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REMONSTRANCE AND COMPLAINT

OF THE

ASSOCIATION OF FAIRFIELD WEST,

TO THE

HARTFORD CENTRAL ASSOCIATION:

TOGETHER WITH THE

REPLY OF THE HARTFORD CENTRAL ASSOCIATION.

PRINTED FOR THE ASSOCIATION OF FAIRFIELD WEST.

NEW YORK:

S. W. BENEDICT, No. 16 SPRUCE STREET.

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MINUTES.

THE Association of Fairfield West met at the house of Rev. L. H. Atwater, in Fairfield, Jan. 8, 1850., at 11 A. M., to consider the sentiments of Dr. Bushnell, as published in a book entitled "GOD IN CHRIST," and also the action of the Hartford Central Association thereon.

Were present—Rev. Elders Nathaniel Hewit, D.D., E. D. Kinney, E. Hall, D.D., T. Smith, L. H. Atwater, C. T. Prentice, T. B. Sturges, L. B. Burr, I. Jennings, and S. J. M. Merwin.

Opened with prayer. Proceeded to consider the subject before us. Heard and considered several documents on this subject by members of the Association. *Voted*, that these documents be referred to a committee consisting of Messrs. Hall, Smith and Atwater, to report thereon at an adjourned meeting. Adjourned to meet at Stamford, at the house of Rev. Isaac Jennings, on the 29th inst., at 11 A. M. Closed with prayer.

Attest,

THEOPHILUS SMITH, Scribe.

The Association of Fairfield West met at Stamford, Jan. 29, 1850, at 11 A. M., according to adjournment.

Were present, Rev. Elders N. Hewit, D.D., J. H. Linsley, D.D., E. D. Kinney, E. Hall, D.D., T. Smith, L. H. Atwater, S. B. S. Bissell, T. B. Sturges, I. Jennings, S. J. M. Merwin, G. M. Porter, A. B. Rich, and G. Hall.

Opened with prayer. Dr. Hall, in behalf of the committee appointed Jan. 8th, made a report in the form of a Remonstrance and Complaint from this Association to the Hartford

Central Association. Proceeded to hear, discuss and amend this report. The roll was called, and each member expressed his views. Whereupon, it was *Voted*, that this Remonstrance and Complaint be adopted by this Association; that it be signed by the Moderator and Scribe, and sent to the Moderator of the Hartford Central Association. Adjourned. Closed with prayer.

Attest,

THEOPHILUS SMITH, Scribe.

The Association of Fairfield West met at the house of Rev. Dr. Hall, in Norwalk, March 19th, 1850, at 11 A.M., to hear the answer of the Hartford Central Association to our Remonstrance and Complaint, and to take such action in the premises as might be deemed expedient.

Were present, Rev. Elders S. Haight, M. Mead, N. Hewit, D.D., E. D. Kinney, E. Hall, D.D., T. Smith, D. Mead, L. H. Atwater, S. B. S. Bissell, C. T. Prentice, T. B. Sturges, I. Jennings, S. J. M. Merwin, and G. Hall.

Opened with prayer. The Answer of the Hartford Central Association to our Remonstrance and Complaint, was read. Whereupon it was *Voted* unanimously, that our Remonstrance and Complaint to the Hartford Central Association, and their Answer to the same, be printed, and that a copy be sent to each member of the several District Associations in the State.

Voted, unanimously, that we address a letter to each District Association (excepting Hartford Central), earnestly requesting them to meet and consider this subject, and let us know the conclusion to which they come.

The form of the letter to be addressed to each District Association was read and adopted.

Attest,

THEOPHILUS SMITH, Scribe.

REMONSTRANCE AND COMPLAINT.

DEAR BRETHREN :

OUR relation to you as ministers of neighboring churches which have, from their origin, been united in the closest bonds of fellowship with the churches which you serve in the ministry, and that under the acknowledged principle—and for more than one hundred years under the express stipulation [as in Chap. IV. of the Heads of Agreement]—“That they are most ready and willing to give an account of their proceedings to each other, when desired for preventing or removing any offenses that may arise among them;” which principle established among the churches must be regarded as equally in force among their ministers;—also our relation to you as an Association united with you in the General Association of Connecticut,—by which relation we stand or fall with you in the esteem and fellowship of the churches of this country and of the world, and by which we are so far held responsible for acts of yours which may justly be held to forfeit that esteem and fellowship,—these relations not only give us the right, but impose upon us the duty, when we judge your proceedings to be at any time greatly injurious to the truth in Christ, to come before you with our earnest but brotherly REMONSTRANCE AND COMPLAINT. From these relations, also, we are under obligation to the churches, to the community, and to God’s holy Truth, not to be silent when our silence must necessarily be considered as our acquiescence in proceedings which go to shield or to countenance destructive error.

We judge that such a duty is imposed upon us by your recently published decision in the matter of Dr. Bushnell’s book entitled “*GOD IN CHRIST.*”

The duty appears to us now to be urgent. The doctrines of that book are not only spread abroad in the book itself, deriving no small celebrity from the celebrity of its author; but there has also been circulated a reiteration and defense of its main positions under the sanction of honored and influential names. Communications are inserted in religious papers having a wide circulation among our churches, either vindicating those doctrines, or apologizing for them—at times by impugning the faith of our churches—or raising questions as to how it can be decided whether the doctrines treated of in the book (*viz.*, the Trinity, the Atonement, and Justification,) are fundamental, or so far forth fundamental that any manner of denial or teaching concerning them can be regarded as heresy; or whether we have any ascertainable standard doctrines on these subjects, by which any possible doctrines concerning the Trinity, Atonement, or Justification may be adjudged heretical. One of these communications, purporting to be from a minister of many years' standing in Connecticut, declares his doubts concerning the truth of these doctrines, as held in our churches, and affirms, on his own knowledge, that many ministers around him are also doubting the same. All which things, with other considerations which we have not mentioned, have caused us to fear lest the doctrines of that book may be already gaining a dangerous ascendancy—especially over the minds of the young—and preparing the way for a wide-spread error, captivating to the carnal mind, but destructive of the faith, and ruinous to the souls of men. These things have also caused ministers and churches abroad—who are in communication with us—to doubt whether there is not among the ministers and churches of Connecticut a serious and wide-spread departure from the truth as it is in Christ; which doubts, in the continued silence of our Associations, we cannot but regard as justifiable. Under these circumstances, the doctrines of the book now go abroad bearing the sanction of your official decision, that you regard their author “as holding whatever is essential to the scheme” embodied

in "the formulas of the church," and that, in your view, "he could not be properly or justly subjected to the charge of heresy, or be denied the confidence of his brethren in the ministry." Yet we find that your "committee were unanimous in the conviction," (and "all the members of the committee acceded to the proposition" so to report; which report was read to your Association and accepted with the two other reports,) that the book in question "denies that the following are revealed truths, viz.:

"1. That there is a real Trinity in the Divine nature."

"2. That, anterior to the incarnation, the personality of Christ was distinct from that of the Father."

"3. That the end sought and achieved by Christ, in making the atonement, was to cancel the penal claims of condemning law, by voluntarily offering his own sufferings and death as a sufficient satisfaction therefor, and so to redeem every believer from further exposure to these claims."

Permit us to say, brethren, that when we consider the terms in which the book denies not only these, but other doctrines, which we hold as essential to Christianity, we are much amazed and grieved at your decision.

We ask you once more to review with us the doctrines set forth in that book. We give you a statement of the doctrines which, as we believe, the book contains, with the passages which contain them written underneath. We underscore parts of these passages, to call to them your especial attention.

I.—CONCERNING THE LOGOS, OR WORD.

The Logos, or Word, which was in the beginning with God, [p. 145,] called elsewhere *the Form of God*, [p. 145,] and which, at the incarnation, was made flesh, is *a capacity of self-expression* in God, [pp. 187, 177, 145,] by which he can

[P. 187.] "By the Word, or Word of Life, that peculiar *power* in the Divine nature, *by which God is able to represent Himself outwardly in the forms of things*, first in the worlds, and now in the human person"—"by this Word of Life, God has now expressed himself."

[P. 177.] "Undoubtedly the distinction of the Word, or the *power of self-representation in God* thus denominated, is eternal."

outwardly produce himself [p. 146.] In creating the worlds, God only represents, expresses, outwardly produces *Himself*, [p. 145,] first in the worlds, then in men, [p. 146,] and at the incarnation, as God has before produced himself in all the other finite forms of being, and as he has before appeared in the human, so now, yet more of God is exhibited in the human form, in the person of Jesus Christ, [pp. 145, 146, 147, 151, 152.]

[Pp. 145, 146.] “There is in God, taken as the Absolute Being, a *capacity of self-expression*, so to speak, which is peculiar—a *generative power of form*, a creative imagination, in which, or by aid of which, He can *produce Himself outwardly*, or *represent himself in the finite*. In this respect God is wholly unlike to us. Our imagination is passive, stored with forms, colors and types of words from without, borrowed from the world we live in. But all such forms God has in himself, and *this is the Logos*, the Word, elsewhere called the *Form of God*. Now, this Word, the Form of God, in which he sees himself, is *with God*, as John says, *from the beginning*. It is *God mirrored* before his own understanding, and *to be mirrored*, as in fragments of the mirror, *before us*. Conceive him now as *creating the worlds*, or creating worlds, if you please, from eternity. In so doing, he only represents, expresses, or outwardly produces *Himself*. He bodies out his own thoughts. What we call the *creation*, is, in another view, a revelation only of God, his first revelation”——“Now as John also declares, there was light, the first revelation was made, *God was expressed* in the forms and relations of the finite.”——“One thing more is possible that will yield a still more effulgent light, viz., that, *as God has produced himself in all the other finite forms of being*, so now he should *appear in the human*.”

“Indeed, *He has appeared in the human before, in the same way as He has in all the created objects of the world*.”——[P. 147.] “But there was *yet more of God* to be exhibited in the Human Form of our race.”——“Now, therefore, God will reclaim this last type of Himself, possess it with his own life and feeling, and through that, live himself into the acquaintance and biographic history of the world.”——“This is Christ, whose proper deity or divinity we have proved.”

[P. 151.] “But the human person, it will be said is limited, and God is not. Very true. *But you have the same objection in reference to the first revelation, the Word, in the world*.”——“Besides you have a special delight in seeing God in the smallest things, the minutest specks of being. If, then, it be incredible that God should take the human to express himself, because the human is finite, can the finite in the *world*, or in a *living atom*, express him more worthily, or do it more accordantly with reason?” [P. 152.] “For it no more follows that a human body measures God, when revealed through it, than that a *star, a tree, or an insect* measures him, *when he is revealed through that*.”

REMARKS.

1. These representations of the Word and of the incarnation appear to us to teach that the Word is no *person* in the Godhead, but only a *power*, or *capacity*, viz. : the power of outwardly expressing or producing himself; and that in accordance with this teaching, the Scriptures should not say

“The Word was God,” but “The Word was a *power* in God.”

2. The passages referred to, as they stand in their connection, appear to us to teach that the Logos had as really expressed and outwardly produced God, in *the world*, (viz. : in its rocks, rivers, mountains, forests, beasts, stars and storms,) as in Jesus Christ; and that God had before appeared in men as really, though not in the same degree, as in Christ. According to the doctrine of the book, we do not see why it would not be as proper to say concerning each mountain, river, beast or man, “This is the true God,” as to say it concerning the Lord Jesus Christ. In our view, the book represents the *works* of God to be as truly the *Godhead* as Christ; the Word, which became incarnate in Jesus, having been before embodied in the material creation, and having been as truly made flesh before—in beasts and men—as in Jesus Christ; the only difference being, that in Christ there is exhibited *more* of God, [p. 147.]

II.—CONCERNING THE TRINITY.

The Trinity is a three-fold impersonation which appears at the incarnation; not an essential Trinity in the Divine Being, but only a Trinity in the mode of representation, as related to our finite apprehension, [pp. 147, 148, 175, 176. As the power of self-representation in God is eternal, if God

[Pp. 147-8.] “Prior to this moment, [the incarnation,] there has been no appearance of trinity in the revelations God has made of his being; but just here, whether as resulting from the incarnation or as implied in it, we are not informed, a threefold personality, or impersonation of God begins to offer itself to view.” “In these three persons or impersonations, I only see a revelation of the Absolute Being, under just such relatives as by their mutual play, in and before our imaginative sense, will produce in us the truest knowledge of God.”

[P. 175.] “Do you then ask, whether I mean simply to assert a modal trinity, or three modal persons? I must answer obscurely, just as I answered in regard to the humanity of Christ. If I say that they are modal *only*, as the word is commonly used, I may deny more than I am justified in denying, or am required to deny, by the ground I have taken.”——“Perhaps I shall come nearest to the simple, positive idea of the trinity here maintained, if I call it an INSTRUMENTAL TRINITY, and the persons INSTRUMENTAL PERSONS. There may be more in them than this, which let others declare when they find it.”

[P. 176.] “I perceive, too, that God may as well offer himself to me, in *these persons*, as through *trees, or storms, or stars.*”

has eternally revealed himself, then this Trinity is *likely* always to have been, and in like manner it *may* always continue to be. Yet it may be, even as a representation, occasional and to be discontinued, [p. 177.] The Scriptures discourage the idea that it is to continue, [p. 177.] It is a trinity of representation only, produced by a process of revelation, [p. 178.]

There is no original triad (or Trinity in the Godhead) back of this that is so produced; and people had better keep their discretion than to seek for one.—[178, 179, 180.]

[P. 176, 177.] “Meanwhile, if our feeling is, at any time, confused by these persons or impersonations, we are to have it for a fixed, first truth, that God is, in the *most perfect and rigid sense*, one being—a pure intelligence, undivided, indivisible and infinite; and that whatever may be true of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, it certainly is not true that they are three distinct consciousnesses, wills, and understandings. Or, speaking in a way more positive, they are *instrumentally three—three simply as related to our finite apprehension*, and the *communication* of God’s incommunicable nature.”

[P. 177.] “But some one, I suppose, will require of me to answer, *whether the three persons are eternal, or only occasional and to be discontinued? Undoubtedly the distinction of the Word, or the power of self-representation in God thus denominated*, is eternal. And in this we have a *permanent ground of possibility* for the *threefold impersonation*, called trinity. Accordingly, *if God has been eternally revealed, or revealing himself* to created minds, it is *likely* always to have been, and always to be as the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Consequently, it *may* always be in this manner that we shall get our impressions of God, and have our communion with Him. As an accommodation to all finite minds in the universe, it may be the purpose of Jehovah to be known by this divine formula for ever. That which most discourages such a belief is the declaration of Paul—“When all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that did put all things under him, that God may be all, and in all.”

[P. 178, 9, 180.] (After a citation from Neander.) “If now it be inquired whether, beginning with a doctrine of trinity *produced by the process of revelation, and adequately accounted for as necessary to that process*, I would then turn to hunt for some “analogy” in myself, and try to climb up thus, through myself, into a discovery of an *original triad in God—convincing myself*, also, that John and Paul give ‘*intimations*’ of such a triad, I frankly answer, no. The expression of such a hope might comfort some who would otherwise be disturbed, but it will only mislead a much greater number, who had better keep their discretion. If God has given us an *instrumental triad* which is good for its *purposes of revelation*, there can be *no greater fraud upon it than to set ourselves to the discovery of an original triad back of it*, that has no instrumental character, and has nothing to do with revelation.

[P. 180.] “This view of Christ and the trinity differs, I am aware, in some respects, from that which is commonly held; but I hope the difference will not disturb you. I have known no other since I began to be a preacher of Christ, and my experience teaches me to want no other. If it has delivered me from agonies of mental darkness and confusion concerning God, which, at one time, seemed insupportable, it cannot be wrong to hope that God will make the truth a deliverance, equally comfortable and joyful to some of you.”

REMARKS.

1. We regard these passages as teaching unequivocally, that there is no Trinity in the Godhead.

2. According to the teaching of the book on the subject of the Trinity, we see not why the representation of the scripture might not have been,—so far as the Godhead itself is concerned—of a Quaternity as well as of a Trinity, a Myriad, as well as of a Triad: nor why there might not have been any number of Christs, as well as the one who is styled “The only begotten Son of God.”

3. As no real sacrifice, or work of atonement, can be performed by a mere representation of a person, without the reality, it appears to us that this denial of the Trinity in the Godhead, is necessarily followed by a denial of any real work of Redemption by the blood of Christ. The doctrine of Justification by faith in that atoning sacrifice must, also, inevitably be denied: as we shall see that both are denied in the book in question. It is from this necessary connection of the doctrine of the Trinity, with the other fundamental doctrines of Christianity, that the doctrine must needs become an article of faith; and is not, and cannot be, a point of mere speculation, but becomes a doctrine in the utmost degree practical and vital.

III.—CONCERNING THE LAW OF GOD.

God does not, without the provisions of the Gospel, hold every transgressor to punishment according to the letter of his law. The law has no certain claim of punishment upon the sinner, any longer than till he repents. It needs no atoning sacrifice to satisfy its penal demands, or to vindicate the justice of God while he passes by the transgressions of the sinner. It is a groundless assumption to suppose that it does so.—[p. 198.] Christ did nothing to satisfy any penal demands

[P. 198.] “First, it [the more mitigated orthodox theory] assumes that, as punishment expresses *the abhorrence of God to sin*, or, what is the same, his *justice*, He can sustain his law, and lay a ground of forgiveness without punishment, *only by some equivalent expression of abhorrence—an assumption that is groundless and without consideration*, as I may cause to appear in another place.”—

of the broken law, nor to vindicate the justice of God; all that he did, and all that needed to be done, was to make men penitent.—[pp. 216–219.] Indeed, if the doctrine were that the Law, without the provision of the Gospel, holds every transgressor to punishment, according to its declared penalty, we should reason the doctrine away, and reject it as incredi-

[Pp. 216–219.] “But what, in this view, some will ask, becomes of the *law and justice of God*? First, we have Christ, interrupting the flow of justice by delivering men, or *assisting them to deliver themselves from the penal consequences of transgression*; FROM THE BLINDNESS, BITTERNESS, DEADNESS, AND OTHER DISABILITIES IT PRODUCES. Secondly, there is made out, or given to men, a CONFIDENCE *equally repugnant to justice, that God will freely accept, embrace, and even JUSTIFY the transgressor WHO FORSAKES HIS SIN*. Where, now, it will be asked, is government? What becomes of law? And since God’s love of right, or, what is the same, his *justice*, was evidenced by his law, and the penalties added to enforce it, what shall save the *obligation of the law*; what, indeed, shall displace the ambiguity that shades the divine character itself? Hence the necessity, it is argued, of some vicarious suffering, or expression made by suffering, that shall *vindicate the law* as effectively as the penalties remitted would have done, and thus shall save the moral rigor of God’s integrity, in the view of his subjects. But, granting this, it does not follow that the new vicarious expression of God must be made *by a process equally vindictive with punishment; or that God’s abhorrence to sin must be poured out upon Christ’s own person.*”

“If a *vindication of God’s law is wanted*, in order to the offer of forgiveness, it is wanted *here, and for effect in this world*. And if we narrowly inspect the case presented, we shall be at no loss in regard to the real ground of such a necessity. For it is even a fundamental condition, as regards moral effect on our character, that, while courage and hope are given us, we should be made, at the same time, to feel the intensest possible sense of the sanctity of the law, and the inflexible righteousness of God. What we need, in this view, is *some new expression of God*, which, taken as addressed to us, will keep alive the impression in us that God suffers no laxity. In a word, we must be made to feel, in the very article of forgiveness, when it is offered, the essential and eternal sanctity of God’s law—His own immovable adherence to it, as the only basis of order and well-being in the universe.

“As to the *manner in which this desired result is effected*, since it presents the hinge question at issue between Unitarianism and orthodoxy, I will dilate upon it here as the gravity of the question demands.

“On one side, it is affirmed that God could not forgive sin, either without an equivalent suffering or an *equivalent expression of abhorrence to sin made by suffering, in the place of punishment*. On the other side, *since this doctrine, in either form of it, seems to involve something offensive to our moral sense, or repugnant to our ideas of God*, it is affirmed that God, out of his simple goodness or paternity, can forgive, and will forgive every truly penitent sinner. Satisfied with neither doctrine, for the reasons urged by one against the other, and, perhaps I should say, with both, for the reasons urged by each in its own behalf, I venture to suggest, as the more real and reasonable view, that, IN ORDER TO MAKE MEN PENITENT *and solo want forgiveness*,—that is, to keep the world alive to the eternal integrity, verity, and sanctity of God’s law,—that is, to *keep us apprised of sin, and deny us any power of rest while we continue under sin*; it was needful that Christ, in his life and sufferings, should *consecrate, or re-consecrate the desecrated law of God, and give it a more exact and imminent authority than it had before*—this, too,

ble; so that it would have no verity, and, of course, no sacredness at all.—[pp. 228, 229.]

without anything of penal quality in his passion, without regarding him as bearing evil to pay the release of evil, or as under any infliction or frown of God, and yet doing it by something expressed in his life and death."

[Pp. 228, 229.] "This suffering [of Christ] is expressive, because it is INCIDENTAL to an effort to reveal the love of God, and bring the eternal life into the closest possible proximity to our human hearts."—"If we look upon it as the very end and aim of Christ's mission to recover man to God and obedience; or, what is the same, to re-establish the law as a living power in his heart; then, of course, everything he does and suffers, every labor, weariness, self-denial, and sorrow, becomes an expression of his sense of the value of the law—every pang he endures, declares its sacredness. So that if he offers pardon, free pardon, to every transgressor, we shall never connect a feeling of license, but shall rather feel a sense of the eternal sanctity of the law, and have a more tremulous awe of it in our conscience, than we should if every transgressor were held to punishment by the letter of it. Indeed, if that were the doctrine, we should reason away and reject the doctrine as incredible; so that it would have no verity, and, of course, no sacredness at all. Whereas, having seen, in the pains-taking, suffering life of Jesus, what God will do for the practical establishment of his law, we are seized with a deep and awe-felt conviction, that if we do not return to it according to his call, there is yet something different that must assuredly follow. All this, you perceive, *without anything said of a penal quality, in the sufferings of Christ. No evil is laid upon him as evil, by the Father, to be endured retributively. He only suffers the ills that lie in his way, and endures the violence that human malignity and cruelty heap on his head.*"

R E M A R K S .

While the author, in these passages, confesses the necessity of keeping up an impression of the eternal sanctity and verity of the law, he teaches that this object is effected by a scheme essentially different from that which God has revealed, and utterly subversive of the great central and fundamental truth of the Gospel. We regard him as denying the *vindictory power* of the law, stripping it of its *sanctions*, and leaving it mere advice, and no longer law. Indeed, he declares, that if God were to instruct us that every transgressor is, by the power of law, and by the divine justice, without the Gospel, held to punishment according to the declared penalty, we should reason away and reject such a declaration as incredible, so that it would have no verity, and of course no sacredness at all.

IV.—CONCERNING THE FALL.

The fall of man was, from the nature of the case, an *a priori* necessity; and, of course, a historic certainty. It was to be expected that the soul, under a simple commandment of God, would yield to the instigation of her curious nature, and try the bad experience of evil. We accordingly look, reasonably and necessarily, for a lapse under the first discipline of law.—[pp. 238–240.]

[Pp. 238–240.] “The first stage of government is the stage of law. But law, taken by itself, can establish nothing. There is an *a priori necessity*, and, of course, a *historic certainty*, that the training of an empire of free beings, and the final and complete union of their will to God, *will require a double administration.*”—“Under the first stage, that of commandment, the soul makes her acquaintance with obligation, comes at the terms, so to speak, of her existence, lays her hands upon the iron-fences of law that stiffen round her. Will she keep within her inclosures? If we speak of a naked possibility, she doubtless may. But it will be wonderful if she does not sometimes yield to the instigation of her curious nature, and try the bad experience of evil. Or if she does not, if she stays within her iron inclosure, only because it is iron, she would seem to be governed in the good she follows, by constraint; which can hardly be regarded as a state of perfect virtue—it is a *prudential*, and even a *cringing virtue*, more than a virtue of liberty.

“Accordingly, we look for a lapse, under this first discipline of law. Feeling its bars, as the bars of a cage, about her, the soul begins to chafe against them, and so she learns the law—first, by attrition against it, and then by bondage under it. This is her fall.”

REMARKS.

We regard this, 1, As setting forth the principle that a simple commandment of God is, with holy beings, no sufficient ground of obedience: but if left with this alone, and put upon their simple love, faith, and duty, they are to be expected to transgress:

2. As palliating the guilt of the fall, by representing it as reasonably to be expected—an *a priori* necessity, arising from a natural curiosity and irksomeness of restraint, which, even in holy beings, naturally required a second administration before complete obedience is to be expected:

3. That for holy beings to obey God, simply because he is God, and because, as such, he commands, is a prudential and even a cringing virtue. The whole goes to teach men lightly to esteem the Divine authority; and to vindicate creatures in rebellion against the law of God, until some other further dispensation is given to restrain them, than the dispensation of law.

V.—CONCERNING THE ATONEMENT.

CHRIST did not die to redeem us from the penalty of the law. He did not bear our sins in the sense of delivering us from the penalty by his sufferings. His blood was not, truly, shed for many for the *remission* of sins.—[pp. 218, 219.] He did not die a vicarious sacrifice, the just for the unjust.—[p. 189.] He is not in that sense the propitiation for our sins. There was no design of expiation, or of vicarious or penal suffering, in His death.—[pp. 236, 237.] He did not come into the world for the purpose of dying for us: that would have been ostentatious and absurd.—[pp. 201, 202.] If God could for one mo-

[Pp. 218-219.] “On one side, it is affirmed that God could not forgive sin, either *without an equivalent suffering, or an equivalent expression of abhorrence to sin made by suffering, in the place of punishment.*”—[P. 219.] “I venture to suggest, as the more real and reasonable view, that, in order to *make men penitent*, and so to want forgiveness—that is, to keep the world alive to the eternal integrity, verity, and sanctity of God’s law—that is, to keep us apprised of sin, and deny us any power of rest while we continue under sin, it was needful that Christ, in his life and sufferings should, consecrate or re-consecrate the desecrated law of God, and give it a more exact and imminent authority than it had before—this, too, *without anything of a penal quality in his passion*, without regarding him as bearing evil to PAY THE RELEASE OF EVIL, or *as under any infliction or frown of God*, and yet doing it by something expressed in his life and death.”

P. 189.] Christ enters into human feelings by his incarnate charities and sufferings, to re-engage the world’s love, and to re-unite the world, as free, to the Eternal Life. To sum up all in one condensed and luminous utterance, every word of which is power, *God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself.* The apostle *says nothing here*, it will be observed, *of reconciling God to men*, he only speaks of reconciling men to God. Had he said, the Life of God was manifested in Jesus Christ, *to quicken the world in love and truth, and reunite it to himself, he would have said the same thing under a different form.* I am well aware that, in offering such a statement, as the true doctrine of Christ and his work, I affirm nothing that is distinctively orthodox, and shall even seem to *rule out* that view of Christ “as a *sacrifice, an expiation for sin, a vicarious suffering*, which, to the view of most orthodox Christians, contains the real moment of his work as a Savior.”

P. [201.] “Once more, it is to be noticed, as a law of expression, *that when evil is endured, simply and only for what it expresses*, it expresses nothing. If a man wades out upon some mountain, in the snows of a wintry night, to carry food to a perishing family, then what he encounters of risk and suffering, being incidentally encountered, is an expression of charity. But if he calls upon us to observe his charity expressed in what he will suffer, and, waiting for a stormy night, goes forth on the same expedition to the mountain, he *expresses nothing but ostentation.* So if Christ comes into the world to teach, to cheer, to heal, to pour his sympathies into the bosom of all human sorrow, to assert the integrity of truth, and rebuke the wickedness of sin—in a word, to MANIFEST the Eternal Life, and bring it into a quickening union with the souls of our race, then to SUFFER INCIDENTALLY, to die an ignominious and cruel death *rather than depart from his heavenly errand*, is to make an expression of the Heart of God, which every human

ment lay his frown (or penal suffering,) upon the soul of the innocent, He can be no such Being as the author of the book in question has loved and worshiped.—[pp. 198-201.] No governmental reasons can justify such a substitution of the innocent for the guilty. If the great Redeemer, in the excess of His goodness, consents freely to offer Himself to the Father, or to God, to receive the penal woes, or some sufficient part of the penal woes, in his own person; and if the Father accepts the sacrifice, then the Divine government, instead of clearing itself, assumes the double ignominy, first, of letting the guilty go, and secondly, of accepting the sufferings

soul must feel. And this expression may avail to sanctify the law *before us*, even though there be no abhorrence expressed in his sufferings. But, if Christ comes into the world, *invoking, as it were, the frown of God*, and undertaking to *suffer evil as evil*, that he may express God's JUSTICE, or HIS ABHORRENCE OF SIN, then he *expresses nothing*. The very laws of expression, if I understand them rightly, require that suffering should be endured, not as suffering, or as evil taken up for the expression of it, but that the evil be a necessary *incident encountered on the way*, to some end separate from expression—some truth, benefaction, or work of love."

[P. 198-201.] "In the second and more mitigated class of orthodox opinions, a very important and really true position is, at last, reached, viz:—that the value of Christ's life and death is measured by what is therein expressed. Only it is needed, now, to go a step farther, investigating *what* he expresses—whether, possibly, it be not rather to accomplish these ends, and that, too, *without any imposition or endurance of evil in the penal form of evil, any suffering or pain which is undertaken for effect, as being a direct exhibition of God's JUSTICE, or JUDICIAL ABHORRENCE TO SIN.*"

"The objections I have to that more mitigated theory, are these:—First, it assumes that, *as punishment expresses the abhorrence of God to sin, or what is the same, his justice, he can sustain his law* and lay a ground of forgiveness without punishment, *only by some equivalent expression of abhorrence*—an assumption that is groundless and without consideration, as I may cause to appear in another place.

"Secondly, this latter seems to accord with the former view in supposing that Christ *suffers evil as evil*, or as a penal *visitation of God's justice*, only doing it in a less painful degree; that is, suffering *so much of evil as will suffice*, considering the dignity of his person, to express *the same amount of abhorrence to sin*, that would be expressed by the eternal punishment of all mankind. I confess my inability to see how an innocent being could ever be set, even for one moment, in an attitude of displeasure under God. *If He could lay His frown for one moment on the soul of innocence and virtue, He must be no such being as I have loved and worshiped. Much less can I imagine that He should lay it on the head of one whose nature is itself co-equal Drity.* Does any one say that He will do it for public governmental reasons? *No governmental reasons, I answer, can justify even the admission of innocence into a participation of frowns and penal distributions. If consenting innocence says:—'Let the blow fall on me,' precisely there is it for a government to prove its justice, even to the point of sublimity: to reveal the essential, eternal, unmitigable distinction it holds between innocence and sin, by declaring that under law and its distributions, it is even IMPOSSIBLE TO SUFFER ANY COMMUTATION, any the least confusion of places.*

of the innocent.—[p. 196.] It did not please the Father to bruise him, and to put him to grief.—[pp. 228, 229, 230.] When Christ cried out upon the cross, the Father had not forsaken Him.—[p. 230.] Christ died only incidentally, with no

[P. 200.]—“According to the supposition, the problem here is to produce an expression of abhorrence to sin, THROUGH THE SUFFERINGS OF CHRIST, IN PLACE OF ANOTHER, through the sufferings of the guilty. Now, the truth of the latter expression consists in the fact, that there is an abhorrence in God to be expressed. But there is no such abhorrence in God toward Christ, and, therefore, if the external expression of Christ's sufferings has no correspondent feelings to be expressed, *where lies the truth of the expression?* And if the frown of God lies upon his soul, as we often hear, in the garden and on the cross, how can the frown of God, falling on the soul of innocence, express any truth, or any feelings of justice?”

[P. 201.] “Thirdly, if Christ be himself, in the highest and truest sense, the Eternal Life, God manifested in the flesh, then every expression of justice or abhorrence to sin, which is made by his death, as a mere endurance of evil, is involved in yet greater obscurity and confusion.”—“He is, in fact, the embodiment, as he is the representation of God and divine Government; he must be taken, in all that he does, as something which is properly referable to God. No theory of three metaphysical natures, called persons, in God, can at all vary this truth. The transactions of Christ must still be taken as transactions of God. The frown, then, if it be said to be of God, is quite as truly on God. The expression of justice or abhorrence is made by sufferings that are endured, not out of the circle of divine government, but in it. And thus we have a government realizing its penal distributions or their equivalents; that is, *its justice*, its significations of abhorrence, wholly within itself and apart from all terms of relation, save as the subjects, so called, are to be spectators! Whatever speculations we may hold, in regard to modes of expression, can we hold such a view of divine government without some uncomfortable suspicion of mistake in it?”

[P. 196.]—“And if the great Redeemer, in the excess of his goodness, consents, freely offers himself to the Father, or to God, to receive the penal woes, or some sufficient part of the penal woes of the world, in his own person, what does it signify, when that offer is accepted, but that God will have his modicum of suffering somehow—if he lets the guilty go, will yet satisfy himself out of the innocent? In which the divine government, instead of clearing itself, assumes the double ignominy, first of letting the guilty go, and secondly of accepting the sufferings of innocence.”

[P. 229.]—“But this, it will be apprehended by some, destroys the whole import of such scenes as the agony and the crucifixion. It may require a different construction of these scenes, but I hope it will not be too hastily concluded that a different construction robs them of their sacred import and power. It is imagined by many, that what is called ‘the agony’ of Jesus, was caused by the penal attitude in which he found himself before the Father, and the consequent sense of the desertion he felt.”—[p. 230.]—“It was not that the soul of the sufferer was racked, by a sense of the withdrawal of the Father. How could the Father withdraw from so great excellence and purity, under so great a burden of sorrow?—what end could it serve thus to falsify his character?—It is also represented, by Luke, that an angel is sent to strengthen and support him—sent by the Father to support him under his own displeasure! Sometimes the exclamation, which he uttered afterwards, on the cross, is made to assist the interpretation of the agony also—‘My God! my God! why hast thou forsaken me!’ But this is only the language of intense suffering, an interjection, so to speak, of anguish.”—“To take this language of passion, this common outcry of distress, and hold it in a cool, historic, or dogmatic sense, is to violate all dignified laws of interpretation.”

thought of a penal quality in his death—[pp. 219, 228, 229.] or of any divine abhorrence of sin exhibited by sufferings laid upon his person.—[pp. 236, 237.] Everything done by Him was done for expression before us, and thus for effect in us :— [pp. 236, 237,] only that he might enter into human feelings by his incarnate charities and sufferings, to re-engage the world's love, and to re-unite the world, as free, to the Eternal life— [p. 189,] to set before us the value which God puts upon law, by the import of His life taken in the simple aspect of a free, faithful, loving obedience.—[p. 226, 227.] His work was the

[Pp. 228, 229.]—“ This suffering [of Christ,] is expressive, because it is *incidental* to an effort to reveal the love of God.”—“ All this, you perceive, without anything said of a penal quality, in the sufferings of Christ. No evil is laid upon him as evil, by the Father, *to be endured retributively. He only suffers the ills that lie in his way, and endures the violence that human malignity and cruelty heap on his head.*”—[See this passage cited more at length, under article “ Concerning the Law.”]

[Pp. 236, 237.]—“ The effect depends, *not on any real altar-ceremony in his death*, but it depends, artistically speaking, in the expressive power of the fact that the Incarnate Word, appearing in humanity, and having a ministry for the reconciliation of men to God, even *goes to such a pitch of devotion, as to yield up his life to it, and allow the blood of his mysterious person to redder our polluted earth.*”—“ My doctrine is summarily this—that, *excluding all thoughts of a penal quality in the life and death of Christ, or of any divine abhorrence to sin, exhibited by sufferings laid upon his person—*excluding points like these, and regarding everything done by him as done for expression before us, and thus for effect in us, he does produce an impression in our minds of the essential sanctity of God's law and character, which it was needful to produce, and without which any proclamation of pardon would be dangerous, any attempt to subdue and reconcile us to God, ineffectual. Meantime, it may comport some to add, that he does by *implication*, or inferentially, express in all that he does the profoundest abhorrence to sin; for if, he will endure so much to re-sanctify his law and renew us in the spirit of it, how intensely signified is the abhorrence of his nature to the transgression of his law—more intensely than it would be by the punishment even of us all!”

[P. 226, 227.]—“ Regard him as coming under the desecrated law”—“ then consider the import of his life, taken in the simple aspect of a free, faithful, loving, unfaltering obedience—obedience unto death. And then, if the speculative instinct rushes in to insist on the absurdity of obedience in a being whose nature is essential deity, let it be enough to reply that there is no being in the universe, of whom obedience can be predicated in so vast a sense as of God. For though God is under no obligations to another, *He is yet under obligations to goodness to devise, do, bear, forbear, suffer, all which the conception or idea of infinite goodness and love contains. He is really under the same law of obligation that we were under and cast off,* and it is the glory and greatness of his nature that he delights eternally to acknowledge this law. Christ is the manifested life *re-creating this everlasting obedience of the divine nature. All that he does and suffers is but an expression of the homage, rendered by God himself, to that which we reject; and the only object of his mission is to bring us back into a like free obedience to the same lovely requirement. His poverty and patience, his weary, persecuted life his agony, his cross, his death—exclude from these all thought of penal suffering or vindictive chastisement, regard him simply as thus supporting the call of duty, and signifying to mankind the self-renouncing and sublime obedience of the divine nature.*”

fulfilment of His own eternal obligation—in which, by simply supporting the call of duty, and signifying to mankind the self-renouncing and sublime obedience of the divine nature, [p. 227,] He aimed to bring us, by this *example*, back into a like free obedience to the same lovely requirement ; and incidentally he died rather than depart from this work.—[201.]

VI.—JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH.

1. THE OBJECT OF THE FAITH.
2. NATURE OF THE JUSTIFICATION.
3. THE GROUND OF JUSTIFICATION.

1. The OBJECT of the faith by which the sinner is justified, is not Christ as the Redeemer whose blood was really shed for the remission of sins ; for no such sacrifice was rendered, and none was needed, in order that God might be just, and the justifier of the sinner. If God had accepted such a sacrifice, it would have been both unjust and absurd, and a sufficient ground for rejecting him as the God of our love and worship [pp. 199–201.] [See under Atonement.]

2. The sinner has no remission of sins through the merits of Christ's atoning blood : nor is Justification "An act of God's free grace, wherein he pardoneth all our sins, and accepteth us as righteous in his sight, only for the righteousness of Christ imputed to us and received by faith alone ;" nor for any consideration based on any vicarious or atoning sacrifice of Christ. If the sinner believes in such a sacrifice, and rests his soul upon it, this is not believing and resting in the truth, but in error [p. 268]. The sinner is to understand by the sufferings and death of Christ, that God had proposed to express—not penalty or abhorrence of sin, but—only his love, and what God will do, without punishment and without the expression of penalty or abhorrence, for the practical establishment of his law. [See under Atonement.] Coming with this under-

[P. 268.]—"First, we have what may be called the Protestant form, which takes the ritualistic side of the Gospel, the objective side, turns it into dogma, and repeats it as a theoretic or theologic truth. And then *though it be no longer a truth, the form of a truth, and so far a divine power lingers in it.*"

standing to the spectacle of Christ's life and incidental death, the sinner is to take courage and receive assurance, being convinced that his terrors of the condemning sentence of the law are groundless, and that visibly God is not the implacable avenger his guilty fears had painted [pp. 213-216]. This belief is *saving faith* [p. 214]. This assurance is *Justification* [p. 214].

[P. 213-216.] "An indescribable dread of evil still overhangs the human spirit. The being is haunted by shadows of wrath and tries all painful methods of self pacification. Vigils, pilgrimages, sacrifices, tortures, nothing is too painful or wearisome that promises to ease the guilt of the mind. Without any speculations about justification, mankind refuse to justify themselves. A kind of despair fills the heart of the race. They have no courage. Whether they know God or not, they know themselves, and they sentence themselves to death. If they have only some obscure notions of a divine Being, then they dread the full discovery of him. If he lurks in their gods, they fear lest their gods should visit them in vengeance, or plague them by some kind of mischief. The sky is full of wrathful powers, and the deep ground also is full. Their guilty soul peoples the world with vengeful images of its own creation."

[P. 214.] "And here, now, if we desire to find it, *is the true idea of Christian Justification.* We discover what it is by the want of it. Justification is that which will give confidence, again, to guilty minds; that which will assure the base and humiliated soul of the world, chase away the demons of wrath and despair it has evoked, and help it to return to God in courage, whispering still to itself—soul be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee."—"In short he [Christ,] *lives confidence into the world.* Apart from all theologic theories, we know, we see with our eyes, that God will justify us and give us still his peace. And then, when we truly come unto him, believing that Christ the Word is He, when forsaking all things for him, we embrace him as our life, then are we practically justified. It is impossible for us to fear. No guilt of the past can disturb us; a peace that passeth understanding fills our nature. Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

"Or, if we advert, in this connection, to the sufferings and death of Christ, we shall see how these, without the imputation of any penal quality or frown of God upon his person, have a special efficacy in fortifying our assurance, or hope of justification with God. Dismiss all speculation about the mode, possibility, interior reality of this suffering; understand that God, having proposed, in this manner, to express his love, all logical, theological, ontological, physiological questions are, by the supposition, out of place. Come, then, to the spectacle of Christ's suffering life and death, as to a mystery wholly transcendent, save in what it expresses of Divine feeling. Call what of this feeling you receive, the reality—all else the *machina Dei* for the expression of this. With deepest reverence of soul, approach that most mysterious sacrament of love, the agony of Jesus; note the patience of his trial, the meekness of his submission to injustice, and the malignant passions of his enemies; behold the creation itself darkening and shuddering with a horror of sensibility at the scene transpiring in his death; hear the cry of the crucified—"Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do;" then regard the life that was manifested, dropping into cessation, and thereby signifying the deposite of itself in the bosom of that malign world to whose enmity it is yielded,—who, what man of our race beholding this strange history of the Word, will not feel a new courage enter into his soul? VISIBLY, GOD IS NOT THE IMPLACABLE AVENGER HIS GUILTY FEARS HAD PAINTED. But He is a friend, he is love. And so great is this change, apart from all theology, that I seem even to see

3. The *ground of Justification* is not the sacrifice which Christ has made to answer the condemning sentence of the law, but it is the righteousness which is prepared in us [pp. 254-258]. Christ is not really our sacrifice or atonement,

another character produced by it in the Christian nations. *They dare to hope. God is closer to them, and in a way to inspire courage. They are not withered, humiliated even to baseness, under those guilty and abject fears, that take away at last the spirit of other nations. It is not that they have all a theory of justification by faith, but that their current conceptions of God are such as the history of Jesus, the suffering Redeemer, has imparted. They have a feeling of something like justification, even if they never heard of it—a feeling, which, if it were to vent itself in language, would say—Therefore we are freely justified by grace. It is not that the suffering appeases God, but that it expresses God—displays, in open history, the unconquerable love of God's Heart.*"

[P. 254.] "The *moral propriety*, then, or *possibility*, nay, in one view, THE GROUND OF JUSTIFICATION, is subjectively prepared IN US; viz., in a *state or impression*, a sense of the sacredness of law, produced IN US, by Christ's life and death. But we cannot think of it in this artificial way; most persons could make nothing of it. We must *transfer* this *subjective state or impression*, this GROUND OF JUSTIFICATION, and produce it outwardly, if possible, in some *objective form*; as if it had some effect on the law or on God. The Jew had done the same before us, and we follow him; representing Christ as *our sacrifice, sin-offering, atonement, or sprinkling of blood*. Now in all these terms, we represent a work as done *outwardly for us*, which is really *done in us*, and *through impressions* prepared in us, but the more adequately and truly still, for the reason that we have it in mystic forms before us. These forms are the objective equivalent of our subjective impressions. Indeed, our impressions have their life and power in and under these forms. Neither let it be imagined that we only happen to seize upon these *images of sacrifice, atonement, and blood*, because they are at hand. They are prepared, as *God's form of art*, for the representation of Christ and his work; and if we refuse to let him pass into this form, we have no mold of thought that can fitly represent him. And when he is thus represented, we are to understand that he is our sacrifice and atonement, that by his blood we have remission, *not in any speculative sense, but as in art*. We might as well think to come at the statue of Aristides speculatively, interpreting its power by geometric demonstrations, instead of giving our heart to the expression of integrity in the form, as to be scheming and dogmatizing over these words *atonement, sin-offering, sacrifice, and blood*, which are the divine form of Christianity.

[P. 255.] "It is only another aspect of the same truth, when Christ is *represented*, objectively, as *our righteousness*. As the sacred blood, yielded for sin, stood in the place of a righteousness, in virtue of the impressions produced by it, so also does Christ; and as the offering was a *liturgic exercise of faith and penitence*, so likewise Christ is a power to *regenerate character and restore us to righteousness of life*. What, then, shall we call him, if not *our righteousness*; TRANSFERRING, again, *what is only subjective*, IN US, and beholding it in its objective source—that is, in the *form of divine art and expression, by which it is wrought*? This is the *true attitude of FAITH*; for if, in the utmost simplicity, we thus believe in him, if we take him, objectively, as a stock of righteousness for us, and hang ourselves upon him for supply, we can scarcely fail to have his life and character ingrafted in us. We may take his obedience as accruing to our benefit—we may see *our righteousness* in him, just as we say we see *our pity* in things that we say are *pitiful*. If we go farther, if we speak of his righteousness as imputed to us, it will not be ill,

nor have we by his blood any real remission of sins; these are only terms, as in art, transferring objectively to Christ, the ground of justification, which is really subjective in us; the effect of his death being not upon the sentence of the law,

in case we hold the representation as in art, and not as a dialectic or dogmatic statement.

“Or, adverting to the affecting truth that Christ has come between us and our sins in his death, we shall see our sins *transferred to him*, and regard him as loading himself with our evils. And then, *as if we had put our sins upon his head*, we shall say that he bears our sins, suffers the just for the unjust, is made a curse for us. All those terms of vicarious import, that were generated under the ritual sacrifice, will be applied over to him, and we shall hold him by our faith, as the victim substituted for our sins. And so, with the humblest and most subduing confessions, we shall deposit our soul tenderly and gratefully in his mercy.

[256, 7, 8.] “Or we may take the general doctrine affirmed as the subjective verity of the Gospel, viz., that God is in Christ reconciling the world unto himself. Then *all the sacrificial terms, that represent pacification with God*, will come into application at once; Christ will now be called our priest answering for us, our sacrifice, passover, lamb, blood of sprinkling. Here, too, the word *propitiation*, as used (I John ii. 2.)—a different word, in the original, from that which we found in the third chapter of the epistle to the Romans—will get its proper objective sense. Viewed thus objectively, Christ will be a propitiation, a piacular, expiatory, vicarious offering, and, embracing him in *this altar form*, there will be a simplicity in our moral attitude, such as will favor the transforming and reconciling power of his life, as no attempt to apply him artificially and reflectively would do—therefore with a more certain and deeper effect.

“Or, if we are occupied more especially with the desire of purification, or with present, actual deliverance from evil, and the new purity and cleanness of our heart before God, we shall *spea*k of Christ as a *lustral offering that removes our defilement*, and declare that the blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin. All things, we shall say, in our deep gratitude, are purged with blood, and without shekling of blood there is no remission.

“You perceive, in this manner, and as a result of our experiment, that as soon as we undertake to throw the elements of our *subjective doctrine* into an *objective representation*, it passes immediately into the view commonly designated by the phrase *vicarious atonement*, only it rather becomes a *vicarious religion*. And thus, after all, it proves itself to be *identical, at the root, with the common Protestant doctrine*—identical, I mean, *not in any rigid and exact sense*, but in such a sense that one is a more didactic and reflective, the other a more artistic representation of the same subject matter. *There is no conflict, UNTIL WE BEGIN TO ASSERT THE FORMER AS THE ONLY TRUTH OF THE GOSPEL, or to work up the latter by itself, into a speculative system of dogma, or of moral government.* If we say that Christ is here, reconciling men to God, it is, for just that reason, necessary to have a way of representing that *God is conciliated toward us*. If we say that Christ is a *power*, to quicken us into newness of life, and bring us out of the bondage we are under to evil, for just that reason do we need to *spea*k of the remission of sins *obtained by his blood*; for the two seem to be only different forms of one and the same truth, and are often run together in the Scriptures—as when the blood of Christ, ‘who offered himself without spot to God,’ is said to ‘purge the conscience from dead works, to serve the living God.’ The two views are not logically or theologically equivalent, but they are not the less really so on that account. An objective religion, that shall stand before me, and be operated or operative for me, excluding all subjective reference of thought, must take such forms, most obviously, as are no logical equivalents

but upon us, making impressions on us, and working character in us [p. 255]. So we *call* Christ our righteousness, transferring to Christ, as in art, what is only subjective in us; the righteousness by which we are justified being not in Christ, but in us [p. 255]. We only see *our own righteousness* in him, just as we see our own pity in things that we call pitiful [p. 255]. In no other sense or manner do we see our sins transferred to Christ, or regard him as loading himself with our evils. As if we had put our sins on his head, we *say* that he bears our sins—suffers the just for the unjust. It is not so; he does not bear our sins, nor suffer vicariously the just for the unjust; but we are justified by actual righteousness wrought in us through the impressions of the sacredness of law and of the love of God, made upon us by the manifestation of the same in the life and death of Christ [pp. 255, 266].

VII.—OBJECTIVE FORMS OF SUBJECTIVE TRUTHS.

The objective form, if regarded as the truth, is not true [pp. 257, 268], the representation bearing no true correspondency to

of the same, *considered as addressing and describing our internal states*: for, by the supposition, an *objective artistic power is substituted for those methods of address which appeal to consideration, reflection, and self-regulation.*—"It is the DIVINE FORM of Christianity, in distinction from all others, and is, in that view, substantial to it, or consubstantial with it. It is, in fact, a *Divine Ritual for the working of the world's mind.*"—"The Christ must become a religion *for* the soul and *before* it; therefore, a RITE or LITURGY *for* the world's feeling,—otherwise Christianity were incomplete, or imperfect."

[P. 266.] "If the soul, then, is ever to get her health and freedom in goodness, she must have the gospel, not as a doctrine only, but as RITE *before* her, a *righteousness, a ransom, a sacrifice, a lamb slain, a blood offered for her cleansing before Jehovah's altar.* Then, reclining her broken heart on this, *calling* it her religion—hers by faith—she receives a grace broader than consciousness, loses herself in a love that is not imparted in the molds of mere self-culture, and without making folly of Christ by her own vain self-applications, he is made *unto* her wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption."

[P. 257.] "There is no conflict" [between this doctrine and "the common Protestant doctrine"] "until we begin to assert the" [latter] "as the only *truth of the Gospel.*" [See the passage under Justification.]

[P. 268.] "First, we have what may be called the *Protestant form*, which takes the ritualistic side of the Gospel, *the objective side*, turns it into dogma, and re-asserts it as a theoretic or theologic *truth.* And then, THOUGH IT BE NO LONGER A TRUTH, the *form* of a truth, and, so far, a divine power lingers in it. I say a divine power; for this *holy form* of sacrifice is no child of human art or reason, but the body prepared of God to be the vehicle of his love to men. But, alas! the Protestant world have not been able to content themselves in it, or to think it sufficiently wise, till they have changed it into

any thing real. It is only a form, or representation, or liturgy, by which impressions are produced in us. Thus, there being no real sacrifice, nor any real remission of sin as the effect of sacrifice, and the atonement being no propitiation to the divine justice, but a simple at-one-ment—having all its effect upon us [see pp. 236, 237, under Atonement] not by any real altar ceremony, but only by an artistic display—a liturgic form [see pp. 252–255, under Atonement] for an effect in the direct manner of art,—to turn these representations into dogma, and represent them as realities, is to represent as truth that which is not true [pp. 268, 257]; and the Protestant world, who have taught that these representations of atonement and remission by the blood of Christ have a true correspondence with any thing real, and so are the truth, have done what they could to set themselves between God's wisdom and man's want [p. 268.] Howbeit, there are beams of light yet shining by them, and some, it is to be trusted, shine through; inasmuch as what they set forth as truth, though no truth, is yet a Divine Form—the body prepared by God to be the vehicle of his love to men. The particle of truth which Protestants hold, is no reason for their contending about the faith, either with Papists or Unitarians, who also hold their particle:—on the basis of this doctrine of objective forms of subjective truths, Protestants, Romanists, and Unitarians, may all unite, universalize their feelings, and become brothers [pp. 269–270].

dogma, and made it *human*; in which *they have done what they could to set themselves between God's wisdom and man's want*. Still there are beams of light shining by them, and some, I trust, shine through."

[P. 269.] "Secondly, on the left of this Protestant form, we have the speculative or philosophic form."—"Under this, as one of its varieties, the Unitarian doctrine is included. Nor is there any doubt that we declare a great and real truth, when we say that the reconciliation of *man* to God is the *sole* object of Christ's mission."—"Reason is not confused and baffled here, as in the Protestant dogma, but the altar of self-renunciation and faith, she has taken down."

P. 270.] "Thirdly, on the right hand of the Protestant view, we have the Romish form, the form of the mass. Here the ritual, objective view, is all in all—nay, somewhat more than all."—"We deal with blood, not as a symbol to faith and feeling, but as a real and miraculous entity. But here, again, a light will sometimes stream by the miracle, into the worshipper's heart—genuine light from Christ our peace, and the Lamb that taketh away our sin."—"Seeing thus how AT-ONE-MENT and *atonement* and THE MASS, all, lie about the Christian truth, receiving something from it which belongs to its verity, rejecting much that is essential to its value and power, is it better to busy our-

VIII.—CHRISTIANITY ESOTERIC AND EXOTERIC.

There may be a true Christian experience when one rejects the altar form, both as a truth and as a form without truth [p. 264, 265]. It will add greatly to the comfort and true understanding of the *preacher*, if he has in *his* mind this solution of the form, viz., that it is art and not truth [p. 271], and probably the philosophic or subjective view (which rejects the doctrine of vicarious atonement as a reality, and views it as a liturgy or form of art) may be allowed to come into a somewhat more prevalent use among a cultivated, philosophic people [p. 271], and in a philosophic age of the world. Yet such people will, from their infirmities, continue to have some need of the sacrificial or ritual view [p. 271]; and the rude masses would be much injured by the discovery that these representations are not realities; and would make a sad figure in applying a gospel of philosophic causes to their own nature, for they hardly know as yet that they have a nature [p. 267].

selves for the next eighteen centuries, in quarreling, each for the *particle of truth* he has, because it is a particle, or, to come back, in shame and sorrow, and receive enough of God's truth to enlarge our consciousness, universalize our feelings, and make us brothers?"

[P. 264.] "I do not say here, it will be observed, that no one can have a true Christian experience, who does not find it in the embrace of Christ as a sacrifice, or a vicarious religion; I only affirm that no one ever becomes a true Christian man, who does not rest himself in God, or give himself over to God in objective faith and devotion, somehow. He may do this, *regarding simply the essential truth and goodness of God as revealed in Jesus Christ!*"—"And here it is that the *objective view of Christ* holds a connection so profound, with all that is freest, most unselfish, and most elevated in Christian experience. *There may be a Christian experience where it is rejected.*" [p. 265]

[P. 271.] "An interesting question remains, which I can only reply to just far enough to save from misapprehension, viz., *how ought Christ to be preached?* Not, certainly, as a theory, nor in the half scholastic manner in which I have here exhibited the Christian doctrine. I only think it will add greatly to the *comfort and true self-understanding of the preacher* in his works, if he has, *in his own mind*, some such solution as this. Meantime, he is to preach much as the Scriptures themselves speak, blending the two views of Christ together. Sometimes he will be more in one, and sometimes more in the other. *Probably the philosophic, or subjective view, may be allowed to come into a somewhat more prevalent use among a cultivated, philosophic people, and in a philosophic age of the world.* But it must never exclude and displace the sacrificial or ritual view; for even the Christian philosopher himself will need often to go back to this holy altar of feeling, and hang there, trusting in Christ's offering; there to rest himself in the quietness of faith, getting away from his care and reflection, and his troublesome self-culture, to be cared for and clothed with a righteousness not his own."

P. 267.] "I might speak also"—"of the sad figure that would be made by

They want an altar, and at least a *form* of Christ's blood sprinkled on it; he must, though not in reality, yet in their apprehension, bear their sins for them. He must be a stock of righteousness before them, and be, in fact, their religion. They, then, taking him by faith *to be* all this before and for them, though, in reality, he is nothing of all this at all,—the Divine Art hidden in it transforms their inner life, in the immediate and absolute manner of art; and seeing now their new peace, not in themselves, where it is, but in God (where it is not,) they rejoice that God is reconciled, and his anger smoothed away; being equally under an illusion in supposing this last to be true as the first [p. 267; see 213–216, under Justification].

the rude masses of the world, in applying a gospel of philosophic causes to their own nature; for they hardly know, as yet, that they have a nature. How manifest is it that they want an altar, set up before them, and if they cannot quite see the blood of Christ sprinkled on it, they must have it as a Form in their souls; he must be a stock of righteousness before them; he must bear their sins for them, and be, in fact, their religion. Then, *taking him, by faith, to be* all this before and for them, the *Divine Art hid in it*, transforms their inner life, in the *immediate, absolute manner of art*; and seeing now their new peace, *not in themselves*, where it is, but in God, they rejoice that God is reconciled, and his anger smoothed away.

“However, there is no such difference of class among men, that the most cultivated and wisest disciple will not *often need*, and as often rejoice, to get away from all self-handling and self-cherishing cares.”—“The mind becomes wearied and lost in its own mazes, discouraged and crushed by its frequent defeats, and virtue itself, being only a conscious tug of exertion, takes a look as unbeautiful as the life is unhappy. Therefore we need, all alike, some objective religion; to come and hang ourselves upon the altar of sacrifice sprinkled by the blood of Jesus; to enter into the Holiest set open by his death; to quiet our soul in his peace, clothe it in his righteousness, and trust him as the Lamb of God that taketh away our sin. In these simple, unselfish, unreflective exercises, we shall make our closest approach to God.”

REMARKS.

According to this scheme, we are both justified and sanctified, by embracing as truth that which is no truth; and though the more “cultivated and philosophic” might become so even under a knowledge of the truth, yet it is essential to the “rude masses” to be thus deluded. Accordingly, God prepares a *Divine Form*, a form not corresponding to the reality of things, and which, regarded as the truth, is not true, by which, through an illusion—not to say deception—practised on their *understandings*, he moves their feelings to love

and righteousness. This illusion is far more effectual than truth; indeed the rude masses would have made a sad figure with the truth; and even the cultivated and philosophic stand in much need of the illusion. God therefore persuades men that Christ died to atone for their sins to his offended justice and to his injured law; but this is not so. He makes them believe that Christ is the propitiation for their sins, and that Christ is their righteousness; but it is not so. Taught to apply to Christ "all these terms of vicarious import" [pp. 255-258], they hold him by *faith* as the *victim substituted* for their sins [p. 267]. Holding thus, by *faith*, to an *untruth*, under the illusion—or delusion—that Christ bears their sins [p. 256], suffers the just for the unjust, is made a curse for them—"with the humblest and most subduing confessions, they deposit their souls tenderly and gratefully in the Divine mercy" [p. 256]. Thus by Divinely prepared Forms, or Liturgic exercises wrought before them, and by Divine Art hid in forms devoid of truth, God converts and sanctifies the soul.

And, what is even more remarkable in this scheme is, that God so deludes men by representations of vicarious suffering, which have in them, "when speculatively regarded," that which is "*repugnant to the most sacred instincts or sentiments of our moral nature,*" and which "*dissolves itself at the first approach of rational inquiry*" [p. 203]; and by which, if we once regard these representations as true, he forfeits our esteem as the God of our love and worship [p. 199].

Our Lord Jesus Christ says, "Sanctify them through thy *truth*: thy *word is truth.*" No, says this book, sanctify them through illusions. It will not do for the rude masses to know the truth. Besides, "thy word"—in its representations of vicarious atonement, and as it is necessary to be understood by the rude masses—is not "truth."

The Savior says, "Ye shall know *the truth*, and the truth shall make you free." No, says this book; truth cannot be known; language is inadequate to allow of any written and external revelation which shall truly and intelligibly declare the mind and will of God to his creatures. What we want

is not *truth*, but *impressions* from liturgies and forms of art. Doctrinal statements of truth are mere dogma, fraught with error and mischief. Ye shall *not* know *the truth*; ye shall receive impressions from *Forms of Art*, and embrace by faith things which are *not truths*; and *error* "shall make you free."

We had indeed read of some, that God should send them "*strong delusion* that they might *believe a lie*; that they all might be damned who *believe not the truth*;" and that for the very reason, that they "received not the *love of the truth*, that they might be saved." But according to this theory, God has beforehand prepared *Forms of Art*, to bring upon men *strong delusion*, that they might *believe a lie*, and embrace it with *faith*, that they *might be saved*. We cannot receive such a scheme. We regard it as a corruption of God's holy truth—a subversion of the most fundamental and vital doctrines of Christianity; as destructive of all confidence in revelation itself; in one word, as "another Gospel."

IX. *Has Dr. Bushnell retracted any of these doctrines? Has his communication, embodied in the report of the Majority, contradicted them?*

We inquire, 1st, *Concerning the Trinity*. In that communication Dr. Bushnell says:

"I start with the conception of the One God, different, I suppose, in no wise, from the one substance or *homousion* of the Church,—which one God is developed to us, or becomes a subject of knowledge under the conditions of a three-fold personality. I take the three, therefore, in their threeness, as distinct grammatical personalities, as they are practically employed in the Bible, acting and interacting mutually towards each other, as the Bible represents; only refusing to investigate their interior mystery—believing that in such a use of them, I receive in the truest and fullest manner the One God. The Trinity and Unity as thus set forth, I constantly preach in public, regarding it as necessary to the efficacy of the Gospel, in saving souls. I love this Trinity, I live upon it. Without it I feel that I could not work my mind and heart in the private exercises of my own Christian life."

Is there here any retraction of what Dr. Bushnell has

taught in his book? It is not pretended that there is. Is there here any contradiction of what he has taught in his book? Not even the shadow of it. Nor does it appear that such was his design, or that he would allow it to be the fact if it were so charged. The only difference is, that in this communication, he has dealt in general terms, which in his book he has fully explained; and that explanation is, that there is no Trinity in the Godhead, but only an instrumental Trinity, produced and adequately accounted for by a process of revelation,—a Trinity which, even as a representation, is probably casual, and finally to vanish away.

The only thing insisted on in the report is, that Dr. Bushnell preaches the Trinity, and lives upon it in his Christian experience; just as he finds it revealed in the Bible; and that a minister should be held responsible, not for his theories, but for his preaching, and for holding the facts of the Gospel.

But Dr. Bushnell has set forth in his book, *what facts*, and *what Trinity*, he finds in the Bible. Are we to understand that his preaching is contradictory to these? or does his explanation imply that his preaching is even different from the representations which he has given in his book? We see not the slightest reason to suppose so. We regard the book, therefore, as the true explanation of the more general statements of the communication embodied in the report; and we have already declared, that in our view, the doctrine of the book is a denial of the doctrine of the Trinity, as it stands in the formulas of our churches, and as it stands connected with the other fundamental doctrines of the Gospel.

We inquire, 2d, of the explanation concerning the doctrine of *Justification by Faith*.

The communication inserted in the majority report is in these words, viz. :

“ I hold most emphatically the doctrine of Justification by Faith, and that any and every form of religion which proposes to save mankind, on terms of merit or desert, is not Christianity. As regards the ground of Justification, I believe that without something done, which in Christ is done, to declare

the righteousness of God, and maintain the sanctity of law, a free pardon offered to sinners would be nearly equivalent to a dissolution of Government. At the same time I look upon Christ as fulfilling the highest and principal office of his Messiahship by means of the incarnation itself, that is, by the revelation he makes of God's feelings towards us, in and through the human state assumed, and the immense power he exerts, or is to exert, in this manner, over our spiritual character. He is then emphatically 'The Life,' the new-creating grace of God—the wisdom of God and the power. To preach him in this character, is my deepest study, and my intensest love to him centers here."

Now when one declares, in a formal explanation of his views, upon their being called in question, that he holds most emphatically "THE *doctrine of Justification by Faith*," he is bound to use the terms, *Justification* and *Faith*, in their current sense, as he knows they will be received by those whom he addresses, and by the intelligent Christian community before whom that explanation is to be spread and have its effect; that is, in the sense in which they are current among the orthodox churches, the orthodox ministers, and in the orthodox standard writers and formulas. To use them in a sense fundamentally different from this, when they can exonerate him from heresy only by being understood in the current sense, is to pass off a counterfeit as current and genuine coin.

Does Dr. Bushnell then mean by the words "Justification by Faith," what those words mean in their current sense, and what they will commonly be understood to mean by our ministers and churches?

If so, then he has retracted and renounced all that he has taught on this subject in his book. If this be so—if your Association have received evidence that it is so—we shall greatly rejoice, and only demand that the evidence of such retraction be made as unequivocal and as public, as your report, and as the book itself. If this be not so, then we respectfully submit, that our brethren of the Hartford Central Association have inadvertently accepted a spurious Justification by Faith, instead of the true one; and have been made the instrument of passing off upon the Christian public, a Justifi-

cation by Faith which the orthodox Christian public have only to know, to pronounce it spurious. If Dr. Bushnell has retracted the doctrine of his book, on the subject of Justification by Faith, it is well. If he has not, then we refer to those doctrines in the passages which we have cited, in proof of the justice of our conviction, that he does *not* hold "*The doctrine of Justification by Faith,*" which those terms currently represent, and which they will by our ministers and churches be understood to indicate: but that he holds to a *Justification*, and a *Faith*—and to a *Justification by Faith*—diametrically opposed to the common orthodox doctrine known by that name, and utterly subversive of it.

It is on this account that we regard the book as the more dangerous, and the more reprehensible,—that while it denies the fundamental doctrines of the Gospel, and substitutes in their places dogmas which are contrary to and subversive of the same, it still employs the *words* Trinity, Atonement, Redemption, Faith, Justification, as though it were not denying,—but as though it were inculcating,—the great truths which these terms currently represent. In our view, therefore, it is not by any deep "Chemistry of thought," but by a simple and unwarrantable change of names, that the book proposes to fuse down, and unite in one homogeneous substance, systems of faith as irreconcilable as the doctrine of Christ and the doctrine of devils; calling evil good, and good evil; putting bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter.

We beg leave, also, to call your attention to another important error—on pp. 97, 98—viz., that a man is not responsible for his belief, whether he holds the truth or rejects it. The passages are in these words:—"I suppose it is proper to say, that I did not prepare the occasions on which these Discourses were delivered, and seem scarcely to have chosen the subjects themselves. Indeed, I seem, too, as regards the views presented, *to have had only about the same agency in forming them, that I have in preparing the blood I circulate, and the anatomic frame I occupy. They are not my choice, or invention, so much as a necessary growth, whose process I*

can hardly trace myself. And now, in giving them to the public, I seem only to have about the same kind of option left me that I have in the matter of *appearing in corporal manifestation myself*;—*about the same anxiety, I will add, concerning the unfavorable judgments to be encountered*; for though a man's opinions are of vastly greater moment than his looks, yet if he is equally simple in them, as in his growth, and equally subject to his law, *he is responsible only in the same degree, and ought not, in fact, to suffer any greater concern about their reception, than about the judgments passed upon his person.*"

We also call your attention to the views of the author of the book on the subject of Creeds,—on p. 82—viz.: "Perhaps it is on this account that I have never been able to sympathize at all with the abundant protesting of the New England Unitarians against Creeds. *So far from suffering even the least consciousness of constraint, or oppression, under any creed, I have been readier to accept as great a number as fell in my way*: for when they are subjected to the deepest chemistry of thought, that which descends to the point of relationship between the *form of the truth and its interior formless nature*, they become, thereupon, so elastic, and run so freely into each other, *that one seldom need have any difficulty in accepting as many as are offered him.*"

We deem that we might justly advert to other important matters contained in the book: its views of language, which we view as teaching men lightly to regard the difference between truth and error, and as impugning the sincerity and sufficiency of the revelation given to us by God; its teachings with regard to inspiration, and its implication relative to the renewing of the Holy Ghost, whose essential personality the book denies. We, however, waive all consideration of these topics further than to request you,—if you shall see cause to reconsider your doings—to give to these matters the attention which their importance demands.

Such, in our view, is the scheme of doctrine to which your decision has given your sanction, as not inconsistent with the

faith of our churches so far as justly to subject one who teaches it even to a *trial* for heresy. In our view, so far as these doctrines shall prevail, the Gospel of Christ will be as prevalently rejected and trodden down. If they pass among us not only without ecclesiastical censure, but with an express ecclesiastical allowance,—and if our churches and associations shall, by their silence, acquiesce in such a decision,—then a good standing in the church, and in the ministry among us, ought not, in our view, to be any longer regarded as even *prima facie* evidence of soundness in the faith: nor could we, in such an event, desire that it should be so considered by the orthodox churches in our land. Such a wide-spread indifference to the truth we should regard as a matter greatly to be deplored. And now, brethren, with all due affection and esteem, arrogating to ourselves no superiority or authority, and wishing you grace, mercy, and peace through Jesus Christ our Lord, we make to you this our respectful but earnest REMONSTRANCE AND COMPLAINT. We entreat you to reconsider your doings, and to redress the injury, which, as we believe, you have inadvertently done to our churches, to the truth, to the cause of salvation, and to our Lord Jesus Christ, the adorable Redeemer who bought us with his blood.

EDWIN HALL, *Moderator.*

THEOPHILUS SMITH, *Scribe.*

THE REPLY.

“HARTFORD, March 6, 1850.

TO THE MEMBERS OF THE FAIRFIELD WEST ASSOCIATION :

DEAR BRETHREN :—A special meeting of the Hartford Central Association was held in Hartford, at the house of the Rev. Mr. Clarke, on Tuesday, March 5th, to entertain your REMONSTRANCE and COMPLAINT in reference to the action of Association upon the book of Dr. Bushnell, entitled “GOD IN CHRIST.” Present—Rev. Messrs. Robbins, D.D., Porter, D.D., Hawes, D.D., Bushnell, D.D., Scranton, Bartlet, Spring, Hempsted, Woodruff, Seward, W. Wright, Richardson, Clarke, Patton, McLean, Raymond, Searle, Grant, and J. L. Wright.

The following resolutions were passed, and the undersigned were appointed a committee to transmit them to the Moderator of your Association.

D. M. SEWARD, *Moderator*
of *Hartford Central Ass'n.*

JOHN A. HEMPSTED, *Scribe.*

RESOLUTIONS.

“*Resolved*, That we acknowledge the receipt of a REMONSTRANCE and COMPLAINT from our brethren of Fairfield Association, on the subject of our decision respecting the publication of Dr. Bushnell, entitled “GOD IN CHRIST;” that we gratefully accept their fraternal admonitions, and sympathize with them in their attachment to those doctrines of the Gospel which have been supposed to be controverted in the above-mentioned publication.

Resolved, That, having carefully examined the book of Dr. Bushnell, and heard his vindication of himself against the charges of heresy brought against him from various quarters, and, after solemn deliberation, come to the conclusion of which our brethren complain, we cannot, with all our respect for their judgment, think it consistent with the established rules of judicial proceedings, or with justice to ourselves or to Dr. Bushnell, to review that decision, or institute a new investigation of the case, until new evidence of a decisive character shall be presented to us.

Resolved, That we have carefully considered the statements and arguments presented to us by the Fairfield West Association; that in making up our decision we allowed greater weight to the statement of Dr. Bushnell, as published in connection with it, than our brethren of that Association appear to be willing to allow it; and that we protest against the conclusion that we give our sanction to any peculiarities of Dr. Bushnell's scheme of doctrine."

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