides, it is a most unnatural method for a *Teacher* to remind men of his precepts by emblems of his body and of his *blood*. Could Plato have been so forgetful of himself as to establish an ordinance or a feast to commemorate his life or death? Especially, would he bind his followers to meet, and by two emblems, repre-

sent to the world his body and blood? He might with great propriety have recommended that they should meet, perhaps on his birthday, or more frequently, and listen to a discourse respecting his system of philosophy. Would he have done more than this? So Christ, we believe, if he had been merely a human teacher would have been satisfied with the institution of the Sabbath; for on that day we meet and inculcate His precepts for which alone men say he lived and died. Then why was he not satisfied with the institution of the Sabbath, so admirably fitted to promote this great and sole object of his life and death? But shall he be so desirous of personal favor, and of honor, as to establish a rite to commemorate his person, and obtrude his body and even *his blood* upon us!!

See too what evil this ordinance has occasioned. It has led thousands and tens of thousands to worship Christ! It is admirably calculated to inspire one, who understands it as relating to an atonement, with ardent love to the Saviour; it excites so much fervor of feeling that we cannot help singing praises to Him, and men break out in rapturous gratitude 'to

Him who loved them and gave himself for them.' How then must Jehovah regard this ordinance, which takes his honors and gives them to another? He must say, "Who hath required this at your hand? Bring no more vain oblations—they are an abomination unto me,—I cannot away with them;—it is iniquity—even the solemn meeting; your appointed feast my soul hateth." How must he feel towards Christ as being the cause of all this impious service! And how must Christ regret it! It would seem as if he would hate to see the Sabbath dawning upon our world, and prefer to dwell that day, in a Heathen temple, where a block is worshipped, rather than hear himself deified by ten thousand Christian worshippers. Now if the effect of this ordinance upon the feelings of men is to be the same to the end of the world, and certainly this will be the case, I appeal to you if, upon your belief, Christ has not done, at least, as much harm as good, by coming upon earth? Has he not been the occasion of more sins, than, upon the Unitarian scheme, he can ever wash away?

My dear Friend, I think you will admit in view of these conversations, that there is, at

least, presumptive evidence of the Atonement. That BODY was broken, that BLOOD was shed, that we might not perish but have eternal life. They are not merely "precept"—"example"—"sincerity." They are the "RANSOM FOR MANY." It is in vain to plead that 'such an ordinance as the Sacrament might properly be instituted in memory of a Teacher, who, though merely human, was the greatest Teacher that ever lived.' This would only make the inconsistency of his conduct the greater; for the greater a man is, the more humble if a good man; and more anxious to give undivided glory to God. If Christ is not divine, I cannot reconcile his conduct in this matter with his life and precepts; if he made no atonement, the continual representation of his body and blood is an unmeaning, I may say, offensive rite. It does violence to my feelings towards Christ as a great, yet meek and lowly MAN.

But look at the subject in another light. We consider Christ as the Word "who was in the beginning with God, and was God." "THOUGH HE COULD NOT SUFFER, HE TOOK THE NATURE WHICH COULD AND DID." These suffer-

ings derive infinite value from the union of the human nature with HIM who "became flesh." The object of this union, of these sufferings and death, was, to deliver us "from the wrath to come." This Saviour "was set forth as a propitiation, through faith in his blood—that God might be just and the justifier of him who believeth in Jesus." When we think of the condescension of the Son of God, and of His sufferings in the garden and on the cross, and remember that "He loved us and *gave Himself* for us," and that in consequence of these sufferings we are saved from the penalty of the Divine Law, we cannot look upon the emblems of His "body and blood," but with the deepest emotions. They have a meaning, which as you may well imagine, is fitted to act upon us with great intensity. When they are before our eyes, we feel the force of all those powerful expressions which abound in the Bible. "He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities, and by his stripes we are healed." "God hath laid on him the iniquity of us all."—"Thanks be unto God for His *unspeakable gift*."—"The height and depth and length

and breadth of *the love* of Christ, *which passeth knowledge.*" "Worthy is the Lamb that was *slain.*" At the same time we feel to their full extent the human excellencies of the Saviour, whether as Man, Teacher, or Example. But without a belief in the atonement of Christ, this ordinance of the Supper would be to us an unmeaning service, and though we should wish to obey his dying command, we should not be able to resist the impression that Christ would be willing to leave an attendance upon it to the choice of any professed follower, who, for reasons satisfactory to himself could not heartily partake; or we should conclude that there was a meaning in those emblems which we did not understand, and therefore that it was our duty to leave the Sacrament until we were possessed of a good degree of assurance upon the subject.

Upon reflection, my dear friend, you may see, that, as I have now endeavored to show, the sacrament of the Lord's Supper can have no other object than to commemorate the Saviour's atoning death. - If this be true, no one should partake of it who does not believe in the atonement. If there is an atonement it is

the only way by which we must be saved ; because it is said, “He that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him.” If a man comes to the Table with a superficial view of his sinfulness, with no genuine repentance, no proper faith in Christ, he “eats and drinks unworthily, and is guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.” I know that the passages which speak of eating and drinking judgment, and the like, referred originally to the Corinthians, who made a disorderly feast of the Lord’s Supper. Ministers, in compassion to weak Christians, and to a tender conscience, have, with great ability, explained these passages so as to remove from such persons that improper dread which they feel, through a sense of unworthiness, in coming to the Sacrament. While the least degree of faith is “counted for righteousness,” and no “bruised reed” shall ever be broken ; while the only qualification for suitable communion is a sense of guilt, and reliance on Christ for pardon, and therefore the humblest believer need not fear, it is as true now as ever that he who “eateth *unworthily* is guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.” I rejoice to believe that

there are some whose errors, though fundamental, have, in such a manner, proceeded from circumstances beyond their control, and whose minds under different circumstances would have *obeyed* the truth, that they will be acquitted in the day of God. The Searcher of hearts, ‘by whom actions are weighed,’ and not a finite creature, will be their Judge. But in regard to those who, from prejudice, or any improper bias, or from neglect of earnest prayer, or from an unwillingness, from whatever cause, to receive the Gospel of Christ, have embraced error, and still go to the Communion table—the least that can be said respecting them is, let not our souls be found with them in the Judgment. They *may* appear to be without “the wedding garment.” How will the mighty import of the ordinance open upon their minds in the clear light of eternity. “Alas !” one of them may be heard to say, “what have I done ! Atoning blood is on me, but not for ‘a ransom.’ I am guilty of this blood. I took the symbol and rejected the Saviour.”—My dear friend, the Bible is a plain book. God has certainly revealed the way to be saved so clearly that we cannot, if we will

not, err. Whilst we judge no man, let us see to it that we ourselves are not judged of God.

Perhaps you will say that I here condemn every one who does not embrace my creed ; and will ask ‘if all those excellent men who cannot believe in the atonement will not be saved?’ This is the question with which many a friend, whom you have known and loved, has concluded his conversation upon this subject. I am not afraid to meet this question. My reply is, God only knows in whom and to what degree circumstances may palliate error. But as a dying man, I feel that there is no hope for me but in the atonement of Christ. I am told, that if I “sin willfully after-that” I “have received *the knowledge of the truth*, then remaineth no more SACRIFICE FOR SINS, but a certain looking for of Judgment and fiery indignation.” If “the word became flesh,” and “bare our sins in his own body on the tree ;” if the stupendous scenes of the humiliation, sufferings, and death of Christ took place “that we might not perish,” I feel that the whole would be mockery, if it were not essential to salvation ;—if, after all, it is “no mat-

ter what a man believes if he is only sincere !”

In view of what has been said, suffer me to add, in conclusion, a few plain and faithful remarks.

I. If you are solicited to ‘join the Church’ for the purpose of securing your influence to any cause or society, you are in danger. I know what is said to young men who are commencing life in certain places where there is a strong sectarian feeling, to show them with whom they must associate themselves if they would hope for encouragement. It is hard for a young man to urge his way against the tremendous influence which frowns from high places upon ‘the old paths’ of our fathers. But what is worldly prosperity to peace of conscience?—what is it “to gain the whole world,” and “lose your own soul!” But though you may choose to worship under different ministrations for those whose sacred influences blessed your childhood, and smoothed your father’s passage to the tomb, I trust that no persuasions will bring you to the Communion table, till, with a living faith in Christ, you have either embraced

the atonement, or satisfied yourself that it has no foundation in the Bible. For if it is true, how dreadful to approach the Sacrament by the influence of unworthy purposes. If the Mt. Sinai was so sacred when God was there that 'if so much as a beast brake through, it must be stoned or thrust through with a dart,' how fearful his danger who rushes to the *mercy seat* and takes the symbols of the great atonement with the spirit of a party!

II. Be not deceived when told that you can join the Church, and after that make up your mind respecting the truth. You know that a common argument is, 'You need not commit yourself to any sect or any particular belief by coming to the Communion. We have no *creed*. Pray, is there any thing *sectarian* in sitting at the Lord's table?' This is very plausible in theory. But go with a particular church to their Communion table, and influences as strong as the grave will keep you there. No returning footsteps are seen in the passage way of that Communion, except that here and there one has been convinced of his need of something more to "purify his conscience from dead works" than the blood of a Human

Teacher. The multitude have never returned. They have gone from that table to Him who is 'ready to judge the quick and the dead,' whose 'blood' will be to us all "the savor of life unto life or of death unto death."

III. I cannot forbear to speak of the awful responsibility which ministers take upon themselves who urge men indiscriminately to the Communion. They say, 'it is as much the duty of every one to come to the table of Christ, as to attend Public Worship.' So it might be proved that it is as much the duty of every one to go to Heaven, as to the House of God on the Sabbath. But that any will enter heaven who are not prepared is expressly denied: for, "into it there shall in no wise enter any thing that defileth." There are *terms of admission* to Heaven, and so there are to the Church of Christ on earth; but to say that every one has a right to the Communion is to break down the fold of Christ, and declare universal salvation. Those who *urge* men to such a step take upon themselves in a certain measure the responsibility that the atonement of Christ and future punishment are not true. If they are mistaken,—if there

should prove to be no other way to be saved than by the propitiatory death of Christ, how can they bear the thought of being accessory, in the least degree, to the fatal mistake of others! "Deliver me from blood guiltiness, O God, thou God of my salvation, and my tongue shall speak aloud of thy righteousness."

IV. If I were a Unitarian I should not hesitate to give up the Lord's Supper. On their principles of interpretation I could satisfy myself that its observance was not binding upon me. I would reason as follows. 'It was necessary in the early age of Christianity, when persecution was about to commence against the followers of Christ, that the ascending Saviour should appoint some striking rite to bind them together. As they would be exposed to instant death by martyrdom, symbols of his own death would very properly represent to their minds their obligations to hold themselves in readiness to die for the cause of him whose body was broken, whose blood was shed in the same glorious cause. Hence the rite was intended only for the early Christians, and to them it must have been significant and impressive.'—If any one should say, 'Are we not

commanded to "show forth the Lord's death TILL HE COME?"—I should reply, that the Lord *had come*. This expression has three meanings in the Bible. It denotes first, the death of each individual, secondly, THE COMING OF CHRIST TO DESTROY JERUSALEM, and thirdly, the day of Judgment. The second meaning, I should argue, was 'preferable to either of the others. As Christianity gained strength and numbers, the ordinance, having answered its purpose, was intended to fall into disuse.' Then if any one should bring up difficulties to oppose this construction, I should say that 'no difficulties were so formidable as those contained in the belief that a *human* Teacher had instituted an ordinance to remind the world of himself, or, at least, that he had instituted an ordinance of such a nature as to lead the mind, as we see it has done to a great extent, into a belief of the atonement. It is so inconsistent with the Saviour's meekness and humility that you ruin the beauty of his character by such a supposition.

My dear friend, I am persuaded that you, with many others, will soon adopt this course of reasoning or admit that the Sacrament is a

proof of the Atonement and Deity of Christ. One more argument upon this point and I have done. When you go into a House of worship on the Sabbath not knowing that it is Communion day, and find the table spread, why do you have those inexpressible feelings in the deep places of your soul, if the Sacrament is only a common service. Those mysterious feelings are worth more as arguments, than written volumes; they will speak on a dying bed:—they will be heard within you when “HE COMETH WITH CLOUDS, AND EVERY EYE SHALL SEE HIM, AND THEY ALSO THAT PIERCED HIM; AND ALL KINDREDS OF THE EARTH SHALL WAIL BECAUSE OF HIM. He which testifieth of these things saith, SURELY I COME QUICKLY.” Happy, thrice happy, my dear friend will you be, when you can add, “EVEN SO, COME, LORD JESUS! COME QUICKLY, AMEN!”





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