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The student's handbook of Christian theology



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HANDBOOK OF CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY.

THE STUDENT'S
Handbook of Christian Theology.

BY THE
REV. BENJAMIN FIELD.

With an Additional Chapter, and the Author's Last Corrections.

EDITED, WITH BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH,
BY THE REV. JOHN C. SYMONS,
Of the Australasian Conference.



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TABLE OF CONTENTS.

	PAGE
BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF THE REV. BENJAMIN FIELD.. ..	vii
INTRODUCTION	xvi
CHAPTER I.—THE EXISTENCE OF GOD	1
„ II.—THE EVIDENCES OF DIVINE REVELATION ..	12
„ III.—THE INSPIRATION OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES..	39
„ IV.—THE DOCTRINE OF THE HOLY TRINITY ..	70
THE SUPREME DIVINITY OF CHRIST	78
THE DIVINE SONSHIP OF CHRIST	92
THE PERSONALITY AND DEITY OF THE HOLY GHOST	100
„ V.—CREATION OF THE WORLD	104
„ VI.—MAN—HIS ORIGINAL STATE AND FALL ..	115
„ VII.—THE ATONEMENT	131
„ VIII.—THE EXTENT OF THE ATONEMENT	152
„ IX.—REPENTANCE	169
„ X.—JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH	173
„ XI.—ADOPTION, AND THE WITNESS OF THE SPIRIT..	185
„ XII.—REGENERATION; OR, THE NEW BIRTH	193
„ XIII.—CHRISTIAN PERFECTION; OR, ENTIRE SANCTIFI- CATION	201
„ XIV.—THE FINAL PERSEVERANCE OF THE SAINTS ..	220
„ XV.—THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST	225
„ XVI.—THE RESURRECTION OF THE BODY	246
„ XVII.—THE GENERAL JUDGMENT	257
„ XVIII.—THE DURATION OF FUTURE PUNISHMENTS ..	263
„ XIX.—THE SABBATH	271
„ XX.—THE CHRISTIAN SACRAMENTS	284

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH
OF
THE REV. BENJAMIN FIELD,

WHILE this edition of the Handbook of Christian Theology was in the press, the mournful tidings reached us that its estimable author had been called to his reward. This event occurred in Melbourne, Australia, whither he had gone for the benefit of his health.

A very general, and certainly a very natural desire has been expressed to have some particulars of the life and character of Mr. Field prefixed to his work. The following brief and imperfect sketch is compiled, with a view of meeting—so far as time and opportunity enables me—this desire.* As I am on the eve of returning to Melbourne, it is impossible that I can prepare a memoir of any length of my friend; nor can I now engage with any one to do so.

Benjamin Field was born at Sevenoaks, Kent, of pious Methodist parents. He was their first-born son, and on the day of his birth was solemnly dedicated to the service of God by his father; who, for a long series of years, had been a useful and honoured local preacher.

At five years of age he was sent to the Sabbath school, and, as his mind expanded, it was evident that he was under the restraining influence of the Holy Spirit. He was never addicted to the follies and vices which are so often associated with youth, but delighted in the means of grace: and when his father—as was his wont—retired, at mid-day, for private devotion, his son would noiselessly creep into the room, kneel down, and join in the half-heard expressions of praise and prayer. When left at home on a Sunday evening, he was in the habit of stand-

* I am indebted for most of the information to a paper in the *Melbourne Wesleyan Chronicle*, from the pen of the Rev. G. Daniel; and also some particulars furnished by Miss Field, of Sevenoaks.

ing on a chair, to conduct a service with his brothers and sisters; and, according to the testimony of the servant, would preach as good a sermon as a minister. "When scarcely twelve years old," he says, "the Spirit that I had so often grieved came upon me in all His enlightening, alluring, subduing, and almost constraining influences, and, with His light beaming on my soul, the world presented nothing but one scene of emptiness and vanity, and the religion of the cross was all-attractive. I heard the whisper of the Saviour's voice, 'Seek ye My face;' and my heart replied, 'Thy face, Lord, will I seek.' Satan desired to have me, that he might sift me as wheat; and among all the temptations incident to a young professor in that stage of his career, I was especially terrified by temptations to the follies and absurdities of infidelity and atheism; and had not my mind at that time been fortified with religious principles, and kept by the power of God, I should have been ruined—for ever ruined! But, supported by an unseen arm, I was shielded. I sought salvation with my whole heart. The first feeling of the morning was one of longing for Christ, and the last feeling at night was one of restlessness to obtain the hidden treasure. I could truthfully adopt the language, 'Mine eye runneth down with water, because the Comforter that should relieve my soul is far from me.' But so great was the loving-kindness of the Lord, that soon the cloud dispersed, and I saw His smile; and then, oh, then!

‘Of my Saviour possessed,
I was perfectly blessed,
As if filled with the fulness of God.’”

It is believed that his conversion took place in connection with the ministry of the Rev. T. Collins. From that period he became a diligent student of God's Word. From a very early age, and even before his conversion, he had the impression that he should become a preacher of the Gospel.

Now, he says, that "thought was heightened to conviction, and I seemed to have a confident assurance that the Lord would make me an ambassador of His; and often, when the miseries of the heathen world were detailed, . . . my heart burned to be there." This yearning desire soon declared itself, and was recognised by the elders of the Church, who, seeing the grace of God in the young disciple, recognised in him those mental qualities necessary for the efficient discharge of the important office. After his having been usefully employed as a Sunday-school teacher, he began to preach—under the direction of the superintendent minister—amongst the cottagers in the villages surrounding his native town. He was then sixteen and a half years of age; and as his early efforts were approved, he became an accredited local preacher. Having been blessed with fruit of his labours, and those qualifications expected by the Church—viz., grace, gifts, and fruit—been thus seen as

belonging to him, he was recommended for the work of the ministry by the March quarterly meeting of 1843, and was accepted as a candidate by the Conference. In June he was employed in the Guildford circuit as a hired local preacher; after which he entered the Theological Institution, Richmond. There he laboured assiduously, was a diligent student, and his "profiting appeared unto all." For the venerable men—the Rev. Thomas Jackson and John Farrar—then at the head of the institution, he ever entertained profound respect and regard; cherishing towards them the feelings of affection due to fathers, to whom in any circumstances of perplexity he could ever apply with fullest confidence. "How thankful," he says, "I feel for three years' residence in our institution, under the kind and efficient tuition with which we are there favoured! I have been more fully satisfied of the infallible truth of the Bible; have received more enlarged perceptions of the doctrines it reveals, and see more clearly the consistency of the doctrines and discipline which, as a Methodist preacher, I am called to enforce, with the leading principles which it embodies. And, above all, I am more deeply and permanently impressed with the need of a right state of heart, in order to bring men to the enjoyment of its glorious blessings."

At the close of his term at the institution he was appointed as a missionary to India. I am informed by one of his fellow-students that his appointment to India did not accord with his judgment or his wishes; these led him to believe that he should be employed in the home work. He was solemnly set apart, by the imposition of hands, to the work of the Christian ministry, at Richmond, July 2, 1846. None acquainted with the habitually reverent and thoughtful frame of his mind would suppose that he could pass through so solemn an ordinance but with a spirit deeply chastened, subdued, and prayerful. "I feel," he says, "the circumstances to be the most solemn and momentous which I have ever seen. I remember that I stand as one who is to receive an appointment and ordination to an office, than which none bears so close a relation to the glory of God, the honour of the Saviour, the salvation of the saints, the prosperity of the Church, and the welfare of the world. And this causes my spirit to sink within me; and I can only propose the question, which I have often proposed in anticipation of this period, 'Lord, who is sufficient for these things?' . . . I left the chapel, deeply feeling the responsibility of my position as one who had, before heaven and earth, made an avowal of consecration that was to be complete and lasting."

One short week in London, in preparation for the voyage, and then he says, "I went to Sevenoaks to take final farewell of friends, many of whom had known me from my infancy, and with many more of whom I had often been blessed in seasons of private intercourse, and in the services of the sanctuary. We had often spoken of the final separation,

and had often been told of the 'pang of parting,' but not the half had been told." Referring to this, when afterwards recording in his journal, he says,—“While I write, my heart bleeds afresh, retaining, as I do, a vivid impression of a father's looks, of a sister's tears, and, above all, of a loving mother's cries; from all these, with a broken heart, I was obliged to tear myself away.” He preached his last sermon before leaving home, and parents, and family, from “None of these things move me,” etc.

July 31, 1846, in company with the Revs. T. Glanville and J. Morris, on board the ship *Macedon*, he sailed for Madras. The new and untried life on board ship was, as usual, somewhat irksome, and he records, “Never before did I so fully comprehend the meaning of the psalmist's cry, ‘My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth, for the courts of the Lord.’ . . . Yet,” he says, “there are pleasures in worshipping God on shipboard. . . . The thought that, in this way we have communion with the ‘whole family in heaven and in earth,’ is peculiarly pleasing.” With his characteristic method and earnestness he applied himself to self-improvement, devoting the morning to the study of the Canarese language, and the afternoon to reading the Greek Testament, with Bloomfield's Notes; Paley's Works, and such biographies as M'Cheyne's, Mrs. Cryer's, and others. Notwithstanding that, he records, “I find a seafaring life is to me so irregular and unpleasant, . . . producing great weakness of body and depression of mind.” Yet such was the ardour of his attachment to reading and study, that he writes, “I have just finished Mosheim's History in 6 vols.,” which is followed by three pages of closely written critique and reflection. His earnest longings for growth in the Divine life are manifest by the setting apart of the hours of nine and five for devotional reading of the Scriptures and prayer, in connection with which exercises he observes, “How much of blessing do I daily realise through having praying friends at home! Lord, bless them! . . . I want more of the power of godliness. ‘Indulge me, Lord, in this request.’” For the souls of those who were voyaging with him he evidenced a yearning love. At the commencement of the voyage we find him laying down rules for his own governance, that his “walk may be so circumspect” that he “may be able at any time to speak with any about salvation, without a blush.” The effect of the Word preached upon the minds of the sailors was carefully watched, and when he is able to record, “One of the sailors came to me to-day, to say how much he and his companions had felt under my sermon,” he exultingly adds, “Glory be to God.”

The voyage to Madras occupied four months, and at its close Mr. Field thus comments:—“Reviewing the seventeen weeks, the most prominent feeling of my soul is gratitude. All lives have been spared. . . . To myself the voyage has been a positive blessing.

During the whole time I have retained a lively and sometimes a depressing sense of the high responsibility of my position, and of my utter unfitness, apart from the grace of God, for the fulfilment of the ministry among heathen people. I have had opportunities for reading, which I greatly needed. . . . We have had opportunity, whenever the weather permitted, of collecting the sailors together on Sundays, and offering to them the salvation of God; but it is a humiliating thought that three Wesleyan missionaries should have spent four months among men ignorant of God and of a Saviour, without having evidence of one being enlightened and saved. If I have been deficient in duty, I can only say, as the time is gone for ever, deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God, thou God of my salvation."

His entrance upon the scene of his future mission labours excited all the ardour, sympathy, and devotedness of his spirit. "I felt," he says, "as though I could weep my life away: it seemed such an overwhelming consideration that one so unworthy, who had desired and prayed from infancy to be employed in distant lands, should now be entering on a scene and country which has been an intolerable burden on the hearts of the pious for a succession of ages! Now (thought I) I have to live, labour, perhaps to die, here! The entire future is hid in dark obscurity, except as it is enlightened by the promises of a covenant-keeping God. The Lord shall have me, body, soul, and spirit; and if He can employ me in any way to accomplish the purposes of His mercy, I will say, Amen: do with me as seemeth Thee good."

His first station was Goobbee, in the Mysore country, at which he arrived some three months after reaching India. In a few months he had acquired sufficient knowledge of Canarese to enable him to commence holding short services with the natives, and was looking forward to a period of earnest and successful toil, when, in the order of the mysterious providence of God, he was suddenly stricken down; in a few days the raging fever had completely prostrated him, and no doubt his constitution received a shock from which it never recovered. At first his medical attendants predicted a speedy recovery, and regarded the attack as merely the ordinary seasoning; but attack succeeded attack, and it quickly became apparent that he was soon to swell the number who are sent to mission stations with every qualification except the primary one of physical adaptability to the climate, and who either succumb at once, and fill an early grave, or at great expense and suffering have to return to more temperate climes. The Neilgherries (Indian Blue Mountains) were tried, and a residence of some weeks brought partial restoration; but a return to the lowlands was followed by immediate attacks of fever. Madras was reached, and by the advice of his friends, medical and ministerial, a voyage was undertaken to Cape Town; and this was ultimately extended to his native land.

At no period of his life was he robust, but his Indian sickness gave a shock to his constitution which it never recovered. Having been partially restored to health by the long sea voyage, and by partial rest at the home of his youth, he was directed by the missionary committee in London to proceed to Paris, where he laboured until the ensuing Conference, under the superintendence of the late Dr. Charles Cook, whose paternal counsels and kindness deeply impressed him. Returning to England, he was appointed to his first English circuit, Chatteris in Cambridgeshire, in 1850; to Luton, 1853; Bradford, 1856; but his health was unequal to the climate, and in 1858 he removed to Hackney; from thence to City Road in 1861; and finally to Penzance in 1864, in the hope that its milder climate would be beneficial. During those years he was becoming increasingly known and respected as an able expositor of the truth, an eloquent platform speaker, a diligent kind-hearted pastor, a painstaking friend of youth, a man of literary taste and ability, and above all as a devout and humble Christian. Many passages in his carefully kept diary, through all these years, indicate the progress made in the Divine life—his constant growth in grace. Through much weakness he laboured on with diligence and perseverance; his aim was high, his purpose unfaltering, and his success great; often appearing before large and crowded audiences when his strength was scarcely equal to the task of carrying him to the pulpit, and returning to spend a restless feverish night from sheer exhaustion. In connection with such circumstances we find such records as this:—"How a Sabbath seems lost when affliction prevents the full outburst of the soul!" In these various circuits many were the tokens of Divine and human favour with which he was blessed; and many the recorded instances of extensive awakenings and genuine conversions in connection with his ministry. During his residence in the Bradford circuit, in 1857, he became so seriously ill that for some months the general impression was that his active labours were at an end. During this time he writes: "Still moving on in full work, but consciously unfit for it. Most of all I sorrow that in time of health I have been so unfaithful to God to whom I had plighted my vows. No language can describe the deep depression of mind with which this time of affliction was attended. . . . Another Sabbath of quietness! When I saw Mr. Nye go into the pulpit, I could not refrain from tears! But why should I weep? I know the Lord hath done it, and that it was all ordered for my good; but God only knows how I love His work, and though I will not murmur at the arrangement which lays me aside, I cannot fail to regard it as a deep and heavy trial." A residence at a hydropathic establishment for some weeks was productive of so much benefit that he was enabled to return again to his circuit and fulfil his appointments to some extent. At the ensuing Conference, to the great grief of the officers and people connected with that

circuit, he made up his mind to be directed by his medical advisers, and go towards the south. The next six years were spent in London in much weakness, but with very marked success; and then, still acting under advice, he removed to Cornwall, and entered upon that which proved to be his last English circuit—Penzance. Here the Lord appears to have honoured his labours almost immediately upon his entry upon the work of the circuit; and, with exultancy of spirit, he records the first token for good in a remarkable case of conversion at Mousehole, "where, it is said, there has not been a single case of conversion for three years past." Dark and inscrutable are the movements of Divine Providence, however! Months elapsed, and then the entry was concerning another removal in search of health, this time to Australia. His last public act, which closed his ministry in England, was a sermon on improvement of the death of the late Rev. Robert Young. At the close of the sermon and the account of Mr. Young, he records, "I addressed the large congregation thus: Brethren, I close my sermon, and with it my ministry amongst you. . . . When fifteen months ago I came amongst you, it was with a deep and sincere desire to promote the work of God: and I will not suppose that what I have done has been all in vain. I rejoice to be assured that the Lord has been working amongst us. I hope that the arrangement which takes me away from the midst of you is of God. I have earnestly prayed for Divine direction. I would not for the world go in any path which the finger of God does not point out; but if He appoints me to go even to the farthest verge of the green earth, I am willing to go and bear the cross of separation from much-loved friends and even much-loved children. Whether my health is to be perfectly restored, as some predict, or whether I am still to suffer, I know not: I am glad to know 'my times are in His hands who doeth all things kindly and well. . . . My earnest desire is that my supply may be far more useful than I could have been, and that my colleagues, with you, may have a year of blessing. Brethren, pray for us."

The kindness shown him by friends when thus called to lay down his charge, and leave his native land, is recorded with evidence of deep feeling, and with earnest prayers that the Lord would reward them abundantly.

Monday, Dec. 11, 1865, Mr. and Mrs. Field, leaving their dear children behind them, embarked on board the *Highflyer*, at Gravesend, bound for Melbourne, where, after a rather tedious voyage, they arrived on Friday, March 16, 1866. The Rev. John Eggleston and myself were the first to welcome them; we boarded the ship before she anchored, and this little attention deeply impressed them: it was on their part altogether unexpected. For the friends who received them and showed them kindness in the land of the stranger, Mr. Field records his high esteem and his earnest prayers: and surely seldom has kind attention been

more needed or better bestowed. Seldom does the Lord permit any of His children to exemplify the power and sufficiency of His grace amidst fires so fierce as those which kindled around this devoted servant. Seldom does he call, even as an example for the Church, his suffering children to exhibit the "blessedness of the man that endureth" under such scenes of reiterated and severe trial and discipline. Stroke fell upon stroke. It is a remarkable coincidence that on the very day upon which he entered Hobson's Bay, and almost the first news which fell upon his ear, was the appalling intelligence of the loss of the *London*!—that the first public service he ever attended in Australia was that one at which the sorrowing church publicly acknowledged the chastening hand of God in the removal of the lamented D. J. Draper! and the first intelligence he received from England was the death of one of the dear children he had to leave behind him! No wonder that he records, "It seemed as though God had deserted us—as though He were leaving us to wander in the world without a comfort; but," he immediately adds, "we must try to cast away these desponding thoughts, we know that they are wrong! Blinded by our tears, heartstricken with our loss, and unable to penetrate the mystery of the dispensation, we would take up the psalmist's words, 'I was dumb, I opened not my mouth, because Thou didst it.' " Referring to the service just alluded to, he says, "Never did the doctrine of a divine and special providence fall more pleasantly upon the heart than on this occasion. . . . I shall not soon forget the impression made upon my heart by the singing of that beautiful hymn :

'God moves in a mysterious way,
His wonders to perform;
He plants His footsteps in the sea,
And rides upon the storm.'

It is not surprising that Mr. Field should at this time have been the subject of considerable depression. He felt that he was useless, because he could not preach. He had a passion for preaching, and this, for the time at least, made him overlook any other mode of usefulness. I suggested to him the preparation of a Hand-book of Theology, expressing my conviction of the great need of such a volume, and that the author of such a work would lay the Wesleyan Church under great obligation. I urged him to undertake the task, promising him all the aid in my power, and engaging to take the responsibility of its publication. After some consideration and consultation with other ministers he commenced the work. How well he performed it I need not say.

In the pursuit of health, and in accordance with the wishes of some old and dear friends, he removed, shortly after his arrival, to Sandhurst, and, to the pleasure and profit of the friends in that circuit, was able to

enter into an arrangement with their Quarterly Meeting to take one appointment per week in one or other of the churches. Referring to this engagement, he says: "What pleasure it would be to me if I could at least take two services each Sunday! then I should feel that I was doing something to purpose; but I scarcely dare hope that I shall ever again have strength for that, and must feel thankful if I can for a little longer preach once." This foreboding seems not to have been literally realised; yet with much weakness, often to the amazement of those who witnessed it, he continued to fulfil his engagement. Finding that a residence at Sandhurst was not productive of the benefit he had hoped, he returned to Melbourne, where he shortly after received the intelligence of the death of his sainted father. Of him, he writes: "So closes the earthly career of my father! Few men have had a more quiet monotonous life. He had been a local preacher for fifty years, and maintained in every relation of life the most unflinching integrity."

At the commencement of 1867, Mr. Field accompanied the ministers attending the Conference to Tasmania. Whilst enjoying the opportunity of meeting some whom he had known in years gone by, and of associating with the leaders of our Israel, the passage to and fro was productive of great misery, and he returned thoroughly prostrate. The first sermon that he heard after his return was upon the thorn in the flesh. He says: "It was to me a time of many tears. I could not but feel how I carried about a thorn—a piercing thorn in my flesh; but oh, I can bear it without a murmur, if God vouchsafe the sufficient grace."

Subsequently he visited Geelong and Colac, and of the kindness and hospitality experienced from the friends at both places he speaks in the highest terms. Whilst at the latter place, his mind was much exercised in reference to a projected arrangement by which he seemed likely to be separated for a season from his beloved wife. It had been partly arranged that he should spend the ensuing winter at Sandhurst, leaving Mrs. Field for a season with kind friends in Melbourne. This, he says, "was presenting itself very painfully, . . . and I was greatly drawn out in prayer that the God who careth for us would provide for us a suitable home, . . . when an invitation came from the Richmond Quarterly Meeting for me to spend the winter in Hawthorn, taking one service on the Sabbath, and leading a class during the week. . . . I was satisfied it was provided by the Lord. . . . To-day we have arrived at our house, and I anticipate great comfort in it." Little did he think of the dreadful trial that was shortly to befall him there!

Thursday, July 4, 1867, thus he writes: "This morning, at quarter past ten, my precious Catherine passed away for ever! I could not help indulging the secret hope that, even at the last, when skill and care had done their utmost, God would interpose and have mercy upon her, and not upon her only, but upon me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow."

If tender sympathy of friends, and earnest prayers from the Church could have kept her alive, she had not died! But the decree had gone forth, from which there was no appeal. . . . I am a widower once more—a lonely, desolate widower, with two infant, motherless babes, the last only twenty-one days old! Oh! this is an awful day! Like a crane or a swallow, so did I chatter: I did mourn as a dove: mine eyes fail with looking upwards: O Lord, I am oppressed: undertake for me. What shall I say? He hath both spoken unto me, and Himself hath done it: I shall go softly all my days in the bitterness of my soul. . . . May God sanctify the dispensation! Oh, I do hope I shall be holier for this heavy trial! Dear Kate once said, 'Let us both get better, and live to God as we have never done.' Her opportunities are past! Surely I shall fulfil her desire."

Though thus crushed in spirit and broken in health, he continued to labour on. He had now taken the charge of a candidate for the ministry, whose studies he directed, making it matter of earnest prayer that he might be able to direct him aright; and finding a kind of melancholy pleasure in an undertaking by which his "painful solitude was relieved." He was likewise busily engaged, completing the work, "Handbook of Theology," upon which he had been employed through all his trials and sufferings during the past twelve months. He evinced a lively interest in everything which concerned the welfare of the circuit with which he was now identified, and many there remember with gratitude and pleasure, not only his valuable pulpit exercises, but his visits to their homes, and the kindly sympathetic advices there tendered. Oftimes he mourns over his want of devotedness to God and His cause; complains of himself for allowing his troubles so to depress him; and stirs himself up by the remembrance of the many mercies still continued. But there is no moroseness, no peevishness, no stoical indifference, no cynical complaining. Thursday, September 24th, 1868, he writes: "My fear is realised at length. I have been struggling on with my preaching engagements, hoping that my voice would improve. But last night, while preaching at Hawthorn, I resolved that I would try no more till I could get through a service with something like comfort. No one can tell what I have suffered in my few last efforts, and instead of gaining attention for my subject, the minds of the hearers have been drawn away in pity for me. After trying to preach last night from Gal. ii. 20, I left with a strong conviction that my public work was done. God knows whether it is so or not. But, oh how thankful I should be if I could see a way of getting bread without attempting that for which I have now become so unfit!" Again the providence of God undertook for His poor suffering servant. An arrangement was entered into by which he removed to the occupancy of the "Home Cottage," and took charge of the *Wesleyan Chronicle* during my absence to visit England for a year.

On Sunday evening, May 30, 1869, he writes : " Can it be possible that so many months have elapsed since I made an entry here ? I have only attempted to preach four times since September 24th, 1868, and I have now no hope that I shall ever resume my public work. But great changes have occurred since last I wrote. Then I was at Hawthorn; but in the middle of March we came to take possession of Home Cottage, Carlton, while Mr. Symons was in England, whose visit may probably extend over twelve months. I also undertook the editorship of the *Wesleyan Chronicle*, and was truly thankful at having such a means of employing my solitary hours, and of extending an influence for good throughout the colony. My heart burns with anxious desire to make this paper, so long as it is in my hands, a religious power amongst us. But my coming here has not been unattended by suffering. On the 15th of April I attended a breakfast meeting given in the Albert-street Baptist Church schoolroom, in honour of the Rev. Mr. Clarke, who had just arrived from England to take the pastorate of that church; and I took a violent cold which kept me shivering all the time I was there. This resulted in a low fever, and though I kept about for a week, everything I did was with great difficulty; and on April 22nd, a walk to Dr. Guntz's house in Collins Street brought on a slight attack of pleurisy. At once I was perfectly prostrate. I went to bed, and remained there several days, not in the least expecting ever to rally. I never felt so sure of death's being at hand as then; and I was led to inquire, 'Is all well? Are my feet upon the Rock?' For two days there was a kind of inward struggle. 'May I, I inquired, 'commit my soul to the great atonement just as I am, without any more deep feeling than I now possess?' But in the middle of one wakeful night the Blessed Spirit came forth to glorify Christ by revealing to me the fulness and sufficiency of the Saviour's merit. I saw, as I scarcely ever saw before, that the propitiation He offered was full, perfect, and sufficient; that it could not be otherwise as presented by Him. But, in connection with that, I saw that the Eternal Father was so well pleased with the oblation of His Son, that He had set Him forth—yes, 'Him hath God set forth' in the holy Gospel as a ground of hope, a way of access, a source of salvation to the whole race of sinful man; and all that was required of me was that I should accept of Jesus as my Saviour—take Him as revealed in the Gospel—and commit the keeping of my soul to Him as one who was 'faithful and just' to forgive, sanctify, and lift up to heaven. Oh, what light and power accompanied these revelations to my heart! How I did rejoice to have such a Saviour, and to cast myself in humble faith upon His infinite merits! During the night my brain reeled, and I thought I saw devils pass out of the room saying, with a smile of satisfaction, 'We will come for you again.' I replied, 'Not while Jesus is near.' In fact, from that glad hour Jesus became my all in all. I wanted to hear of nothing and to talk of nothing

but Him. And I pray God that I may retain the blessed influences of glorious revelation till the hour of death. I am getting better now, but the shortness of my breath, the cough, the expectoration, etc., tell me it is not for long. But I am not troubled. If I may but live to God, and glorify Jesus by my pen, and be the means of good to all that call upon me, and then pass peacefully to heaven—that will be a glorious finish to an unworthy life.”

His last entry in his diary was made Sunday evening, June 13, 1869. “My Willie’s birthday! It seems utterly inconceivable that two years can have elapsed since I was in the midst of my great trouble, and that after all that I have passed through I can be so happily circumstanced with my children about me. I do feel devoutly thankful, and upon my bended knees I have been telling my God and Father that I will praise Him for all that is past, and trust Him for all that is to come.”

Writing to his father-in-law, June 18th, Mr. Field says: “I herewith post you another number of the *Chronicle*. I forget whether I have told you that the minister who is the responsible editor of it is in England for a few months, and has left his editorial duties with me. And this is a specimen of my work in my new capacity. Now that Providence has deprived me of all power to preach, or speak in public, I am thankful to have means by my pen of doing good through these columns. And I pray most earnestly that the articles which I write or select, may be the means of blessing to hundreds who read the paper.

“I have been very ill since I last wrote to you. I took a serious cold which settled upon me in the form of low fever, and brought me very near eternity. I had no thought of recovering. But I had such a glorious manifestation of Divine mercy to my heart. The great atonement was unveiled before me in all the fulness of its merits, and I felt that I could without a fear commit my everlasting all to the hands of Him who loved me and gave Himself for me. Oh what happy hours were those as I lay prostrate with weakness, but ‘looking to Jesus!’ I sincerely hope that in your last hours, if you are favoured with reason and memory, you may have a similar blessing. For five weeks I have been gradually improving, and now when quiet at home am scarcely conscious of anything wrong. . . . I am very jealous over myself, lest with returning strength I should lose any measure of that blessing which I enjoyed in my illness. Even in my quiet solitary life, where the greater portion of every day is spent quite alone, I find the need of constant watchfulness and prayer to keep up the fervours of spiritual life. I would be always walking with God, maintaining the faith of the heart in pure and uninterrupted exercise. All my sympathies, afflictions, and desires, are with things spiritual and divine. And I trust that through Him who ‘liveth and was dead, and is alive for evermore,’ I shall find an entrance through the gates into the city.”

One night, shortly before his death, he was awakened by a violent fit of coughing, which was followed by considerable hæmorrhage. His faithful attendant was soon with him, and found him bathed in blood. Looking at her he faintly murmured, "It is come at last!" Medical aid was sought, and again death seemed to ungrasp his fainting prey. A few days of perfect quiet, and he was again able to rise from his bed, and engaged in what had now become an interesting employment to him, preparing for the next number of the *Chronicle*. On the evening of Wednesday, Sept. 1, he assembled his little ones around him for the last time. After tea, as they were retiring, one observed, "We will have tea together again to-morrow night, won't we, papa?" He briefly but significantly replied, "We must only live one day at the time." With a friend who called to see him he conversed cheerfully and hopefully during the evening, and then shortly after ten o'clock requested that a portion of Scripture might be read to him, and the 335th and 336th hymns in the Wesleyan collection. He then retired to his room, and had been in bed about half an hour when he was heard to knock for assistance. His housekeeper and son were immediately with him. The hæmorrhage had returned. There was a minute or so of apparent consciousness, and then the freed spirit liberated from his frail suffering companion, bid a final farewell to trials, disappointments, and distresses, to weakness and weariness, to anguish and tears, for ever.

"Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours."

The funeral took place on Saturday, September 4. At two o'clock the procession accompanying the body moved from the "Home Cottage," Carlton, to Wesley Church, Lonsdale Street, where, notwithstanding the inclemency of the weather, a large congregation, sufficient to fill the body of the spacious church, had assembled, anxious to testify their respect for the lamented deceased. The Rev. J. Bickford, superintendent of the circuit, read portions of Scripture from Psalm xc. and 1 Cor. xv., after which the Rev. J. S. Waugh, chairman of the district, gave out a portion of the fifty-first hymn, delivered a short address, and offered prayer. The body was then removed to the hearse, and the funeral *cortège*, which was a very large one, again formed, and moved to the general cemetery. Upon arrival at the cemetery, the Rev. John Eggleston read portions of the burial service, and the body was lowered into the grave in which repose the remains of the late Mrs. Field; after which the Rev. George Daniel gave out two verses of the forty-first hymn, and engaged in prayer. After a sorrowful glance at the adjoining grave, in which lie the remains of the lately martyred Rev. W. Hill, silently and sadly the company dispersed, with thoughts in many cases, doubtless, raised to those scenes

XX BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF THE REV. BENJAMIN FIELD.

“ Where glorified spirits, by sight,
Converse in their holy abode;
As stars in the firmament bright,
And pure as the angels of God.”

On Friday evening, Sept. 10, a funeral sermon was preached in Wesley Church, Lonsdale Street, by the Rev. J. Bickford. The church was well filled, most of the Melbourne Wesleyan ministers being present, and many of the friends by whom Mr. Field had been known having come in from miles around the city. During the reading of the obituary notice many a breast heaved with deep emotion, and the tears of genuine sympathy bedewed many cheeks.

Mr. Field was a man who by his piety and earnestness was very successful in winning souls to Christ, and was greatly beloved. I have received numerous testimonies to this in various parts which I have visited in England. I never met with any one who, coming an entire stranger as he did into a strange land, so fully and so quickly gained the affection and love of the people; and surely, no one was ever so kindly and affectionately treated as he was by the Victorian Methodists. His unmistakable piety, his love for the cause of God, and yearning for souls, his superior pulpit abilities, his physical weakness, his accumulated sorrows, all conspired to draw towards him the warmest sympathy and Christian benevolence of all who knew him. Before the publication of the Handbook he had written a memoir of his sister, Mrs Martin, of Sevenoaks; and also an admirable little tractate, “The Penitent’s Enquiry,” which has had a large circulation both in England and Australia.

Mr. Field was married twice. One son, about eighteen years of age, of the first, and a daughter and son, both very young, by the second wife, are left orphans. By the care and aid of their relatives, and the contributions of their colonial friends, they will be provided for. It is also hoped that from the sale of this volume some assistance may be rendered towards the support of the orphan children.

LONDON,

Dec. 24th, 1869.

JOHN C. SYMONS.

INTRODUCTION.

THE present work owes its existence to the following circumstances. The writer, under the pressure of physical weakness, was laid aside from the work of the itinerancy, in which for twenty years he had enjoyed many blessings, and, as he would humbly hope, had led many a soul to the enjoyment of the great salvation. On arriving in Australia, in search of health, it was suggested to him by the Rev. J. C. Symons that a pleasing and profitable occupation of his leisure hours would be the preparation of a work especially designed to benefit young students, whether Sunday-school teachers, local preachers, or candidates for the ministry, who have few books and little time for reading, but who yet are anxiously desirous to understand "those things which are most surely believed among us," and to see the scriptural proofs by which they are sustained. On the subject being mentioned to other ministerial brethren, it was agreed by them all that such a work was greatly needed, nothing having yet appeared that seemed exactly to meet the requirements of the class above indicated.

To this task, therefore, the writer has devoted himself. His aim has been to give, in the simplest language, a summary of those grand and essential verities which are comprised in the Theology of the Wesleyan Methodists. All our standard authors have been consulted, and their definitions and arguments quoted, or their teachings summarised, as seemed desirable for the elucidation of the subjects in hand. And as no one can fully appreciate the proofs upon which our Theology is based, unless he has an acquaintance with the heresies that have sprung up in the Church, a brief account of those heresies and their advocates has been presented in connection with the doctrines which they have aimed to subvert. The form of question and answer has been adopted for the purpose of simplifying and bringing into prominence each particular point that is deserving of attention.

Some who peruse the book may, perhaps, regret that the passages of Scripture referred to are not given at length. It is conceded that in that case the book could have been read much more quickly, but whe-

ther with greater benefit is very doubtful. It is an indescribable advantage to one who is beginning the study of Theology to have his own Bible at hand, to search out every passage for himself, and to ponder its bearing upon the doctrine for the confirmation of which it is quoted. The time lost by this method is far more than compensated by the deep impression which the truth has made upon the mind; besides which, the memory soon becomes a Scripture "concordance," furnishing in an instant the chapter and verse of any particular passage that may be discussed. The writer would earnestly advise every young student to try this method for himself, and he ventures to predict that in less than twelve months he will be surprised at the amount of Biblical truth that is indelibly written upon his mind.

It is probable that some of the readers of this book may be looking forward with anxiety to an examination before a Church Court, preparatory to their being admitted into the ranks of local preachers or ministers of the Wesleyan Church, and the writer would gladly afford them a brother's helping hand. What is to be done that such an examination may be passed creditably and with success? Most earnestly would he recommend that no pains be spared in order that every subject be thoroughly *understood*. It is humiliating to see the memory "crammed," while the understanding is dormant. Employ the memory to its utmost extent for the correct quotation of God's Holy Word; but rest not satisfied without the clearest apprehension of every doctrine discussed, and of every definition given. He would also advise that the present work should be regarded as but introductory to the perusal of our great standard authors. As time and opportunity allow, read with all possible diligence the works of Wesley, Fletcher, Watson, Bishop Pearson, etc., and thus lay up a good foundation against the time to come.

Every superintendent of a circuit and chairman of a district has his own particular mode of presenting the questions for the examination of young men. But there is little variety as to the subjects introduced. And if the candidate be prepared to give prompt, brief, intelligent answers to the following questions, supporting them with appropriate Scripture proofs, all things being equal, the result need not be feared:—

1. Define Inspiration.
2. Quote those passages in which the Bible declares itself to be inspired.
3. What are the direct evidences in authentication of the Bible as a Divine revelation?
4. What are the presumptive evidences?
5. What are the collateral evidences?
6. Define the doctrine of the Trinity in Unity.
How does this differ from Tritheism?

How does it differ from Sabellianism ?

How does it differ from Arianism ?

Who was Sabellius ?

Who was Arius ?

7. Quote a few passages which clearly teach the doctrine of the Trinity in Unity.
8. What is the outline of evidence to prove the Divinity of Christ ?
9. Quote a few of the most striking passages that teach this doctrine.
10. What is meant by the *Divine* Sonship of Christ ?
11. How is this doctrine proved from Scripture ?
12. What is the meaning of the word " Person " ?
13. What is the outline of evidence to prove the personality of the Holy Spirit ?
14. Quote a few of the most striking passages that teach this doctrine.
15. What is the outline of evidence to prove the Divinity of the Spirit ?
16. Quote a few of the passages that teach this doctrine.
17. What was the image of God in man ?
18. What do you understand by " Original Sin " ?
19. What do you understand by hereditary guilt ?
20. Prove from Scripture that guilt is transmitted from Adam to his posterity.
21. Prove from Scripture that man has a depraved nature.
22. Prove that this depravity is *universal*.
23. Prove that this depravity is *total*.
24. Prove that it is transmitted from Adam.
25. What is redemption ?
26. Prove that the death of Christ was strictly a sacrifice for sin.
27. Prove that the death of Christ was universal in its provisions.
28. What is repentance ?
29. How is your definition supported by Scripture ?
30. Is repentance the gift of God ?
Is it the act and duty of man ?
31. What is saving faith ?
How does Mr. Wesley define it ?
What is Dr. Bunting's definition ?
32. Prove that faith is the gift of God and the act of man.
33. What is justification ?
How does Mr. Wesley define it ?
34. Prove from Scripture that it is substantially the same as pardon.
35. Does it not signify more than pardon ?
36. What is adoption ?
37. Under what aspect is God regarded in the blessings of pardon, justification, and adoption ?
38. What is the witness of the Spirit ?

What is Mr. Wesley's definition ?

39. What is regeneration ?

How does it differ from justification ?

40. Justification, the witness of the Spirit, and regeneration are received at the same moment ; but is there not, in the order of thinking, a succession of one to the other ? and between the two latter is there not a relation resembling that of cause and effect ?

41. What is the witness of our own spirit ?

42. What is entire sanctification ?

43. Is this attainable by all believers in the present life ?

44. May a Christian believer fall from grace, and be lost ?

45. In the general resurrection, will the same body, in the popular sense of the term, be raised again ?

46. Will the punishment of the wicked in the future state be strictly and literally eternal ?

47. Is the Christian Sabbath a Divine institution of perpetual and universal obligation ?

48. What is a sacrament ?

49. How many sacraments are there ?

Such an array of questions may appear somewhat alarming to a young man who has but just begun to study Theology ; but no one is fitted to be an expounder and a teacher of the Word of God who does not clearly understand, and is not prepared to defend, these momentous truths. There is, therefore, no time to be lost. The whole powers of the mind must be turned to the Bible, and to Bible truth. The leisure hours of night and morning must be carefully improved for the one great object of making you "a workman that needeth not to be ashamed." Prayer, earnest, persevering prayer, must be daily offered up to God for the light and influence of the Holy Ghost ; and you will find, what thousands have found before, that prayerful, plodding industry will be crowned with the effectual blessing of God.

Young men, my labour is now commended to you. My prayer is, that it may help you in your first efforts to grasp the truth and to make it known to others. And to each one who reads these pages I exhort :—Meditate upon these things ; give thyself wholly to them, that thy profiting may appear to all. Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine ; continue in them ; for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee."

HAWTHORN, VICTORIA,

October 20, 1868.

HANDBOOK OF CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY.

CHAPTER I.

THE EXISTENCE OF GOD.

I. *How can we define the term "God"?*

"As to the word itself, it is pure Anglo-Saxon, and among our ancestors signified not only the Divine Being, now commonly designated by the word, but also *Good*; as in their apprehension it appears that God and Good were correlative terms; and when they thought and spoke of him, they were ever led, from the word itself, to consider him as The Good Being, a fountain of infinite benevolence and beneficence towards his creatures."*

II. *What is the proper notion of God?*

"Sometimes we find the term God in Atheistic and Pantheistic writers employed in a sense which tends only to mislead. By this expression I mean, not a personification or abstraction, but a Being distinct from nature as its Author and Governor; a Being in whom power and intelligence are combined; a Being to whom, as the Author of my own existence, I may rationally address my prayers and my praise; to whom, as the sovereign Benefactor, I may offer my homage, my gratitude, and my love."† But the principal idea conveyed by this term *God* is that of "a Being or Nature of infinite *perfection*; and the infinite perfection of a being or nature consisteth in this, that it is absolutely and essentially necessary, an actual being of itself; and potential or causative of all things beside itself, independent from any other; upon which all things else depend, and by which all things else are governed."‡ In the words of Lawson, "God's infinite perfection includes all the attributes, even the most excellent;

* Dr. A. Clarke.

† Dr. Godwin's "Lectures on Atheism."

‡ Bishop Pearson "On the Creed," art. i.

it excludes all dependency, borrowed existence, composition, corruption, mortality, contingency, ignorance, unrighteousness, weakness, misery, and all imperfections whatever; it includes necessity of being, independency, perfect unity, simplicity, immensity, eternity, immortality, the most perfect life, knowledge, wisdom, integrity, power, glory, bliss, and all these in the highest degree."* "But what finite mind can fully conceive the conditions included in Absolute Perfection? To evolve these will require eternity; for could they be evolved in less, they would not be unlimited."†

III. *By what names is God revealed to us in Scripture?*

"The names of God, as recorded in Scripture, convey at once ideas of overwhelming greatness and glory, mingled with that awful mysteriousness with which, to all finite minds, and especially to the minds of mortals, the Divine essence and mode of existence must ever be invested. Though one, he is *Elohim*, 'Gods,' 'persons adorable.' He is *Jehovah*, 'self-existing,' *El*, 'strong,' 'powerful.' *Ehieh*, 'I am,' 'I will be,' 'self-existence,' 'independency,' 'all-sufficiency,' 'immutability,' 'eternity.' *Shaddai*, 'Almighty,' 'all-sufficient.' *Adon*, 'supporter,' 'Lord,' 'Judge.'"‡

IV. *How do we prove the existence of God to be necessary and independent?*

"From the truth that something now is, we arrive at the conclusion that something must always have been. It is a maxim which to every mind must be self-evident, that nothing can produce itself, or be the cause of its own existence, bringing itself into being; for this is to suppose the thing to act before its own existence, which is palpably absurd and contradictory. It is not less plain that what now exists could not be produced by nothing, created without a creator, caused without a cause. Something has, therefore, existed from eternity. Here, then, there are only two suppositions possible. The first is, that of an infinite series of causes or successive existences, produced one from another in endless progression, without any original cause at all. This hypothesis involves a manifest contradiction; inasmuch as, while each being or existence in the series is supposed to be caused by that which preceded it, the whole series together is caused by nothing. No part, on the hypothesis, being necessary, the whole cannot be necessary. It is only, therefore, going back with the difficulty. It offers no explanation of original existence. The only remaining supposition is, that the Being which has existed from eternity must be self-existent, must exist from the necessity

* *Thec-Politica*, quoted in Watson's "Institutes."

† Harris's "Pre-Adamite Earth."

‡ Watson's "Institutes," part ii., chap. i.

of his own nature.”* More briefly, the subject may be stated thus: “That which is before all can be derived from none; that which is derived from no other being, but on which, as the First Cause, all must be dependent, must be independent of all, and have self-existence. He whose existence is not dependent, nor has the ground or reason of such existence in any other being, but has existed from eternity, is not in his being contingent, but necessary; that is, he cannot but be what he is.”† “The great parent truth, therefore, which he may be regarded as silently repeating, through all the solitudes of space, and through every point of duration, is the sublime affirmation, ‘*I AM*’—underived, self-existent, absolute Being: in which sense there never has been, never will be, never can be, any being besides.”‡

V. How do we prove that this uncreated, unoriginated, eternal Being is “causative of all beings beside itself?”

There must have been a period in past eternity when he existed alone in the universe; when infinite space had never owned a world; the darkness of immensity had never been penetrated by a ray of created light, and no seraph had ever bowed before his throne. And yet something now exists; there is the firmament with its troops of stars, and the earth with its varied and countless tenantry, and the sea with its myriads of living tribes and assemblage of costly works. Now, every effect must have a cause. This is a self-evident truth of which our minds can never be divested by any or all of the most specious subtleties of philosophy. And if the “infinite succession in causalities” involves a manifest contradiction, as we have seen, where can we look for the Great First Cause but to the God of the Bible, who has existed from eternity, in his own self-sufficiency? Were he to break the silence of eternity, he might proclaim, “I am the first, I also am the last. Mine hand also hath laid the foundation of the earth, and my right hand hath spanned the heavens.” (Isa. xlviii. 12, 13.) “I the Lord do all these things.” (Isa. xlv. 7.) And as every thing and every being owes its existence to him, they must ever remain dependent on him, and subject to his will and pleasure. Any power less than omnipotent, any wisdom less than omniscient, would be infinitely unequal to the task of governing such an universe even for one day or one moment. But he can rule the work for ever, and with infinite ease; and can and will thus accomplish the end which he proposed from everlasting.

VI. What is the information which Nature can supply respecting the Supreme Being?

* Wardlaw's “Systematic Theology.”

† Dr. Godwin's “Lectures on Atheism.”

‡ Harris's “Pre-Adamite Earth.”

It teaches—1. THAT THE GREAT ETERNAL MUST BE INFINITE. What bounds or limits can be fixed to him who gave birth to the universe? His necessary existence must, as far as we can perceive, be necessary in every point of space, as well as in every moment of duration. As Dugald Stewart says: "When we have once established the existence of an intelligent and powerful Cause, we are unavoidably led to apply to this Cause our conceptions of *immensity* and *eternity*, and to conceive him as filling the infinite extent of both with his presence and his power. Hence we associate with the idea of God, those awful impressions which are naturally produced by the idea of infinite space, and perhaps still more by the idea of endless duration." *

It teaches—2. THAT THE GREAT ETERNAL MUST BE OMNI-
PRESENT. As all things are created by him and dependent on him, we cannot conceive the absence of the supporting cause from that which it upholds. And since by the immensity of his nature he fills and includes all things, he must be everywhere, at every point, in the regions of boundless space.

It teaches—3. THAT THE GREAT ETERNAL MUST BE A SPIRIT. We mean that he is a being who perceives, who wills, and acts; but that the properties of matter, such as form and divisibility, do not pertain to his nature. Matter is entirely an object of sense: the Deity is not, cannot be an object of sense, and cannot therefore be material. We see throughout nature innumerable results which none of the properties of matter can account for; we see effects which only intelligence, wisdom, design, could produce; we are therefore justified in speaking of Deity as immaterial, in concluding that he is a Spirit.

It teaches—4. THAT THE GREAT ETERNAL IS THE ONLY GOD. No one can attentively view the arrangements which appear throughout the whole economy of nature, the connection of every part with the others, and its dependence on the whole, with the wonderful harmonies which the working of the entire system exhibits, without being struck with the obvious unity of design; and feeling, if he is prepared to acknowledge any Creator at all, that "there is one God, and there is none beside him." If any person should affirm that there is a plurality of Gods, the burden of proof would lie on him. It is an assumption without anything to support it.†

VII. *What is the origin of that belief in God which so generally prevails in the world?*

Three distinct opinions have been held upon this subject: (1.) Some have represented the idea of God as *innate*, as indelibly engraved on every human mind. But if it were so, "every human being would be in possession of it. Of this there is not

* Dissertation on the Progress of Metaphysical Science.

† Godwin's "Lectures on Atheism."

only no proof at all, but the evidence of fact is against it; and the doctrine of innate ideas may with confidence be pronounced a mere theory, assumed to support favourite notions, but contradicted by all experience."* (2.) Others have ascribed our belief in God to "intellectual intuition;" they speak of such a direct and immediate "apperception" of God as is altogether independent alike of any process of reasoning, and of any external sign or manifestation in the shape of evidence; and they conclude that all argument on the subject is superseded by its self-evident certainty; that a formal proof is impossible, just because it is superfluous. Hence a recent writer has said: "He who asserts that there is no God is a madman; he who by elaborate reasoning endeavours to show that there is a God is a fool."† But we can find no proof of any *intuition* so direct and immediate, or any belief so spontaneous, as to be altogether independent of evidence. Even our belief in the existence of our fellow-men may be said in a certain sense to be intuitive; it is so natural and so inevitable that we are scarcely conscious of passing through any process of reason in reaching it; and yet it springs unquestionably from real evidence—an evidence which may scarcely admit of a formal statement, but which is nevertheless the sole ground of our belief. And so our belief in the existence of God depends on certain *signs* or *manifestations* which require to be presented and urged upon the mind before their force will be duly felt. (3.) It is therefore to be concluded that we owe the knowledge of the existence of God to revelation alone. The first man received it by sensible converse with him, and the doctrine was then transmitted, with the confirmation of successive visible manifestations, to the early ancestors of all nations, from whom the successive generations of men received it as a tradition from the past. And if the apprehension of one Supreme and Divine Intelligence has been obliterated among any people, it has never been recovered by any other means than by the instruction of others. But being thus presented to the mind, the proofs by which the doctrine is sustained are both copious and irresistible.

VIII. *What are the principal arguments that are employed to prove the existence of God?*

We are disposed to regard almost every method of proof that has been adopted as containing some element of truth—some fact or principle which, at one stage or another, may be beneficially applied in the way of confirming or illustrating the doctrine. The leading arguments, however, are the following:—

1. THE HISTORICAL ARGUMENT. This is an argument drawn from the universal consent of mankind to the fact of his existence;

* Watson's "Institutes."

† Mr. McCall: Article in "The People."

the universality of such consent being regarded as sufficiently ascertained from all ancient history, and from the reports of voyagers and travellers in all parts of our globe. On the Atheistic hypothesis, how is this to be explained? If the belief be referred to man's defective reasoning and erroneous judgment, is it not an unparalleled phenomenon that nearly all men, in all times and places, should, without any common consent, have fallen into a similar error? How did it originate? If it be an idea so chimerical and repugnant to reason as the advocates of a sceptical philosophy would have us to believe, how came it to be as early as the annals of man, and as wide as the human race? Admit the position that there is a Divine Creator, such as the Bible speaks of, and the phenomena are at once explained. It is scarcely possible to suppose that a wise and beneficent Being should have formed such a creature as man, and left him wholly ignorant of his origin; and that the fact of his Creator's existence, when once made known, should have found universal acceptance, or nearly so, in every succeeding generation, can only be accounted for, we conceive, on the supposition that it is quite in accordance with the nature of man; and the correspondence of this belief with the sense of mankind, in all circumstances, and in all ages, affords a strong presumption of its truth.

2. THE MORAL ARGUMENT. This is drawn from the sense of moral accountableness which is deep-seated in our mental constitution. Has there not always been an inward sense that some actions are right, and others wrong? And has not a conscious pleasure followed the performance of the one, and dissatisfaction and pain attended the other? And when this inward sense of duty and of moral obligation has been outraged, and men have gone counter to the internal monitor, has there not been some apprehension of the displeasure of a higher power? Atheism assigns these ideas and sentiments to ignorance and superstition. Were this their origin, they would be removed by increasing knowledge. But the reverse has been the case. They still characterise a very large portion of those who are well acquainted with natural philosophy, including many of the most original and independent thinkers. No explanation can be given of these phenomena in our mental constitution, excepting by the existence of a just and holy God. The authority of a law of right and wrong within the breast, implies a lawgiver; the setting up of a tribunal there, points to a yet higher tribunal in the heavens; and from the felt presence of a judge within us, denouncing wrong and sanctioning right, we infer the existence of a righteous Judge over us, who is at once its Author and Lord. "And this theology of conscience," as Dr. Chalmers remarks, "has done more to uphold a sense of God in the world, than all the theology of academic demonstration."*

* Dr. Godwin's "Lectures on Atheism;" Pearson's "Essay on Infidelity;" Charnock "On the Attributes."

3. THE A PRIORI ARGUMENT, which is thus explained by Bishop Hamilton: "The terms *a posteriori* and *a priori* were introduced by the schoolmen to distinguish the two methods of arguing; one from the nature of effects to the nature of their cause; the other from the nature of a cause to the nature of its effects. The argument *a priori*, taken in this sense, cannot be applicable to the present subject; for we cannot argue from anything considered in the light of a cause, when we mean to prove the existence or the attributes of that Being who is the First Cause of all things. Therefore, when we speak of proving the being and attributes of God *a priori*, we must understand that term in its original and more comprehensive sense, as it denotes the common synthetic method of arguing, which is applicable to this as well as to other subjects, particularly to the proof of mathematical theories. In this method we lay down evident principles or axioms, and from them deduce other truths that are more complex; and as the principles from which we begin are *first* known to us, and in the order of our thoughts are *prior* to the truths deduced from them, we are said in this way to argue *a priori*. The reader should attend to the distinction here made between the two ways of arguing *a priori*: one *from a cause to its effects*, which is the philosophical way; the other, *from axioms or first principles*, which is the mathematical or demonstrative way of arguing."* The *a priori* method of reasoning, which is explained, has been employed Dr. S. Clarke, in his "Demonstration of the Being and Attributes of God;" by Chevalier Ramsey, in his "Philosophical Principles of Religion;" by Wollaston in his "Religion of Nature Delineated;" by Bishop Hamilton, in his "Attempt to Prove the Existence and Absolute Perfection of the Supreme, Unoriginated Being in a Demonstrative Manner;" by Moses Lowman, in his "Argument to Prove the Unity and Perfection of God, *a Priori*;" and by Dr. Bruce, in his "Treatise on the Being and Attributes of God." A brief outline of what these writers have advanced is given by Dr. A. Clarke, in the twenty-ninth of his published sermons, to which the reader is referred.

The reasonings of these great men have by no means been received with universal favour, even by those who were equally jealous for the honour of God. Many have thought that the argument was inconclusive, and others have deemed it rather calculated to perplex and confound than to produce rational conviction. Accordingly, Dr. Gretton, Mr. Thomas Knowles, of Pembroke Hall, Cambridge, and Dr. Waterland, published elaborate dissertations to point out what they conceived to be the defects of the *a priori* argument. In more recent times, Dr. Chalmers and Richard Watson have expressed themselves as

* Works of Right Rev. H. Hamilton, D.D., late Bishop of Ossory, vol. ii., pp. 26, 27. Edit. 1809.

concurring in the views of these learned men; and they are sanctioned by the high authority of Dr. Reid, who, next to Locke, may be considered the father of intellectual philosophy, by Dugald Stewart, and by Lord Brougham. On the subject of the *a priori* argument we observe (1.) It is of a nature too abstract and recondite to be generally useful to mankind. (2.) In the Scriptures of the Old Testament, God himself often appeals to the stupendous works of creation for proofs of his existence, and of the greatness of his power; and St. Paul, in dealing with the heathen, always adopted the same course. See Rom. i. 20; Acts xiv. 15, 17; xvii. 23, 29. (3.) It was by an appeal to the works of nature and of providence, connected with the testimony of Scripture, that Atheism and Polytheism were generally overthrown in the Roman Empire during the first three centuries of the Christian dispensation. (4.) The *a priori* argument may serve to silence the cavils of metaphysical Atheists, and on this account is not to be despised.*

4. THE A POSTERIORI ARGUMENT. This, as we have shown, proceeds from effects upward to their cause. The conviction that for every effect there must exist a corresponding cause seems to be an original and essential law of our intelligence. And there is another axiom closely connected with this general one, viz., that every effect manifestive of design must have a designing cause. Now, all the works of nature carry with them the evidences of design and contrivance. Whether we think of the sidereal firmament and the unnumbered worlds of boundless space, or enter into a minute examination of the animal, vegetable, and mineral kingdoms; or whether we study the anatomy of the human body, or the vast and varied capabilities of the human mind, everywhere we discern an astonishing adaptation of parts to uses, of means to the attainment of manifest ends, which preclude all possibility of chance or accident; and we are compelled to resign ourselves to the conviction that there is a Great First Designer, and that he is God. There is nothing elaborate in the process. From effects we ascend naturally to causes, from subordinate laws we rise up to the highest law; and when the inductive philosophy has carried us up to the highest point in the series of material causation, by our very mental constitution we repose in the conviction, that beyond the series of mere mechanical causes and effects, is the Infinite Cause of all—a Being of unbounded wisdom, unlimited power, and infinite love. This argument is elaborately drawn out and illustrated in Paley's "Natural Theology," Ray's "Wisdom of God in Creation," Lord Brougham's "Discourse on Natural Theology," and in the "Bridgewater Treatises," by Chalmers, Prout, Bell, Kirby, Roget, Whewell, Kidd, and Buckland.

IX. *What are the principal theories that are advocated in*

* Rev. Thomas Jackson's MS. Lectures.

opposition to the Bible doctrine of an infinite, uncreated, self-existent Spirit?

1. **ATHEISM**, which totally denies the existence of a Supreme Being. When the word is used in this unqualified sense, it is called *speculative* Atheism, in contradistinction from *practical* Atheism, which consists in an utter disregard of the claims and moral government of God. Speculative Atheism is a strange and startling phenomenon. Faith in God is so inherent in the heart of humanity, that many wise and good men have doubted whether there ever has been a speculative Atheist, a man that is *bona fide* convinced in his judgment that there is no God. Addison would have told a man who gloried in this distinction that he was an impudent liar, and that he knew it. And Dr. Arnold said: "I confess that I believe conscientious Atheism not to exist." But when we consider the deceitfulness of the human heart, and the incalculable power of its corrupt principles and passions in blinding and biasing the understanding, there seems to be no sufficient reason for questioning the possibility of even that most monstrous of all its perversions that is implied in Atheism. During the latter half of the last century the religious world had to contend with the abettors of an undisguised Atheism. The materialistic school of France sent forth an infidel science and literature of the broadest stamp. In the *Système de la Nature*, the celebrated work of Baron d'Holbach, the most absolute Atheism is asserted. In the *French Encyclopædia of Sciences*, which numbered among its contributors some of the most brilliant writers of the age, the existence of God was treated as a mere fiction of an over-credulous age. What has been too truly called the Reign of Terror in France, was avowedly the reign of the most absolute Atheism. And our own age does not lack unhappy men who, both theoretically and practically, disown God, and deny his existence.*

2. **PANTHEISM**. A system that denies the Divine personality, and regards the universe as God. It teaches that God, instead of being the cause of all things, is the essence of all things. It is not, therefore, to be confounded with Atheism.† The Atheist

* Wardlaw's "Systematic Theology," and Pearson "On Infidelity."

† Still, if you take away that faith in a personal God and Father which the Bible teaches, in what respect are we better and happier than the adherents of stark Atheism? "Men talk of the wisdom, the power, the order, the benevolence of *nature*. But let nature be conceived of as apart from a living Providence and a personal God, and what do such expressions mean? They are utterly illusive; they have no true and real meaning. All the seeming wisdom, all the marvellous adjustments, all the *curiosa felicitas* of nature, are but the happy conjunctions, the exquisite chance-unions of we know not what. When lost in admiration of grand all-answering laws, of wonderful organisations, of complexly apt and beautiful contrivances, of what seem like the most kind

sees God nowhere, the Pantheist sees him everywhere. The one looks upon a world every department of which is bright with intelligence, and resolves the whole into mere mechanical forces. The other sees God really shining in the sun, moon, and stars, and hears him speaking in the winds and waters, and in the deep emotions of the human soul. The Atheist looks up to the heavens and around on the earth, and coolly says, There is Nature, but no God. The Pantheist points to all the glorious forms of earth and sky, and exclaims, *There* is God. His God, therefore, is merely an infinite substance—a vague immensity—the one essence of being extended everywhere, of which man, and all other existing things, are but the modes. Pantheism was substantially the creed of Spinoza, an apostate Dutch Jew, who lived in Holland about the middle of the seventeenth century; and of Thomas Hobbes, of Malmesbury, who lived about the same time. It has prevailed extensively in Germany and France during the last few years, and the names of Schelling, Hegel, Fuerbach, &c., are well known as its prominent advocates. The celebrated German philosopher, Frederick Strauss, who has written largely to prove that the Gospels are a myth, and are to be put in the same category with the legends and myths, the superstitions and fancies of Heathenism, is a Pantheist; and so is Emerson of America. Theodore Parker, who yet retains something of the Puritan preacher, is but the American Strauss; while he professedly holds to the idea of a personal God, *in a certain sense*, all his proclivities are with Pantheists and so-called Spiritualists. Whether Carlyle is a Pantheist or not is very difficult to say; but the religious tendency of a great deal that he has written is decidedly Pantheistical; and in some of the transatlantic productions which are circulating among us, we meet with the system of Pantheism in its poetic or most attractive form.*

and beneficent provisions, the soul that is beginning to glow with wonder at this seeming wisdom, and to swell with thankfulness because of this seeming love, is struck as with a death-chill in black and hopeless bewilderment by the thought that there is no Being of wisdom and benevolence, no Father, no God, who can be thanked or adored because of these wonderful works. Surely, this is enough to darken the universe to the explorer of nature's mysteries, and to fill his soul with perpetual melancholy and confusion."—Rev. J. Rigg, D.D.

* Pearson "On Infidelity," chap. ii. "British and Foreign Evangelical Review," vol. v., art. vi.

Pantheism, like other forms of infidelity, has a variety of shades, and assumes a variety of names. The Pantheism of Hegel and Strauss and their followers is called *Spiritualism*. It claims to be scientific and transcendental: its God is the universe in its spiritual and abstract totality (in which all things are God and God all things). The Pantheism of Fuerbach is called *Naturalism* or *Humanism*. It makes God one with humanity, and thus identifies the finite with the infinite. God, or the Infinite, it is said, manifests itself or comes to consciousness in

3. MATERIALISM. The Materialists were a sect in the ancient church, composed of persons who, being prepossessed with that maxim of the ancient philosophy, '*Ex nihilo, nihil fit*,'—out of nothing, nothing can arise,' had recourse to an eternal matter, on which they supposed God wrought in the creation; instead of admitting God alone as the sole cause of the existence of all things. Tertullian, a celebrated father of the third century, vigorously opposed the doctrine of the Materialists in his treatise against Hermogenes, who was one of their number.* In later times, the term Materialists has been applied to those who affirm that there is but one substance in the universe, viz., matter; that the Deity himself is material, as also is the soul of man; that thought and perception are not distinct from the body, but are properties of matter under certain modifications; and that intelligence, so far from creating or organising matter, is itself evolved from matter working out its own inherent laws.

man, so that man is transformed into an object of worship; not, indeed, man the individual—for as an individual or person he is nothing—but man the whole, or humanity as immutable and eternal. According to this view, God is not a being above man, but God is to be found in man. In the language of Emerson, "Standing on the bare ground, my head bathed by the blithe air, and uplifted into infinite space, all mean egotism vanishes. The currents of the Universal Being circulate through me. I am part or particle of God." Religion is not a thing that comes to man from without; but "the beginning, middle, and end of religion is man himself." The whole result is self-assertion, self-adoration, or man-worship, involving the full denial of a "living" God and a real immortality. The Pantheism of Auguste Comte is called *Positivism*. This scientific philosopher denies the very existence of spirit, whether human, angelic, or Divine. The idea of the *soul* as an immaterial, immortal essence, and of *God* as the Supreme Creator and Preserver of all, is peculiarly abhorrent. He has made up his mind that *will* must necessarily be capricious, and thence inconsistent with the idea of uniform method or law, which science can alone recognise; and whether, therefore, *will*, as a creative and controlling cause, is claimed for man or for God, it must be rejected. Thus, then, according to Comte, we have no soul, no Creator, no Father in heaven, no Redeemer on earth, no immortality, no heaven beyond this world and time. But seeing that man is a religious being, to whom worship is natural, Comte meets the exigency by teaching that man is his own god; not man the individual, but humanity; the life of the whole, or the whole of humanity, as a continuous and eternal life. Thus the Positivism of Comte allies itself to the Humanism of Fuerbach, disclaiming everything supernatural in sanction or origin, and aiming to regulate the conduct of human beings only so far as the world is concerned.

* "Encyclopædia Britannica."

CHAPTER II.

THE EVIDENCES OF DIVINE REVELATION.

WE have in our hands a book that professes to be a revelation of truth and duty given by God to his intelligent and sinful creatures—a book whose last page has been written about eighteen hundred years—a book that has been transcribed by numberless pens, translated into many languages, scrutinized by the scholar, and loved and revered by millions; and we must devote a short chapter to a consideration of the evidences by which this particular record is commended to our faith.

1. Is there any reason for perplexity among the numerous pretended revelations that are found amongst men?

Infidels have always been accustomed to say much concerning false religions, in order to throw discredit upon the true one. They have argued thus: "Every nation in the world pretends to a revealed religion. Each community has its own, which boasts its irresistible proofs, its miracles, its prophets. To believe them all is impossible, since they contradict and anathematize each other; and to discriminate between them is equally impossible, for were there a true revelation it would be vain to attempt the discovery of it in the midst of so much confusion." Now let it be observed, that, how numerous soever the religions may be which falsely boast their Divine origin, this is no proof that a true revelation does not somewhere exist. On the contrary, so many groundless pretensions are an evidence that a just claim does somewhere exist. No one would have made counterfeit money, had not the true coin first existed; and charlatans in medicine only exert their influence over the minds of people, because there are physicians and real remedies. So if God had not spoken to man, what Rousseau calls "the fantasy of revelations" would never have had its rise. And thus, instead of concluding that there is no true revelation because there are so many false ones, we should say that there are so many false ones because there is a true revelation. And it is a great mistake to suppose that the task of discovering the true religion is perplexing and impracticable. Of course it would be idle to allege against us the claims of such religions as have no written testimony, and of which any-

thing may be affirmed that fancy or caprice can suggest. We must confine ourselves to those revelations which have a written evidence; and of these how many are worthy to be put in competition with the Bible? We are referred to the *revelation of Zoroaster*.* But even were not tradition involved in so much uncertainty as to reckon as many as six different Zoroasters, and were not the authenticity of the Zendavesta† a contested point, as is the case, still this book is rather a treatise of theology, philosophy, and other matters, than a professed revelation. The author is less a false prophet than a legislator; and he may be compared to Solon‡ and Lycurgus,§ who invoked the authority of the gods in support of their laws, without declaring themselves to be prophets. *As to Confucius*,|| he lays so little claim to this character, that the books of which he is considered the author are especially distinguished by the fact that no trace of the doctrine of a Divinity, or of a future state, is to be found in them. Of *Sanchoniathon*¶ we have only a fragment, and that is more

* The "Encyclopædia Britannica" gives the following account of Zoroaster: He was a celebrated ancient philosopher, said to be the reformer or the founder of the religion of the Magi. It is wholly uncertain to how many eminent men the name of Zoroaster belonged. Some have maintained that there was but one Zoroaster, and that he was a Persian; others have said that there were six eminent founders of philosophy of this name. Ham the son of Noah, Moses, Osiris, Mithras, and others, both gods and men, have by different writers been asserted to have been the same with Zoroaster. Many different opinions have also been advanced concerning the time in which he flourished. . . . If in the midst of so much uncertainty, anything can be advanced with the appearance of probability, it seems to be this: that there was a Zoroaster, a Perso-Median, who flourished about the time of Darius Hystaspes; *i.e.* about 500 B.C.; and that besides him there was another Zoroaster, who lived in a much more remote period among the Babylonians and taught them astronomy. Concerning him, however, nothing more is known than that he flourished towards the beginning of the Babylonian empire, and was the father of the Chaldean astrology and magic.

† The Zend or Zendavesta is a book ascribed to Zoroaster, which the ancient Magians and the modern Persees observe and reverence as the sole rule of their faith and manners. The word, it is said, originally signifies any instrument for kindling fire, and is applied to this book to denote its aptitude for kindling the flame of religion in the hearts of those who read it.

‡ Solon was one of the seven sages of Greece and the celebrated legislator of Athens who flourished in the sixth century B.C.

§ Lycurgus the celebrated Spartan legislator who is supposed to have flourished about B.C. 850.

|| Confucius was the most eminent and most justly venerated of all the philosophers of China; he was born about B.C. 550.

¶ Sanchoniathon was a Phœnician philosopher and historian, who is said to have flourished before the Trojan war. Of this most ancient

than doubtful. It has passed through four different hands before it reaches us. It is to be found in the fathers of the church, who quote from Porphyry—the declared adversary of Christianity, who quotes from Philon of Biblos, who quotes the Phœnician author. *The Hindoos*, indeed, possess books which they believe to be inspired, but the origin of these books is anything but authentic. The most impenetrable mystery covers their origin. In fact, I find no religion which claims Divine inspiration for well-known writers except these three: that of Moses, of Jesus Christ, and of Mohammed, and all these spring from the same source; for the religion of Jesus Christ is based on that of Moses, and Mohammed pretends to rest his claims upon those of the two others. The Old Testament—the most ancient book in existence—clearly proclaims its Divine inspiration; and it is from this common head that all accredited revelations, whether true or false, have their rise; and amongst these there are only three whose authority it is either possible or necessary to bring to the test. The inquiry is thus brought within very narrow limits; for the Jewish and Christian religions hold together in such a manner that if the second is of God, the first, to which it bears testimony, must be of God also. They are one: they stand or fall together. And the Christian religion is so strongly opposed to Mohammedanism that if the one is Divine, the other cannot be so.* Let us then examine the claims of the Christian religion, and of the documents on which it rests, namely, the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. We maintain that they not only *contain*, but *are*, a revelation from God. And the evidences by which this is proved are generally distributed under these general heads: Presumptive, Historical, Direct, Internal, and Miscellaneous.

THE PRESUMPTIVE EVIDENCES OF REVELATION.

“These are certain facts, or preliminary considerations which yield a presumption in favour of such a revelation, and which may fairly predispose us to examine its more direct and proper proofs.”† These facts relate to the necessity, the possibility, and the probability of an express revelation from God.

II. *Is a Divine Revelation necessary?*

writer the only remains extant are sundry fragments of cosmogony, and of the history of the gods and first mortals, preserved by Eusebius and Theodoret. Several modern writers, however, of great learning, have called in question the very existence of Sanchoniathon, and have contended with much plausibility, that the fragments which Eusebius adopted as genuine upon the authority of Porphyry, were forged by that author or the pretended translator Philo, from enmity to the Christians, and that the Pagans might have something to show of equal antiquity with the book of Moses. These opposite opinions have produced a controversy that has filled volumes.—“*Encyclopædia Britannica*.”

* Rev. A. Monod's “*Lucilla*.”

† Dr. Hannah.

Modern infidels are loud in their assertions that the light of nature will suffice to conduct mankind to truth and virtue and happiness. And this point can be easily tested by an inquiry into the state of those nations which are altogether without revelation, either real or pretended. It would not be fair to refer to systems of Natural Theology which have been framed in Christian lands, even though the men who framed them were avowed opponents of the Bible; for some of their best views and precepts have been derived, not from the dictates of their own unassisted reason, but, as Rousseau himself confesses,* from those very Scriptures which they despise and revile, from the early impressions of education, and from living in a country where, in spite of themselves, they imbibe some portion of that religious knowledge which the sacred writings have everywhere diffused. "If the inquiry really be concerning the sufficiency of natural light without a direct revelation, we ought, in all justice, to confine ourselves to those, whether in ancient or modern times, who have enjoyed the light of nature alone; or, at most, the light of nature with a few faint rays of early traditionary revelation." Examine, then, the most authentic records concerning the religion and morals of the heathen world. Bring forward as witnesses the ancient philosophers of Greece and Rome. Let your inquiries relate to the time when the human mind was in a condition of strength and culture, quite equal, if not superior, to anything developed in the history of the world. And what is the result? Did man, simply by his own unaided reason, rise to a right conception of his Maker? did he discover the true relation in which he stood to the Supreme? Was he able to tell with certainty whether there was pardon for the guilty, or whether there was power in prayer? Did he erect an infallible standard of morality, and exercise a steady belief in a future state of being? In short, without the Bible, did he realize and fulfil the great end for which he was created, and all this in a way conducive to his own happiness as an immortal being, and quite in harmony with the principles of the Divine government and the character of God? Alas! all history testifies that "the world by wisdom knew not God;" that the most eminent of the heathen philosophers never rose above a gloomy scepticism or a low and grovelling idolatry; and that vice in its most revolting shape stalked about, not in solitary and isolated cases, but under the professed sanction of the national religion, and its degrading rites and ceremonies. Read the abundant evidence furnished on this subject in Dr. Leland's "Necessity and Advantages of the Christian Revelation," Bishop Porteus' Tract on "The Beneficial Effects of Christianity," Horne's "Introduction," Watson's "Institutes," and Dr. Macknight's "Notes on the First Chapter of Romans." And what have the modern opposers of revelation left us to prove that

* Works, vol. ix., p. 71, 12mo., 1764.

our unaided reason, the light of nature, or call it what you will, will serve us better than it did the sages of antiquity? What can you find in their writings which may be regarded as a perfect rule of duty, or an infallible standard of truth? The Rev. T. H. Horne has been careful to collect in his "Introduction," vol. i., the recorded opinions of Herbert, and Hobbs, and Hume, and Blount, and Collins, and Tindal, and Morgan, and Bollingbroke, and Voltaire, and Diderot, and D'Alembert, etc.; from which the proof is but too abundant, that were there no guide for man but that which they have attempted to furnish, his condition would indeed be hopeless, and his destiny perplexing, unmeaning, and sad. If men are not altogether blinded by prejudice or passion, if they are not altogether deaf to the voice of history, they cannot but see the inadequacy of human reason to the moral necessities of man. We need a revelation: this the philosophers of antiquity painfully felt; and this every thoughtful spirit will feel, who, like them, is left to the misery of mere conjecture on the most momentous subjects connected with human happiness.

III. *Is a Divine Revelation possible?*

There are those among modern sceptics who answer this inquiry with an emphatic "No," although others have felt themselves compelled to concede this point. Says Bollingbroke, "An extraordinary action of God upon the human mind, which the word inspiration is now used to denote, is not more inconceivable than the ordinary action of mind on body or of body on mind." And those who allege the impossibility of a divine revelation to man should in all fairness show where the impossibility lies. *Is it in God?* Is he not a Being of amazing and even of unbounded power? and whatever difficulties may be involved in a divine revelation, are they such as omnipotence can never overcome? *Is the alleged impossibility in man?* Has he not perception, judgment, and will sufficient, if rightly directed, to apprehend and embrace what God may be pleased to reveal? To deny this were to deny the gift of our intellectual and rational nature, and to degrade ourselves to a level with the brutes. (Psalm xlix. 20.) Does the impossibility, then, lie in the discovery of a *proper medium of communication*? Shall we suppose that he who formed man, and endowed him with intelligence, is unable to devise a way by signs, inspiration, language, or the like, to disclose to him his mind and purposes? If we ourselves can in various ways transmit our inward thoughts, and sentiments, and feelings to each other, can we entertain the thought that God, who has supplied us with this faculty, is ever at a loss to convey to us by some most efficient medium, the knowledge of his will and designs? We must surrender ourselves to the boldest Atheism ere we can deny that he can, if he sees fit, make a communication of himself and of

* Dr. Hannah's Lectures.

his will, and accompany it with evidences sufficiently clear to convince every lover of truth of its credit and authority.

IV. *Is a Divine Revelation probable?*

If any argument can be drawn from the general persuasion of mankind, it is strongly in favour of this supposition. For we shall scarcely find a people that believed the existence of a God, who did not likewise believe that some kind of communication already subsisted between God and man, or would at some future time be vouchsafed to dispel the cloud of darkness in which they were involved. But further than this: all our acquaintance with the Divine nature leads to the conclusion that he will concede to his rational and responsible creatures a communication of his nature and will. *He is a holy God*, infinitely and eternally holy; and it is in the nature of holiness to desire in all others a resemblance to itself, and to hold all impurity, wherever it exists, in utter abhorrence. But if our infinitely wise Creator designs us to be holy, he will undoubtedly supply every necessary assistance; for it is altogether inconceivable that a wise Being should will an end without willing also the means essential to that end; and is not a revelation of his will one of the means essential to that end? * *He is a God of goodness too*. "The goodness of God endureth continually." It arrays the lilies of the field, marks the fall of the sparrow, numbers the very hairs of our head, feeds the fowls of the air, and munificently supplies the wants of the whole creation. Man, as the chief and prince of this lower world, partakes of the especial care and bounty of the Most High. And shall his best interests be disregarded? shall his body be fed, and his soul be left to pine away in dreary and unrelieved destitution? shall he find plentiful provision for time, and none for eternity? Is this the lesson which Divine goodness teaches? this the conclusion to which its past and present manifestations guide us? † Surely it may be presumed, with Socrates, however much the modern infidel may doubt it, that he, the loving Father of our spirits, will break the awful silence, and speak to man in the voice of love whatever may be necessary to his present and eternal well-being. ‡

If, then, these considerations afford presumptive evidence in favour of a revelation from God, the next inquiry relates to

THE HISTORICAL EVIDENCES OF THE CREDIBILITY OF THE SCRIPTURES.

The volume that is offered us as a revelation from God contains many separate books, written by different persons; are all these *genuine*? It abounds in historical facts; are they *authentic*?

* Treffry's "Lectures on the Evidences." † Dr. Hannah.

‡ The probability of a Divine revelation is stated with great force in Paley's "Evidences"—Preliminary Considerations. See also Watson's "Institutes."

It has come down to us from very ancient times; can we be certain of its *uncorrupted preservation*? Historical evidence respects these three points.

V. *Have we sufficient proof of the genuineness of the sacred books?*

A book is genuine if it was written by the person whose name it bears. The word has relation only to authorship. Is it the legitimate production of the person to whom it is ascribed, or is it spurious? "Now, the greater part of the books of Scripture plainly appropriate the names of those by whom they were written; but the other books do not appropriate the names of their respective writers, while yet they claim to be the genuine productions of competent persons though unknown or undetermined."* We must keep this distinction before us, and by the ordinary rules of criticism, the same rules that we should apply to the records of any profane writer, test the genuineness of the sacred books. The process of proof in respect to the Old and New Testament is of course distinct, and must be treated of separately.

Concerning the Books of the Old Testament.

1. Those which are assigned under God to a known and certain human authorship have been received from the time of their alleged publication as the production of the men whose names they bear; and there is not, even in contemporary authors, in the contents of the works themselves, or in the traditions by which they are accompanied, the shadow of a testimony to the contrary. And the books which are assigned also under God to a competent human authorship, though unknown or unascertained, have been always received on a prevalent and satisfactory authority as the genuine works of men guided by God, and thus divinely fitted to instruct the church and the world. And they afford ample internal evidence of their genuineness, in their strict harmony with other parts of Scripture, and in their uniform character. Did our process of proof pause here, we should be bound to admit the genuineness of these records.

2. The Old Testament is in the hands of two classes of men, who, in a theological sense, are utterly at variance—Jews and Christians. They possess no interest in common, no ties by which they could possibly be bound in a common scheme of fraud; and yet these hostile bodies have for ages jointly maintained the genuineness of the Old Testament: on this point there has been neither doubt nor disputation. And is it possible that an acknowledgment so universal could have taken place, had not these writings been demonstrably what they profess to be?

3. We have *direct* testimony to the genuineness of the Old Testament; for Josephus, the celebrated Jewish historian, who

* Dr. Hannah.

lived at the beginning of the Christian era, and who was without temptation to state anything that was not perfectly and notoriously true, gives a catalogue of the sacred books among the Jews, in which he expressly mentions the five books of Moses, thirteen of the Prophets, and four of Hymns and Moral Precepts. Now, the ancient Jews united the book of Ruth to that of Judges, made the two books of Samuel, the two books of Kings, the two books of Chronicles, Jeremiah and the Lamentations, and the twelve minor Prophets, respectively one book; and therefore the enumeration of Josephus precisely corresponds with that of our Bibles: another conclusive proof of the genuineness of these records.

4. But we have further proof on this subject in the fact that, more than three hundred years before the age of Josephus, the Jewish Scriptures were admitted into the celebrated Library of Alexandria, which was formed by the immediate successors of Alexander the Great. For this purpose they were translated into Greek about 280 B.C. This version is commonly called the "Septuagint," and is now in our hands. It consists of the same books as those which compose the Old Testament in our Bibles; and thus are we assured that we still have those identical books, which the most ancient Jews attested to be genuine; a benefit this which has not happened to any ancient profane books whatever.

5. Besides all this, the genuineness of the Old Testament Scriptures is attested by a mass of internal evidence, arising from the language, style, and manner of writing that are used, and the very great number of particular circumstances of time, place, persons, etc., that are mentioned. These are given in detail, and with great force, by Rev. T. H. Horne in his "Introduction," vol. i. and in Treffry's "Lectures on the Evidences," lecture ii.

Any one who will carefully examine the arguments now adduced will see how strong—we may add, indisputable—is the evidence of the genuineness of the Old Testament Scriptures.

VI. *Do not passages occur in some of these books which really could not be written by the person to whom the work is attributed?*

"We do not deny that a few insertions may have been made on the authority of subsequent inspired men, as Joshua, Samuel, and Ezra; and that marginal glosses may have accidentally crept into the text. But they do not affect the proper genuineness of the work."* Let us, however, consider a few examples. They may be comprised under one general head; viz., expressions and passages found in the Pentateuch, which could not have been written by Moses.

1. In *Genesis* xiv. 14, it is said that Abram "Pursued them unto Dan," whereas it appears from *Judges* xviii. 29, that the town of Laish was not called Dan till above 330 years after the death

* Dr. Hannah.

of Moses. Hence it is argued that Genesis was not written till after the Israelites had taken possession of the Holy Land. "But is it not possible that Moses originally wrote Laish, and that after the name of the city had been changed, transcribers, for the sake of perspicuity, substituted the new for the old name?" * "But if this solution does not please you, I desire it may be proved that the *Dan* mentioned in Genesis was the same town as the *Dan* mentioned in Judges. I desire, further, to have it proved that the *Dan* mentioned in Genesis was the name of a town and not of a river. A river was fully as likely as a town to stop a pursuit. Lot, we know, was settled in the plain of Jordan (Gen. xiii. 14); and Jordan, we know, was composed of the united streams of two rivers, called *Jor* and *Dan*." †

2. In *Gen.* xiii. 18, it is said that "Abram dwelt . . . in Hebron;" but in *Joshua* xiv. 15, we are told that "Hebron before was Kirjath-arba." Yet Hebron might be the name of the district even in the time of Moses; and till evidence to the contrary is adduced, the argument against the genuineness of the text is without foundation.

3. In *Gen.* xxxv. 21, we read, "Israel spread his tent beyond the tower of Edar;" and it is said that, as this was the name of a tower over one of the gates of Jerusalem, the author of the Book of Genesis must at least have been contemporary with Saul and David. But "the tower of Edar" signifies, literally, the tower of the flock, and is so translated in *Micah* iv. 8; and as this name was undoubtedly given to many towers or places of retreat for shepherds in the open country of Palestine, which in the days of the patriarchs was covered with flocks, it is unnecessary to suppose that the phrase in this passage had any reference to a tower that, many hundreds of years after Israel was dead, was built in Jerusalem. ‡

4. *Exodus* xvi. 35, 36, has been adduced to prove that the book could not have been written by Moses, as the Jews did not reach the borders of Canaan, or cease to eat manna, until after his death. It is acknowledged that the passage is evidently inserted by a later hand. It forms a complete parenthesis. "It might have been added by Ezra, who, under the direction of the Divine Spirit, collected and digested the different inspired books, adding such supplementary, explanatory, and connecting sentences, as were deemed proper to complete and arrange the whole of the sacred canon." §

5. *Numbers* xxi. 3, is another passage which appears to have been added after the days of Joshua; as it is certain the Canaanites were not utterly destroyed at the time here spoken of; nor were they till after the death of Moses. Probably, therefore, the

* Horne's "Introduction."

† Bishop Watson's "Apology," letter iii.

‡ Horne's "Introduction,"

§ Dr. A. Clarke's Note.

verse was added afterwards by Joshua or Ezra : or else the word *Vaiyacharem*, which we translate "utterly destroyed them," should be rendered "devoted them to utter destruction," which makes a good sense, and is not repugnant to the Hebrew.*

6. *Numbers* xii. 3, is supposed to prove that Moses could not have been the author of this book, as no man, however great his egotism, could have written such an assertion of himself. But "who would be so fastidious as to find fault with an illustrious man, who, being calumniated by his nearest relations as guilty of pride and fond of power, should vindicate his character by saying, 'My temper was naturally as meek and unassuming as that of any man upon earth' ? There are occasions in which a modest man, who speaks truly, may speak proudly of himself, without forfeiting his general character ; and there is no occasion which either more requires or excuses this conduct than when he is repelling the foul and envious aspersions of those who both know his character and had experienced his kindness ; and in that predicament stood Aaron and Miriam, the accusers of Moses."† This appears to be a sufficient answer to the objection. But it is pleaded by able critics that the word *Anav*, which is translated "meek," is derived from *Anah*, to act upon, to humble, depress, afflict, and ought to be understood in this sense here. "He was depressed or afflicted more than any man," etc. And why was he so ? because of the great burden he had to bear in the care and government of this people ; and because of their ingratitude and rebellion, both against God and himself. Of this depression and affliction see the fullest proof in the preceding chapter. The very power they envied was oppressive to its possessor, and was more than either of *their* shoulders could sustain.‡

7. In *Deut.* xxxiv. the death of Moses is described ; and therefore that chapter could not have been written by him. Most commentators are of opinion that it was added either by Joshua, or some other sacred writer, as a supplement to the whole. Or, it may formerly have been the commencement of the Book of Joshua, and was removed from thence and joined to Deuteronomy by way of supplement. This latter opinion "will not appear unnatural, if it be considered that sections and other divisions, as well as points and pauses, were invented long since these books were written ; for in those early ages several books were connected together, and followed each other on the same roll. The beginning of one book might, therefore, be easily transferred to the end of another, and, in process of time, be considered as its real conclusion."§

8. *Genesis* xxxvi. 31, and *Deut.* iii. 14, contain the most formidable objections that have been urged against the genuine-

* Dr. A. Clarke's Note.

† Bishop Watson's "Apology."

‡ Dr. Clarke's Note.

§ Ibid.

ness of the Pentateuch; for the one implies a writer who lived after the establishment of monarchy in Israel; the other a writer who lived at least some ages after the settlement of the Jews in Palestine. "But I have no scruple," says Bishop Watson, "in admitting that the passage in question, viz., Gen. xxxvi. 31-39, containing the genealogy of some kings of Edom, might have been inserted in the Book of Genesis after the Book of Chronicles (which was called in Greek by a name importing that it contained things left out in the other books) was written." "Or it is quite possible they might have been, at a very early period, written in the margin of an authentic copy to make out the regal succession in Edom, prior to the consecration of Saul; which words being afterwards found in the margin of a valuable copy, from which others were transcribed, were supposed by a copyist to be a part of the text, which having been omitted by the mistake of the original writer, had been since added to make up the deficiency; on this conviction he would not hesitate to transcribe them consecutively in his copy."*

And so also the clause of the second example (Deut. iii. 14), "unto this day," could not possibly have proceeded from the author of the rest of the verse, who, whether Moses or any other person, would hardly have written, "He called them after his own name *unto this day*." The author of the Pentateuch wrote, "He called them after his own name:" some centuries after the death of the author, the clause "unto this day" was probably added in the margin to denote that the district still retained the name which was given it by Jair, and this marginal reading was in subsequent transcripts obtruded on the text.†

These are the principal passages that have been adduced to disprove the genuineness of the Old Testament Scriptures. And now let any one decide impartially as to their bearing upon this question. Is there anything in any or in all of these passages to induce us to lay aside the sacred books as spurious or counterfeit? Did any one ever deny the Iliad or Odyssey to be the work of Homer, because some ancient critics and grammarians have asserted that a *few* verses are interpolations? And may we not even say that the few instances of interpolation that have been discovered in the text of Scripture, so far from impeaching the antiquity and genuineness of the original narrative, rather confirms them? "For, if this were a compilation long subsequent to the events it records, such additions would not have been plainly distinguishable, as they now are, from the main substance of the original; since the entire history would have been composed with the same ideas and views as these additions were; and such explanatory insertions would not have been made, if length of time had not rendered them necessary."‡

* Dr. Clarke.

† Horne's "Introduction."

‡ Ibid.

Concerning the Books of the New Testament; their genuineness is a question easily determined. It is proved by the common consent of all ages of the Christian Church from the times of the apostles down to our own.* “Had the books which bear the names of Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Paul, Peter, etc., been published after their death, when they had never before been heard of, would not the several persons and churches to which some of them were addressed, and Christians in general, as supposed to have been acquainted with them during the lives of the apostles and evangelists, have declared them to be forgeries? The claim, it is evident, would have been absurd, and the imposture manifest. The doubts that arose concerning the Epistle to the Hebrews, which bears not the name of Paul; that of James, which perhaps was *then* thought, as it has *since* been, irreconcilable with Paul’s doctrine; the Second Epistle of Peter, which seems to have been written just before his death; and the Second and Third of John, in which he only calls himself the elder, prove this. Some of these books, and perhaps the Revelation of John, might not be generally known among Christians during the lifetime of their authors, or they might not be publicly acknowledged by them; and therefore, after their death, the scrupulous caution of the church long hesitated about admitting them as genuine and divine; till *internal evidence* fully convinced the most accurate judges that they were entitled to that regard.”† And, now, the early catalogues that we possess of the New Testament books, the references to them by name in the earliest Christian writers, the quotations, from almost all the books, that are found in their writings, are such as to put the question of the genuineness of the Christian Scriptures in a position of certainty incomparably beyond any writings that ever existed. Such, in fact, is the accumulation of testimony, that it would be far more rational to question whether Milton was the author of “Paradise Lost,” than whether the books of the New Testament were written by the authors whose names they bear.‡

VII. *Have we sufficient proof of the authenticity of the sacred books?*

“An authentic book is that which relates matters of fact as they really happened. A book may be genuine without being authen-

* See Lardner’s “Credibility of the Gospel History.” An abridged view of the evidence adduced in this work is given by Paley, in his “Evidences.” See also Horne’s “Introduction,” vol. i.

† Treffry’s “Lectures on the Evidences.”

‡ On the genuineness of the books of the New Testament there are two works of inestimable value. Isaac Taylor’s “History of the Transmigration of Ancient Books,” and his “Process of Historical Proof Exemplified and Explained.” They are as interesting in respect of the facts they embody as they are convincing in argument.—Rev. T. Jackson.

tic; and a book may be authentic without being genuine.”* Genuineness teaches us that a book is its alleged author’s real performance; authenticity, that it contains the truth, and in consequence possesses authority. Now, we maintain that the Holy Scriptures are not only genuine, as we have proved them to be; but, also, authentic. *The facts* related contain the truth, and nothing but the truth. And since these facts are inseparably identified with all the other parts of Scripture, if you establish *them*, you may be said to give authentication to the entire revelation.

Those statements of the Bible to which this part of our inquiry refers, may be classed under three general heads.

1. Such as appertain to ordinary history, and which must be judged of by the rules applicable to history in general. Such, for example, are the facts that Moses was the leader and law-giver of the Jewish people; that David was the second and the most eminent of the Israelitish monarchs; that Jesus Christ was the founder of the Christian faith; that he was crucified by the command of Pilate; that after his death his disciples extensively preached the doctrines which he taught, and the like relations. Now, all that is necessary to prove the truth of these statements is, that they were published about the time when these facts are said to have occurred, and that they were then admitted as authentic. It is impossible for a fictitious narrative of public events to be believed by those who lived in the times in which they are affirmed to have taken place. If, a thousand years hence, a question should arise as to the conquests of Napoleon Bonaparte, it will be a sufficient proof on the subject that the narratives of these conquests were published and universally received in our own age. Thus, therefore, we prove the truth of Scripture history in general; because we have abundant proof that it was published and admitted about the time when its events are said to have occurred.†

2. Such as narrate public occurrences of a supernatural order; *e.g.*, the plagues of Egypt, the parting of the Red Sea, the manna, the passage of the Jordan, the preternatural darkness, with the other phenomena, attendant upon our Lord’s crucifixion. Here, also, the evidence of the genuineness of the books of Scripture is a sufficient proof of their authenticity; for if these relations were published while multitudes were alive who must have witnessed the facts, had they really transpired, it is manifestly impossible that any narrative could have been received which was not strictly true.‡

3. Such as we believe principally upon the testimony of the writers of Scripture; *e.g.*, a large proportion of the teachings and miracles of our Lord, and the incidents of his private life,

* Bishop Watson’s “Apology,” letter ii.

† Treffry’s “Lectures on the Evidences.”

‡ Ibid.

the miracles of the apostles, etc. Here we have testimony that is every way trustworthy, abundantly sufficient to command our faith. To confine our remarks to the New Testament :

(1.) The witnesses were in a position to judge accurately concerning the facts which they relate.

(2.) Their character was such as to preclude the possibility of fraud. They were men of the most eminent virtue, followers of one "who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth." Their purity and virtue and self-denial, all belie the supposition of their having spent their lives in the attestation of a known lie, in the name and with the pretended authority of the God of truth.

(3.) They had no interest in making their story good. All deceivers have some object in view, which, by their imposture, they expect to accomplish. What, then, was the object here? Why, the forfeiture of all the good on which men in general set their hearts, and the endurance of the evils from which human nature revolts, and to which no sane man would expose himself that could help it. At the same time, in the very doctrine which they promulgate in connection with the alleged facts, they doom themselves, as conscious impostors and liars, to the damnation of hell. And it would be an utter outrage on all the common principles and feelings of our nature to suppose men thus to relinquish good, and to encounter evils, in attestation of what they know to be false.

(4.) Their narratives present every appearance of the most perfect simplicity and candour. They contain no rhetorical embellishments and no peculiar opinions of the writers. They related facts just as they occurred, and even detailed their own errors and faults without the slightest attempt at concealment or extenuation.

(5.) Their writings contain several undesigned coincidences which are a decisive mark of truth. Our space precludes enumeration; but the subject is fully brought out in Paley's "*Horæ Paulinæ*," Blunt's "*Veracity of the Gospel and Acts of the Apostles*," and Biley's "*Supplement to Paley's Horæ Paulinæ*."

(6.) Their testimony is in harmony with contemporary history. They are most minute and circumstantial in their narratives, giving dates, names of persons, places, and a thousand other things, which, had there been any design to deceive, would certainly have been omitted, since every one of them supplied facilities for detection. And yet their statements are confirmed by the testimony of profane historians, by the public and national records of the time, and even by the bitterest enemies of the Christian faith.*

From these cursory remarks, I think, we are warranted in affirming that Scripture history is accredited to a degree to which no

* For information on these points we refer to Treffry's "*Lectures on the Evidences*;" but especially to Horne's "*Introduction*," vol. i.; and Leslie's "*Short and Easy Method with Deists*."

other narratives can make the slightest pretensions, and consequently is worthy of our most implicit faith.

VIII. *Have we sufficient proof of the uncorrupted preservation of the sacred books?*

Observe, this question does not relate to verbal inaccuracies, such as may result from inadvertency. Before the art of printing, books were multiplied by the pen. The transcribing of books was a distinct profession; and the perfection to which the art was carried is almost incredible to those who have not inspected ancient penmanship. Yet the most careful were not infallible; hence the various readings which have been collected from existing manuscripts. But of what do they consist? almost wholly of inadvertencies in transcription; such as, the insertion or omission of an article, the substitution of a word for its equivalent, the occasional transposition of a word or two in a sentence, or the insertion of a marginal note in the text. All this was to be expected. But our question now is, are the Scriptures preserved to us in all material and important circumstances without corruption? And we maintain that they are.

With respect to the Scriptures of the old Testament, this will appear—

1. From the moral improbability of the corruption of such writings, guarded as they were by a succession of holy men, publicly read, made the subject of frequent appeals, and identified with the various institutions of the country in which they existed.*

2. From the precautions employed for their preservation. There was one tribe, that of Levi, to whom their safe custody was confided. One copy of the Pentateuch was preserved in the ark. So great was the reverence of the Jews for their Scriptures, that Philo and Josephus testify that they would suffer any torment, and even death itself, rather than falsify a single point. And a law was enacted by them which denounced him as guilty of unpardonable sin who should presume to make the slightest alteration in the sacred books. Shortly after the completion of the Old Testament canon by Ezra, there arose the doctors of the Masorah, or the "Masorites"—the most learned men of the Jewish nation, who directed their attention exclusively to the preservation of the sacred text. And on the cessation of the Masorites in the eleventh century of the Christian era, as we learn from the celebrated Rabbi Maimonides, it was a constant rule to destroy a book of the law rather than allow a single error in word or letter to be perpetuated.†

3. From the entire silence of our Lord and his apostles on the subject of any corruption of the ancient Scriptures. Would they have referred so frequently to Moses and the Prophets, urging

* Dr. Hannah.

† Trefry's "Lectures on the Evidences."

the people so emphatically to "search the Scriptures," appealing to them in proof of what they did and what they taught, had they cherished any doubt as to the perfect state of these writings? Had such doubt existed, would they not rather have lifted up their voice like a trumpet to denounce the men who had wilfully corrupted the word of God?*

4. From the harmony of the ancient versions. We have the Samaritan Pentateuch, which undoubtedly existed many centuries before the Christian era. We have the Greek translation, "the Septuagint," executed about 280 B.C. And we have the ancient Syriac version, made about the commencement of the Christian era. The first was in the hands of the most virulent ancient enemies of the Jews, the Samaritans; the last was held by their most strenuous opponents of a subsequent age, the Christians of Palestine and Syria. It was impossible, therefore, that any material alteration could be made upon the sacred books without at once being detected and exposed. And the general agreement of those important versions shows that, in fact, no attempt to alter or corrupt was ever made.†

5. From the harmony of all existing manuscripts. Of these we have now extant some which are upwards of one thousand years old. The whole number examined and compared with each other by Kennicott and De Rossi was one thousand three hundred and forty-six; and the published editions subjected to their most careful inspection was three hundred and fifty-two; making a grand total of one thousand six hundred and ninety-eight; and though, of course, there are in these a very large number of minor differences, yet, as Dr. Kennicott stated to King George III., there is not one which affects the truth of any Scripture fact, or the certainty of any doctrine of faith or moral duty.‡

With respect to the Scriptures of the New Testament, their incorrupt preservation is attested by the following facts:—

1. They were widely dispersed from the time at which they were written. In the apostolic age Christianity was extended through the greater part of the Roman empire; and Justin Martyr, who wrote in A.D. 148, and Tertullian, who wrote above fifty years after, in their "Apologies for the Christians," which they addressed to the highest authorities of the state, declare that in all the religious assemblies of these people the Gospels were regularly read as a part of the service. It follows, therefore, that copies were circulated in Egypt, Judea, Syria, Greece, and Italy. No man could corrupt books so widely dispersed; especially when a peculiar sacredness was attached to them, and the wilful adulteration of them was regarded as a most atrocious sin.§

* See Lord Chancellor Wood's "Continuity of Scripture."

† Treffry's "Lectures on the Evidences."

‡ Ibid.

§ Rev. T. Jackson's MS. Lectures.

2. They were early translated into various languages. A translation of the New Testament into Syriac was made, according to the general opinion of the learned, at the close of the first century or the beginning of the second. Translations into Latin were also made for the use of the Christians who spoke that language; and out of these St. Jerome, in the fourth century, formed the version called the Vulgate. Other translations followed, and every version of the New Testament is an additional security against adulteration. If any corrupt copies were circulated, the other copies which are extant, and of an earlier date, would enable any one to detect the fraud.

3. Christians were early divided into sects; and these sects were involved in continual disputes, all of them, however, regarding these sacred records as Divine compositions, possessing an authority belonging to no other books. Now, these sects were a check upon one another; and it was morally impossible that any man or body of men should corrupt or falsify what was universally regarded as the supreme standard of truth, should hoist into it a single expression to favour some peculiar tenet, or erase a single sentence, without being detected by thousands. It is thus that the God of providence overrules what may seem at first sight to be unmitigated evil for the production of permanent good.

4. All the Greek manuscripts of the New Testament that are known to exist are in substantial agreement with each other. These MSS. are far more numerous than those of any *single* classic author whomsoever. Upwards of three hundred and fifty were collated by Griesbach. They are not, indeed, all entire; nor was this to be expected; for not a few have been much read and damaged. They were written in different and distant parts of the world; several of them are upwards of 1,200 years old; and they all present to us the books of the New Testament without any variations that affect the substance of Christianity. The thirty thousand various readings which Dr. Mill published, and the hundred and fifty thousand which have been collected by Griesbach, while they seem in some particulars to restore the genuine text, seem also to prove that the text has not been wilfully or injuriously corrupted. In fact, it is the remark of one every way qualified to judge: "The very worst MS. extant would not pervert one article of faith, or destroy one moral precept, not elsewhere given in the most explicit terms." And so far are the various readings contained in these manuscripts from being hostile to the uncorrupted preservation of the books of the New Testament (as some sceptics have boldly affirmed, and some timid Christians have apprehended), that they afford us, on the contrary, an additional and most convincing proof that they exist at present, in all essential points, precisely the same as they were when they left the hands of their authors. *

* Horne's "Introduction."

Here we complete our inquiry into the Historical Evidence of the Credibility of the Scriptures. They were written by the persons whose names they bear, and about the period in which they are said to have been written, and we therefore affirm their *genuineness*. They contain a true relation of facts, and a correct statement of doctrines, and we affirm their *authenticity*. They have undergone no alterations except such as in the lapse of time were unavoidable, and we affirm their *uncorrupted preservation*. Our next inquiry will be, whether the Bible is accompanied with evidence sufficient to satisfy every candid mind that it really is a Divine revelation. And we must examine

THE DIRECT OR EXTERNAL EVIDENCES OF DIVINE REVELATION. If God should commission certain men to be the messengers of his truth to others, he will certainly enable them to produce to their fellow-men satisfactory credentials of their speaking with his authority; in other words, sufficient evidence that what they affirm to be from him really is of such Divine origin. And it is sufficiently manifest that it must be evidence presented to the senses of men; something of which all are competent to judge. It must also be something which Divine power and wisdom alone can effect; something undeniably superhuman and supernatural. This is what we call direct or external evidence, and is found in the miracles wrought and in the prophecies uttered—miracles, which display the almighty power of God—prophecies, which attest his omniscient wisdom. These constitute the unequivocal seal of heaven to the commission of his servants and to the testimony which they bear. For the discussion of these subjects, we refer the reader to chapter iii.

THE INTERNAL EVIDENCE OF DIVINE REVELATION. This is furnished by the character and the discoveries of the book itself—the sublimity of its doctrines, the purity of its precepts, the harmony of its parts, the exactness of its adaption, the blessedness of its influence, etc., etc. Inquiry and examination, the most acute and penetrating, into these various departments of testimony, will serve to make good the position that these Scriptures are incomparably superior to aught that unassisted human wisdom had ever produced.

IX. *What are the most prominent features of the internal evidence?*

We can adduce but two or three.

1. The pure and spiritual conceptions which the Bible has furnished of the Deity. There is nothing which the writers upon natural religion have demonstrated more clearly than the insufficiency, the absurdity even, of those results to which the lights of nature and reason have actually brought men as to the character of the Deity. We take even the writings of the sages, the wise men in Egypt and Greece and Rome, and in the most brilliant periods of the philosophical and literary history of such countries,

and we find their opinions of the Supreme Being, not only loose and undefined, but misshapen and preposterous, and to the last degree stupid. We take up the Bible, and we find there something so transcendently superior as to admit of no comparison. We find it declaring, "God is one," "God is a Spirit," "God is light," "God is love." In fact, we find here every view of God that is fitted at once to inspire fear and love; to command adoring veneration; and to conciliate and fix affectionate and confiding attachment. Are we not constrained to say there must be something more than human wisdom here?

2. The clear and consistent account which the Bible gives of the redemption of man. The most unenlightened pagans have acknowledged man to be in a state of vice, ruin, and misery; but they could discover no method of recovery. "How can a man be just with God?" was an inquiry to which their profoundest philosophy furnished no reply. But the Scripture revelation makes this the constant theme of its discoveries; and the arrangement which it reveals is so high and wonderful as to extort the exclamation: "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God!" Here is mercy extended to the guilty, but in perfect accordance with the claims of law, of justice, and of truth. "The law is magnified," sin is punished, justice is vindicated, and yet the sinner is pardoned and saved. In every part of the scheme there are the most emphatic indications of profound and unsearchable wisdom. It is a procedure so remote from the apprehensions of men as to preclude all ideas of human fabrication.

3. The light which the Bible throws around the destiny of man. The greatest teachers of antiquity were perplexed with doubts concerning the immortality of the soul, the resurrection of the body, and the rewards and punishments of a future state. Some of them had weak and imperfect notions on these subjects, while others discarded them as vain and superstitious terrors. But the Bible supplies us with all needful information. It alone has furnished an answer to the inquiry, "If a man die, shall he live again?" It has opened the portals of immortality; its glorious sunshine has dispelled the darkness of the grave. It has so unveiled the eternal future to our gaze, that every right inquiry can be answered, every real necessity relieved, every substantial interest secured. Human wisdom has never produced anything at all like this.

We cannot pursue the subject further; and must refer for other aspects of the subject to chapter iii. The Scriptures carry with them a self-evidencing power. They have the impress of God upon them. They plead their own cause; and the more their contents are understood, the more will they discover the source from which they come.

X. But do not Sceptics derive their chief objections to the Bible from its internal character?

They do, and the reason is obvious.

1. They do not come to the inquiry with a becoming sense of the limitation of the human faculties. They find in the record certain doctrines (such as the Trinity of Persons in the Unity of the Godhead) which they are unable to comprehend, and certain acts of the Divine government (such as the destruction of the Canaanites by the people of Israel) which they cannot reconcile with their notions of what is right. It never occurred to them to inquire with Zophar, "Who by searching can find out God?" or to say with David, "Such knowledge is too wonderful for me." They evidently suppose that in a revelation from God there should be nothing which they cannot fathom—nothing the reasons of which they are unable to perceive. And in view of these difficulties and mysteries, they at once pronounce the volume which contains them to be an imposture and a lie. Now, is this wise? Are there not inscrutable mysteries in every department of nature, in every branch of science, and even in our own physical frame? and is it reasonable to expect that we should find nothing of the sort when we pass from nature to revelation? If we cannot comprehend ourselves, is it reasonable to expect that we should comprehend God? If we are baffled at every point in our investigation of the physical universe, is it matter of wonder that we should find some things beyond our reach in God's moral administration? And are we not justly chargeable with a high-minded self-sufficiency that is utterly repugnant to the dictates of sound common sense, if we bound truth by the limits of our own capacity, refusing to receive whatever it cannot fully comprehend, and indignant at everything difficult or mysterious that does not immediately yield to its penetration? Our first work, undoubtedly, is to examine the great body of external and historical evidence that proves the Bible to be of God. This is an examination of which reason is capable. And if we find, as we shall, that this book possesses valid claims to be acknowledged as a revelation from God, our only legitimate course is at once determined; namely, to sit down to the record as humble learners, meekly receiving as truth whatever it teaches, and implicitly practising as duty whatever it enjoins. This may be very mortifying to the pride of reason; but it is self-evidently rational and imperative.

2. There are many passages which through ignorance are misunderstood by them, and therefore uninterpreted. For example, on reading Exod. iii. 22 and xi. 2, they suppose that Moses represents the just God as ordering the Israelites to *borrow* the goods of the Egyptians under pretence of *returning* them; while he intended that they should march off with the booty. Now, this mistake arises from ignorance of the meaning of the original word *shaal*, which signifies simply to *ask, request, require, demand*. "God commanded the Israelites to *ask* or demand a certain recompence for their past services, and he inclined the hearts of the Egyptians to *give* liberally; and this, far from being a matter of oppression,

wrong, or even charity, was no more than a very partial recompence for the long and painful services which we may say 600,000 Israelites had rendered to Egypt, during a considerable number of years." There was, therefore, no *borrowing* (in the ordinary sense of that term) in the case; and if accounts were fairly balanced, Egypt would be found still in considerable arrears to Israel.* Many other similar cases might be adduced which require but to be fairly examined, and all difficulty disappears.

3. They overlook the fact that the gift and light of revelation were progressive; in consequence of which things might be permitted under an inferior dispensation, but are not permitted now; as examples, we may mention slavery and divorce under certain circumstances.

4. They make the most of all the apparent discrepancies they meet with, and allege them to be sufficient to set aside all claim to the inspiration of the Bible. Now, we admit that freedom from error is an essential property of whatever is divine; all Scripture as it came from God is pure, unmixed, and unchanging truth; and none have given more attention to the discrepancies that appear, than devout believers in the authority and divine origin of the Word. But they have discovered that many seeming discrepancies have arisen from the errors of transcribers and translators; and many from the brevity of the narrative, or from our ignorance of local scenes and circumstances, or from the ambiguity of certain words, etc. They have also discovered that many of the most formidable discrepancies disappear before a rigid and exact inquiry, and many more before the light of advancing science and discovery. And they think it only fair and honest to conclude that, if a few yet remain, we have but to wait the results of investigation and discovery, and light will break in upon the obscurity, and the authority and inspiration of the Bible be put beyond dispute.

COLLATERAL OR MISCELLANEOUS EVIDENCES.

"These evidences are so styled because they are subsidiary to such as have been produced, and because they do not exactly fall under any of the classes of proof which have passed under our review. It is to be observed, however, that they are not of an inferior character; the more they are examined, the more fully will it be seen that they are of singular value and use."† We take a more particular survey, under this head, of the conversion of Saul of Tarsus to the Christian Faith; the early propagation of Christianity; and the actual benefit which it has already conferred upon mankind.

XI. *In what way does the conversion of Saul attest the Divine authority of Christianity?*

The scriptural account of that event in Acts ix. assigns a mira-

* Dr. A. Clarke's Note on Exod. iii. 22.

† Dr. Hannah.

culous manifestation as its cause. There can be no debate whether Paul himself thought that something supernatural had happened. And on no other supposition can we account for a change so unexpected, and requiring so costly a sacrifice.

1. *It is not possible that he could have been deceived*; for (1.) The events that occurred were of a tangible and obvious kind, in which there was no room for delusion or misapprehension. What took place was at noon and in the highway. And the light from heaven which struck him to the ground, the voice addressing him by name, the total blindness which followed, the restoration of his sight by one who was commissioned to visit him, his instruction by special revelation in all the mystery of the doctrine of Christ, his ability at once to confound the opposition of unbelieving and prejudiced Jews—these were not matters of mere fancy; the case was thoroughly sifted by friends and foes; it became a matter of greatest notoriety; and amongst all his enemies who pursued him with virulence and malice, not one was ever able to contradict or disprove the tale. (2.) The character of his mind was such as to raise him above the possibility of deceit. His naturally vigorous and capacious understanding had been strengthened by years of careful study under the best of teachers, so that “he well knew how to trace distinctions, to strip off disguises, to detect each species of false or feeble reasoning, and to subject everything to the most searching scrutiny.” (3.) He was inflamed with ardent zeal for a religion which he believed to be divine. It was his religion by the accident of birth, by the deliberation of choice, by the force of habit. It was identified with his first thoughts, associated with his deepest feelings, interwoven with his fondest recollections. (4.) He was publicly committed to the task of opposing and destroying the religion of Jesus. His fame was spread through all the region of Judea as the prop and champion of the old religion, the avowed and notorious exterminator of the new. He was, therefore, armed against Christianity by a combination of mighty causes which precluded the possibility of imposition or deceit.

2. *He could not intend to impose on others*; for there was no motive that could prompt him to feign what he was not, and no end that could be answered by assuming the profession of Christianity. His position as an enemy of Jesus was one of honour and prosperity. The chief priests honoured him with their approbation and patronage. His country's gratitude followed him, and its rulers hailed him with the most flattering commendations. Even to relax in his zeal would cover him with disgrace; but to change sides, and to defend the faith he had laboured to destroy, would draw upon him universal execration, and expose him to all sorts of privations, sufferings, hardships, dangers, and death itself. These were not only the unavoidable consequences of espousing the cause of the Nazarene; but he had them fully in his apprehension. And would he be likely

under such circumstances to feign attachment to doctrines which he did not believe, and to a person whom in his heart he contemned? Who ever heard of a cheat whose only object was to secure to the actor the loss of property, of position, of friends, a life of labour and ignominy, and a death of scorn, and all in exchange for association and honour and applause and goodwill? He could not be imposing on others.

3. *We are, therefore, unavoidably led to the conclusion that his conversion was the result of a real miracle.* The brightness which struck him to the ground, the voice by which he was arrested, proceeded from a Divine interference. The great change that he underwent was from heaven. It is certain, therefore, that the religion to which that conversion introduced him is not an imposture, but that it is indeed of God. If challenged for proof that Christianity is divine, we can point to Saul of Tarsus. There he stands, a monument of the power of grace, such as may fix the attention of every age, and witness to the end of the dispensation that the religion he embraced is the infallible and eternal truth of Jehovah. This argument is ably developed in Lord Lyttleton's "Observations on the Conversion and Apostleship of Paul."

XII. *In what way does the Early Propagation of Christianity attest its Divine origin?*

The argument will unfold itself if we keep in mind a few important facts.

1. Within the first century of the Christian era the Gospel had made a progress that is altogether unexampled and without a parallel. In less than a single year after its Founder was accused as a malefactor, and on the very soil where his blood was shed, its converts amounted to nearly ten thousand; in less than two years it overran Judea: and in less than a single century it pervaded Syria and Lybia, Egypt and Arabia, Persia and Mesopotamia, Armenia and Parthia, the whole of Asia Minor, and no small part of Europe.

2. The doctrines which were promulgated with success were, in all their essential facts and principles and requirements, in perfect opposition to the prejudices, desires, and propensities of mankind, whether Jew or Gentile.

3. The instruments that were employed were mostly plain, unlettered men, artless and simple in their manner and objects, without polish of address, without friends, power, or property; and were consequently the most incompetent and ineligible, in all earthly and secular respects, for such a work. (1 Cor. i. 26-29; 2 Cor. iv. 7.)

4. The opposition that was directed against the Gospel was the most determined and inveterate. Jews and pagans made common cause against the religion of the cross, bringing all their resources to destroy the workmen and to stop their work; and for three centuries Christian blood never ceased to flow.

5. Christianity did nothing to conciliate its foes by yielding itself to the claims of Judaism and Paganism. It was exclusive and unaccommodating in its pretensions and claims ; demanding to be received, not only as from God, but as *alone* from God, to the denying and setting aside of every other system.

6. If, therefore, Christianity triumphed under these circumstances, that triumph was a satisfactory evidence of its being from God, and of its having Divine power and influence on its side. The true principle of the argument, in this view of it, was perceived by the penetrating shrewdness of Gamaliel : " If this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to nought," etc. (Acts v. 38, 39.) He meant to say, " such was its nature, and such were its circumstances, that if it really was indebted to human wisdom alone for its origin, and to human authority and human power alone for its support, it could not possibly maintain its ground ;" from which the inference is immediate and plain, that if it were not overthrown, but did maintain its ground, and did prosper, the fact would be a satisfactory proof of its possessing an origin, an authority, and a power, more than human.

XIII. Does not the success of Mohammedanism weaken the force of this argument ?

No ; the two cases are, in every respect, widely different. (1.) Mohammed was a man of rank, of a powerful and honourable family, and possessed, by marriage, of great wealth. Such a person, taking upon himself the character of a religious teacher in an age of ignorance and barbarism, could not fail of attracting attention and followers. (2.) Mohammed propounded no doctrine that would be unpalatable to the carnal mind. On the contrary, he indulged in the grossest pleasures, and gratified his passions without control ; laying claim to a special license from heaven to riot in unbounded sensuality. He also courted the weaknesses, and humoured the evil propensities, of his followers, allowing them, in this world, a liberal indulgence to their animal appetites and their natural fondness for sensual gratification ; and holding out to their hopes the promise of a paradise of carnality and voluptuousness. (3.) But, attractive as his system was to all that was sensual and worldly in the human heart, so long as Mohammed employed argument and persuasion only his success was singularly small. His converts in three years amounted, it is said, to fourteen ; and in seven years to no more than a hundred. It was not till he began to use a very different weapon that his followers greatly multiplied. He proclaimed the Koran at the head of his armies. With the book in the one hand, and the sword in the other, at once a prophet and a warrior, he *forced* his religion upon the people. In all these points of view Christianity and Mohammedanism, and their respective histories, stand in contrast. The success of the latter can be traced to the attractions of wealth, the allurements of vice, and the fear of the

sword. The success of the former was "not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts."

XIV. *In what way do the benefits conferred by Christianity attest its Divine origin?*

1. *That benefits of the highest order have been conferred by its influence admits of abundant proof.* (1.) What a mighty and blessed change has it produced upon individual men, transforming them by the renewing of their minds! "It has weaned the drunkard from his deadly cup; it has tarnished the gold of the miser, and made him turn from his enslaving passion to lay up treasure in heaven; it has shed over the dogged soul of misanthropy the sunshine of a meek, a glad, and a quiet spirit; it has silenced the tongue of profanity, and filled its polluted mouth with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs; it has spread the smile of love over the face of envy; it has washed the hands of dishonesty, and purified the treacherous heart; it has subdued the tiger to a lamb, and turned the child of infamy into a worthy citizen, a devoted Christian, and a steady friend; it has brought light in darkness, strength in weakness, joy in sorrow, and abundant consolation in the hour of death." "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." (2.) How rich and salutary are the blessings it has conferred on domestic life! It has thrown a holy sanctity around the marriage relation; cutting off that grand source of domestic wretchedness, polygamy; and confining the dangerous liberty of divorce to one only cause. It has given to woman her proper place and appropriate occupations, making her no longer a beast of burden and a slave, but an equal and a helpmeet for man. It has abolished infanticide, and succeeded the cruel rites of that bloody superstition by the gentle dealings of parental love. It has made "home" a new word, investing it with charms and endearing associations unknown before. It has taught parents to love their children, children to honour their parents, servants to obey their masters, masters to be just to their servants, and all of them to cultivate "whatsoever things are lovely and of good report." (3.) How multiplied the advantages it has bestowed upon nations! Wherever it has been welcomed, even though it may have produced but slender spiritual results, "the inferior benefits which it has scattered have rendered its progress as traceable as the overflowing of the Nile is by the rich deposit and consequent fertility which it leaves behind." It has exerted a humanizing influence upon penal statutes; it has been the Magna Charta of true liberty, the enemy of oppression and slavery, the friend of the poor, and the patron of learning; it has softened in some measure the cruel spirit of war, and will, when its spirit shall universally prevail, spread peace and good-will among all the nations; it has secured to the toiling multitudes the inestimable boon of a weekly Sabbath; and

has raised everlasting monuments of its benevolence in hospitals and edifices of charity, and in the emollient influences which it has spread over the heart of society.

2. *Benefits like these have never been conferred in the absence of Christianity.* Sceptics are fond of attributing them solely to the benign influence of a human philosophy, and the gradual improvements of the human mind. But let them tell us how it was that, before the appearance of the Gospel, philosophy and humanity were perfect strangers to each other, though they are now, it seems, such close and intimate friends. The philosophers of Greece and Italy were at least equal in natural sagacity and acquired learning to the philosophers of modern Europe, yet not one of those great and wise and enlightened men of antiquity seems to have had any apprehensions that there was the least cruelty in a husband repudiating an irreproachable wife; or a father destroying his new-born infant, or putting his adult son to death; in a master torturing or murdering his servant; or in any of those horrid acts of oppression which the page of history records. On the contrary, it would be no difficult task to show that the more the ancients advanced in letters and the fine arts, and the more their communication and commerce with the different parts of the then known world was extended and enlarged, the more savage, oppressive, and tyrannical they became.* And as to the philosophy of the present age, which assumes to itself the exclusive merit of all the humanity and benevolence that are to be found in the world, we learn what it would do, if left to itself, for the promotion of love and gentleness and national prosperity, in the events of the French Revolution, when Reason was erected as the nation's god. Seeing then that philosophy and learning have never of themselves exerted a benignant influence over the destinies of man, and that wherever Christianity has spread, uninjured by the superstitions of men, she has exercised the most beneficial influence on the outer and inner life, we are bound to award to her the palm as the source of the high and matchless benefits that have followed in her train. And if the sceptical philosophers of modern times have thrown off the insensibility and hard-heartedness of their ancient brethren in Greece and Rome, or those of France in more modern days, and have become the patrons of gentleness and philanthropy, it can only be because they live under a light, and draw from a source, which they ungratefully ignore—the light and teachings of our blessed Christianity. “If they can show that they have added one iota to the original stock of benevolence to be found in the Gospel, or advanced one single human sentiment which is not either expressly or virtually comprehended in the Christian revelation, they may then be allowed to arrogate some praise to themselves on the score of their philanthropy; but till they can

* Bishop Porteus' “Beneficial Effects of Christianity.”

prove this, the claim of Christianity to all those happy changes in the face of human affairs, which have been here specified, stands unimpaired.”*

3. Here then we take our stand. “A tree is known by its fruits.” The religion of the Bible has done more for the real good of man than any other system, yea, than all other systems put together have ever done; its leading principles and characteristic precepts are exactly such as would naturally produce (when not impeded by any accidental obstructions) those very effects which we ascribe to them. It cannot, therefore, have emanated from an evil source. It must have come from God, for it bears the impress of his nature.

4. *Nor is the argument weakened by the evil things which have been done by men who bear the Christian name.* We are not ignorant of the monstrous vices which have been practised under covert of the Christian profession. We know all the cruel atrocities, the foul abominations, and the baby fooleries of Popery, that system of baptized Paganism, which is styled in Scripture “the mystery of iniquity.” And we know that many a man who professes to be guided by the Bible has proved himself to be worthless, cruel, and treacherous. But is the Bible chargeable with these things? Have they not been produced by a grievous disregard of its principles, and disobedience to its laws? And can anything be more unfair, more dishonest, than to make the word of God answerable for what it condemns? Is this honourable? Is it what any infidel or sceptical philosopher would relish being done with any system or theory of his own invention? Either judge of the Bible altogether by itself, or take a genuine specimen of true faith in its principles, and a pure life governed by its precepts; if this is done, we do not fear the result; for the Bible and its religion will be found profitable for the life that now is, and for that which is to come.†

* Bishop Porteus’ “Beneficial Effects of Christianity.”

† For an exhaustive treatise respecting the various schools of sceptical, rational, and infidel writers, in ancient and modern times, I would especially refer the reader to Farrar’s “Critical History of Free Thought in reference to the Christian Religion.”

CHAPTER III.

THE INSPIRATION OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES.

I. *What is the distinction between revelation and inspiration?*

By *revelation* we understand a direct communication from God to man, either of such knowledge as man could not of himself attain to, because its subject matter transcends human sagacity or human reason; or which (although it might have been attained in the ordinary way) was not, in point of fact, from whatever cause, known to the person who received the revelation. By *inspiration*, on the other hand, we understand that actuating energy of the Holy Spirit, guided by which the human agents chosen by God have officially proclaimed his will by word of mouth, or have committed to writing the several portions of the Bible.

II. *What are the principal theories avowed and urged against the common doctrine of plenary inspiration?*

I. THERE IS THE DOGMA AS GIVEN BY MR. FRANCIS W. NEWMAN, in his work, "The Soul: its Sorrows and Aspirations," viz.: That an authoritative external revelation of moral and spiritual truth is essentially impossible to man. He does not presume to say that God could not, by any possible method, disclose to men his character and will, and the facts of their immortal destiny. If so, then that is impossible to God which is possible to man. It is an *authoritative* external revelation that is impossible. Even if God were to communicate to mankind the great truths which it concerns them to know, and were to append a perfect code of moral duty, neither of these communications could possess any authority with us on the ground of their coming from God, and can only have authority at all in so far as upon quite independent grounds we are able to authenticate the facts of the former communication as true, and to acknowledge the commands of the latter as right. This dogma, by which Mr. Newman would interpose a veto upon the prosecution of any argument in proof of the inspiration of the Bible, has been echoed by the members of that school which he represents, including Theodore Parker, Hennel, etc., and has been severely but justly exposed by Henry

Rogers, in "The Eclipse of Faith," and by others. We cannot, for want of space, attempt even a summary of their arguments, but they show most clearly that any revelation of spiritual truth, to be authoritative, must be external; and that if God has given an external revelation, it *is* authoritative, if true; and if not true, then God is false.*

2. THERE IS THE DOGMA AS PROPOUNDED BY MR. MORELL, in his "Philosophy of Religion," a work concerning which a competent authority has said that, "no philosophical book published in the present age is so crowded with self-contradictions, or so obscured by a luminous mist of language." "Revelation" is here defined to be "a process of the intuitional consciousness gazing upon eternal verities." Upon this ground he maintains that revelation is purely an inner work in the soul, an act or process of intuition, and so not a communication from without; and that inspiration denotes the condition of those in whom, through supernatural influences, these intuitions have been the most clear and distinct. Nor does he allow that this intuitive vision, this elevating of the mental faculties to apprehend spiritual realities, was confined to a few men, constituting them authorised teachers to us; but that all men in whom these supernatural influences have operated to the quickening of religious thought and sentiment have received, though in varying degree, the same inspiration. Against this theory we, who receive the Bible as the inspired word of God, maintain that our knowledge of spiritual realities cannot be intuitive, and must, therefore, be revealed through the understanding. We might go through every item of intelligence contained in the Bible, and show that it could not be known by that natural light, that immediate consciousness which is called "intuition." If men are left to their own intuitive knowledge, their views will be obscure, uncertain, and varying, and therefore unauthoritative. None but God can give us such a revelation of truth as will assure either our mind or heart; and the Bible furnishes exactly what is required. There we have the truth of God, truth which he, the wise and good Father of spirits, has revealed to us, and which must have been communicated by him through words, images, or some other transcendental mode of informing the understanding.†

3. THERE IS A THIRD THEORY WHICH HAS BEEN THUS STATED: Inspiration is "that action of the Divine Spirit by which, apart from any idea of infallibility, all that is good in man, *beast*, or *matter*, is originated and sustained; . . . it seems to us to be the Bible's own teaching on the subject of inspiration, namely, that everything good in any book, person, or *thing*, is inspired, and that the value of any inspired book must be decided by the extent of its inspiration, and the importance of the truths

* London Review, No. xx.

† London Review, No. xx. Pearson "On Infidelity," pp. 77-79.

which it well (or inspiredly) teaches. Milton, and Shakspeare, and Bacon, and Canticles, and the Apocalypse, and the Sermon on the Mount, and the eighth chapter to the Romans, are in our estimation all inspired; but which of them is the *most valuable* document, or whether the Bible as a whole is incomparably more precious than any other book, these are questions which must be decided by examining the observable character and tendency of each book, and the beneficial effect which history may show that each has produced." According to this view, wherever there has been the co-operation of God at all, then the epithet "inspired" is justified. The blossoming of flowers, the flowing of rivers, the fattening of cattle, are the result of inspiration. Genius is inspiration; therefore the lustful tales of the "Decameron" and the infidelity of "Queen Mab" are inspired. Clever mechanics are inspired; therefore Dr. Guillotin was inspired. Nay, the power of God sustains the energies of infernal spirits. His Spirit is present in hell, therefore the Devil is inspired; and assuredly, if cleverness, genius, tact, knowledge, are all the product of inspiration, none are more inspired than the great deceiver, "the prince of the power of the air." What arrant nonsense all this is! But it is the legitimate consequence of the doctrine that wherever the creating, sustaining power of God is present, there is inspiration. The great mistake upon which this theory is based consists in not seeing that God energises in the universe in essentially different ways, and that inspiration denotes one kind of Divine action, and not another.

These three theories, which include and exhibit the numerous beliefs which the disbelievers in miraculous inspirations adopt, issue inevitably in the denial of a Divine revelation altogether:—the first, Mr. Newman's, openly avowing this denial of a revelation, because of its essential impossibility; the second, Mr. Morell's, not avowing, but yet necessitating such a denial, because revelation is said to consist in the awakening or brightening of a man's own intuitions, and cannot therefore be a communication from God; the third, conspiring to the same end, by maintaining that the Bible writers, who claim to have received such a revelation, had no aid or inspiration from God different from other men. So far all of them reach, though by different methods, one broad conclusion, that there is no express revelation of truth or duty given by God to man.*

III. *What are we to regard as the proper view of inspiration as applied to the Holy Scriptures?*

Inspiration literally signifies a breathing into; and it denotes "that extraordinary agency of the Holy Spirit on the mind, in consequence of which the person who partakes of it is enabled to embrace and communicate the truth of God without error, in-

* London Review, No. xx.

firmity, or defect." * By the Rev. T. H. Horne it is thus defined: "Divine Inspiration is the imparting of such a degree of Divine assistance, influence, or guidance, as should enable the authors of the Scriptures to communicate religious knowledge to others without error or mistake, whether the subjects of such communications were things then immediately revealed to those who declare them, or things with which they were before acquainted." † This view is sustained by such scriptures as 2 Sam. xxiii. 2; 2 Peter i. 21. It will be seen from these definitions that the inspiration of which we are now speaking is to be distinguished, first, from the *inspiration of genius*—the inspiration of a Plato, a Bacon, or a Shakespeare. While it would be mere pedantry to quarrel with a phrase so well understood in the main, it must be remembered that this has nothing in common with the special inspiration which we claim for the Holy Scriptures. The former refers to the workings of nature in her highest sphere, but still of nature, and of nature only; the latter is supernatural and miraculous, revealing truths above nature, shedding a clear and unerring light on a path on which all earthly guidance fails. It is to be distinguished, secondly, from the *inspiration of moral goodness* or of ordinary spiritual influence; in other words, the illuminating and sanctifying grace of the Holy Ghost, bestowed in larger or lesser measure on all believers, to lead them in the way of truth and create them anew unto good works. In this sense, every Christian, from the simplest child to the loftiest saint and master of Christian thought, is inspired. But this inspiration, bestowed on all who ask it, may co-exist with much of ignorance and error; whereas that higher and rarer gift of which we speak is extraordinary and infallible. The inspiration of genius unveils the deepest truths of nature, but goes not beyond nature; the inspiration of grace apprehends and realises the truths of revelation, but does not reveal. The inspiration of the sacred books does both. It is the inspi-

* Dr. Hannah.

† "Introduction to the Scriptures."

The reader will often meet with the words *Mechanical* and *Dynamical* Inspiration. The theory of *Mechanical* Inspiration is that which teaches that the Spirit acted on men in a purely passive state. It represents the prophets and apostles, when under the power of the inspiring Spirit, as mere soulless machines, mechanically answering the force which moved them—the pens, and not the penmen, of the Holy Ghost. This purely organic theory of inspiration was taught by some of the disciples of Calvin shortly after the Reformation, but it rests on no scriptural authority; and, if we except a few ambiguous metaphors, is supported by no historical testimony. *Dynamical* Inspiration is the phrase used to describe an influence acting upon living *powers*, and manifesting itself through them according to their natural laws: man is not converted into a mere machine, but all his mental faculties and habits are used and directed by the Divine Spirit in the work of making known the will of God.

ration of which Paul speaks in Gal. i. 11, 12 : "I certify you, brethren," etc.*

So much for the positive aspect of the doctrine ; it will be necessary to consider it also on its negative side. Thus :

1. It does not imply any suppression or abeyance of the natural powers and faculties of the writers. It neither extinguishes their individuality, nor restrains the free play of their human thoughts and feelings. It elevates, illuminates, guides, informs the essential and indestructible powers of the soul, but does not supersede them. It is not the supplanting of the human by the Divine, but the blending and mutual interaction of the human and the Divine. The sacred writers speak and write not only what they have received, but what they have learned, felt, and realised ; so that the words they utter come forth, not from the depths of the Divine mind only, but from the depths also of their own hearts. Hence one of the peculiar excellences of Holy Scripture ; it is as utterly human as it is truly and absolutely Divine. It comes as closely near us as it rises above us. Hence, too, the endless variety of the sacred writings, and their marvellous adaptation to all sorts and conditions of men. Where, however, the human and the Divine are so inextricably blended in one common result it is absolutely impossible clearly to discriminate the one from the other, or to fix any definite point where the one element ends and the other begins.

2. Inspiration does not imply an equal clearness and fulness in the exhibition of Divine truth in every part of the sacred book. On the contrary, it is one of its excellences that it is progressive. It proceeds from the simplest lessons to the highest truths. The religion of the Old Testament and the religion of the New are different, and yet parts of the same,—complementary though not identical ; neither is in itself complete, but each contributing to the completeness of the whole.†

IV. *Do the Scriptures themselves claim to be divinely inspired ?*

Direct and repeated affirmations of its own inspiration and truth are not appended to each particular chapter or particular book, which, indeed, would be incongruous with the dignity and self-consciousness of a Divine Author. But the scriptural writers speak freely of their commission and of the authority attached to it ; and by necessary inference assert in the strongest manner their inspiration by God. Moses was directly commissioned by God (Exod. iii. 14), and the book of the law was written by his express commandment. (Exod. xxiv. 4-7.) Joshua, his successor, went forth to his task by the same Divine appointment (Joshua i. 1, 5, 9), and his addresses to the people were prefaced with the words, "Thus saith the Lord God of Israel." (xxiv. 2.) Of

* Rev. Islay Burns, "Sunday Magazine," 1865. † Ibid.

Samuel, we are told "The Lord revealed himself to Samuel by the word of the Lord." (1 Sam. iii. 20, 21.) The books of the Prophets are composed almost entirely of direct messages from heaven. And if these testimonies appear to be in any degree defective, the language of our Lord and his Apostles supplies the void. Our Lord recognised the whole body of the Old Testament, included by the Jews in the threefold division of "the Law, the Psalms, and the Prophets;" paid the highest honour to those ancient records; repelled every onset of the tempter with, "It is written" (Matt. iv. 4, 6, 7, 10); extended his full sanction to every "jot and tittle" of "the law and the prophets" (Matt. v. 17, 18); enforced the precepts of the Pentateuch as still binding on the Jewish people (Matt. viii. 4); quoted the writing of Hosea (Matt. ix. 13), of Malachi (Matt. xi. 9, 10), of the Book of Samuel (Matt. xii. 3, 7), of Isaiah (Matt. xiii. 13-17), of the Decalogue (Matt. xv. 1-9), of Genesis (Matt. xix. 4, 5), of Zechariah (Matt. xxi. 5), of the Psalms (Matt. xxi. 16), of Exodus (Matt. xxii. 31, 32, etc.); recognising in every instance their full authority as the written word of God, and even giving to them the distinctive name of "the Scriptures," in contradistinction to all other writings. (Matt. xxi. 42, xxii. 29; Mark xiv. 49; Luke iv. 21; John v. 39, vii. 38, x. 35.) In imitation of their Lord, the Apostles and Evangelists quote largely from the various books of the Old Testament, appealing to them as authoritative upon all questions of faith (Rom. iv. 3; Gal. iii. 22), giving them the title of *Scriptures* (Acts xvii. 2, 11; Rom. i. 2, xv. 4; 1 Cor. xv. 3, 4; 2 Tim. iii. 15); "the oracles of God" (Rom. iii. 2; Heb. v. 12; 1 Pet. iv. 11); and declaring that the Holy Ghost spake by the mouth of his ancient servants. This is expressly declared of David (Mark xii. 36; Acts i. 16), of Isaiah (Acts xxviii. 25), and of all the holy Prophets. (Luke i. 70; Acts iii. 21; 1 Peter i. 21.)

Turning to the writings of the New Testament, we have the same positive assertions of inspiration and authority. A special promise of the presence and help of the Holy Ghost was given to the Apostles. (John xiv. 25, 26; John xvi. 13.) The Spirit of Truth, thus promised, was (1) To recall to their minds whatever the Lord had declared to them; and (2) To teach them all things; old truths are to be brought back to their recollection, and new truth is to be imparted from above. In virtue of this Divine endowment, our Lord places their authority on a level with his own, and with that of the earlier prophets. (Matt. x. 40, 41.) The Apostles themselves distinctly claim that the Holy Ghost *and* they are witnesses to Christ; not independent witnesses, but he witnessing through them. (Acts v. 32.) They do not scruple to say, "it seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us" (Acts xv. 28); they identify their words with the words of the Holy Ghost (1 Cor. ii. 13), even announcing their message as "in truth the word of God" (1 Thess. ii. 13); they claim the same Divine inspiration that they claimed for the ancient prophets (1 Peter i.

11, 12), and declare that their Gospel message was "the word of the Lord that endureth for ever" (1 Peter i. 25); they place "the commandment of the Apostles" on a level, in point of authority, with "the words of the holy Prophets" (2 Peter iii. 2); they reject and even anathematise man or angel who shall declare any other doctrine than theirs (Gal. i. 8); and this doctrine they never pretend to have discovered by the use of their own reason, but they refer it to the gift of God and the illumination of the Spirit. (Eph. iii. 5.) While, if any one should be inclined to fancy that all this relates to the teachings by *word*, and not to the *written* instruction of the Apostles, John xx. 31, and 2 Thess. ii. 15, ought to show that no such distinction existed in the minds of the Apostles. The epistles of Paul are identified with the general body of the Scriptures. (2 Peter iii. 16.) The epistles of St. John are pervaded by the two ideas, that they are the teaching of the Holy Spirit and the truth of God; and the Apocalypse is presented to us with its high title, "the Revelation of Jesus Christ" (Rev. i. 1), which was to be written in a book by the direct command of him who is "the First and the Last." (Rev. i. 11.) Thus, in various forms, the contents of the Holy Scriptures are declared to be "God-inspired."* (2 Tim. iii. 16.) They issue directly and solely from him. They breathe the pure spirit of his goodness, and carry the stamp of his authority.

V. Does not St. Paul disclaim inspiration, at least for a portion of his writings?

Certain passages in 1 Cor. vii. are often adduced to prove

* In this passage St. Paul lays it down as the characteristic of "all Scripture" that it "is given by inspiration of God" *Θεόπνευστος* "divinely inspired"). Some writers think that the passage should be rendered thus: "all divinely inspired Scripture," or "all Scripture, being divinely inspired, is profitable." According to the common rendering, inspiration is predicated of all Scripture. According to the other, it is presupposed, as the attribute of the subject. But this rendering is liable to insuperable objection; for *Θεόπνευστος* and *ώφέλιμος* are connected by the conjunction *και*, and must both be predicates if either of them is; and unless one of them is a predicate, there is no complete sentence. Henderson remarks that the mode of construction referred to "is at variance with a common rule of Greek syntax, which requires that when two adjectives are closely joined, as *Θεόπνευστος* and *ώφέλιμος* here are, if there be an ellipsis of the substantive verb *εστι*, this verb must be supplied after the former of the two, and regarded as repeated after the latter. Now, there exists precisely such an ellipsis in the case before us; and as there is nothing in the context which would lead to an exception to the rule, we are bound to yield to its force." And he adds, that "The evidence in favour of the common rendering derived from the fathers, and almost all the versions, is most decided."—Dr. Leonard Woods, late Professor of Theology in the Andover Theological Seminary, United States, in Kitto's "Biblical Cyclopædia."

that the Apostle distinguishes between what he says by inspiration, and what he says by himself; and the conclusion is drawn, that some parts of his epistles are inspired, and some are not. Let us examine them :—

1 Cor. vii. 6.—The apparent difficulty here arises from the ambiguity of our word “permission.” Had the better word, *indulgence* or *allowance*, been employed, the meaning of the passage would have been unequivocally presented; namely, “I say this by allowance *for* you, not of command *to* you.”

1 Cor. vii. 10, 11.—The idea is that, in this passage, he distinguished between his *own* commands and those received by revelation from Christ. But this is not so. He is, says Dean Alford, “about to give them a command, resting not merely on inspired Apostolic authority, great and undoubted as that was, but on that of the Lord himself—(the command of Christ is in Mark x. 12)—so that all supposed distinction between the Apostle, when writing of *himself* and of *the Lord*, is quite irrelevant.” In other words, he is re-stating a command which our Lord gave while he abode on earth; and the contrast lies simply between *that* and what he, as an inspired Apostle, might give; not between different commands of his own, given at different times and under different conditions.

1 Cor. vii. 12, 25.—Here, again, the Apostle is supposed to intimate that in certain parts of Scripture he wrote according to his own uninspired judgment, although guided in other portions of his work by the Holy Ghost. But the fallacy lies in supposing that the expression, “commandment of the Lord,” means a communication made by the Holy Ghost to the Apostle; whereas it merely signifies an express direction of Christ, given while he abode on earth, and which had now become historical. So that the Apostle is not here contrasting what he says by the Spirit, and what he says of himself; but what he says that had already been expressly commanded by Christ, and what he says by the Spirit in reference to cases of which, since they did not then exist, our Lord had not, while he was on earth, spoken.

In none of these cases, then, does the Apostle disclaim inspiration. In the first case his meaning is, that what he said was matter of permission, as to the persons whom he addressed, and not of command or positive injunction. In the second case he declares that he is reiterating a law once spoken by our Lord’s own lips, and is not uttering the inward suggestions of the Holy Ghost. In the third case he declares that he is not reiterating such a law, but is giving utterance to these inward suggestions. Still, in every case he speaks as an inspired Apostle. In the former, the Spirit is fulfilling one part of our Lord’s twofold promise, “He shall bring all things to your remembrance,” etc. In the latter, he is fulfilling the other part, “He shall teach you all things,” “He will guide you into all truth.” The objection therefore falls; and the witness which the New Testament Scrip-

tures have to the inspiration of their authors is untouched, consentient, and complete.*

VI. *By what credentials were the writers of the Old and New Testaments authenticated as divinely inspired?*

The word written was, in the first case, the word spoken, and the credentials of the speakers consisted in their possession of superhuman power, and of superhuman knowledge. The one we find in the miracles they performed; the other, in the prophecies they uttered. If they could perform works that were really supernatural, and foretell, with the greatest accuracy, remote events such as no sagacity of man could possibly conjecture, it may be confidently concluded that, so far, they were the subjects of inspiration.

VII. *What is the proper definition of a miracle?*

"A miracle is an effect or event contrary to the established constitution or course of things; or a sensible suspension or controlment of, or deviation from, the known laws of nature; wrought either by the immediate act, or by the concurrence, or by the permission, of God, for the proof or evidence of some particular doctrine, or in attestation of the authority of some particular person."† Rev. T. Jackson gives the following definition: "By a miracle, in the strict and theological sense, we understand a direct interposition of God's power, controlling or suspending the established laws of nature for the purpose of giving his sanction to the ministrations of his servants, whom he has sent to reveal his will." From these definitions, it appears "that we do not think

* British and Foreign Evangelical Review, vol. v., No. xvii., art. 4. See also Wardlaw's "Discourses on the Socinian Controversy"—Appendix.

† Watson's "Catechism on the Evidences." I give this definition entire: while yet I fully concur in the views of Dr. Hannah, who omits one clause, for the following reasons, as stated by himself: "It is not in the power of a creature, how exalted soever that creature may be, to work a miracle by his own unassisted agency. Even angelical beings cannot perform works of omnipotence, such as miracles properly are. For this reason I omit a clause in the definition of a miracle as given by Mr. Watson, that it may be wrought 'by the permission of God.' Miraculous power cannot reside in the creature, but in God only. If he use the creature, it is simply as an instrument for the conveyance or transmission of his own miraculous energy, commonly, too, in proportion to the faith which such an instrument possesses and exercises. All the merely human servants of God by whom miracles were wrought, confessed by their humble prayers and acknowledgments that the extraordinary power, of which they were but the instruments, proceeded from him whom they served; and that, in fact, it was *he*, not *they*, who wrought, the miracles. If, then, a miracle, properly so called, be wrought it must be by the *especial interposition* of God himself, and for an object worthy of such an interposition."

every strange event a miracle, nor what uninstructed men, from their ignorance of the laws of nature, etc., might consider miraculous; but consider that event only to be miraculous which manifestly exceeds the extent of human power, as measured by those limits of its exertion which uniform experience has defined, which, as it overrules the established laws of nature, must argue the agency of a Divine control, and which is so connected with the promulgation of a professed revelation as clearly to be designed to authenticate it.”*

VIII. *How shall we sustain the view now given?*

By the scriptural designations of these supernatural works, which severally shadow forth the several constituents of a miracle. These designations are *σημεία* signs, *τέρατα* wonders, *δυνάμεις* mighty deeds. (2 Cor. xii. 12.) According to the teachings of these three words, a miracle is (1) *A wonder* surpassing the powers of man and nature; therefore, rightly called (2) *A power*, as being produced by the immediate exercise of supernatural and Divine power; and (3) *A sign or token*, as proving that he who works it, or by whom God works it, has the seal of a Divine commission, of speaking by Divine inspiration, and acting by Divine authority. In Acts ii. 22, we find a concise but sublime summary of scriptural teachings relative to miracles. The scattered rays are here brought to a focus. It is expressly asserted (1) That they are the immediate work of God, in distinction from those events which he brings to pass by the immediate efficiency of second causes. (2) That they were enacted openly and publicly, when all had opportunity not only to witness but to scrutinise and test them. (3) That they were such, and so wrought, that the people among whom they occurred could not but know their existence and character, “as ye yourselves also know.” (4) Their purpose was to demonstrate to beholders, and all others cognisant of them, that Jesus Christ was a man approved of God. (5) Thus miracles are important proofs of Christianity. By them an obligation was laid on the people to believe in Christ, and to obey his word.†

IX. *Are miracles appealed to in the Bible as conclusive tests of a Divine mission?*

They are. Moses was accredited to the Hebrews of his day by the miracles of the exodus and of the wilderness. (Exod. and Numb.) When his commission from God was called into question, the matter was decided by an outward and visible miracle. (Numb. xii. xvi.) And Joshua, Elijah, Daniel, etc., were attested to be the sent of God by special signs of Divine power. Our Lord referred to miracles as accrediting his own ministry (Matt. xi. 1-5; John v. 36; x. 25, 37, 38;) the Apostles appealed to the same in

* Watson's “Catechism on the Evidences.”

† British and Foreign Evangelical Review, vol. v., No. xvii., art. 3.

proof of our Lord's Divine authority (Acts ii. 22), and of their own mission. (Mark xvi. 20; Rom. xv. 19; 2 Cor. xii. 12; Heb. ii. 4.) And the conclusiveness of the evidence is such, that the rejection of it is declared to be a heinous sin, meriting the severest inflictions of Divine wrath. (Numb. xiv. 22; Matt. xi. 20-24; John xv. 24.) If it be asked, in what way and under what circumstances miraculous works authenticate the Divine mission of those who profess to be sent by God to teach his will, the answer is, "that as the known and established course of nature has been fixed by him who is the Creator and Preserver of all things, it can never be violated, departed from, or controlled, but either immediately by himself, or mediately by other beings at his command, and by his assistance or permission; for if this be not allowed, we must deny either the Divine omnipotence or his natural government; and, if these be allowed, the other follows."*

X. What are the objections that are brought against miracles as proofs and tests of a Divine revelation?

1. DAVID HUME'S WELL-KNOWN OBJECTION, which has been variously repeated in modern times, is in substance this: "It is contrary to experience that a miracle should be true; but not contrary to experience that testimony should be false. No testimony, therefore, can ever render a miracle probable." Dr. Wardlaw pronounces this argument "a piece of the sheerest and most puerile and pitiful sophistry that ever had the sanction of a philosopher's name." The grand sophism lies in the ambiguity of the word "experience." Whose experience does he mean? Does he mean the *universal* experience of mankind in all ages and in all nations? Then, who does not perceive that to affirm anything to be contrary to experience, in this sense, is a simple way of saying that a miracle never took place?—the very thing he should have proved. But perhaps he means that it is contrary to his *personal* experience, and to the *general* experience of mankind, that a miracle should be wrought; and of course it is, or the miraculous character of the event would cease. But are we to suppose that the experience of the present generation, or of any individual in it, can disprove what is alleged to have taken place eighteen hundred years ago? The fact is, no fact or event is *contrary to experience* unless it is said to have occurred at a time and place, at which time and place, we being present, did not perceive it to occur; as if it should be asserted that in a particular room, and at a particular hour of a certain day, a man was raised from the dead, in which room, and at the time specified, we being present and looking on perceived no such event to have taken place. Here the assertion is contrary to experience, properly so called, and this is a contrariety which no evidence

* Watson's "Institutes."

can surmount.* Nothing of this kind can be asserted concerning the miracles of the Bible. Here we have a record of the testimony of the only competent witnesses, those who lived at the time, and in the place when and where the alleged facts are dated. That is, we have *experience* in the only form in which, from the nature of things, it is possible for us to have it, in favour of the facts, and we have no recorded counter experience against them.†

2. A MODERN PHILOSOPHICAL OBJECTION against the miracles of the Law and the Gospel is couched in these words: "Our ideas of Divine perfection tend to discredit the notion of occasional interference. It is derogatory to Infinite Power and Wisdom to suppose an order of things so imperfect that it must be interrupted and violated to provide for the emergency of a revelation."‡ The objection proceeds from low and unworthy views of the vast importance of that revelation to attest which the miracle is said to be wrought. For what purpose is that revelation given? Is it not to promote the present and eternal well-being of intelligent, immortal, and morally responsible agents? And is not this infinitely more important than the mere regulation of the movements

* Hume says, that when any one bears testimony to a miracle, "if the falsehood of his testimony would be more miraculous than the event which he relates, then, and not till then, can he pretend to demand my belief or opinion." No statement could be more reasonable; and the Christian maintains that he has testimony to produce whose falsehood would be a mightier wonder than the miracle attested. What, then, is the next step to be taken? Clearly, to take up the miracles which Christians allege to be true, to set their evidence fully and distinctly forth, and to point out that, however plausible that evidence might be, its fallaciousness would be no miracle compared with the miracle it affirmed. But every reader of Hume's essay knows that he has done nothing of the sort. Christian miracles are quietly put by him out of court; and he calls to the bar certain "miracles" with which Christianity has nothing to do, enters upon their evidence, condemns them as falsities, and then calmly informs the court that the Christian miracles are disproven. "Jesus Christ," he virtually proceeds, "is alleged to have given sight to the blind. He may stand aside. Here is a miracle performed by the god Serapis,—a bull, with some speciality about the tail,—through the instrumentality of Vespasian, and we shall take it up instead. Jesus Christ is said to have made the lame walk. Well, the Cardinal Retz was informed that a man who rubbed holy oil on the stump of his leg recovered powers of walking. Yet there was no miracle; and, of course, none was performed by Christ. Jesus is affirmed to have raised the dead. We shall prove the negative if we can make it appear that certain persons falsely or mistakenly alleged themselves to have derived advantage from touching the tomb of Abbe Paris." Such is literally Hume's mode of applying his theory. There is not, to my knowledge, in the whole range of literature an evasion like that.—Bayne's "Testimony of Christ to Christianity."

† Paley's "Evidences."

‡ "Essays and Reviews," Ess. iii., pp. 107-114.

of a material system? The two are not to be compared. Is there, then, anything unworthy the universal Governor if he should make the material or physical world subserve the interests of the moral and spiritual? Or is there anything incredible in the assertion that the deviations from the order of the physical world may form an essential branch of the arrangements and provisions of the moral branch of the Divine administration? Why so morbid a jealousy of any departure from the laws of the material universe, if by such departure a high end is to be answered in the moral and spiritual world?

3. IT IS OBJECTED THAT MIRACLES HAVE BEEN WROUGHT IN DEFENCE OF ACKNOWLEDGED FALSEHOOD, OR IN CONNECTION WITH IT, and that this circumstance deprives the miracles of Scripture of their worth. It is undeniable that, within certain limits, evil spirits, the powers of darkness, are suffered, in God's sovereign wisdom, to counterfeit miracles, and that these have a sufficient resemblance to true miracles to deceive those who have not received the love of the truth.* (See Rev. xvi. 14, xii. 9, xiii. 11, 14, xix. 20; 2 Thess. ii. 9-11.) But let a full examination be made of the signs and wonders that have ever been employed in giving currency to falsehood; let them be compared with the miracles by which the Scriptures are attested; and it will be manifest that they were pure deceptions, destitute of those conditions by which a real miracle is sustained. *The Egyptian Magicians* wrought many wonders in imitation of the works of Moses, and were perhaps assisted in their "enchantments," or sleights of hand, by diabolical power; but when Moses went beyond what could be imitated by sleight of hand or subtle contrivance, as in the plague of lice, they were themselves obliged to confess the interposition of "the finger of God," and we hear no more of their attempts. *There were certain false prophets in Israel*, who gave "signs and wonders" to support the claims of idolatry (Deut. xiii. 1-4); but when it is remembered how frequently miraculous works are claimed on the part of Jehovah, as the conclusive evidences of his authority and truth, and how he challenges all the gods of the heathen and their devotees to the production of similar proofs of their Divine claims (Deut. xviii. 21-23; Isa. xli. 21-23, xlv. 7, 8), the inference is inevitable that "the signs or wonders" spoken of did not involve anything really miraculous—any deviation from, or suspension of, the laws of nature—but were mere wonders of power or knowledge, such as a superior acquaintance with those laws, and a more shrewd and penetrating foresight of the results of symptomatic events and circumstances, might readily enough account for. And the Israelites, always prone to idolatry, are warned against all hasty and rash conclusions, as if such wonders occasionally coming to pass, the secret of which they might not be able fully to discern,

* British and Foreign Evangelical Review, vol. v., No. xvii., art. 3.

involved anything really miraculous, really evidential of Divine claims. *The case of the Witch of Endor* is often adduced in proof that genuine miracles have been wrought by other than Divine power. But read the whole case, as recorded in 1 Sam. xxviii. 11-14, and is it not evident that the appearance of Samuel was effected, not at all by any of the arts and incantations of the sorceress, but by the immediate intervention of the power of God, to the astonishment and terror of the woman herself, and for the purpose of prophetically admonishing the apostate King of Israel? * *Our Lord's temptation by the Devil* is regarded as evidence that Satan can work miracles (Matt. iv. 1-11); but whatever may be the difficulties attending some particulars of its explanation, there does not appear to be anything in it necessarily miraculous, or which is not capable of explanation, without the supposition of any miracle at all. The Devil set Jesus on a pinnacle or wing of the temple, but there is no proof that he transported him through the air. He "showed him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time;" but these universal terms, *οκουμενη* and *κοσμος*, are often used in a less extended sense, and are, I apprehend, to be interpreted in the present instance as signifying a large extent of inhabited country, in all its variety, riches, and glory. And if so, there is nothing supernatural in the matter. This subject might be pursued at great length; but the conclusion of an attentive examination would be, that no *genuine* miracle was ever wrought in attestation of anything but truth, nor, under the Divine government, ever can be.

XI. Do the miracles of the Bible satisfy the required conditions for the purpose of attesting and confirming messages from God?

These conditions may be reduced to four:

1. THEY MUST BE OF AN UNUSUAL AND EXCEPTIONAL CHARACTER. When they become habitual with any regular law of recurrence, they cease to be miraculous; and if they become frequent, but remain irregular and unaccountable, they will cease to startle or surprise, and will come to be classed with the unexplained phenomena of the natural world. And the Bible teaches clearly that miracles were a rare exception, and not the ordinary rule of Divine Providence.

2. THEY MUST BE PUBLICLY WROUGHT. It would contradict their great object if they were "done in a corner," and there were no adequate witnesses of their reality. This condition, again, is satisfied in the highest degree by the main body of the miracles, both of the Old and New Testament.

3. THERE MUST BE A CONSISTENT PLAN IN THEIR DISTRIBUTION AND OCCURRENCE. If they are the real credentials of

* This view has been adopted by Delany, Waterland, Clarke, Farmer, Henderson, Wardlaw, and others.

Divine messages, we should expect them to abound at marked eras of revelation, when there is some conspicuous unfolding of the Divine will, and to be more sparingly exhibited in those intervals, when there is merely a continuation of former degrees of light, and no sign of any new message from God to man. And it is plain that this character belongs to the whole series of miracles which the Bible records. Occasional miracles were wrought from Adam to Moses. But when the new dispensation was to be ushered in at the time of the exodus, and the revealed will of God was to be embodied in a written and permanent form by the great lawgiver of the Jews, then we meet with a profuse display of miraculous agency, which lasted till the chosen people had entered into their promised inheritance. After that the miracles were few, till the Theocracy under the law began to wane, and new revelations were to be given by Prophets to complete the old covenant, and link it with the Gospel that was to follow. Then public miracles reappear, which continued through the two generations of Elijah's and Elisha's ministry. When the Sinaitic covenant was waxing old, and the code of Old Testament prophecy was nearly complete, signs and wonders were withdrawn through the long space of five hundred years. Then came the dispensation of the Messiah, and we are suddenly confronted once more with "mighty deeds" to ratify the messages of the Gospel, which, like the others, reach through a space of forty years and upward. But when the Church is founded, and the sacred canon is brought to a close, miracles suddenly cease or insensibly melt away. Thus, every feature of their arrangement confirms the faith of the Church, that they are credentials appointed by God to confirm and ratify his own messages of holiness and grace.

4. THERE MUST BE THE PRESENCE OF A MORAL PURPOSE, and so form one part of the message which they seal. And this feature severs the Bible miracles from the idle tales of marvels with which a sceptical criticism would confound them. The miracles of our Lord, with scarcely an exception, are parables also. Some deep spiritual truth shines through the supernatural history, and in the benevolence of their character they answer well to the grace which forms the distinguishing glory of the Gospel.*

XII. *What is prophecy?*

Prophecy is that gift of God, by which he employs and empowers a creature to speak in his name and for him; so that although coming through the lips or writings of a man, the communication is in very deed the word of God.† But the prophetic gift has so frequently been employed by the Divine will in reveal-

* "The Bible and Modern Thought."

† Dr. G. Smith's "Book of Prophecy."

ing a knowledge of future events, that the term has become generally associated with such revelations. And in this view it may be thus defined: "Prophecy is a miracle of knowledge; a declaration, or description, or representation of something future, beyond the power of human sagacity to discover or to calculate."^{*}

XIII. *In what respect does prophecy compare with miraculous works, as an evidence of inspiration?*

The latter are miracles of power, the former is a miracle of knowledge; they thus belong to the same category, as deviations from the established laws and course of nature. Of the two classes of miracles, too, the end or purpose is the same. They are not designed for the gratification of an idle wonder or a vain curiosity; but for the manifestation and establishment of the mind of God to his intelligent creatures, on points of essential consequence, at once to his own glory and to their happiness. (See John xiii. 19, and John xx. 30, 31.) There is, however, one very manifest difference between miracles of power and miracles of knowledge. The former usually produce the greatest impression upon those who actually witness their occurrence; while prophecy, in the nature of things, makes its strongest appeal to posterity. The evidence of miracles is as full at first as ever it will be; that of prophecy goes on increasing from age to age.

XIV. *How does the gift of prophecy verify a man's claims as an inspired instructor?*

In this way: "When the events are distant many years or ages from the uttering of the prediction itself, depending on causes not so much as existing when the prophecy was spoken or recorded, and likewise upon various circumstances and a long arbitrary series of things, and the fluctuating uncertainties of human volitions; and especially when they depend not at all upon any external circumstances, nor upon any created being, but arise merely from the counsels and appointment of God himself; such events can be foreknown only by that Being, one of whose attributes is omniscience, and can be foretold by him only to whom the 'Father of lights' shall reveal them; so that whoever is manifestly endued with that predictive power must, in that instance, speak and act by Divine inspiration, and what he pronounced of that kind must be received as the word of God."[†]

XV. *What things are necessary to the validity of the argument from prophecy?*

1. That we have satisfactory evidence of the predictions having

^{*} Rev. T. H. Horne's "Introduction."

[†] Watson's "Catechism on the Evidences."

been delivered before the events, and not having been contrived and palmed upon the world after them.

2. That the events predicted should be such as, from their own nature, or their distance in time ; from their complexity, or from other circumstances, could furnish no ground either of previous assurance, or even of high probability, to those who looked forward into futurity.

3. That the prophecy should be very full, very explicit, so that there could be no possibility of accidental coincidence of the event with the prediction.

4. That the event should accurately correspond with the prophecy, and should be sufficiently notorious to admit of public examination.

"If in any writing, said to be prophetic, we meet with the union of these characteristics, we may at once pronounce it to be Divine. In Scripture prophecy they all concur. Take, for example, the dispersion of the Jews, as foretold by Moses Deut. xxviii. ; the destruction of Nineveh, as foretold by Nahum iii. ; of Babylon, as foretold by Isaiah xlv., and Jer. l. ; and of Tyre, as foretold by Isaiah xxiii., and Ezekiel xxvi. ; the succession of the Babylonian, the Medo-Persian, the Grecian, and the Roman Empires, as foretold by Daniel ii., viii. ; and you will find that in them each of these particulars is distinctly realized. But 'the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.' This is the great topic of prophetic Scripture ; and the predictions on this subject were stated so distinctly as to maintain, from age to age, a growing expectation of his advent ; they were so numerous as to extend almost from the birth of time to within five hundred years of his actual appearance ; and, lastly, their fulfilment was to the letter, and in the most public manner."*

XVI. *What are the methods by which unbelievers explain the agreement of the event with the prophecies of Scripture ?*

There are only three natural explanations, as is acknowledged by the French infidel, Rousseau. Either the agreement is purely accidental : but prophecy is so full and precise, giving such details as to times, places, persons, circumstances, that this is no more possible than it would be to produce an *Æneid* by throwing printed characters at hazard. It is a *philosophical* absurdity. Or the event has been made for the prophecy : but this is no more possible than that the history of Napoleon was arranged or made at pleasure. It is an *historical* absurdity. Or, lastly, the prophecy has been made for the event : but this supposition overturns all the laws of criticism. It is a *literary* absurdity. Turn which way we will, we can find no other issue.†

* Treffry's "Lectures on the Evidences."

† Adolphe Monod's "Lucilla."

XVII. How can we reply to the objection so often urged against the Scripture prophecies, namely, that they are clothed in terms of indeterminate obscurity?

Why is not the language of prophecy as lucid as that of history? In some instances it is, there being no ambiguity and no symbol. This is the case, "First, when those to whom the prediction was known were not themselves to be the instruments of its fulfilment, and those who were to be the instruments of its fulfilment were in ignorance of the prediction, *e.g.*, the prophecy of the destruction of ancient Babylon: this was known to the Israelites, who were not to be the agents in effecting it; while to the Medes and Persians, who were to be the instruments of its verification, it was unknown. Secondly, when the predictions are of such a nature as that they cannot be effected otherwise than by the combined agency of those to whom they are known, *e.g.*, the prophecy of the universal diffusion of the Gospel."* But it is admitted that, in general, the language of Scripture prophecies is figurative and symbolical, and, therefore, invested with a certain haze and obscurity. For this various reasons have been given: "This partial obscurity harmonises with the whole of God's providential plan; for, in the first place, God lays no restraint on the freedom of man; and he would be constrained to do so with respect to certain prophecies if they were couched in literal and historical terms, otherwise the enemies of the faith would conspire to prevent their accomplishment while the friends of truth would combine to insure their fulfilment. In general, God would have his creatures fulfil the prophecy, without being aware of it themselves. In the second place, God does not force man's conviction. He does not render truth so self-evident that there remains nothing for man to do. On the contrary, he everywhere obliges him to seek and to pursue it, inasmuch as religion consists rather in the feelings of the heart than in the opinions of the mind. This remark is not applicable to revealed religion only; it is the same with natural religion. The existence of God, and the immortality of the soul, are they at once and to all as clear as the day?"† "Nothing can be clearer than that the terms in which predictions are couched should be such as neither, by their too intelligible plainness, to awaken the suspicion of collusion for their accomplishment, nor, by their too impenetrable obscurity, to leave the correspondence between the prediction and the event undiscernible when the fulfilment actually arrived."‡

XVIII. How can we reply to the objection that there have been pretenders to the gift of prophecy, and predictions which

* Wardlaw's "Systematic Theology."

† Rev. A. Monod's "Lucilla."

‡ Wardlaw's "Systematic Theology."

the event proved to be false ; and that, therefore, our reliance upon what are said to be prophecies must be very feeble ?

"We admit the fact ; but we cannot allow that because there have been some false prophecies there are none true and worthy of implicit confidence ; on the contrary, we maintain that the existence of fictitious predictions is a strong presumption that some predictions are Divine. If there were no current money, there would be no counterfeit coin ; and if there had never been a true prophet, we cannot easily conceive that there would have been any pretenders to that character." * Let any one look through the vast range of literature of ancient or modern times, and produce any predictions that bear the same marks of genuineness as those of Holy Scripture. Let him examine all the oracles and divinations of paganism, and see if they can be brought to the standard that has been mentioned above. We repeat the challenge, and know that it cannot be met.

XIX. Are we then to conclude that a genuine prophecy is in the power of God only, and can be uttered by none except under his direct inspiration ?

Yes ; the most full and explicit assertions on this subject are found in the Book of God. "Sagacious men and fallen spirits may form very clever conjectures as to the result of causes in actual operation, and may therefore suggest, with some approach to accuracy, events which are likely to occur at no distant date. But nothing save the infinite prescience of the eternal God can foretell the actual occurrence of future contingent events." † How plainly is this stated in Isa. xlv. 9, 10. And the sacred writers were instructed to challenge the production of any equal or analogous displays of prescience from the followers of the numerous idol deities or false gods, whose worship abounded in their country and times. (Isa. xli. 21-23.) When, therefore, an individual can satisfactorily prove that he is endowed with the power of prophetic utterance, he may be considered as having substantiated his claims to the character of an inspired instructor.

XX. What are the leading internal proofs that the writers of the Old and New Testament were inspired ?

We have already referred to the *honour paid by our Lord to the Holy Scriptures*, how he affirmed the principle of their supreme authority, and uniformly acted upon it. See Quest. IV., p. 44. And it is of great importance that this should be borne in mind, especially in the present aspects of religious controversy. But other internal proofs of inspiration shall be adduced.

I. THE WONDERFUL UNITY THAT IS APPARENT IN THE SACRED BOOKS. This is patent to the most casual observation.

* Treffry's "Lectures on the Evidences."

† Dr. G. Smith's "Book of Prophecy."

There is not a book which does not contribute something to our stock of information relative to the ways of God with man ; not one the absence of which would not produce a gap in the continuity of our knowledge. The complete Scriptures contain an entire history of man in his relation towards God. They take up the wondrous story in the eternity before time, carry it on consecutively over the whole course of time, and only cease with the eternity after time. Throughout the whole of these ages one harmonious plan of redemption marches on towards its accomplishment. We are presented with its first beginnings, in the promise of a Redeemer, in Eden ; are invited to watch the calling, growth, and history of the family and nation selected to furnish its human instruments ; we view its actual execution in the life, death, and resurrection of the Lord Jesus ; and we find in the Apocalypse a sketch of its fortunes in the world up to the coming of our Lord. Throughout this connected line no one book could be omitted without omitting a link, and leaving some essential point of the history unexplained. And if the books thus composed at very different periods, and by men of widely different character, position, and circumstances, are yet found to constitute one whole and single work, united throughout by a unity of thought and purpose ; if collusion or mutual agreement among the separate writers was clearly impossible, then this unity can only have been impressed on the work by Divine intelligence, and constitutes the stamp of Divine inspiration.*

2. THE GRANDEUR AND SUBLIMITY OF THEIR CONTENTS. Many of them lie beyond the possible scope of any human knowledge. This is true of many of the historical facts, of the interpositions of God in human affairs, of the purposes contemplated in them, and of the incomprehensible mysteries connected with the being and nature of God. The history, the doctrines, and the morality of the Bible lie equally beyond the sphere of human reason. And many of the truths that it reveals are so profound in themselves that, when revealed, the loftiest human intellect is lost in their heights and depths. Hence the book is believed to be a Divine book. The sublimity of its subject matter attests its higher than human authorship.†

3. THE ABSOLUTE VERACITY OF THEIR TEACHINGS. None will deny that errors have taken place in transcription, that dates have been inaccurately copied, that glosses have been interpolated. We leave the determination of these questions to the ordinary resources of criticism. We take the text as identified with the original autographs, and we affirm that it contains truth, and nothing but truth. On no one point has criticism discovered

* "God's Word Written," by Rev. E. Garbett, M.A. This subject is treated with great clearness and force by Lord Chancellor W. Page Wood, in his work on "The Continuity of Scripture."

† Ibid.

a single contradiction to known facts, while it has brought to light an astonishing accordance with them. Exactly in proportion as our knowledge of the countries, circumstances, and nations alluded to in Scripture has become more precise and minute, have all the statements of Scripture been more and more verified. Where ground has apparently existed for impugning its accuracy, further information has proved the objections to be only the product of human ignorance; and it is natural to conclude that what further information has done for some difficulties, it would do, should it be vouchsafed to us, for all. "Thy word is truth." Hence follows the inference, that the God of Truth himself directed the human instruments. They wrote as they were moved by him. Nothing but the full inspiration of his Spirit could give to their words the attribute of perfect and unmingled truth.*

4. I must also refer to what by some writers is classed amongst the internal evidences of Divine inspiration, viz., **THE MORAL INFLUENCE WHICH THE SCRIPTURES EXERT WHEREVER THEY ARE CORDIALLY AND SINCERELY BELIEVED.** Other writings have been revered as sacred and divine, but they have left their adherents degraded in intellect, polluted in morals, palpably and grossly estranged from all that constitutes dignity and happiness. I refer for proof to the Shastras of the Brahmin, the Koran of the Mussulman, and to the works of the most celebrated legislators of antiquity—as Minos, Zoroaster, Lycurgus, Solon, Pythagoras, etc.† But when you turn to the Bible, all is changed. Wherever its principles are understood, and its precepts carried into practice, you will find all that constitutes the grace, the strength, the purity, the perfection of social and spiritual life. What is it that has laid so deeply the foundations of our national freedom; that has covered the land with seminaries of education, with asylums for the sick and the destitute; that has impelled the human intellect onwards in the path of discovery; that has mitigated the horrors of war, and is gradually extinguishing the war spirit; that has broken the fetters of the slave; that has elevated woman to that rank in society to which she is justly entitled; and which has secured to the toiling multitudes the inestimable boon of one day's rest in seven? For all these national and social blessings we are indebted to the influence of the Bible.‡ Nor must we omit the higher, because the saving, influence which the Bible exercises on the inner, spiritual life of man. It is the medium through which the Divine Spirit acts in purifying the soul of man—in bringing it under the influence of new motives, new desires, new principles; and when the affections of men are once brought under its influence they are "new creatures," not-

* "God's Word Written," by Rev. E. Garbett, M.A.

† See also chap. ii. pp. 13—15.

‡ See also chap. ii. pp. 36—38.

withstanding their former circumstances, prejudices, and habits. To exhaust this subject would require a volume. And who sees not that we have here another convincing proof that the Bible is from God? "An evil tree bringeth not forth good fruit." If, therefore, this revelation were not of God, it could do nothing.*

XXI. *Does the inspired authorship extend equally to all the contents of the canonical Scriptures?*

Some have contended that the sacred writers were inspired in all matters lying beyond the range of human discovery, such as doctrinal teaching relative to the nature of God, and the mode of man's salvation; but that on all matters falling within the natural range of human knowledge, such as historical and biographical details, they were left to the unassisted use of their own faculties. To this notion we strongly object. The historical facts constitute one of the principal means of verifying the entire revelation. We have no possible means of putting to any practical test its doctrines; but we have means of testing the accuracy of historical facts. And in these facts, therefore, God has supplied the means of ascertaining the truth of that Book, whose highest object is to reveal doctrines altogether belonging to another sphere. The simple fact, that in this way alone could a verification be afforded, is enough to prove that the historical portions of Scripture are inseparably identified with the doctrinal, and form component parts of one and the same revelation, invested with one and the same authority. Moreover, the wonderful accuracy of Scripture, in its minute historical details, can only be explained by the exercise of a Divine omniscience. This accuracy is not confined to a single book, or to a single writer, or to a single section of the scriptural writings; it is the quality of the Scriptures in general. It has been traced in particulars which are more or less incidental to the main object of the narrative; particulars, which a human writer, diffident of the extent of his own knowledge, might have omitted altogether, or where a bold and careless writer might have added details at haphazard; and in particulars, many of which could not possibly fall within the personal knowledge of the writer, and for which no effort of memory, no extent of information can account. Now, we maintain, that this minute veracity is not the result of anything personal to the individual man, but of some general influence which they partake in common. Divine inspiration extends equally to historical and biographical details, and to its sublimest doctrines. It follows, therefore, that an equal authority pervades the whole body of the Scriptures. They are *the Word of God*.†

XXII. *Are we, then, to suppose that the same force of inspiration, so to speak, was exerted upon each of the sacred*

* See on this subject Horne's "Introduction," vol. i., chap. v., sec. 4; Watson's "Institutes," etc.

† "God's Word Written," by Rev. E. Garbett, M.A.

writers, or upon the same writer throughout his writings, whatever might be its subject?

"There is no necessity that we should so state the case in order to maintain what is essential to our faith—the plenary inspiration of each of the sacred writers. Traditional history and written chronicles, facts of known occurrence, and opinions which were received by all, are often inserted or referred to by the sacred writers. There needed no miraculous operation upon the memory to recall what the memory was furnished with, or to reveal a fact which the writers previously and perfectly knew. But their plenary inspiration consisted in this—that they were kept from all lapses of memory, or inadequate conceptions, even on these subjects; and on all others the degree of communication and influence, both as to doctrine, facts, and the terms in which they were to be recorded for the edification of the Church, was proportioned to the necessity of the case, but so that the whole was authenticated or dictated by the Holy Spirit with so full an influence that it became truth without mixture of error, expressed in such terms as he himself ruled or suggested. This, then, seems to be the true notion of plenary inspiration,—that for the suggestion, insertion, and adequate enunciation of truth, it was full and complete."*

XXIII. *What is meant by verbal inspiration?*

By verbal inspiration is meant that "the inspired servants of God, while they retained the proper use of the powers and faculties with which the God of Providence had endowed them, were always guided or assisted to use such language as would convey 'the mind of the Spirit' in its full and unimpaired integrity."† "It does not imply, then, (1) that a supernatural influence made the

* Watson's "Conversations for the Young."

† Dr. Hannah.

The controversy among orthodox divines respecting what is called *verbal inspiration* appears to arise in a great measure from the different senses affixed to the phrase. Dr. Henderson, who is among the most candid and able writers opposed to the doctrine of *verbal inspiration*, seems to understand the doctrine as denoting the *immediate communication* to the writers of *every word and syllable and letter* of what they wrote, independently of their intelligent agency, and without any regard to their peculiar mental faculties and habits; while those who most earnestly and successfully contend for the higher views of inspiration, particularly Calamy, Haldane, and Gaussen, consider the doctrine they maintain as entirely consistent with the greatest diversity of mental endowments, culture, and taste of the writers, and with the most perfect exercise of their intelligent agency,—consistent with their using their own memory, their own reason, their own manner of thinking, and their own language;—consistent, too, with their making what they were to write the subject of diligent and laborious study, *only insisting that it was all under the unerring guidance of the Divine Spirit*.—Kitto's "Biblical Cyclopædia," art. *Inspiration*.

words or communicated the knowledge of them for the first time to the writers. Nor does it involve (2) that the peculiar habits and familiar mode of language of the writer did not mould the sentences and the place of the individual words, perhaps their very form. Nor (3) does it exclude the possibility that the fact affirmed by the use of some particular word, as, for instance, that the sons of Esarhaddon found refuge in Armenia, might have been known to the writer, where such knowledge was possible, by the ordinary channels of human information. In short, it does not involve any denial that, the man wrote it to whose authorship the particular book is imputed. Verbal inspiration admits all this, but goes on to assert that there was a concurrence of the act of God with the act of man. (1.) He endowed the man with those particular gifts, and chose him to be his instrument. (2.) He guided his mind in the selection of what he should say, and of the revelation of the material of his writing, where such revelation was made necessary through the defect of human knowledge. (3.) He acted in and on the intellect and heart of the writer in the act of committing the words to writing, not only bestowing a more than human elevation, but securing the truthfulness of the thing written, and moulding the language into the form accordant to his own will. To sum up the whole, verbal inspiration simply amounts to this—that while the words of Scripture are truly and characteristically the words of men, they are at the same time fully and concurrently the words of God.*

XXIV. Is the doctrine of verbal inspiration asserted by the immediate and direct testimonies of the inspired writers?

A considerable portion of the entire Scriptures consists in direct messages from God. These are found in the latter portion of the Book of Exodus, the entire Book of Leviticus, many chapters in Deuteronomy and Numbers, the greater part of the prophecies of Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Micah, Zechariah, and the whole of the prophecies of Zephaniah and Habakkuk. In all these cases we find the direct communications ascribed immediately to God, being introduced with "Thus saith the Lord," or analogous terms. No assertion of the existence of inspired words—that is, of words which carry with them the Divine authority—can be stronger than this. The positive expressions, "My God saith," "The Spirit of God said," etc., must imply a verbal message if it implies anything. To the same class belongs the personal teaching of our Lord. Surely his words were inspired.

* Garbett's "God's Word Written."

The reader should be apprised that there are divines who fully coincide with the views above given, but prefer the word "plenary" as comprehending all that is involved in the term "verbal," and as being free from certain objections which they regard as attaching to the use of the latter word.

But let us look at the question in relation to both the Old and New Testament. In the case of the Old Testament, the writers of the New, including our Lord himself, testify to its verbal inspiration, since they quote it in a manner inexplicable on any other principle. In a vast majority of instances they quote, not its sense merely, but its words, and rest the authority of great doctrines on single phrases, and even on single words, taken from different parts of the Old Testament, and so separated from their context as to show that the words themselves are considered to be authoritative.* And, besides this, while David, Moses, etc., are distinctly recognised as the writers of the books bearing their names, the Holy Spirit is plainly declared to speak through them: "The Holy Ghost, by the mouth of David, *spake*" (Acts i. 16); "Well *spake* the Holy Ghost, by Esaias" (Acts xxviii. 25). That these specified portions contain the very words of God is expressly asserted in the word "*spake*," and no consistent believer in the authority of Scripture can call it into question.

Now, if the verbal inspiration of the *Old* Testament be once proved, there can be neither motive nor interest to withhold the same amount of inspiration from the New. We find, indeed, that our Lord promised such a plenary assistance to his Apostles in their time of special difficulty, that it would "not be ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost." (Matt. x. 20.) The idea evidently intended is, "The instructions which ye in general give are derived not so much from yourselves as from the Holy Spirit. Hence, when ye are called on to defend your doctrines, ye need feel no anxiety, but may confidently rely on the Holy Spirit to vindicate his own doctrines, by suggesting to you the very words of your defence."† St. Paul positively asserts this verbal inspiration (1 Cor. ii. 13), and again in 2 Tim. iii. 16; it is surely impossible to distinguish between *Scripture* and the *words* of which Scripture is made up. When, therefore, the Apostle says, "All Scripture is *God-breathed*," he plainly declares that every word of Scripture is a breath or word of God;‡ and no less than this can

* Garbett's "God's Word Written."

† Storrs and Flatt.

‡ The following passage from the pen of a distinguished Wesleyan minister is worthy of attention in relation to this subject:—"All Scripture is Divinely inspired. Now, what is Scripture? Is it Divine truth conceived in the mind, or Divine truth written? Most assuredly, Divine truth *written*. It is not, then, the conception of Divine things in the minds of the sacred writers that constitutes the inspiration of which the Bible speaks, but the writing down of Divine things with the pen. *It is the writing that is inspired*. We have to do, not with the thought that existed in the minds of those who wrote the sacred pages, but with the expression or incarnation of that thought on paper. 'A pure influx into the mind of an Apostle is no sufficient guarantee for the instruction of the world, unless there be a pure efflux also; for, not the doctrine that has flowed in, but the doctrine that has flowed out, is

be the meaning of St. Peter, when he first traces the life of the soul in the people of God to an "incorruptible seed," then identifies this word with the actual preaching of himself and his co-Apostles. (1 Peter.i. 25). "Thus we find that the claim which the sacred writers make on the subject is, that they were, in truth, what they have been aptly called, 'the penmen of the Holy Ghost;' and that the words in which they clothed 'the wisdom given unto them,' were words 'taught by the Holy Spirit.'"^{*}

XXV. How can the doctrine of verbal inspiration be reconciled with the difference of style and manner that is observable among the sacred writers?

Simply by considering that God used the human instrument, not as a dead mechanism, but as the living being he was; and so permitted his words, style, and manner to be coloured by the personal peculiarities of the instrument. To use the familiar but much perverted illustration of the ancient fathers, the Prophets were like instruments of music, and God's was the hand that touched them. A master's hand may display the same consummate skill, and exhibit the same peculiarities of style, whatever be the instrument he uses, whether harp, or flute, or violin. But the several instruments will not, therefore, lose their own peculiarities, or cease to be distinguishable from each other. So it was with the Prophets. The same God spake through Moses and Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel, and the words were his. The style impressed on them by the Prophet was much the same as the difference of accent and emphasis, of tone and manner, with which four different speakers might deliver one and the same message.† At the same time, "it by no means follows that both

truly all that we have to do with.' With the celebrated Dr. Chalmers, we believe that, 'had the force and effect of this observation been sufficiently pondered, the advocates of a mitigated inspiration would not have disavowed, as they have done, the inspiration of sentiment from the inspiration of language.'"

^{*} Watson's "Conversations," p. 12.

† Garbett's "God's Word Written."

This view of plenary inspiration is fitted to relieve the difficulties and objections which have arisen in the minds of men from the variety of talent and taste which the writers exhibited, and the variety of style which they used. See, it is said, how each writer expresses himself naturally, in his own way, just as he was accustomed to do when not inspired. And see, too, we might say in reply, how each Apostle, Peter, Paul, or John, when speaking before rulers, with the promised aid of the Holy Spirit, spoke naturally, with his own voice, and in his own way, as he had been accustomed to do on other occasions when not inspired. There is no more objection to plenary inspiration in the one case than in the other. The mental faculties and habits of the Apostles, their style, their voice, their mode of speech, all remained as they were. What, then, had the Divine Spirit to do? What was

words and manner were not greatly altered, as well as superintended by this Divine inspiration, although they still retained a general similarity to the uninfluenced style and manner of each, and still presented a characteristic variety. Certain it is, that a vast difference may be remarked between the writings of the Apostles and that of the most eminent Fathers of the times nearest to them, and *that*, not only as to precision and strength of thought, but also as to language. This circumstance is at least strongly presumptive, that although the style of inspired men was not stripped of the characteristic peculiarity of the writers, it was greatly exalted and controlled."

XXVI. Are not the many minor details which are found in Scripture history inconsistent with the doctrine of verbal inspiration?

In other words, would it not be unworthy of the majesty and omniscience of God to suppose His Spirit to have inspired the details of genealogy, or the particulars of ordinary earthly events? We reply—(1.) The detailed facts of Scripture constitute essential links in the historical unity of the entire revelation. As in human language, if all words of conjunction, and of grammatical dependence were omitted, the intelligent sentences of human language would become mere strings of isolated words without a meaning; so, were all the human details of the scriptural narratives taken away, the unity of the plan now pervading the entire revelation would be absolutely lost, and the scheme of the Divine plan would be interrupted in the same degree. Hence, it would be as unreasonable to allege these details to be unworthy of the majesty of a Divine Author as it would be to allege the absurdity of ascribing to the genius of Milton the little words which connect the sublime diction of the "Paradise Lost." (2.) Minute detail is inseparable from all human action. It is, therefore, inseparable also from doctrines touching human life and action; and if the doctrine be consistent with the majesty, wisdom, and goodness of God, the facts and record of the facts must be consistent with them likewise. (3.) The only possible means afforded to man of verifying the truth of Scripture, and of distinguishing it from the false impostures of man, is supplied by these details on points of topography, genealogy, history, etc. If, therefore, we suppose it to be the will of God to afford to mankind some means of verifying the accuracy of his inspired

the work which appertained to him? We reply, his work was so to direct the Apostles in the use of their own talents and habits, their style, their voice, and all their peculiar endowments, that they should speak or write each in his own way, just what God would have them speak or write for the good of the church in all ages.—Kitto's "Biblical Cyclopædia," art. *Inspiration*.

* Watson's "Conversations for the Young."

Word, the addition of these little details is only what an adequate conception of his purposes would lead us to expect.*

XXVII. *How can the doctrine of verbal inspiration coincide with the alleged discrepancies which distinguish the citations from the Old Testament in the New?* If the words were infallible in the first instance, would not an infallible writer have transferred them unchanged?

1. It must be remembered that, in many instances, the writers of the New Testament do not profess to quote the *words*; they merely refer to the *sense* of the more ancient writers, e.g., Matt. ii. 23; John vi. 45, vii. 38, viii. 17; Acts x. 43; Rom. i. 2, vii. 1, ix. 4, x. 11, xii. 9; 1 Cor. i. 31; 2 Cor. vii. 18, etc. Forgetfulness of this has been one, among others, of the prolific causes of misapprehension relative to the New Testament quotations of the Old Testament Scriptures.

2. In other instances, passages from the Old Testament are adduced in the New, not for the purpose of explaining the language employed, or of giving its literal sense, but *in accommodation* to particular circumstances of which the writer is treating. In the narratives of the Evangelists, the phrase, "That the Scriptures might be fulfilled," is often to be understood in this way. "And surely, if a human author may quote himself freely, changing the expression, and giving a new turn to his thought, in order to adapt it the more perspicuously to his present purpose, the Holy Spirit may take the same liberty with his own. The same Spirit that rendered the Old Testament writers infallible in writing only pure truth in the very form that suited his purpose then, has rendered the New Testament writers infallible in so using the old materials, that while they elicit a new sense, they teach only the truth, the very truth, moreover, contemplated in the mind of God from the beginning, and they teach it with Divine authority."†

3. And may we not, in these citations, assume the operation of a Divine intention, which overruled a seemingly independent writer, to provide for the interpretation of the passages adduced by employing one word rather than another? "The inspired writers of the New Testament were God's interpreters, commissioned to reveal the predetermined counsels of his will." As such, their function was not so much to quote the teachings of the Prophets, as to explain. And, being guided to *interpret* by the same Holy Ghost by whom the ancient writers were guided to *write*, they could pass infallibly through the words to the sense, and give to the Church the authoritative record of what "the Spirit which was in them (the Prophets) did signify." Who shall interpret the words, but he who first inspired them?

These remarks apply to the various classes of Old Testament

* Garbett's "God's Word Written."

† "Outlines of Theology," by A. A. Hodge.

texts that are given in the New Testament with verbal alterations. *But in the vast majority of instances, as we have already seen, quotations are given with verbal accuracy, and elaborate arguments are founded on single phrases, and even on single words.* Several instances of this character occur in the personal teaching of our Lord. (See Matt. iii. 3, iv. 4, xix. 5, xxi. 13, 16; Luke iv. 21.) In the narrative of his trial and crucifixion, there are also many notable cases of similar verbal reference on the part of the Evangelist. (Matt. xxvii. 9, 10, 35.) In the Acts of the Apostles, the same method of verbal quotation is continued. (Acts ii. 27, 34, iv. 25, xiii. 46.) But in the argumentative portions of the Epistles, we find these illustrations most abundantly. They are adduced in great number, by Rev. E. Garbett, M.A., in his masterly work, entitled, "God's Word Written," pages 258 to 261, where he shows, on a careful comparison of the two passages, that the inspired writers of the New Testament rest positive doctrines, and frame elaborate arguments, on the authority of single sentences and single words of the Old Testament Scriptures; and he says, "If any one will take the trouble of examining these evidences, he will find them marked by two peculiarities: (1.) Although the quotation of the whole sentence be inaccurate, the quotation of the particular phrase, or particular word, on which the stress of authority is laid, is invariably accurate, and the context is added, generally, in order to identify the passage, but for no further reason. The exclusive attention thus fixed on particular words, can only have arisen from the belief that these single words are God's words, selected by his intention, and therefore clothed with his authority. (2.) It will be observed that passages, from different writers, are grouped together as the harmonious evidence of some common truth; e.g., the Divine nature and glory of the Son of God are proved in Heb. i., by parts of sentences selected for the sake of their emphatic words from three different Psalms and from the First Book of Samuel. Similar instances occur in Rom. iv. 3, 6, 7, 8; ix. 7, 16, 17, 20, 25; where single expressions and single words are sharply separated from the context, and used in a sense which the sentiment of the context would not of itself have suggested. If there be verbal inspiration, this mode of quotation is as consistent and reasonable, as it is utterly inexplicable without it; for, if the words were selected under the guidance of the perfect wisdom of the Omniscient Being, then they are full of God, and must have a depth and reach of meaning, a faultless and unerring appropriateness, investing each single word with the full authority of the Deity.

XXVIII. *How can the doctrine of verbal inspiration be reconciled with certain inaccuracies that are alleged to exist on scientific subjects?*

The inaccuracies which have been prominently adduced in the most recent attacks, relate to the Bible-astronomy and the History

of Creation ; and in Chap. IV. we have shown that the Bible, in its allusions to these subjects, teaches exactly what the discoveries of modern science have asserted and proved, and that the objections founded upon these discoveries to the inspiration of the Scriptures are futile and worthless. Referring the reader to that chapter, and to the many able works that have issued from the press on the subject, I will only remark in this place, that the cases of apparent conflict between revelation and science generally arise either out of a mistaken interpretation of a text of Scripture, or out of a mistaken interpretation of some phenomenon of nature—as, for instance, the production of light before the creation of the sun. In the first case, the contradiction disappears when the Scripture is fairly interpreted ; in the second, it disappears when an erroneous physical hypothesis is abandoned.

XXIX. How can the doctrine of verbal inspiration be reconciled with the apparent discordance between different statements in the histories of the Bible ?

It is freely admitted that every word of God is pure. It is impossible that in the respective representations of different inspired writers there should be any real discrepancy ; I do not say any material or essential discrepancy, but any real discrepancy whatever. On the other hand, the Bible is not strictly and absolutely free from all error in the shape in which it actually reaches the great majority of its readers. Slight errors of transmission and translation may intrude, and have intruded, which it remains for the scholar to detect, and, as far as possible, to expunge. But as to the apparent contradictions and historical discrepancies which have seemed so formidable to some, we regard them as nothing but phantoms which disappear before a rigid and exact inquiry. It must be remembered that historical truth does not require that no facts should be omitted, since such a condition would be impracticable ; nor does it require that in several narratives of the same events the facts recorded should be absolutely identical. One part may be given and another omitted, or there may be variety in the order of arrangement ; or the fact given may be viewed from different points, corresponding either to the objects or to the personal character of the narrator. Such variations furnish a strong evidence of the veracity of the writers, since they show their independence of each other. These variations only become contradictions when the different statements are so palpably opposed to each other that one and all cannot be equally true. Now, when these things are borne in mind, the great proportion of those difficulties in Scripture history which seem serious give way and vanish. Although, on the first aspect, there appears incongruity such as we are at a loss to reconcile, upon more close and attentive examination light breaks in upon the obscurity. We discover links of harmony ; the appearance of contradiction gives way in proportion as investigation ad-

vances ; and at length the two accounts are seen to be in perfect concord. And there could not well be a more satisfactory evidence of truth than this. And if there should be a few discrepancies still existing (and they are comparatively very few) which bear any signs of involving a real contradiction, it is only fair and reasonable to conclude that this arises either from some corruption of the copies, or from the necessarily desultory style of the narratives, and from the frequent want thence arising of connecting links. We cannot here enter in detail into the various cases of inaccuracy that have been exhibited by Christian critics or by sceptical adversaries. They are dwelt upon at length in Horne's "Introduction," Paley's "Evidences," "The Bible and Modern Thought," by Rev. T. R. Birks, M.A., "God's Word Written," and many other works on the Divine authority of the Holy Scriptures. By perusing such works the reader will see that the usual result of a close and candid examination is to bring to light some historic fact, some connecting link, some undesigned coincidence, or some delicate harmony of truth which escapes the careless reader, and only reveals itself to a patient, humble, and reverent study of these oracles of God.

In conclusion, it must ever be borne in mind, when discussing the subject of Divine Revelation, that there are two elements to be recognised—the one human, the other Divine—which are ever distinct, but never separate ; and we must keep them so, neither confusing them together, nor allowing either one to absorb the other. The whole of Scripture is Divine, and the whole of Scripture is human ; none the less Divine because it is human ; none the less human because it is Divine. "Holy men of old wrote"—here is the human side ; "as they were moved by the Holy Ghost"—here is the Divine. Yet both meet in the same word, as the two clauses are but the constituents of one sentence : "Holy men of old spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."

CHAPTER IV.

THE DOCTRINE OF THE HOLY TRINITY.

SECTION I.

I. What is the meaning of the word Trinity?

The word, in its Latin form, *Trinitas*, is derived from the adjective *Trinus*, "three-fold," or "three in one;" it is nowhere employed in Holy Scripture, but was a term invented and used as early as the second century, to express the doctrine by a single word, for the sake of brevity and convenience.

II. What is the substance of Scripture teaching with regard to this doctrine?

The doctrine as delivered in the Bible is very short, and amounts to this: "that in the entire and undivided unity of the Divine nature there is a Trinity of personal subsistences, consubstantial, co-equal, and co-eternal."* "In other words, that the one Divine nature exists under the personal distinction of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost."† This we conceive to be the extent of the information conveyed to us respecting this doctrine in the inspired volume; and it is wise to keep ourselves within the limits of the record. When the adversaries of Trinitarianism insist on explanations of what is admitted to be inexplicable, and on definitions of what the Bible has not defined, let us follow the counsel of Hezekiah: "Answer them not." We never can venture to explain on such subjects, further than the testimony of the Bible warrants, without the risk and certainty of darkening counsel by words without knowledge.‡

III. What idea do we attach to the word "person" in connection with this doctrine?

It is clearly defined by Dr. Waterland to be "an intelligent

* Dr. Hannah.

† Watson's "Institutes."

‡ Dr. Wardlaw's "Systematic Theology."

agent, having the distinct characters, I, thou, he." And by Locke thus: A person "is a thinking, intelligent being, that has reason and reflection." And by Dr. Isaac Barrow thus: "By a person, we are to understand a singular, subsistent, intellectual being; or, as Boethius defines it, an individual substance of a rational nature."* It has been said that the term is not used in Scripture; and some who believe the doctrine it expresses have objected to its use. But if that which is clearly stated in Scripture be compendiously expressed by this term, and cannot so well be expressed except by an inconvenient periphrasis, it ought to be retained. Our translators, however, believed that there is Scripture warrant for the term, when, in Hebrews i. 3, they translated the word *προσωπον*, *hypostasis*, "person." The Greek Fathers understood the word in this sense, though not in this sense exclusively. And the Apostle's argument obliges us to give the word this signification here. For the Son being called "the express image" of the Father, a distinction between the Son and the Father is unquestionably expressed; but if there be but one God, and the Son be Divine, the distinction cannot be one of essence, and must therefore be a personal one. This seems sufficient to authorise the use of the word "person" in discussing the doctrine of the Trinity.†

IV. *How does the doctrine now stated differ from Tritheism, Sabellianism, and Arianism?*

TRITHEISM, said to have been first advocated by John Ascunage, a Syrian philosopher of the sixth century, denies the unity of persons in the ever-blessed Trinity, and teaches that the Godhead is constituted of three beings, distinct in essence as well as in person. In other words, that there are three Gods. From the absurdity and grossness of this system none are more free than Trinitarians, who earnestly plead for the infinite and indivisible unity of the Divine nature.

SABELLIANISM, so called from Sabellius, an African bishop or presbyter of the third century, may be considered as the opposite extreme to this. It teaches that there is no distinction of persons in the Divine nature, and that the terms, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, represent the Divine Being to us under different aspects or relations only; as a man may be called a father, a son, and a brother in different respects or relations, continuing the same single individual man. Because their scheme, by denying a real Sonship, obliged them to acknowledge that it was the Father who suffered for the sins of men, the Sabellians were often, in the early ages, called "Patri-passians."‡

* Works, vol. ii., p. 493.

† Watson's "Institutes."

‡ This heresy has been revived in modern times by Emanuel Swedenborg, a Swedish baron, who flourished in the early part of the last cen-

ARIANISM, which derives its name from Arius, a presbyter of Alexandria in the fourth century, teaches that the Godhead consists of one eternal person, who, in the beginning, created, in his own image, a superangelic being, his only begotten Son, by whom he made the worlds; and that the Holy Ghost was the first and greatest creature whom the Son created. This system, therefore, while it professedly allows a kind of inferior deity to the Son and the Spirit, denies all proper consubstantiality and co-eternity with the Father, and consequently all that constitutes peculiar and supreme divinity.*

In direct opposition to all these heresies of the early Church, "we worship one God in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity; neither confounding the persons, nor dividing the substance. For there is one person of the Father, another of the Son, and another of the Holy Ghost. But the Godhead of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, is all one; the Glory equal, the Majesty co-eternal."†

V. Is not the doctrine of the Trinity in Unity contrary to all reason, and therefore perfectly incredible?

Were we to affirm that the persons in the Godhead are three in one in the same sense, or in the same respects, we should evidently affirm what is contrary to reason; such a proposition involving, in the very terms of it, a palpable and irreconcilable contradiction. But it is no contradiction to say, that in different respects the three may be one; that is, that in respect of persons they shall be three, and in respect of Godhead, essence, or nature, they shall be one. The *manner* of the thing is a perfectly distinct question. It is a mystery concerning which the Bible says nothing. We are required to believe the plain fact that God is Three and One. In the *manner* lies the mystery; we have no concern with it; it is no object of our faith. We believe just as much as God has revealed, and no more. "This" (says Mr. Wesley) "is a point much to be observed. 'There are many things which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath

tury. He was a learned but eccentric man, and declared that for twenty-seven years he had enjoyed uninterrupted intercourse with the world of departed spirits, and during that time was instructed in the internal sense of the sacred Scriptures, hitherto undiscovered. His views with regard to the Divine nature were that Jesus Christ is Jehovah manifested in the flesh—that his humanity is Divine—and that in his person dwells the whole Trinity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; the Father constituting the soul of the above humanity, whilst the humanity itself is the Son, and the Divine virtue or operation proceeding from it is the Holy Spirit; forming altogether one God, just as the soul, the body, and operation of man, form one man. See Watson's "Dictionary," art, *Swedenborgians*.

* Rev. A. A. Hodge. Dr. Hannah.

† Creed of St. Athanasius.

it entered into the heart of man to conceive.' Part of these God hath revealed to us by his Spirit; 'revealed,' that is—unveiled, uncovered; that part he requires us to believe. Part of them he has not revealed; that we need not, and indeed cannot, believe; it is far above, out of our sight. Now, where is the wisdom of rejecting what is revealed, because we do not understand what is not revealed?—of denying the *fact*, which God has unveiled, because we cannot see the *manner*, which is veiled still?" *

VI. *Is there not evidence of this doctrine supplied by the names of God as given in the Old Testament?*

This is very obvious to a person conversant with the Hebrew language. This language is peculiarly expressive, and its names of objects are not *arbitrary* signs, but significant of their nature and properties, or of some remarkable circumstance connected with their history. (See Gen. xvii. 5, xxxii. 28; Matt. i. 21.) In conformity with this feature of the language, the *names* of God are expressive of himself, and were chosen by him for this purpose. Now, the two principal names which are applied to Deity in the Old Testament are Jehovah, and God (in Hebrew *Elohim*). The former is God's proper name, and clearly applies to the Divine essence. This name is always singular, and may be rendered "He who exists." The other name, *Aleim* or *Elohim*, is plural. And the question occurs—Why is the name Jehovah, which refers to his essence, always singular? Plainly to express the unity of the Divine essence. Why is the other, *Elohim*, plural? As clearly to denote a plurality of persons in the Godhead.

In a multitude of passages these two names of God are united together to express his Divine nature—"the Lord God," Jehovah *Elohim*.† (Deut. vi. 3, 4, 5; Exod. xx. 2, 5; Isa. xlii. 5.) This double name is the one which God has ordinarily assumed in addressing mankind. Now, as there must be fitness and propriety in the language of God, there must be a sense in which he is both singular and plural—plural in persons, for his name is *Elohim*; singular in essence, for his name is *Jehovah*. If the Trinity were false, the names would be contradictory; if the Trinity be true, the genius of the language is consistent, and the names appropriate.

VII. *Is not this argument strengthened by the ordinary grammatical construction of these names in a sentence, and by some peculiar exceptions in a few remarkable passages?*

Every one knows that verbs and pronouns should agree in number with the leading noun. Yet *Elohim*, though plural, is

* Sermon on the Trinity. Also Jones's Catholic Doctrine of a Trinity.

† The reader will remember that in every instance where the name *Lord* is printed in capital letters, it is *Jehovah* in the original Hebrew.

almost invariably constructed with verbs and pronouns in the singular, as in Gen. i. 1, "*Elohim* created;" the agent is plural, the verb singular. And this strange form of expression is used by Moses above five hundred times. It is not as if the grammar had been unformed, and necessitated such an idiom; it was that the writer, actuated by an inspiring influence, selected a mode of speech denoting an undoubted plurality in the agents, while there was perfect unity in the action.

In a few remarkable instances, where the personalities of the Godhead are designed to be made prominent, the regular construction is adopted, and *Elohim* is combined with plural verbs and pronouns. See Gen. i. 26: "*Elohim* said, Let *us* make man in *our* image." If the language is proper, there must be a plurality of persons in the Godhead, and each person must be related to us as our Creator. In harmony with this, the Son and the Holy Spirit are set forth in other parts of the sacred volume as united in the act of creation. (Job xxxiii. 4; John i. 3.)

And it must also be observed, that on some occasions the singular name, *Jehovah*, is united with plural verbs and pronouns. See Gen. xi. 6, 7, which obviously contains the solemn intercourse of Divine persons: "*Jehovah* said . . . let *us* go down," etc.; and Isaiah vi. 3, 8, where both the singular and plural pronouns, "*whom shall I send?*" and "*who will go for us?*" refer to the one true and only God, "*Jehovah of hosts.*" Thus, by the very names in which God is revealed to man, and by the construction of those names with various verbs and pronouns, we are taught the great mystery of godliness—the fact of a plurality of persons in the essential unity of the Godhead.*

VIII. *What other passages in the Old Testament clearly mark a distinction of persons in the Godhead?*

1. The threefold ascription of praise, uttered by the winged seraphim in the heavenly temple (Isa. vi. 3), especially when taken in connection with other texts which show that the Being whose glory filled that temple, and drew forth those praises, was not the Father only, but the Son (John xii. 41), and the Holy Ghost (Acts xxviii. 25).

2. The threefold benediction of the high priest in the temple below (Num. vi. 24-26); that threefold blessing mysteriously coalescing in *one* covenant name; for it is added, "They shall put my name upon them, and I will bless them" (ver. 27).

3. The Messiah's commission (Isa. xlviii. 16); "The Lord *Jehovah* and his Spirit" send forth, and the eternal "*I AM*" is the sent one.

4. The many passages which speak as distinctly of the Son and the Spirit as they do of the Father:—of the Son (Ps. ii. 7,

* See Dr. W. Cooke's "Christian Theology."

12; Prov. xxx. 4); of the Spirit (Gen. i. 2, vi. 3; Ps. cxliii. 10; Zech. iv. 6; Joel ii. 28).

IX. What passages in the New Testament confirm and sanction the Doctrine of the Trinity?

The doctrine of the Divine Three presents itself—

1. At the Saviour's baptism (Matt. iii. 13-17), where we have the voice of the Father, the human presence of Jesus, and the visible descent of the Spirit.

2. In the form of Christian baptism (Matt. xxviii. 19), that solemn ordinance being duly administered only when "in the name"—the one undivided name—of the Three Divine Persons.

3. In the apostolic formula of blessing (2 Cor. xiii. 14), where the glorious Three are addressed in prayer, as the united fountain of grace and love.

4. In the prayers of the saints (Eph. ii. 18; Rev. i. 4, 5).*

5. In the worship of heaven (Rev. iv. 8), this threefold ascription being in perfect harmony with Isaiah's vision (Isa. vi.), and with all that we learn from other scriptures of the threefold personality of the Divine nature.

X. What is the value of 1 John v. 7, in its bearing on this controversy?

It is well known that the genuineness of the passage has been doubted even by the orthodox, and those who do not captiously make objections. *Against its genuineness* it is urged that—(1.) It is not to be found in a single genuine and unaltered Greek manuscript written before the sixteenth century. (2.) It is wanting in the earliest and best critical editions of the Greek Testament. (3.) It is contained in the MSS. of no other ancient version besides the Latin. (4.) Not all the MSS. even of the Latin version contain the clause. (5.) It is not once quoted in the genuine works of any one of the Greek fathers, or early ecclesiastical writers, even in those places where we should most expect it. (6.) It is not once quoted by any of the Latin fathers, even where the subject of which they were treating required, and where, consequently, we should expect to see it cited. (7.) The Protestant Reformers either rejected it, or at least marked it as doubtful. *In behalf of its genuineness* it is contended that—(1.) It is found in the Latin version which was current in Africa before the Latin Vulgate version was made; and also in most MSS. of the

* The style of the book sufficiently accounts for the Holy Spirit being called the seven spirits; but no created spirit or company of created spirits are ever spoken of under that appellation; and the place assigned to "the seven spirits" between the mention of the Father and the Son, indicates with certainty that one of the sacred Three, so eminent, and so exclusively eminent, in both dispensations, is intended.—Watson's "Institutes."

Vulgate version. (But the authority of these MSS. is justly to be suspected, on account of the many alterations and corruptions which the Vulgate version has undergone.) (2.) It is found in the Primitive Liturgy of the Latin Church. (3.) It is found in the Confession of Faith, and Liturgy of the Greek Church. (But it is very probable that it was interpolated from the Liturgy of the Latin Church into that of the Greek Church by some of the Greek clergy, who were devoted partisans of the Romish Church in the fourteenth or fifteenth century, at which time the majority of the common people, from the ignorance which prevailed, were incapable of detecting the imposition.) (4.) It is cited by numerous Latin fathers. (The contrary is maintained by the antagonists of the disputed clause.) (5.) The connection of the disputed clause requires its insertion, inasmuch as the sense is not perfect without it. (This argument is rebutted by the fact that the context admits of an exposition which makes the sense complete without the disputed clause.) (6.) The grammatical structure of the original Greek requires the insertion of the seventh verse; otherwise the latter part of the eighth verse, the authenticity of which was never questioned, must likewise be rejected. (7.) The doctrine of the Greek article, which is found in both verses, is such that both must be retained or both must be rejected. (Much stress has been laid upon these grammatical arguments, in opposition to which, it is said, a spurious passage may be fitted to the context as well as a genuine one.) (8.) The mode of thinking and diction is peculiar to St. John. (To this it is replied, that there is no such identical expression in the whole Bible besides, and it is not correct that no other Evangelist calls the Son of God "The Word," because that appellation is given to him by St. Luke i. 2.) (9.) The omission of the clause may be satisfactorily accounted for. (But some of the reasons assigned for the omission have been shown to be destitute of the support alleged in their behalf, and the remainder are wholly hypothetical, and unsustained by any satisfactory evidence.)

On weighing all the preceding arguments, the majority of Biblical critics have abandoned the clause as spurious: but its absence neither does nor can diminish the weight of irresistible evidence which other undisputed passages of Holy Writ afford to the doctrine of the Trinity.*

Many very able works have appeared in defence of this great doctrine. Wardlaw's "Discourses on the Socinian Controversy," in one volume, 8vo, are very powerful and convincing, and the

* See on this disputed clause Horne's "Introduction," vol. iv., pp. 448-471; ninth edit. Dean Alford's "Greek Testament." Angus's "Bible Hand-book," p. 47. Dr. Clarke's "Commentary," end of 1 John v.

appendix embodies much Scripture criticism. Faber's "Apostolicity of Trinitarianism," in two volumes, 8vo, is one of the most important works that modern times have produced on the subject. His object is to prove that the doctrine of the Trinity has been the recognised doctrine of the Christian Church from the apostolic times; it is a standard work on this great subject. David Simpson's "Apology for the Doctrine of the Holy Trinity," is an historical, as well as a theological work; it is in one volume, 8vo, and displays vast reading and research. Randolph's "Vindication of the Doctrine of the Trinity," is the production of a very accomplished scholar, against "The Apology" of Mr. Lindsey, a clergyman of the Church of England, who had imbibed the Socinian principles. In the early part of the last century, Mr. Abraham Taylor, a Dissenting minister, published an octavo volume on "The True Scripture Doctrine of the Holy and Ever Blessed Trinity, in Opposition to the Arian Scheme." It is a work of real merit—learned, orthodox, zealous. At this time the Lady Moyer Lecture was founded. It consisted of eight sermons preached annually at St. Paul's Cathedral in defence of the orthodox doctrine of the Trinity. Dr. Waterland led the way; and was ably followed by Dr. Berriman, Bishop, Trapp, Knight, Bedford, Wheatly, Seed, Dawson, Browne, Felton, and others, each of whom published his sermons in an octavo volume. They form a valuable body of Scripture and historical evidence on the subject. Towards the close of the seventeenth century, Bishop Bull wrote a "Defence of the Nicene Faith;" a work of great importance. Mr. John Howe also wrote with piety and moderation, confining himself, however, principally to the question of the possibility of a Trinity of persons in the Godhead. Dr. Wallis, at the same period, published three sermons and several letters concerning the Trinity. Their clearness and logical accuracy have perhaps never been surpassed. Bishop Stillingfleet, who was one of the most voluminous and powerful writers of that age, published also a small treatise on the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, which deserves a place in every theological library. And Mr. Charles Leslie wrote against the Socinianism of that period. He was a high and intolerant clergyman, but one of the most profound reasoners of either that or any other age. His principal work on this subject was, "The Socinian Controversy Discussed." In reference to the subject of the Holy Trinity, Milbourne's "Mysteries in Religion Vindicated," published 1692, is well worthy of diligent study; and particularly two works of Bishop Browne, entitled, "The Procedure, Extent, and Limits of the Human Understanding," and "Divine Analogy." They are well adapted to check the intellectual pride which has given birth to every form of error respecting the Divine nature, and to teach men to rest in the simple testimony of Holy Scripture.*

* Rev. T. Jackson's MS. Lectures.

SECTION II.

THE SUPREME DIVINITY OF CHRIST.

WE have seen that while God is truly one in essence, he is truly and really distinguished by a threefold personality. To render the argument complete, we have yet to demonstrate from the Holy Scriptures that each personal distinction in the Godhead is described as possessing true and proper Divinity. The Deity of the Father is admitted by all. That the Deity of the Son and the Holy Spirit is also explicitly revealed we shall proceed to prove. We begin with *the true and proper Deity of Christ*.

I. *With what heresies are we principally brought into contact in examining this subject?*

Those of *Arius* and *SOCINUS*. We have shown that Arius maintained that the Son of God is a creature, but the first and noblest of all created beings; that by him, as a subordinate agent, God formed the universe, and that the Holy Ghost was created by his power. This scheme obtained for a time imperial patronage in the primitive Church, and for some years to a great extent triumphed over Scriptural Christianity. The Nicene Council was held in order to its suppression, and the Nicene Creed was drawn up and adopted as a testimony against it. In England this scheme is generally abandoned, and those who depart from orthodox Christianity almost invariably espouse the tenets of Socinus, under the plausible name of Unitarianism.

There were two men of the name of Socinus, who lived about the time of the Reformation. The elder was *Lelius Socinus*; the younger, *Faustus Socinus*, a nephew of *Lelius*. Their theory had been advanced in substance by *Paul of Samosata*, in the third century. It is easier to say what they did not believe, than what they did. They denied the Divinity of Christ, with the sacrifice of his death; and regarded him as a mere man and a martyr. The personality and Godhead of the Spirit they denied, and spoke of him as an exertion of Divine power. This theory reduces the revelation of God to a level with Deism and the system of Mohammed.*

II. *Is there any evidence that Christ had an existence previous to his incarnation?*

This Socinians deny; they even say that the doctrine is not to be met with in the Bible. First, take the testimony of Christ himself (John iii. 13; vi. 32, 33, 38, 50, 51, 58, 62; xvi. 28). Secondly, take the testimony of inspired men:—Of John the

* Rev. T. Jackson's MS. Lectures.

Baptist (John iii. 31); of the Apostle John (John i. 1-3, 14); of St. Paul (Heb. ii. 14-16; 1 Cor. xv. 47; Eph. iv. 9). All these scriptures are perfectly plain if you regard Christ as having had an existence before he appeared among men. His birth was not his beginning. It was his arrival from another sphere.

III. *How far back did his pre-existence extend?*

The Scriptures carry the mind backward, and yet farther backward, until the thoughts are lost in the inscrutable depths of a pre-eternity. (1.) He existed before John the Baptist (John i. 15, 27), though certainly not in his human conception, birth, or personal ministry. (2.) He existed before Abraham (John viii. 58). The question, to which this text was an answer, related to pre-existence, and in this sense the text was understood by the Jews. (3.) He existed before the flood (1 Peter iii. 18, 20), for "he preached" to the sinners of the old world; true, this was done by the ministry of a prophet (2 Peter ii. 5); yet to do anything by another not able to perform it without him, as much demonstrates his existence as if he did it of himself without any intervening instrument. (4.) He existed before the creation. (John i. 1, xvii. 5, 24; Col. i. 17; Heb. i. 2.) (5.) He existed from all eternity (Micah v. 2, margin); from "the days of eternity" were the "goings forth" of this glorious being, travelling in the greatness of his strength through the silences of immensity.* Now, the pre-existence of Christ, simply considered, does not evince his Godhead, and is not, therefore, a proof against the Arian hypothesis—that he was the first and greatest of creatures; but it destroys the Socinian hypothesis, that he was a man only. When, however, we are carried back by the Scriptures to the ages of eternity, and are told that "in the beginning" he was with God, yea, and "was God," then the doctrine of his pre-existence is a powerful argument in proof of his Divine nature. He must be God in all the mystery and all the majesty of that nature, if he could be spoken of in words like these.

IV. *Were there any appearances of Christ as a Divine Person before the advent?*

Of this we have no positive statement in Scripture; but the fact can be clearly proved by a comparison of many texts.

1. IT IS CLEAR THAT A DIVINE PERSON DID APPEAR, THOUGH OFTEN IN THE FORM OF AN ANGEL,† BOTH TO THE

* Read on this subject Pearson "On the Creed," art. 2, under the head of "His Only Son;" Watson's "Institutes," part ii, chap. x.; Wardlaw "On the Socinian Controversy," dis. iii.

† The term "Angel of the Lord," which so often occurs in the English Bible, is so ill conformed to the original that it is to be feared, it has led many into the error of conceiving of "the Lord" as one person, and of "the Angel" as another. The word of the Hebrew, ill rendered

PATRIARCHS AND TO THEIR SUCCESSORS:—*To Abraham at Mamre* (Gen. xviii.). Here he comes as one of "three men," but he announces himself as "Jehovah," who can so overrule the processes of nature as to give the aged woman a son (ver. 14); and as they look towards Sodom, he stands forth as Deity confessed; six times he is called "Jehovah" (ver. 17, 19, 20, 22, 26, 33); once "the Judge of all the earth" (ver. 25); such is his power, that he threatens to destroy the Cities of the Plain (ver. 17); he receives the adoring worship of his servant (ver. 23); "then Jehovah went on his way" (ver. 33).—*To Abraham at Moriah* (Gen. xxii.). God came to try the faith of the patriarch. In ver. 11, we find that the "God" who tempted him (ver. 1) was "the Angel of the Lord." It was to him that the sacrifice would have been offered, and he declares that the readiness to offer the son of his affection to *him* (the Angel) was proof that Abraham feared *God* (ver. 12). He then calls to him again, delivers the message of the eternal God, and by using the phrase, "By myself have I sworn, *saith the Lord*" (ver. 16), he shows that there are distinctions of persons in the Godhead, and that he himself, though Divine, was the medium of communication between heaven and earth.—*To Jacob at Bethel* (Gen. xxviii. 13-17). Here was a very glorious appearance to Jacob of "Jehovah God of Abraham;" and in Gen. xxxi. 11-13, we find that it was "the Angel of the Lord" who as Jehovah thus appeared.—*To Jacob at Peniel* (Gen. xxxii.). The patriarch was subjected to a strange mysterious conflict with "a man" (ver. 24); but when the day came, "the man" gave him a new name, and Jacob gave the place a new name (ver. 28, 30); and in both cases the statement was made that the Being with whom he wrestled was none other than "God" himself, whom Hosea designates "the Angel"—"the Lord God of hosts" (Hosea xii. 4, 5).—*To Moses at Horeb* (Exod. iii.). A burning bush startles the man of God, and a voice speaks; but the speaker, "Angel" as he was (ver. 2), is called "Jehovah," "God" (ver. 4), "the God of Abraham," etc. (ver. 6), and the great "I AM." He claims the tribes of Israel as *his* people (ver. 7), and promises that *himself* should bring them out of Egypt to the promised land (ver. 17); which promise he afterwards fulfilled, when, as "Jehovah" (Exod. xiii. 21), "the Angel" (xiv. 19), he went before them in the cloudy and fiery pillar. And there are many other

"the Lord," is not, like the English word, an appellative, expressing rank or condition, but it is the proper name Jehovah. And this proper name Jehovah is not, in the Hebrew, a genitive after the noun substantive "Angel," as the English represents it; but the words "Jehovah" and "Angel" are two substantive nouns in apposition, both speaking of the same person, the one by the appropriate name of *essence*, the other by the title of *office*. *Jehovah angel* would be a better rendering.—Bishop Horsley, quoted in Dwight's "Theology," ser. xxxv.

appearances of the same august Being. In Exod. xix. 20, 21, he comes down on Mount Sinai, and is called "Jehovah;" in Acts vii. 38, he who thus came down is called "the Angel." In Exodus xxxiii. 20, 21, he is promised as the guide and leader of the people to the promised land; and that he was the same Divine Angel is evident from the fact that he claims their obedience, that it is his prerogative to pardon or punish sin, and that God's own peculiar name, "Jehovah I AM," is in him. With this uncreated Angel,—this presence of the Lord,—the people were satisfied (Exod. xxxiii. 14, 15); whereas the thought of being left to the guidance of "*an* angel"—a mere ministering spirit—filled them with mourning and sadness. (Exod. xxxiii. 2.) In Joshua v. 13-15, he is called "a man," because he assumed a human form; he is also Captain of the "Lord's host," and therefore distinct from Jehovah, whose host he led; still, he is called "Jehovah" (vi. 2), whose presence made the ground holy (v. 15).

2. IT IS CLEAR THAT THE DIVINE PERSON THUS REVEALED WAS NOT GOD THE FATHER. "For of God the Father it has been ever true, that no man hath at any time seen his shape, nor has he ever limited himself to any definite personal appearance."* He has always maintained the character of "the invisible God," "whom no man hath seen nor can see." (1 Tim. i. 17, vi. 16; John v. 37.) Moreover, in no part of Scripture is he spoken of as being *sent*. On this subject there is a perfect uniformity in the language of the sacred writers. According to them, the Father sends the Son, and the Father and the Son send the Holy Spirit; but neither the Son, nor the Spirit, nor both united, ever send the Father.

3. IT IS ALSO CLEAR THAT THIS DIVINE PERSON WAS THE PROMISED AND FUTURE CHRIST; for, *first*, Christ is announced under the very same titles that the Angel bore. Malachi speaks of him as "the Messenger" or Angel "of the covenant" (Mal. iii. 1); "but the same person who is the Messenger is the Lord Jehovah himself; not the same person with the sender, but bearing the same name, because united in that mysterious nature and undivided substance which the name imports. The same person, therefore, is servant and Lord; and by uniting these characters in the same person, what does the prophet but describe that great mystery of the Gospel, the union of the Divine and human nature in the person of the Christ?"† Observe, also, as a messenger or angel is the servant of him who sends him, so Christ, in evident reference to this, is called *God's servant*. (Isa. lii. 13, liii. 11, xlix. 6.) A message is a service; it implies a person sending and a person sent; and as this name is given to the Lord Jesus, it seems that whenever God has had a commission to execute, that

* Dr. A. Clarke.

† Bishop Horsley, Sermon on Mal. iii. 1.

commission has been confined to his Son, who, from the beginning, has been the Mediator between God and man. "He thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but took upon him the form of a servant." The identity of titles, both Divine and subordinate—titles of nature and of office, which were given to the Angel Jehovah and to the Lord Jesus, are, to my mind, conclusive evidence that they are one. *Secondly*, various things, said to be done by the Angel Jehovah in the Old Testament, are attributed to Christ in the New. (1.) We have seen how the Angel Jehovah spake to Moses on Mount Sinai. In Heb. xii. 24-26, we are told that it was "Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant, whose voice then shook the earth." (2.) The Angel Jehovah, when he "spake to Moses in Mount Sinai," gave the law, and made the covenant, usually called the Mosaic, with the children of Israel. Jeremiah tells us that the new covenant with Israel was to be made by the same person who made the old (Jer. xxxi. 31-34); and from St. Paul we learn that this new covenant, predicted by Jeremiah, is the Christian dispensation, and Christ is its Author. (Heb. viii. 6-10.) The Christ of the New Testament and the Angel Jehovah of the Old are, therefore, the same Person. (3.) We have seen how the Angel Jehovah was the leader and guide of the Israelites to the promised land, and the New Testament frequently identifies the Lord Jesus with the events of their journey. The reproach which Moses endured, when he left the Egyptian court, and united himself with the tribes of Israel, is called "*the reproach of Christ*." (Heb. xi. 26.) But how can this be true, excepting as the people were the people of Christ, and so the reproach was his? They are charged with tempting the Lord their God in Massah (Deut. vi. 16), which they did by murmuring and repining at what he, as their Divine leader, allotted them to bear. But St. Paul tells us that it was *Christ* whom they tempted when they murmured against God in the wilderness. (1 Cor. x. 9.) But how can this be true, excepting as Christ was then with them as "the Lord their God," leading them to the land of promise? They were supplied with manna from heaven and water from the rock, type of those spiritual supplies which the believers among them received as oft as they resorted to their Divine conductor. But again, the Apostle tells us that the "spiritual rock" which supplied the life-giving stream was Christ, who "followed them" (margin, "went with them") wherever they journeyed. (1 Cor. x. 4.) But how can this be true, excepting as Christ was with them, their unailing companion, the Author of all their temporal blessings and of all the spiritual good which they enjoyed?*

Thus, from the New Testament, we gather that the Son of God, the Saviour, was the Angel Jehovah of the Old Testament,

* The evidence on this subject is arranged with consummate ability and clearness in Professor Hill's "Lectures on Divinity," book iii.

who appeared and spake to the fathers. And what rich and copious proof have we here of our Lord's Deity! "No name is given to the Angel Jehovah which is not given to Jehovah Jesus; no attribute is ascribed to the one which is not ascribed to the other; the worship which was paid to the one by patriarchs and prophets, was paid to the other by evangelists and apostles, and the Scriptures declare them to be the same august Person; the image of the Invisible, whom no man can see and live; the redeeming Angel, the redeeming Kinsman, and the redeeming God." *

V. *Are Divine names or titles ever given to Christ?*

I. HE IS CALLED GOD. There can be no dispute that the name "God" is often used in the Bible when it cannot for a moment be supposed that it is used in its high and incommunicable sense. It is applied to Moses (Exod. vii. 1), and to princes, magistrates, and judges (Exod. xxii. 28; Ps. lxxxii. 1, 6), because of some imperfect resemblance which they bear to God in some one particular. But it is in no secondary or figurative sense that Christ is called God. Consider these texts: Matt. i. 23; John i. 1, xx. 28; Acts xx. 28; † 1 Tim. iii. 16; ‡ Heb. i. 8; 2 Pet. i. 1. § But,

* Read on this subject Watson's "Institutes," part ii., chap. xi.; Doddridge's "Lectures," lecture civii.; Hare's "Preservative against Socinianism," chap. viii.; Fletcher's Works, vol. vi.; Dwight's "Theology."

† Griesbach and J. P. Smith agree that the preponderance of evidence is for the reading "the church of the *Lord*." Bloomfield considers that "the church of *God*" is the true reading, and observes that it is a usual expression of St. Paul, occurring eleven times in the epistles. Whichever is correct, the text supports the Divinity of Christ, since, as J. P. Smith observes, the appellation "the *Lord*" given to the Redeemer, is combined with a peculiar and exalted knowledge, authority, power, and influence, for the advancement of his kingdom, and the protection of his servants.

‡ Some have wished to read "which" or "who," instead of "God," in this verse. The difference in the original would be made by a very trifling variation in the characters used. But Bloomfield says that the external evidence is decidedly in favour of the word "God," whilst that in favour of "who" or "which" is next to nothing; and the internal testimony against "which" or "who" is not less decisive, while it is objectionable on every ground. T. H. Horne says, "The fullest view of the evidence, both internal and external, will be found in Henderson's "Great Mystery of Godliness Incontrovertible," who has demonstrated the genuineness of the reading "God," from the united and indisputable testimonies of manuscripts, ancient versions, and quotations in the writings of the Fathers, and the best printed editions of the Greek Testament, both early and recent, as well as from internal evidence.

§ This text is rendered in the margin of the larger English Bibles, "Through the righteousness of our God and Saviour Jesus Christ;" and,

as if for ever to shut out the secondary or subordinate sense, he is called "the mighty God" (Isa. ix. 6); "God over all" (Rom. ix. 5); "the true God" (1 John v. 20); "the great God" (Titus ii. 13).*

2. HE IS CALLED JEHOVAH,† which is acknowledged to be the incommunicable name of the Most High, signifying his eternal, independent, and immutable existence. "I am Jehovah; that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another." If this name, therefore, is directly given in the Scripture to Jesus of Nazareth, the question of his supreme Divinity ought to be decided; and that it is so, we have abundant proof (see Isa. vi. 5, compared with John xii. 41, Jer. xxiii. 5, 6; Joel ii. 32, compared with Rom. x. 13; Isa. xl. 3, compared with Matt. iii. 3; Isa. viii. 13, 14, compared with 1 Pet. ii. 7, 8; Zech. xii. 1, 10, compared with John xix. 37); and "we are bold to say that there is no lofty name by which the Father is ever described, which is not given, in some place or other, to the Son; so that if you have any process of argument by which to disprove the Divinity of Christ, you may apply the same process to disprove the Divinity of the Father, and thus demonstrate that there is no God at all."

VI. *Are Divine attributes or perfections ever ascribed to Christ?* Yes.

1. ETERNAL EXISTENCE. Isa. ix. 6; Micah v. 2; John i. 2; Isa. xlv. 6, compared with Rev. i. 11, ii. 8, xxii. 13. x.
2. OMNIPRESENCE. Matt. xviii. 20, xxviii. 20; John iii. 13.
3. OMNISCIENCE. John ii. 24, 25, xxi. 17; Col. iii. 3; Rev. ii. 23, compared with 1 Kings viii. 39.
4. OMNIPOTENCE. Isa. ix. 6; Rev. i. 8; Phil. iii. 21.
5. IMMUTABILITY. Heb. i. 10, 12, xiii. 8.
6. EVERY ATTRIBUTE OF THE FATHER. John xvi. 15; Col. ii. 9.

VII. *Are Divine works ever ascribed to Christ?*

1. THE CREATION OF THE UNIVERSE. "If there be a maxim that is written clearly, with all the light of its own evidence upon the human soul, it is this: 'He that made all things is God.'" And in how many texts is creation ascribed to the Son of God? (John i. 3, 10; Eph. iii. 9; Col. i. 16; Heb. i. 2, 10.)‡

according to the established principles of Greek construction, this appears decidedly to be their just translation.—Dr. Wardlaw.

* To avoid all ambiguity and to express the precise sense of the original, the words ought to be rendered "the glorious appearance of our Great God and Saviour Jesus Christ."—Dr. Wardlaw.

† The reader will remember, that in every instance where the name "Lord" is printed in capital letters it is Jehovah in the original Hebrew.

‡ "By thus ascribing the work of creation to the Son, the Apostles do not exclude the agency of the Father and the Holy Spirit. They do

2. PROVIDENTIAL GOVERNMENT. Matt. xxviii. 18; Luke x. 22; John iii. 35, xvii. 2; Acts x. 36; Rom. xiv. 9; Eph. i. 22; Col. i. 17; Heb. i. 3; Rev. xvii. 14.

3. THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS. Matt. ix. 2-7; Mark ii. 7, 10; Col. iii. 13.

4. THE FINAL DISSOLUTION AND RENEWAL OF ALL THINGS. Heb. i. 12; Phil. iii. 21; Rev. xxi. 5.

5. THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD, AND UNIVERSAL JUDGMENT. John v. 22, 27, 28, 29; Phil. iii. 20, 21; Matt. xxv. 31, 32; Acts x. 42, xvii. 31; Rom. xvi. 10; 2 Tim. iv. 1.

VIII. *Is Divine worship paid to Christ?*

1. The worship of Christ is distinctly recognised as the distinguishing peculiarity of New Testament saints. Acts ix. 14, 21; 1 Cor. i. 2; Rom. x. 12, 13.*

2. We have numerous instances of religious worship as rendered to Christ by the inspired Apostles and early saints. Luke xxiv. 51, 52; Acts. i. 24, vii. 59, 60; 2 Cor. xii. 8, 9; 1 Thess. iii. 11, 12; 2 Thess. ii. 16, 17; 1 Tim. i. 2; Rev. i. 5.†

not break in upon the unity of the Godhead, and separate the essence of Deity, in distinguishing the persons. Creation was the work of the Trine God; but the Son was the immediate and prominent agent in wielding the threefold energy of the whole Divine nature."—Watson's Sermon on Col. i. 16.

* "Should it be objected that Christ created *officially*, or by *delegation*, I answer, this is impossible; for as creation requires absolute and unlimited power or omnipotence, there can be but *one* Creator, because it is impossible that there can be *two* or *more* Omnipotents, Infinites, or Eternals. It is, therefore, evident that creation cannot be effected *officially* or by *delegation*: for this would imply a being *conferring the office*, and delegating such powers; and that the being to whom it was delegated was a *dependent being*; consequently not unoriginate and eternal; but this the nature of creation proves to be absurd."—See Dr. A. Clarke's admirable and sublime note on Col. i. 12-17.

* The testimony from *ἐπικαλέομαι* translated "call upon," is most convincing when compared with the Septuagint usage of the word; for it is the ordinary term for the sacred invocation of God, as see Ps. cxiv. 18; 1 Pet. i. 17. It describes such spiritual worship, that, whether offered to the Father or to the Son, is indissolubly connected with salvation (Acts ii. 21); and yet this is, without the shadow of a doubt, applied in the above texts to the invocation of the Lord Jesus.

† The Unitarian objection to the Divinity of Christ, as arising from this argument is, that the worship rendered to Christ was only such reverent salutation as was by custom offered to those in authority. We are aware that the word translated worship *προσκυνέω* is often used in classical writers for humble and prostrate salutation. But what is its New Testament usage? The word occurs sixty times, and the noun formed from it *προσκυνήτης* once. There are twenty-two instances in which it is used of worship offered to God the Father, or absolutely to

3. He is worshipped by angels. Heb. i. 6 ; Rev. v. 11, 12.

4. He is to be worshipped by every creature in the universe. Phil. ii. 9, 11 ; Rev. v. 13, 14.

After reading such passages as these, can we doubt whether the Being who is thus represented as occupying the same throne with the Eternal Father, and receiving the very same expressions of adoration and praise,—of *unqualified* adoration, of *everlasting* praise,—be himself God in the same sense, and in as high a sense, as the Father himself is so styled ?

IX. Is not the Divinity of Christ proved from his own most solemn declaration ?

See especially John xiv. 9, xvi. 15, x. 30. If this be his testimony concerning himself, we are reduced to the fearful alternative, either to recognise him as truly God, or to turn away from him as destitute of the human excellences of sincerity, humility, and truth ; unless, indeed, we have recourse to a supposition, upon which the most desperate of his modern opponents have not yet ventured, and say with his jealous kinsmen, that he was beside himself.* Of a truth, the alternative is terrible. But can devout and earnest thought falter for a moment in suspense ?

X. Is not the Divinity of Christ proved by the frequent conjunction of his name with that of the Father ?

We have examples of this in the promises he made (John xiv. 21, 23) ; in the embassy of the apostolic writers (Titus 1 ; Gal. i. 1) ; in the designation of the churches addressed (1 Cor. i. 2 ; Eph. i. 1 ; Phil. i. 1 ; 1 Thess. i. 1 ; 2 Thess. i. 1) ; in the benediction besought by the Apostles (1 Tim. i. 2 ; 1 Thess. iii. 11 ; 2 Thess. ii. 16, 17 ; 1 Cor. xiii. 14) ; and in the worship of heaven (Rev. v. 13, vii. 10). Now, the union of the name of the Most High with one subordinatedly employed in the evident capacity of a servant, is of easy explanation, though even this is rare in Scripture ; but the conjunction of the infinite God with one co-ordinately engaged in manifest equality of rank, is utterly inexplicable on the Unitarian hypothesis, and no explanation can be given except on the assumption that the Lord Jesus is one with the Father in the honours of supreme Divinity. To associate the Creator with a creature, in offices and prayers and giving of thanks, in the way set forth in these texts, would for ever confound

God ; and five of Divine worship used intransitively ; fifteen instances of worship to Jesus Christ ; seventeen of idolatrous worship condemned, and two of human salutation. Of these two, moreover, in one (Matt. xviii. 29), the king to whom the worship is paid is evidently in his royalty a type of God. We are, therefore, virtually reduced to one solitary instance.—Rev. E. H. Bickersteth, M.A., "Rock of Ages."

* This argument is elaborated in a train of lofty and impassioned eloquence by Liddon, in the "Bampton Lectures for 1866."

and destroy the infinite distinction between the eternal God and mortal man.

XI. Is not the Divinity of Christ proved from the view given in the Scriptures of the love of God as displayed in the mission or gift of Jesus Christ?

This love is always spoken of in terms which intimate its astonishing and unparalleled greatness. (John iii. 16; Rom. v. 8, viii. 31, 32; 1 John iv. 8-10.) If Jesus Christ is to be viewed only as a teacher sent from God, if his life was only an example, and his death a confirmation of his testimony, where shall we discover that unparalleled peculiarity of love, and whence derive that incomparably superior obligation, which these passages so strongly express? Peter and Paul were commissioned to teach mankind the will of God, and they also proved their sincerity, and sealed their testimony with their blood. But when do we find any language like that which is used respecting him applied to them? Why is the love displayed in the gift of Jesus Christ the pledge and assurance of every other blessing? Why is it exhibited as without parallel or comparison, even in the whole conduct of God himself? Indeed, the supposition of Jesus Christ being a mere human prophet so reduces and neutralises the meaning of the expressions, so totally annihilates their spirit and beauty and propriety, that we say, with all the emphasis of conviction, it cannot be true.*

XII. Is not the Divinity of Christ proved by his high claims to the love and obedience of his followers?

What mere human prophet ever addressed the people to whom he was sent in such terms as the following passages contain? Matt. x. 27-38; Luke xiv. 26; John xii. 26. If the speaker were indeed what we affirm him to have been, the language is suitable to the person; we are sensible of no incongruity between them. But if he were on a level in nature with the disciples and the multitude to whom he spoke, every feeling of fitness and propriety is outraged; it is the language of unexampled presumption. Yet these high claims were felt and owned by his followers to be just. Love to Christ was the distinguishing feature of their character (Eph. vi. 24); the grand moving spring of their activity (2 Cor. v. 14, 15); the want of which incurred a heavy curse. (1 Cor. xvi. 22.) And view Jesus Christ as Emmanuel—God with us—the atoning Redeemer of a lost world—then all is as it ought to be. The strongest terms that can be selected are not then too strong to express his claims on our attachment; his title to the entire surrender of our hearts and powers to his service.†

* Wardlaw's "Socinian Controversy," dis. ii.

† Ibid.

XIII. *What are the principal objections that Socinians allege against our Saviour's true and proper Divinity?*

They may be arranged in two classes:—

1. THOSE DRAWN FROM HIS PROPER HUMANITY AND HIS HUMBLE MISSION AS A SERVANT. It is exceedingly unfair to adduce this as an objection; for Socinians cannot but know that Trinitarians admit as freely as themselves that our Lord is man, and that, as the Mediator between God and man, he received a commission from the Father. The question, however, is, are we not continually taught, by an astonishing mass of Scripture evidence, that while he is truly and properly man, he is also the Supreme and Eternal God? And are not the very texts which most strongly declare the humanity of Jesus sufficient to refute those who from them would deny his Deity? How could a mere man, without absurd presumption, solemnly announce that God the Father was greater than he? How could he be "made flesh"? How could it be a proof of his humility that he "was made in the likeness of men"? He was "perfect God and perfect man;" and, keeping this in remembrance, we have a clear and satisfactory explanation of those passages which might otherwise appear incongruous and contradictory.

2. THOSE DRAWN FROM PARTICULAR TEXTS OF SCRIPTURE.

(1.) It is supposed that our Lord's reply to the rich young man proves that he himself disclaimed Divinity. (Matt. xix. 16.) It is most unfortunate for the Unitarian theory to press this passage into its service; for if it disproves the Saviour's Deity, it also disproves his goodness. But was he not good? Not good? and yet the great teacher of men, and the example of the most perfect holiness, obedience, and benevolence! Not good? and yet the whole testimony of Scripture asserts his immaculate holiness and disinterested love! Not good? and yet the Father, once and again, proclaims from heaven that he was his beloved Son, in whom he was well pleased; and inspired apostles declare that he was holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners! The title "good Master," however, was not rejected by our Lord because it was improperly *applicable* to him, but because it was improperly *applied* by one who regarded him only as a mere man, not as the Divine Messiah. He did not restrain one from calling him good, who came professing his persuasion that he was a Divine person, or one who entreated him to do an act which supposed Divine power, and so might be considered as implying such a persuasion; but one who addressed him as a teacher, "good Teacher" διδασκαλε αγαθε, and proposed a question which all eminent teachers amongst the Jews professed to answer. Our Lord repelled the title when given as an unmeaning compliment, but announced to the young man the true ground on which alone the term was applicable to him. "If I am good, then am I Divine; for there is none good but one, that is, God." This was

doubtless the conclusion to which Christ was desirous to lead the young man. He had come to inquire of Jesus merely as a master, or teacher; the Saviour would convince him that he was not only his instructor, but his God.*

(2.) It is supposed that in Mark xiii. 32, we have a denial of our Lord's omniscience, and therefore of his Divinity; but whatever may be the meaning of these words, they cannot be understood in a sense that contradicts the many passages which explicitly declare that Christ knows all things. Moreover, it is very clear, from the whole drift of the discourse, that our Lord *did* know the time of the impending calamities; for, in the same breath, he foretells them with the most circumstantial exactness, and declares that the present generation should not pass away until the event should be accomplished. And hence we must seek the explication of the text in that idiomatic use of the word *to know*, which the Hebrew so often furnishes, and which the Evangelist would naturally follow, although he wrote in Greek. To *know*, in this place, appears to bear the sense of the Hebrew conjugation called Hiphil, and to signify, therefore, "to make to know"—that is, "to declare or reveal." St. Paul uses the same word in the same sense in 1 Cor. ii. 2. The meaning will then be, that by none of the three means of communication by which God has been pleased to reveal his purposes, neither by inspired men, nor angels, nor even the Son himself, was the exact time of that visitation *made known* or *revealed*; but the Father himself would reveal it by its sudden and unlooked-for appearance, "*which in his own times he shall show.*" A comparison of this text with Acts i. 6, 7, seems to confirm this view; for there again the Saviour intimates, not that he was himself unable to satisfy their curiosity, had he pleased to do so, but that it was not within the range of his commission, as the Sent of God, to disclose to them that part of the Divine arrangements.†

(3.) Two passages are often adduced against the eternity of Christ, and in proof that he is a created being—Rev. iii. 14, and Col. i. 15. In the first of these, the word rendered "beginning" is *αρχη*, which is applied to the Father as well as the Son (see Rev. xxi. 6); so that if the word must mean that Christ had a beginning, and therefore is not eternal, it teaches the same with regard to God the Father. The meaning of the word *αρχη*, "beginning," is the same here as *αρχων*, *chief*, *ruler*, *governor*, *supreme*; the abstract term being put for the concrete, of which there are many examples. This is evidently its meaning when applied to the Father, and so it is when applied to the Son.‡

* Dr. Cooke's "Christian Theology;" Watson's "Exposition," *in loco*.

† Watson's "Exposition," *in loco*; Dr. W. Cooke's "Christian Theology;" Dr. Wardlaw's "Systematic Theology," vol. iii., p. 685; Dr. Urwick's "Second Advent," p. 34.

‡ Dr. W. Cooke's "Theology."

Hence, Dr. A. Clarke's note: "The beginning of," etc.; "that is, the Head and Governor of all creatures, the King of the creation." And Benson's: "The Author, Head, and Ruler of the creation of God." And thus, instead of disproving his eternity, it establishes his supremacy and Divinity. In Col. i. 15, Christ is designated "the *first-born* of every creature," or more literally, "the first-born of the whole creation." The word *πρωτότοκος*, *first-born*, like *ἀρχή*, *beginning*, signifies the Chief, the Supreme, the Lord, the Governor; the phraseology is Jewish. As he who was first born in a Hebrew family had the pre-eminence and lordship over his brethren, so the word was used to denote pre-eminence or dominion in general. It is applied to kings (Ps. lxxxix. 27); to death (Job xviii. 13); and, by the Jewish people, to God himself, for they call Jehovah "the first-born of all the world, or of all the creation," to signify his having created or produced all things. The word is thus applied to Christ by St. Paul, and is designed to exalt him above all creatures, and to crown him Divine Head and Lord and Sovereign of all. It proclaims one of his many royal titles, and invests him with the insignia of universal empire.*

(4.) 1 Cor. viii. 6, is also adduced as a denial of our Lord's Divinity; but, as Dr. Pye Smith observes, "The Deity of Christ can no more be denied because the Father is here called the 'one God,' than the dominion of the Father can be denied because the Son is called the 'one Lord.'"† "The connection of this passage with the preceding, and the scope of the argument, are well expressed by Billroth, as follows: 'As respects the eating of flesh offered in sacrifice to idols, we know that there is no idol-god in the world, and that there is no God but one, viz. Jehovah. Although, then, there be what are called gods, whether they be in heaven or on earth, as, indeed, there are gods many and lords many (to the heathen, according to the ideas of the heathen), yet is there to us but one God (i.e., there is only one Being whom we acknowledge as Divine) and one Lord, from whom, as Creator and First Great Cause, all things have their origin, and we [exist] for him (i.e., for his service and glory, see Col. i. 16); and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom (i.e., as the immediate and efficient cause) are all things, and we by him;' i.e., are what we are"‡—language in perfect accordance with the great Scripture principle: "Of the Father, through the Son, and by the Spirit, all things are." Here, then, there is nothing to exclude from the honours of supreme Divinity either the Word, who was in the beginning with God, and was God, or the Holy Ghost, who bears the same Divine title. Indeed, the passage

* Dr. W. Cooke's "Christian Theology;" Dr. A. Clarke's "Commentary," *in loco*; Dr. Guthrie's "Inheritance of the Saints," p. 197.

† "Scripture Testimony," vol. iii., p. 332.

‡ Dr. Bloomfield, *in loco*.

can only be explained in itself, or made to agree with the uniform testimony of Scripture, on the principle that the Father and the Son are one God and one Lord, in the unity of the Godhead.

Among the most valuable works on the subject of this section are the following: Dr Pye Smith's "Scripture Testimony to the Messiah," in three volumes, 8vo,* beyond comparison the most elaborate and convincing book on the Divinity of Christ that ever appeared in the English language. Wardlaw's "Discourses on the Socinian Controversy." Holden's "Scripture Testimony to the Divinity of Christ," which is more adapted to popular use, and to the use of young students, than either of the works just mentioned. It is in one volume, 8vo. Moses Stuart's "Letters to Dr. Channing, in Defence of the Divinity of Christ." They are written in a truly Christian spirit, and contain much valuable criticism combined with sound argument. Hare's "Preservative against the Errors of Socinianism." It is acute and powerful in argument, and contains a just view of the important subjects of which it treats. Wilson's "Illustration of the Method of Explaining the New Testament by the Early Opinions of Jews and Christians concerning Christ." A very able defence of the Godhead of Christ, showing that the early Christians and the Jews, who were contemporary with our Lord, understood those terms which are now applied to the Divinity of our Lord just as they are now understood by orthodox believers. Dr. Burton's "Testimonies of the Nicene Fathers to the Divinity of Christ," and his "Testimonies to the Divinity of the Holy Ghost and the Doctrine of the Trinity," are both works of the highest value, as exhibiting the views of the Christian writers during the first three centuries concerning these subjects. Horsley's "Tracts in Controversy with Dr. Priestley," published in one volume. They are deficient in Christian temper, but are among the ablest controversial publications that ever appeared. Dr. Waterland, at an early part of last century, wrote largely in defence of the Divinity of Christ and of other subjects connected with it; and all his publications, bearing on these points, are entitled to a careful study. Dr. Calamy, Dr. Guyse, and Mr. Hurrion, three Dissenting ministers, lived at the same time, and distinguished themselves in defence of the truth. Calamy published a volume on the doctrine of the Trinity; Guyse on the Divinity of the Holy Spirit; and Hurrion another on the same subject. They are all worth a careful reading. Bishop Bull's "Opinion of the Catholic Church, for the first three centuries, on the necessity of believing that our Lord Jesus Christ is truly God," is equally valuable to the theological student and the student of ecclesiastical history. I especially recommend a work, published in A.D. 1765, by Dr. Abaddie, entitled "The Great and Stupendous Mystery of Man's

[* This edition is out of print. It is now published in two vols. 8vo.]

Salvation by Jesus Christ, asserted and defended." Mr. Wesley was deeply impressed with the value of this treatise. The author maintains that if Jesus Christ be not God, the Gospel is less credible than the system of Mohammed. His argument may be evaded, but cannot be refuted.*

SECTION III.

THE DIVINE SONSHIP OF CHRIST.

I. In what various applications do we find the term "Son of God" in Scripture?

This was a title which, before our Lord's time, had been received with various shades of meaning. It had been used of all who, in their several degrees, stand in filial relationship to their Father in heaven—(1.) Of the spirits who sang for joy when the foundations of the earth were laid. (Job xxxviii. 7.) (2.) Of the judges and rulers who, because the word of the Lord came to them, were all the children of the Most Highest, and to whom, as such, even the very name of God—*Elohim*—was applied without impiety. (Ps. lxxxiii. 6; Judges v. 8.) (3.) Of those, whosoever they may have been, who saw the daughters of men that they were fair. (Gen. vi. 4.) (4.) Of Israel, as the dear son of Jehovah. (Hos. xi. 1.) (5.) Of all who should one day be called the children of the living God (Hos. i. 10); *viz.*, believers in Christ, because of their gracious adoption into God's family. (John i. 12.)†

II. When the term is applied to the Lord Jesus, is it a title of office or of nature? In other words, does it apply to Christ as a Divine person, or must it be restricted to his humanity?

1. There are passages which seem‡ to restrain its significance to the mere humanity of the Saviour; and to rest its application—(1.) Upon his miraculous conception. (Luke i. 35.) (2.) Upon his official designation. (John x. 34-36.) (3.) Upon his resurrection from the dead. (Acts xiii. 33.)

2. The general teaching of Scripture is, however, that as he is called "Son of man" in reference to his proper humanity, so is

* Rev. T. Jackson's MS. Lectures.

† Plumptre's "Christ and Christianity:" Boyle Lecture for 1866, p. 145.

‡ I say "*seem to restrain*," etc., because I am well aware that some of our most learned and judicious divines explain these passages as confirming, rather than as opposing, the doctrine of the Divine Sonship of our Lord, as we shall afterwards have occasion to show.

he called "Son of God" in reference to his Divine nature, and as expressive of his peculiar and eternal relation to God the Father.

We admit that there are instances in which the title "Son of man" is connected with the loftier attributes of Deity (see Matt. ix. 6, xii. 8, xxiv. 30; John iii. 13, vi. 62, etc.); and that the title "Son of God" is occasionally applied where the reference is to the attributes of pure humanity, as *e.g.*, Rom. v. 10; Gal. ii. 20. This, of course, arises from the personal union of the two natures in Christ. But this interchange of appellations will no more prove the title "Son of God" to be a human designation, than it will prove "Son of man" to be a Divine one.

III. *Can we gather from the evangelical narrative in what sense the disciples, and the Jews in general, regarded this title?*

A few references will show that they all regarded it as the designation of a Divine person. (1.) *Take the confession of Nathanael.* (John i. 45-49.) He was first led to Jesus through an invitation from Philip, who described our Redeemer as "the son of Joseph." But when Jesus announced to him that he saw him "under the fig tree," probably in allusion to a recent act of secret devotion, Nathanael, certain that no merely human being had seen him, at once recognised in Christ that prerogative of God, which consists in searching the hearts of men, and seeing them in their most secret retirements, and under this idea exclaimed, "Thou art the Son of God," etc. The natural conclusion is, that, as the confession was drawn forth by this proof of omniscience, it was intended to indicate his proper Deity. (2.) *Take the confession of the disciples,* occasioned by a most impressive display of our Lord's power over the elements. (Matt. xiv. 22-33.) They had seen him walk upon the sea, which is the prerogative of God (Job. ix. 8); they had seen him uphold the disciple on the face of the great deep, and, by a single act of his will, hush the tempest, and bring the endangered vessel to land. They felt that the Lord of nature was there, and they "worshipped him, saying, Of a truth thou art the Son of God." Can we resist the conviction that under these circumstances the acknowledgment and homage was that of pure Deity? (3.) *Take the confession of Peter.* (Matt. xvi. 13-18.) It has two great parts: "Thou art the Christ" is the first part,—he whom God has anointed and sent forth to be the King, the Priest, the Prophet of his church. This, then, was a title of office. "The Son of the living God" is emphatically added to express the *true nature* of him who was thus acknowledged to be the Christ. That this was the view of Peter is rendered indubitable by our Lord's reply, "Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven;" meaning, that the truth thus expressed had not been ascertained by human testimony, but by the Divine revelation alone. Now, if the title "Son of God" describes the miraculous conception, it is a matter of plain historical testimony; if it expresses nothing

more than the Messiahship of Jesus, *that* was stated to Peter by his own brother Andrew (John i. 40, 41); and was no subject of Divine communication. But the doctrine of the Saviour's Deity, and of his eternal relation to the Father, is truly inscrutable, and in order to its apprehension requires the revelation of God; for "no one knoweth who the Son is but the Father." This interpretation, therefore, is the only one with which the passage harmonises. (4.) *Take the avowed conviction of the Jewish people.* In the narrative recorded (John v. 17, 18), the calling of God his own Father was understood by the Jews, and their opinion is sanctioned by the evangelist, as the most direct and precise claim of Divinity, and, according to their interpretation, as a crime worthy of death. In John x. 24, 25, we find our Lord avowing himself to be the Christ; but this produced no observable effect upon his hearers. When, however, he claimed God as his Father, they proceeded to outrage as before, and assigned as the reason, that, being a man, he made himself God (ver. 29-36). It is obvious, therefore, that the conception they had of the term was that it implied the possession of perfections and prerogatives such as belonged to no creature, but to God only.

IV. *Did the Saviour ever affirm his Sonship in the same sense in which it was understood by the Jews?*

Had they misapprehended the term, we cannot doubt that he would instantly have corrected their mistake, and set them right. He was bound not to suffer his own character to be stained in their view with the crime of blasphemy. But he uttered no word of correction. On the contrary he re-asserts his Sonship, and that in the most explicit terms, as involving a Divine character and claim. For (1.) he declares his equality with the Father, both in operation and in honour. (John v. 19-29.) (2.) He refers to the testimony of John in confirmation of his claim. (John v. 33, compared with John i. 34.) (3.) He appeals to the testimony of the Father (ver. 37), who, both at the baptism (Matt. iii. 17), and at the transfiguration (Matt. xvii. 5), proclaimed him as his "beloved Son," for the purpose of securing the most profound reverence for his person and work. (4.) He appeals to his miraculous works, they being evidences of his Divine power. (John x. 37, 38; xiv. 11.)

V. *Is there any confirmation of this view arising out of the history of our Lord's death and resurrection?*

The Jews had all along asserted that the assumption of the title "Son of God" by one whom they regarded as a mere man, was for him to be guilty of the capital crime of blasphemy. (See John x. 33.) And before the bar of the Sanhedrim, the High Priest adjured Jesus, that is, put him upon oath, to tell him whether he was Christ, the Son of God. (Matt. xxvi. 63.) The people also urged the same question. (Luke xxii. 70.) And he at once avowed that he was

so in the very sense in which they put the question (Matt. xxvi. 64; Mark xiv. 62; Luke xxii. 70); and for this they adjudged him worthy of death, and led him to the cross. (Matt. xxvi. 65, 66; Mark xiv. 61-64; John xix. 7.) "The mere claim of being *the Christ* would not have been regarded as blasphemy by those who had questioned with themselves whether John was the Christ or no, and were deceived again and again by the appearance of false Christs. It was because they saw in the words what seemed to them to imply a claim to the incommunicable name, a participation in the absolute unity, that they condemned him on the ground that he spoke of himself as the Son of the Blessed."* It now became a question of the utmost moment, was he, as the Son of God, equal to the Father, or was he a blaspheming impostor? It was a question to be decided by infinite power alone; and, for its decision, the Father interposed; and by the most stupendous of all miracles—his resurrection from the dead—Christ was "declared," definitely marked out, "the Son of God with power." (Rom. i. 4.) The resurrection was, therefore, the evidence of the Divine filiation of the Redeemer. His claim to be the Son of God, which the Jewish council adjudged to be blasphemy, was by this glorious miracle effectually vindicated.

VI. *Do the writings of St. John afford any special evidence of the Divine Sonship of our Lord?*

The avowed purpose, both of the Gospel and Epistles, was to excite and confirm our faith in the great truth that Jesus is the Son of God. (John xx. 31; 1 John v. 13.) And how is the matter proved? By giving evidence that he was miraculously born? By supporting his claims to Messiahship? No; but by repeated and irrefragable arguments that he was Divine. The title "Son of God" must, therefore, express the sovereign Divinity of Christ. And we shall see how this idea runs through the writings of this Apostle. As the Son, he has perfect oneness and equality with the Father (John x. 30, v. 18, xvi. 15); oneness and equality of nature, with mutual in-being (John i. 18, viii. 19, 20, x. 28, 29, xiv. 7-11, xvii. 20-23); oneness and equality of title (1 John v. 20, 21, compared with John xvii. 3); oneness and equality of glory (John xvii. 1, 5, 9, 10); oneness and equality in counsel and operation (John v. 17, 19, 30, xiv. 10, 11, xvii. 21; 1 John ii. 24; 2 John 9); oneness and equality of life-giving power (John v. 21, 25, 26, xi. 25, 27, 40, x. 17, 18; Rom. i. 1, 3, 4); oneness and equality of honour (John v. 23, xiv. 13, xv. 23, 24). Can these passages be reviewed without producing in us the conviction that "Son of God," as applied by the Apostle, is a title of absolute Divinity?

VII. *Does not the Epistle to the Hebrews clearly sustain the doctrine of the Divine Sonship of Jesus?*

* Plumptre's "Boyle Lecture for 1866," p. 148.

It must be remembered that many of the persons addressed in that epistle had been contemporaries of our Lord, and had witnessed that unrighteous controversy upon the doctrine of his Divine Sonship which issued in his crucifixion. The lofty sense in which he employed the title "Son of God," and in which it was interpreted by his judges, must to them have been perfectly familiar. They were incapable of affixing to the appellation any idea but that of sovereign Divinity. And yet with these circumstances before him, the Apostle, in treating of the dignity of our Lord's person, styles him throughout "The Son of God."

(1.) As the Son of God, he is the radiation of the Divine splendour, and the accurate and most exact resemblance of the Father's substance. (Heb. i. 3.)

(2.) As the Son of God, to him are ascribed the creation of the world and the attributes of eternity and immutability. (Heb. i. 2, 10-12.)

(3.) As the Son of God, he is superior to angels, he having this title by inheritance, that is, by natural and inalienable right (Heb. i. 4-6)—right resulting not from mere gratuity, or from the meritoriousness of toil or sufferings, but from nature.

(4.) As the Son of God, he is addressed by the Father as "God," the everlasting King (Heb. i. 8), whereas angels in their highest estate are but messengers and ministers (ver. 7.)

(5.) As the Son God, even in his condition of lowest debasement, he is entitled to the homage of angels. (Heb. i. 6.)

(6.) As the Son of God, he sits upon the throne of God, far above all principality and power, while angels are occupied in the services of love. (Heb. i. 13, 14.)

The same ideas of absolute Divinity connect themselves with the title throughout the epistle. The conclusion is unavoidable; not only that "Son of God" is a Divine title, but that of all the appellations by which the Divinity of Christ is described, it is the most choice, peculiar, intelligible, and emphatic.

VIII. *Does not the language of the angel to the mother of our Lord affirm that he should be called the "Son of God," on account of his miraculous conception?*—Luke i. 35.

So it has been thought by Dr. A. Clarke and some others; and they have regarded this text as decisive evidence against the Sonship of our Lord's Divine nature. But if their view of the passage is correct, then, in the same respect in which our Lord is the Son, the Holy Ghost is the Father—a title which is never appropriated to him. Moreover, throughout his personal history there is not a single instance in which the use of this title is connected with an allusion to the Divine production of his human nature. Even St. John, who wrote for the one specific purpose—"that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God"—says not a word about the miraculous production of his humanity. That view of the passage which makes the miraculous conception

the reason why our Lord should be invested with this title, arises from the notion that "the power of the Highest," in the second clause, means the same as "the Holy Ghost" in the first, which it evidently does not. There is abundant evidence that the term "power" was, by the Jews, used to signify a Divine person; in 1 Cor. i. 23, Christ is called "the power of God;" and the early writers of the Church commonly apply the word "power" to the Divine nature of our Lord; and, in accordance with this view, we must affix a personal sense to the term "the power of the Highest" in this text. There were two acts to be performed in the "preparation of the body" of our Lord—one, the miraculous production of a human being; and the other, the joining of the Divine nature with it in personal union, so that Christ might be Emmanuel, God with us; and it is reasonable to conclude that both should be referred to in the explanation of the case to Mary. First, then, we have the act of the Holy Ghost producing the human nature of our Lord in the womb of the virgin; and then we have "the power of the Highest"—*i.e.*, the Second Person in the Trinity, the Eternal Logos, descending upon the virgin mother, and uniting himself to that which was so formed. From these two acts all that the angel mentions followed. It follows that that should be a "holy thing" which should be born of Mary, as being produced immediately by the Holy Ghost; and it followed that this "holy thing" should be called the Son of God. And, accordingly, this became the appellation of the one undivided Christ, but wholly by virtue of the hypostatical union. The mode of expression by which the concluding clause is introduced confirms the view thus given: "therefore ALSO," etc. It shall not merely be called *holy*, which would follow from its immediate production by the Holy Ghost; but it shall be called the Son of God because of another circumstance—the union of the two natures; for since human nature was united to the Son of God, it was to bear the same name, as being in indissoluble union with him.*

IX. *Does not the language of St. Paul, in Acts xiii. 33, oblige us to rest the Sonship of our Lord upon his resurrection from the dead?*

By some this view has been entertained. But a palpable reason for its rejection is, that it supposes Christ to have become the Son of God at the resurrection, which is not the fact. Every expression in the New Testament which gives emphasis to the Sonship of Christ, refers to a period before the resurrection. There are two other expositions of the passage; and in both it is referred to the *Divine* filiation. Watson supposes that the resurrection is here announced as the evidence or declaration that Christ was truly, and in a proper sense, the Son of God. In this case, ac-

* Watson's "Exposition," *in loco*; Treffry's "Eternal Sonship," pp. 127-137, 148-150.

cording to an allowable Hebraism, the passage will signify, "Thou art my Son; this day (of the resurrection) have I declared, and by indubitable evidence demonstrated, thy proper and Divine generation." Hence it is a passage of exactly similar import to that in Rom. i. 4, "declared to be the Son of God . . . by the resurrection," etc.* Treffry doubts whether there is in this text any reference to the resurrection. He says the word *again*, in ver. 33, is inserted by our translators without any sufficient warrant, while the participle *ἀναστῆρας raised up*, does by no means necessarily suggest the doctrine supposed. In fact, when the verb has this sense, it is usually connected with some determining phrase, such as ἐκ νεκρῶ *from the dead*; otherwise its meaning simply is to *raise up*, or, passively, to *be raised up*. See Luke iii. 22, 26; v. 6, 17, 34, etc.; Acts ii. 30; where the reference is not to the resurrection, but to the natural production and the official elevation of Christ. And throughout St. Paul's discourse at Antioch, recorded in chapter xiii., he maintains a clear distinction between the raising up of Christ by official appointment, and the resurrection from the dead. (Compare verses 23 and 30. The same distinction is to be observed in verses 33 and 34; the resurrection being spoken of only in verse 34.) Thus the passage will signify, "God hath fulfilled his promise, in that he hath raised up Jesus, by sending him in the flesh, and by appointing him to the various functions required of him." And then, to show that Jesus, who was thus raised up, is such a Saviour as God had promised unto the fathers, he announces the eternal relation of the Messiah to the Father,—the great truth which displays the beneficence of him who gave, and the condescension of him who was given, "as it is also written in the second Psalm, Thou art my Son, this day" (there being no succession, no yesterday, no to-morrow, in eternity) "have I begotten thee." Whichever of these interpretations we prefer, the main result of our inquiry is unaffected, the Saviour still stands before us as the eternal Son of God; the Son, in that high and ineffable sense which can be predicated of no created, no finite being; the Son, as having from eternity derived the Divine essence from the Father, but so derived it, incomprehensible though it be, that we can affirm of the two Persons that they are co-equal, co-eternal, and of the same substance.

X. *What is the reply to the metaphysical objection, that Sonship implies posteriority of time and inferiority of nature?*

Properly speaking, it implies neither. "On the contrary, filiation necessarily implies not only equality, but identity of nature. This is so evident that, in the Scriptures, 'son of man' is a common Hebrew periphrasis for a proper human being; and by parity of reasoning, he who is strictly 'Son of God' is a proper Divine being. Hence, far from being an evidence of natural inferiority,

* Watson's Works, vol. vii., pp. 38, 39.

the filiation of our Lord is the most plain and unequivocal argument for his Deity." "Nor is it correct to say that a father, as such, exists before his son. He who has no child is not a father; and no one can be a father until he has offspring; and supposing paternity and filiation to be essential relations of the first and second Persons in the Trinity, it is plain that from eternity (incomprehensible as it may be to us) the one must have been a Father, and the other a Son."*

XI. Can anything be predicated as to the manner of the Son's generation?

On this subject, the Holy Scriptures are silent; and all analogies derived from created nature must for ever fail to convey adequate ideas of the mode of Divine existence. It is sufficient for us to rest in the fact as revealed by God himself; waiting till our arrival in the world of spirits for those further discoveries which the Almighty, in the plenitude of his wisdom and love, may see good to make.

XII. Is there any importance attached to the inquiry into the doctrine of the Divine Sonship?

Some have gone so far as to represent it as a subject of mere strife of words, while others regard it as affecting not merely the general character of the Gospel, but the very subsistence of experimental religion. A few considerations may tend to a due appreciation of the subject.

1. "The denial of the Divine Sonship destroys all relation among the Persons of the Godhead; for no other relations among the hypostases are mentioned in Scripture save those which are expressed by paternity, filiation, and procession; every other relation is merely economical; and these natural relations being removed, we must then conceive of the Persons in the Godhead as perfectly independent of each other; a view which has a strong tendency to endanger the unity of the essence;" for, to unity of nature natural relation is essential; and if the relation be given up, the unity must follow.

2. "If Son of God be in strictness a human designation (and so it must be if it relate not to his Divinity), then we may say that our Saviour, as God, has no distinctive name at all in the whole Scriptures. The title 'God' does not distinguish him from the other Persons of the Trinity; and 'Word' stands in precisely the same predicament as 'Son;' for the same kind of criticism may reduce it to merely an official appellation. The other names of Christ are all official; and hence the denial of the title 'Son' as a designation of Divinity leads to the remarkable conclusion, that we have not in Scripture a single appellation which, in strictness and truth of speech, can be used to express the Divine Person of him who was made flesh and dwelt among us."

* Rev. R. Treffry.

3. A denial of the Divine Sonship of our Lord is calculated to weaken the impression of the greatness of God's love in the redemption of the world. That love is eminently evinced in the fact that he gave "his only begotten Son" (John iii. 16, 17; 1 John iv. 9, 10); him who from eternity was "in the bosom of the Father," the sharer of the depth of the Father's counsels, the object of his ineffable delight. And he that spared not *his own*, his proper Son—his in a sense altogether exclusive and peculiar, his in infinite and ineffable tenderness—how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? Such is the leading doctrine of the glorious Gospel. But withdraw the Divine Sonship, and the subject is instantly thrown into obscurity. We cannot conceive in what sense the first Person in the Trinity could possess a property in, or an authority over, the second, so as to be able to give or send him. All that we are capable of imagining in this case is, that on the part of the one there was a concurrence in the beneficent design of the other. This, however, is no evidence of the Father's love; and all that Scripture teaches on the subject becomes actually unintelligible. On the other hand, let the doctrine of the Divine filiation be admitted, and we perceive the fitness, the harmony, and the glory of the mediatorial designation. Thus is our love to God enkindled by the manifestations of his love to us; our faith is strengthened by the recollection that it was "his own Son" who died for our sins; and we assure ourselves of the prevalency of the mediatorial intercession by the thought, that he who pleads for us is the dear and only begotten Son, who was loved by the Almighty Father with ineffable delight before the foundation of the world.

The most able Treatise on the Divine Sonship of our Lord in the English language is that written by Rev. R. Treffry, Jun. The reader should also peruse the chapter on this subject in Watson's "Institutes," part ii., chap. xii.; and an Essay of great value by the same author, "Works," vol. vii. Fletcher also has written upon the subject with great force and beauty (see "Works," vol. vi., pp. 169-193); and Pearson "On the Creed" has a chapter full of convincing argument. Art., *His only Son*.

[Recent controversies have arisen respecting the person of Jesus Christ, which have excited considerable discussion. Strauss has striven to prove that the Gospels are myths, and that Jesus was a mythical personage, Rénan has attempted to prove that the Gospels are historical, but that Jesus, though the Christ, was not Divine. The author of "Ecce Homo" has undertaken to "trace the biography of Christ from point to point, and accept those conclusions about him, which the facts, critically weighed, appear to warrant." He professes to come in this investigation in the character of a person who had heard of Christ "as a young man of promise," who was producing and had produced a very wonderful

effect upon society by his life and teachings, and desires to ascertain the source of this power and influence. It is not easy to tell what precise views this author holds; these are to be declared in a future volume. The work is undoubtedly very able, but unsatisfactory. Many volumes have been written in reply; but, on the whole question, the most valuable works are, De Pressense's "Jesus Christ; his Times, Life, and Work." "Ecce Deus; Essays on the Life and Doctrine of Christ, with controversial notes on 'Ecce Homo,' " by Dr. J. Parker; and a series of letters in the "Sunday Magazine" for 1868.]

SECTION IV.

THE PERSONALITY AND DEITY OF THE HOLY GHOST.

ALL who believe in the doctrine of a plurality of persons in the Divine nature, believe that plurality to be a Trinity, and to consist of Father, Son, and Spirit. None, it is presumed, have believed in more, none in fewer. We now come to consider the personality and Deity of the Holy Ghost, in opposition, first, to Arianism, which teaches that as the Son is the first and greatest creature of the Father, so the Holy Ghost is the first and greatest creature of the Son, "a creature of the creature;" and secondly, to Socinianism, which teaches that the Holy Spirit is only a Divine attribute, energy, or influence. This latter is the opinion of all modern Socinians, Unitarians, and Rationalists.

Adhering to the definition of a person as an "intelligent agent," "one who possesses personal properties, *i.e.* such as indicate the possession of mind or intelligence," we inquire—

1. How can the Personality of the Holy Ghost be proved from Scripture?

Let it be conceded that the terms "Spirit" and "Holy Spirit" do sometimes denote, not the person, but the operations, the gifts, the influences of the Holy Ghost, as when he is said to be "poured out," &c., the question arises, whether, besides these, there are not very numerous portions of Scripture which *do* positively and unanswerably establish his personality.

1. THE PERSONAL PRONOUNS ARE REPEATEDLY APPLIED TO HIM, though the noun translated *Spirit* is, in the original, in the neuter gender. (John xiv. 16, 17, 26; xv. 26; xvi. 7, 14, 15.) We cannot suppose this violation of grammatical propriety to have been merely accidental. It had a manifest design.

2. PERSONAL QUALITIES ARE ASCRIBED TO HIM. Such as active intelligence (1 Cor. ii. 10, 11); volition (1 Cor. xii. 11; Acts xv. 28); personal capability of being resisted (Acts vii. 51), grieved

(Isaiah lxiii. 10; Eph. iv. 30), blasphemed against (Matt. xii. 31, 32), lied against (Acts. v. 3, 4), and tempted (Acts v. 9).

3. PERSONAL ACTS ARE ASCRIBED TO HIM. He strives (Gen. vi. 3); he speaks (John xvi. 13; Acts x. 19, viii. 29); he guides (John xvi. 13); he intercedes (Rom. viii. 26); he works miracles (Rom. xv. 19); he sanctifies (1 Cor. v. 11); he calls and sends forth messengers (Acts. xiii. 2, 4); he distributes gifts (1 Cor. xii. 11); he seals (Eph. i. 13, iv. 30).

II. *How can the proper Deity of the Holy Ghost be proved from Scripture?*

1. DIVINE NAMES ARE GIVEN HIM. (1.) God (Acts v. 3, 4; 2 Tim. iii. 16, compared with 2 Pet. i. 21; 1 Cor. iii. 16). (2.) Jehovah (Isa. vi. 5, 9, compared with Acts xxviii. 25; Exod. xvii. 7, compared with Heb. iii. 7-9; Jer. xxxi. 31-34, compared with Heb. x. 15-17).

2. DIVINE PERFECTIONS ARE ASCRIBED TO HIM: Omnipresence (Ps. cxxxix. 7-10; Rom. viii. 26, 27). Omniscience (Isa. xl. 13, 14, compared with Rom. xi. 34; 1 Cor. ii. 10, 11). Omnipotence (1 Cor. xii. 11; Rom. xv. 18, 19). Eternity (Heb. ix. 14).

3. DIVINE WORKS ARE PERFORMED BY HIM: Creation (Gen. i. 2; Job xxvi. 13, xxxiii. 4). Providential renovation (Ps. civ. 30). Regeneration (John iii. 5, 6; Titus iii. 5). The resurrection of the dead (1 Pet. iii. 18; Rom. viii. 11).

4. DIVINE WORSHIP IS PAID TO HIM (Isa. vi. 3-9, compared with Acts xxviii. 25; Rom. ix. 1; 2 Cor. xiii. 14; Matt. xxviii. 19; Rev. i. 4).

III. *How do we express the relation of the Holy Ghost to the Father and the Son?*

By the word "procession." The teaching of Scripture is, that as Christ is God by an eternal filiation, so the Holy Ghost is God by an eternal procession. The manner of the procession lies beyond the reach of all our ideas; but the fact is both expressly stated and clearly implied. First, it is expressly stated that the Holy Ghost proceedeth from the Father (John xv. 26); and it is clearly implied that he proceedeth from the Father and the Son, in passages where he is called "the Spirit of the Father" and the "Spirit of Christ" (Matt. x. 20; 1 Cor. ii. 11, 12; Gal. iv. 6; Rom. viii. 9).*

Here we close our chapter on the Holy Trinity.

IV. *What, then, is the sum of Scripture teaching with regard to this momentous subject?*

(1.) The Divine Being is essentially One; but, in a manner by us altogether incomprehensible, existing in three Persons. (2.) This

* Pearson "On the Creed," art. viii.

personal distinction belongs, eternally and necessarily, to the one Godhead—to the very essence of Deity; the personality being as essential as the unity. (3.) This distinction being proved from the Scriptures to exist in the Divine unity, all the texts in which the unity is affirmed must be interpreted in consistency with this doctrine; as meaning that God is One indeed, but that he is One according to the peculiar modification of unity which belongs to Deity; a unity differing from that which can be predicated of any of his creatures.* (4.) While this distinction has, by a necessity of nature, subsisted in the unity of the Divine essence from eternity, there is an eternal and necessary relation of the three Divine Persons to each other, the second Person of the Godhead being “the Son” of the Father by a Divine and eternal filiation; and the third Person related to the Father and the Son by the Divine and eternal procession. “These relations, we say, are *proper and Divine*. The Father, as God, begets; the Son, as God, is begotten; the Holy Ghost, as God, proceeds. And, as natural and Divine, so are these distinctions and relations *eternal*. The Father is an eternal Father; the Son an eternal Son; the Holy Spirit an eternal Spirit. The maintenance of personal and Divine *distinctions* is our protection from Sabellianism; that of proper and eternal *relation* preserves us from Tritheism; while the assertion of consubstantiality, joined with *relative order*, is our defence against Arianism.”†

* Wardlaw's “Systematic Theology.”

† Treffry's “Eternal Sonship.”

CHAPTER IV.

CREATION OF THE WORLD.

I. What is the relation to each other of the first two chapters of Genesis ?

It is important that this question should be duly considered ; because, in a work entitled "Essays and Reviews," that has obtained some notoriety in the world, and in some other writers, there is an attempt to throw discredit on these chapters, by representing them as two different and contradictory accounts of creation, taken by the author from two different sources. We conceive that there is no ground whatever for the allegation. The aim of the first connected narrative is to exhibit God as the Creator of the universe, and to mark out the order in which the process of creation was conducted ; and the picture is closed with the words, "These are the generations of the heavens and the earth," etc. (chap. ii. 4). The author then passes over from the perfected picture of created universe to that which must have been to him, as to all writers of history, the most worthy of note,—the history of man. The differences that exist are to be explained by the different objects the author had in view. In the first, his object was to give an outline of the history of the universe ; in the second, to relate the origin and primitive history of man, so far as it was necessary, as a preparation for the history of the fall. In the former, therefore, all the steps of creation are treated in chronological order. In the latter, only so much is alluded to as is necessary for the author's purpose, and in the order which that purpose required.*

II. What are the teachings of revelation and science as to the antiquity of the earth ?

The discoveries of geology prove the globe to have existed at an indefinitely remote period before the creation of man ; that is, long before the six days' work so definitely described in the Mosaic account. "If any point, not capable of mathematical demonstration in physical science, is proved, surely this truth is esta-

* See "Aids to Faith," pp. 197, 198.

blished.”* In ignorance, however, of this fact, it was at one time supposed by some that the first verse of Genesis contained a summary account of the six days’ work which followed in detail—that “the beginning” was the commencement of the first day, and of course only about six thousand years ago.† But no phrase could be more indefinite as to time than the phrase “in the beginning.” It means “in former duration,” “of old.” Whenever it is used in the Bible, it merely designates the commencement of the series of events or the periods of time that are described. And all that it states in Genesis i. 1, is, that the act of creation occurred at a certain point of time in past eternity, which is not chronologically fixed. It leaves an undefined interval between the creation of matter and the six days’ work, “during which it may have passed from chaos to order, and from order to chaos again, and each time it may have continued as long in its transition state. And after each reduction to order, it may have been occupied by as many descriptions of creatures as any speculator may be pleased to suppose.”‡ With these agree the views of Dr. Chalmers: “The detailed history of creation in the first chapter of Genesis begins at the middle of the second verse; and what precedes may be understood as an introductory sentence, by which we are most appositely told, both that God created all things at the first, and that afterwards, by what interval of time it is not specified, the earth lapsed into a chaos, from the darkness and disorder of which the present system or economy of things was made to arise. Between the initial act and the details of Genesis, the world, for aught we know, might have been the theatre of many revolutions, the traces of which geology may still investigate.”§

III. *What is the meaning, and what the Biblical usage of the word “to create”?*

The Hebrew and Greek words thus rendered are often applied to the formation of one substance out of another pre-existing, and not merely to signify the bringing of things out of nothing. But we believe that these three propositions could easily and thoroughly be established on good evidence, viz. :—(1.) “The proper and primary sense of the word is that of the Divine act of absolute creation out of nothing, and only its secondary and transitive meaning is that of fashioning or re-modelling from elements already in existence,—this peculiarity distinguishing the word from others, whose just and proper meaning is, to model or make, and with which it is sometimes associated or apparently

* Professor Hitchcock’s “Religion of Geology.” Pearson “On Infidelity,” p. 227.

† Hebrew Chronology, 5874; Septuagint (Hales’), 7281 (A.D. 1870).

‡ Dr. Wardlaw’s “Systematic Theology.”

§ Read on this subject Professor Hitchcock’s “Religion of Geology;” Dr. Harris’s “Pre-Adamite Earth.”

interchanged."* (2.) Apart from any consideration derived from the primary meaning of the word itself, the true and proper exegesis of the opening statements of Genesis requires them to be understood in the sense of absolute creation; for, in the words of John Howe, as the work there described was wrought *in the beginning*, *i.e.* when things took their beginning, had their first rise, it must suppose that "heaven and earth" were not only then brought into order, but *that* of which they were made was made of itself to exist, not having existed before. Otherwise, how was that the "beginning" of things? (3.) The same doctrine is to be undoubtedly drawn from a right interpretation of other passages of Scripture. In Rom. iv. 17, God is said to have "called those things which be not as though they were." Now, as "to be called" in Scripture is *to be* (1 John iii. 1); so "to call" is *to make* or *cause to be* (Jer. xxxii. 23; in the original "thou hast called this evil;") he, therefore, "calleth those things which be not as if they were," who maketh those things which were not to be, and produceth that which hath a being out of that which had not, that is, out of nothing.† In Heb. xi. 3, we read "Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God." It cannot be justly questioned that the Divine declaration, by faith in which we attain to this conviction, is that contained in Gen. i. 1; here, therefore, we have the Apostolic exposition of that declaration—"The worlds were framed by the word of God"—by the commanding word. (Ps. xxxiii. 6, cxlviii. 5.) And still further to evolve and expound the idea of absolute origination, it is added, "So that the things which are seen were not made of things which do appear;" or, which amounts to the same, "Things visible were made from things not visible;" *i.e.*, not from anything pre-existing;‡ they were strictly originated by the creative fiat. Had the Apostle meant merely that the visible creation was formed from a pre-existing, invisible matter, he surely would not have made it a doctrine of faith; this is rather a doctrine of sense in antagonism to faith, and as such it has been always acceptable to a sensuous philosophy.§ We therefore conclude, with much certainty, that the material universe was created out of nothing; and that God intended, in Gen. i. 1, to declare the great truth

* British and Foreign Evangelical Review, vol. v., art. Baden Powell's Essays.

† Pearson "On the Creed," art. i.

‡ The learned John Howe puts the matter thus: "Things which are seen, *i.e.* which are, were not made of things which do appear, *i.e.* things before existing; for there is nothing at all that can be supposed to exist, but doth appear to some faculty or other, Divine or created. But they were things simply not appearing at all, and therefore not existing at all, out of which these worlds were made."

§ Harris's "Pre-Adamite Earth."

that there was a time in past eternity when it came into existence at his irresistible fiat; a truth eminently proper to stand at the head of a Divine revelation.

IV. *What errors have been propagated in the world in direct opposition to this view of creation?*

Plato, Aristotle, and nearly all the philosophers of antiquity taught that matter was self-existent and eternal. The grand argument by which this opinion was sustained is the well-known *ex nihilo nihil fit*—nothing produces nothing. While, therefore, they recognised God as the Author of the harmonious system that now exists, they believed that the matter was from eternity. In modern times, the deniers of the doctrine of absolute creation out of nothing have been either Pantheists or Atheists. *The Pantheists*, as we have shown in Chap. I., teach that God and the universe are one—that all visible objects are but fleeting modifications of a self-existent, unconscious, impersonal essence, which they call God, or Nature, or the All. There is no personal God; and therefore creation, miracle—any disturbance of the laws and methods of nature—is impossible and absurd. *The Atheists* have differed among themselves. (1.) Some maintain that the present system of the universe has continued just as it now is, in unbroken succession, from eternity. (2.) Some resort to the atomic theory of the ancients; viz., that the only self-existent principle of all things was an infinite number of atoms, which from eternity moved together in obedience to certain necessary forces, and, in their fortuitous concourse, constitute everything that exists around and within us. (3.) Others hold to an endless development of all things. According to this development theory—or, as it is sometimes called, “this law of continuity”—species was not created, it is developed. “Those distinctions which we call by the name of ‘species’ are not immutable forms stamped upon the subjects so distinguished at the first, and reproducing themselves from age to age. They are all the results of gradual change, of progressive advancement throughout incalculable ages of past duration, from the merest rudimental germ or germs up to the beautiful and noble forms which we now behold. And even this is but a lower stage from which everything is now advancing to yet higher and nobler forms of existence throughout interminable ages of future duration.”* Dr. Darwin’s name is well known as connected with this theory. But this doctrine of development has received its most perfect scientific exposition in the “Nebular Hypothesis” of La Place, a celebrated French philosopher. He taught that the earth and the system to which it belongs had arisen from the gradual condensation of a diffused vaporous nebula; “and he

* Sunday Magazine, vol. iii., pp. 170, 171. Godwin’s “Lectures on Atheism,” p. 267.

supposed that the numerous patches of thin faint light scattered over the heavens might be stars in process of formation. Suppose rotatory motion established in the thin luminous matter, gravity meanwhile drawing its ethereal particles together, and a sun of somewhat solid material might at length be formed. As it revolved rapidly, rays of light might be flung off from it at various distances, which might ultimately settle into planets, and these again might fling off similar rings, from which satellites might be evolved."* Such was this philosopher's way of explaining how the world might have come into existence without the intervention of Divine power. "But that the universe existed at first in a gaseous, diffused, nebulous state, is only an hypothesis. And the fact that the space-penetrating power of Lord Rosse's telescope has resolved many of the supposed nebulae into starry systems, requires us to keep the hypothesis still at a wide distance from the realities of science."†

It is here that the word of God steps in to rebuke the folly of human speculation, and tells us, in its very first sentence, "that *matter*, elementary or combined, aggregated only or organised, and *dependent*, *sentient*, and *intellectual beings*, have not existed from eternity, either in self-continuity or succession, but had a beginning; that their beginning took place by the all-powerful will of one Being,—the self-existent, independent, and infinite in all perfection; and that the date of that beginning is not made known."‡

V. What are the teachings of revelation and science as to the state of our globe immediately prior to the Adamic creation ?

Revelation declares that "the earth was without form, and void," etc. (Gen. i. 2.) The meaning is that it was waste and desolate, covered with water, surrounded with darkness, and utterly devoid of inhabitants and life. And "science proves that, before man appeared, the earth must have been waste and desolate; all previous forms of life destroyed and entombed; and though its strata might be completed, its whole surface was covered with mighty inundations, and its atmosphere loaded with the vapour from the seas and oceans, which such a vast volcanic eruption could not fail to send up in immense and enormous volumes, wrapping the whole surface of the planet, perhaps for years or centuries, in thick impenetrable darkness."§ But how this state of desolation and emptiness arose, whether it became so in consequence of some mighty catastrophe, or simply in obedience to God's omnific word, science cannot tell, nor has Moses declared.

* Sunday Magazine, vol. iii., p. 380.

† Dr. Harris's "Pre-Adamite Earth." Brewster's "More Worlds than One."

‡ Dr. Pye Smith. § Birks's "Bible and Modern Thought," p. 317.

VI. *What may we suppose was the length of that "one day" of which Moses speaks?*

It was long since suggested that the day thus mentioned might mean an indefinite period. And this notion has been eagerly seized by Hugh Miller and others, from a desire to show the accordance of the words of Moses with the main outlines of geological discovery; but such a meaning is forced and unnatural, and "cannot be brought into harmony with the plain and definite terms of the narrative. 'It was evening and it was morning, the first day,' or, 'evening came and morning came, one day,' are terms which can never be made to comport with the theory of indefinite periods; and especially when there follows God's resting from his works, and hallowing the seventh day as a day of Sabbatical commemorative celebration of the work of the other six. Was that, too, an indefinite period?"* It is certain that "in the fourth commandment, where the days of creation are referred to (Exod. xx. 9-11), the six days' labour and the Sabbath spoken of in the ninth and tenth verses, are literal days. By what rule of interpretation can the same word in the next verse be made to mean indefinite periods? Moreover, it seems from Gen. ii. 5, compared with Gen. i. 11, 12, that it had not rained on the earth until the third day; a fact altogether probable if the days were of twenty-four hours, but absurd if they were long

* Dr. Wardlaw's "Systematic Theology," vol. ii. p. 66.

The language of Bishop Horsley on this subject is worthy of note. "No expressions could be found in any language to describe a gradual progress of the work for six successive days, and the completion of it on the sixth, in the literal and common sense of the word day, more definite and unequivocal than those employed by Moses; and they who seek or admit figurative expositions of such expressions as these, seem to be not sufficiently aware that it is one thing to write a history, and quite another to compose riddles. The expressions in which Moses describes the days of creation, literally rendered, are these: 'When he has described the first day's work, he says,—'And there was morning, and there was evening, one day;' and in the progress of the narrative, at the end of each day's work, he counts up the days that had passed off from the beginning of the business; and to obviate all doubt what portion of time he meant to denote by the appellation of a 'day,' he describes each day of which the mention occurs as consisting of one evening and one morning. By what description could the word 'day' be more expressly limited to its literal and common meaning, as denoting that portion of time which is measured and consumed by the earth's revolution on her axis? That this revolution was performed in the same space of time in the beginning of the world as now, I would not over-confidently affirm; but we are not concerned in the resolution of that question. A day, whatever was its space, was still the same thing in nature, a portion of time measured by the same motion, divisible into the same seasons."—Sermon xxiii.

periods.”* These, and many other reasons, stated at length by Professor Hitchcock in the work from which the above extract is taken, and by Williams, in “The First Week of Time,” etc., lead us totally to reject the theory of Hugh Miller. On the supposition that geological discoveries necessitate the admission of a more remote origin and a longer existence to our globe than a few thousands of years, the true explanation lies in the first verse of Genesis, as explained before. (See Quest. II.) Why, then, should we not regard the days described by Moses as natural days? Chalmers, Buckland, Sedgwick, Dr. Kurtz, and Archdeacon Pratt, in his able pamphlet on “Scripture and Science,” and many other writers of eminence, adhere to this view, “that the days of Genesis are literal days; that the ages of geology are passed over silently in the second verse, and that the passage describes a great work of God at the close of the ‘Tertiary Period,’ by which our planet, after long ages, was finally prepared to be the habitation of man. This, I have no doubt, is the true and simple explanation.”†

VII. *What are the subjects in the history of the six days' work which Infidelity derides and scouts?*

1. IT IS OBJECTED THAT THE PRODUCTION OF LIGHT ON THE FIRST DAY IS CONTRADICTORY TO THE CREATION OF THE SUN AND MOON UPON THE FOURTH DAY. This has been the subject of sceptical derision from the days of Celsus to the present time; but the discoveries with regard to heat, combustion, electricity, galvanism, etc., show that there may be light independently of the sun. It is also now generally received that the sun itself is an opaque body, and that solar light proceeds from a luminous atmosphere by which it is surrounded. The progress of science has, therefore, neutralised the objection that light could not exist before the sun. Indeed, it has done more; it has proved the accuracy of the Mosaic language. Moses does not call the sun “*Or*, light,” but “*Maor*, a light-bearer, a place or instrument of light”—a luminary or candlestick—just what modern science has discovered it to be. Now, in the beginning God created light, and diffused a great portion of it through the various substances of the earth. This was done on the first day; but on the fourth day he caused a great portion of light to be concentrated round the sun's body, in order that henceforth the sun might become the means of illuminating and fructifying the worlds revolving around him, and that he, with other heavenly bodies, might be for signs and for seasons, etc. This is what Moses teaches; and hence, so far is the Mosaic doctrine of light from being inconsistent with science, that if Moses had wished to embody its

* Professor Hitchcock's “Religion of Geology,” p. 65.

† Birks's “Bible and Modern Thought,” p. 300.

latest discoveries, he could not have expressed himself more happily.*

2. IT IS OBJECTED THAT THE BIBLE DECLARES THE EARTH TO BE IMMOVABLE. This strange objection to Scripture cosmogony is revived in the volume of "Essays and Reviews," p. 208, the proofs being taken, however, not from Moses, but from such passages as Ps. xciii. 1, and Ps. civ. 5. According to the mode of interpretation on which this objection is based, it might be proved that the Hebrews held that a pious man was an immovable fixture. (See Prov. x. 30.) But the objection rests on simple ignorance of the Hebrew word translated "moved." This word *not* signifies, as Gesenius says, "to waver, to shake, to totter," and therefore it is applied to the feet of one in motion in Ps. xvii. 5. (See margin.) Can any one be so silly as to suppose that David prayed that his feet might be immovably fixed? The petition is that his feet might not "totter," that he might not stumble. So the meaning of the above passages is, that "the world is established, that it cannot totter;" not even in that velocity of motion with which it compasses the sun. A totter, a slip, would be of dreadful consequence to its inhabitants; but the Lord has so arranged and steadied its motions, that no *totter* is possible.†

3. IT IS OBJECTED THAT THE MOSAIC ACCOUNT OF THE "FIRMAMENT" REPRESENTS IT TO BE A PERMANENT SOLID VAULT. This was urged by Voltaire, and in recent times has been triumphantly repeated to show the supposed ignorance and gross conceptions of the Hebrew people. The objection is based on Gen. i. 6, 7; Job xxvi. 11; 2 Sam. xxii. 8; Ps. lxxviii. 23; Gen. vii. 11; and if well founded would be conclusive proof of the opposition between astronomical science and the Mosaic cosmogony. But, happily, it is the weakest of all the objections, and the most easily refuted by Scripture statement. The Hebrew word *Rakia* does not signify *vault*; it is the most general word that language could supply to signify the vast boundlessness of the heavens. It is precisely equivalent to our word "expanse," which it would be rare folly to imagine a solid and crystalline sphere. "But it is said the Hebrews believed that heaven had pillars and foundations, and that there were windows and doors in heaven, on the opening of which the rain descended. With equal reason might these wise interpreters say that the Hebrews believed that there were bottles in heaven (Job xxxviii. 37); or that the waters are bound up in a garment (Prov. xxx. 4); or that the ocean has bars and doors (Job xxxviii. 10); or that the shadow of death and the womb have doors. (Job xxxviii. 10, iii. 10.) If these are figurative, as common sense would teach, so are the windows and

* Professor A. McCaul, in "Aids to Faith," p. 211; Dr. W. Cooke's "Explanation of Scripture Difficulties," p. 16; Garbett's "God's Word Written," p. 198.

† Professor McCaul, in "Aids to Faith," p. 219.

doors of heaven. And there is evidence enough that the Hebrews knew very well that rain did not come from the celestial ocean, through windows and doors, nor yet from bottles in the heavens; but from the clouds. (Job xxxvi. 27, 28; Gen. ix. 11-17; Judges v. 4; 1 Kings xviii. 45; Prov. iii. 20.)*

4. IT IS OBJECTED THAT THE DIFFERENT RACES OF MEN COULD NOT HAVE HAD A COMMON ORIGIN, AND THEREFORE THE ACCOUNT OF THE FORMATION OF BUT ONE PAIR OF HUMAN BEINGS IS NOT CREDIBLE. It was said by Voltaire, and often repeated, that "none but blind men can doubt that the whites, negroes, Albinos, Hottentots, Laplanders, Chinese, and Americans are entirely distinct races." At the same time many of our profoundest philosophers, both among the believers and unbelievers in revelation, have strenuously maintained that there is nothing in the varieties of colour, stature, physiognomy, or conformation of men, to prove that they did not descend from the same stock. In a very elaborate article in the "*Encyclopædia Britannica*" on *Complexion*, it is proved in the most satisfactory manner, that the different colours in different inhabitants of the globe are caused by those various qualities of things, which, combined with the influence of the sun, contribute to form what we call *climate*. And the writer remarks, "Upon the whole, colour and figure may be styled habits of the body. Like other habits, they are created, not by great and sudden impressions, but by continual and almost imperceptible touches. Of habits, both of mind and body, nations are susceptible as well as individuals. They are transmitted to offspring, and augmented by inheritance. Long in growing to maturity, national features, like national manners, become fixed only after a succession of ages. They become, however, fixed at last; and if we can ascertain any effect produced by a given state of weather or of climate, it requires only repetition during a sufficient length of time to augment and impress it with a permanent character. The sanguine countenance will, for this reason, be perpetual in the highest latitudes of the temperate zone; and we shall for ever find the swarthy, the olive, the tawny, and the black, as we descend to the south. The uniformity of the effect in the same climate, and on men in a similar state of society, proves the power and certainty of the cause. And if the advocates of different human species suppose that the beneficent Deity hath created the inhabitants of the earth of different colours, because these colours are best adapted to their respective zones, it surely places his benevolence in a more advantageous light to say he has given to human nature the power of accommodating itself to every zone." Let me also refer the reader to a lecture of Rev. W. Brock, D.D., in which he argues "the Common Origin of the Human Race" from the affinity between the languages of mankind,

* Professor McCaul, in "*Aids to Faith*," pp. 220-230; Birks's "*Bible and Modern Thought*," pp. 314-316.

the resemblances in their physical organisation, the equality of their intellectual capacities, the identity of their great traditions, and the sameness in their spiritual condition.* In these various arguments we have a summary of the proof, which has never been successfully met, that all men have descended from the same first parents; or, in the words of Scripture, that "God hath made of one blood all nations of men to dwell on all the face of the earth."

VIII. *What principles ought to be borne in mind in comparing the teachings of science with the records of inspiration?*

1. That the book of nature and the book of revelation have the same Divine Author; and, when rightly interpreted, both declare the glory of God, and show forth his handiwork. There may be apparent discrepancies between them, but there can be no real contradictions; and in proportion as scientific research is prosecuted in the right spirit, and true principles of interpretation are applied to the scriptural page, will the harmony be manifested.

2. That the sacred writers speak of natural objects according to the popular mode of comprehending them. Their idioms were the idioms of their time and country. "And to infer that Scripture teaches the immobility of the earth because it speaks of sunrise or sunset, or because Joshua said, 'Sun, stand thou still,' is just as fair as to attribute the same error to the compilers of almanacs and astronomical tables, or to scientific men in their common *parlance*. If Copernicus himself had been in a similar position with that of Joshua, he would have used just the same language; and he who would try to substitute a more exact phraseology would be regarded as more of a pedant than a philosopher."

3. That the mere speculations of men, whether in the regions of science or of criticism, however learned and laborious they may be, should be received with great caution. The history of the last hundred years tells of theory after theory, propounded with the utmost confidence—first applauded, then controverted, then utterly rejected. Mere scientific hypothesis is not scientific fact, and has no authority; neither are the transcendental guesses of the human understanding or imagination entitled to be heard in judgment against the teachings of Scripture. We should allow ourselves to be influenced only by those settled results which, after severe testing, have been unanimously accepted by the competent, the sober, and the judicious.

4. That we should for ever stifle all jealousy, and silence all outcry against the steady march of physical and mental science. "No progress which science can make will ever unsettle one stone in the solid foundation on which we rest our faith in the

* This lecture is found in "Lectures to Young Men, delivered before the Young Men's Christian Association, in Exeter Hall, from Nov., 1848, to Feb., 1849."

Divinity of those oracles. Scientific investigation, carried out to the uttermost, can no more succeed in sapping, than the storms and floods of persecution have ever succeeded in shaking, the foundations of the temple of Christian truth. They shall never be moved. All will but contribute to settle and secure them."* "Let but the investigation be sufficient, and the induction honest; let observation take its farthest flight; let experiment penetrate into all the recesses of nature; let the veil of ages be lifted up from all that has been hitherto unknown, if such a course were possible, religion need not fear; Christianity is secure, and true science will always pay homage to the Divine Creator and Sovereign, 'of whom, and through whom, and to whom are all things;' and unto whom be glory for ever."†

* Dr. Wardlaw.

† Dr. J. Pye Smith.

CHAPTER VI.

MAN, HIS ORIGINAL STATE AND FALL.

I. *What was the image of God in which man was created ?*

"God is a Spirit," and therefore it could not have been in bodily lineaments that there existed a resemblance between the creature and the Creator. Nor do I think it refers to the dominion which was granted to him over this lower world. In this respect he was the vicegerent, and if the vicegerent, then, in some sense, the image of God. But it is evident that this cannot be brought into account, when we would determine in what the alleged image consisted. The image was that in which man was created, and cannot, therefore, be explained by rank or authority subsequently given.* The New Testament settles the question about the import of the image of God in those passages which contain allusions to man's first creation, when, in regeneration, the lost image is restored. (See Col. iii. 9, 10; and Eph. iv. 24.) Here the properties of the image are specified: "knowledge," "righteousness," and "true holiness;" or, in the words of Dr. Hannah: "Light in the understanding, rectitude in the will, sanctity in the purposes and affections." In this state his Maker pronounced him good; "very good," a declaration which implies the absence of all evil, and the possession of every excellence, physical, intellectual, and moral, which his nature as a man, and his condition as a free agent, could admit.†

II. *Was man in his state of original probation placed simply under a law, or also under a covenant ?*

The difference between the two is sufficiently plain. A law is

* This is the opinion of A. Clarke, Watson, Wardlaw, Hannah, and many others. But Wesley speaks about a "political image" (sermon xlv.); and Benson, Jackson, with not a few divines of learning and ability, have maintained that the dominion over the inferior creatures was an integral part of that image and likeness of God in which man was created. This view they think is supported by 1 Cor. xi. 7.

† Read Watson's "Institutes," part ii., chap. xviii.; Wardlaw's "Systematic Theology," vol. ii., chap. v.

the will of the sovereign, sanctioned by threatened punishment. A covenant is a stipulation or agreement, which, although it may have the nature and sanctions of a law, promises a reward upon certain conditions to be fulfilled by the creature, and an alternative penalty to be inflicted in case the condition fails. Now "the law under which our first parents were placed is styled in the Scriptures 'the first or old covenant,' and is commonly called by divines the covenant of works, in distinction from the new or second covenant, of which Christ is the Mediator, and which is called the covenant of grace." * The conditions of that covenant may be summed up in one word—obedience; "full obedience in every point, and this to be performed without any intermission, from the moment man became a living soul till the time of his trial should be ended." † By his faithful adherence to these conditions, he was to be continued in the possession of all his blessings, love and joy, life and immortality (this is manifestly implied in Gen. ii. 9, 17, iii. 22; Gal. iii. 12); while disobedience was to be followed by the loss of all, and by the infliction of all the evils comprised in the dreadful word "death." This was the covenant—the agreement into which the Creator entered with his sinless creature; and that man did enter willingly into this covenant will appear from the fact that the human will was in perfect unison with the Divine. He cordially obeyed the law, accepted the promises, and determined to avoid the threatened evil.

III. *How can the test to which man's subjection was put be vindicated from the scorn of Infidelity?*

The account of this matter we have in Gen. ii. 8, 9, 15, 17. ‡ It must not be supposed that this was the only rule under which he was placed. "All rational creatures are under a law which requires supreme love to God, and entire obedience to his commands." The command to abstain from eating of this tree was only made a special and decisive test of that general obedience. And we can conceive nothing more fitting.

1. The restraint reminded him that he was under a law to his Maker; that though lord of the creation, he was in subjection to the authority of God; and the continued abstinence from the prohibited fruit would be regarded as an open proclamation, in

* Dr. Dwight's "Theology." Mr. Wesley very beautifully exhibits the difference between the first and the second covenant—the covenant of works and the covenant of grace—in sermon vi.

† Wesley, sermon v.

‡ Two explanations have been given of the designation of the tree as "the tree of the knowledge of good and evil." The first, that the eating of it added the knowledge of "evil" to man's previous knowledge, which was only "good." The second, that the tree was to be the test "of good or evil;" the test by which God was to try man, and by which it would be known whether he would be good or evil.

view of heaven and earth and hell, of unquestioning obedience to the will of God. What more just than this?

2. "From the comparatively trivial character of the action prohibited, it taught the important lesson that the real guilt of sin lay in its principle, the principle of rebellion against God's will; not in the extent of the mischief done, or of the consequences arising out of it."* What more important than this?

3. It concentrated man's obedience into a single point, brought the duty which he was required to perform up to his view in the most distinct manner possible, and rendered it too intelligible to be mistaken. No room was left for doubt or debate—a matter of special importance to him, so lately brought into existence, so unversed in argumentation, acquainted only with plain facts, and under the guidance of nothing but common sense.† What more kind than this? Thus, there is no ground for the unbeliever's scorn. The prohibition has only to be examined to show forth the justice, the wisdom, and the benevolence of him who imposed it.

IV. *By what principles can we estimate the turpitude of Adam's sin?*

This subject has often been made the subject of the unhallowed burlesque of ungodly men. "How could it be," they ask, "that God should condemn man for the mere eating of an apple?" as if the sin was to be measured by the mere value of the fruit that was taken. But there cannot be a more false measure of moral turpitude.

1. The sin consisted in disobeying his Maker, revolting from his authority, and rebelling against his government. Whatever was the mode, whatever was the instrument of the rebellion, the sin was substantially the same; the same authority was denied, the same obligation broken, and of course the same guilt was thus far incurred.‡

2. The sin involved the breach of the whole moral law—the law of love under which our first parents were placed. There was *unbelief*—a principle which makes God a liar—a transfer of his confidence from God to a malignant and an apostate spirit. There was *ingratitude* and discontent with the rich provision God had made for his happiness; there was *pride*, a desire for elevation by unlawful means; there was *self-will* and insubordination to God; and there was *alienation of heart*, engendered by receiving the calumnies which the tempter cast upon God.§

3. The sin was intensely aggravated by the smallness of the temptation; for although, in one view, some perverse spirits, who

* Dr. Wardlaw's "Systematic Theology," vol. ii., p. 82.

† Dr. Dwight, sermon xxvi.

‡ Ibid.

§ Dr. Wm. Cooke's "Christian Theology."

are determined to cavil, may consider this as rendering the offence proportionately diminutive and trifling, yet in another and far juster view this ought to stamp it with the deeper malignity and guilt, inasmuch as the strength of the evil principle manifested in the commission of any sin is shown to be great in proportion as the temptation to the commission of it is small.*

4. The sin was greatly aggravated by the perfect nature they possessed. No cloud was upon the understanding. They had the power to master the appetite, and keep in subjection the otherwise mutinous inclinations of sensitive nature, and at the same time they were surrounded with motives and helps to retain their innocency. And yet, in spite of all, they dared to rebel, and thus ungratefully to requite the Author of their being and blessedness. On all right views of the character and government of God and the condition of man, that first act of human rebellion involved a combination of atrocious evils which led the way to deserved misery. And this is a consideration that ought to rescue the subject from the light and ungodly scorn with which it is often treated by the philosophers and fools of this world.

V. What was the import of the penalty annexed to the first transgression?

The penalty threatened was "death," and what this included may be gathered from the general meaning of the term as it is used in the Scriptures, and from the evils that fell on the guilty pair in the fulfilment of the ordained penalty.

1. That the threatening included the dissolution of the body is not often disputed. (Gen. iii. 19.) Driven from the tree of life, the virtues of which were probably ordained to be the natural means of preserving the body in undecaying vigour, he was now subject to the wastings of disease and the decay of age; and finally the sentence was to be executed—"Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." But, viewing the phrase *to die* in the light thrown upon the subject by the principles of the Gospel, we regard it as comprising what is technically called—

2. Spiritual death. This "consists in a separation of the soul from communion with God, who is the source of spiritual life, and is manifested by the dominion of earthly and corrupt dispositions and habits, and an entire indifference or aversion to spiritual and heavenly things." This separation from God Adam sustained in the day, the hour, he ate the forbidden fruit; and of this he gave immediate proof, presently showing by his behaviour that the love of God was extinguished in his soul, which was now "alienated from the life of God." He was now under the power of servile fear, so that he fled from the presence of the Lord. Yea, so little did he retain even of the knowledge of Him who

* Dr. Wardlaw's "Systematic Theology," vol. ii., p. 33.

fillet heaven and earth, that he endeavoured to "hide himself from the Lord God" (Gen. iii. 8); so had he lost both the knowledge and the love of God, without which the image of God could not subsist. In the room of this, he had sunk into pride and self-will, the very image of the devil; and into sensual appetites and desires, the image of the beasts that perish.*

3. But the highest sense of the term "death," in the Scripture, is the punishment of the soul in a future state, both by loss of happiness, a separation from God, and by a positive infliction of Divine wrath. (Rom. vi. 23; James i. 15.) And to this curse Adam became exposed by his fall; and nothing but an intervention of mercy, so mighty and so majestic as to satisfy the demands of justice, could save the progenitor of our race from the pangs and horrors of this "second death."†

VI. *Why was the full and immediate infliction of the penalty arrested?*

An economy of grace and restoration was at once introduced, and even before a sentence of punishment was pronounced, the revelation of a Saviour was given, and a charter of redemption was unfolded. (See Gen. iii. 15.) "The import of this prediction appears from various allusions of Scripture to have been, that the Messiah, who was in an eminent and peculiar sense 'the seed of the woman,' should, though himself bruised in the conflict, obtain a complete victory over the malice and power of Satan, and so restore those benefits to man which by sin he had lost."‡ How far this promise of mercy was understood by our first parents we are unable to determine. It was, however, sufficient to banish despair, encourage hope, and become the foundation of repentance and confidence in the Divine mercy through the inter-

* Wesley's Sermon on "The New Birth."

† "But Dr. Taylor is sure only temporal death was to be the consequence of his disobedience. 'For death is the loss of life, and must be understood according to the nature of the life to which it is opposed.' Most true; and the life to which it is here opposed, the life Adam enjoyed till lost by sin, was not only bodily life, but that principle of holiness which the Scripture terms 'the life of God.' It was also a title to eternal life. All this, therefore, he lost by sin; and that justly; for death is the true wages of sin,—death both temporal, spiritual, and eternal."—Wesley on "Original Sin." Pelagians and Socinians hold the view of Dr. Taylor, namely, that temporal death was the full amount of the curse which came upon Adam. This point is argued at length by Wesley on "Original Sin," and in sermon xv.; in Watson's "Institutes," part ii., chap. xviii.; in Wardlaw's "Systematic Theology," vol. ii., chap. xi.; and in Dwight's "Theology," sermon xxviii.

‡ Strenuous objections have been made to this view, in order to get quit of the doctrine of so early and significant a promise of a Redeemer. See those objections answered in Watson's "Institutes," part ii., chap. xviii.

vention of the Divine Redeemer. As expressive of his confidence and hope, Adam at once gave to his wife a new name—Eve, that is, *Life*—because she was to be the mother of that Living One who was destined to give life to the world.* It is evident, also, that animals were very soon offered to God in sacrifice through faith in the promise of a Saviour,† and that there was one appointed place where a visible symbol of the Divine presence was fixed, before which the humble worshipper might present himself, his offering, and his prayer.‡

VII. *Is Adam to be regarded as a mere individual, the consequences of whose conduct terminated in himself? Or is he to be regarded as the federal head and representative of mankind?*

The federal relation of Adam to his descendants is not stated in the history of the fall. But the testimony of other parts of Scripture on this subject is so explicit that all attempts to evade it have been in vain.

1. The point is proved by the parallel drawn by the Apostle between the first and second Adam—the parallel lying chiefly in this one point, that each acted a public part, standing for others, and not for himself merely—a part from which important results were to arise to those whom they are considered respectively as representing. The point of parallelism is noticed in general terms in Rom. v. 14, where Adam is called, with evident allusion to his public representative character, “the figure,” “type,” or “model” of “him that was to come;” and it is especially brought out in Rom. v. 18, 19, and 1 Cor. xv. 22, 47.

2. The point is proved by the fact that the threatenings pronounced upon the first pair have taken effect on all their posterity as well as themselves. (Read Gen. iii. 16-19.)

3. The point is proved by the fact that the Bible declares that

* This is undoubtedly the correct sense of the passage, and is defended in Dr. Smith's “Book of Prophecy,” pp. 132, 133; Dr. W. Cooke's “Theology,” etc.

† The animals, with whose skins Adam and his wife were clothed, must have been slain as sacrificial victims, since no permission was given as yet to use them for food. Hence we infer that the first promise was immediately followed with special directions for the worship of God through those offerings which were calculated to adumbrate the great sacrifice, which, in the fulness of time, was to be offered by the promised Seed.

‡ This visible symbol of the Divine presence, or shekinah, was appropriately called “the presence of the Lord.” (Gen. iv. 16.) It was doubtless the same with that radiant flame which turned every way, or which revolved upon itself (Gen. iii. 24), and was like the glory which afterwards filled the temple. The sacrifices of Cain and Abel were probably offered before this celestial brightness; for when Cain was rejected, it is said that he “departed from the presence of the Lord.”

sin, death, and all penal evils, came into the world through Adam. (Rom. v. 12, 16, 17, 18, 19, 21; 1 Cor. xv. 22.)*

VIII. How can the righteousness and fairness of such a federal relation be vindicated?

If it be proved that it existed by the appointment of God, we are sure of the justice of the arrangement, whether it be manifest to our reason or not. "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" But since men have wickedly impeached the equity of the Divine procedure in this matter, we may reverently consider facts which, even to our beclouded understandings, prove him to have acted under the direction of his infinite rectitude and love.

1. "Although I am far from intending to lay it down as a position that the procedure of the infinitely just God is to be vindicated by any analogy to the procedure of men, yet it may not be undeserving of notice that, even amongst men, it is no uncommon thing, when there is good on the one hand and evil on the other, for covenants or agreements to be entered into which involve a man's posterity even to the latest generations. One man may offer to another certain benefits, to be perpetually secured, on certain prescribed and accepted conditions, to himself and his children, while all are to be forfeited by both himself and them, and certain opposite evils incurred, on his failing to fulfil the stipulated conditions. No one, on such failure, would feel entitled to complain of the offerer; nay, his generosity might, and might justly, be commended, however much the infatuation of the originally engaging party might be the object of wonder and condemnation."

2. The connection between Adam and his posterity is in perfect harmony with the analogy of God's procedure in his providence. Instances often occur in which both good and evil arise to posterity from the conduct of parents; consequences result, both bodily and mental, moral and physical, affecting health and character and situation. It is vain to say that this can be accounted for from natural causes; for to speak of natural causes as operating without God's permission or concurrent will is absolute Atheism. He could, but does not, prevent the results which arise to children from the conduct of their parents. And if we say there is unrighteousness in the relation which Adam sustained to his posterity, we must also assert that the whole course of Providence has been, and is in this respect, a series of unrighteous dealings. But who would dare thus to charge God foolishly?

3. The connection between Adam and his posterity must always be considered in relation to both sides of the alternative. When men complain of the arrangement which made the state of all

* Read Wesley on "Original Sin;" Watson's "Theological Institutes," part ii., chap. xviii.; Wardlaw's "Systematic Theology," vol. ii., chap. xii.

mankind to depend on Adam, they invariably fix on that aspect of the case which regards man as guilty, and as involved through the original offence in misery and ruin and death, overlooking entirely the opposite blessedness and life which would for ever have been insured to Adam and his descendants had he stood.* Of this side of the case there is no complaint, and yet the principle is the same in both.

4. Nor should the federal union between Adam and his posterity be viewed apart from the evangelical provision of mercy which was concurrent with it, and which included, in like manner, both him and the whole race of men. The redemption of man by Christ was not an after-thought, brought in by man's apostasy; it was a provision; and when Adam fell, involving his race in sorrow, pain, and death, mercy revealed "the second Adam, through whom all might recover whatever they had lost through the first; nay, and recover it with unspeakable gain; since every additional temptation they feel, by that corruption of their nature which is antecedent to their choice, will, if conquered by grace, be a means of adding to that 'exceeding and eternal weight of glory.' This single consideration totally removes all reflections on the Divine justice or mercy, in making the state of all mankind so dependent on the behaviour of their common parent; for not one child of man finally loses thereby, unless by his own choice; and every one who receives 'the grace of God in Christ' will be an unspeakable gainer. Who, then, has any reason to complain, even of having a nature inclined to evil? seeing, the more opportunities he has of fighting, the more of conquering; and seeing, the greater is the difficulty of obtaining the victory, the brighter is the crown of glory."†

IX. *What is original sin?*

The term "original sin" is not to be found in Scripture, and appears to have been first introduced by St. Augustine in his controversy with the Pelagians. It is sometimes called "birth sin." In the Articles of the Church of England it is thus defined: "Original sin is the fault and corruption of every man, whereby man is very far gone from original righteousness, and is of his own nature inclined to evil, so that the flesh lusteth always contrary to the Spirit; and, therefore, in every person born into this world, it deserveth God's wrath and damnation." More briefly and fully it is defined by Dr. Hannah, as "the transmission of hereditary guilt and depravity to all the natural progeny of the first sinning pair."

The subject thus divides itself into two branches: original or hereditary guilt, and original or hereditary depravity.

* [Many divines do not believe Adam to have been immortal before he fell.]

† Wesley on "Original Sin," part iii., sec. vi.; Wardlaw's "Systematic Theology," vol. ii., chap. x.

X. What are the principal heresies with which we are brought into contact in considering this subject?

1. PELAGIANISM. This system derived its name from Pelagius, a British monk, who, at the commencement of the fifth century, went to Rome, Jerusalem, and other places, propagating his opinions, and gaining disciples. He taught that what was commonly believed respecting the corruption of human nature as derived from our first parents was not true; that the consequences of Adam's sin were confined to his own person; that men are now born as pure and innocent as Adam was when God created him, but that, being fallible, they fall into sin through the force of example; that death is natural to our physical system, and is in no sense the penal consequence of sin; and that men can, by their own power, renovate themselves, and reach the highest degree of holiness. Augustine, the celebrated Bishop of Hippo, was the most prominent and successful opponent of this heresy. It was strongly condemned by various councils; the Roman Emperor issued an edict, banishing its leaders from his dominions, and thus the evil was arrested.*

2. SOCINIANISM, denying the atonement of Christ, rejects also the doctrine of original sin, and maintains substantially the same views concerning human nature as those taught by Pelagius.

3. One of the most learned and powerful defenders of the Pelagian heresy in modern times was *Dr. John Taylor*, of Norwich, a Dissenter, who flourished in the first half of the last century. He was a thorough Arian, well acquainted with the Hebrew and Greek Scriptures, "a man of unusually strong understanding, joined with no small liveliness of imagination. He had likewise an admirable command of temper, and wrote in a smooth and pleasing, yet a manly and nervous style." All these talents he exerted to the uttermost for the defence of the purity and innocence of human nature, and all the cognate errors connected with that theory. Jonathan Edwards's *Work* on "Original Sin" was in refutation of Dr. Taylor's views; and so was the masterly treatise of Mr. John Wesley, entitled "The

* At a later period, a system of doctrine was advanced, to which the name of Semi-Pelagianism was given. It embraced the Pelagian tenets with various modifications. This system obtained extensive patronage, for it could not be so easily arrested as the other.

It has been common in modern times for the zealous advocates of absolute predestination to apply the term Pelagian to those who hold general redemption and the conditionality of the evangelical covenant, whereas nothing can be more unjust. No man was more orthodox on these points than the great Arminius; but some who entered into his labours and bore his name, after his decease, departed from the truth. Among others we may mention Curcellæus, Limborch, and Le Clerk, as men whose leanings towards the Pelagian heresy are as obvious as they are to be lamented.

Doctrine of Original Sin, according to Scripture, Reason, and Experience," which, next to his "Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion," is the largest and most elaborate of all his original publications.

Let us consider the doctrine of "Original Sin" in the first of its two branches—"Original Guilt," or the connection of the posterity of Adam with the "Guilt of the First Sin."

XI. *What is the meaning of the word "guilt" as used in this controversy?*

The word is sometimes employed to express *personal culpability*; and Augustine, and others in more modern times, have gone so far as to apply the term in this sense, teaching that, through the federal union of Adam with his posterity, what was done by him is to be considered as having been done by them, each and all of them, in him; a notion which alike contradicts our personal identity, our moral consciousness, and the principles of the Divine government revealed to us in the Holy Scriptures. The word "guilt" is also employed to express answerableness in the law or *exposure to punishment*. In this sense the word is used Matt. xxvi. 66, and must be so understood in relation to this subject—an obligation to suffer punishment for the sin of our first parents. The doctrine, therefore, may be thus stated: "That the sin of Adam, who stood as the representative of his posterity, involved the whole race of mankind in his sentence of condemnation; subjecting them, with himself, to the penal consequences of his fall."

XII. *What is the Scripture testimony by which this doctrine is supported?*

Read carefully Rom. v. 12-21, the sum of which passage is this, that by one man's disobedience, his posterity are "made," *καταρτισθέντες*, constituted, accounted, dealt with, as "sinners," "judgment" having come upon them all to "condemnation." (See also Eph. ii. 3.)

XIII. *Do not the facts of human history corroborate the testimony of Scripture?*

They do; for (1.) all men, without one solitary exception, are subject to the natural and moral evils which resulted from Adam's apostasy. Adam, by his sin, was exposed to the calamities and sorrows of this life, to temporal death, and to eternal ruin. And all his posterity have to endure the same pain, toil, disappointment, anxiety, and bodily death. This is a fact, independent of the statements of the Bible; and since it is allowed that we thus suffer for Adam's sin, and *that* by the sentence of God—is not the consequence evidence that we are, "by nature, children of wrath"? (2.) The other fact is, that infants, as well as adults,

are subject to sufferings the most severe, diversified, and protracted, which not unfrequently result in death. They have "not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression"—i.e., they have not been guilty of actual, personal sin; must they not, then, be regarded as implicated in the "guilt" of the original head? as suffering and dying as a part of the race for which he stood the representative?

XIV. Is such a consequence of the defection of our first parents in accordance with the ordinary proceedings of the Divine government?

It is; for though that government never makes one man accountable for the sins of another, it yet permits the effects of one man's transgressions to involve sufferings and woes upon others. Thus, the prodigal entails want and disgrace upon his offspring; the licentious parent—the victim of intemperance and lust—not only vitiates his own constitution, but transmits disease and wretchedness to his posterity. A wicked ruler sometimes plunges whole nations into misery, and the consequences are felt for generations. So a man, in violating the laws of his country, may involve his posterity in disgrace and civil penalties. If he commit treason, his estate is taken from him, and his children become disinherited. All such facts illustrate the penal consequences of our connection with the first transgressor.

XV. Does not this doctrine shut up our race to absolute despair?

It would if considered in itself. But the same scripture which tells us that "by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation," tells us also that Christ, who made himself the federal head of fallen men, has, by his vicarious obedience to death, procured "the free gift," which "came upon all men unto justification of life." (Rom. v. 18.) This "free gift," "the gift by grace," refers to the whole benefit given by the abounding grace of God through the obedience of Christ. And this is pronounced to be co-extensive with the curse. It follows, therefore, that all children dying in infancy are adjudged to life. They are not, indeed, born justified and regenerate; but they are born under "the free gift;" and since they are incapable of a voluntary rejection of it, they receive the full benefit, which effectually cures the spiritual death and corrupt tendency of their nature, and then passes to its issue, "justification of life." In the case of adults, "the free gift" comes upon them, in its effects, very largely, independently of anything they do. They are favoured with the influences of the Holy Spirit, the means of grace, and the offers of mercy. In a word, "justification of life" is offered to them, it is pressed upon them; they are clearly instructed in the means by which, even considered as *personal* offenders, they may obtain it. If they yield and embrace the

offer, then the end, for which "the free gift came" upon them is attained; and they fail of it only by rejecting it.* In reference to the heathen, if it be asked to what extent and with what results they have received "the gift by grace which is by one man," we answer, God knoweth. That they do receive it is certain (Rom. ii. 15); and "in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ," they will be dealt with righteously according to the circumstances in which they have been placed.

Let us consider the second branch of "Original Sin;" namely, original or innate depravity.

The doctrine is, "that the whole race, descending by ordinary generation from the fallen first progenitors, inherit from them a morally tainted and vitiated nature; a nature in which there is no inclination to do anything truly good, but which, as soon as its dispositions or tendencies begin to unfold themselves, shows itself evil in the production of evil thoughts, words, and actions."

XVI. *Is not this to be considered as forming part of the penal consequence of Adam's sin?*

It is; for one part of the curse threatened to disobedience, as we have seen, was death—death spiritual—that moral state which arises from a separation of the soul from God, the great source of spiritual life. The sin of Adam incurred this penalty, and the penalty was inflicted. God executed to the full his threatening. He withdrew from the soul of Adam. The spiritual life of that soul sank by inevitable consequence, and our first parent fell under the full power of spiritual death—a mere rational animal, devoid of spiritual light and life, devoid of holy affections and heavenly desires, a prey to guilt and remorse, and a victim to a legion of unholy passions and propensities. And since Adam was a public person, a representative, this state of death, of separation from God, has passed on to his descendants, who, in their natural state, are therefore said to be "dead in trespasses and sins," aliens from God, and therefore filled with evil. This is by some divines called, with great aptness, a "depravation arising from a deprivation." And it is of great importance that this point be well understood and carefully maintained; inasmuch as we are sometimes charged with teaching that the corruption of our nature arises from some evil quality infused or implanted by some positive cause or influence. It is said, with some show of reason, that such teaching makes God directly the author of sin. But no such teaching can be justly laid to our charge. We maintain that the depravity of the heart of man arises, not from the infusion of evil into the nature of man by God, but from that separation of man from God, that extinction of spiritual life,

* See Watson's "Institutes," part ii., chap. xviii.

which was effected by sin, and the consequent and necessary corruption of man's moral nature. "Hereditary depravity," therefore, arises from "hereditary guilt."*

XVII. What proof have we that human nature is morally depraved?

1. It is directly affirmed in such passages as these: Gen. viii. 21; Job xv. 16; Prov. xxii. 15; Eccles. ix. 3; Jer. xvii. 9; Matt. xv. 19; Rom. viii. 5-9; Gal. v. 17-21; 1 John v. 19.

2. It is clearly implied in those passages which affirm the universal need of regeneration. (See especially John iii. 3.) The new birth is a spiritual and moral change, a change of heart, a change of principle and disposition. And, if it be so that "a man," *i.e.* any man, any one of the entire race, stands in need, not of reformation only, but of entire renovation, does it not follow that human nature is naturally, radically, utterly degenerate?

3. It is proved by the conduct of children as soon as they are capable of moral action. (Ps. lviii. 3; Prov. xxii. 15.) No child unspotted by sin, except the "child born" for our redemption, is ever mentioned in the records of history. And among the thousands of children whom we have known, have we ever seen *one* whom we could conscientiously pronounce to be free from evil dispositions, evil affections, and evil conduct? Their education may have been the best, and the example set before them the purest, but pride, anger, stubbornness, self-will, etc., in varying degrees, attest the existence of a natural inherent tendency to evil.

4. It is proved by the mighty and continued struggle that has to be maintained where men determine to renounce evil and to walk with God. See how that struggle is described in Gal. v. 17, but especially in Rom. vii. 15-24. It matters not that a man may have the help of godly companionship and of religious ordinances; he yet finds that the greatest watchfulness, the most earnest prayer, and the most thorough decision are requisite to the successful cultivation of the principles and habits of holiness. Who can account for this, except on the principle that man *is* by nature corrupt and sinful, averse to that which is good, and prone to that which is evil?

XVIII. Is this depravity of human nature universal in its prevalence?

1. This is affirmed in Ps. xiv. 2, 3, liii. 1, 3; Isa. liii. 6; Rom. iii. 9-12; 2 Cor. v. 14; Eph. ii. 2, 3; 1 John v. 19.

2. It is confirmed by the history of our race, which is little else but a continuous record of the licentious workings of human de-

* This doctrine is clearly set forth in Watson's "Institutes," part ii., chap. xviii.; by Edwards, "On Original Sin," part iv., chap. ii.; by Wardlaw, in his "Systematic Theology," and a host of theologians.

pravity,—of lust, pride, malice, selfishness, and contempt of God. Everywhere we see mankind alienated from their Maker. The laws, the writings, the conversations, the very religions of the world prove that enmity to God, and rebellion against his government, are the characteristic marks, not of any individual, not of any particular people, but of universal man, in every age and every part of the world.

XIX. Is this depravity of human nature total in its influence ?

Let the question be understood. I do not mean to ask, is human nature in every instance as thoroughly depraved as it is possible for it to become ? Nor do I ask, has every man a disposition inclined to every form of sin ? To these questions a negative answer would immediately be given. The question is, has the contagion spread itself through the entire man ? Has it touched and vitiated every power and every faculty, “spirit, soul, and body,” leaving no part pure ? And this the Scriptures directly assert in the fullest manner. (See Gen. vi. 5 ; Rom. vii. 18.)

XX. Is this depravity received by hereditary transmission from Adam ?

In plainest terms, it is referred to Adam’s apostasy as its origin. (Rom. v. 12, 19.) “He was not only the first that sinned, but in consequence, and as the effect of his having sinned, sin or sinfulness was derived from him to the race of mankind. They received from him the infection.” Hence, we see the meaning of Gen. v. 3. “Adam begat a son in his own likeness, after his image ;” not in the image of God, in which himself was created, but “in his own likeness,” depraved and sinful in his nature. From that time, every one born into the world has inherited this innate corruption. This view evidently formed part of patriarchal theology, and was adopted by Zophar (Job xi. 12) ; by Job (xiv. 4) ; by Eliphaz (xv. 14) ; and by Bildad (xxv. 4). The same doctrine was announced by David (Ps. li. 5, lvii. 3) ; and was confirmed by the Saviour’s declaration (John iii. 6), in which he teaches that the fleshly character, or what St. Paul calls “the carnal mind,” is inseparably connected with the birth of man. Thus moral depravity is natural and hereditary, a part of man’s moral constitution from his birth.

XXI. If men are thus naturally and totally depraved, what shall be said of the apparent virtues and excellences that we see amongst unconverted men ?

We cannot admit that they disprove the statements of the Bible as to the ruined and degenerate state of man.

1. “Many of the so-called virtues are but vices in disguise ; as when courage, patriotism, continence, and beneficence spring from pride, ambition, selfishness, or other corrupt motives.

2. "Generally these apparent excellences are associated with other qualities, which convict the heart as corrupt before God. The chastity of Lucretia was connected with the sin of suicide; the fidelity of Regulus with implacable enmity to Carthage; the temperance of Cato with envy, parsimony, and cruelty; the generosity of Fabricius with military ambition; and the wisdom and virtue of Socrates ended in an act of idolatry."*

3. "It is a fact, too, which cannot be denied, that men have constitutional evil tendencies; some are more powerfully bent to one vice, some to another. Whether it results from a different constitution of the mind that the general corruption should act more powerfully in one direction in this man, and in another in that, or from the temperament of the body, or from some law impressed by God upon a sinful nature, such is the fact; and it gives a reason for the existence of much negative virtue in society."†

4. Nor should it be forgotten that in every unrenewed man, beneath much which we confess to be lovely and of good report, there lurks a heart altogether indisposed to yield itself up to its Maker, and fully determined to follow its own bent, and obey its own impulse; and when men follow a natural bent, and are not actuated by a principle of devotedness to God, it makes no difference what the bent is—whether it be turned towards things that procure the applause of society, or towards those which are visited with its censure, it equally coincides with that innate depravity which is the result of the fall, and therefore brings them all under one and the same emphatic condemnation; they are "in the flesh," and "cannot please God." (Rom. viii. 8.)

5. And let it be also remembered that though men may be unregenerate, they are not left under the full, uncontrollable power of depravity. Every man is interested in the benefits procured by the death of Christ, and is favoured with a measure of the Holy Spirit; and that his gracious influence should so far operate, and so far be yielded to, as to produce some holy fruit, is only what we might rationally expect. If, therefore, there is found in him "some good thing towards the Lord God of Israel," and something of moral excellence in his dealings with men, this is the effect of grace, not of nature; it is to be attributed to the controlling influence of the Holy Spirit, to his incipient workings in the heart. He is teaching, striving, and convincing, for the purpose of bringing the heart in penitence and faith to Christ; and if not "resisted," "grieved," "vexed," the issue will be a "death unto sin, and a new birth unto righteousness." "But in most cases this struggle, this striving with man, this standing betwixt him and death, cannot fail to correct and prevent much evil, to bring into existence some 'goodness,' though it may be as 'the morning cloud and the early dew,' and to produce civil and social

* Dr. Wm. Cooke.

† Watson.

virtues, none of which, however, are to be placed to the account of nature.”*

The subject of this chapter has been as fruitful of controversy as any within the compass of theology. In England the first man of eminence who excited general attention by writing against the orthodox view of “Original Sin,” was Dr. Jeremy Taylor, who flourished in the first half of the seventeenth century. He was a man of vast erudition, of a rich and eloquent imagination, a voluminous writer, and a high churchman. His doctrine was attacked with superior ability and effect by Dr. Jeanes, a Puritan minister. About the same time Anthony Burgess published a folio volume on “Original Sin,” in which he “asserted and vindicated” that doctrine “against the old and new adversaries thereof.” It is now scarce and dear, but it is a storehouse of information on the subject of which it treats. This is the largest work on “Original Sin” that ever appeared in English. In the early part of the eighteenth century there was a great decay of piety among the English Dissenters, connected with a sad defection from the creed of their Puritan and Nonconformist ancestors. Various attempts were made to resist these pernicious innovations in doctrine; and among others who wrote in defence of original sin was Dr. David Jennings, the fellow-labourer of Dr. Doddridge. He was the author of a very able tract on the subject; but as it was published anonymously it is not now generally known. But the most distinguished writer on the occasion was Dr. Watts, who published “The Ruin and Recovery of Man.” It is an eloquent and an argumentative work, written in a tone of great candour and moderation. It contains, however, some peculiar opinions, indicative of infirmity of judgment. He thinks that brute creatures have not the same sensations of pain that men have, and that the children of the ungodly are annihilated. These works were followed, as we have before stated, by Mr. Wesley’s “Treatise on Original Sin,” in answer to Dr. John Taylor. It is replete with argument, clear, forcible, and convincing. Mr. Samuel Hebdon and President Edwards also wrote against Taylor with great zeal and ability. Mr. Fletcher’s “Appeal,” which relates to the same subject, is perhaps the most finished of all his writings. On the question of Hereditary Depravity it is perhaps the most useful treatise in the English language. Mr. Holden’s book on the Fall of Man is not a treatise on original sin, but a defence of the literal interpretation of the Mosaic account of the transactions which took place in the garden of Eden, in opposition to those Rationalists and Neologists, who would resolve the whole into allegory and fable. Every man who aspires to proficiency in theological knowledge should read this able volume.†

* Rev. R. Watson; see also Mercein’s “Natural Goodness.”

† Rev. T. Jackson’s MS. Lectures.

CHAPTER VII.

THE ATONEMENT.

I. *In what light should we regard the death of Christ ?*

The Scriptures teach that "the death of Christ was vicarious and propitiatory; and that by it a satisfaction was offered to the Divine justice for the transgressions of men, in consideration of which, pardon and salvation are offered to them in the Gospel through faith." The following passages are a mere specimen of those that might be selected to show how the doctrine of atonement, as thus explained, pervades the whole of the inspired volume: Isa. liii. 5, 6, 7, 12; Matt. xx. 28, xxvi. 28; John i. 29, vi. 51; Rom. v. 6-9; Gal. i. 4, iii. 13; Eph. i. 7; 1 Tim. ii. 6; Heb. ix. 26, 14, vii. 27; 2 Cor. v. 21; 1 Pet. ii. 24, iii. 18; 1 John i. 7, ii. 2; Rev. i. 5, 6, v. 9. If such passages as these do not convey the ideas of substitution and atonement, is it possible by human language to convey these ideas at all? What other words and phrases would we select, if it were our special desire to express them more distinctly?

II. *What are the views adopted by those who deny the orthodox doctrine of the vicarious sacrifice of Christ ?*

1. THE SOCINIAN VIEW is, that the death of Christ, like that of any other martyred prophet, was a sealing of his testimony with his blood; that is, (for the phrase can mean no more,) an attestation of his sincerity in the claims he had advanced, and the doctrines he had delivered to men. According to this view, his *dying for our sins* means simply that it is by the doctrine which his death attested that we obtain forgiveness of our sins, and that his death was thus eminently for our benefit. They add to this, that in his sufferings and death he left us an example of fidelity, patience, meekness, etc.; and that we are saved by his death, inasmuch as that it is by the moral influence which his benevolent and self-denying example exerts upon our hearts that our hostility is subdued, and we are reconciled to God. It should be a sufficient answer to this theory that the Apostles, in writing of Christ's death, never refer to it as a confirmation of doctrine, and never, either in this manner or as an example of virtue, connect it with the salvation of man. The whole system is perfectly gratuitous, without the least shadow of foundation in the Book of God.

Somewhat different from this is—

2. DR. JOHN TAYLOR'S VIEW, as set forth in his "Key to the Apostolic Writings," and his "Scripture Doctrine of Atonement." He teaches that "the end of Christ's coming into the world was to do the will of God—to perform solid, substantial obedience; and that it was his righteous, kind, and benevolent actions, his obedient death, or the sacrifice of his love and obedience, which made atonement for the sins of the world; so far, and in this sense, that God, on account of his goodness or perfect obedience so highly pleasing to him, thought fit to grant unto mankind, whom he might in strict justice have destroyed for their wickedness, the forgiveness of sin." This scheme divests the death and blood of Christ of everything properly sacrificial and propitiatory, and resolves all that is taught in the New Testament on that subject into symbol, figure, and allusion. It is a melancholy illustration of that artifice by which the terms of Divine revelation are deprived of their appropriate meaning, and are modelled so as to fall in with the theories of those who are more anxious that the Bible should speak their language than that they should speak the language of the Bible. We need not shrink from understanding Scripture terms in their plain and proper import when they represent the death of Christ as an atonement or propitiation for sin. If the unnumbered passages in which these terms are found are to be resolved into mere figures of speech, the Bible is the most confounding and misleading book in the world.

We must also refer to what may be called—

3. THE BROAD CHURCH VIEW, as advocated by Professor Maurice, Rev. F. W. Robertson, and others of that school. They admit that the death of Christ was a sacrifice, but only a sacrifice of self-will—*that* self-will which is the root of all evil in man.* His endurance of punishment was his perfect willingness

* Mr. Maurice's words are these: "The Gospel shows him who is one with God and one with man, perfectly giving up that self-will which had been the cause of all men's crimes, and all their misery."

I have mentioned the name of Mr. Robertson in connection with this defective teaching, and it is greatly to be deplored that a man whose sermons are so attractive, and have obtained so large a circulation, should be the advocate of views so inadequate and unscriptural on the subject of the atonement. His views are thus propounded by an able writer in the "London Review," No. xxxiii.: "Christ was the eternal idea or type of humanity 'the reality of human nature.' He was representative man. Whatever he did during his incarnation was done by us in him. In this sense he stood in the place of us all; and recognising the law of sacrifice as the great law of being, by his absolute submission to the will of the Father—a submission which, because it was perfect, involved the necessity of suffering to death,—he grappled with and vanquished the evil which tyrannised over our nature, and made us virtually partakers of his triumph. . . . He was our sacrifice, not because he

that the loving God's wrath against the unlovely should continue to work on among men, until all unloveliness disappears; and that he, becoming one of them, should not be specially exempt. Hence sacrifice in Christ and sacrifice in man is one and the same thing, viz., the abandonment of self-will, the adoption of the Divine. The idea of his expiating guilt by making himself a true and proper sacrifice of atonement is denounced; and, in fact, neither the obedience which he renders, nor the cross which he bears, is, in any sense whatever, the procuring cause of man's redemption.*

III. *By what line of argument can we prove the necessity of an atonement?*

By this: God is the moral governor of the universe. He has called into existence creatures, who are, by the constitution of their nature, fit subjects for moral government. He has given to them a law—"a copy of his own eternal mind, a transcript of his own Divine nature." That law is enforced by penal sanction: "Cursed is every one that continueth not," etc. (Gal. iii. 10.) "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." (Ezek. xviii. 4.) They have broken that law; and are, therefore, brought under his judicial displeasure (Ps. v. 4, 5, vii. 11; John iii. 36); and threatened with "everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power." (Ps. ix. 17, xi. 6;

died on the cross, but because his entire self-surrender as 'the realised idea of our humanity, the idea of man created,' represents the sacrifice of us all in the like submission of ourselves to God. Not his death, not his blood-shedding, was the sacrifice for sin. It was his entire devoting of himself to the Father's will. God was satisfied with the offering of Christ, because 'for the first time he saw human nature a copy of the Divine nature, the will of man the Son perfectly coincident with the will of God the Father.' And this work of Christ was the work of humanity. In Christ thus made perfect, God 'saw humanity submitted to the law of self-sacrifice,' and 'in the light of that idea he beholds us as perfect, and is satisfied.' Now against all this we most earnestly protest. The New Testament knows nothing of Christ as 'the idea of humanity,' and mankind as 'atoned' to God in him in the sense here intended. It is true it speaks of him as our substitute, and it represents men as dying with him, buried with him, risen and alive with him. But there is not the smallest evidence that any such mystical blending of our personality with his personality, as the Platonising view supposes, was ever dreamt of by the sacred writers; and, what is absolutely fatal to its pretensions, while there is no one passage in which the blessings of salvation are connected with human nature as such, they are invariably described as flowing to men from the active grace of the Holy Ghost, and as the immediate result of a personal faith in Christ. It is not redeemed man, as such, that dies with Christ and lives in him; but redeemed man repenting towards God and believing in his Son."

* Dr. Candlish's examination of Maurice's "Theological Essays."

Mal. iv. 1; Matt. iii. 12; Rom. i. 18; 2 Thess. i. 7-9.) All the attributes of God—not his holiness and justice and truth alone, but even his goodness (considered as embracing and providing for the general well-being of the universe)—require that the penalty should be executed. Not to exact the penalty would be to repeal the law, to reduce its sanction to an empty threat unworthy the veracity of God, and to lower his government in the eyes of all the intelligent universe. *Men may repent*, but this produces no change in their legal relation to the God whom they have offended. They are offenders still, are equally guilty of all for which they stand charged; and there is nothing in their penitence which would make it morally right and fit in the Supreme Being to forgive their offences against his government. *They may amend their lives*; but present obedience can only fulfil present obligation; it can have no retrospective influence, nor in any way cancel the offences of former years. If God is to extend forgiveness to the guilty, it must be in a way that will satisfy the claims of infinite justice, and thus maintain in their full dignity, free from every charge of imperfection and mutability, the character of the Governor, the rectitude of his administration, and the sanction of his law. There is, therefore, no hope for sinful man unless it can be found in the atonement of Christ. There is present to him no method of salvation but by repentance and reformation, and he must cover his face in despair, and go down to the darkness of hell without possibility of escape.

IV. *In what way is the need met by the death of the Lord Jesus?*

He entered into a covenant with the Father to become the surety and substitute of the guilty—to bear the curse of the law on their behalf—to die the just for the unjust. In order to this, it was necessary that he should possess a truly human and mortal nature, and that, principally, that he might be made subject to a penal death. At the same time, he must be free from every sort of taint or depravity, otherwise his suffering would be for himself exclusively, and even to himself could be of no judicial advantage. He must also be independent of all the obligation under which every creature is laid, else the benefit of his suffering will be confined to himself. Now, all these qualifications were found in the person of Christ. He was really and essentially God; but for the suffering of death he was “born of a woman” (Gal. iv. 4); was “made flesh, and dwelt among us” (John i. 14; Heb. ii. 14); and yet, while assuming our humanity, he provided for its freedom from hereditary taint. (Luke i. 35.) As a Divine Being, he was also perfectly independent of all extrinsic obligation, and whatever he did resulted from his spontaneous benevolence towards man. (John x. 17, 18.) The justice of God could make no exception to such a victim. He accordingly “gave himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to

God." (Eph. v. 2.) The accomplishment of his work was a passion with him, and he represents himself as in pain till he should have fulfilled the design of his love. (Luke xii. 50.) When the awful scene of his sufferings was immediately before him, he evidenced the same free consent to be the victim for our transgressions. (John xii. 27, 28.) Amidst inconceivable opposition and crowds of unspeakable horrors, this grand principle upheld him till he hung upon the cross. There, for our sakes, "it pleased the Lord to bruise him." *He* made "his soul an offering for sin." (Isa. liii.) "In inflicting the sentence against transgression on the voluntary and all-sufficient Surety, Jehovah, while he clears the sinner, does not clear his sins; although clothed with the thunders of vindictive justice against transgression, he wears to the transgressor the smile of reconciliation and peace; he dispenses the blessings of mercy from the throne of his holiness; and while exercising grace to the guilty, he appears in the character—equally lovely and venerable—of 'the sinner's friend and sin's eternal foe.' In this way, then, all the ends of *public justice* are fully answered. The law retains its complete, unmitigated perfection; is 'magnified and made honourable;' the dignity and authority of the government are maintained and even elevated; all the perfections of Deity are gloriously illustrated and exhibited in sublime harmony; while the riches of mercy are displayed for the encouragement of sinners to return to God." *

V. *Is there any objection to the use of the word "satisfaction," as applied to this subject?*

Objections are sometimes alleged against the use of this word, but, as appears to us, without reason. As used by orthodox writers, it is clearly synonymous with the word atonement, and may be thus explained: "The death of Christ *satisfied* Divine justice, in that our sins deserved death; but as Christ was both God and man, and perfectly righteous, there was an infinite value and merit in his death; through which, as undergone for our sakes and in our stead, Almighty God exercises his mercy in the forgiveness of sins, consistently with his justice and holiness." †

* Dr. Wardlaw's "Discourses on the Socinian Controversy," disc. vii. It has sometimes been said by theologians that we know not the *vinculum* or bond of connection between the sufferings of Christ and the pardon of sin; this, therefore, they place among the mysteries of religion. But this appears to arise from obscure views of the atonement, for the *vinculum*, or connection of those sufferings with our pardon, appears to be matter of express revelation. It is declared that the death of Christ was "a demonstration of the righteousness of God," of his righteous character and his just administration, and therefore allowed the exercise of mercy without impeachment of justice, or any repeal or relaxation of the law. Watson's "Institutes," part ii., chap. xx.

† Wesleyan Catechism.

VI. *What is the exact meaning of the word atonement?*

The word atonement is pure English, and literally signifies to be *at one*. As used in theology, it refers to the death of our Lord Jesus as the means by which God and man become *one*—restored to a state of friendly relationship. The word is often found in the Old Testament—the Hebrew word *kaphar*, of which it is a translation, signifying primarily “to cover,” “to over-spread;” it comes, however, in the secondary sense, to signify *to atone, to appease, to pacify, to procure favour*, because the effect of these is to cover, or, in Scripture meaning, to remit offences. In this secondary sense it is used in such passages as the following: Gen. xxxii. 20; Prov. xvi. 14; Ezek. xvi. 63; Numb. xvi. 46, 47. In accordance with this meaning of the word, the Septuagint renders it by *εξilasκω*, “to appease,” “to make propitious,” the very word which is employed in the New Testament with regard to the object of the Saviour’s death (Heb. ii. 17); and which, as a noun (*λασμος*), occurs in 1 John ii. 2, iv. 10.

VII. *In speaking of the death of Christ as an atonement for sin, are there not certain popular errors that we must carefully avoid?*

There are. The following must be prominently mentioned:—

1. THAT CHRIST’S DEATH IS A LITERAL PAYMENT OF A DEBT. This is one of those illustrative figures frequently used by Antinomian writers, which, while it suits in some points, will not bear close application in others without leading into pernicious error. That sins are compared to debts is true, and the comparison is natural. We owe obedience to God, which we have failed to render, and every sin is an accumulation of unpaid debt. But the cancelling of a debt of judicial obligation is very different from the payment of a debt of money. A debt of property may be paid by ourselves or by another, and all future obligation is cancelled, but we never can pay up obedience which we have failed to render. The obedience of one moment can only stand for itself, and cannot cover the debt incurred by the disobedience of another moment. Moreover, a debt of obedience can never be paid for us by another; it is, from its very nature, intransferable. Hence, the Scriptures never represent the death of Christ as a pecuniary or commercial transaction, the payment of so many pounds or talents by one person for so many pounds or talents owing by another. Our relation to God is that of sinners to an offended Judge and Sovereign, and not merely that of pecuniary debtors to a creditor. The atoning act of Christ consisted not, therefore, in paying a civil debt, giving precisely what the original obligation required, but in suffering “the just for the unjust.” It was a *satisfaction*, the rendering of something in the place of what is due, with which the Lawgiver is content.

Nor did it cancel all future obligation, as would the payment of a debt for an insolvent debtor. As a criminal, he before merited punishment ; as a criminal, he no less merits it now. But, since God has graciously accepted of the atonement, he *may* be pardoned consistently with the honour of the Divine government and the public good. And if, on the exercise of penitent faith, he should be forgiven, he will acknowledge himself to be an everlasting debtor to the grace of God. The atonement of Christ, then, ought not to be regarded as proceeding on the principles of commutative or commercial justice. All that can be said is, it answered a purpose with respect to the sinner, similar to that which the payment of a debt answers with respect to the debtor. The debtor is acquitted in the one case, the sinner in the other. Beyond this point the analogy vanishes.*

2. THAT CHRIST'S DEATH IS AN EXACT EQUIVALENT FOR THE PUNISHMENT OF MAN'S SIN. This view of the atonement is held by some avowedly. Their idea is that the sufferings of Christ possessed just as much virtue as is sufficient for the salvation of all who shall be saved, whose precise proportion of punishment he is conceived to have borne, according to the guilt even of each particular sin. "From such a minutely calculating process my mind revolts with loathing. There is so much in it of mercantile reckoning, of the balancing of a debit and credit account, of a pounds-shillings-and-pence satisfaction, that I have never been able to contemplate it with patience. I regard it as distressingly derogatory to the infinite dignity of the atoning sufferer, and to the consequent infinite value of his sacrifice."† The only true sense of the phrase that the sufferings of Christ are an equivalent for the penal sufferings of sinners, is, not that he suffered the precise quantum of pain which they deserved to suffer, but that his sufferings equally availed in satisfying Divine justice and in vindicating the authority of the law ; that they were equivalent, in the estimation of the righteous Governor, to the punishment of the guilty ; equivalent, in effect, to a *legal* satisfaction, which would consist in the enforcement upon the offenders themselves of the penalty of the violated commandment.

3. THAT THE DEATH OF CHRIST NECESSARILY SECURES THE SALVATION OF ALL FOR WHOM IT WAS OFFERED. This it does not. "It is an expiation for all men, but an acquittal for none." It puts them into what divines call "a salvable state ;" but its benefits can only be applied according to the terms or conditions that God has appointed. In case of those conditions not being complied with, men fall under the full original penalty of the law. They reject the one Saviour whom God has provided : there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins ; and they are, therefore, left to the malediction of the law, without

* Dr. Wardlaw. Watson's "Institutes."

† Dr. Wardlaw.

obstruction to the exercise and infliction of Divine justice. (John iii. 16-18, 36.)

VIII. *By what course of argument is it proved that Christ's death was really vicarious?*

1. BY THOSE PASSAGES OF SCRIPTURE WHICH SPEAK OF CHRIST AS A PROPITIATION FOR SIN. (1 John ii. 2, iv. 10; Rom. iii. 25.) The word used in the two former passages is *ἱλασμός* (*hilasmos*); in the last, *ἱλαστήριον* (*hilasterion*); both are from the verb *ἱλασκω* (*hilaskō*), "to propitiate," "to appease," "to atone," "to turn away the wrath of an offended person." The noun *ἱλασμός* is often used by the Seventy, and signifies, in their use of it, a sacrifice of atonement. (Levit. vi. 6, 7; Numb. v. 8; Ezek. xlv. 27, xlv. 19.) The same signification it has, and can only have, as used by St. John. The word *ἱλαστήριον* is used only twice in the New Testament,—in Rom. iii. 25, and Heb. ix. 5. Its proper meaning is the *propitiatory* or *mercy-seat*, as it is rendered in the latter passage.* According to this, the mercy-seat under the law was a type of Jesus Christ, and of the effects of his atoning sacrifice. As it was on the mercy-seat that Jehovah, the God of Israel, manifested himself to his worshipping people, and showed himself propitious; so is it in or through Jesus Christ, the true *ἱλαστήριον*, that God reveals himself as the God of grace, hears our prayers, and dispenses his mercy. And as, under the law, God was propitious to those only who appeared before his mercy-seat with the blood of their sin offerings (Levit. xvi. 2, 3, 11-15); so under the Gospel dispensation he is accessible to sinners, as supplicants for mercy, only as they come to him through faith in that blood of sprinkling, which is shed for the sins of the world.

The passages, therefore, which speak of our Lord as a "*propitiation*," directly refer to his vicarious sufferings as the means by which the Divine Being was rendered propitious or favourable to guilty men.

2. BY THOSE PASSAGES WHICH SPEAK OF CHRIST AS A RANSOM FOR MANKIND. (Matt. xx. 28; Mark x. 45; 1 Tim. ii. 6.) The word in the first two of these passages is *λυτрон* (*lutron*), which signifies the price paid for the deliverance of a captive. The word in Timothy is *ἀντιλυτρον* (*antilytron*), which denotes the ransom paid for the life of a captive by giving up the life of another person†—the idea involved in both words being that of substitution or satisfaction. The *λυτрон* (*lutron*) in the case of a man is "the precious blood of Christ," who "came to give his life a ransom for many." In accordance with this view, we are said to be *redeemed* by Christ. The Greek word

* For proof that this is the meaning of the term, see Wardlaw's "Discourses on the Socinian Controversy," disc. vii.

† Dwight's "Theology," sermon lvi. Dr. Angus's "Bible Handbook," p. 181.

is λυτρον (*lutroo*), as that which signifies redemption is ἀπολυτρωσις (*apolutrosis*), both derivatives from λυτρον (*lutron*), ransom. And this redemption is by "a price" (1 Cor. vi. 20), even "the precious blood of Christ." (1 Pet. i. 18, 19; Eph. i. 7; Rev. v. 9; Acts xx. 28.) By this are we redeemed from bondage and everlasting death, and the blessings we had forfeited by sin are bought back for us. The Divine favour, adoption into God's family, a restoration to his image, an inheritance among the saints in light, and even the immortality and glory of the body—all these blessings were lost, but are restored through the Redeemer's death. They are our "purchased possession to the praise of his glory." I know not how the doctrine of the vicarious sufferings and death of the Lord Jesus could have been declared in more explicit or more forcible language.

3. BY THOSE PASSAGES WHICH SPEAK OF CHRIST AS A SUBSTITUTE FOR MANKIND. He is set forth as having died "for us"—and suffered "for us;" the prepositions used in such cases are *ὑπὲρ* (*anti*) and *ὑπὲρ* (*uper*), the former meaning "instead of," and the latter "on behalf of," "for," and "instead," both clearly implying *substitution*. (1 Cor. xv. 3; Gal. i. 4; 2 Cor. v. 14, 15; Heb. ii. 9; 1 Peter iii. 18.) It is admitted that the Greek prepositions used in these quotations are sometimes to be rendered "on account of." But instances are not few in which they can only be interpreted in the sense of "instead of," and "in the place of;" *e.g.*, John xi. 50; Rom. v. 6, 8; Matt. ii. 22, vii. 10. And if that sense is rejected in passages which speak of the death of Christ, the reason must be drawn from the contrariety of the doctrine to some other portions of Scripture; whereas not one passage can be produced which denies that Christ suffered and died in the place or stead of guilty men. The doctrine of *substitution* could not be more properly or more forcibly expressed than it is in such texts as are now adduced.

4. BY THOSE PASSAGES WHICH SPEAK OF RECONCILIATION AND THE MAKING OF PEACE BETWEEN GOD AND MAN AS THE DESIGN AND EFFECT OF CHRIST'S DEATH. (Col. i. 19-22; Rom. v. 10, 11, see margin; 2 Cor. v. 18, 19; Heb. ii. 17.) The word translated "reconciliation" is in the original Hebrew and Greek *precisely* the same as that which is rendered atonement, ransom, and propitiation. Our translators evidently regarded the words as expressing the same meaning, and as teaching the same doctrine, and therefore they employed any of these terms indifferently to convey the meaning of the inspired writers. Thus, then, to reconcile is *to atone*, *to propitiate*, not man, but that holy Being against whom our sins have been committed; and this was accomplished by a substitutionary victim.

The Socinian objection is, that when, in the New Testament, reconciliation is spoken of, it is not the reconciliation of God to sinners, but of sinners to God; as in 2 Cor. v. 18-21, it is said,

"He hath reconciled us to himself." To this we reply: First, If this were true with regard to this particular word, it is also true that words and phrases which are, in their meaning, perfectly equivalent with reconcile and reconciliation are used respecting the state of God's regard towards sinful creatures—as when he is said to be "pacified," and to have his "anger turned away." The doctrine for which we contend, therefore, is untouched. Secondly, In Scripture, the verb to reconcile is used when the person said to be reconciled is not the offended party, but the offender; in which case it manifestly signifies, not the removal of enmity in the heart of him who is said to be reconciled, but the averting of displeasure, and the obtaining of favour, in the bosom of him to whom he is reconciled; *e.g.*, Matt. v. 23, 24. Here the brother is the aggrieved party, and therefore to be reconciled. Yet it is not said, "Reconcile thy brother to thee," but "Be reconciled to thy brother." The former, however, is what is meant. Gain thy brother; make peace with him. (See also 1 Sam. xxix. 4.) Here Saul was the offended party; so that David's "reconciling himself to his master" properly means reconciling his master to him, propitiating him. Thirdly, The same thing is clear from the passages quoted in 2 Cor. v. 19. God's "reconciling the world to himself" is explained by "not imputing their trespasses to them," and means, therefore, bringing them by forgiveness into a state of favour and acceptance with him. So in Rom. v. 6, 10, "reconciliation to God by the death of His Son" is inclusive of, and identical with, being "justified by his blood."* The whole doctrine is this: God is reconciled "by Jesus Christ," who was made a sin-offering for us; the legal barrier to our pardon is thus removed. But, in order that the reconciliation may be consummated, our enmity of heart must be laid aside, the weapons of our rebellion cast away, and with penitent faith we must yield ourselves to God.

IX. *Have we anything in the teachings of Christ himself as to the atoning, the propitiatory, character of his death?*

This has been strangely denied in some of the more recent attacks on this momentous truth.† But to us it appears that, from the first, the death which he looked forward to and spoke of was more than that of a martyr; was something quite other than that of the patriot, or the warrior. His language, to speak after the manner of men, was that of one whose whole soul was permeated with the idea of sacrifice. As interpreted by the current traditions of the schools of Palestine, that reference to the "serpent lifted up" (John iii. 14), could suggest no other thought than that of one who, identifying himself with sin, bore the penalty

* Dr. Wardlaw's "Discourses on the Socinian Controversy," disc. vii. Dr. Angus's "Bible Handbook," p. 182.

† *E.g.*, in the "Essays and Reviews."

of death, and so became the source of life and healing to mankind. We find the same truth ever and anon welling forth, not so much in set and formal teachings as in utterances of pregnant meaning, called forth by seemingly casual occasions. The disciples dispute which should be the greatest, and he rebukes them with the truth, that the Son of man came to give his life a ransom for—in the place of—many. (Matt. xx. 28.) The multitude throng around him, that they may eat of the loaves, and he tells them of the “flesh” and “blood” which “he will give for the life of the world. (John vi. 51, 55.) As the Good Shepherd, he giveth his life for the sheep. (John x. 11.) That “lifting up” is the condition of his “drawing all men to him,” partly, indeed, as with the cords of a man, through the marvellous attraction of his patience, meekness, agony; but partly, also, as with the cords of an everlasting love, and the power of a Divine act. (John xii. 32.) From the first, he had proclaimed the forgiveness of sins as the great work which he came on earth to accomplish; had wrought signs and wonders to bear witness that he had power to forgive them (Matt. ix. 5; Mark ii. 7; Luke v. 23; vii. 48); but as the hour of his death drew nigh, he declared that his blood was “shed for many,” *i.e.* for all men, “for the remission of their sins.” (Matt. xxvi. 28.) As Moses had sprinkled the blood of the victims upon the people, baptizing them, as it were, into the covenant of Sinai; so his blood was to be the sign and token of a new covenant, making the first old; differing from the first in pointing, not to a law written on tables of stone or the pages of a book, but to one written on the tables of men’s hearts; but, like that, resting on the idea of sacrifice.* If we interpret the life of Christ by his own words, we cannot reduce him to the level of a legislator, or a teacher, or a reformer, or a restorer of a theocracy. The idea of sacrifice is latent or patent throughout his whole work. The teaching of St. Paul and St. Peter, of the Epistle to the Hebrews, and of the beloved disciple, is but the natural development of his teaching.†

X. *What evidence do we derive from the institutions of the Jewish law of the substitutionary or propitiatory character of the death of Christ?*

One of the most striking facts connected with the ceremonial law is the singular prominence given to the shedding of the blood of victims. Animal sacrifices had, indeed, a place in man’s worship immediately after the fall. We trace them also through the antediluvian and patriarchal ages. But of the Mosaic ritual they

* In the “new covenant” of Matt. xxvi. 28, there is a manifest reference, on the one hand, to that of which Jeremiah had spoken (xxxi. 31-34), and to the “blood of the covenant” with which Moses had sprinkled the people when they pledged themselves to obedience. (Exod. xxiv. 6-8.)

† “The Boyle Lectures for 1866,” by Rev. E. H. Plumptre, M.A.

formed a very prominent part, and that by the direct appointment of God. Now, nothing is more clear than this: while some of these sacrificial rites were primarily eucharistic, *the grandest and most eminent of them were strictly EXPIATORY*; they were appointed by the Lawgiver as an atonement for sin. *This was true of the daily oblation* (Ex. xxix. 38-42), from which the pious Hebrew would learn that the favourable regard of God was to be obtained only by a perpetual substitution, and that no single day could be blessed except so far as it was hallowed by the shedding of blood. Still more impressively was the doctrine of expiation taught at *the great annual solemnity*. (Levit. xvi). This was a season of peculiar humiliation (ver. 29, 31). The high priest, clothed in his sacerdotal robes (ver. 4), first killed a bullock in behalf of himself and family (ver. 6, 11); and having in his hand a censer full of sacred fire, he entered into the immediate presence of God, sprinkling incense on the censer, and sending up a cloud of perfume between the cherubim (ver. 12, 13); he then sprinkled the blood of his own sin-offering before the mercy-seat (ver. 14), and having thus "made an atonement for himself and for his house" (ver. 6), he proceeded to perform similar rites for the people. Two goats had been previously chosen for this service, one of which was appointed by lot to die (ver. 7, 8); its blood was sprinkled before the Lord, as that of the bullock had been sprinkled (ver. 15). The propitiatory service was then extended to the tabernacle and altar, the blood of the bullock and of the goat being sprinkled as before, and thus the place was purified from the pollution which it had contracted from the sins of the worshippers (ver. 16, 18, 19). The living goat was then brought forward, the hands of the priest were laid upon its head while he confessed the sins of the people, thus representing the transfer of guilt, and the animal was led away into a land uninhabited, "bearing the iniquities of the people" (ver. 21, 22). In this impressive ceremony we have contrition, propitiation, confession, the transfer of guilt, and the bearing it away, and each brought out with such distinctness and particularity as to preclude the confusion of ideas and all probability of mistake. And we might adduce many other instances of sacrificial offering under the Jewish ritual, and it would be manifest that, although the victims, "whose blood was brought into the sanctuary for sin," could not by any virtue of their own take away the guilt of transgression (Heb. x. 4), yet they are *propitiatory* in their nature, and they procured, when duly offered, the remission of its temporal consequences. The general idea of *atonement* pervades and characterises the whole.

That the Levitical sacrifices were also TYPES admits of clearest proof; *i.e.*, they were prepared and designed by God to prefigure the true atonement that was to be made for sin in the fullness of time. This is expressly declared in Hebrews x. 1, where the Apostle, discoursing on the "sacrifices" of the tabernacle, calls them "a *shadow* of good things to come;" now, as a

shadow corresponds exactly to the substance which occasions it, so do the ordinances of Judaism describe, by adumbration, the grand new covenant propitiation. In Hebrews ix. 8-12, the same Apostle tells us that "the first tabernacle," with "the gifts and sacrifices" offered therein, was "a figure" of "a greater and more perfect tabernacle," and of "his own blood," with which our Lord "obtained eternal redemption for us." And a considerable part of that epistle proceeds on the assumption, that in Christ is fully realized and accomplished all that the Levitical law foreshowed and predicted. This connection is so intimate, that *the very names of the victims offered under the law are transferred to Christ*. He is called *θυσία*, "a sacrifice" (Eph. v. 2); *ἀμαρτία*, "a sin-offering" (2 Cor. v. 21); * *ἱλασμός*, a "propitiation" (1 John ii. 2); *ἱλαστήριον*, "a propitiatory or mercy-seat" (Rom. iii. 25); *προσφορά*, "an offering" or oblation (Eph. v. 2; Heb. x. 14); *ἀπολύτρωσις* "redemption" (1 Cor. i. 30); *λύτρον*, "a ransom" (Matt. xx. 28); *ἀντίλυτρον*, "a ransom price." (1 Tim. ii. 6). Now, these are the very terms which, in the Septuagint, are applied to the sacrificial victims of the Mosaic dispensation. Of course, the application of these terms to Christ is, in the highest sense, proper, for they are applied to him by the Spirit of Truth; and while they mark his connection with the Levitical institution, they clearly evince the atoning object of his death. His death could have had no relation whatever to the Levitical immolations and offerings, if it had no sacrificial character. And nothing could be more misleading and even absurd than to apply those terms which were in use to express the various processes and means of atonement, if the Apostles and Christ himself did not intend to represent his death strictly as an expiation for sin. Admit that the ceremonial law was a system of shadows, divinely adapted to foreshow and prepare the world for Christ, and this at once imparts meaning, consistency, and glory to the whole; and affords additional proof that he who was thus typified was the grand universal sin-offering for the world.

XI. *Are there not certain collateral arguments which support the doctrine of atonement by the death of Christ?*

There are; for so deeply is the doctrine wrought into the texture of Scripture, that we meet with it at every turn; and there are many facts that are utterly inexplicable except on the principle that Christ died as an atoning sacrifice.

I. ONE ARGUMENT IS DERIVED FROM THE LONG SERIES

* In this passage Christ is said "to be sin for us"—not certainly as to the guilt of it, for "he knew no sin," but as to the expiation of it by his personal sufferings. For the phrase is manifestly taken from the sin-offerings of the Old Testament, which are there sometimes called "sins," as being offerings for sin, and because the animals sacrificed represented the sinners themselves.—Watson's "Institutes," part ii., chap xxi.

OF PROPHECIES THAT FORETOLD HIS COMING. "To him give all the prophets witness." They were endowed with extraordinary powers of inspiration that they might feed the desire, and animate the hope, and strengthen the expectation of his appearance in our world. So numerous were these predictions, and so wide their influence, that long before he "dwelt among us" he had become "the Desire of all nations," and holy men "waited for" him, in holy expectation of the great blessings which his advent would procure. (Luke ii. 25, 26.) Now, is it credible that God would thus raise up men endowed with prophetic vision to "testify beforehand the sufferings of Christ," and to describe his person and offices, if he were nothing more than a divinely authorised teacher and a martyr for the truth? It was because he was a Saviour, bringing "remission of sins" to the guilty, that holy men of God were thus moved by the Holy Ghost to speak concerning him. (Luke xxiv. 44-47; Acts x. 43.) Such a person, anointed to so great a work, had never visited our world before. He stood alone, the object of the world's hope and joy and trust, and on this account was worthy of the lofty strains in which the prophets indulged when they testified of him.

2. ANOTHER ARGUMENT IS DERIVED FROM THE MESSENGER WHO PREPARED HIS WAY BEFORE HIM. Isaiah and Malachi had predicted that he would be heralded by a heaven-sent messenger (Isa. xl. 3; Mal. iii. 1),—a prediction that was accomplished in John the Baptist. But why should Jesus of Nazareth be honoured with a forerunner who, by his life and preaching, should prepare his way amongst men? Moses and Elijah had entered on their work without any such herald; and if he were no greater than they—if his work were no greater than theirs, it is strange that such a preparation was made for his approach. But the matter is explained if we admit that Christ was to be an atoning sacrifice for the sins of men. It was needful that all eyes should be turned to him as the great Mediator of a covenant of peace, and therefore God, in condescending mercy, raised up John to do this work; and while he preached the baptism of repentance, he again and again proclaimed the near approach of "the Christ," "that prophet," "a man which" (said he) "is preferred before me; for he was before me." (John i. 20, 21, 30.) Afterwards, looking upon Jesus as he walked, he exclaimed, "Behold the Lamb of God," etc. (John i. 29); it was a wonderful saying, eloquent of the universal redemption of our race. Thus, from his lips flowed the first announcement of Christ as having now appeared in full maturity of manhood, to prosecute the mighty work of putting away sin by the sacrifice of himself. "The law and the prophets were until John:" but, standing as he did on the frontier of the new dispensation, and proclaiming with such clearness as this the fulness of the atonement, he was the greatest among them that are born of women. (Matt. xi. 11.)

3. A THIRD ARGUMENT IS DERIVED FROM THE EXTRAORDINARY CIRCUMSTANCES CONNECTED WITH HIS BIRTH. Before he was born, the angel of the Lord announced him as not merely a teacher, but a Saviour from sin. (Matt. i. 21.) To sustain this character, he must himself be "holy, harmless, undefiled." He was therefore "conceived of the Holy Ghost" (Matt. i. 20), and his human nature preserved from the taint which it would have inherited in the ordinary course of generation. At the moment of his birth the angel of the Lord again proclaimed him to the world as a Divine anointed Saviour, whose coming amongst men was "tidings of great joy" (Luke ii. 10, 11); and when brought in infancy to the temple, the spirit of prophecy came on a devout and aged man, and he gazed upon the child in rapture and reverence, exclaiming, "Mine eyes have seen thy salvation." The hypothesis which reduces our Lord to the level of a human teacher and martyr, deprives all these circumstances of their meaning and glory; but assuming that he is the grand new covenant propitiation, all is clear, consistent, God-like.

4. A FOURTH ARGUMENT IS DERIVED FROM THE INTENSITY OF OUR LORD'S SUFFERINGS. We have read the histories of certain martyrs and confessors, and have been struck with the undaunted courage with which they met death, even when surrounded by everything that could agitate our nature. How different was the demeanour of Christ when anticipating death! So intense and bitter was his agony, that he casts himself on the ground—sweats, as it were, great drops of blood—utters the most touching and thrilling complaints—entreats, with pathetic earnestness, that, if it were possible, he might be spared the anguish. What account do we give of this? With a conscience void of offence, with a reward of surpassing splendour actually in view, with powers undecayed and sensibilities untouched through any bodily infirmity, you expect to behold in him the finest exhibition of collectedness and courage ever furnished by an individual of our race. And if he had died in his individual capacity, it must have been so. But receive the great doctrine that Christ "bare our sins in his own body on the tree," and the scenes of Gethsemane and Calvary are such as we might expect. A mountain of iniquities is upon him—he is standing in the place of criminals—justice is exacting from him the penalty of the law, and the light of God's countenance must for a while be hid from the Being on whom the vials of wrath are rapidly descending. This is the explanation of the agonising groans, the deep and affecting exclamations, the intense and overpowering agonies; "the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all."

5. A FIFTH ARGUMENT IS DERIVED FROM THE APPOINTMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER. This sacrament was appointed as a memorial of Christ's death (Luke xxii. 19, 20; 1 Cor. xi. 26); and as such was to be observed by his followers to the end of time. But if he were nothing more than an eminently righteous man,

who submitted to death in order to confirm the doctrines which he taught, why should we have a religious rite to bring his death continually before our minds? Why not, in a similar way, show forth the death of other saints and other martyrs? His own words render the explanation. The blood that he shed ratified and confirmed the new covenant, and procured "remission of sins" for the many who deserved to die. (Matt. xxvi. 27, 28.) On any other supposition than that of Christ's dying as a sacrifice—dying in order to make expiation—the ordinance is a useless superstitious ceremony. But admit the supposition, and the sacred institution is worthy of him who appointed it, and worthy of reverent observance by every believer till the Lord come.

6. A SIXTH ARGUMENT IS DERIVED FROM THE TOTAL CESSATION OF ANIMAL SACRIFICES. By the destruction of Jerusalem the whole system, as appointed by God, was swept away for ever. The most splendid temple in the world, the most venerable priesthood, the most complicated and costly system of sacrifice—all are suddenly blotted out from under heaven, never more to be restored; and it is worthy of note that the hand of God was as remarkably distinct in the destruction of the religious polity of the Jews, as was his commandment in its origin. Whatever may have been the reason for this amazing alteration, it is certain that it was in some way connected with the work of Christ (see Daniel ix. 24-27); and the question arises, what has Christ done that the whole of the Jewish religion should be thus at once abrogated? The only reply that can be offered is, that he has effected all that the sacrifices of the law were designed to effect. He has done that at once which they were for many ages employed to do. He has so effectually accomplished his work, that no priesthood, no animal offering, no shedding of blood, will ever again be necessary. Messiah has been cut off, but not for himself, and has therefore caused the sacrifice and the oblation to cease.

XII. *By what arguments can we prove that the sacrifice of Christ was complete and available as an atonement for sin?*

1. THIS IS PROVED FROM THE INFINITE DIGNITY AND VALUE OF THE SACRIFICE. Who was it that gave himself for us? "It is *Christ* that died," he whose name is "Emmanuel," God over all, blessed for ever. This glorious Being incarnate was the victim for our transgressions. His "precious blood" was the price of our redemption; and the dignity of his nature—his personal and moral excellences as God, as well as man—have impressed his atonement with a virtue adequate to all which the guilt of perishing millions required, and Divine justice demanded on our behalf.

2. IT IS PROVED BY THE RESURRECTION OF THE SAVIOUR. Had his sacrifice been faulty or inadequate, his body could never have risen from the tomb. The law would have detained its captive, and we could have had no hope of salvation from the sufferings

and death of our surety. But we hear a voice saying, "Let the prisoner go free;" and in a moment the chains of death are snapped asunder, and God the Father, in the exercise of his glorious power, opens the door and delivers the illustrious captive. Here is the proof that God has accepted the sacrifice of his Son as perfectly sufficient and valid. It proclaimed, with a voice as audible and piercing as though the words had been uttered by angelic messengers, that man's redemption was complete, and every debt had been boldly met and discharged, and that our Great High Priest had finished the work that had been given him to do. That deserted sepulchre was the Father's broad seal to the spotless character, the perfect work, and the all-sufficient sacrifice of his Son; and we may plant our feet upon the vacant tomb, and utter the challenge of the Apostle: "Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died; yea, rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right of God." (Rom. viii. 34.)

3. IT IS PROVED BY THE FACT THAT CHRIST IS "SET FORTH" BY THE SUPREME AUTHORITY OF GOD THE FATHER AS THE OBJECT OF FAITH AND THE GROUND OF ACCEPTANCE. (See Rom. iii. 25.) "God was the sovereign whom our sins had offended, and at whose mercy we consequently lay. He alone, when his creatures had fallen by their iniquity, had a right to determine whether any remedy should be provided for them; and if any, what that remedy shall be. If *he*, therefore, has made known a ground of hope for the guilty, we cannot surely wish for firmer security, or for any higher warrant or encouragement to rely on that ground with unshaken confidence." And this he has done in the glorious Gospel, where "God hath set forth" Christ as the all-sufficient "propitiation," though faith in whose blood we may "receive remission of sins that are past." This, therefore, is our reply to every sceptical objection, and every unbelieving fear: the propitiation of the cross is revealed and sanctioned by the highest authority in the universe as a "sure foundation" for the faith and hopes of mankind. "Other foundation can no man lay." We need no other. In resting our hopes here we are safe; for, "he that believeth on him shall not be ashamed."

XIII. What are the principal objections which Socinian writers allege against the doctrine of atonement by the death of Christ?

OBJ. 1. THAT THE WHOLE OF THIS SCHEME OF ATONEMENT IS UNNECESSARY,—A USELESS ENCUMBRANCE,—FOR THAT GOD MIGHT, WITH PERFECT PROPRIETY, FORGIVE SINNERS UPON THEIR REPENTANCE, WITHOUT ANY SUCH ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATION. This objection savours not a little of presumption; for how can creatures like us pronounce upon the plans and arrangements of God, or decide that certain ends of the Divine government might have been equally well attained by other means than those which the all-wise God has seen fit to adopt? Far wiser

and more becoming would it be to conclude, that what God has done is the only thing that could be done consistently with his own infinite wisdom, and rectitude, and love. And with regard to *repentance*, there is nothing in the analogy of Providence that would lead us to infer its sufficiency to obtain forgiveness. It does not, in the present experience of mankind, remove the consequences of sin ; it neither restores health injured by intemperance, nor property wasted by profusion, nor character dishonoured by an evil practice ; neither does it ward off from the criminal, in human courts, the punishment which his crimes merited. And what right have we to suppose that in the moral government of God it could either annihilate the guilt of what is past, or commend the rebel to the favour of his offended God ? "Reason, to say the least of it, can arrive at no certain conclusion on this subject, and it becomes us to submit with grateful humility to the way of acceptance made known in the Gospel. Repentance is inseparably connected with forgiveness ; but it is not its procuring cause, its meritorious ground. *This* is to be found only in the perfect obedience and atoning death of the Son of God."

OBJ. 2. THAT IT IS MANIFESTLY UNJUST TO PERMIT THE INNOCENT TO SUFFER FOR THE GUILTY. This objection, let it be observed, lies not only against the doctrine of atonement by the vicarious sufferings of Christ, but against the views held by the objectors themselves. Do they not admit the spotless innocence of our Lord ? Do they not admit that he suffered both in body and in mind ? Why, then, does he suffer ? Their answer is, to confirm the truth of his testimony, and to set before us an example of patience. Well, then, even on this view he suffered *for us, i.e.* for our good. Let them answer, therefore, their own objection. "If it be just in God to allow the innocent to suffer for these ends, why should it be unjust in him to allow the innocent to suffer for another end, even for the end which we allege to have been the true cause of these sufferings ? Can it be *just* in God to inflict sufferings on the innocent for an *inferior* end, and yet *unjust* in him to inflict the same sufferings, on the same person, for an end *obviously and incalculably superior* ?"

But the justice of the arrangement is vindicated by the absolute voluntariness, and the supreme right of self-disposal, of the suffering substitute. He was a willing sufferer. This he himself acknowledged. (John x. 18.) And he had, what no creature has, the sovereign right of self-disposal. "He died therefore because, having himself the supreme power of life and death, from his boundless benevolence to man he willed to die ; and thus in this substitution there was a concurrence of the Lawgiver, and the consent of the substitute." No right was invaded, and where could injustice lie ?

And besides this, the scheme included a provision of ample reward to the suffering substitute. We might find it difficult to show how the sufferings of the innocent for the guilty could be

reconciled with justice, if those sufferings involved the irreparable destruction of our compassionate Redeemer. A reward must be affixed to his work, in order to preserve the equity of the transaction; and as his love and condescension were transcendent and unparalleled, it seems only fitting that his reward should be of the most signal and eminent order. By the prospect of this reward he was animated amidst his humiliation and suffering. (See Heb. xii. 2.) And when his work was "finished," he was "highly exalted" in mediatorial glory (Phil. ii. 5-11; Rev. iii. 21; Heb. i. 3, 4); honoured, according to the fitness of his claims, in the enjoyment of the purest bliss (Heb. i. 9), and in the discharge of the highest functions (John v. 26, 27, and 22, 23); and appointed to dispense the blessings of redeeming mercy for the restoration and happiness of his creatures. (Ps. lxxii. 11, *et seq.*; Isa. lii. 13-15, liii. 10, 11.) These were the rewards given by the Eternal Father to Christ himself, in honour of his redeeming work. And as he sits enthroned in the highest heavens, having received "a name which is above every name," adored by all the ranks of angels and of glorified men (Rev. v. 8-14), and scattering abroad the riches of his grace, who can say that the scheme of which he is the exalted Mediator involves essential injustice?

OBJ. 3. THAT THE DOCTRINE OF THE ATONEMENT IS REPUGNANT TO THE BENEVOLENT CHARACTER OF GOD. It is strange that this objection can be urged against the doctrine, when the Bible—God's own Word—points to the atonement as that which, above everything, illustrates and magnifies the benevolence of God; *e.g.*, Rom. v. 1; John iii. 16; 1 John iv. 10. The fact is, it was love to man that prompted "the unspeakable gift." It was love "that delivered him up for us all;" *that* infinite gift and *that* vicarious suffering being the most direct and satisfactory proof of infinite love. But then, it was love in perfect harmony with justice, truth, and holiness. The Mediator is made a sin-offering for us, that the sinner may be saved from wrath without any compromise of the rectitude of the Divine administration or the truth of Divine denunciations. The theory which denies the atonement sets aside the claims of justice, and extols the love of God at the expense of other attributes. The Gospel exhibits the love of God, but in perfect consistency and harmony with all the attributes of his nature; and the provision of mediation and atonement for the purpose of preserving inviolate the sacred rights of government can never appear unamiable, except to a creature whose judgment is biased, and who is thence misled into mistaken and unfounded conceptions.

OBJ. 4. THAT OUR SALVATION IS DESCRIBED AS BEING A "FREE GIFT," "ACCORDING TO THE RICHES OF HIS GRACE" (Rom. v. 16; Eph. i. 7); AND THEREFORE CANNOT COME THROUGH A SATISFACTION MADE TO DIVINE JUSTICE. What is meant by the term here used? A "free gift," a gift of grace, is a gift unmerited by them on whom it is bestowed; the term

"free" being applicable to the mode of its *bestowment*, not to the mode of its being *procured*. Now, in this sense, every blessing, though procured for us by the Saviour's blood, is the free gift of sovereign grace. We can give no equivalent for it. It is a perfect gratuity. But it would never have been bestowed at all, had it not been for the death of Christ. And it is remarkable that the same texts which describe salvation as a "gift," connect it with the atonement as its price or procuring cause. (Rom. iii. 24, 25, v. 20, 21, vi. 23.) There is nothing incompatible in the ideas of propitiation and grace. If we bestow a gift upon a fellow-creature, it is free *to him*, whatever it may have cost *ourselves*. And be it observed, that when grace provided the atonement, it provided it for the purpose of rendering the further exercise of the same grace in receiving, pardoning, sanctifying, and eternally blessing sinners, consistent with the honour of the Divine name, with the glory of Jehovah's character and government. This being its design, grace continues to characterise all its results. Beginning, middle, and end, from eternity to eternity, all is grace. There is grace in the origin, and grace in the execution, of the plan of redemption; and grace in the bestowment, on account of it, of all the blessings of salvation.

The reader may be interested in the names and character of the principal Socinian leaders whom England has produced. We have referred to *Dr. John Taylor*, of Norwich (see p. 123). *Dr. Joseph Priestley*, who also flourished in the middle of the last century, was a Dissenting minister, and in many respects was an estimable and able man. His brilliant discoveries in chemistry have invested his name with a halo which otherwise it would not have possessed. But his character as a theological controversialist was irrecoverably lost from the time that Bishop Horsley wrote his "Controversial Letters." *Gilbert Wakefield*, who was for some years a clergyman of the English Church, was contemporary with Priestley, and an advocate of his errors. He excelled in classical literature, but in nothing else. He was a zealous propagator of the principles of the French revolution. He wrote against the Divinity and atonement of Christ, and the public worship of God. *Theophilus Lindsey*, born 1723, at one time excited considerable attention as a Socinian leader. He was a Yorkshire clergyman. For some years he used a Liturgy, the leading doctrines of which he did not believe; and when he resigned his living, he was extolled by his friends as a moral martyr. The most respectable man, beyond all comparison, among English Socinians is *Dr. Lardner*, whose labours in defence of the general truth of Christianity are beyond all praise. In his "Credibility of the Gospel History," he has raised a battery in defence of the Gospel which Infidelity has not even attempted to de-

molish ; but in his sermons he has lamentably failed in telling what the Gospel is. Those sermons are cold and freezing, a perfect contrast to St. Paul's Epistles. These men are the most prominent of English Socinians. In their theological views, all, excepting Lardner, were rash, changeable, and profane ; and their publications rather tend to produce a general scepticism than to stir up devout affections.

Among the works that have been written in defence of the atonement the reader is referred to Watson's "Institutes," part ii., chap. xix., xxii. ; Dr. W. Cooke's "Christian Theology ;" Hare's "Preservative against Socinianism ;" Treffry's "Letters on the Atonement ;" Lessey's "Four Sermons on the Priesthood of Christ ;" Wardlaw's "Systematic Divinity," vol. ii. ; Wardlaw's "Discourses on the Socinian Controversy." The following valuable works are more rare : "Discourses concerning the Sufferings of Christ," by Bishop Stillingfleet, a man of universal theological reading and an able reasoner. "Harmony of the Divine Attributes in the Work of Redemption," by Dr. W. Bates ; this book abounds in rich and varied imagery, and is replete with sound divinity and devout feeling. "The History of Redemption," by President Edwards, explains the nature of redemption, its various benefits, and traces the arrangements of Providence with respect to this great work. "The Origin of Primitive Sacrifice," by Faber, in answer to Mr. Davidson. The "Discourses and Dissertations on Atonement and Sacrifice," by Bishop Magee, in three octavo volumes, contain a library of information, but the arrangement of the book is bad, and the spirit of the writer haughty and malignant. "Four Discourses on the Sacrifice and Priesthood of Christ," by Dr. Pye Smith, are chiefly critical. "Treatise on the Doctrine of Atonement," by Jerram, is entitled to high praise, and adapted to popular use. Dr. Owen's work "On the Epistle to the Hebrews" is full of powerful argument.*

* For the opinions here recorded, the writer is indebted to the MS. Lectures of Rev. T. Jackson.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE EXTENT OF THE ATONEMENT.

I. *What is the Calvinistic view of this question?*

There are various modifications of this view as held by those who bear the general name of Calvinists. *The Hyper-Calvinists* contend that the sufferings of Christ possessed just as much virtue as is sufficient for the salvation of all who shall be saved, and no more. And that, as Christ stood in the room of the elect only, he bore their sins exclusively, and all others are shut out from the possibility of salvation by the sovereign decree of heaven. *Another class of Calvinists* admit and plead for the unlimited sufficiency of the atonement; that is, they believe it possessed an intrinsic value sufficient for the salvation of the whole world. But they contend for restriction in the atonement as arising from what they denominate "its destination:" the worth of the atonement is infinite, absolute, and all-sufficient; but it was offered for a certain number only. These will certainly be saved, and all others will as certainly perish. *Moderate Calvinists*, so called, hold the atonement to be universal—a propitiation for the sins of the whole world—but by Divine purpose restricted in its application to a definite number of individuals, whom in his own good time he effectually calls, and whose full salvation is alone secured by the bonds of the eternal covenant. The three views, therefore, may be thus stated: (1.) The atonement was neither offered for all, nor was it sufficient for all. (2.) The atonement was sufficient for all, but it was not offered for all. (3.) The atonement is sufficient for all, and was offered for all, but is by God's sovereign pleasure limited in its application to "the elect."

II. *What is the Arminian or Wesleyan view of this subject?*

That our Lord Jesus Christ did so die for all men as to make salvation attainable by every man that cometh into the world. This view is not to be confounded with that of the Universalists, viz., that all men will be ultimately saved. Arminians, though maintaining universal redemption, agree with Calvinists as to the

matter of fact that some will be lost ; but they deny that this will arise from any sovereign purpose of God, contending that if men are not saved the fault is entirely their own, lying solely in their own unwillingness to accept the salvation offered to them, or to receive it on the terms on which it is presented.

III. *What are the leading arguments in support of this view ?*

1. THE FIRST ARGUMENT IS DERIVED FROM THE FACT THAT THERE IS NOT ONE PASSAGE IN THE SCRIPTURES WHICH SAYS THAT CHRIST DID NOT DIE FOR THE SALVATION OF ALL, or which limits the efficacy of the atonement to any select number of the race ; not one in either the Old Testament or New, uttered by Prophet or Apostle, which either teaches the doctrine in plain language, or which obscurely implies it.

2. THE DOCTRINE IS PROVED FROM THOSE PASSAGES IN WHICH CHRIST IS SAID TO HAVE DIED FOR THE "WORLD" AND FOR THE "WHOLE WORLD." (John i. 29, iii. 16, iv. 42, vi. 51 ; 2 Cor. v. 19 ; 1 John ii. 2, iv. 14.) The Calvinistic reply to these passages is, that by the world is meant the "elect world." But (1.) there is no such phrase in the whole Bible, nor can the restriction be admitted by any just rule of interpretation. (2.) The term "world" is never applied to the elect or to the people of God ; on the contrary, they are always distinguished from "the world" (John xv. 19, xvii. 14-16.) (3.) The world, as distinguished from the people of God, are spoken of as the objects of the Saviour's death. (1 John ii. 2.)

3. THE DOCTRINE IS PROVED FROM THOSE PASSAGES IN WHICH CHRIST IS DECLARED TO HAVE DIED FOR "ALL MEN," AND FOR "EVERY MAN." (1 Tim. ii. 6, iv. 10 ; Heb. ii. 9.) It is impossible to take the universal terms that are here employed in any limited sense. But in 2 Cor. v. 14, 15, the Apostle assumes and takes for granted the universality of Christ's atonement ; the fact that Christ "died for all," was regarded as a fact so thoroughly undisputed and indisputable that he employs it to prove the deplorable condition of the entire race.

4. IT IS PROVED FROM THOSE PASSAGES IN WHICH THE EFFICACY OF CHRIST'S DEATH IS DECLARED TO BE CO-EXTENSIVE WITH THE EFFECTS OF THE FALL. (Isa. liii. 6 ; Rom. v. 15-18.)

5. IT IS PROVED FROM THOSE PASSAGES WHICH DECLARE THAT CHRIST DIED, NOT ONLY FOR THOSE WHO ARE SAVED, BUT FOR THOSE WHO DO OR MAY PERISH. (Rom. xiv. 15 ; 1 Cor. viii. 11 ; 2 Pet. ii. 1.) In accordance with these texts, the apostates, who are doomed to the "sorer punishment," are declared to have once had a saving interest in "the blood of the covenant." (Heb. x. 29.)

6. IT IS PROVED FROM THOSE PASSAGES IN WHICH THE GOSPEL IS ANNOUNCED AS GOOD TIDINGS TO "ALL PEOPLE,"

AND TO "EVERY CREATURE." (Luke ii. 10; Mark xvi. 15.) If it be true that there are many Gospel hearers for whom Christ never died, and to whom, therefore, salvation is as much an impossibility as it is to devils, the Gospel certainly cannot be good news to every creature. Its name is a lie upon its nature. It is bad news to many a one; for its rejection adds a fearful aggravation to their doom, whilst it never told, as it never could tell, that Christ had any regard to them in the sacrifice of the cross.

7. IT IS PROVED FROM THOSE PASSAGES WHICH MAKE IT THE DUTY OF ALL MEN TO REPENT AND BELIEVE THE GOSPEL, AND WHICH PLACE THEM UNDER GUILT AND CONDEMNATION FOR REFUSING TO DO SO. (Mark xvi. 16; John iii. 18.) If the atonement of Christ had been *partial*, the requirement to believe in him could not be *universal* without the most obvious injustice. If there be one for whom Christ died not, to command him to believe in Christ as his Saviour is to command him to believe what is not true; and to command him to believe "unto salvation" is a delusion, for salvation was never provided.

8. IT IS PROVED FROM THOSE PASSAGES WHICH INVEST THE AMBASSADORS OF CHRIST WITH AN UNIVERSAL COMMISSION, AND WHICH PRESENT INVITATIONS AND PROMISES THE MOST FREE AND UNRESTRAINED. (Mark xvi. 15; Matt. xi. 28; John vii. 37; Rev. xxii. 17.) On the principle of a limited atonement, all these passages are unintelligible and contradictory; but admit an universal atonement, and they are full of beauty and harmony.

9. IT IS PROVED FROM THOSE PASSAGES IN WHICH MEN'S FAILURE TO OBTAIN SALVATION IS PLACED TO THE ACCOUNT OF THEIR OWN OPPOSING WILLS, AND MADE WHOLLY THEIR OWN FAULT. (Ezek. xxxiii. 11; Matt. xxii. 3, xxiii. 37; John v. 40; 2 Pet. ii. 1.) From these texts the conclusion is inevitable, that the sole bar to the salvation of those who are lost is in themselves, and not in any such limitation of Christ's redemption as supposes that they were not comprehended in its efficacy and intention.

10. IT IS PROVED FROM THOSE PASSAGES WHICH ASSERT THE UNIVERSALITY OF THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD. There was no provision for a resurrection in the covenant made with Adam. There was provision made for uninterrupted life upon condition of obedience, and for unmitigated death in case of disobedience. Adam fell, and universal death is the consequence. But "as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." (1 Cor. xv. 22.) Since, then, all shall experience a resurrection of their bodies, because of the work of the second Adam, is it not abundantly manifest that all have a connection with Christ, and that the work of Christ has a bearing upon all, and that it was therefore undertaken and achieved in behalf of all? If there be some for whom Christ did nothing at all, how comes

it to pass that they are to be raised again because of what he did.*

IV. *Are there not passages of Scripture which intimate that the propitiation is limited to those who shall be saved?*

Let us look at them.

John x. 15, is often adduced to prove that Christ died for none but the sheep. "But the consequence will not hold; for there is no inconsistency between his having died for them that believe and also for them that believe not. Christ is 'the Saviour of all men,' but 'especially of them that believe,'—two propositions which the Apostle held to be perfectly consistent." The same remarks apply to such texts as Acts xx. 28, and Eph. v. 25, 26. His having "purchased the church" and "given himself for the church" is certainly no proof that he did not love and give himself for the world; and especially when the statement is so clear that "he is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world."

John xvii. 9, is urged in proof that all, excepting the "elect," are shut out from the redeeming love of Christ. The meaning of the passage is, however, made obvious by the context. Christ, in the former part of his intercessory prayer, prays exclusively, not for his church in all ages, but for his disciples then present with him, as appears from verses 6-9; then, in verse 20, he prays for all who in the future should believe on him through their words; and the ultimate object of his prayer for them is that the world may be brought to the belief of the truth (verses 21-23). Thus "the world," in its largest sense, is not cut off, but expressly included in the benefits of this prayer.

Rom. v. 15, is regarded as an evidence that the "all men" of other verses in the chapter is used in a limited sense, inasmuch as the free gift is here specified as extending only "unto many." But there is no force in this remark. All men are many, though many are not in every case all. But that the term "many" is taken by him in the sense of all, appears from the following parallels: "Death passed upon all men"—"many be dead." "The gift by grace hath abounded unto many"—"the free gift came upon all men." "By one man's disobedience many were made sinners"—here the "many" must mean "all men"—"so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous"—here the "many" is equally extensive, referring to mankind collectively as receiving the "justification to life" through the obedience of Christ. In the light of this passage must Matt. xx. 28, and xxvi. 28, be explained.

V. *How can we reply to the objection that, "if Christ died*

* Watson's "Institutes." Arthur's "Did Christ die for all?" Morrison's "Extent of the Propitiation."

for more than those who will be saved, he has died in vain for many"?

In this objection it is assumed that the terms on which he offered himself up were, that all for whom he suffered should be saved. Is this ever hinted in Scripture? Never. But we are clearly informed as to the conditions and terms of his atoning death: "So must the Son of man be lifted up, that *whosoever believeth* in him should not perish," etc. (John iii. 15.) "He that believeth shall be saved." (Mark xvi. 16). If that failed, Christ has been "lifted up" in vain; but that will never fail; and, therefore, though "he that believeth not shall be damned," he is not "dead in vain." "This is the will of him that sent me, that every one that seeth the Son, and *believeth on him*, may have everlasting life." (John vi. 40.)

But if it be still insinuated that it seems to affix a stigma on God to suppose that he should use means for the salvation of sinners which ultimately prove ineffectual, I have to say, that on this principle God's glorious character would be covered with stigmas. Is he not daily using means with sinners in his Providence, and in the invitations, exhortations, warnings, winnings, wooings, examples, and commandments of his word? Are these means always effectual? Was the preaching of Christ and his Apostles never ineffectual? How short-sighted is man! How can *we* know that a thing is really in vain, because, forsooth, it may not answer the end which we would have expected? Can *we* grasp, as with an infinity of intellect, all the possible bearings of any one work of the Almighty? He has made the way clear for *all* to be saved by giving his Son to die for all; and now he invites all, he commands all; and if all do not comply, still the glory of his boundless love is magnified and most illustriously displayed by the very fact, that none have been excluded from salvation but by their own folly.

VI. *How can we reply to the objection that, "if Christ died for the ultimately unsaved, it is unjust in God to make them pay the penalty of their sins again"?*

This objection arises from what we have already shown to be a radically mistaken view of the atonement. It supposes the atonement to be a literal payment of a debt. The Bible never in any instance describes it under this idea. Christ did not pay the sinner's debt in the sense in which the objector understands that phrase. It is only in a loose sense that the death of Christ may be thus spoken of. He did a something in consideration of which it is now quite consistent with God's character as a moral Governor, provided the sinner believe, to remit his debts; whilst it is by no means inconsistent with his character, provided the sinner will not believe, to exact the whole to the uttermost farthing. The unbeliever refuses to accept of Jesus as his surety;

Divine justice therefore says, "Pay me that thou owest;" and because he has nothing to pay, he is delivered over to the tormentors.

VII. The Calvinistic doctrine of a limited atonement is based upon certain views concerning the election of grace. What are these views?

They are thus given in the "Westminster Confession of Faith." "By the decree of God, for the manifestation of his glory, some men and angels are predestinated unto eternal life, and others foreordained to everlasting death. . . . Those of mankind that are predestinated unto life, God, before the foundation of the world was laid, according to his eternal and immutable purpose, and the secret counsel and good pleasure of his will, hath chosen in Christ unto everlasting glory, out of his mere free grace and love, without any foresight of faith or good works, or perseverance in either of them, or any other thing in the creature as conditions or causes moving him thereunto; and all to the praise of his glorious grace. As God hath appointed the elect unto glory, so hath he, by the eternal and most free purpose of his will, foreordained all the means thereunto. Wherefore they who are elected, being fallen in Adam, are redeemed by Christ; are effectually called unto faith in Christ by his Spirit working in due season; are justified, adopted, sanctified, and kept by his power through faith unto salvation. Neither are any other redeemed by Christ, effectually called, justified, adopted, sanctified, and saved, but the elect only. The rest of mankind God was pleased, according to the unsearchable counsel of his own will, whereby he extendeth or withholdeth mercy as he pleaseth, for the glory of his sovereign power over his creatures, to pass by, and to ordain them to dishonour and wrath for their sin, to the praise of his glorious justice." The same views of absolute, unconditional election and reprobation are taught with great earnestness in Calvin's "Institutes," in the sixth article of the Synod of Dort, 1619; and in the Confessions of the French Reformed Churches, 1558; and of the Churches of Piedmont in 1665. A definite number are declared to be elected to eternal salvation, and the rest of mankind are reprobated, and predestinated to eternal destruction. It is just to remark, however, that many of our Calvinistic brethren have now avowedly renounced the doctrine of unconditional reprobation, and would rejoice to see it wholly extirpated from the church of God.*

* There have been two leading schemes of predestination, generally known by the names of Supralapsarianism and Sublapsarianism. The Supralapsarian theory is, that God has absolutely decreed to save some and condemn others, and to do this without having any regard in such decree to righteousness or sin, obedience or disobedience, which could possibly exist on the part of one class of men or the other, but simply

VIII. *What are the teachings of Arminian and Wesleyan writers on the doctrine of election?*

They find three kinds of election, of choosing and separating from others, mentioned in the Scriptures.

1. THERE IS THE ELECTION OF INDIVIDUALS TO PERFORM SOME PARTICULAR AND SPECIAL SERVICE. In this sense the word is applied to the priests under the law (Deut. xxi. 5; 1 Sam. ii. 27, 28); to kings and rulers (Ps. lxxviii. 70); to Prophets (Jer. i. 5); and to the Apostles of Christ. (Luke vi. 13; John vi. 70; Acts ix. 15.) But this election implied nothing in reference to their final destiny.

2. THERE IS THE ELECTION OF NATIONS, OR BODIES OF PEOPLE, TO EMINENT RELIGIOUS PRIVILEGES. Thus the family of Abraham was selected from all the other nations to constitute the visible church of God, to receive special revelations of truth, and to preserve among men the knowledge, worship, and obedience of the true God. Hence they are spoken of as his "chosen" or "elect" people (Deut. iv. 37, vii. 6, x. 15; Ps. xxxiii. 12; Isa. xli. 8, 9, etc.); and as he brought them out of Egypt, invited them to the honours and happiness of his people, and, by many express declarations and acts of mercy, engaged them to adhere to him as their God, he is said to "call" them, and they were his "called" (Isa. xli. 8, 9, xlviii. 12, li. 2; Hos. xi. 1); and as he had distinguished them from all other nations, and sequestered them unto himself, they are styled his "peculiar people." (Deut. vii. 6, xiv. 2, xxvi. 18.) But it ought to be specially observed that all these privileges, blessings, and honours belonged to *all* the children of Israel without exception—that they were the effect of God's free grace, without regard to any prior righteousness of theirs (Deut. ix. 4, 5, 6)—that they were granted to the sons of Abraham for the good of all the nations of the world (Gen. xii. 3, xxii. 18; Exod. vii. 5, ix. 16, xv. 14; Lev. xxvi. 45; Num. xiv. 13, 14, 15); and that there was nothing in those privileges to ensure their absolute and final blessedness; great numbers of them fell under Divine vengeance for their sin (Exod. xxxii. 8, 27, 28; Num. xi. 4, 5, 6, 33, xvi. 2, 3, 32, 35, 41, 49, xxi. 5, 6), and were excluded from the benefit of the promise. (Heb. iii. 7, etc.)

Under the Christian dispensation, the term "election" is also

to glorify himself, as having a supreme right to do what he will with the work of his hands. The Sublapsarian contends that God, in his decrees, considered the human race as fallen and corrupt, and on this account obnoxious to malediction; but out of this lapsed and accursed state he determined to recover some, for a declaration of his mercy; but he resolved to leave the rest under malediction, for a declaration of his justice, and at the same time to glorify his sovereignty in saving any, when he might have left all to perish.—Watson's "Institutes," and Wardlaw's "Systematic Theology."

occasionally applied to communities—all those who have embraced the Gospel, even by profession, being called by the same appellations which had before been applied to the Jews. They, as a people, had been deprived of election and church relationship of every kind for their rejection of Christ; and their privileges were transferred to believing Gentiles, who were called into that church relation and visible acknowledgment as the people of God which the Jews had formerly enjoyed. And wherever they were found in a collective body, professing allegiance to Christ, and maintaining the ordinances of Christianity, the terms and distinctions which had so long been given to the visible church were applied to them, and applied with the same latitude as they were before applied to the Jewish people. It was this calling and election of Gentile believers to the privileges of the church of God that constituted “the mystery which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men as it is now revealed unto his holy Apostles and Prophets.” (Eph. iii. 1-7.) It was this that aroused the indignation of the Jewish people (Matt. xx. 1-16, xxi. 33-43,) and which St. Paul so elaborately defended in the ninth of Romans.* And as the arrangement to bring believing Gentiles into the church of God was no casual arrangement, but formed a part of God’s original plan, they are said to be “the called according to his purpose” (Rom. viii. 28,) and to be “chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world.” (Eph. i. 4.)† In all these passages there is not the most distant reference to an unconditional election to eternal life.

* See Dr. A. Clarke’s “Commentary” on this chapter. Watson’s “Institutes,” part ii., chap. xxvi.

† This passage, which is so often quoted as one of the leading proofs of the doctrine of personal, unconditional election, has no reference whatever to that subject. The entire epistle proves that the subject of the Apostle’s discourse is the collective election of the whole body of Christians. Let the text be read as Mr. Fletcher suggests, and the meaning of the inspired penman will be placed with great clearness before the mind: “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us (Jews and Gentiles, who do not put the word of his grace from us, and reject his gracious counsel against ourselves) with all spiritual blessings in heavenly (things) in Christ; according as he hath chosen us (Jews and Gentiles) in him before the foundation of the world, that we (Jews and Gentiles) should be holy and without blame before him in love (as all Christians ought to be): having predestinated us (Jews and Gentiles) unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will; by which he hath made both (Jews and Gentiles) one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; making in himself of twain (that is, of Jews and Gentiles) one new man (that is, one new ecclesiastical body which is at unity in itself, though it is composed of Jews and Gentiles who were before supposed to be absolutely irreconcilable). Eph. ii. 14, 15. (And this he hath done) to the praise of the glory of his grace,

3. THERE IS A PERSONAL ELECTION—THE ELECTION OF INDIVIDUALS TO BE THE CHILDREN OF GOD AND THE HEIRS OF ETERNAL GLORY. Under the Jewish covenant there was, as we have seen, the election of an entire nation in virtue of their natural descent from Abraham. Under the Christian covenant, natural descent is disregarded, and faith in Christ is all in all. Every penitent believer, therefore, whether Jew or Gentile, is chosen in Christ to enjoy all the privileges of grace here, and the glories of heaven hereafter. And to each one is applied the phrases which were borrowed from that collective election of which we have spoken,—“the elect of God,” “chosen of God,” “chosen in Christ.” This personal election is explained in two passages: First, in 1 Peter i. 2, where believers are said to be “elect *through sanctification of the Spirit*.” They are not elected, being unsanctified and disobedient, in order to be sanctified by the Spirit. But they are elected *through* the sanctification of the Spirit. Their election is, therefore, strictly conditional; and though it takes place “according to the foreknowledge of God,” it is an act of God done in time, and is intended to result in ever-increasing obedience, and in the daily enjoyment of the sprinkling of the blood of Christ. Second, in 2 Thess. ii. 13, 14, where the elect ones are said to be chosen “from the beginning,” *i.e.* from the very first reception of the Gospel in Thessalonica,* “through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth,” to ultimate, eternal, and glorious salvation, “whereunto,” *i.e.* to which sanctification and faith they were called by the Gospel. Certain it is, that sanctification and belief of the truth cannot be the ends of election, if they are the means of it, as they are here said to be; and we may therefore conclude, that the personal election of believers is a choice into the family of God of persons already believing and obedient. It does not, in the least degree, imply an exclusion of others from like precious blessings; nor does it render their final salvation irrevocably secure; they are still in a state of probation, and their election, through unbelief and misimprovement, may be rendered void, and come to nothing; they are therefore to give diligence to make their calling and election sure. (2 Peter i. 10.) And since God would have all men to be saved (1 Tim. ii. 4), and will in nowise cast out any that come to him (John vi. 37), the number of the actually elect may be indefinitely increased. And as true believers may “turn back unto

wherein he hath made us (Jews and Gentiles equally) accepted in the Beloved,” etc.—Fletcher’s “Works,” vol iii., pp. 302, 303.

* This is the interpretation which Mr. Watson puts upon the expression “from the beginning;” and he says, “when Calvinistic commentators interpret the clause to mean election from eternity, they make a gratuitous assumption which has nothing in the scope of the passage to warrant it.”

perdition," and be "cast away," the number of the elect may be indefinitely diminished.

From these remarks it will be seen that we regard the eternal, absolute, unconditional election of a set or determinate number of men to everlasting life as an invention of man, which is utterly destitute of support from the word of God; and that we regard the election of grace as God's choice of those who believe the Gospel to all the privileges and blessings of present salvation, and to the hope of eternal life through Christ Jesus. The former doctrine is productive of the following evils: (1.) It tends to perplex and confuse the mind, and renders all certainty on the subject of salvation impossible; (2.) It tends to make the confident presumptuous, and the fearful and timid melancholy and despairing; (3.) It is at variance with the plain invitations of the Gospel, which are made to all men; (4.) It greatly destroys human responsibility, and appears unfavourable to personal solicitude and earnestness concerning religion; (5.) It invests the Divine character with the awful charge of partiality; and (6.) Seems to render the judgment-day unnecessary. On the other hand, personal, conditional election, or the election of character, (1.) Is in harmony with all the Divine attributes; (2.) Is in unison with the commission to preach the glad tidings of the Gospel to all men; (3.) Involves men in circumstances of individual responsibility; (4.) Is favourable to personal holiness and Christian diligence; and (5.) Accords with man's responsibility, and the necessity for the judgment-day.

IX. Can the following passages be fairly interpreted in agreement with this doctrine of conditional election?

Matt. xxii. 14.—The parable clearly explains this passage. A king made a marriage feast, and invited many to partake of the provision; but those only were chosen (approved) who, having accepted the invitation, put on the wedding garment, and were thus fitted to commune with the king and his guests. So, "many are called" by the Gospel,—invited, admonished, besought to come to the feast of mercy; but such only are "*chosen*" to enjoy the blessings of grace and of glory who obey the call, become obedient to the truth, and walk in holiness of life. And these are "*few*," indeed, compared with the "*many*" who are called by the Gospel ministry. This is the only true interpretation of the passage; and it fully establishes the doctrine of conditional election; for it shows that men are "*chosen*" to inherit the blessings of grace and glory, not by mere sovereign decree, but in virtue of their compliance with the call of the Gospel. If they are not among the "*chosen*," the fault is their own, and they will be "*speechless*" with guilt when brought to the bar of the Eternal King.

Acts xiii. 48.—The Calvinists regard this text as teaching that those in that assembly who were foreordained or predestinated by

God's decree to eternal life, believed under the influence of that decree. What does the word *τεταγμενος* (which we translate *ordained*) mean? Certainly, it included no idea of *pre-ordination* or *pre-destination* of any kind. The verb *ταττω* or *τασσω* signifies to *place, set, order, appoint, dispose*: hence it refers to the disposition or readiness of mind of some that were in the congregation, such as the religious proselytes mentioned in verse 43. The Jews contradicted and blasphemed; the religious proselytes heard attentively, and received the word of life; the one party were utterly indisposed, through their own stubbornness, to receive the Gospel: the others, destitute of prejudice and prepossession, were glad to hear the truth; they, therefore, in this good *state and order* of mind, believed. Those who seek for the plain meaning of the word, will find it here.* Hence Doddridge paraphrases the text thus: "As many of those who were present as were, through the operation of Divine grace upon their hearts in good earnest *determined* for eternal life, and brought to a resolution of courageously facing all opposition in the way to it, believed, and openly embraced the Gospel." And in his comment he says: "I have chosen the word '*determined*' as having an ambiguity something like that in the original. The meaning of the sacred penman seems to be that all who were deeply and seriously concerned about their eternal happiness openly embraced the Gospel." †

X. *What are the principal objections to the Calvinian doctrine of the absolute and unconditional reprobation or rejection of certain persons from eternal salvation?*

1. THE FIRST AND GREATEST OBJECTION IS THAT NO SUCH DOCTRINE IS TO BE FOUND IN THE BIBLE. If Scripture taught this tenet of reprobation—taught that God has bestowed existence upon myriads whom he has irrevocably determined to give up to endless perdition—we should be compelled to receive it as a tremendous token of the sovereignty of the Most High. But why, in the absence of the words of inspiration, men should gratuitously fasten such a doctrine on their systems it is difficult to imagine.

2. IT IS DIRECTLY OPPOSED TO ALL THE REVEALED ATTRIBUTES OF GOD:—To his *love*, which is said to extend to the "world" (John iii. 16), and in virtue of which he is "not willing that any should perish" (2 Peter iii. 9); to his *justice*, for it represents him as destroying his creatures without any avoidable fault of their own—destroying them by the simple rule of his own sovereignty; to his *sincerity*, for, according to this scheme, while he sends the "good news" to "every creature," accompanied with earnest invitations to embrace it, he has decreed

* Dr. A. Clarke *in loco*. Watson's "Institutes," part ii., chap. xxvii.

† See "Family Expositor."

that huge multitudes shall be unalterably excluded from all share in its benefits; to his *veracity*, for he declares that "he is loving to every man" (Ps. cxlv. 9), and "is no respecter of persons" (Acts v. 34); and how can this be true when, by virtue of his own irresistible decree, one part of mankind are infallibly saved, and the rest infallibly damned? Thus the doctrine "destroys all his attributes at once. It overturns both his justice, mercy, and truth; yea, and represents the most holy God as worse than the devil, as both more false, more cruel, and more unjust."

3. IT HAS A MANIFEST TENDENCY TO DESTROY HOLINESS, for it wholly takes away those first motives to follow after it, so frequently proposed in Scripture, the hope of future reward and fear of punishment, the hope of heaven and fear of hell. A man may justly say, "If I am ordained to life, I shall live; if to death, I shall die; so I need not trouble myself about it." In this way does the doctrine tend to shut the very gate of holiness.

4. IT DIRECTLY TENDS TO DESTROY OUR ZEAL FOR GOOD WORKS. How can you run to snatch men as brands from the burning when you believe they are appointed thereunto from eternity? If you know that they are either elected or not elected, your advice, reproof, or exhortation is as needless and useless as our preaching. It is needless to them that are elected, for they will infallibly be saved without it; it is useless to them that are not elected, for with or without it they will infallibly be damned; therefore you cannot, consistently with your principles, take any pains about their salvation.

5. IT ALSO TENDS TO OVERTHROW THE WHOLE CHRISTIAN REVELATION. The point which the wisest of the modern unbelievers labour to prove is, that the Christian revelation is not necessary, knowing that if it be not necessary it is not true. Now, this point you give up; for—supposing *that* eternal, unchangeable decree—one part of mankind must be saved, though the Christian revelation were not in being, and the other part of mankind must be damned, notwithstanding that revelation. And what would an infidel desire more? In making the Gospel thus unnecessary to all sorts of men, you give up the whole Christian cause.*

XI. *But are there not certain texts which give countenance to the doctrine of unconditional reprobation?*

The following passages are often quoted with that view:—

Rom. ix. 13.—"Jacob, have I loved," etc. But no such doctrine is implied here; for, first, it is not Jacob and Esau personally who

* Some of these arguments are taken from Mr. Wesley's powerful and impassioned sermon on "Free Grace." Dr. Southey has given a large extract from this sermon, and when the late Earl of Liverpool read it in the Doctor's work, he declared that in his judgment it was the most eloquent passage he had ever met with in any writer, ancient or modern.—Jackson's "Life of Charles Wesley."

are spoken of, but their posterity, as appears from Mal. i. 2, 3,* and from the entire drift of the Apostle's discourse.† Secondly, the term "to hate" does not mean to abhor, but to regard with a less degree of favour, as is proved from Luke xiv. 26, compared with Matt. x. 37. The meaning of the passage is, God had certain benevolent purposes to accomplish, a dispensation of religious privileges to establish, and he preferred the seed of Jacob to that of Esau as the medium through which these purposes should be fulfilled. This he had a sovereign right to do. "So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy." (Rom. ix. 16.) Abraham *willed* that the blessing should be given to Ishmael; Isaac, *willed* that it should be given to Esau; and Esau *ran* to hunt for venison, that it might be regularly conveyed to him. But they were all disappointed; for God had originally intended that the blessing of being a great nation and a distinguished people should be given to Isaac and Jacob; and to this intention he adhered, for reasons sufficient to his own infinite wisdom. But though Jacob and his posterity were chosen from others to constitute the visible church, and to be the progenitors of the Messiah, they were not on that account irrevocably saved, for to many of them he swore that they should not enter into his rest (Heb. iii. 11); nor were Esau and his posterity irrevocably damned, for many of them were devoted servants of the living God.

Rom. ix. 17, 18.—There are two points in this passage claimed in favour of unconditional reprobation; namely, that of Pharaoh's being "raised up" (or, as it is supposed to mean, brought into existence) for the purpose of being a monument of Divine vengeance, and that of his being "hardened" by a direct influence from God. But in reference to Pharaoh's being "raised up," the original word *he-emadtica* has no reference to being born or brought into existence; it literally means "I have caused thee to stand." (See margin of Exod. ix. 16.) Turn to Exodus ix. 15, 16, and the subject will be made plain. In the Hebrew the verbs

* It was not Esau in person that said "we are impoverished," neither were his mountains and heritage laid waste. This was only true of some of the Edomites, his posterity.

† One proof that Jacob was loved and Esau hated was, "that the elder shall serve the younger," which was never true personally. Jacob never did exercise any power over Esau, nor was Esau ever subject to him. Jacob, on the contrary, was rather subject to Esau, and was sorely afraid of him, acknowledged him to be his *lord*, and himself to be his servant (see Gen. xxxii. 8, 13); and hence it appears that neither Jacob nor Esau, nor even their posterities, are brought here by the Apostle as instances of any *personal* reprobation from eternity. For it is very certain that very many, if not far the greatest part of Jacob's posterity, were wicked and rejected by God, and it is not less certain that some of Esau's posterity were partakers of the faith of their father Abraham.—Dr. A. Clarke *in loco*.

are in the past tense, and not in the future, as our translation improperly expresses them. And if translated, as they ought to be, in the subjunctive mood, or in the past instead of the future, the passage will stand thus: "For if now I had stretched out my hand, and had smitten thee and thy people with pestilence, thou shouldst have been cut off from the earth. But, truly, on this very account I have caused thee to stand, that I might cause thee to see my power, and that my name," etc. Thus God gave this wicked king to know that it was in consequence of his special providence that both he and his people had not been already destroyed by means of the past plagues; but God had preserved him for this very purpose, that he might have a further opportunity of manifesting that he, Jehovah, was the only true God, for the full conviction both of the Hebrews and the Egyptians; that the former might follow, and the latter fear before him. Judicious critics of almost all creeds have agreed to translate the original as above; a translation which it not only can bear, but requires, and which is in strict conformity to both the Septuagint and Targum.* There is therefore nothing in this text to countenance the notion that God had from all eternity appointed Pharaoh, and brought him into being to this end, that he might show his power in his destruction.

In reference to the *hardening of Pharaoh's heart*, all who have read the Scriptures with care know that God is frequently represented in them as *doing* what he only *permits* to be done. Pharaoh made his own heart stubborn against God, he hardened his neck against Divine reproofs (see Exod. viii. 15, ix. 34); therefore God in his holy anger withdrew from him the influences of his grace and Spirit, and gave him up to the blindness and hardness of his own heart; then he rushed on stubbornly in his course of haughty disobedience, became "a vessel of wrath, fitted" by his malice and disobedience "for destruction" (Rom. ix. 22), and at length was "suddenly destroyed, and that without remedy." Thus the sins of Pharaoh were his own voluntary acts; and his doom the result, not of any arbitrary decree, but of his wilful perversity and rebellion.

Isa. vi. 9, 10, compared with Acts xxviii. 25-27.—In the former passage the prophet is represented as the agent or cause of the people's impenitence. This, however, is a form of speech which obtains in the prophetic writings, by which the prophets are said to perform the thing which they only declare or foretell (of which see instances in Ezek. xliii. 3; Jer. i. 10); "Make the heart of this people fat," etc.; *i.e.*, *declare it* to be stupid and senseless, and predict the removal from them of the means of salvation which they have so long abused, so that they shall not "see with their eyes," etc. And this agrees with the parallel passage in the Acts, where the blindness and impenitence are

* Dr. Clarke on Exod. ix. 15, 16.

represented as the people's own—a state they have brought upon themselves, and which is now to be punished by judicial blindness and obduracy. Our Lord gives the same meaning to the passage in Matt. xiii. 13-15: "Therefore speak I to them in parables, because they seeing, see not," etc.—in pursuance of the general rule laid down in verse 12, I do not give more knowledge to this people, because they use not that which they have already; and in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah, hearing ye shall hear; all possible means will be given you; yet they will profit you nothing, because your heart is sensual, stupid, and insensible; your spiritual senses are shut up; yea, you have closed your eyes against the light, as being unwilling to understand the things of God, and afraid, not desirous, that he should heal you.*

One other alleged support of Calvinistic reprobation must be mentioned:—

1 Pet. ii. 8.—It is admitted that our translation implies that the disobedient were appointed to be disobedient. But the original does not convey that idea. For the words in construction stand connected in this manner:—"The disobedient stumble against the word to which they were appointed." They were appointed to stumble against the word, but not to be disobedient. Now to understand what the Apostle means by the disobedient stumbling against the word, let it be observed that he alludes to Isa. viii. 14, 15, where it is said, "and many among them shall stumble, and fall, and shall be broken;" consequently their being appointed to stumble must be taken in connection with the words, "and fall and shall be broken," which follow in the same sentence, and which, being well known to his Jewish readers, the Apostle supposed would naturally occur to them. On this supposition the meaning will be, that they were appointed to be broken as the consequence and punishment of their stumbling and falling, which meaning is confirmed by what our Lord said in explication of Isaiah's prophecy. (Matt. xxi. 44.)† Here then, again, the doctrine of unconditional reprobation has no sanction. The people stumbled and fell through their obstinate unbelief; and thus their stumbling and falling, as well as their unbelief, were of themselves. In consequence of this they were appointed to be broken, God having appointed from all eternity, "he that believeth not shall be damned."‡

Other texts might be examined, but we should find nothing that favours the Calvinistic theory of reprobation. The one great truth holds good, that Jesus Christ "by the grace of God tasted death for every man." God is sincere when he invites all men to come to him for salvation, and expostulates with those who refuse compliance with his will. He means what he says when

* Wesley's Notes.

† Macknight's Epistles *in loco*.

‡ Wesley's Notes, and Dr. A. Clarke *in loco*.

he solemnly swears by himself, that he has no pleasure in their destruction. But while God is love, he is a God of justice, too; and if men continue to "resist the Holy Ghost," if they "will not come to Christ that they may have life," they shall be punished even here by the withdrawal of those gracious influences which they contemned and despised, and hereafter by the gnawings of the deathless worm and the scorings of the quenchless flame. And under their sentence of condemnation they will be "speechless," confessing that God is just, and that they were the authors of their own ruin. This is the reprobation which the Bible teaches.

XII. How should we understand the terms "to call," "the called," etc., which frequently occur in the New Testament?

1. SOMETIMES "TO CALL" SIGNIFIES MERELY TO INVITE TO THE BLESSINGS OF THE GOSPEL; "the called" are, therefore, the invited. (Prov. i. 24; Matt. xxii 14; Acts ii. 39; Rom. i. 5, 6; Gal. i. 6, 15, v. 13; 1 Thess. ii. 12; 2 Thess. ii. 14.)

2. SOMETIMES "THE CALLING" IS NOT THE INVITATION OF MEN TO PARTAKE OF SPIRITUAL BENEFITS MERELY; BUT AN INVITATION OF THEM TO FORM A SPIRITUAL SOCIETY, COMPOSED OF THE BELIEVING MEN OF ALL NATIONS, whether Jews or Gentiles, and to be formed into this fellowship for mutual benefit, and for the purpose of diffusing the benefits of salvation among men. (Rom. viii. 30; 1 Cor. i. 9; Col. iii. 15.) Those who accept this invitation, and join themselves to the church by faith and baptism, are spoken of as "partakers of the heavenly calling" (Heb. iii. 1); and as "the called," because of their obedience to the invitation. (Rom. ix. 24; 1 Cor. i. 24, vii. 18.) As they were invited to this fellowship in accordance with God's original purpose as declared to Abraham (Gen. xvii. 4), they are said to be "the called according to his purpose." (Rom. viii. 28.) As the object of this church state is to promote holiness, it is termed a "holy calling." (2 Tim. i. 9.) As sanctity is required of all the members, they are "called to be saints." (Rom. i. 7.) As the final result is to be eternal life, we hear of "the prize of the high calling" (Phil. iii. 14); "the hope of their calling" (Eph. i. 18, iv. 4); and of their being "called to his eternal glory." (1 Tim. vi. 12; 1 Thess. ii. 12; 2 Thess. ii. 14; 1 Pet. v. 10.) And as this final result is ensured to none but the faithful (Matt. xxiv. 13; Rev. ii. 10), they are required to "give diligence to make their calling sure." (2 Pet. i. 10.)

XIII. What is meant by the phrase "effectual calling"?

It is a phrase in use among Calvinistic writers, by which they mean an inward compelling of the mind to embrace the outward invitation of the Gospel, and to yield to the inward solicitations of the Spirit which accompanies it. But we find no ground either for the phrase, or for the doctrine which it expresses, in the New

Testament. The "calling" of Scripture is, as we have shown, the invitation, and offer, and publication of the Gospel; a bringing men into a state of Christian privilege to be improved unto salvation, and *not an operation in them*. "Effectual invitation," "effectual offer," and "effectual publication," are turns of the phrase which sufficiently expose the delusiveness of the Calvinian idea.*

XIV. *Does not Romans xi. 29, support the view that every one who is called must necessarily be obedient to the call?*

No; the passage is often cited under that notion, but the context shows that it has no such intention. St. Paul is speaking of the unbelieving Jews, who, with regard to the Gospel which they had rejected, were enemies to God, on account of that grace which had admitted the Gentiles into his church and family; "but as touching the election," whereby they were chosen and separated from all the people of the earth to be the peculiar people of God, they are beloved,—favour is in store for them for their fathers' sakes. "For the gifts" which God had bestowed upon them, "and the calling," the invitation with which he had favoured them, he will never revoke. In reference to this point *there is no change of mind in him* (for this is the meaning of repentance as it applies to God), and therefore they may yet be restored to their original privileges, and enjoy every spiritual blessing with the fulness of the Gentiles.† Macknight's comment agrees with this: "The blessings which God freely bestowed on Abraham and his seed, and his calling or making them his people, God will never repent of; but will restore to his natural seed the honour of being his people, after the Redeemer hath turned away their ungodliness of unbelief." (Ezek. xvi. 60, 61, 62.)

XV. *If the calling of the New Testament be, as now stated, an invitation, an offer, a publication of the Gospel, does not 1 Cor. i. 26, prove that that offer or invitation is limited, many of the "wise" and "noble" being excluded from its benefits?*

Again we refer to the context, which shows that the discourse is to be understood, not of the Gospel call to salvation, but of the calling of the preachers of the Gospel, who were employed to convert the world. God chose not the learned, the mighty, and the noble ones of this world, to preach the Gospel, but illiterate and weak men, and men of low birth; and by making them successful in reforming mankind, he put to shame the legislators, statesmen, and philosophers among the heathens, and the learned scribes and doctors among the Jews, who never had done anything to the purpose in that matter. Hence, the words should be rendered, "ye see the calling of you, brethren, that not many wise men," etc., "*call you*," i.e., into the fellowship of the Gospel.‡

* Watson's "Institutes." † Dr. A. Clarke. ‡ Macknight on the Epistles.

CHAPTER IX.

REPENTANCE.

I. *What is the nature of evangelical repentance?*

This question may best be answered in the words of some of our leading divines. Mr. Wesley's definition is given, as usual, in few and pregnant words: "By repentance I mean conviction of sin, producing real desires and sincere resolutions of amendment." It is thus defined in the "Second Catechism" of the Wesleyan Methodists—the definition being taken, with one or two important verbal alterations, from the "Assembly's Shorter Catechism":—"True repentance is a grace of the Holy Spirit, whereby a sinner, from a sense of his sins and apprehension of the mercy of God in Christ, doth, with grief and hatred of his sin, turn from it to God, with full purpose of, and endeavours after, future obedience." And thus by Rev. J. S. Pipe, in his "Dialogues on Sanctification": "Repentance is such a sight and sense of the evil of sin as leads you to loathe both it and yourself in the presence of God for having been guilty of it, attended by such unfeigned humiliation and contrition of spirit as constrains you to confess its evil, and to forsake it altogether." And thus by Rev. Dr. Wardlaw: Evangelical repentance is "that gracious contrition of spirit in which the heart is humbled and melted towards God, mercy implored from him as a justly offended sovereign, and sin seen in its deformity, hated and forsaken." We shall see as we proceed how these definitions accord with the teachings of Holy Scripture.

The two Greek verbs which are alike rendered in our translation by the English word "repent," are μεταμέλομαι and μετανόω; corresponding to which are two nouns μεταμέλεια and μετάνοια the former meaning "after-concern," the latter "after-thought."* And in every case of true and genuine repentance the ideas conveyed by both these words are fully and simultaneously realised. "After-concern"—i.e., anxiety and concern on account of something that has been amiss; "after-thought," signifying such a change or alteration of mind as implies the return to right views, right feelings, and right conduct; or, as it is expressed by St. Luke, *the*

* Dr. Wardlaw's "Systematic Theology," vol. iii., p. 95.

coming to himself of a man who has been acting a foolish and criminal part.* See how this change of mind and "concern," deep, keen, trembling concern, are brought out in the Word of God: (1.) In incidental descriptions of penitence. (Ps. cxix. 58-60; Ezek. xxxvi. 31; Isa. lvii. 15, lxvi. 2.) (2.) In the prayers of penitent men. (Ps. li. 1-4, cxxx. 1-4; Dan. ix. 4, 7; Ezra ix. 5, 6.) (3.) In the practical illustrations of penitence: Manasseh (2 Chron. xxxiii. 12, 13); the Ninevites (Jonah iii. 5, 8); the Prodigal (Luke xv. 17-20); the Publican (Luke xviii. 13); Peter (Luke xxiii. 61, 62); Saul of Tarsus (Acts ix. 5, 6, 11). From the whole we conclude, in accordance with the definitions given above, that "the sinner that repenteth is one who is convinced of sin, humbled before God, and sorrowful on account of his guilt; who sincerely desires and resolves to lead a new life, and who, in pursuance of that desire and resolution, applies himself with full purpose of heart to the mortification of the sin which easily besets him, and earnestly seeks the promised salvation of God in Christ Jesus."†

II. *St. Paul refers to two kinds of sorrow*:—"Godly sorrow," and "*the sorrow of the world.*" (2 Cor. viii. 10.) *How may they be distinguished?*

"Godly sorrow" arises especially from the view of sin in its relation to God. The crime has been committed against *him*; *his* law has been violated; *he* has been offended. Upon this point the attention is fixed with absorbing and overpowering interest, and from that arises the depth and pungency of the sorrow. See the language of David in regard to his great sin. (Ps. li. 4.) He could not have been insensible to the wrong done to Uriah, or to the laws of the land, or to the injury which his example would do to men. But the mind was turned from everything else, and fixed on the amazing offence regarded as committed against God. Hence the soul "turns to God" (1 Thess. i. 9), with humble confession (Ps. li. 3; 1 John i. 9); with earnest prayer for mercy (Ps. li. 1, 2; Luke xviii. 13); and with steadfast resolutions to go and sin no more. (Prov. xxviii. 13; Ps. cxix. 59; Job. xxxiv. 32.) This is "repentance *towards God.*" "The sorrow of the world" may involve the deepest regret for having sinned, but it has none of the elements of repentance mentioned above. *It terminates on the world*, and may be produced by the mere dread of punishment, or by the mere shame of detection, or by the loss and suffering and disrepute which the sin has occasioned. Hence, if the sin be forsaken, it is not because there is any deep sense of its intrinsic evil in the sight of God; there is no apprehension of the mercy of God in Christ; no real hearty turning to God; remorse, shame, fear—these are the emotions that stir within; and, as in the case of Judas, and many many more, such sorrow "*worketh death,*" by producing the horrors of despair, or the guilt of suicide.

* Dr. Bunting, "Sermon on Luke xv. 10." † Ibid.

III. *Is repentance, of itself, effectual in securing forgiveness?*

The whole host of Deistical and Socinian writers,—all, in fact, who dislike the doctrine of the atonement,—maintain that from the relation which subsists between the Creator and the creature, there can be nothing needed, but that man, if he have offended, should repent; and that on his repentance, he is necessarily forgiven. There never was a theory which could draw less support, whether from reason, from experience, or from Scripture. *What are the teachings of human governments?* Whoever dreams, when laws have been broken, of the criminal being forgiven just because he is contrite? He may be bitterly sorry for what he has done, he might promise never to repeat the offence, but all this avails nothing to the satisfying of justice, to the making amends to the violated majesty of the law; and the man is condemned, though with no suspicion that his repentance is insincere, and moreover, without any imputation on the judge of hardheartedness. What right can we have to suppose that what would be utterly ineffectual had we broken the laws of man, must necessarily be efficacious when set against the breaking of God's laws? *And what is the testimony of experience so far as there is a present administration of punishment?* Is repentance sufficient to turn away the penalties which follow in the way of natural consequences upon actions? If the constitution is injured by intemperance, will repentance restore it? If property is wasted by prodigality, will repentance recover it? If the character is stained by vice, will repentance purify it? And how can repentance suffice to avert future punishment, when thus manifestly inadequate to deliver us from present punishment? There are no grounds whatever for supposing repentance, by itself, sufficient to procure pardon. "If certain passages of the New Testament connect pardon with repentance, the connection there asserted is rather remote than immediate; and repentance must, in such texts, be considered as leading to, and terminating in, the faith of the Gospel, and as only then crowned with remission of sins. Since it is entirely for the sake of the atonement made by Jesus Christ that God justifies us, he fitly and righteously requires from us a distinct recognition and cordial reception of that atonement. Now, thus to recognise and receive the atonement is in no sense the province of repentance, but the work of faith. It is 'in Christ' that God is reconciling the world unto himself. In order, therefore, to be reconciled, we must meet him in his Son; and this we can never do, until to 'repentance toward God,' by which we confess, deplore, and renounce sin, we add that 'faith in our Lord Jesus Christ' by which we accept and claim him as our Saviour."*

IV. *Does repentance, as connected with salvation, precede or follow the exercise of faith?*

* Dr. Bunting, "Sermon on Rom. v. 1."

It is very common with Calvinistic writers to insist on faith as preceding repentance. *We* believe that in the order of time repentance is exercised first. "There is, indeed, a faith which precedes and induces repentance—a belief of the testimony of God concerning the evil and demerit of sin, and concerning his willingness to receive such as renounce sin and turn to him. The former must be believed, or the sinner will see no need of repentance. The latter must be in some degree apprehended, or he will have no sufficient encouragement to repentance. But the belief which thus produces penitence is not the faith which justifies and saves him." Justifying faith has a direct and immediate reference to Christ crucified, and is *consequent* upon that penitential sorrow which mourns for guilt and cries for mercy. The jailor at Philippi was a real penitent when he was directed to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. John the Baptist observed the same order in the exhortation, "Repent and believe the Gospel" (Mark i. 15); and so did St. Paul in his preaching, whether to Jews or Greeks (Acts xx. 21), "testifying repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ."

V. Is there not an union of Divine and human agency in the repentance of a sinner?

There is; for repentance is distinctly stated to be the gift of God (Acts v. 31, xi. 18; 2 Tim. ii. 25); and yet is commanded as the duty and act of man. (Mark vi. 12; Luke xiii. 3; Acts viii. 22, xvii. 30.) God, by his Spirit, applies the truth to the heart,—the truth concerning the claims of his government, the extent and spirituality of his law, and the love of the Lord Jesus. He unveils to the mind the number and aggravations of those sins that have been committed, and the exposure to everlasting wrath which the sinner has incurred. In this way he convinceth of sin, and gives power to repent. But the agency thus exercised is not that of compulsion—it is not such as to destroy the freedom of man, or in any way to interfere with the proper exercise of his powers as a moral agent. And in view of those powers he is commanded to repent, to yield himself to the influence of those views and feelings which the Spirit has awakened, to humble himself before God, to implore his mercy, and turn himself from his transgressions. If he does not repent, it is because he *will* not.

CHAPTER X.

JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH.

I. *What is justification?*

To justify a person is a law phrase, denoting the action of a judge, who, after a fair legal trial, declares a man innocent who was accused at his bar, and acquits him by a sentence pronounced in the hearing of the accuser and of the witnesses. The man passes out of a court free from all blame. The accusation has fallen to the ground. He is justified in the legal, proper sense of the term. And in this sense the word is often used in Scripture. (Job xxxiii. 32; Deut. xxv. 1.)

EVANGELICAL JUSTIFICATION has to do with man as guilty and ungodly. He is a convicted offender. A pardon, however, is granted, which destroys the connection between his conduct and its consequences. This is justification improper or secondary, and is the general meaning of the word as used in the Epistles of St. Paul. Hence the definition of the "Conference Catechism:" "Justification is an act of God's free grace, wherein he pardoneth all our sins, and accepteth us as righteous in his sight, only for the sake of Christ." And the still fuller definition of Wesley: "The plain, scriptural notion of justification is pardon, the forgiveness of sins. It is that act of God the Father, whereby, for the sake of the propitiation made by the blood of his Son, he showeth forth his righteousness (or mercy) by the remission of the sins that are past."*

II. *How is it proved that justification is substantially the same blessing as pardon?*

In a variety of passages, justification, pardon, forgiveness, remission of sins, and terms of a like import, are used synonymously. (See Acts xiii. 38, 39; Luke xviii. 13, 14; Rom. iv. 5-8.)

III. *But if pardon is substantially the same as justification, why is the latter term so frequently used in preference to the former?*

Two reasons may be assigned:—

* Sermon v.

1. "THE BLESSING IN QUESTION IS CONFERRED UPON MANKIND IN A MANNER WHICH EXHIBITS THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OR JUSTICE OF GOD IN EQUAL PROMINENCE WITH HIS GOODNESS AND MERCY." * "The forgiveness of sin may be the act of mere mercy, not only without any respect to the dictates of justice, but in violation of its principles. *Justification* is an act of mercy, indeed, but of mercy in connection with justice, and under its control. It is mercy that pardons, but justice that justifies." † Here the grand doctrine of the atonement of Christ is brought into view. A Being of infinite dignity has become the voluntary and all-sufficient Surety for sinful men. He died the just for the unjust, sustaining the penalty of the law, and meeting the demands of justice; and on this account the law itself consents to the pardon of the offender, and God, in his official character of *judge*, shows mercy upon terms that are consistent with a *righteous* government. Thus, "grace reigns through righteousness." God "is faithful and *just* to forgive us our sins" (1 John i. 9),—"just and the *justifier* of him that believeth." (See Rom. iii. 21-26.)

2. THE BLESSING IN QUESTION INVESTS MEN WITH ALL THE PRIVILEGES OF RIGHTEOUSNESS. Pardon may signify nothing more than a remission of the penalty due to sin. Justification involves a restoration to forfeited immunities and privileges. The man is accounted righteous, and is treated as such—treated in relation to God and eternity as an innocent and holy being. It is as if a deed were put into his hand entitling him to be henceforth dealt with as one would be who had performed the whole condition of the covenant of life. The whole matter, then, may be summed up in the following language: "Justification is that act of God, viewed as our righteous and yet merciful Judge, by which, for the sake of the satisfaction and merits of Christ, embraced and applied to the heart by faith, he discharges the criminal at his bar, and treats him as a just person, in full accordance with the untarnished holiness of his own nature, and the inviolable rectitude of his administrations." ‡

IV. *What are the leading errors that are propagated with regard to this blessing?*

1. THAT OF POPERY, WHICH CONFOUNDS JUSTIFICATION WITH SANCTIFICATION. So the Council of Trent declares, that "justification is not only the remission of sins, but also the sanctification of the inner man." "In the modern semi-Popery of the Oxford Tractarians the same heresy forms an article of its creed. Its writers sometimes identify justification with sanctification as one and the same thing; and at other times contend

* Rev. T. Jackson.

† Hare "On Justification."

‡ Dr. Hannah.

that the former includes the latter; or, as Mr. Newman preposterously expresses it, the term to justify means 'to count righteous, but including under that meaning to make righteous.'"^{*}

That sanctification, which constitutes a man inherently righteous, is *concomitant* with justification, we know; that the two are *identical* we deny. The one retates to state, the other to character. "The one implies what God does *for* us though his Son; the other what God works *in* us by his Spirit. So that although some rare instances may be found wherein the terms 'justified' and 'justification' are used in so wide a sense as to include sanctification also, yet, in general use, they are sufficiently distinguished from each other, both by St. Paul and the other inspired writers."[†]

2. THAT OF ANTINOMIANISM, WHICH SPEAKS OF JUSTIFICATION AS A SENTENCE PASSED IN THE DIVINE MIND FROM ETERNITY. There is nothing whatever in the Bible to support this hypothesis. Nowhere are sinners spoken of as justified till they believe the Gospel. Unless our faith, therefore, can be from eternity, our justification cannot be from eternity. It is the guilty who are pardoned, the ungodly who are justified. (Rom. iv. 5.) Whilst ungodliness and guilt remain, "so far are any from being justified, that they are 'under wrath,' in a state of condemnation with which a state of justification cannot consist, for the contradiction is palpable; so that the advocates of this wild notion must either give up justification in eternity, or a state of condemnation in time. If they hold the former, they contradict common sense; if they deny the latter, they deny the Scriptures."[‡]

3. THAT OF CERTAIN CALVINISTIC WRITERS, WHO TEACH THAT JUSTIFICATION IMPORTS THE IMPUTATION OR ACCOUNTING TO US OF THE PERSONAL RIGHTEOUSNESS OF CHRIST. They put the matter thus: "Christ so represented the elect that his righteousness is imputed to us as ours; as if we ourselves had been what he was, that is, perfectly obedient to the law of God, and had done what he did as perfectly righteous." Hence their writings abound with such figurative expressions as "being clothed with the righteousness of Christ," "appearing before God as invested in it, so that no fault can be laid to our charge." And certain men, who turn the grace of God into licentiousness, go so far as to contend that since Christ has rendered perfect obedience for them, and what he did is accounted as done by them, they are under no real obligation of obedience, and can fear no penal consequences even from a course of the most flagrant vice. The following considerations are fatal to this theory:

(1.) "It is nowhere stated in Scripture that Christ's personal righteousness is imputed to us. Not a text can be found which

* Dr. Wardlaw's "Systematic Theology."

† Wesley's Sermons, No. v.

‡ Watson's "Institutes," part ii., chap. xxiii.

contains any enunciation of the doctrine." Even the fourth chapter of Romans, where it has been supposed to exist in all its proofs, gives no countenance to the theory. It is repeatedly said, that "faith is imputed for righteousness;" but in no place here, that Christ's obedience to the moral law is imputed to any man.

(2.) "There are many duties which the moral law requires, which Christ never fulfilled in our stead, and never could. We have duties of a domestic kind, which belong solely to ourselves, in the relation of parents, husbands, wives, servants, etc., in which relations Christ never stood. While, therefore, he furnishes grace to every true believer to fulfil these duties to God's glory, he has fulfilled none of them for us."*

(3.) "This doctrine shifts the meritorious cause of man's justification from Christ's 'obedience unto death,' to Christ's active obedience to the precepts of the law; and leaves no rational account of the ground of Christ's vicarious sufferings. To his 'blood' the New Testament writers ascribe our redemption; and 'faith in his blood' is as clearly held out as the instrumental cause of our justification; but by this doctrine the attention and hope of men are perversely turned away from his sacrificial death to his holy life, which, though necessary, is nowhere represented as that on account of which men are pardoned."†

(4.) The passages of Scripture which are appealed to in proof of this doctrine, when rightly interpreted, give it no support. Those passages may be divided into three classes:—

(a.) The first class is of those which speak of the righteousness of God or of Christ: such as 2 Pet. i. 1; Rom. i. 17, iii. 5, 21-26, x. 3; Phil. iii. 9. But none of these passages contain one word about imputation, or the most distant allusion to anything resembling it. That must be supplied by the lively imagination of the reader. Nor do they contain anything like a hint about justification by the imputation of active obedience. When in these passages the Apostles speak of the righteousness of God, if it were allowed that the personal righteousness of Christ is what is meant by that phrase, they make no distinction between his passive and his active righteousness; yet this distinction is absolutely necessary to the support of the doctrine, which supposes that we are justified by his active, and not by his passive obedience or righteousness. But these passages do not speak of the obedience of the man Christ Jesus at all; they speak most plainly of the righteousness of God. It is true, one of the texts speaks of "the righteousness of our God and Saviour;" but this is not his righteousness as man, but as God,—his Divine righteousness, which it is impossible to impute to a human being.

* Dr. A. Clarke.

† Watson's "Institutes," part ii., chap. xxiii. Hare "On Justification," pp. 52-54.

What, then, is the meaning of "the righteousness of God?" The general meaning of it is, God's just administration of his own righteous laws. Of this general meaning, a particular application is often made; in which case it sometimes implies his justice in the punishment of impenitent sinners, but more frequently his justice in pardoning sin, through the atonement.

(b.) The second class is of those which speak of our justification through Jesus Christ: *e.g.*, Jer. xxiii. 6; Isa. xlv. 24; Rom. x. 4; 1 Cor. i. 30. But all that appears from these verses is that all our righteousness or justification is from God through Christ. It is not at all stated that we are justified by his obedience; nor that we are justified by his active, rather than by his passive obedience; nor that his obedience justifies by imputation. There is, indeed, one text in which St. Paul speaks of justification by the obedience of Christ. (Rom. v. 18, 19.) But here is nothing said of the active obedience of Christ as distinguished from his obedient suffering, and which might lead us to attribute the free gift of justification to the former, rather than to the latter. If the Apostle is supposed to speak here of the active obedience of Christ, as distinguished from his sufferings, his death is, of course, excluded from the work of justification; but this cannot be allowed in view of Rom. v. 9. As St. Paul has decided that we are justified by the blood of Christ, there is reason to suspect that he speaks here of his passive, rather than of his active obedience—his obedience unto death.

(c.) The third class is of those which speak of imputed righteousness: *e.g.*, Rom. iv. 3, 5, 6, 9, 11, etc. But the word here rendered "imputed" is λογίζομαι, which means to reckon, to account, but is nowhere used by St. Paul in such a connection as to imply the act of transferring, of taking from one, to place to the account of another. In the texts alluded to, the Apostle never once intimates that it is the active obedience of Christ which is imputed to us for righteousness, but uniformly asserts that the faith of the person justified is imputed for righteousness. It does not appear, then, that there is one plain passage of Scripture for the support of this doctrine.*

IF IT BE ASKED, IS THERE THEN NO SENSE IN WHICH IT MAY BE SAID THAT THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF CHRIST IS IMPUTED TO US? we reply, yes. Although the phrase has no foundation in Scripture, it is sometimes employed by Arminian and Wesleyan writers in a sense that is perfectly scriptural. Understanding "the righteousness of Christ," as including "what he did in obedience to the precepts of the law, and what he suffered in satisfaction of its penalty, which, taken together, constitute that mediatorial righteousness for the sake of which the Father is ever well pleased in him," this may be said to be "imputed" to us when "*its collective merits and moral effects*"

* Hare "On Justification," pp. 55, 66.

are so reckoned to our account that we are released from all guilt, and accepted of God.* Every one can see how wide the difference between this doctrine and that which teaches that the active righteousness of Christ is "personally imputed in its *formal nature or distinct acts*." But are not the remarks of Dr. A. Clarke worthy of consideration? "I am quite of Mr. Wesley's mind, that once 'we leaned too much towards Calvinism,' and especially in admitting in any sense the unscriptural doctrine of the imputed righteousness of Christ. I never use the distinction of righteousness imputed, righteousness imparted, righteousness practised. In no part of the Book of God is Christ's righteousness ever said to be imputed to us for our justification, and I greatly doubt whether the doctrine of Christ's active obedience in our justification does not take away from the infinite merit of his sacrificial death." "That he fulfilled the moral law we know, without which he could not have been qualified to be our Mediator; but we must take heed lest we attribute that to obedience (which was the necessary consequence of his immaculate nature) which belongs to his passion and death."

V. *We find it frequently asserted in Scripture, that no man can be justified on the ground of his obedience to the law of God.* (Acts xiii. 39; Rom. iii. 20, 28; Gal. ii. 16, etc.) *What views have been propagated in opposition to this doctrine?*

1. THOSE OF THE CHURCH OF ROME. Notwithstanding the ostentatious parade she makes of cross and crucifix, her principle, to all practical intents and purposes, is salvation by works. By prayers and penances, by fasts and vigils, by pilgrimages and privations, and last, not least, by acts of living or dying charity to the church, she teaches, and has always taught, that men may earn the mercy of God, and purchase a right to heaven. "And so very far has the notion of merit been carried, that a man may not only have enough to serve for himself, and procure his own salvation and the opening of the gates of heaven to him by St. Peter, but even a redundant stock, which may be placed to the account of others, for their release from the pains of purgatorial fire, and their reception to the kingdom above. These redundant works are termed *works of supererogation*, being over and above what are required; certainly, the greatest conceivable height of absurdity as well as of self-righteous and presumptive arrogance."†

2. THOSE OF THE UNITARIAN SCHOOL. There are no writers who more clearly and boldly affirm that it is by works, and by works alone, that any man can find acceptance with God. "Repentance and a good life," said Dr. Priestley, one of the most learned of these writers—"are of themselves sufficient to

* Dr. Bunting's "Sermon on Justification by Faith."

† Dr. Wardlaw's "Systematic Theology," vol. ii., chap. xl.

recommend to the favour of God." And says Belsham, "The practice of virtue is always represented as the only means of obtaining happiness both here and hereafter." And Dr. Harwood affirms with honest, straightforward effrontery, "Other foundation can no man lay. All hopes founded upon anything else than a good moral life are merely imaginary." "This is sufficiently plain and sufficiently daring; the very terms of the inspired Apostle being borrowed for the purpose of making the contradiction the more pointed."^{*}

Views such as these, however, being founded in the principles and tendencies of our fallen nature, are found in their full spirit among the members of churches whose teaching is in the highest degree scriptural. It is the most natural of all things, when the horrible conviction rushes into the soul that we are lost, to try by obedience, or other works of righteousness that we can do, to make reparation for past iniquities, and to repeal the debt of obligation which we owe to heaven. And very often it is not till men learn by prolonged and painful and unsuccessful trials that they cannot be their own saviour, that their proud hearts allow them to stand at the gate of mercy, their plea for pardon being, not their own merits, nothing, nothing whatever but the precious blood of Christ.

VI. *When it is asserted that a man cannot be justified "by the law of Moses," is the reference to the moral or only the ceremonial part of the Mosaic law?*

Writers of the Socinian and Pelagian schools insist upon it that it is only the ceremonial law which is so peremptorily excluded from the ground of justification. But the entire tenor of St. Paul's reasoning on the subject is in direct opposition to any such limitation as this. Read Rom. iii. 19, 20, which teaches that "by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified." The context shows of what "law" he is speaking; for he says concerning it: (1.) That it proves "all the world" to be "guilty" and condemned; but as a great proportion of the world had never been under the ceremonial law, they could not be condemned nor humbled by its teachings or its rites. It is the moral law by which Jews and Gentiles stand convicted before God. It also says: (2.) That "by the law is the knowledge of sin," which is true only of the moral law. It (and not the ceremonial law) shows what sin is, and how men have deviated from the righteous demands of God. Read also Rom. iii. 31. Here "the law," without the deeds of which a man is justified, is said to be established through faith. Now, it is acknowledged that the ceremonial law is abolished, and that the obligations of the moral law remain unaltered. It is the latter therefore that is established by faith, because this faith works by love, and love is the principle of

* Dr. Wardlaw's "Systematic Theology," vol. ii., chap. xl.

obedience. The course of the Apostle's argument throughout shows that the one subject before his mind was the moral law—the rule of moral conduct which God had given to both Jews and Gentiles: to the former in their own Scripture; to the latter in that law written in their hearts by his own Spirit. And by this law, Divine authority declares that neither Jews nor Gentiles could be justified.*

VII. *How is it proved that men cannot be justified by the works of the law?*

1. THIS IS EVIDENT FROM THE FACT THAT THE LAW HAS BEEN BROKEN. It is a fundamental maxim of all legislation, that "the doers of the law shall be justified;" in the legal sense of the word, they are proved to be innocent, acquitted from the charge of guilt; and in order to our sustaining a plea of justification by our own doings, or works, or deservings, we must prove a "continuance in all things written in the book of the law to do them." This is absolutely and peremptorily required. "He that doeth these things" perfectly and unceasingly "shall live by them." But how is it possible that we should stand on such a plea as this; we, who instead of continuing in all things required by the law, should perhaps discover, if we were to weigh ourselves in the balances of the sanctuary, that there is scarcely one of the ten commandments which we have not broken, either in its letter or its spirit? No; all such are under the curse. (Gal. iii. 10.) The broken law condemns them, but can never justify, unless we could fancy so self-contradictory an anomaly as that of a law which admitted the violation of itself, and justified the breaker as well as the keeper of it. Here is the self-evident truth, "a broken law never can by possibility justify the breaker of it; i.e., never can pronounce *him* guiltless by whom its requirements have been broken. And while we cannot pronounce him innocent, it makes, at the same time, no provision for the pardon of the guilty."

2. IT IS EVIDENT FROM THE FACT THAT WHATEVER WE DO IN THE WAY OF RIGHTEOUSNESS WE RENDER NO MORE THAN IS ABSOLUTELY DUE TO GOD. If we had ability to commence a course of obedience, and henceforth keep the whole law, present obedience cannot atone for past transgression. It would be no more than the discharge of duty, and after all leave us unprofitable servants. Thus the guilt we had contracted would remain unexpiated, and the sentence of death unrepealed.

3. IT IS ALSO EVIDENT FROM THE FACT THAT IF WE COULD CLAIM ACCEPTANCE ON THE GROUND OF OBEDIENCE, WE ARE NOT ABLE TO PERFORM IT. We are "without strength," "alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in

* See Wesley's Sermons, No. v.; Hare "On Justification," pp. 91, 92.

us," possessed of the carnal mind, which is "enmity against God," "in the flesh," and therefore "*cannot* please God." To a guilty nature, then, the ground of justification is not, and cannot be, his own obedience or "the works of the law."

VIII. *What is justifying faith?*

"It is not a mere assent to the general truths of the Gospel, nor a mere belief of its essential doctrines (James ii. 19), but a personal trust (Eph. i. 12, 13; Rom. xv. 12) in the sacrificial blood of the Son of God (Rom. iii. 24, 25; Gal. ii. 20), exercised in a penitent state of heart (Mark i. 15), and productive both of peace of conscience and of inward and outward holiness."* (Rom. v. 1; James ii. 14-17.) Mr. Wesley explains the subject thus: "Justifying faith implies, not only a Divine evidence or conviction that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, but a sure trust and confidence that Christ died for *my* sins, that he loved me and gave himself for me."† Dr. Bunting presents us with a very comprehensive view of the subject in his sermon on "Justification by Faith." Justifying faith has respect in general to all that Christ is set forth in the Gospel as doing and suffering, in order to our redemption and pardon. But it has respect in particular to the atoning sacrifice of Christ. The acts or exercises of this faith seem to be three. It includes—

"(1.) The assent of the understanding to the truth of the testimony of God in the Gospel, and especially to that part of it which concerns the design and efficacy of the death of Jesus as a sacrifice for sin.

"(2.) The consent of the will and affections to the plan of salvation; such an approbation and choice of it as imply a renunciation of every other refuge, and a steady and decided adherence to this.

"(3.) Actual trust in the Saviour, and personal apprehension of his merits.

"On the whole, may it not be said that the faith to which the privilege of justification is annexed is such a belief of the Gospel, by the power of the Spirit of God, as leads us to come to Christ (Matt xi. 28), to receive Christ (John. i. 12), to trust in Christ (Eph. i. 12), and to commit the keeping of our souls into his hands, in humble confidence of his ability and willingness to save us?" (2 Tim. i. 12.)

IX. *What is meant by St. Paul's expression, "faith is counted" or "imputed for righteousness"?*

Rom. iv. 5, 22.—The simple meaning is this: that being destitute of any *legal* righteousness to merit God's favour, our faith in Christ is accepted in its stead. "As God 'made Christ to be

* Rev. T. Jackson.

† Wesley's Sermons, No. v.

sin for us,' that is, treated him as a sinner, punishing him for our sins: so he counteth us righteous, from the time we believe in him; that is, he doth not punish us for our sins; yea, treats us as though we were guiltless and righteous."* Observe, there is nothing here to support the Antinomian idea, that faith supercedes the necessity of holiness. †

X. *Is it true that "faith is the gift of God"?*

This has been strenuously denied, but, as appears to us, by a grievous oversight of the plain teachings of Holy Scripture. Peter's faith in the Divine Sonship of his Master was attributed to the direct teaching of the Father. (Matt xvi. 16, 17.) The coming of a soul to Christ, which is but another phrase for believing in Christ (John vi. 35, 36, 37), is attributed to the drawing of the Father. (John vi. 44.) And in three different passages St. Paul describes faith as the gift and the operation of God. (Eph. ii. 8; † Phil. i. 29; Col. ii. 12.) Hence we must ever maintain that faith in its grace and power is of God. In the words of Dr. Doddridge: "God, by the gracious influence of his Spirit, fixes our attention to the great objects of faith, subdues our prejudices against it, awakens holy affections in our souls, and, on the whole, enables us to believe, and to persevere in believing, till we receive the great end of our faith in the complete salvation of our souls." "But the grace or power to believe, and the act of believing, are two different things. Without the grace or power to believe, no man ever did or can believe; but with that power, the *act of faith* is a man's own. God never believes *for* any man, no more than he repents for him; the penitent, through this grace enabling him, believes for himself; nor does he believe necessarily or impulsively when he has that power; the power to believe may be present long before it is exercised; else, why the solemn warnings which we meet everywhere in the word of God, and threatenings against those who do not believe? (See, for example, John iii. 18, 36.) Is not this a proof that such persons have the power, but do not use it? They believe not, and

* Wesley's Sermons, No. v.

† Read Mr. Wesley's Sermon on "The Law Established through Faith," No. xxxv.

‡ It is said by some that the expression, "*that not of yourselves*," etc., does not apply to faith, but to salvation. The grammatical construction of the sentence shows that it refers to the whole preceding clause, and means, (1) *Your salvation* is not of yourselves—of your own power or merit; in all its branches, present and eternal, it is from God as a free, undeserved gift. Just so, (2) *your faith* whereby you receive salvation is not of yourselves; you can neither believe of yourselves without supernatural light and grace; nor can you, by works done while you are in unbelief and unrenewed, deserve that God should give you faith. Your faith as well as your salvation is of God.—See Benson *in loco*.

therefore are not established. This, therefore, is the true state of the case : God gives the power, man uses the power thus given, and brings glory to God ; without the power, no man can believe ; with it, any man may.”*

XI. How are the teachings of St. Paul and St. James on this subject to be reconciled ?

Compare Rom. iii. 28 with James ii. 24. Infidels, and particularly Voltaire, have employed these passages as proofs of the inconsistency of Scripture with itself. Luther, supposing that James taught a different doctrine to that of St. Paul, condemned the epistle as uninspired, and therefore unworthy of regard. If, however, we consider the object at which each was aiming, the apparent discrepancy between the two Apostles will vanish. St. Paul, addressing the Pharisees, who trusted to their obedience to the law of Moses, proves that all men are guilty and condemned ; and therefore that justification by law—justification on the ground of our own doings and observances—is a thing utterly and eternally impossible. St. James was combating the errors of the Antinomian, who argued that, if justification were by faith alone, we might be content with a bare speculative assent to Gospel truth, regardless of its influence upon the character and life. And he replies by showing that no faith can save, unless it be of that genuine character which will evidence itself by works of evangelical obedience. While we are justified by faith, it is by faith “ which is never alone, though it alone justifieth ; which is not *solitaria*, although it is *sola* in this work,” as our old divines speak. But there is a greater difficulty in the statement which follows, where Abraham is said to be not justified merely by a faith which produced good works, but actually “ justified by works ;” while St. Paul, referring to the very same case, says, “ If Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory.” (Rom. iv. 2.) The true solution of the difficulty appears to be, that the two inspired writers speak of different justifications. The one treats of the justification of a sinner, by which he means his pardon and acceptance by God ; the other treats of the justification of a professed believer, where the word is understood very nearly according to its legal import, namely, as the declaration, manifestation, or satisfactory proof of a person’s being what he really is. The former of these justifications is by faith, the latter by works ; both are equally necessary, both mutually consistent. Let us see, then, in what manner each Apostle employs the case of Abraham, as illustrating his point. St. Paul refers to the time when Abraham was justified as a sinner, before he was circumcised ; and *that* justification was by faith alone. (See Gen. xv. ; Rom. iv.) But “ when he offered Isaac, his son, upon the altar,” which was about forty years afterwards, he appears in

* Dr. A. Clarke, Note on Eph. ii. 8.

the character of a believer, and his justification at that time, of which St. James speaks, regarded him in that capacity, and is said to be "by works." And by those works "the Scripture was *fulfilled*, which saith Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness." (James ii. 23.) What, then, is meant by any part of Scripture being *fulfilled*? If it be a *prediction*, it is fulfilled when it receives its accomplishment; but if it be *the affirmation of a matter of fact*, it is fulfilled when the affirmation is established by evidence. St. James therefore declares, that when Abraham performed that signal act of obedience in offering Isaac, he gave undeniable evidence that he had been justified by faith. The truth of it was manifested; he was *proved* to be what he had been previously *declared* to be.

There is thus a perfect harmony of principle between St. James and St. Paul. They speak by the same Spirit; they say the same things. And there is nothing which it is of higher importance to bear in mind, than that, while as sinners we are justified by penitent faith in the precious blood of Christ, our faith must itself be justified or shown to be genuine by our personal obedience. Abraham was "justified by works," when by works he was proved to have been "justified by faith." His faith "wrought with his works," for in them its efficient power was exercised and displayed; and "by works was faith made perfect;" it was carried out, as it were, to the extreme limit of its practical exercise, and shown to be a faith worthy of the father of the faithful.*

* See Dr. Wardlaw's "Miscellaneous Sermons," No. v.; Hare "On Justification," p. 3; Watson's Works, vol. vi., p. 316; vol. xi., p. 234.

CHAPTER XI.

ADOPTION AND THE WITNESS OF THE SPIRIT.

I. *What is adoption ?*

"Adoption is an act of God's free grace, whereby, upon the forgiveness of sins, we are received into the number, and have a right to all the privileges, of the sons of God."* (Rom. viii. 15; Gal. iv. 5; Eph. i. 5.)

II. *In what respect does it differ from pardon and justification ?*

The terms refer to one and the same act of the Divine mind, though they place that act under different aspects. *Pardon* leads us to think of God simply as our *Sovereign*, remitting all our past transgressions. *Justification* embraces an allusion to his character as the righteous yet merciful *Judge*, who, even in the act of remitting the penalty of sin to the believer in Jesus, maintains the principles of his just and holy government. But "*Adoption* is an act of God, viewed as our compassionate *Father*, by which he accepts the returning prodigal, admits him to filial communion, and reinstates him in the possession of all the privileges of his house and family."†

III. *What are the special privileges belonging to this state ?*

Freedom from a servile spirit (Rom. viii. 15; Gal. iv. 7); the guidance of the Holy Ghost (Rom. viii. 14); filial confidence in God (Rom. viii. 15; Gal. iv. 6); a propriety in all he has and is (1 Cor. iii. 21-23); and a right and title to eternal life. (Rom. viii. 17; Gal. iv. 7; 1 John iii. 2.)

IV. *Is it possible that the believer can be assured of his adoption ?*

I. THE PRACTICAL IMPORTANCE OF SUCH ASSURANCE IS PRESUMPTIVE EVIDENCE THAT HE MAY. If left in darkness as to his acceptance, his mind would be a prey to endless anxieties. No emotions of ardent gratitude and filial joy would spring up

* Wesleyan Catechism.

† Dr. Hannah.

within him. He could not pray in full assurance of faith, nor joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, nor rejoice in hope of the glory of God. All the love and joy and peace of a Christian heart spring from a "knowledge of salvation." It is reasonable, therefore, to suppose that the God who pardons iniquity, and receives the penitent to favour, would, by some means, attest the fact in man's own heart, and not leave it to conjecture, or assumption, or inductive reasoning.

2. THE SCRIPTURES EVERYWHERE ASSERT THAT SUCH ASSURANCE IS ATTAINABLE. They abound with examples of those who have lived in the enjoyment of it. Under the Patriarchal dispensation there was Abel (Heb. xi. 4); Enoch (Heb. xi. 5); and Job (chap. xix. 25). Under the Jewish dispensation there was Hezekiah (Isa. xxxviii. 17); David (Ps. xxxii. 5, ciii. 1, 3, 12); Isaiah (chap. vi. 7); and Daniel (chap. ix. 23). And in the dispensation of the Gospel, "the knowledge of salvation by the remission of sins" is one of the distinguishing features of the new life. Our Lord was anointed "to comfort all that mourn." (Isa. lxi. 1-3.) He continually honoured the faith of the humble by an assurance of forgiving mercy. (Luke x. 20; Matt. ix. 2; Luke vii. 47, 48.) He has provided for his church "another Comforter," whose perpetual work it is to testify to the adoption of his believing people. (Rom. viii. 15.) The converts in Apostolic times showed by the gladness they felt that they knew they were of God. See the Pentecostal believers (Acts ii. 46); the Ethiopian (Acts viii. 59); the jailer. (Acts xvi. 34.) And St. Paul always assumes that those to whom he wrote knew themselves to be forgiven; otherwise his descriptions of their character would be false (Rom. v. 11; 1 Pet. i. 8), and his admonitions altogether inapplicable. (2 Cor. xiii. 11; Phil. iii. 1, iv. 4; 1 Thess. v. 16-18.)

V. By what means is this assurance of our spiritual sonship attained?

There is a twofold "witness" granted (Rom. viii. 16): First, that of "the Spirit itself," or rather *the same* Spirit (*αὐτὸ τὸ πνεῦμα*) of which the Apostle had spoken in the foregoing verses; "the Spirit of Christ," "the Spirit of God," "the Spirit of adoption." Secondly, that of "our spirit"—our true self, the spiritual, intelligent, accountable, and deathless part of our nature. There is a *conjoint* testimony of these two witnesses. "The Spirit itself" is a *fellow-witness* "with our spirit." Such is the import of the Greek word *συνμαρτυρεῖ* which is employed here. Now, although the witness of God's Spirit comes first in the order of thought and in point of fact, it will be advantageous to consider, at once, the nature of the other witness.

VI. What is the witness of our own spirit?

It consists in our individual consciousness that we possess the character of the children of God, as that character is portrayed

in God's word. In the language of Dr. Hannah, it is "that rational inference which, proceeding from a careful examination of the scriptural marks of the children of God, and a satisfactory persuasion that these marks are produced in us by the presence and agency of the Holy Spirit, confirms us in the grateful conclusion that we are the children of God." And in the language of Mr. Wesley, "it is nearly, if not exactly, the same with the testimony of a good conscience towards God; and is the result of reason and reflection on what we feel in our own souls. Strictly speaking, it is a conclusion drawn partly from the word of God and partly from our own experience. The word of God says every one who has the fruit of the Spirit is a child of God; experience or inward consciousness tells me that I have the fruit of the Spirit; and hence I rationally conclude, therefore I am a child of God."* The following scriptures appear to refer to the subject:—2 Cor. i. 12; 1 John iii. 14, 18, 19, v. 10. Now, as this witness proceeds from the Spirit of God, and is grounded on what he works in us, it is sometimes called the Spirit's *indirect* witness, to distinguish it from the other testimony, which is properly direct. "The testimony of our conscience" is, however, a phrase on every account preferable to this.

VII. *What is the witness of the Divine Spirit?*

It consists in a communication made by the Holy Ghost to the believer's mind of the fact that his sins are forgiven, that he is reconciled to God, and that the filial relation, which was destroyed by disobedience, is now restored by grace through faith. Mr. Wesley's definition is very clear and full: "By the testimony of the Spirit, I mean an inward impression on the soul, whereby the Spirit of God immediately and directly witnesses to my spirit that I am a child of God, that Jesus Christ hath loved me and given himself for me, that all my sins are blotted out, and I, even I, am reconciled to God."† In accordance with this are the words of Dr. Hannah: "The witness of the Holy Spirit is that which directly ascertains to us the blessing of our acceptance with God, and which, impressing on our hearts a sense of his paternal love towards us in Christ Jesus, creates within us that great element and principle of the new nature—love to him in return." The following scriptures refer to this subject:—Rom. viii. 15, 16; Gal. iv. 6; 1 Cor. ii. 12; 1 John iv. 13. And the doctrine is clearly implied in such passages as these:—Rom. v. 1, 5, viii. 1; Isa. xii. 1, 2.

VIII. *By what arguments is it proved that this testimony is direct and immediate?*

I. IT IS PROVED BY THE MEANING OF THE WORD THAT IS EMPLOYED. "The Spirit beareth witness." Now, a witness is

* Sermon xi. † Sermons x., xi.

not an inferential deduction, however logical in its process ; not a conjecture, however well founded. It is a direct, implicit testimony, given with the greatest care and distinctness.

2. IT IS PROVED BY THE SUBJECT MATTER OF THE TESTIMONY. The witness is to our adoption, to the forgiveness of sin, the blotting out of the handwriting that was against us. Now, this is not anything that takes place within us, it is not anything perceptible to the evidence of our senses. It is an act of God, a mighty secret buried in the recesses of our Father's heart, locked up more closely than the most hidden of human thoughts, one of "the deep things of God," which can be known to us on earth only by a supernatural communication. (See 1 Cor. ii. 11.) Unless, therefore, the Holy Ghost will tell us what has taken place in the mind of God, whether he has pardoned our sins and written our name in the Book of Life, we must live in sorrow and in gloom all the days of our life. But the arrangement is made ; and what we could not know by the use of our reason or the evidence of our senses, "God hath revealed unto us by his Spirit." Essentially Divine, that Spirit "searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." He knows the moment when adopting love welcomes home the prodigal, and away he hastens on his dove-like message to reveal the glorious fact to the anxious soul, thus becoming to that soul "the Spirit of adoption," whereby he cries, "Abba, Father."

3. IT IS PROVED BY THE EXPERIENCE OF THE CHILDREN OF GOD. Dr. Chalmers says that he could not, without making his doctrine outstrip his own experience, vouch for any other intimation of the Spirit of God than that which he gives in the act of making the word of God and the state of our own hearts clear to us.* And that might be true in regard to *his* experience. Dr. Watts gives, as the result of *his* experience, a very different view. Says he, "There is an extraordinary witness of the Spirit, when, in an immediate and powerful manner, he impresses the soul with an assurance of Divine love, and gives the heart of the saint a full discovery of his adoption, without the more slow and argumentative method of comparing the dispositions of their souls with some special characters of the children of God in Scripture." And we could bring forward a great multitude, far inferior, perhaps, to these men in learning and genius, but well instructed in the deep things of God, and they can tell by experience how the Holy Ghost wrought in their soul when first they believed. They were not conscious of any of the fruits of the Spirit. In fact, all their thoughts and reflections were turned from themselves to the cross. But there was a secret consciousness, a testimony mysteriously sent into the soul, the whisper of a voice which could not be heard beyond the confines of the soul, but which there spoke thrillingly and impressively, "Thy sins, which are many, are

* Lectures on the Epistle to the Romans.

all forgiven thee." At once they felt the joy of salvation, and exclaimed in full assurance of faith, "I am my Beloved's, and my Beloved is mine."

4. IT IS PROVED BY THE FACT THAT NOTHING BUT THIS CAN MAKE OUR HAPPINESS COEVAL WITH OUR ADOPTION. "If left to infer that we are pardoned from our principles, and that we are adopted from the reality of the change we have undergone, some portion of time must necessarily elapse, that temptation may test, and opportunities may develop, the graces that are within, before we can decide on their genuineness. And the length of time that will transpire will be very much proportioned to a man's natural temperament. Those who are constitutionally depressed and melancholy will be for a long season in gloom, slow and cautious in admitting anything that tends to their comfort; and only the sanguine will enter speedily into liberty, and rejoice in the Lord. And in the very best case the decision will be pronounced in heaven, that the heir of hell is received among the faithful, while he himself is groaning, 'O that I knew where I might find him!' Surely, there is nothing in the Gospel to warrant such a belief as this. No; as soon as the three thousand gladly received the word, as soon as the Ethiopian embraced him of whom the Prophet spake, as soon as the jailer believed in the Lord Jesus, the Comforter sped away with the tidings of their pardon. And in the very same moment in which it is pronounced in the courts above, 'Thy sins be forgiven thee,' there is the echo in the believing heart, 'Go in peace.'" And this can arise from nothing else than the direct and immediate testimony of the Holy Ghost.

IX. How is it proved that this testimony of the Spirit of God must be antecedent to the testimony of our own spirit?

From this single consideration, we must be holy in heart, and holy in life, before we can be conscious that we are so, before we can have the testimony of our spirit that we are inwardly and outwardly holy. But we must love God before we can be holy at all, this being the root of all holiness. Now, we cannot love God till we know he loves us. "We love him *because* he first loved us." And we cannot know his pardoning love to us till his Spirit witnesses it to our spirit. "Since, therefore, this testimony of his Spirit must precede the love of God and all holiness, of consequence it must precede our inward consciousness thereof, or the testimony of our spirit concerning them."* Thus, also, the point is stated by Mr. Watson: "These fruits (love, joy, and peace) cannot result from anything but manifested pardon; they cannot themselves manifest our pardon, for they cannot exist till it is manifested. God, conceived of as angry, cannot be the object of filial love; pardon unfelt supposes guilt and fear still to burden the mind; and guilt and 'joy' and 'peace' cannot co-exist."†

* Wesley's "Sermons," No. x.

† Institutes, p. ii., chap. xxiv.

The relation in which these "fruits of the Spirit" stand to "the witness of the Spirit" is that of the effect to its cause.

X. How may this testimony of God's Spirit be distinguished from the impressions of an excited imagination, and from the delusion of the Devil?

There are certain marks by which it may be known.

1. THE TESTIMONY OF THE HOLY GHOST IS ALWAYS PRECEDED BY HEARTY, GENUINE REPENTANCE. Its consolations are unknown till the spirit has been humbled and is contrite; till iniquity has been abandoned, and the cry extorted, "God be merciful to me a sinner." But with this deep and penitent humiliation of heart presumption is unacquainted. And we therefore press this inquiry upon all who think they have the Spirit of God, have you felt a godly sorrow for sin—sorrow that has led you to hate it as the worst of evils, and to put forth every power in forsaking its practice? If you have, the Spirit who is leading you will not suffer you to be deceived: but if you have not, the cry of Abba, Father, is from no Divine testimony. You are saying peace, where there is no peace.

2. WHERE THE HOLY GHOST BEARS HIS WITNESS, HE INVARIABLY PRODUCES A HOLY CHARACTER. The inward testimony causes to spring forth that beautiful cluster of Christian graces which the Apostle calls "the fruit of the Spirit." (Gal. v. 22, 23.) Fruits like these are never produced by a phantasy or a delusion. They grow nowhere but in a heart that has undergone the great regenerating change. Where they are found, the witness from above, and the witness from within, bear a united testimony, which may be received without suspicion and without fear.

XI. Is this witness of the Spirit the common privilege of believers?

Many regard it as the privilege only of a highly favoured few of saints of the first order, and not even to be granted to them till just at the close of life. But this notion has not even a pretext of scriptural footing. In Gal. iv. 6, St. Paul makes it a part of "the common salvation," as truly as adoption itself. "Because ye are sons"—not because you are singularly holy, or have come to hoary hairs, or are on the verge of the grave, but—"because ye are sons God hath sent," etc. It is not a good-service reward, but a birthright; not a crown of distinction, but a joy of adoption. And every part of the New Testament makes the sense of adoption a near, present good, which babes in Christ may grasp and the meekest of the earth may feel, which is offered to the prodigal when he returns from his wanderings, and to the publican when first justified from his sins. Let the following passages, which were addressed to believers of every age and rank, be duly pondered:—Rom. v. 1-5, viii. 15, 16; 1

Pet. i. 8, 9. Besides these there is an almost endless variety of texts holding out to believers the promises of rest and peace. (Matt. xi. 28; John xv. 27; Rom. xiv. 17, etc.) And can the enjoyment of rest and peace, such as that which is here described, co-exist with doubt and misgiving as to our acceptance in the Beloved? No; it can arise from no influence but that of the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, who reveals to us the mercy of God in Christ. If these things are so, the sense of adoption is not a privilege of such high and transcendent saintliness as to be attainable only by the few. It is a common privilege of our common faith. In the heart now throbbing for the first time under the inspirations of spiritual life, there is the same cry as in the heart of the aged saint on whose face is falling the light of a brighter world than this. Each can say, "Abba, Father; my Lord and my God."*

XII. Can this witness of the Spirit be held in uninterrupted enjoyment?

Certain it is that it may be lost. And unless we learn to live by the faith of the Son of God, and maintain diligence in Christian duty, it is impossible to retain it. Besides this, there may be times of very severe and heavy trial; the mind may be depressed through bodily disorders, or be in heaviness through manifold temptations; and the great adversary may use all his skill to inject unbelieving thoughts. In such circumstances it may be very difficult to retain the full assurance of faith, especially for one who is naturally of a melancholy temperament. But it may be done. It is obviously God's will that his children should "*abide*" in his love (John xv. 9, 10); should "*rejoice in the Lord always*" (Phil. iv. 4; 1 Thess. v. 16); should "*walk in the light*" (Isa. ii. 5; 1 John i. 6, 7); and should "*joy in the God of salvation*," even in seasons of greatest providential darkness. (2 Cor. vi. 10; Hab. iii. 17, 18.) But are there not what are called *sovereign* hidings of God's countenance? that is, does not God withdraw the witness from his children in the mere exercise of his sovereign pleasure? We often meet with this idea in certain Calvinistic writers; but we venture to affirm that it is totally groundless, without one prop in Scripture. God is faithful, unchangeable to his covenant engagements, and never leaves his people, even for a moment, while they are faithful to his grace. The withdrawal of his favour and peace is the chastisement for disobedience. (Isa. lix. 2.)

XIII. What is to be said of persons, humble, prayerful, consistent, who are evidently brought into darkness through constitutional depression?

"We reply, constitutional depression may prevent the soul from exercising faith in Christ; and as faith is the instrument by

* See Arthur's "Tongue of Fire," chap. v.

which we receive the Spirit's witness, the absence of that instrument, through depression, will, of course, be the occasion of our being destitute of the Spirit's witness. As mental depression affects our perceptions generally, it will doubtless affect and distort our religious perceptions; and, in instances deeply exacerbated, may so fix and concentrate the soul's attention on what is gloomy, as to create for itself a region of darkness in which it cannot see the benign features of God's character, or the mercy so brightly revealed in the Gospel. Thus, through a mental infirmity obscuring our views, our confidence fails; and our confidence failing, our evidence fails too. Such cases, however, are to be regarded as evidences of mental disease, and not to be regarded as a standard for others whose minds are in a healthy state."

In reviewing the whole subject, we may say, in the words of Mr. Wesley, "Let none ever presume to rest in any supposed testimony of the Spirit which is separate from the fruit of it. And let none rest in any supposed fruit of the Spirit without the witness." "In our being favoured with a twofold testimony there is evidently great practical utility, as it is a protection against presumption on the one hand, and despondency on the other. Our Maker has placed a double guard around our spiritual and eternal interests. As he has provided that where one bodily sense mistakes an object, another sense may correct it; so in reference to the important subject of saving religion—its evidence is placed both in our consciousness of the Spirit's witness, and the conviction of our own judgment." The one is the echo of the other, responding to the same blessed testimony. "What 'the Spirit itself' makes evident to our *consciousness*, 'our spirit' makes evident to our *reason*. What the former reveals by an immediate impression, the latter demonstrates by inference and argument; both unite in declaring that now are we the sons of God."

[On this subject Mr. Wesley's sermon on the wilderness state should be carefully read.]

CHAPTER XII.

REGENERATION ; OR, THE NEW BIRTH.

I. In what different senses is the word regeneration employed in Scripture ?

The Greek word *παλιγγενεσία*, which strictly signifies a new birth, and is rendered "regeneration," occurs but twice in the New Testament. In Matt. xix. 28, it appears to refer to the final renovation of all things, when all the children of God shall, as it were, be born anew from their graves, and the Son of man, presiding over that august assembly, shall sit on the throne of his glory, and both judge and reward every man according to his works.* In Titus iii. 5, the word is used in a moral sense to express the renovation of the heart by the Holy Spirit. It is in this latter sense that we use the word in this chapter.

II. What is the proper nature of regeneration, or the new birth?

From the many different phrases which are employed to set it forth, we conclude that it is a spiritual change of a remarkably decided nature. It is mentioned as a being "born again" (John iii. 3); being made "a new creature" (2 Cor. v. 17; Gal. vi. 15); as a passing "from death unto life" (John v. 24; 1 John iii. 14); as a being "conformed to the image of his Son" (Rom. viii. 29); as a translation from the power of darkness into the kingdom of his dear Son" (Col. i. 13); and as a putting on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. (Eph. iv. 24.) Our leading divines, catching the spirit of these texts, have embodied them in formal definitions. Thus Wesley: The new birth "is that great change which God works in the soul when he brings it into life; when he raises it from the death of sin to the life of righteousness. It is the change wrought in the whole soul by the Almighty Spirit of God, when it is created anew in Christ Jesus; when it is renewed after the image of God in righteousness and true holiness."† Thus Watson: "Rege-

* This is the view of Wesley, Doddridge, and many others.

† Sermon on "The New Birth."

neration is that mighty change in man, wrought by the Holy Spirit, by which the dominion which sin had over him in his natural state, and which he deplores and struggles against in his penitent state, is broken and abolished; so that with full choice of will and the energy of right affections, he serves God freely, and runs in the way of his commandments." * Thus Dr. Hannah: "Regeneration is that spiritual change which is wrought in believing man by the Holy Spirit of God, and which, though it may be mysterious and inexplicable in its process, is sufficiently plain and obvious in its effects." † Thus John Angell James: "It is that entire change of our moral nature, which is effected by the Spirit of God, through the word received by faith, when the corrupt and fallen nature which we inherit from Adam is taken away, and the holy and spiritual nature which we receive from Christ is imparted."

III. *What are the scriptural evidences of the new birth?*

Some of them are distinctly specified.

1. VICTORY OVER THE WORLD. (1 John v. 4.) The disciples of Christ are not of the world, even as Christ is not of the world (John xvii. 16); they are expressly told "that the friendship of the world is enmity with God" (James iv. 4); one essential feature of their religion is to keep themselves unspotted from the world (James i. 27); and the faith by which the new life is sustained gives them the victory over the world. (1 John v. 4, 5.) They neither seek the company, nor fear the frowns, nor conform to the practices, nor delight in the pleasures, nor adopt the maxims of the world. In their new nature there is a spirit of perfect antagonism with "all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life." (1 John ii. 16; 2 Cor. vi. 14-16.) They cannot be received as the sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty except as they come out from among them and be separate. (2 Cor. vi. 17, 18.) Any other course is an unmistakable indication that the love of the Father is not in them. (1 John ii. 15.)

2. DOMINION OVER SIN. Read that solemn passage in 1 John iii. 8, 9. Sin is the abominable thing which God hateth; and as they are now brought under the dominion of his grace, the body of sin is destroyed; they are freed from sin; they reckon themselves dead indeed unto sin (Rom. vi.); and they cannot sin, because they are born of God. There is that light in their minds which shows them the evil and malignity of sin; there is that bias upon their hearts that disposes them to loathe and hate sin. There is that spiritual seminal principle or disposition which breaks the force and power of sin. There is that love to God which makes them delight to do his will, so that it is contrary to the nature of

* Theological Institutes.

† MS. Theological Lectures.

their new-born soul to commit sin. And whenever temptation is presented, instead of yielding to the suggestions of the enemy, as the ungodly habitually do, they repel the tempter, exclaiming, "How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?"*

3. LOVE TO THE SAINTS. (1 John iv. 7, 8, iii. 14.) This is not that natural affection or denominational affection which often binds in the sweetest and closest union those who are of the same family, or of the same church, or of the same taste. It is a love that overleaps the barriers of sect and party, and church and nation, and fixes its regards on every one that loves God and bears his image. Such an one is hailed as a brother in Christ, and an heir of heaven, and is the object of a warm, hallowing, operative affection, which is cherished for the Master's sake, while it constitutes a valid evidence of Christian character.

4. THE PRACTICE OF UNIVERSAL RIGHTEOUSNESS. (1 John ii. 29, iii. 7.) Regenerating grace has fixed a principle within, which prompts and constrains to the observance of "whatsoever things are true, honest, just, pure, lovely, and of good report." There is such a clear conviction of the rectitude of God's claims, and such delight in doing his commandments, and such a view of personal obligations to God for his unbounded love, as prompts the eager inquiry, "How shall I please the Lord, and promote his glory?" It is his meat and drink to do the will of God; and, like his Master, whose image he bears, the one great concern of life is "to fulfil all righteousness."

IV. *Whence arises the necessity for this great change?*

Our Saviour teaches that it arises—

1. FROM THE DEEP DEPRAVITY OF OUR NATURE. (John iii. 6.) "That which is born of the flesh is flesh." It is carnal, corrupt, depraved, and sinful; for in this sense the term "flesh," as it is opposed to "spirit," is to be interpreted in God's word. (See Gal. v. 17; Rom. viii. 5-8.) The understanding is darkened (Eph. iv. 18; 1 Cor. ii. 14); the heart is at enmity (Rom. viii. 7); the will is perverse (John v. 40; Matt. xxiii. 37); the affections are earthly (Rom. viii. 5); and the whole deportment is regulated by Satan, the great enemy. (Eph. ii. 2, 3.) In this sad state we are born—flesh of flesh, the depraved offspring of depraved parents; and having been "born in sin," we must be "born again;" the fleshly principle must die; and born from above, spirit of Spirit, the spiritual principle will be restored to its proper supremacy and power, thus allying us to God, and enrolling us among the subjects of a spiritual kingdom.

2. FROM THE PURITY OF HEAVEN, OF ITS SOCIETY, ENJOYMENTS, AND EXERCISES. They are so unsuitable to us in our natural state, that, without the change which Divine grace effects,

* Read on this subject Mr. Wesley's Sermons on John iii. 8, and 1 John iii. 9.

we cannot see, much less enter, the kingdom. (John iii. 3, 5; Matt. v. 8; Heb. xii. 14; Rev. xxi. 27.) If an unregenerate soul could be admitted there, it could realise no enjoyment, because it could feel no sympathy with the objects that would surround it, and the company with which it must mingle. All things would be alien to it, and it would be alien to them. But admission is impossible. The word has gone forth that there shall in nowise enter anything that defileth. And before the gates of the city can be opened for us, we must be thoroughly renewed, having all our sympathies, tastes, pursuits, and affections directed and governed by "holiness to the Lord."

V. By what agency is the work of regeneration produced?

The intrinsic nature of the change is sufficient to prove that neither education, nor example, nor any mode of instrumentality which could be performed by mere mortal influence, will accomplish it. The testimony of Scripture is that the Holy Spirit of God is alone the author of the new creation. (John iii. 5, 6; 2 Cor. iii. 18; Titus iii. 5.) This does not imply, however, that the sinner himself is reduced to a machine in the hands of God. God neither forces the human will, nor saves man without his concurrence and co-operation. There is a sense in which he is to work out his own salvation (Phil. ii. 12), to make himself a new heart and a new spirit. (Ezek. xviii. 31.) What is divinely commanded must be possible. A certain power of compliance is put within every one of us. "At the same time, if man were not favoured with the enlightening and renovating power of the Holy Ghost, all forms of instrumentality and personal efforts would be in vain; or rather, no personal efforts would be made. God the Spirit imparts a measure of light, invites to salvation, and excites spiritual desires. Then, if his gracious influences are yielded to, he bestows them more abundantly—gives grace for grace. If still obeyed, he imparts further help; and on the penitent fully resigning himself to Christ by faith, takes up his abode in his heart, sheds his love abroad therein, and thus the soul is regenerated."*

VI. What is the instrumental means by which the Holy Spirit operates in effecting this life-giving change?

Some divines have contended that his influences are exerted directly upon the affections and the will, without any instrumental means whatever. But the Scriptures teach most explicitly that he works upon the heart through the medium of "the truth"—that word of Divine truth contained in the Gospel. (James i. 18; 1 Pet. i. 23; 1 Cor. iv. 15; Rom. x. 17; Eph. v. 26.) And probably there never will occur one instance of regeneration in which the word of God, in one form of administration or another, will not be the instrument employed. What a mighty force is thus thrown into the exhorta-

* Dr. W. Cooke.

tion of St. James, "Receive with meekness the engrafted word," etc. (James i. 21.)

VII. *Although we believe that justification, the witness of the Spirit, and regeneration, are co-existent (that is, they are bestowed upon us in the same moment of time), is there not, in the order of thinking, a succession of one to the other? and between the two latter is there not a relation resembling that of cause and effect?*

There is. The succession in the order of thought is this. In the first instance, justification, or the relative change, is obtained with an immediate adoption into the family of God. The Spirit is then given to bear his witness to the heart that sin is forgiven and the prodigal welcomed to his Father's house. And from that witness, and the consciousness of Divine love which it awakens, there springs up in the heart that love to God which is the great principle in our regeneration. (1 John iv. 19.) This is the order of our spiritual recovery, and hence we see the harmony which exists between the blessings; the witness of the Spirit being the key-stone—or the link which binds together the relative with the real change.

VIII. *How is regeneration distinguished from repentance, justification, and entire sanctification?*

In repentance a man undergoes a great change, for he ceases to do evil, and learns to do well; but he is still painfully conscious of being in a state of spiritual bondage, "carnal, sold under sin." (See Rom. vii.) In regeneration the soul is delivered both from the guilt and power of sin, and exults in conscious liberty. (See Rom. viii. 1, 2.) In other words, repentance is a condition of bondage, the other of freedom; the one of union with the body of death, the other of deliverance from it through Christ. The one is accompanied by a sense of wrath, the other by a consciousness of favour. Justification and the new birth are distinguished thus: "Justification implies only a relative, the new birth a real change. God, in justifying us, does something for us; in begetting us again, he does the work in us. The former changes our outward relation to God, so that of enemies we become children; by the latter our inmost souls are changed, so that of sinners we become saints. The one restores us to the favour, the other to the image of God. The one is the taking away the guilt, the other taking away the power of sin; so that though they are joined together in point of time, yet are they of wholly distinct natures."*

Regeneration and entire sanctification are distinguished thus: The one is infant life—the life of a new-born babe (1 Pet. ii. 2); the other is natural life—the life of "a perfect man" who has attained "the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ."

* Wesley's Sermons, No. xix.

(Eph. iv. 13.) In regeneration the power of sin is broken; in entire sanctification the soul is "cleansed from all unrighteousness." In the former the love of God is shed abroad in the heart; in the latter the soul "is made perfect in love."

IX. *What is the doctrine of baptismal regeneration? and by what arguments is it disproved?*

The doctrine is that baptism, when administered by a certain privileged order, and after a certain prescribed form, communicates to the individuals all the blessings that are comprehended in the new birth. This is the avowed doctrine of the Romish Church. It is warmly supported by the followers of the "Tractarian heresy;" and, unhappily, the whole office for the baptism of infants in the Liturgy of the Church of England proceeds upon the supposition that this doctrine is true.

Now, it may be safely admitted, that if baptism be rightly administered, and received by faith as God's appointed sign of the washing away of sin, and as his pledge and seal of his faithfulness in imparting covenant mercies, he will honour his own institution, and make it a channel through which to communicate his spiritual grace. Hence, Acts ii. 38; Mark xvi. 16. But that baptism and regeneration are *necessarily* linked together is an idea for which there is no foundation in the word of God.

1. IT IS DISPROVED BY THE APOSTLE PETER when he tells us that "baptism saves us" (1 Pet. iii. 21), but is careful at once to announce that he does not mean baptism as an outward ordinance, but as "the answer of a good conscience towards God." What is the meaning of this distinction? If the saving influence of the Holy Ghost always accompanied the washing of the flesh, why distinguish between them? There was no danger of mistaking the one for the other. The only conceivable supposition which gives meaning to these words, is that which admits the possibility of this fleshly washing to take place without its being efficient to save.*

2. IT IS DISPROVED BY THE CORRESPONDING RITE OF CIRCUMCISION. This rite was appointed for the admission of members to the Jewish church. It was "a seal of the righteousness of faith" (Rom iv. 11), a sign of inward purity (Rom. ii. 29; Deut. xxx. 6); and, like all Divine ordinances, was profitable if a man kept the law. (Rom. ii. 25.) But as a mere outward ceremony, however correctly administered, it was totally inoperative. (See Rom. ii. 25-29.) Now, baptism holds the same place in the Christian economy as circumcision did in the Jewish dispensation, and the very same observation that St. Paul made concerning the one ordinance holds with regard to the other. The outward sign is not inseparably connected with the inward grace; and if the latter be absent, the former will avail us nothing.

3. IT IS DISPROVED BY SCRIPTURE FACTS. First, there are

* Dr. G. Smith's "Perilous Times," p. 307.

instances of persons being regenerated who had not been baptised—the thief on the cross (Luke xxiii. 42, 45); the Ethiopian eunuch (Acts viii. 36-39); Cornelius (Acts x. 44-48). Secondly, there are instances of persons being baptised who were not regenerated. Ananias and Sapphira (Acts v.); Simon Magus (Acts viii. 13-23.)

4. IT IS DISPROVED BY THE CONDUCT OF ST. PAUL. Were baptism identified with regeneration, would he, while glorying in preaching, have spoken of baptism as an inferior ordinance? And yet, so he does, declaring with manifest satisfaction that he had not been sent to baptise, but to preach; and leaving the administration of the rite to inferiors, he even thanked God that he had baptised none of them. (1 Cor. i. 14-17.)

5. IT IS DISPROVED BY THE CHARACTER OF MANY BAPTISED PERSONS. If the sacrament does really secure regenerating grace, should it not be followed by some moral and religious results in the outward character? But have the most discerning and anxious parents, on their return from the sanctuary, discovered any accession of new and holy qualities in the baptised child, or have they missed any evil tempers which the child previously developed? Universal experience gives a negative reply. And is it not an undeniable and melancholy fact, that the lives of thousands who have risen into life demonstrate but too clearly that many who are baptised with water have never been baptised with the Holy Ghost?

6. WHILE THE DOCTRINE IS THUS DISPROVED, THERE ARE NO TEXTS WHICH, RIGHTLY INTERPRETED, CAN BE ADDUCED TO SUSTAIN IT. Those which are generally put forward with this view are the following:—

(1.) John iii. 5.—“There is no conclusive evidence that our Lord referred to baptism at all in this passage. Though water is mentioned, it seems to be figuratively for the Holy Spirit itself, which is immediately introduced as the object intended: Nor does this involve an offensive tautology, or a departure from the *usus loquendi* of the sacred writers. On the contrary, nothing is more common than for the inspired writers to employ, first a *figure*, and then, in the same sentence to introduce exegetically the object itself; or, *vice versa*, first to mention the object itself, and then, in the same sentence to introduce a striking figure of the same; yet, no one in such cases supposes that *two* Divine subjects are intended. Take for example Matt. iii. 11; Isa. i. 16, xlv. 3. Now, apply this principle of interpretation to John iii. 5, and we reach the conclusion that only *one* thing is intended—one regeneration, and that by the Holy Ghost, of whose cleansing influences water is an expressive emblem.”* Thus, the

* Dr. W. Cooke. The reader should be informed that this explanation of the text is not the only one that has the authority of great names for its support. The following, for which we are indebted to the learned

passage affords no sanction to the doctrine of baptismal regeneration.

(2.) Titus iii. 5.—“This passage furnishes another instance of the custom of giving in the same sentence, first, a figurative, and then a literal and exegetical representation of the same subject. The subject represented is the great spiritual change experienced by every believer. This is first termed, figuratively, ‘regeneration;’ then, literally, a ‘renewing;’ and is first ascribed, figuratively, to a ‘washing’ or to the *laver*; then, literally, to the ‘Holy Ghost.’ Thus, the second member of the sentence is simply exegetical, or explanatory of the first.”* Let this view of these two passages be received, reading them, “Except a man be born of water, *even* (καί) of the Spirit,” etc., and “the washing of regeneration *even* (καί) the renewing of the Holy Ghost,”—then we allow the Spirit to interpret his own meaning, and all is clear and harmonious, and in perfect agreement with every other scripture.

If it be asked, in conclusion, WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN BAPTISM AND REGENERATION? we reply in the words of Mr. Wesley: “The one is an external, the other an internal work. The one is a visible, the other an invisible thing. The one is the act of man purifying the body, the other a change wrought by God in the soul; so that the former is just as distinguishable from the latter, as the soul from the body, or water from the Holy Ghost.”†

John Howe and others, is worthy of attention. “Nicodemus knew of a birth, or being born again, by water, because the thing in his day was quite common; for whenever a Gentile was proselyted to the Jewish faith he was baptised; and the learned men of the nation were accustomed to say of him that he was ‘new born’ or ‘born again;’ meaning that he was now introduced into a new world, having new relations, prospects, connections, etc. Now, our Lord intended to sanction this rite (for it was beautifully emblematical), and adopt it for his own. And to warn and instruct Nicodemus, he seems to say, ‘there has been a birth by water before, according to your own mode of speaking and practice; let the water remain, and be introduced by it to the kingdom that I will set up. But there must be another birth, of which the Spirit is the author; a man must be born of God—born spirit of Spirit, before he can be a spiritual member of a spiritual kingdom.’” “The two operations of water and the Spirit are thus associated and spoken of not as one is conducive to the other, nor as both are equally indispensable to the same result, but as one is the public recognition of ostensible connection with the kingdom of God, and the other is the proof and means to the individual of actual admission into it; as one is the outward and visible sign, and the other is the inward and spiritual grace. . . . To be a member of this kingdom in the fullest sense, ostensibly and really, by the recognition of the church and the approval of God, two operations are required—baptism by water, and sanctification by the Spirit.”—Rev. J. Stacey.

* Dr. W. Cooke. † Sermon, No. xlv.

CHAPTER XIII.

CHRISTIAN PERFECTION; OR, ENTIRE SANCTIFICATION.

I. *Is perfection of some sort held out in the Bible as an attainable state ?*

No one who reads his Bible with attention will give a negative answer to this question. Perfection is enjoined (Gen. xvii. 1; Matt. v. 48; 2 Cor. xiii. 11; Heb. vi. 1): it is exemplified (Gen. vi. 9; Job i. 8; Ps. xxxvii. 37; 1 John iv. 17): it is prayed for (2 Cor. xiii. 9, 11. Heb. xiii. 20; 1 Pet. v. 10): and it is presented as the great object of the Gospel ministry. (Col. i. 28; Eph. iv. 11-13). Let any one take his Concordance, and he will be surprised at the multitude of instances in which, under all dispensations, this word is sanctioned by Scripture use. And it is important to note this, because even many serious and intelligent Christians are startled whenever the word is employed in relation to religious experience, supposing that it savours of pride and presumption. But we must take heed how we stagger at any word of God. "The words which the Holy Ghost teacheth" are right words, and words of wisdom; and the wisest course is to study them till we understand their full import, and never under any circumstances to discard them, lest we incur the guilt of them who are "ashamed of Christ and his words."

II. *Can we suppose that the perfection so held out is of the same nature and degree as may be predicated of God, of angels, or of Adam as he came fresh from his Creator's hand ?*

This we never assert. *The perfection of God* is absolute, and can neither be augmented nor diminished. Such a state belongs to no created being, either in earth or heaven, in time or in eternity. It is the privilege of all rational creatures to be eternally progressing, and yet they must ever remain at an infinite distance from the perfection of the Creator. Nor can we in our probationary state attain *angelic perfection*. Angels have capabilities far greater than ever fell to the lot of man, and are in circumstances far more favourable to the growth and development of all moral excellence; and with their higher powers, and their residence in a region of spotless purity, they have duties and re-

sponsibilities that can never belong to us, and are distinguished by moral qualities that can never be known among men. *Adamic perfection* occupies a lower rank still. But it involved a freedom from every defect either in the understanding or in the affections. The body of the new-made man was "no clog to his mind; it did not hinder his apprehending all things clearly, judging truly concerning them, and reasoning justly, if he reasoned at all. Consequently, the law, proportioned to his original powers, required that he should always think, always speak, and always act precisely right, in every point whatever. He was well able to do so; and God could not but require the service he was able to pay."* But by our degeneracy both body and mind have become impaired and enfeebled. We can neither, "at all times, apprehend clearly, nor judge truly, nor reason justly; therefore it is as natural for a man to mistake as to breathe; he can no more live without the one than without the other;" consequently, the perfection of Adam can never be realised in us. The perfection enjoined in the Bible is limited by the capacities and susceptibilities of fallen human nature. It does not, therefore, raise man to the perfection of the Godhead, nor of angels, nor of Adam.

III. *What, then, is the perfection of which the Gospel speaks as the present privilege of the saints?*

We call it *Christian* perfection to distinguish it from the perfection of angels, and from the perfection of Adam in his unfallen state. Let us see how it is defined by two or three of our theologians: "What is Christian perfection?" says *Mr. Wesley*. "The loving God with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength. This implies that no wrong temper, none contrary to love, remains in the soul; and that all the thoughts, words, and actions, are governed by pure love."† Says *Mr. Fletcher*, "By Christian perfection we mean nothing but the cluster and maturity of the graces which compose the Christian character in the church militant. In other words, Christian perfection is a spiritual constellation made up of these gracious stars—perfect repentance, perfect faith, perfect humility, perfect meekness, perfect self-denial, perfect resignation, perfect hope, perfect charity for our visible enemies as well as for our earthly relations; and, above all, perfect love for our invisible God, through the explicit knowledge of our Mediator, Jesus Christ. And, as this last star is always accompanied by all the others, as Jupiter is by his satellites, we frequently use the phrase 'perfect love' instead of the word perfection, understanding by it the pure love of God shed abroad in the hearts of established believers by the Holy Ghost, which is abundantly given them under the fulness of the

* Wesley's "Plain Account of Christian Perfection."

† "Plain Account," etc.

Christian dispensation.”* Says *Dr. A. Clarke*, “That observation of a learned civilian is at once both correct and illustrative; namely, ‘We count those things perfect which want nothing requisite for the end whereto they were instituted.’ Accordingly, a man may be said to be perfect who answers the end for which God made him; and as God requires every man to love him with all his heart, soul, mind, and strength, and his neighbour as himself, then he is a perfect man that does so—he answers the end for which God made him. And this is more evident from the nature of that love which fills his heart; for, as love is the principle of obedience, so he that loves his God with all his powers will obey him with all his powers; and he who loves his neighbour as himself will not only do no injury to him, but on the contrary, labour to promote his best interests. Why the doctrine which enjoins such a state of perfection as this should be dreaded, ridiculed, or despised, is a most strange thing.”

From the above definitions and explanations it appears that Christian perfection is the maturity of grace and holiness which established adult believers attain to under the Christian dispensation; but is especially to be regarded as a *maturity of holy love*,—love which counteracts and expels all antagonistic influences, and moulds the soul into the image of God; for “God is love.”

IV. *The same maturity of grace is often spoken of as “entire sanctification.” Does that phrase suggest any other views of this state of holiness?*

The verb “to sanctify,” in its etymological meaning, signifies to separate from a common and profane use to an appropriate and special service. In this sense it is applied to the Sabbath (Gen. ii. 3); to the Jewish tabernacle and temple and the utensils of the Divine service (see Exod. xxx.); and to Aaron and his sons and their successors in office.

The term, thus used in a ceremonial sense, is applied in a high spiritual sense to all justified and regenerate men (1 Cor. i. 2, and other places); denoting their separation from sin, and their dedication to the service of God. And from this it is easy to see what is involved in that matured and perfected degree of the Spirit’s work, which St. Paul calls a being sanctified “wholly,” (1 Thess. v. 23.) It consists in an entire separation from sin, and an entire dedication to God.

1. ENTIRE SEPARATION FROM SIN, by which we mean, first, from all *outward* sin, all violations of the law of love which relate to our outward conduct; and secondly, from all *inward* sin, all violations of the law of love which relate to the intellect, sensibilities, and the will. And is not the absolute necessity and easy possibility of this entire separation from sin most clearly insisted upon throughout the Revelation of God? Let the following

* “Last Check.”

passages be duly pondered :—Ps. cxxx. 5, 6 ; Ezek. xxxvi. 25-27 ; Rom. vi. 6, 7, 10, 11 ; 2 Cor. vii. 1 ; Eph. v. 25-27 ; 1 John i. 7, 9, iii. 8. It must be observed, however, that if sin were defined in its most absolute and strict sense as including, not only every transgression of the Divine law, but every defect by which we come short of its requirements, “there is no man that sinneth not.” But defect and infirmity—which are, in a sense, transgressions of the perfect law, and from which no one is clear till he lays down this corruptible body—are not charged upon the conscience and imputed as sin in the case of a man whose heart is clean, and whose intentions, affections, and principles are swayed by love ; for “love is the fulfilling of the law.” (Rom. xiii. 10.)

2. ENTIRE DEDICATION TO GOD, by which we mean a complete acquiescence in his will and reference to his glory ; using and enjoying all as he wills we should, disclaiming any rights that conflict with his rights ; pursuing such business and in such measure as from our best light we believe he approves ; loving only those objects which he loves, and in that degree which he allows ; and discharging every duty, in the world or in the church, at home or abroad, in willing and acknowledged reference to the honour of his name. This is entire consecration. And who will say that by the grace of God it is not possible ? It is enjoined, Rom. i. 2 ; 1 Cor. vi. 19, 20 ; and it is exemplified, Rom. xiv. 6-8 ; Gal. ii. 20.

The man who is thus entirely cleansed and entirely dedicated has that mind in him which was also in Christ Jesus (Phil. ii. 5) ; he is filled with the fruits of righteousness (Phil. i. 11) ; his speech will be always with grace, seasoned with salt (Col. iv. 6) ; he will set no wicked thing before his eyes (Ps. ci. 3) ; his bodily appetites will be used only for the purposes for which they were designed (1 Cor. ix. 27) ; he rejoices evermore, prays without ceasing, and in everything gives thanks (1 Thess. v. 16-18) ; the law of love, as described in 1 Cor. xiii., is written on his heart ; and he moves amidst the scenes of life blameless and harmless, the son of God without rebuke. (Phil. ii. 15.) Such an one can say, in some humble and distant sense, what his Divine Master said, “The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me ;” and when God comes to inspect the soul, he finds all that it possesses to be in harmony with himself—a throne on which he reigns without a rival, an empire wherein he exercises undisputed dominion. This is entire sanctification—this is Christian perfection. And we may sum up the whole in the words of Dr. Hannah : “It denotes the extirpation of our remaining sin, and the mature growth of regenerate life ; or, in other words, that pure and perfect love of God, and of all others for his sake, which is now attainable through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, and which is strictly consistent with the acknowledged infirmities of our present mortal condition.” And this suggests another inquiry :—

V. What limits or qualifications are we to assign to this state of grace?

1. DOES IT INCLUDE INFALLIBILITY, EXEMPTION FROM ERRORS OF JUDGMENT, OR INTELLECTUAL PERFECTION OF ANY KIND? No; while we remain in the body we are liable to be imposed upon by deceptive appearances, to arrive at false conclusions; to be misled by unfaithful memory, illusory observations, erratic imaginations; to form unauthorised surmises and suspicions; to entertain incorrect opinions about many things. This is a natural consequence of the soul's dwelling in flesh and blood. But a man may be filled with pure love, and yet be subject to ignorance and mistake.

2. DOES IT SUPPOSE THAT THE CONDUCT AND FEELINGS WILL BE ALWAYS FREE FROM IMPROPRIETIES AND IRREGULARITIES? No; from imperfect knowledge or mistake in judgment there may frequently result an improper conduct and feeling. For instance: Wrong information concerning an upright and honest neighbour may lead me to regard and to treat him as a vile and disreputable man. The prejudice of education may induce me to flagellate the body, or to confine myself to the cloisters of a monastery. "And a thousand such instances there may be, even in those who are in the highest state of grace. Yet, where every word and action spring from love, such a mistake is not properly a sin."*

2. DOES IT IMPLY FREEDOM FROM TEMPTATION? No; a state of temptation is compatible with the highest state of holiness; for Adam, in his primeval innocence, was tempted; and the Saviour, who knew no sin, was tempted in all points like as we are; and, so long as our probation lasts, we shall be liable to temptation from a variety of sources. But so long as it is promptly, and with the full and hearty concurrence of the soul, repelled, there is no indication of inward sympathy, and there is no sin.

4. DOES IT IMPLY AN EXEMPTION FROM THE DANGER OF FALLING AWAY? No; the most holy Christians are not in this respect above Adam in Paradise, or above angels in heaven. The one fell into sin from the summit of his paradisiacal excellence, and the others from the height of their celestial perfection; so may those believers whose hearts have been purified by faith gradually depart from the faith, and even fall so low as to count the blood of the covenant wherewith they were sanctified an unholy thing.†

5. DOES IT PRECLUDE THE POSSIBILITY OF FURTHER ADVANCEMENT? No; the word "perfection" indicates that the graces of the Spirit exist in the sanctified soul without alloy, without mixture—that there is nothing within contrary to them—that they exist in measure corresponding with the present

* Wesley's "Plain Account."

† Fletcher's "Last Check."

capacity of the soul possessing them ; but it does not indicate an attainment beyond which there is no progress. As the defects and infirmities of this mortal state are overcome or removed, as the capacities continue ever and endlessly to enlarge, as the mind expands and unfolds its energies, so will the sublimities of its moral perfection wax brighter and brighter. Through time and throughout eternity the soul will continue to receive fresh supplies from the fulness of its glorified Lord, "changed from glory into glory."

VI. *Is this state of Christian perfection attained when the believer is justified ? In other words, is regeneration identical with entire sanctification ?*

This opinion was strenuously advocated, more than a century ago, by the celebrated Count Zinzendorf, and many of our countrymen imbibed it from him. And still there are a few—a very few—who contend, that at the moment of regeneration the believer is completely and thoroughly sanctified ; and that if he should afterwards be conscious of inbred corruption, he has, in a measure, fallen from grace. It may be conceded, first, that in very exceptional cases, especially in the cases of those who are saved just at the close of life, the work is "cut short ;" and the penitent believer is at once forgiven and cleansed from all unrighteousness : secondly, that in the holy transports of his first love, the justified man *imagines* that all sin is gone—"he feels no sin, and therefore fancies he has none ; it does not stir, therefore it does not exist ; it has no motion, therefore it has no being ;" thirdly, that the regenerate man "is delivered from the dominion of outward sin, and, at the same time, the power of inward sin is so broken that he need no longer follow or be led by it. But it is by no means true that inward sin is then totally destroyed ; that the root of pride, self-will, anger, love of the world, is then taken out of the heart ; or that the carnal mind, and the heart bent to backsliding, are entirely extirpated. These, to some extent remain, under the control of a stronger gracious power implanted, but still making resistance, and indicating the need of a further work. Take the following Scripture proofs that there is sin still existing in the heart of the justified believer. 1 *Cor.* iii. 1-3.—The persons here addressed were "babes in Christ," and were therefore born again of the Spirit they were Christian "brethren," "sanctified in Christ Jesus" (chap. i. 2) ; and yet they were in a measure "carnal," of which there were tokens enough to disturb the peace, and prevent the prosperity of the church. 2 *Cor.* vii. 1.—This exhortation plainly teaches that the believers to whom it was addressed were still the subjects of spiritual pollution, from which the soul must be cleansed before they could answer the great purposes of their Christian calling. *Gal.* v. 17.—The Apostle directly affirms that the "flesh," the evil nature, opposes the Spirit, even in believers ;

that even in the regenerate there are two principles "contrary the one to the other." 1 *John* i. 7.—In this passage we are supposed to be "in the light," but not yet cleansed from sin; this entire cleansing is still held out as an object to be aimed at in all the holy exercises of the soul. And the whole tenor of New Testament teaching leads to the same conclusion, "that there are two contrary principles in believers, nature and grace, the flesh and the Spirit. Almost all the directions and exhortations in St. Paul's epistles are founded on this supposition; pointing at wrong tempers or practices in those who are, notwithstanding, acknowledged by the inspired writers to be believers. And they are continually exhorted to fight with and conquer these, by the power of the faith which was in them." *

WHAT, THEN, IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN REGENERATION AND ENTIRE SANCTIFICATION? "Regeneration is the beginning of purification; entire sanctification is the finishing of that work. A regenerate man is kept from voluntarily committing known sin; which is what is commonly meant in the New Testament by 'committing sin.' But he yet finds in himself the remains of inbred corruption or original sin; such as pride, anger, envy, etc. The person fully sanctified is cleansed from all these inward involuntary sins. He may be tempted by Satan, by men, and by his own bodily appetites, to commit sin; but his heart is free from those inward fires, which, before his full sanctification, were ready to fall in with temptation, and lead him into transgression. The Holy Ghost has cleansed him from all these pollutions of his nature." †

VII. *If Christian perfection is thus a distinct work from regeneration, is it to be attained gradually or instantaneously?*

That there is to be a gradual growth to the maturity of the Christian life is plain. Hence the commands, 2 *Peter* iii. 13, and the figures by which the work of grace is illustrated: it is leaven (*Matt.* xiii. 35); it is the mortification of sin (*Col.* iii. 5); it is the rising from infancy to manhood (1 *John* ii. 12, 13); and it is a race, "a going on." (*Heb.* xii. 1, vi. 1.) But though there is a progress towards perfection in every justified believer, yet its attainment is not a mere ripeness, insured by natural growth, but is instantaneously wrought in the soul by the direct agency of the Holy Ghost. It is by faith (*Acts* xv. 9), and therefore, at any time when the requisite faith is exercised, the reward will be granted. Mr. Wesley illustrates the subject thus: "A man may be dying for some time; yet he does not, properly speaking, die, till the instant the soul is separated from the body; and in that instant he lives the life of eternity. In like man-

* Wesley's Sermon on "Sin in Believers," where this subject is treated at length.

† Bishop Hedding, of the M. E. Church of America.

ner, he may be dying to sin for some time ; yet he is not dead to sin till sin is separated from his soul ; and in that instant he lives the full life of love. Yet he still grows in grace, in the knowledge of Christ, and in the witness of the renewal." But as it is often difficult to perceive the instant when life ceases, so a man may be "dead indeed unto sin," but know nothing of the instant when "the old man" expired. While in other cases the time, place, and circumstances may be as plain and unmistakable as any event in the natural world.

VIII. What is the Scripture proof that this state of moral and spiritual excellence is attainable ?

1. IT IS PROVED FROM THE FACT THAT GOD COMMANDS IT. (Deut. vi. 5, compared with Luke x. 27 ; Matt. v. 48 ; Rom. vi. 11 ; 2 Cor. vii. 1 ; Heb. vi. 1, xii. 14 ; James i. 4 ; 1 Pet. i. 15, 16.) If it is not attainable, then God has issued a command which it is impossible should be obeyed—made a requirement of his creatures which they have no power to perform. Who is prepared for this conclusion ?

2. IT IS PROVED FROM THE FACT THAT GOD PROMISES IT. (Deut. xxx. 6 ; Ezek. xxxvi. 25-29 ; Matt. v. 6 ; 1 Thess. v. 24 ; 1 John i. 7-9.) If it is not attainable, then God's promise will fail ; but "he is not a man that he should lie."

3. IT IS PROVED FROM THE FACT THAT HOLY AND INSPIRED MEN PRAYED FOR IT IN BEHALF OF THE CHURCH. (John xvii. 20-23 ; Eph. iii. 14-21 ; Col. iv. 12 ; 1 Thess. v. 23 ; Heb. xiii. 20, 21 ; 1 Pet. v. 10.) If it is not attainable, the men who offered these prayers were deluded by the Holy Ghost, and inspiration is not to be trusted !

4. IT IS PROVED FROM THE FACT THAT THE BIBLE POINTS TO IT AS THE GREAT OBJECT OF ALL GOD'S DEALINGS WITH MEN. It is the object of Christ's mediatorial work (Luke i. 68-75 ; 1 John iii. 8 ; Eph. v. 25-27 ; Titus ii. 14) ; of the institution of the Christian ministry (Eph. iv. 11-13 ; Col. i. 28) ; of the promise of the Gospel (2 Pet. i. 4) ; and of the afflictions of life. (Heb. xii. 10.) To suppose that it is not attainable is to cast contempt on the provisions of grace, and, above all, to dishonour the meritorious sacrifice of Christ.

5. IT IS PROVED FROM THE FACT THAT THE SCRIPTURES PRESENT US WITH EXAMPLES OF THOSE WHO HAVE REALISED IT. Enoch (Gen. v. 24) ; Noah (Gen. vi. 9) ; the disciples on the day of Pentecost (Acts. ii. 4) ; Barnabas (xi. 24) ; St. John (1 John iv. 17) ; the Apostles who laboured among the Thessalonians (1 Thess. ii. 10) ; and St. Paul. (Phil. iii. 15).^{*} Now, if an instance

* The words of Paul, in Phil. iii. 12-14, have often been adduced as his own acknowledgment that he was not wholly sanctified. But the context shows that the perfection of which he was speaking in verse 12 consists in the obtaining of the reward to which, as a Christian racer,

can be found in the Bible of one individual who, at any period of his life, was "perfect," "blameless," free from sin, or entirely sanctified, the attainableness of such a state is clearly proved. And it would make nothing against this doctrine if a charge of moral delinquency could be afterwards proved against him; because, as we have already shown, Christian perfection does not imply impeccability, or certain perseverance in that state to the close of life.

IX. If the blessing of "perfect love" is thus proved to be attainable, may we look for it in the full vigour of life?

The general opinion of Calvinistic divines is that it cannot be obtained until death. The great and good Matthew Henry teaches this doctrine; and Dr. Dodd says, in his note on Rom. vi. 7, "The body of sin in believers is, indeed, an enfeebled, conquered, and deposed tyrant, and the stroke of death finishes its destruction." We, on the contrary, believe that the entire sanctification of our nature may take place long before death, and be exemplified in whatever position Providence may place us. Our reasons for this conclusion are—

1. We find no intimation in the Bible that we cannot be cleansed from sin while in life and health; and in no one passage is it hinted that the glorious transformation must be postponed to the end of our career. All the commands and promises that relate to this subject are so worded as to convey the idea of a *present* application.

2. We are nowhere taught that the soul's connection with the body is a necessary obstacle to its entire sanctification. Indeed, it is explicitly declared that the body, with all its appetites, powers, and members, is to be sanctified to God. (1 Thess. v. 23; Heb. x. 22; 2 Cor. iv. 10, 11; 1 Cor. vi. 19, 20; Rom. vi. 13.)

3. It is the blood of Christ, and not "the last enemy," that cleanseth from all sin (Heb. x. 29; 1 John i. 7); and it would be an insult to Christ and to his "precious blood," to suppose that he cannot save his people from their sins while soul and body are united.

4. "The Scriptures connect our entire sanctification with subsequent habits and acts to be exhibited in the conduct of believers before death." (Rom. vi. 6, 19, 22; 2 Cor. vii. 1; 1 Thess. v. 23.)

5. The Scriptures, also, "require us to bring forth the graces and virtues which are usually called the fruits of the Spirit. That these are to be produced during the life, and to be displayed in our spirit and conduct, cannot be doubted; and we may then ask

he was aspiring. He was looking for the crown of martyrdom and the resurrection to eternal life, and was led to view everything as imperfect or unfinished till these were attained. And he calls upon all who, like himself, were "perfect," in the sense of being cleansed from indwelling sin, to "be like-minded" in pressing forward to the goal.

whether they are required of us in perfection and maturity ? If so, in this degree of perfection and maturity, they necessarily suppose the entire sanctification of the soul from the opposite and antagonist evils.”*

We conclude, therefore, as to the time of our complete sanctification, that “now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation.”

X. By what evidence is the attainment of this great blessing verified ?

It is evidenced indirectly by its fruits. There will be an inward consciousness that the body of sin is destroyed, a deep and constant current of love flowing out towards God and all mankind, a perfect submission to the will of God, a life of faith in the Son of God, and intimate fellowship with God. Indeed, the one undivided “fruit of the Spirit” described in Gal. v. 22, 23, will be gloriously displayed to the honour of God and the edification of man. But, still, “*none ought to believe that the work is done, till there is added the testimony of the Spirit witnessing his entire sanctification as clearly as his justification.*” “But what need is there of this, seeing sanctification is a real change, not a relative one only, like justification?” Ans.—“But is the new birth a relative change only ? is not this a real change ? therefore, if we need no witness of our sanctification because it is a real change, for the same reason we should need none that we are born of or are the children of God.” “But does not sanctification shine by its own light ?” Ans.—“And does not the new birth too ? Sometimes it does ; and so does sanctification : at others it does not. In the hour of temptation Satan clouds the work of God, and injects various doubts and reasonings, especially in those who have very weak or very strong understandings. At such times there is absolute need of that witness ; without which the work of sanctification not only could not be discerned, but could no longer subsist. Were it not for this, the soul could not then abide in the love of God ; much less could it rejoice evermore, and in everything give thanks. In these circumstances, therefore, a direct testimony that we are sanctified is necessary in the highest degree.” “But what scripture makes mention of any such thing, or gives any reason to expect it ?” Ans.—“That scripture, ‘Now we have received not,’ etc. (1 Cor. ii. 12.) Now, surely, sanctification is one of ‘the things which are freely given us of God.’ And no possible reason can be assigned why this should be excepted, when the Apostle says ‘we receive the Spirit’ for this very end, ‘that we may know the things which are’ thus ‘freely given us.’ Consider, likewise, 1 John v. 19 : ‘We know that we are of God.’ How ? ‘By the Spirit that he hath given us.’ Nay, ‘hereby we know that he abideth in us.’ And what ground have we, either from Scripture

* Watson’s “Institutes.”

or reason, to exclude the witness, any more than the fruit, of the Spirit, from being here intended? By this, then, also 'we know that we are of God,' and in what sense we are so; whether we are babes, young men, or fathers, we know in the same manner. Not that I affirm that all young men, or even fathers, have this testimony every moment. There may be intermissions of the direct testimony that they are thus born of God; but those intermissions are fewer and shorter as they grow up in Christ; and some have the testimony both of their justification and sanctification, without any intermission at all; which I presume more might have, did they walk humbly and closely with God."*

XI. What are the leading objections raised against the doctrine of Christian perfection?

OBJ. 1. THE DOCTRINE CANNOT BE TRUE, BECAUSE MANY CHRISTIANS AND EVEN MANY LEARNED AND PIOUS DIVINES DO NOT RECEIVE IT! To this we reply, that although it be true that great names in vast numbers might be arrayed in opposition to the doctrine, as above stated, yet other names equally distinguished for learning and excellence can be arrayed as its zealous defenders. This, however, does not settle the difficulty. The question is not dependent on human opinions, however respectable and worthy of attention. "To the law and to the testimony." One "thus saith the Lord" is more conclusive than all the opinions of all the great and learned men the world ever contained. If the doctrine is in the Bible, let us embrace it, whoever may oppose; if it is not, let us reject it, whoever may be its defender.

OBJ. 2. THE DOCTRINE CANNOT BE TRUE, BECAUSE THERE ARE NO EXAMPLES OF IT. If the fact asserted in this objection were conceded, the attainableness of perfection might still be maintained. What God wills us to be can never be inferred from what we are. Let us mournfully confess that every Christian, since the world began, had lived beneath the privileges of his vocation, rather than charge God with requiring anything from us that we cannot perform, or promising anything to us which he will not bestow. But we cannot concede that the universal experience of the church is against the doctrine. How many, in modern times, have humbly but confidently affirmed that they could "reckon themselves dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ." And those who lived in closest communion with them have told "how holily and justly and unblamably they behaved themselves." Read the memoirs of Fletcher, Bramwell, Carvosso, Mrs. Fletcher, Mrs. Rogers, Lady Maxwell, etc. Was there anything in their experience contrary to the word of God? Did they not understand the character of their experience? Did they in the general movements of life give any

* Wesley's "Plain Account," pp. 48, 71, 72.

signs of mental aberration, from which we might conclude that they were self-deceived? But the Holy Scriptures, as we have already shown, present us with examples of those who have realised this full salvation. Enoch and Elijah must have enjoyed it; they loved God with all their heart, and lived in full preparation for their translation to glory. The disciples, after the baptism of Pentecost, must have enjoyed it. They were so "filled with the Holy Ghost," that love reigned alone, to the extinction of every antagonist principle and affection, rendering life itself one continued sacrifice of praise. Stephen must have enjoyed it. The benignity, the tenderness, the boldness, the spirituality of that man of God, as he stands before the council, and his Christ-like regard for his murderers as he sinks to rest, show that his soul was filled with love to God and man. The Apostle John must have enjoyed it. His epistles are the breathings forth of that "perfect love" of which he so sweetly writes. And St. Paul must have enjoyed it. See how he loved his hostile countrymen (Rom. ix. 1, 2); how he realised the efficacy of the Saviour's death (Gal. vi. 14); how he esteemed all worldly things, that Christ might be all in all (Phil. iii. 8, 9); how contentedly he submitted to the will of God in every dispensation of his providence (Phil. iv. 11-13); how fully he discharged the duties of his calling (Acts xx. 20, 21, 26); how pure and single was his aim (Acts xx. 24); how blameless his deportment (1 Thess. ii. 10); how strong his faith (2 Tim. i. 12); and how perfect his meetness for the heavenly inheritance. (Col. i. 12; 2 Tim. iv. 5-8.) Is not this the experience of one who stands "perfect and complete in all the will of God"? And if ministers, instead of advocating the cause of imperfection, were to display more fully before their people the beauties of holiness, the infinite efficacy of the precious blood, and the duty of being filled with the fulness of God, can we doubt that there would be many living witnesses in all our churches that Christ our Saviour is able to save to the uttermost?

OBJ. 3. THE DOCTRINE CANNOT BE TRUE, BECAUSE IT IS PROMOTIVE OF PRIDE AND SELF-RIGHTEOUSNESS. Strange mistake! He who is cleansed from all unrighteousness is, above all others, "clothed with humility." He has become a willing and ready disciple of him who was "meek and lowly in heart;" and whatever good thing he enjoys he ascribes to the free, unmerited grace of God in Christ Jesus. Holiness and pride are far as the poles asunder.

OBJ. 4. THE DOCTRINE CANNOT BE TRUE, BECAUSE IT WOULD EXCLUDE THE NECESSITY OF A MEDIATOR. Far from it. The abundant blessings which a holy man has received from the mediation of the Saviour invests that mediation with all possible attractiveness. His life of holiness is a "life of faith in the Son of God." And all his fruits of holiness flourish only as he abides in the vine. He rejoices in Christ Jesus (Phil. iii. 3); he walks in him (Col. ii. 6); he glories in his cross (Gal. vi. 14);

whatsoever he does, he does all in his name (Col. iii. 17); he looks with ardent longing for his glorious appearing (Titus ii. 13); and never does he so fully apprehend the preciousness of Jesus as when he has put away the evil and bitter thing which Christ hateth.

OBJ. 5. THE DOCTRINE CANNOT BE TRUE, BECAUSE THE SCRIPTURES EXPLICITLY AND POINTEDLY ASSERT THE NECESSARY EXISTENCE OF SIN WITHIN US TO THE CLOSE OF LIFE. Let us examine the passages referred to:—

1. 1 Kings viii. 46; 2 Chron. vi. 36.—These passages, taken in the fullest sense of which they are capable, only assert that there is no man who is not a sinner. If they were intended to assert—as our opponents imagine—that there is no man who does not, and cannot live without committing sin, then why say, “If they sin against thee”? The true meaning, however, is that no man is placed beyond the possibility of sinning. “The Hebrew has no mood to express words in the permissive or optative way; but to express this sense it uses the future tense.” And hence the text should be translated: “Should they sin against thee, for there is no man that may not sin”—no man who is impeccable, none infallible, none that is not liable to transgress.* The same remarks will apply to *Eccles.* vii. 20, where the verb *to sin* is in the future, and is properly rendered subjunctively, with the negative particle, “There is not a righteous man upon earth who does good, and may not sin.” Dr. Peck says: “The rule of Hebrew syntax authorising this rendering may be found in all good Hebrew grammars; and in the application of the rule to the passages under consideration we are supported by some of the best critics—Romish, Lutheran, Calvinist, and Arminian.

2. Prov. xxiv. 16, is often adduced. But this passage is totally irrelevant; for there is here no mention of sinning, and no reference to sin. Read the context, and it will soon appear that Solomon is speaking of the adversities into which a good man may fall, but from which God delivereth him.

3. Prov. xx. 9.—Shall we conclude from this question that *God* cannot make our hearts clean? Would not this be a direct contradiction to such passages as Ps. li. 7-10; Ezek. xxxvi. 25, 26; 1 John i. 7? The passage is simply an affirmation that all have sinned—that no man can with truth say, with respect to his past life, I am guiltless, my heart is clean, I have not sinned.

4. James iii. 2.—The force of the objection, arising from this text, lies in the supposition that James is speaking personally, including himself with those whom he was addressing; but it is a well-known custom for speakers to use the pronoun *we* in statements where the including of themselves would involve the most

* For a learned examination of this point, see Dr. Peck on “Christian Perfection.” See Dr. Clarke’s Note *in loco*.

preposterous consequences. If James must be supposed to refer to himself always when he uses the word "we," it must be granted that he was exposed to the greater condemnation (ver. 1); that he was a horsebreaker (ver. 3); that his tongue was set on fire of hell (ver. 6); that he was a common swearer (ver. 9, etc.). But this supposition is too gross to be admitted: yet is just the principle on which men allege the former passage against the doctrine of entire sanctification. But even if St. James *had* designed to include himself in that statement, the utmost it could prove would be that he and those whom he addressed were imperfect; but no number of cases of unfaithfulness on the part of men could disprove that the privilege of perfect holiness was placed before them. James was a full believer in the doctrine of Christian perfection, as is evident from the subsequent part of the verse, and from chap. i. ver. 4; and what he intends by the statement, "in many things we offend all," is, that the "many masters" or teachers who thrust themselves into the office, affecting that for which they are not qualified, are causes of offence and stumbling to all, and shall receive greater condemnation. Therefore "be not many teachers, let no more of you take this upon you than God thrusts out; seeing it is so hard not to offend in speaking much."*

5. 1 John i. 8.—Dr. Wardlaw asks, "Is not the plain meaning, that if at any time we say we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves?" We reply, certainly not. The passage explains itself. Read verses 8, 9, 10, where the meaning evidently is: "I have before affirmed that the blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin. And no man can say, I need it not; I have no sin to be cleansed from. If we say that we have no sin, *i.e.*, that we have not sinned (ver. 10), we are under the most dreadful of all deceptions, and the truth of the Gospel is not in us, the whole of which is founded on this most awful truth, that all have sinned. But if we confess our sins, from a deep sense of their guilt and demerit, he is faithful and just, not only to forgive the sin, but to purify the heart, that we may go and sin no more."† There is nothing in this text, therefore, to favour the necessary existence of sin. It is rather one of the strongholds of those who contend for the entire cleansing of the soul by the precious blood of Christ.

6. Rom. vii. 14-25.—No passage has been more usually resorted to, as furnishing proof of the necessary continuance of indwelling sin than this. It is argued, "If the great Apostle was 'carnal, sold under sin,' how can any one expect to reach a state of freedom from its guilt and power?" But it remains to be proved that St. Paul, in this chapter, is describing his character and feelings as a regenerate man. To us this notion appears perfectly untenable, because neither his own experience,

* Wesley's Note *in loco*.

† See Wesley and Clarke.

nor that of any regenerate person, can be reconciled with the description here given. A regenerate man yields his members as instruments of righteousness unto God (vi. 13); but this man with his flesh obeys the law of sin (ver. 25). A regenerate man does not commit sin (1 John iii. 9); but this man is sold under sin (ver. 14). A regenerate man is spiritual (Gal. vi. 4); but this man is carnal (ver. 14). A regenerate man has his fruits unto holiness (vi. 22); but this man brings forth fruit unto death (ver. 5). A regenerate man exults in his liberty (viii. 2); but this man groans by reason of his bondage (ver. 24). So that there is no agreement or resemblance at all between the regenerate man and those described in this chapter.

If it be asked, whom, then, does the Apostle describe? we reply, he is either personating a Jew who is struggling with sin, but, through resting in the law, is unable to conquer; or he is showing what his own state was when his conscience was awakened, but knowing nothing of a Saviour, he found himself enslaved to the practice of sin which he abhorred. Convinced by many unavailing efforts that he could never extricate himself from his bondage by the deeds of the law, he cries out from the depths of his wretchedness for a deliverer, whom at length he found in the person of "Jesus Christ our Lord."

The chief reason why St. Paul is supposed to speak of himself as a regenerate man is, that he uses the first person and the present tense throughout the passage. But it should be recollected how common it is with the inspired writers to speak as if they included themselves, when in reality they did not intend it. Thus Hosea (chap. xii. 4) says, "There (viz. in Bethel) God spake with *us*," whereas he was not in existence when God spake with Jacob there. The Psalmist, speaking of the dividing of the Red Sea, says, "There did *we* rejoice in him;" and yet he was not present when that event occurred. Instances of the same thing occur in Paul's writings. (Rom. iii. 7; Gal. ii. 18; 1 Thess. iv. 17.) It was a method of avoiding, as much as possible, the giving offence to the Jews, when dwelling on subjects concerning which they would be peculiarly sensitive. And "that St. Paul does not speak these words of himself, but, under his own borrowed person, describes the state of a carnal, unregenerate person, was the opinion expressed by St. Irenæus and Origen, by Tertullian and St. Basil; by Theodoret and Chrysostom; by St. Jerome, and sometimes by St. Augustine; by St. Ambrose and St. Cyril; by Macarius and Theophylact."* The same sentiment is held, "as far as I know, by all the evangelical commentators of the present time on the continent of Europe; most of the English Episcopal Church, also, for many years; and not a few of the Scotch, Dutch, and English Presbyterian and Congregational divines have adopted the same interpretation."†

* Dr. Jeremy Taylor, "Sermon on Rom. vii. 19." † Dr. Bloomfield.

And "it is difficult to conceive how the opinion could have crept into the church, or prevailed there, that the Apostle speaks here of his regenerate state; and that what was, in such a state, true of himself must be true of all others in the same state."* No, there is nothing in the whole of this chapter, when rightly interpreted and applied, that is inconsistent with the Scriptural doctrine of Christian perfection.

OBJ. 6. THE DOCTRINE CANNOT BE TRUE, BECAUSE THE SCRIPTURES UNIFORMLY SPEAK OF BELIEVERS AS FIGHTING A GOOD FIGHT; WHEREAS, IF INBRED SIN IS DESTROYED, THE CONFLICT IS FINISHED. This idea is not less absurd than to suppose that, because civil dissension has no existence in a besieged city, therefore the inhabitants may sit secure, though the enemy is at their gates, attacking their outworks, and striving to make a breach in the walls. Has not the most perfect Christian an unfailling adversary in the devil, who goeth about as a roaring lion? (1 Pet. v. 8, 9.) Are not principalities and powers, and the rulers of the darkness of this world, engaged for his destruction? (Eph. vi. 11, 12.) And is not the world, in which he sojourns, full of temptations? Surely, then, there can be warfare, fierce and dreadful enough, without the remains of sin in the heart. Was not the blessed Saviour free from sin? And yet he maintained a conflict with the devil for forty days in the wilderness. The disciple is not above his Master.

OBJ. 7. THE DOCTRINE CANNOT BE TRUE, BECAUSE THE SAVIOUR HAS TAUGHT US TO PRAY, "FORGIVE US OUR TRESPASSES;" WHEREAS, IF WE LIVE WITHOUT SIN, THAT PRAYER HAS NEITHER USE NOR MEANING. It may be sufficient to reply that the same prayer teaches us, in two of its petitions, to ask for ourselves and others an entire deliverance from sin. What else can be the meaning of "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven;" and "deliver us from evil"? Besides, it should not be forgotten that, though we do not sin according to the evangelical sense of that term, but fulfil the law by pure love to God and man (Rom. xiii. 10), there are many involuntary improprieties of speech and behaviour into which we may be drawn through ignorance, mistake, or infirmity. These may be regarded as "trespasses," though not charged upon the conscience and imputed as sin; and of them we should ask the forgiveness of our Father in heaven. Moreover, in the Lord's Prayer we are regarded as being linked in the bonds of brotherhood with the sinners of our race; and not for ourselves only, but for them, do we pray, when we say, "Forgive *us our* trespasses." But take what view we will of the meaning of the petition, would it not be a strange and sorry argument that we must continue in sin, because, being sinners by nature, we are taught to ask for pardon?

* Dr. A. Clarke's Note on Rom. vii. 14.

XII. If the doctrine of Christian perfection be true, are the offspring of sanctified parents holy from the birth?

It has been said, "Like produces like. If the nature of original corruption is totally destroyed in parents, it is impossible but that their children must be also perfectly pure." * What-ever support such a sentiment might be supposed to derive from philosophy, it certainly has none in the Bible. "The Scripture hath concluded all under sin." The relation of the entire race to fallen Adam—a fact on which the great argument in Rom. v. rests—is independent of all intermediate descent. Moreover, the holiest of parents are not now in the condition of our unfallen ancestor. The whole nature—bodily, mental, and moral—is deteriorated by the fall; and sanctification by the Holy Spirit does not restore these powers to a state of Adamic perfection even in the parent himself who enjoys this sanctification; and if the parent himself is not thus restored, how can he transmit that perfection to his posterity? Besides this, the maxim that "like produces like" is true of *nature* and *capacity*, but not true in any sense of *acquired* endowments, of *superinduced* qualities. The sons of an astronomer have no innate knowledge of the stars; and Milton's daughters added no books to his immortal epic. And as the acquirements of the intellect cannot be transmitted from sire to son, so neither can the piety of the heart. This has been obtained by grace, through faith in Christ Jesus; and can only be obtained by the successive generations of men, however holy their immediate parentage may be, as the result of the same personal repentance and faith. Hence it is said, "Except a man"—the phrase is as general as can be found—"a man," of whatever lineage, or rank, or training, or education—"except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

XIII. On a review of the whole subject, how do Wesley's teachings on Christian perfection differ from those of others who have promulgated the same doctrine?

I. THERE WAS THE PERFECTION OF THE MYSTICS. This was taught by Thomas à Kempis, Macarius, Fenelon, Lucas, Law, Madame de Guyon, and other writers, Protestant and Papal. Their opinions glowed with the very sanctity of the Gospel. They presented in their writings such a portraiture of the perfect Christian as would awaken the noblest aspirations of a regenerate heart; but they taught that the perfect love of God would raise a man above those mental infirmities which are inseparable from our present state; and that these lofty attainments were to be reached by seclusion from the world, ascetic self-abnegation, and works of charity and benevolence. Wesley's statement of the doctrine

* This subject is argued elaborately in a work entitled "Man Primeval." By Rev. Nathan Rouse.

differed from theirs as being far more clear, more consistent with our present state of infirmity and ignorance, and more readily attainable by present faith in a perfect Saviour. In a letter to one of his correspondents he says: "I want you to be *all love*. This is the perfection I believe and teach; and this perfection is consistent with a thousand nervous disorders which that high-strained perfection is not. Indeed, my judgment is that (in this case particularly) to overdo is to undo; and that to set perfection too high is the most effectual way of driving it out of the world." Moreover, he had no sympathy with the notion that the perfection of the Gospel could be reached by seclusion from the world and a long series of self-denying works. His words are: "As to the manner, I believe this perfection is always wrought in the soul by faith, by a simple act of faith; consequently, in an instant. But I believe a gradual work, both preceding and following that instant."

2. THERE WAS THE PERFECTION OF PELAGIANISM. It has been said that Wesley adopted the Pelagian scheme, but no statement can be farther from the truth. Pelagianism presents a strictly *legal* perfection—perfect conformity to the law. But, denying the doctrine of man's depravity and of the direct influences of the Spirit, it holds that perfection may be attained through the efforts of mere natural ability. Wesley, on the other hand, set forth an *evangelical* perfection—perfect conformity to the terms of the Gospel. But, strenuously maintaining the doctrine of hereditary depravity and of the Spirit's influence, he held that this exalted state could only be attained through the merits of the Saviour's death, and by the power of the Holy Ghost.

3. THERE IS THE PERFECTION OF THE OBERLIN SCHOOL, as represented chiefly by Professors Mahan and Finney. In some respects their phraseology comes very near the Wesleyan view; and the illustrations of the doctrine, and the arguments employed to prove it, are generally the same as are employed by us. But, like the Pelagians, they make the original moral law of God the standard of perfection. Says Finney, "Nothing more nor less can possibly be perfection or entire sanctification than obedience to the law." It is difficult to say precisely what he means by this language; but this is the point at which it is understood the Oberlin theory diverges from ours. Wesley and Fletcher were always careful to announce that the perfection to which we are called "is not perfection according to the absolute moral law; it is perfection according to the special remedial economy introduced by the atonement, in which the heart, being sanctified, fulfils the law by love (Rom. xiii. 8, 10); and its involuntary imperfections, which are, in a sense, transgressions of the perfect law, are provided for by that economy, without the imputation of guilt."* When Mr. Wesley thus explained his opinions to

* Dr. Abel Stevens.

Bishop Gibson, the prelate exclaimed, "Why, Mr. Wesley, if this is what you mean by perfection, who can be against it?"

There are various works on this subject, which may be studied with advantage:—Mr. Wesley's "Plain Account of Christian Perfection," and sermon on "Christian Perfection;" Fletcher's "Last Check," which relates entirely to this subject, and is one of the finest examples of logical argumentation and of Christian temper in the English language; Mr. Treffry's Treatise on "Christian Perfection;" Mr. Benson's "Three Sermons on Sanctification;" Watson's "Institutes," part ii., chap. xxix.; Mr. D. Walton's volume, entitled "The Mature Christian;" and Hunt's "Letters on Entire Sanctification." The American Press has issued many works on the subject that are well worth reading, among which I may mention prominently, Dr. G. Peck's "Scripture Doctrine of Christian Perfection," Dr. Jesse Peck's "Central Idea of Christianity," and Dr. Foster on "Christian Purity."

CHAPTER XIV.

THE FINAL PERSEVERANCE OF THE SAINTS.

I. *What are the two views that are held upon this subject?*

1. THE CALVINISTIC VIEW—namely, that all who have received the grace of God, being born again of the Spirit, shall certainly persevere to the end, and be eternally saved. In other words, they shall never fall either totally or finally from a state of grace. This doctrine follows, as a necessary sequence from the doctrine of personal election.

2. THE ARMINIAN OR WESLEYAN VIEW—namely, that those who were once justified and regenerated, may, by grieving the Spirit of God, fall away and perish everlastingly. In other words, their perseverance in the ways of righteousness, and their glorification in heaven, are strictly conditional.

II. *By what arguments do we sustain the view that a Christian may deeply and finally fall?*

1. IT IS CLEARLY IMPLIED IN THE SOLEMN INJUNCTIONS WHICH THE BIBLE CONTAINS TO A FAITHFUL PERSEVERANCE IN THE WAYS OF GOD. Matt. xxiv. 13, xxvi. 41; John xv. 4; 1 Cor. ix. 24, x. 12; Col. i. 22, 23; Heb. iii. 14, iv. 1; 1 Pet. v. 8, 9; 2 Pet. i. 10, 11; Rev. ii. 10. It will be seen that many of these texts expressly connect our future blessedness with the faithful observance of the conditional precept. The end can only be secured as the means are observed. But this can be true only on the principle that we are still in a probationary state, and that our eternal happiness, so far from being fixed by an irrevocable decree, is contingent on our faithfulness to God.

2. IT IS PROVED BY THE REPEATED WARNINGS OF THE BIBLE AGAINST APOSTASY FROM GOD, SUCH APOSTASY, WITH ITS GENERAL CONSEQUENCES, BEING ANNOUNCED AS FEARFULLY POSSIBLE. Ezek. xviii. 24-26; Matt. v. 13; John xv. 2, 6; Rom. xi. 19-22; 1 Cor. x. 3-12; Heb. x. 38; 2 John 8; Rev. iii. 11. In full accordance with these passages is St. Paul's language, descriptive of his own conduct and fear. (1 Cor. ix. 27.) All these texts would be without meaning if our admission to heaven were unalterably secured.

3. IT IS PROVED BY THE AFFECTING DESCRIPTIONS AND EXAMPLES OF APOSTASY WHICH THE BIBLE PRESENTS AS MONITORY SIGNS AND BEACONS OF THE PEOPLE OF GOD.

Matt. xii. 43-45; 1 Tim. i. 18, 19; 2 Pet. ii. 20-22; Heb. vi. 4-6, x. 26-29. No terms could be found which more clearly describe and designate a state of salvation than those employed in these texts, as descriptive of the former condition of these apostates. The unclean spirit had gone out of them; they had faith and a good conscience; they had escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord; they were enlightened, and tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost; and yet so total is their fall, that their hearts become again the dwelling-place of wicked spirits; they make shipwreck of faith; they are again entangled in and overcome by the pollutions of the world; they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, even counting the blood wherewith they were sanctified an unholy thing; and on this account their final doom is the "fiery indignation which shall devour the adversaries." Surely, here is proof enough that no man, however deep his piety, is the subject of an unconditional or absolute appointment to eternal life. While in this world, he is in a state of probation which implies danger, and can only obtain the recompence of the reward, "IF he continue in the faith, grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the Gospel."

III. *What are the leading arguments adduced in opposition to this doctrine?*

1. IT IS ALLEGED THAT THERE ARE "PROMISES AND DECLARATIONS INSURING OR IMPLYING THE COMMUNICATION OF GRACE TO THE END;" e.g., John iv. 14, vi. 39, 40; Heb. xiii. 5, and many others. True, and God is faithful; he cannot deny himself. But all these promises directly express or clearly imply some condition, the violation of which, on man's part, will sacrifice the promised good. For example, the first of these passages expresses the permanence of the gift, but it is only to him that "drinketh of the water." Let him wander from the fountain, and cease to drink, and the living water will no longer refresh his soul. As to the second, it is a clear expression of "the Father's will." But is that will never frustrated by the sin of man? (See Matt. xxiii. 37, and 1 Tim. ii. 4, compared with John v. 40.) And was it not directly frustrated by the sin of Judas? He, like the rest, was given to Christ, but was "lost" to Christ and heaven. (See John xvii. 12.) As to the third, while God promises his abiding presence with his saints, other scriptures teach that that presence will be withdrawn from the disobedient and unfaithful. (2 Chron. xv. 2, xxiv. 20.) And so every promise of grace is contingent upon the faith and obedience of them to whom it is given.

2. IT IS ALLEGED THAT THERE ARE TEXTS IN WHICH "THE STRONGEST CONFIDENCE IS EXPRESSED AS TO THE CERTAINTY OF FINAL SALVATION, AND THAT THESE WOULD BE THE UTTERANCE OF FOOLHARDY ASSURANCE WERE THE ARMINIAN DOC-

TRINE TRUE;" *e.g.*, Rom. viii. 35-39; 2 Cor. v. 1; Phil. i. 6; 1 Pet. i. 4, 5. We reply, that it is the privilege of every Christian to live in "full assurance of hope." (Heb. vi. 11.) The heaven is prepared for him (Matt. xxv. 34; John xiv. 2); Divine grace is "sufficient" to meet the exigencies of his condition (2 Cor. xii. 9); God has promised to supply his need through all the changes of his life (Phil. iv. 19); he has in the graces of the Spirit an earnest of the inheritance (2 Cor. i. 22; Eph. i. 14); and God is faithful, who will not suffer him to be tempted above that he is able. (1 Cor. x. 13.) Hence he has reason enough to "rejoice in hope of the glory of God" (Rom. v. 2); and in proportion as he advances in holiness will he "abound in hope by the power of the Holy Ghost." (Rom. xv. 13.) But let hope be as confident as it may, it is still *but* hope, and cannot have all the absolute certainty of possession. The latter leaves no room for fear—the former may. And in our probationary state, though "begotten again to a lively hope," we are to "pass the time of our sojourning here in fear" (1 Pet. i. 17); a fear such as that which existed in Paul (1 Cor. ix. 27); and which, from a due apprehension of danger, will prompt to the mortification of the flesh (1 Cor. ix. 27), to incessant watchfulness and prayer (Matt. xxvi. 41), and to holy diligence. (1 Pet. i. 10, iii. 14.) It is, therefore, neither presumption nor "foolhardy assurance" to "hope to the end." This is, indeed, enjoined as a duty. But while "rejoicing in hope," "let us also fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it." (Heb. iv. 1.)

3. IT IS ALLEGED THAT THERE ARE TEXTS WHICH CONTAIN AFFIRMATIONS STILL MORE DIRECT THAT THE RIGHTEOUS SHALL FINALLY OBTAIN ETERNAL LIFE; *e.g.*, Rom. viii. 28-30; John x. 28, xi. 25, 26, etc. The first of these texts is supposed to be the stronghold of the Calvinistic doctrine. But does the Apostle mean that the blessings there mentioned invariably and unavoidably follow each other, so that no person who receives the first blessing ever fails to receive the second, the third, etc.? He cannot mean that. The statement of our Lord, in Matt. xxii. 14, proves that many have been "called," who were never "justified;" and the awful instances of apostasy named in Heb. vi. 4-8, and 2 Pet. ii. 20-22, etc., prove that there have been men who were once "justified," and yet were never "glorified." The Apostle, in enumerating these Christian privileges, and marking their sequence, is speaking of the gracious "purpose" of God in its gradual development and its ultimate consummation. These successive blessings are designed for Jews and Gentiles; they constitute so many steps from a state of nature to eternal glory. All who are glorified in heaven have advanced by these steps. Being "foreknown" as true believers, they were "predestinated"—predestined—(so the word *προώρισε* in this text means)—to be conformed to the image of Jesus, in the holiness of their present

character, and in their final glorification. This was the great blessing that God marked out for them as believers. They were therefore "called"—invited—by the Gospel to this state and benefit. The calling being obeyed, they were "justified;" and being justified, and continuing in that state of grace, they were "glorified;" for "he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved." (Matt. xxiv. 13.) This is the plain and obvious course of the amplification pursued by the Apostle. Except in direct opposition to other parts of Scripture, it cannot be designed to teach that these privileges follow each other with absolute and never-failing certainty in the experience of every one who is called by the Gospel.

The great mistake with regard to this text, and the others referred to, viz., John x. 28—"My sheep shall never perish;" and John xi. 26—"Whosoever liveth, and believeth in me, shall never die," etc., arises from supposing that they relate to a certain number of persons as *men*, whereas they relate to persons as existing under some particular *characters*. To such characters the promises are sure. Let the character be sacrificed, and the promise is made void. God himself has made this point plain in Ezek. xxxiii. 13, to which, as furnishing a key to many texts of Scripture, I must specially refer the reader: "When I shall say to the righteous that he shall surely live," I speak to him as a righteous man, and the promise depends on his retaining his righteous character; for "if he trust to his own righteousness, and commit iniquity, all his righteousness shall not be remembered; but for his iniquity that he hath committed, he shall die for it." Here you discover the principle that runs through the whole of Scripture: "Wherefore, let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."

4. IT IS ALLEGED THAT THE ARMINIAN DOCTRINE MAKES GOD CHANGEABLE. By no means. With him is no variableness. A change of character would be a cessation of Divinity. "But this" (as Dr. Wardlaw, when writing on another subject, observes) "is quite consistent with changes in the relation in which his moral and accountable creatures stand to him, and in the consequent state of his mind towards them. Surely no one will imagine that when man from being loyal becomes rebellious, the relation between him and God can continue the same as before, or that the state of the Divine mind remains unchanged towards him." It is evident that complacency must come to an end when men "turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them." And as a Governor, he who "is angry with the wicked every day" cannot retain the same relative position to man in his guilt that he had sustained to him as his "willing and obedient" child. But a change in the relations between the creature and the Creator is not, properly speaking, a change in the Creator himself. Indeed, the very change in the judicial relation arises from the unchangeableness of God and the mutability of man. The

change comes upon man. He "draws back" from God, to whom he has pledged his devotion; and if God is unchangeably true, his "soul shall have no pleasure in him;" if he is unchangeably pure, "the foolish shall not stand in his sight;" if he is unchangeably just, he will reward the man according to his works. It is, therefore, because he retains all the unsullied purity of his holiness—because he retains all his truth and righteousness, as the principles of his moral administrations—that he can no longer "hold him guiltless" that sins wilfully after he has received the knowledge of the truth. And we throw back the charge of imputing changeableness to God upon those who hold the doctrine which we oppose.

5. IT IS ALLEGED THAT THE ARMINIAN DOCTRINE IS DESTRUCTIVE OF SPIRITUAL COMFORT, REPRESSING ALL THE BUOYANCY OF GENEROUS AND CONFIDING LOVE. This view is certainly not in harmony with experience. The Christian's comfort arises from his conscious interest in Christ, from the unfailing efficacy of the atonement and intercession of his Lord, and from his hope of the heavenly inheritance. And that comfort can never be destroyed while he cleaves to the Lord with purpose of heart. The thought that he may "fall away," and that his "latter end" may be "worse than the beginning," is repressing to all the buoyancy of presumption, but is one of the most powerful motives to filial duty. And if, under the impulse of salutary fear, he "gives diligence to make his calling and his election sure," he will realise the happiness of him that feareth alway (Prov. xxviii. 14); "the joy of the Lord will be his strength;" he will never fall: "For so an entrance shall be ministered unto him abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

CHAPTER XV.

THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST.

THIS is a subject which, in some of its leading points, is at present dividing the opinions of Christians, and exciting a growing interest; rousing in some of God's servants all the ardour of prophetic vehemence, and engaging the calmer, but not less deeply serious and devout, investigation of others. The discussion of the subject will bring us into communion with some of the sublimest portions of the prophetic Scriptures, which we must be careful to interpret with sobriety of judgment, and in strict consistency with other portions of the Word that are more plain and specific in their meaning.

1. In what sense are we to understand the phrase—"The coming of the Lord"?

1. According to the Jewish mode of speaking, God is said to "visit" or "come to" places and persons where his providence particularly operates in regard to them. Joseph said, "God will surely visit you," etc. (Gen. i. 24); the Psalmist, "O when wilt Thou come unto me?" (Ps. ci. 2); Isaiah, "O that thou wouldst . . . come down!" (Isa. lxiv. 1.) And thus judgments foretold by ancient prophets concerning Babylon, Egypt, Assyria, and Jerusalem, were prefaced with, "Behold, the Lord cometh;" "behold, the day of the Lord cometh," etc. (Isa. xiii. xix. xxx.; Joel ii. 30, 31; Micah i. 3-5.) And since such language was rendered familiar to the Jewish mind, we cannot be surprised that in foretelling the destruction of Jerusalem, our Lord should employ similar language, especially as that event was connected so intimately with the full establishment of the new dispensation, which constituted Messiah's kingdom on earth. (See Matt. x. 23, xvi. 28; Matt. ix. 1; Luke ix. 27; Matt. xxvi.) Even so, in foretelling the overthrow of the Man of Sin, St. Paul employs the like metaphorical phraseology: "Whom the Lord shall destroy with the brightness of his coming." (2 Thess. ii. 8.)

2. The phrase marks out an actual personal manifestation of Christ. The several terms by which this is referred to are—*ἡ παρουσία*

ἀνψις, revelation; Παρουσία, presence, advent; Ἐπιφάνεια, appearance, manifestation. And it is brought to view in connection with almost every doctrine, every duty, every privilege which the Gospel reveals. It is employed as a warning to careless sinners and to lax professors. (2 Pet. iii. 9, 10; 1 Cor. iii. 13; Jude 14, 15; Rev. i. 7.) It is employed to stimulate believers to universal duty; to fearless testimony for Christ (Luke xii. 8); to patient suffering (1 Pet. iv. 12, 13); to vigilant activity (1 Pet. i. 13; Luke xii. 35-37); to holy constancy (1 John ii. 28); heavenly-mindedness (Col. iii. 4, 5; 1 John iii. 2, 3; Phil. iii. 20.) It is employed as the goal to which all attention is directed. (Luke xix. 13; Phil. i. 6, 9, 10; 1 Cor. xi. 26.) And it is presented as the great object of Christian expectation and hope. (1 Thess. i. 10; 1 Cor. i. 7, 8; Titus ii. 13; Rev. xxii. 20.)

II. *What are the leading circumstances connected with Christ's second advent?*

1. Immediately upon his coming, all the dead saints will be raised to life, and all the living saints will be transformed. (John vi. 39, 40; 1 Thess. iv. 13-18, compared with 1 Cor. xv. 51, 52.)

2. Not less immediately connected with his coming will be the public final judgment of all mankind, the vindication and acceptance of the righteous, and the accomplishment of God's sentence upon the wicked. (Matt. xxv. 31-46; 2 Thess. i. 6-10; 2 Tim. iv. 1.)

3. The earth we now inhabit will then be renewed and transformed, and will be thenceforward occupied by the Saviour and his perfected church as their everlasting abode.* (2 Pet. iii. 7-14, compared with Ps. xxxvii. 9-11, and Matt. v. 5.) All the saints at the resurrection will be "caught up in the clouds," that they may be beyond the range of this mundane system while the renovating process is going on; but no sooner is it complete than they will return with their Divine Head to perpetuate their fellowship with him, on the then perfected world, for ever. Does not this explain Rev. xxi. 1-5, 10, 11?

* "The object of the administrations we sit under is to extirpate sin, but it is not to sweep away materialism. By the convulsions of the last day it may be shaken and broken down from its present arrangements, and thrown into such fitful agitations, as that the whole of its existing framework shall fall to pieces, and with a heat so fervent as to melt its most solid elements may it be utterly dissolved. And thus may the earth again become 'without form and void;' but without a particle of its substance going into annihilation. Out of the ruins of this second chaos may another heaven and another earth be made to arise, and a new materialism, with other aspects of magnificence and beauty, emerge from the wreck of this mighty transformation, and the world be peopled as before with the varieties of material loveliness, and space be again lighted up into a firmament of material splendour."—Dr. Chalmers.

III. *At what period may the second advent of our Lord be expected to occur?*

Those who look for it before the time of the millennium think that it may occur in our own day, and even immediately. These views they gather from those passages in the New Testament which seem to intimate that the great event was near, and that it might take place almost at the time when the admonitions were given. Some of those admonitions, however, must probably be explained of our Lord's coming in his providence to overthrow Jerusalem; as, *e.g.*, James v. 1-8; Heb. x. 37; John xxi. 22. Still, there are passages which appear to imply that the second advent was not distant; and on this point two facts of great importance must be noted. First, the exact period must be perfectly known of God. Secondly, as more than eighteen hundred years have elapsed since those passages were uttered, the proximity intended must be one that comports with the intervention of so long a period. Hence, I consider—either the proximity in question must be understood of the event as it appears in *his* sight “with whom one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day”—or that nearness is affirmed according to faith's estimate, which judges of all things temporal by comparing them with things eternal,—or that the reference in the passages referred to is, not to Christ's second advent, but to his providential coming at death to usher souls to bliss or woe. Perhaps some of the texts in question will class with the first of these ideas, others with the second, others with the third. But as the admonitions themselves *must* allow of the event being eighteen centuries distant when they were delivered, they *may*, for anything in themselves to the contrary, allow of there being an equal length of time yet to transpire before the event occurs.

It is also worthy of remark that *the only errors mentioned in the New Testament respecting the time of our Lord's coming, all consist in dating it too early.* See (1.) Luke xii. 45, 46. Here, the case supposed is that of a servant who had taken up a wrong impression as to the time when his lord should come; and that erroneous anticipation having been disappointed, he immediately fell into the opposite error, and concluded that his master would not come at all, an error which proved fatal. This parable has often been realised in the transition from overweening credulity to open infidelity and reckless immorality. (2.) Luke xix. 11-27. Here is a parable uttered for the very purpose of correcting the error of those who supposed “that the kingdom of God would immediately appear.” And the corresponding parable of the talents shows that the looked-for period was far distant; “*after a long time* the lord of those servants cometh,” etc. (Matt. xxv. 19.) (3.) 2 Thess. ii. 1, 2. Here it is manifest, that if the Thessalonians had understood expressions in the former epistle (chap. v. 1-3) as intimating that the event was near, they would seriously err; and from the earnest and solemn style of

this address it was evidently, in the Apostle's judgment and in the judgment of the Holy Spirit, a matter of high importance that the mistake should be guarded against, if it had not yet been imbibed, and corrected if it had. (4.) *2 Pet.* iii. 3, 4. Here we have it distinctly declared, that, so long a time should elapse before the Lord comes, that unbelieving men would look upon the expectation of that event as groundless, would contemptuously fling the "promise" in the face of the waiting church as a manifest deception, and give themselves up to riot at will in impiety and vice. We come back, then, to the question, when may the second advent of our Lord be expected to occur?

1. IT WILL NOT TAKE PLACE UNTIL THE VERY CLOSE OF THE GOSPEL DISPENSATION. I infer this from *1 Cor.* xi. 26, according to which, while the observance of the Lord's supper is to be kept up in the church "until he come;" when he does come, its observance is altogether to cease. From which it follows, that the whole system of worship, instruction, and church order with which it is connected, will then terminate too. The connection between the institution and the evangelical economy is taught in the very words used by the Saviour when he appointed it: "This cup is the new covenant in my blood" (*1 Cor.* xi. 25); *i.e.*, it is the symbol of the blood by which the Gospel covenant is ratified and confirmed; consequently, the duration of the ordinance is coeval with the duration of the covenant; when the former ceases, the latter expires. And because the ordinance ends with the coming of our Lord, so also will the covenant. Hence it follows that, as the Lord's supper, and the economy of which it is a part, are to cease with the coming of Christ, any interpretation of Scripture which implies a continuance of either, after that event, must be erroneous.

2. IT WILL NOT TAKE PLACE UNTIL THE PERIOD EXPIRES FOR WHICH CHRIST, AS THE WORD INCARNATE, IS MADE THE HEAD OF THE UNIVERSE. His government of his *church* will be everlasting. (*Luke* i. 33.) But his government of the *universe*, in his capacity as Messiah, referred to in *Matt.* xxviii. 18, is only for a limited term; namely, until the end for which it was delegated to him is attained. That end is the subjugation of all his enemies (*Psa.* cx. 1; *Matt.* xxii. 44); the giving of repentance and remission of sins (*Acts* v. 31); and, as we learn from many scriptures, the control of all events in subserviency to the interests and completion of the church. And nothing can, I think, be more plainly taught than that he is to remain enthroned over the universe in the heaven of heavens "until" all these purposes have been answered. Consequently, to look for his future advent before his enemies are subdued, and the nations converted to the Gospel, is in direct opposition to the Divine arrangements. But when the objects of his meditorial reign have been accomplished, his death on earth and his life in heaven having fully effected their respective ends, then will he close his administration by the

last judgment, and the final separation of the righteous and the wicked, and give back the sceptre to him by whom it was put into his hands, and the Divine administration of the universe shall go on as before. (See 1 Cor. xv. 22-28.)

3. IT WILL NOT TAKE PLACE UNTIL THE LAST IN THE WHOLE SERIES OF OLD TESTAMENT PROPHECIES IS TO BE FULFILLED. This position I found upon Acts iii. 20, 21. Here the question arises, what is meant by "the restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the Prophets"? The obscurity resting on such phraseology is removed by rendering the word "completion" or "accomplishment"—a change of rendering fully admissible, according to the term used in the original:* so that the meaning of the text will be "until all things are accomplished which the Prophets have foretold." We are hence taught that the Lord Jesus will, as to his humanity, remain in heaven during the whole time that the Old Testament prophecies are being fulfilled. Whatever is foretold concerning the Jews or Gentiles, concerning the Messiah's reign, the prosperity of the church, and the desolation of kingdoms hostile to Christ, *all* is to be verified by fact before he comes. If it be objected that the resurrection of the dead, and the new heavens and new earth are among the things foretold, but will not take place till after our Lord has come, my reply is, partly, that both events will occur *at the very time* when the second advent takes place: further, that although Christ will be "revealed" before the renovation of the globe is perfected, he will but appear "in the air" (1 Thess. iv. 19), and not until the new heavens and the new earth are perfected will the glorious Saviour, with his people, come and take possession of this globe as their heritage and habitation.

4. IT WILL NOT TAKE PLACE UNTIL ALL OPPORTUNITIES OF SALVATION GRANTED TO MANKIND WILL FOR EVER CLOSE. This follows from what has been proved already. But consider, especially, 2 Pet. iii. 8, 9, where the Apostle assigns, as a reason for the delay of Christ's coming, the patience of the Deity, and his great willingness to give mankind the longest opportunity he could, consistently with his honour, for obtaining part in the great salvation. This reason, however, is plainly dependent on the fact that the coming of Christ will render the further conversion and salvation of men impossible. Were it not so, the circumstance of God being "not willing that any should perish" affords no obstruction to the immediate manifestation of Emmanuel. To teach, therefore, that any portions of mankind are to be evangelised *by* the Saviour's advent, or *after* it has occurred, contradicts the mind of the Spirit, and is at variance with the Divine arrangements.

5. IT WILL NOT OCCUR UNTIL THE TIME ARRIVES FOR THE

* This view is sustained by Dr. Wardlaw. See "Miscellaneous Discourses," No. xvii.

RESURRECTION AND GENERAL JUDGMENT OF MANKIND, THE GLORIFICATION OF THE SAINTS, THE PUNISHMENT OF THE WICKED, AND THE FINAL RENOVATION OF THE MUNDANE SYSTEM. Read (1.) *Matt.* xxiv. 37, 51, and xxv. 31, 46. No representations could more distinctly teach that when Christ comes, judgment will *at once* begin, and that the faithful and unfaithful will then forthwith have their respective awards pronounced. (2.) 2 *Pet.* iii. 3-11. The "scoffers," in their taunt, intimate that, according to their view, the Gospel warrants our expecting the renovation of the earth to begin at once upon the Saviour's advent. And the Apostle tacitly concurs in that opinion, teaching that when Christ comes according to the promise, then comes "the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men," and then comes "the day of the Lord, in which the heavens shall pass away," etc. Consequently, any doctrine which dates the second advent prior to the time for these events is contrary to the true meaning of "the promise."

While, then, we are "looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God," let us cultivate "the patience of hope," or that "patient waiting for Christ" which St. Paul recommended. For, as it has been well said by Augustine, one of the Fathers of the Church, "he who loves our Lord's coming is not he who asserts that it is near, or he who asserts that it is far off; but rather he who, whether it be near or distant, waits for him with sincerity of faith, steadfastness of hope, and fervour of charity."

IV. *What are the principal events that may be expected to occur previously to our Saviour's coming?*

1. THE CONVERSION OF THE GENTILE NATIONS TO THE FAITH AND WORSHIP OF THE GOSPEL. It was promised to Abraham "In thy seed"—"which is Christ"—"shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." (*Gen.* xxii. 18.) And the nature and results of that blessing are foretold in such passages as these: *Ps.* xxii. 37; *Isa.* ii. 17, 18, xlix. 6; *Mal.* i. 11.

2. AS MATTERS ARE ADVANCING TO THIS CONSUMMATION THERE WILL BE A GRADUAL DECAY AND ULTIMATE EXTINCTION OF THE PRESENT GREAT DOCTRINAL AND ECCLESIASTICAL APOSTASY FROM CHRISTIANITY. (2 *Thess.* ii. 1-11.) What answers to the object here portrayed has been for ages standing out before Europe and the world in the system of Popery! In her unscriptural dogmas "the mystery of iniquity" is exhibited in fearful contrast to the "great mystery of godliness." She is organised under a visible head, who sets himself above all authority whatsoever upon earth, showing himself to be in the place of God. And she is supported and propagated by means of the frauds she has practised, and the false miracles she has wrought—her adherents never hesitating to forward their designs "after the working of Satan, with all power and signs and lying wonders." But that system shall gradually waste away under

the influence of Divine truth, signified by "the spirit of Christ's mouth," till at length comes the time of the "judgment of the great whore" (Rev. xvii.), when the giant apostasy, which for centuries has been the dread and the curse of Christendom, shall be engulfed in utter destruction.

3. DURING THE DECLINE OF THAT APOSTASY, AND PERHAPS NOT VERY LONG BEFORE ITS COMPLETE OVERTHROW, DETERMINED AND PARTIALLY SUCCESSFUL EFFORTS WILL BE MADE TO CRUSH THE GOSPEL WITHIN THE PALE OF ITS INFLUENCE, TO BE QUICKLY FOLLOWED BY SIGNAL SUCCESS IN THE CAUSE OF TRUTH. This opinion is founded chiefly upon Rev. xi. 1-10. No interpretation that I have met with, which explains these statements as relating to matters past, appears to be at all satisfactory. Whether we take the two witnesses as intending the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, and which, from the "power" ascribed to them, is perhaps the correct view; or whether we take them as intending the faithful in general bearing testimony for God and for truth, understanding the number "two" as indicating the *sufficiency* of the testimony borne; or whether we take them as intending the two churches of the Waldenses and Albigenses—an idea in which I find great difficulty in concurring—whatever, I say, be intended by the "witnesses, they are, I think, undeniably yet prophesying in sackcloth, so that the 1260 years, at the close of which they are to be slain, have not yet expired. Desperate, however, and deadly as is the persecution to which they will be subjected, it is of short duration. The witnesses are soon to live again, and acquire ascendancy unknown before; dismay is to seize their enemies, and convulsion desolate the mystic city in the street of which their bodies had lain unburied (verses 11-13).

4. AS THESE EVENTS ARE PROGRESSING, THE LONG PREVAILING ORIENTAL IMPOSTURE WILL DISAPPEAR UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF PROVIDENCE, WITHOUT ANY MOVEMENT OF EXTERNAL VIOLENCE. I refer to the religion which the Prophet of Mecca broached 1200 years ago, and which upwards of 1000 years before that date had been described by Daniel (chap. viii.) He first tells us of the rise of the joint empire of the Medes and Persians, and of the junior portion of the monarchy becoming the ascendant, and pushing its conquest at will (verses 3; 4-20). Then we have Alexander the Great utterly demolishing the Medo-Persian power, and himself cut off in the zenith of his glory, his dominions being divided after his death into four sovereignties (verses 5-8, 21, 22). Then follows a description of the rise, progress, and end of Mohammedanism (verses 9-12, 23-25). Mohammed could not be more aptly described than as "a king of fierce countenance." His religion is one of "dark sentences." He arose and broached it in the eastern of the four kingdoms alluded to, "in the latter time of their kingdom," 1000 years after Alexander's death; and "when transgressions

were come to the full," just at the time when the Bishop of Rome attained the long struggled-for ecclesiastical ascendancy. History and the present state of the world tell how great he became; but he was raised to his greatness by the arms of the Saracens, and "not by his own power." He was permitted to set himself against the Christianity which then prevailed by reason of the corruptions that abounded, or, as the prophecy expresses it, "a host was given him against the daily sacrifice by reason of transgression." Whether by "peace" he has destroyed many, let the influence of sensuality tolerated by his system testify. And whether he has not "stood up against the Prince of princes," his rivalry of the Saviour in the regard of mankind will at once determine. But one brief sentence records his doom: "He shall be broken without hand;" a statement which seems to indicate that the destruction of the Oriental Imposture will be the effect of no martial assault, but will rather be the special doing of Providence; perhaps by means of principles and habits infused among its votaries, and working unobserved till they have sapped its foundations and killed its very core.

5. ABOUT THE TIME WHEN BABYLON-ECCLESIASTICAL FALLS, AWFUL PROVIDENTIAL JUDGMENTS WILL CONVULSE AND OVERTURN THE POLITICAL GOVERNMENTS THAT HAVE BEEN CONFEDERATE WITH HER. The symbols of the fifth seal, representing the martyrs pleading for vengeance on the persecuting powers (Rev. vi. 9, 10), is, I think, at present, and has been for centuries past, in course of fulfilment. Judgment deserved, though apparently long delayed, will ultimately come, and the awful symbolic imagery of the first section of the sixth seal shall have its counterpart in all the dread reality of answering events. (Rev. vi. 12-17.) This prediction I regard as identical in its application with the vision recorded in Rev. xix. 11-21. A comparison of the chief symbolic personage in this vision, with the symbolic personage in the first seal (Rev. vi. 1, 2,) will, I think, be sufficient to show that both intend a movement of the Saviour in his providence, the one for purposes of judgment, and the other for purposes of grace. It is, however, manifest that the nations of Europe will witness and experience upturnings and revolutions which, for extent and magnitude, have seldom, if ever, been equalled. But whether those changes will be brought about by the working of principles, or by violence in the way of invasion from without, or by a combination of both agencies, I undertake not to give an opinion.

6. WHILE THESE EVENTS ARE OCCURRING, OR IMMEDIATELY AFTER THEY HAVE TAKEN PLACE, THE JEWS, WHEREVER SCATTERED, WILL BE CONVERTED TO THE CHRISTIAN FAITH, AND RE-INCORPORATED WITH THE VISIBLE CHURCH. Whether Israel as a nation will be restored to Palestine or not, it is certain that they are to be the subjects of another restoration—a restoration to the faith of the Gospel. (See Hos. iii. 4,

5; Rom. xi. 23-27.) The prophecy quoted in the latter passage is taken from Isa. lix. 20, 21; and if the Apostle has given the meaning of the Hebrew text, we have an unequivocal instance in which the term "Zion," as used in the Old Testament, signifies the Gospel Church, and as unequivocal an evidence that the conversion of the Jews is to be effected, not by the personal advent of Christ, but by his mystical going forth from that Church in the agency of his providence and grace. Concerning this great event, the following particulars are clearly taught:—

(1.) *That whatever shall prove to be the case with regard to the restoration of the Jews to Palestine, their conversion to the faith of the Gospel will take place in their dispersion among the Gentiles.* This, I think, is implied in Hos. iii. 3, 4. Other statements countenancing the same idea are found in Hos. ii. 14-20.

(2.) *The conversion of the Jews will be accomplished through the instrumentality of Gentile Christians.* (Rom. xi. 30, 31.)

(3.) *The conversion of the Jews will not take place until the generality of the Gentiles have been evangelised.* (Rom. xi. 25, 26.) This "coming of the fulness of the Gentiles" I take to correspond with the "fulfilling of the times of the Gentiles" (Luke xxi. 24), until which "Jerusalem," or the Jewish people, is to be "trodden down of the Gentiles."

(4.) *The conversion of the Jews will be the occasion of an astonishing revival of religion throughout the churches of the Gentiles.* (Rom. xi. 11, 12-15.)

(5.) *The converted Jews will blend with converted Gentiles in the common fellowship of Christianity.* (Eph. iii. 4-6; Rom. x. 12, 13; Gal. iii. 26-29, vi. 15, 16.) "The Israel of God," in this passage, being reckoned according to the inspired decision in Rom. ii. 28, 29.

7. IMMEDIATELY UPON THE INGATHERING OF THE JEWS WILL COMMENCE A LONG PERIOD OF UNEXAMPLED PROSPERITY IN THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH, DURING WHICH THE OPERATION OF EVIL AGENCY WILL BE GREATLY RESTRAINED, AND EMINENT PIETY, WITH ALL ITS CONCOMITANT BLESSINGS, WILL PREVAIL THROUGHOUT THE WORLD. (Read Dan. ii. 44, 45; also, Dan. vii. 19-27.) "The fourth beast" was the Roman Empire; "the ten horns" are the various States into which that empire was broken up; and what is the "little horn," that sprang up among the ten of the Roman beast, but the Papacy? Every sentence of verses 24, 25, applies most emphatically to that iniquitous system; but the hour when "the judgment shall sit," and "take away his dominion," shall arrive, and not less surely shall "the people of the saints of the Most High" be established in ascendancy all over the world. (Read also Rev. vii. 1-4.) The third verse tells us of a restraint put upon destructive influences until a great work of mercy is accomplished; viz., the "sealing" of the servants of God. The fourth verse sets forth the vast multitude of Jews on whom this gracious work shall be effected. But in

whatever way we explain these particulars of the vision, there exists little room for doubting that the vision points forward to a time during which the operation of agencies that might obstruct the going forward of the "sealing," shall be suspended, and throughout which the Holy Spirit will be poured out in remarkably abundant measures, and on a scale of previously unequalled extent, for the accomplishment of that great work. (See also Rev. xx. 1-6.) The first three verses foretell the restraining of Satanic agency; that agency which is now at work in all directions, perverting the Gospel, prompting to evil, etc., will to a great extent, if not altogether, cease to operate. This, however, will be but for a limited period. Satan will be loosed again, and will return to the earth to do as he did before, and perhaps worse. The fourth verse tells of two classes, usually distinguished by the names of "martyrs" and "confessors," who "lived and reigned with Christ," for the same term as that for which Satan is bound. This is called "the first resurrection." I think we shall be able to show, hereafter,* that this passage cannot be understood of a literal resurrection, without the most preposterous conclusions. It is a beautiful vision, designed to show that, in the days of millennial glory, when Satan's power on the earth shall be divinely and effectively restrained, and Christ is reigning on the earth in all the glories of his spiritual character, then the *spirit* of noble and martyred men—that self-sacrificing spirit of earnest devotion—which, in times of the church's depression, had been so long dead, shall be revived in their successors; souls will be seen coming up—everywhere coming up—"in the spirit and power" of the ancient witnesses for the truth, adorning the church with the ardour of their devotion, enjoying unwonted fellowship with their exalted Saviour, co-operating with his designs of mercy, and holding the ascendancy among the children of men. In this way, "the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus," and which had had no alliance with anti-Christian powers, will show themselves again, not in their own persons by literally rising from the dead, but in the uprising of a *race* of men like them in principles and deeds of devotion to Jesus and his cause.

THIS, THEN, WILL BE THE MILLENNIUM—that long period of prosperity in the Christian Church, when a restraint will be put upon all the powers of evil, and the kingdom of Christ shall have its fullest development upon earth. And the distinguishing features of that period are to be learned from Holy Scripture:—

(1.) It will be characterised by the universal diffusion of revealed truth. Isa. xi. 9, xxv. 7, xxx. 26.

(2.) It will be marked by the universal reception of the true religion, and unlimited subjection to the sceptre of Christ. Ps. ii. 7; Ps. lxxii. 8-11; Zech. ix. 10; Ps. xxii. 27-29; Isa. ii. 2, 3; lxi. 23; Zech. xiv. 9; Matt. xiii. 31, 32; Rev. xi. 15.

* See chapter on "The Resurrection of the Body."

(3.) It will be a time of undisturbed harmony and peace. Isa. ii. 4; Mic. iv. 3; Isa. xi. 6-9.

(4.) It will be a time in which kings and governments will be Christian, and will consecrate their influence to Christ and his church. Ps. lxxii. 10, 11; Isa. xlix. 23, lx. 16.

(5.) It will be a time in which all classes will come into the fellowship of the church, and give whatever influence they can command for its increase and well-being. Isa. lx. 5-14.

(6.) It will be a time of great temporal prosperity. Isa. xxx. 23, 24; Jer. xxxi. 12; Ezek. xxxiv. 26, 27, xxxvi. 29-38.

(7.) It will be a time of glory sufficiently long to secure the great objects of redeeming mercy. The Scriptures speak of a thousand years. But whether this is to be literally understood, or whether a round number is designed to indicate a long and indefinite period, or whether, according to prophetic usage, a day is put for a year, and so the period comprises three hundred and sixty-five thousand years, are questions in which great and good men have differed. Enough for us to know that the happy period is no short and transient age. Generation after generation, in long and unbroken series, shall see the glory of the Redeemer, and bask in his favour, and exult in his triumphs, singing in strains of delightful harmony: "The kingdoms of the world are become the kingdoms of our God and of his Christ."

8. AT THE EXPIRATION OF THE PERIOD CALLED A THOUSAND YEARS, THE RESTRAINT WHICH HAD BEEN PUT UPON EVIL AGENCY WILL BE REMOVED, A GENERAL APOSTASY FROM THE TRUE FAITH AND WORSHIP OF GOD WILL OCCUR, THE SAINTS WILL BE EXPOSED TO SEVERE PERSECUTION, UNPARALLELED VIOLENCE AND UNGODLINESS IN ITS WORST FORMS WILL EVERYWHERE PREVAIL, IN THE VERY HEIGHT OF WHICH DEGENERACY THE SAVIOUR WILL APPEAR. Many passages relating to the second advent intimate that it will take place at a time of abounding depravity, when religion is at a low ebb, and when worldliness, infidelity, and hostility to God, are rampant. (Luke xviii. 8; Matt. xxiv. 7, compared with Gen. vi. 11; Luke xvii. 26-30.) But especially consider Rev. xx. 7, 8. With the expiration of the period signified by the thousand years, the martyrs and confessors cease to live and reign; *i.e.*, the practice and profession of pure Christianity rapidly decline. "The rest of the dead" live again; *i.e.*, characters such as abounded in the ages before the Millennium—infidels, liars, robbers, murderers, profligates, worldlings, and the like—will abound in all directions. Then forth comes the giant fiend, prepared and maddened to do his worst, surpassing, if possible, in malice, subtlety, and power, all that he had been or done before. Those will be fearful days to live in. The Holy Spirit will almost entirely suspend his influence in quickening men, and the devil will all but universally and totally possess them; for "he shall go out to deceive the nations that are in the four quarters of the

earth." Moreover, the vision seems to indicate that the *whole mass* of unbelievers will be joined together in one common league against God and his church, comparatively carrying all before them (ver. 8, 9). And now, the cause of wickedness has gained all but a complete triumph, and the cause of righteousness, once everywhere predominant, has become all but extinct. And, in that very moment of last extremity, the day of redemption to the righteous, and of final doom to the ungodly, blazes forth upon the world. Just as the devil's unbattled legions "compassed the camp of the saints," fire from heaven devoured them, the devil is cast into the lake of fire, the great white throne is set, and the scenes of eternity are ushered in (ver. 9-15.)

This, we conceive, to be the doctrine of the New Testament as to the time and circumstances of our Lord's second advent. But, as this subject seems periodically to agitate the church, it will be needful to propose for consideration one or two other inquiries.

V. What are the views of pre-millennarians on the subjects which have been now discussed?

Their views cannot be so clearly and intelligibly stated as they might be if the advocates of them did not differ so widely among themselves. In general terms, however, they affirm that the second advent of Christ will take place before or at the commencement of the Millennium; that at that period he will descend from heaven to reign personally upon the earth*—that he will have a central place of power and authority, probably Jerusalem—that the righteous dead will then be raised in such bodies as are to be immortal—that they will be his attendants, and will participate with him in the government of the world—that this will continue during the period of a thousand years—that the world will be subdued and converted during this period, not by moral means, but by "a new dispensation"—by the power of the Son of God—and that at the close of this period all the remaining dead will be raised, and the affairs of the earth will

* It would be interesting, if our space would allow, to trace the history of the controversy concerning the personal reign of Christ on the earth. Very soon after the time of the Apostles, the doctrine was earnestly maintained by some in the Church. It was a delightful solace to believers, in those dark and evil days, to regard Christ as being about to come in person to overthrow his enemies, and exalt his people to a position of security and triumph in the earth. And Papias, Justin Martyr, and Tertullian were among the orthodox Fathers who gave in their adhesion to these views. In the third century the controversy waxed hot, and Origen stood forth prominently in the number of opponents, after which the millennial views (so called) began to decline. Shortly after the Reformation a set of troublers arose, who arrogated to themselves the authority of prophets of God, and agitated the populace by fictitious visions as to the speedy advent of our Lord. And during the interregnum in England, another set of enthusiasts sprang up, sometimes called

be consummated.* This is *pre-millennarianism*, or, as the early Fathers, and after them the Reformers and our elder divines, termed it—*Chiliasm*, from the Greek word χίλιοι, “a thousand.” In the above statement, I have expressed only the fundamental principles of the system, to which nearly all the modern pre-millennialists would subscribe, keeping clear of the points on which they are divided.

VI. *What are the leading objections to these views ?*

1. OUR FIRST OBJECTION IS, THAT THEY ARE BASED UPON A RIGIDLY LITERAL INTERPRETATION OF THE SCRIPTURES, THAN WHICH NOTHING CAN BE MORE PREPOSTEROUS. We acknowledge how difficult it is sometimes to decide whether language is to be taken in its literal or in its figurative reference. But to affirm, as many do, that, whenever the literal interpretation will comport with sense, it should be adopted, would frequently lead to absurdities in interpretation which are alike repugnant to Scripture and to common sense. Take, for example, Rev. xx. 1-4, the great bulwark of the pre-millennial theory of the first resurrection; if a literal interpretation of the 4th verse be insisted on, then the entire passage must be understood literally; and we shall have Satan literally bound with a literal chain, his dungeon a literal bottomless pit which is opened and shut with a literal key, and sealed with a literal seal. The representation which speaks of “all nations flowing to Mount Zion” (Isa. ii. 2), which speaks of God’s “gathering all nations and tongues,” and of their “coming and seeing his glory in Jerusalem” (Isa. lxvi. 18), if construed literally, would predict what is simply impossible, because all nations never can go up to Jerusalem. And if, to meet this difficulty, it is conceded that all nations will thus worship at Jerusalem only by some selected representation, the theory of literal construction is at once abandoned. There are prophecies which speak of priests and Levites, and of the offering of sacrifices, as under the law (Ezek. xl. to xlv. ; Jer. xvii. 25, 26.) To follow the literal mode of interpretation would be to affirm that the Levitical code is to be re-established as the law of the latter days; whereas, Peter told the Christian Jews that it was “a yoke which neither they nor their fathers were able to bear.” (Acts xv. 10.) St. James opposed the imposition of it on the Gentile converts as an error, fraught with danger to the interests of Christianity and the souls of men. (Acts xv. 19, 29.) St. Paul

Millennarians, but more frequently Fifth Monarchy Men, who aimed at the subversion of all human government, proclaiming that Christ would immediately appear to establish his kingdom, and that they, as his deputies, were to govern all things under him. Since that time the advocates of the personal reign have not formed a distinct sect from others, but have been found, in greater or less numbers, among most of the denominations into which the Christian world is divided.

* Barnes’s note on Rev. xx.

characterised it as the mere discipline of minors, and as a bondage unsuited to the liberty of Christ's freemen (Gal. iv.) ; and Apostolic authority declares its abrogation for ever to have been a prominent object and achievement of Messiah's first coming. (Heb. vii. 12-18, viii. 7-13.) There are also prophecies which speak of David as again reigning over Israel. (Ezek. xxxvii. 24, 25, xxxiv. 23, 24.) In order to be consistent, those who contend for a rigid literal interpretation must maintain that King David literally shall reign again over the twelve tribes in Judea ; whereas, themselves acknowledge that in these passages the word "David" means "the King of the Jews, of the seed of David, Jesus Christ our Lord." Now, surely, if we may say that when David is mentioned, it is not David himself that is intended, but another personage whom David prefigured, we may also say, that when "Israel," "Zion," etc., are mentioned, it is not Israel, Zion, etc., literally that are intended, but the then future and greater realities which "Israel," "Zion," etc., prefigured. We do not contend that language of this kind must *always* be thus understood. But it should not be forgotten that such phraseology is frequently thus employed in the New Testament. Take for example *Heb.* xii. 22, 23. Will any one contend for the literal interpretation of these statements? They are only true when considered figuratively and spiritually. These Christians, instead of living under the Mosaic, enjoyed the *Christian* dispensation ; instead of belonging to the earthly, they were initiated into the citizenship of the spiritual Jerusalem—the only Zion and Jerusalem that will ever in any religious sense exist on earth ; they belonged to the same society with angels and all holy men living and dead ; were one with them, under the same Prince and Head whose blood of sprinkling had purchased for them these rights and this denizenship, and to whom they were all joined in one spirit.

Language of the same kind, and applied in the same way, occurs in *Gal.* iv. 21-26, where there is express mention made of two Jerusalems—the one connected with the law, the other with the Gospel—the one below, the other above—the one geographical, the other mystical—the one which was the centre of union and the place of sovereignty to those who were federally connected with the abrogated Sinaitic polity, the other which is the centre of association and the abode of government to those who are federally connected with the new and abiding evangelical economy.

St. James also sets an example of interpreting prophecy, not in a literal, but a figurative sense. See *Acts* xv. 15-17, where he quotes from Amos ix. 11, 12. "The building up of the tabernacle of David," etc., most naturally means re-establishing the house of David in royal power. But we are taught by an inspired Apostle to understand the prophecy, not of the political dominion of an earthly prince, but of religious authority possessed by the Messiah as the Divine moral ruler of the church.

Now, terms and modes of speech being thus, according to the New Testament, susceptible of a twofold explanation, it often becomes a question, in studying the prophecies, in which of the two senses they are to be understood. And to ascertain this, due consideration must be given to the nature of the subject, the object of the sacred writers, their consistency with themselves, and the analogy of faith. For my own part, I think that, in the two prophecies so often quoted (Isa. ii. 2, and Micah. iv. 1, 2), the language of the *seers* must be understood in that application in which similar phraseology is used by the *Apostle*. Accordingly, I explain "the mountain of the Lord's house being established in the top of the mountains," etc., as foretelling the pre-eminence which the Christian Church is to acquire over all other religious systems. And I understand "all nations going up from year to year to Jerusalem to keep the feast of tabernacles" (Zech. xiv. 16), as meaning that the inhabitants of the world in general are regularly to do homage to Jehovah under the Gospel dispensation, according to the ritual of the church in its present state of sojourn through the wilderness. To affirm a literal construction of these and other passages, which are found in the most figurative and symbolical books of the Scriptures, would go far towards destroying all the fixed laws of sound interpretation. To interpret such passages as one would interpret a law, a deed, or a contract, would be an outrage upon common sense and common honesty. And this we conceive to be the ground of many of the errors by which the pre-millennial theories are characterised.

2. OUR SECOND OBJECTION TO THESE VIEWS IS, THAT THEY OBSCURE THE SPIRITUALITY OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM. Jesus Christ has now a kingdom on the earth—"a kingdom which cannot be moved," which shall "stand for ever." The great characteristic of this kingdom is, that it is a *spiritual*, in distinction from a temporal and visible reign. Read such passages as the following:—John xviii. 36; Luke xvii. 20, 21; John iv. 20-24. These and other scriptures assert and illustrate the same great and important thought; viz., the holy and Divine spirituality of Christ's kingdom; and this truth must therefore be carried into all our interpretations of those scriptures which speak of his kingdom, whether now existing on the earth, or existing during the Millennium. To do this would at once overthrow the theory of Christ's pre-millennial advent and personal reign. It would be seen to have nothing to support it but a vain imagination, that congratulates itself in an empire decked with all the gorgeous royalty of this world, rather than one which "is not meat and drink, but righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost."

3. A THIRD OBJECTION TO THESE VIEWS IS, THAT THEY DO NOT ASSIGN A PROPER PLACE IN THE CONVERSION OF THE WORLD TO THE AGENCIES WHICH ALREADY EXIST, AND WHICH GOD HIMSELF HAS APPOINTED. When the Son of God ascended up on high, he bequeathed to his church all the agencies that are

required for the extension and final triumph of his spiritual kingdom. These are the truths of his Gospel and the omnipotent power of his Spirit. Just in the measure in which these are enjoyed will men return from the error of their ways. And the views in question appear highly derogatory to the present economy as the dispensation of the Spirit, and to the ordinance of preaching as the medium of his operation. Glorious things are spoken in prophecy of the results which should signalize the impartation of the Spirit. If Isaiah be asked how long the spiritual destitution of his people will continue, he replies, "Until the Spirit be poured upon us," etc. (chap. xxxii. 15; see also Zech. iv. 6). If we inquire of the Lord by what agency the Jews are to be finally converted, and made eminent in the earth, the reply is substantially the same. (Ezek. xxxix. 29.) In the prophecy of Joel, the promise of the Spirit takes a still wider range (chap. ii. 28, as quoted, Acts ii. 17); Gentiles as well as Jews are included in its comprehensive embrace, as St. Paul shows when quoting a part of the prediction. (Rom. x. 12, 13.) Here, then, is a series of predictions, importing that during the last days spiritual transformations, of the most glorious and comprehensive nature, shall result from the impartation of the Holy Spirit. From the day of Pentecost down to the present, the Spirit has effected these transformations chiefly through the preaching of the Gospel, whence we may infer that in all subsequent times, whatever miraculous means may be subordinately employed, his renewing influence will be exerted principally through the same instrumentality. And as the church has not yet witnessed anything answering to the fulfilment of these predictions, we are to conclude that, great as the triumphs of the Gospel at times have been already, a period is impending when we shall see greater things than these. So that any views which cast but a passing shade on that happy prospect, or which transfer the honour of effecting them to any other department of the Divine government, must be regarded as disparaging to the dispensation of the Spirit, and the Divine appointment of the diffusion of the Gospel as the medium of his influence.*

4. A FOURTH OBJECTION TO THESE VIEWS IS, THAT THEY ARE INCONSISTENT WITH THE SCRIPTURAL NARRATIVE OF THOSE EVENTS WHICH ARE TO TAKE PLACE BETWEEN THE MILLENNIUM AND THE END OF THE WORLD. Read the brief but comprehensive narrative found in Rev. xx. 7-12. There are several things here that are absolutely fatal to the hypothesis of the pre-millennial advent. It speaks of events that are to take place *on this earth*, and affirms that the thousand years of the Saviour's reign upon it are *to have an end*. This, the Millennarians deny. It affirms that the judgment will not take place until the *close* of the thousand years. This, also, they deny; affirming the judgment to consist in the personal

* Harris's "Great Commission."

rule and authority of Christ during the thousand years. It speaks of a great and final conflict between the powers of light and the powers of darkness, which is to take place between the close of the millennial reign and the subsequent and second coming of Christ. This, also, they deny; and affirm that the final battle is to take place long before, and when Christ comes in person to introduce the millennial reign and to establish his kingdom. Will they explain these incoherences in their theory? Will they inform us how it is, upon their hypothesis, that the spirit of Antichrist is to rise again in the earth after the thousand years are expired? Will they inform us how it is that the great and final conflict, which they assign to a period previous to the Millennium, John speaks of as after the Millennium?

These are a few of the objections to the hypothesis of the pre-millennial advent.

VII. *But are there not passages which connect the second advent of our Lord with events that are to occur before the Millennium? and how are they to be explained?*

A few of the passages that are often referred to by pre-millennarian writers as unanswerably supporting their teachings shall be considered.

1. 2 Thes. ii. 8.—The argument drawn from this text is that “the coming of Christ is expressly said to be for the destruction of Antichrist; and as that is confessedly pre-millennial, so must the coming of Christ be.” I take “the man of sin,” here described, to be a *specific apostasy*; and I am constrained, by all the laws of exact interpretation, to describe “the coming of the Lord” for its destruction—whether personal or figurative—to be a *pre-millennial* coming. But, as we have already shown, the *temporal* judgment of any wicked community by the *agency of second causes*, is, in prophetic language, described as “the coming of the Lord,” and as “the day of judgment,” to that community. (See Isa. xiii. 6, 9, 10, 13, 19, xix. 1, xxx. 27, 28, 30, 33; Micah i. 3-5; Matt. x. 23; Rev. iii. 3.) From these examples it is evident that a figurative coming of the Lord for purposes of judgment was a familiar idea in prophetic phraseology; and, as St. Paul was profoundly read in the Scriptures, and deeply imbued with their spirit and style, it cannot be thought strange if he should fall in with it in this respect, by speaking of a bright coming of Christ to destroy the anti-christian power, meaning only a figurative advent, and not his second personal coming. It should also be noted that what is here ascribed to “the brightness of Christ’s coming,” is, in Dan. ii. 44, ascribed to the church itself, as the instrument of Antichrist’s destruction, a fact which shows the extreme improbability of the “coming” here mentioned being Christ’s personal advent. And as there is nothing in the text or context which requires us to take this “brightness of his coming” to be the same with that personal coming, the error about which had been

already corrected, we have no hesitation in adopting the idea that the man of sin will be destroyed by Christ, as coming in the interposition of his providence and the workings of his truth, to prepare the way for the universal spread of righteousness and peace.

2. Matt. xxiv. 29-31, compared with Luke xxi. 24-27. It is said that "the coming of the Lord in this passage can be no other than his personal coming; and as it is to occur when 'the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled,' *i.e.*, at the fall of Antichrist, and immediately before the Millennium, it follows that this is the time of the second advent." Let it be admitted that these words point *ultimately* to the personal advent of Christ and the final judgment, still the *direct* and *primary* reference of the prophecy is to Christ's coming in judgment against Jerusalem, to destroy it and its temple, and with them the standing and privileges of the Jews as the visible church of God, and to set up the Gospel kingdom in a manner more palpable and free than could be done while Jerusalem was yet standing. Our Lord settles this point in Matt. xxiv. 34, and there is nothing in the mere grandeur and strength of the language employed to prevent us taking that view; for, in other prophecies, which we have inspired authority for applying to the destruction of Jerusalem, the same prophetic style is employed as in this prophecy. (See Joel ii. 28-32, compared with Acts ii. 17-20.) Peter expressly declares that the *first* and *last* parts of this passage were fulfilled at the Pentecostal effusion of the Spirit. Evident, therefore, it is that "the great and terrible day of the Lord"—bound up with these events as part of the same great chapter of church history—is no other than the day of Jerusalem's judicial destruction. See also Mal. iii. 1, 2, iv. 5, 6—passages which we are expressly taught in the New Testament to apply to Christ's first coming; "the great and dreadful day of the Lord," as connected with that coming, can, therefore, be no other than what Joel describes in identical terms, *viz.*, the destruction of the Jewish nation and church for rejecting him, through the instrumentality of the Romans. I might also refer to Matt. x. 23, xvi. 28; Mark ix. 1; Luke ix. 27, the plain meaning of which is, that the establishment of "the kingdom," meaning the Gospel kingdom, would be witnessed by those of Christ's auditors who should survive the overthrow of Jerusalem—at that time the chief obstacle to its manifestation. We have thus seen that a figurative advent of our Lord to the judgment of any wicked community is a familiar idea in prophetic style; and that this very event of the destruction of Jerusalem is so described in several prophecies, for the application of which we have inspired authority; so that when our Lord assures us that that coming of his, and the judgments announced by him, would be witnessed by the generation then living, we are prepared by Scripture itself to acquiesce in this as just one of the many examples of a *figurative advent of Christ to judgment*, expressed in all the grandeur

usually employed to describe his personal advent and the final judgment. Here, again, then, as in the former passage, we demand to apply this text to the second personal coming of our Lord.

3. Rev. xix. 11-16, 19-21.—The statement of the pre-millennialists is, that we have in this text “a full and distinct narrative of the Lord’s appearing from heaven just before the Millennium; and that as the prophecy says nothing of such an advent *after* the Millennium, the testimony of the vision to the pre-millennial advent is decisive and complete.” To me it appears very difficult to understand this as a vision of the second advent. Will Christ personally and visibly fight against “the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies,” personally and visibly gathered together against him? We know the overwhelming effects produced by the manifestation of his glory upon those who beheld it. (See Daniel x. 6-8; Luke ix. 32-34; Acts ix. 2-7; Rev. i. 17.) And can we conceive that when he comes in his own glory, and in that of his Father, with all his holy angels, any created being will either dare or be able to make war against him in his person? The very absurdity involved in this idea would, of itself, prove to my mind that the event foretold cannot be the second or any personal coming of Christ. But, it is objected, if this be not the second advent, where does it occur in the Apocalypse *after this*? I reply in Rev. xx. 11, compared with 2 Pet. iii. 10. Here, I see the Lord personally present on his throne of judgment in the one passage, while the other informs me that he has *only then* come; and with this agree the words of our Lord: “When the Son of man shall come in his glory, . . . *then* shall he sit upon the throne of his glory.” (Matt. xxv. 31.)

VIII. *Is there any canon for determining whether the “advent” and “judgment” announced in any prophecy is to be understood literally or figuratively?*

Mr. Faber replies to this question as follows: “When the judgment of some wicked *empire* or *community* is described as being effected by the coming of the great day of retribution, and by the advent of the Lord with the clouds of heaven, then the temporal judgment of that particular empire or community is alone intended, and the language in which it is set forth must be understood *figuratively*, not literally. But when the judgment of no empire or community is described, then the coming of the great day of retribution, and the advent of the Lord with the clouds of heaven being mentioned generally with reference to the whole world, and not particularly with reference to some special body politic, must be understood *literally*, not figuratively.” This canon, founded upon a distinction which pervades the whole language of Scripture, will commend itself, I believe, to the judgment of every dispassionate student of the Bible, in proportion as it is closely tested.

IX. What, then, is the sum of Bible teaching concerning the glorious appearing of our Lord ?

It is this : that Christ, having ascended up on high, is appointed King of the Universe—"a priest upon his throne," whence, after a season, "he will appear the second time," and become once more as really visible to the inhabitants of earth as he was in his former manifestation; that, previously to this, the Gentiles will be converted to the faith of Christ; Popery, which has sat like an incubus upon Christendom for ages, shall be swept away; the Mohammedan imposture, by which millions have been enslaved, will be brought to an end; the political governments which have confederated with the great apostasy, will be overturned; the seed of Abraham will be visited in mercy, will acknowledge Jesus as their own Messiah and Saviour, and will unite with the converted Gentiles in honouring him by the zealous diffusion of the knowledge of his name; and, at length, by means of Gospel truth and the outpouring of the Spirit, the period of millennial glory and joy will be granted to the church: then shall the power of the Redeemer's enemies, and especially of the arch-adversary of God and man, be held under Divine and salutary restraint; truth, righteousness, and peace will everywhere prevail; and all classes of men will yield a willing subjection to the Prince of Peace. Afterwards, for a little season, Satan will be loosed, and make a final and desperate effort against the Lord, his Christ, and his people; another general apostasy will be developed, and the church of the Redeemer will experience trouble, rebuke, and blasphemy. Then in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, will the heavens burst asunder, and make way for a descending Saviour. The work of conversion will be carried on no more. "All that are in the graves shall come forth," and before the "great white throne" shall "be gathered all nations" for judgment. And when the wicked are driven away, Christ's ransomed and glorified ones will come and take possession of the renovated earth,* which, possibly, will be rendered capacious enough for

* I hold strongly to the view on this subject that is advocated in this chapter; namely (in the words of Dr. Urwick), that "the Lord mighty in battle, who on the cross 'spoiled principalities and powers, and made a show of them openly,' and who, age after age, is breaking the yoke of the oppressor, and emancipating human souls, will not stay in his career of illustrious achievement till he wrests the very earth itself from the grasp of its usurper, re-creating it in unrivalled purity and glory, and taking possession of it with his people for immortality as peculiarly his own domain." It does not seem easy to give a fair and natural interpretation of the celebrated prediction of Peter (2 Pet. iii. 10-13) "otherwise than as intimating that 'the new heavens and the new earth,' physically considered, will be the same which God originally created for the abode of men, when it shall have undergone an igneous, as it has already undergone an aqueous, transformation."—Dr. D. Brown. This view, as thus stated by Dr. Urwick and Dr. Brown, is held by Wesley, Clarke,

the multitudes of the saved, or which may be only *one* of the "many mansions" which are to be fitted up for them; and there will they dwell for ever, where no sin can pollute, no sorrow darken, and no change occur. "So shall we ever be with the Lord." Amen.

The writer is principally indebted for the contents of this chapter to Dr. W. Urwick's Lectures on "the Second Advent of Christ;" Dr. David Brown's "Christ's Second Coming;" Dr. G. Spring's "Glory of Christ;" and Rev. J. W. Thomas's essay on "The Millennium," in the Wesleyan Magazine, 1861.

Benson, Macknight, Chalmers, Bloomfield, and many others, both among the pre-millennialists and their opponents.

At the same time, the reader must be informed that there are men of equal eminence and sobriety of judgment (amongst whom we may mention the late Dr. Waldegrave, Bishop of Carlisle, author of "New Testament Millenarianism,") who avow themselves unconvinced by the arguments alleged in support of this view. Some of them contend that the text in Peter refers to the latter-day glory. The Apostle's "nevertheless" is thus made to express, not the hope of what is to follow the second coming of the Lord, with a view to cheer and animate believers in their anticipations of the final conflagration, but the assurance of something which was to precede it; introduced for the purpose of clearing away an objection to what he had before said of the speedy approach of the day of God. Others of them argue that, if it were certain that the passage does relate to the habitation of the righteous after the resurrection and the general conflagration, it is not necessary that the terms of it should be interpreted literally, that is, as meaning a heaven and earth resembling the present; but that the language may be merely borrowed, in the way of figure, from "the heavens and the earth which are now," of which he had been speaking, and mean no more than the certainty of a future glorious, holy, and blessed abode, fitted for the inhabitants as they shall then be, as thoroughly as the present is for men as they now are. The subject has its importance; for whatever view we take of it will necessarily give its hue to all other statements of Scripture regarding the earth. "Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind."

CHAPTER XVI.

THE RESURRECTION OF THE BODY.

I. *What are the essential characters and properties of a true resurrection?*

"The proper notion of the resurrection consists in this, that it is a substantial change by which that which was before, and was corrupted, is reproduced the same thing again." It is a *change*, as distinguished from a second or new creation; a *substantial* change, as distinguished from all accidental alterations—a change of *that which was and hath been corrupted*, because things immaterial and incorruptible cannot be said to rise again—and a *reproduction of the same thing again*, as distinguished from the production of something else, out of the same matter.*

II. *Was the resurrection of the dead a doctrine of the Old Testament revelation?*

The most satisfactory way to answer this question is by the citation of a few Scripture texts, such as, in their general import, cannot be mistaken, and of which our interpretation is sanctioned by different passages in the New Testament:—Job xiv. 12-15, xix. 25-27;† Ps. xvii. 15; Isa. xxv. 8, compared with 1 Cor. xv. 54; Dan. xii. 2, 13; Hosea xiii. 14. And not only have we these distinct announcements of the doctrine in the Old Testament, but nothing is more common than for deliverance from great calamities to be compared to reviving, a resurrection, and life; *e.g.*, Isa. xxvi. 19, etc.; particularly the deliverance of the Jews from their captivity in Babylon is largely expressed by this very similitude, Ezek. xxxvii. 11, etc. "It appears from hence that the doctrine of the resurrection was at that time a popular and common doctrine; for an image which is assumed in order to express or represent anything in the way of allegory or meta-

* Pearson "On the Creed," art. v.

† For the proofs that this text refers to the resurrection of the body, and not merely to the restoration of Job to his former temporal condition, see Pearson "On the Creed," art. xi.; Wardlaw's "Systematic Theology," vol. iii., chap. xxxi.

phor, whether poetical or prophetical, must be an image commonly known and understood, otherwise it will not answer the purpose for which it is assumed."* And from the following passages in the New Testament we have the clearest assurance that the belief of a general resurrection was the belief of the Old Testament Church, both under the Patriarchal and Mosaic dispensations:—Matt. xxii. 30-32; † Acts xxiii. 6-8, xxiv. 14, 15, xxvi. 6, 7; Heb. xi. 35.

III. *What are the principal passages in which the doctrine is taught in the New Testament?*

Matt. v. 29, x. 28; John v. 28, 29, vi. 39, 40, 44, 54; Rom. viii. 11, 22, 23; 1 Cor. xv. 5; Phil. iii. 20, 21; 1 Thess. iv. 13-17.

IV. *At what time will the resurrection occur?*

At the second advent of our Lord, and immediately preparatory to the general judgment. (John vi. 39; 1 Cor. xv. 23, 24; Phil. iii. 20, 21; 1 Thess. iv. 16, 17; Rev. xx. 13.)

V. *Will the good and the wicked dead rise simultaneously?*

The millennarian view is that the resurrection of the righteous will occur at the commencement, and that of the wicked at the close, of the thousand years of millennial glory. The teachings of Scripture appear to us to be very decisive that they will all be raised *at once*. It is true that in those well-known passages in 1 Cor. xv. and 1 Thess. iv., we read only of the resurrection of *believers*, as taking place when "the Lord himself shall descend with a shout;" the exclusive subject of discourse there being "the resurrection of life." But in the Gospel of John (chap. v. 28, 29), we are taught that the "shout," or "voice of the Son of God," shall bring back to life *"all that are in the graves."* It

* Bishop Lowth.

† Some argue from this passage that the term "resurrection" is used as signifying "the separate state," as it is called. It is evident, however, that the Sadducean question to which our Lord was replying had reference to the resurrection of the dead. When the seven husbands and the woman should reappear in corporeal life, whose wife should she be? And the force of our Lord's argument in reply should be considered as arising from the fact, that in the creed of the Sadducees the denial of the resurrection was associated with a denial of a life after death altogether. The two together formed one negative belief. Whatever, therefore, shook their faith as to the non-existence of the separate spirits of the dead, was fitted to shake their unbelief as to the resurrection of the body. The latter, as our Lord knew, would depend upon the former, and would follow in their minds as a sequence or inference from it. It was thus far a kind of *argumentum ad hominem*. Prove a future state, and on their principles, and according to the lurking idea in their minds you make good a resurrection.—Dr. Wardlaw.

is the same "voice" at the same "hour" which all are to hear. And at the one utterance of that voice "shall all be made alive," though in two classes, and with destinies in prospect—how fearfully contrasted! In the account of the final judgment in Rev. xx. 12, 13, the resurrection of *all the dead*, without distinction, is represented as taking place simultaneously, immediately before it, and in order to it. And in 2 Thess. i. 7-10, we have a most explicit announcement of Christ as being revealed from heaven with the two great designs of taking vengeance on the ungodly, and of being glorified in his saints. Who would ever, on reading this passage, be led to fancy that the time of his "coming" to be glorified in his saints was to be earlier by a thousand years than the time of his being "revealed" to take vengeance on his enemies?

VI. *If the resurrection be certain and simultaneous to the righteous and the wicked, why should St. Paul say, "If by any means I might attain," etc.?*

The simple answer is, it was not the general resurrection he was striving to attain to—not a resurrection common to both classes. It was a resurrection peculiar to believers—a resurrection exclusively theirs; exclusively, however, not in the time of it, but in its nature, its accompaniments, and its issues. As Bishop Pearson says, "He meant that resurrection which followeth upon the being 'made conformable to Christ's death,' which is a resurrection in conformity to the resurrection of Christ." This is put beyond doubt in the two last verses of the chapter, where all its peculiarity, all that for which it is desired, is made to lie in the thing itself, and not in the time of it. He who sees the glory of that resurrection, which will be granted to those whose "conversation is in heaven," will not be surprised that St. Paul should regard that as the goal of the race set before him.*

VII. *Is not the view of a simultaneous resurrection for all men contradicted by Rev. xx. 4-6, which speaks of a "first resurrection"?*

The bearing of this passage upon the point in dispute depends greatly on the question whether it ought to be interpreted literally or figuratively. I am perfectly satisfied that the literal exposition is not at all defensible.

First, It should be recollected that the passage forms part of a prophetic book—of a book that is constructed on the very principle of symbol, and figurative almost throughout. Indeed, the whole of the very vision where the text lies is symbolical; and on what principle are we at once to make a transition from the symbolical to the literal, from the obscure and figurative to the direct and simple, from the style of prophecy to the style of

* Dr. D. Brown.

history? Secondly, John is here said to have seen "*the souls* of them who had been beheaded," etc. Now, I am quite aware that the word *souls* is often used to signify *persons*; and if John had said, "I saw the souls that were beheaded," we should have understood him to mean persons. But he says "*the souls of them*," *i.e.* of those persons that had been thus martyred; he must therefore be understood as meaning, not the entire person, but the soul as distinguished from the body. On this principle, I cannot but consider the vision of "*the souls*" as a circumstance strongly in support of the figurative or spiritual interpretation.

What, then, on this principle, did the vision signify? What was the meaning of the symbol? I answer, *it signifies a glorious revival and extensive prevalence of the spirit and character of the ancient martyrs.* These martyrs, according to prophetic figure, rise, and live, and reign, when a race of successors appears, signally animated by their spirit, and pursuing their glorious career, and when their principles become predominant and extensively influential. And, let it be observed, that the figure of a *resurrection*, to signify a remarkable revival of the church, a period of new life and spiritual activity, is not only in itself natural, but it is to be found in other parts of Scripture. It is the very figure used by Ezekiel in the vision of the valley of dry bones (see chap. xxxvii. 1-14), where he portrays the resuscitation that was to come upon his peeled and scattered countrymen as a coming up out of their graves. The same kind of figure is used in reference to the conversion of sinners. Their natural character is a state of death, and the spiritual change effected in their conversion is represented as a resurrection from the dead. (John v. 25; Eph. ii. 1, 5.) And to use an illustration directly in point: the prophecy that Elias should come was fulfilled, not by the resurrection of Elias himself from the dead, but by the coming of John the Baptist "in the spirit and power of Elias." What, then, more natural, as a prophetic symbol, than a resurrection of the martyrs to signify the unexampled revival and prevalence of "*the spirit and power*" of the martyrs? To any one at all acquainted with the symbolical language of prophecy, such an explanation, so far from appearing strained and unnatural, will recommend itself by its appropriateness and simplicity.

But if the principle of literal interpretation were conceded to the Millennarians, it would not bear them out. They argue from the passage for a *general* resurrection of the righteous at the commencement of the supposed millennial reign of Christ. But the persons here said to live and reign with Christ a thousand years are *not* the righteous dead in general, but the martyrs only (ver. 4); and to make so particular a description comprehend and include all classes of the righteous dead is singularly inconsistent in those who plead for a rigid literality.

The Millennarians ask, "What, then, will you make of the

phrase, 'The rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished'?" I take this to be symbolical, and symbolical on the same principle as the former; signifying *the reappearance of the spirit and character of the hostile opponents of Christ and his cause*, in accordance with the prophecy found in Rev. xx. 7, 8.

If, then, the text we have considered does not affirm a literal resurrection of the righteous as separate and distinct from that of the wicked, the theory must be abandoned; for there is no other text in the Bible which can with any show of reason be made to bear upon this subject. It is true that 1 Thess. iv. 16, has sometimes been adduced. But it requires only the reading of the entire passage to satisfy any candid mind that there is in it no reference to the resurrection of the wicked at all. The Apostle is speaking of the dead and the living: "We who are alive shall not prevent," *i.e.*, shall not anticipate, or take precedence, or get the start of "them that are asleep." Those who shall die before our Lord's coming, and those who shall then be alive, will find themselves quite upon an even footing. Such is the Apostle's own explanation of his own language.*

VIII. *Will the bodies raised be identical with those committed to the grave?*

They will; for (1.) all the passages of Scripture which treat of the subject plainly imply, if they do not even directly express, the resurrection of the same body. "*In my flesh shall I see God.*" (Job xix. 26.) "*They that are in the graves shall come forth.*" (John v. 28.) "*He shall quicken our mortal bodies.*" (Rom. viii. 11.) "*This corruptible shall put on incorruption,*" etc. (1 Cor. xv. 53, 54.) "*The sea shall give up the dead that are in it.*" (Rev. xx. 13.) (2.) The very term resurrection implies this identity; that which has been laid down must be taken up; for God to give us a new body, one which the spirit never inhabited, would not be a resurrection, but a creation. (3.) The design of the resurrection requires it; the purposes of justice demand that the beings who shall then appear in judgment should be the identical beings who have been here on probation; and that the same body which was the associate of the soul, and the instrument of carrying into effect its good and evil volitions, should partake with it in the joy or the sorrow, the happiness or the misery, of the future state. (4.) This identity will be manifest in the saints who are alive at the second coming of our Lord. Their bodies will be *changed* (1 Cor. xv. 51; Phil. iii. 21); but

* This section is extracted principally from Dr. Wardlaw's "Miscellaneous Discourses," ser. xvii. But I must refer the reader also to Dr. Urwick on the "Second Advent;" Dr. D. Brown on "Christ's Second Coming;" Barnes's Notes on Rev. xx. 1-6; and Wesleyan Methodist Magazine, 1859, art. *The First Resurrection*.

that very word proves that they will be composed of the same materials of which they shall consist when the change takes place. And if this shall be the case with them, is it not reasonable to conclude that so also will it be with the bodies of the dead? (5.) The examples which we have had of a resurrection from the dead, prove that the same body which died shall rise again. For, whether we look upon the three examples of the Old Testament, or those of the New, they all rose in the same body before it was dissolved. "The bodies of saints," which came out of their graves upon our Saviour's death, were certainly the same bodies that were laid in. (Matt. xxvii. 52, 53.) And Christ himself, when he reappeared among men, declared the body with which he was clothed to be the same body which was crucified. (Luke xxiv. 39.) And seeing that he "shall change our vile bodies, that they may be fashioned like unto his glorious body" (Phil. iii. 21), it follows that we shall rise in the same bodies, and that every particular person at the resurrection may speak the words which Christ then spake, "Behold, it is I myself." (Luke xxiv. 39.)* The subject is encompassed with difficulties, but no difficulties should be placed against the express revelation of the word of God.

IX. What are the leading objections that have been started to this view of the identity of our present and our future bodies?

1. THE OBJECTION ARISING FROM THE SUCCESSION OF BODIES WE MAY BE SAID TO INHABIT. "The body is throughout life incessantly changing, both acquiring new materials and parting with old; so that in the course of a long life it is conceived to undergo, more than once or twice, alterations of its entire mass; there not being an atom of the body of the infant in that of the youth, or of the youth in that of the old man." This fact, it is said, renders the identity for which we contend inconceivable. But do these changes that are constantly going on in our present bodies destroy their identity? "Would any one think of asserting that he himself is not now the identical individual he was at the time of his birth? that the decrepit body of the aged debauchee is suffering unjustly for the intemperance of his youthful frame? that it would be unrighteous to punish the murderer for a crime which he perpetrated when the body was composed of other particles? or, that he himself, in consequence of a similar change, has no title to property left him a few years ago? His common sense protects him from such absurdities in the affairs of this life; and we will leave him to assign to himself a reason, if he can, why it should desert him only in the province of religion."† If we are sure of our identity through all the changes

* See Pearson "On the Creed," art. xi.

† Harris's "Great Teacher."

we undergo in life, we surely need not stumble at the difficulties attending the identity of our present with our resurrection bodies.

2. THE OBJECTION ARISING FROM WHAT HAS BEEN TERMED THE GERM THEORY—viz., that there may be in the human frame some germ, or some original and unchangeable *stamen*, which will unfold into the resurrection body. The idea seems founded on a misapprehension of St. Paul's meaning in 1 Cor. xv. 36, 37; and is advocated from a desire to render the doctrine of a resurrection less difficult to conceive, and more acceptable to philosophic minds. But let it be observed:—

(1.) That the existence of any such germ or elementary *stamen* is matter of the merest conjecture. It has never yet been discovered by the most skilful dissector or the profoundest physiologist. There is nothing whatever in the shape of fact to give it the least support, even to the extent of giving it probability.

(2.) "That the theory involves this absurdity, that the body is not entirely dead, that there is a part of it, however small, in which life remains; for a dead germ or seed could not reproduce: and how there can be life in any part of it, after the vital principle has forsaken it, we leave the authors of this hypothesis to explain."*

(3.) That the theory is not compatible with the teaching of Scripture; for it sets aside the doctrine of a resurrection of the body entirely. "If the preserved part be a *germ*, and the analogy of germination be adopted, then we have no longer a resurrection from death, but a vegetation from a suspended principle of secret life. If the *stamina* of Leibnitz be contended for, then the body, into which the soul enters at the last day, with the exception of these minute stamina, is provided for it, by the addition and aggregation of new matter, and we have a creation, not a resurrection."†

(4.) "If bodies, in either of these modes, are to be framed for the soul, by the addition of a large mass of new matter, the resurrection is made substantially the same with the pagan notion of the metempsychosis; and if St. Paul, at Athens, preached not 'Jesus and the resurrection,' but Jesus and a transmigration into a new body, it will be difficult to account for his hearers scoffing at a doctrine which had received the sanction of several of their own philosophic authorities."‡

(5.) In the case of our Lord, who has "become the firstfruits" of the great resurrection harvest, the body was altogether removed from the grave; no invisible germ was subtracted while the rest was allowed to moulder into dust.

For these reasons, the germ theory, although advocated by some divines of eminence, must be abandoned as untenable. It obviously affords no relief to the only real difficulty involved in the doctrine of the resurrection.

* Dick's "Theology." † Watson's "Institutes." ‡ Ibid.

3. THE OBJECTION ARISING FROM THE MIXTURE OF THE PARTICLES OF MATTER, BY ASSIMILATION OR OTHERWISE, WITH OTHER BODIES. It is argued that "the bodies of the dead, when decayed and mouldered into dust, become the food of plants and vegetables; these plants and vegetables become the food of animals; and these animals the food of living men. Drowned men are devoured by fishes; these fishes, it may be, by other fishes; and some of these by men. In certain savage countries cannibalism prevails; men devour one another. In these and other ways the same particles of matter come to form part of different human bodies." Hence, it is said, "A literal and bodily resurrection of the dead is a thing impossible. The doctrine is a palpable absurdity; for how can any power extricate and bring into form the identical bodily frame that once belonged to each one of the human race?" In all such difficulties as this objection specifies, we take refuge in the infinite power and wisdom of God. "He knoweth all the men which ever lived since the foundation, or shall live unto the dissolution, of the world; he knoweth whereof all things were made, from what dust we came, and into what dust we shall return. (Ps. cxxxix. 15, 16.) And as his wisdom is infinite, so his power is unlimited. There is no atom of the dust or ashes but must be where it pleaseth him, and be applied and make up what and how it seemeth good to him." * And when he appoints that the parts which are essential to the identity of the body shall be re-collected, will he allow any operation of nature to frustrate his purpose? Can he be inattentive to his own designs? Or, "hath he said, and shall he not do it? hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?" He doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth. Let him but speak, and "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye," all the particles of human dust, that may be necessary to reconstruct the body, howsoever they may be scattered, or wheresoever lodged, will be obedient to his high behest, and body and soul, once more united, shall stand forth as the monument of *his* power, who "spake and it was done, who commanded and it stood fast."

X. *But does this identity of the resurrection body with that committed to the grave exclude all idea of change in its structure and organisation?*

By no means; St. Paul argues this point at length (1 Cor. xv.) in answer to the question, what sort of bodies are the saints hereafter to receive? Are their bodies, when they are raised, to be the same sort of bodies that they were when earth claimed them as its own? And he shows "it no more follows that what is raised from the grave is to have the same structure and organisation, the same properties and attributes, with what is laid in

* Pearson "On the Creed," art. xi.

the grave, than it follows that what comes up from the spot where a seed has been dropped, must possess the same bodily form and character as the seed. The fact, on the other hand, that what springs up from the 'bare grain' that is sown, is so very different from the 'bare grain' itself, affords a strong presumption that what is to be raised from the tomb may differ still more widely from what is lying there now. The 'bare grain' is a body adapted to the place which it is to occupy, and the function which it is to serve, underground. But it comes up, having a body suited to the place now to be occupied, and the function now to be served, in the bright and warm light of day. So these material frames of ours, as they are now compacted and organised, are admirably adapted to the place they have to occupy, and the function they have to serve, in this lower world. But if they were to rise such exactly as they are now, they might be ill adapted to the sunshine of that higher heavenly region into which they are to pass. The presumption, therefore, is, that he who brings up the 'bare grain' that is sown, not 'bare grain' still, but that graceful stem of ripe and yellow corn, will bring up the body that is now mouldering in the dust, not such as it is now, but such as will suit that brighter and glorious sphere where all dissolution and decay are unknown." * The particulars are specified in respect of which the resurrection body may be expected to differ from the present body. "In the stead of corruption it shall be inaccessible to decay, for 'neither can they die any more.' In the stead of dishonour it will be raised in glory, radiating a splendour which shall eclipse all sublunary glory. In the place of weakness, it shall be clothed with vigour of immortal youth, asking no relaxation or repose, the wings of the soul accompanying and aiding it in all its untiring flights. In the place of a natural body, it shall be raised a spiritual body; the original grossness of its materiality shall be purged away; it shall be refined and etherealised into spirit—a robe of light rivalling the invisible essence of the soul itself; while each of its senses shall form an inlet to floods of enjoyment, and each of its organs be instinct and emulous with zeal for the Divine glory." † Still there is real identity. Every seed is to have "*its own body*." We shall rise from the dead, purified, indeed, and brilliant, and indestructible; but, nevertheless, each retaining so much of his own peculiar lineaments, that we shall not be a new rank of creatures, but strictly the old—remodelled, and yet the same; transformed, but not losing identity; the parent still recognised by the child, and the child still recognised by the parent.

XI. *In what, then, does the identity of the human body consist?*

This is a very difficult question to answer; and our profoundest

* Dr. Candlish's "Life in a Risen Saviour." † Ibid.

theologians acknowledge that it is impossible to arrive at any satisfactory conclusion on the subject. We must, therefore, content ourselves with what we have already stated, "that God will give a body to every man at the resurrection, such as to ensure his being himself conscious that he is the same man; and such, at the same time, as shall be recognised by others, so as to make him the same man to them as well as to himself."* "It may be changed from what it was when the tomb received it,—weak, wasted, worn. It may wear the bloom of summer life, instead of the cold, bleak deadness of the 'bare grain.' It will not, however, be so changed but that the instinct of conscience will feel it to be the body in which the deeds of this life were done. It will not be so changed but that the eye of affection will perceive it to be the very form, on whose clay-cold lips, years or ages ago, it imprinted the last long kiss of fondness. Yes, I am to rise again in my body; different, but yet the same; with such difference as it may seem good to God to make; with such sameness as shall identify me personally, in body and soul, to myself and to all my friends."†

XII. What are the principal heresies that have been propagated with regard to the resurrection of the body?

1. THAT OF THE PHARISEES, the principal sect, in our Lord's time, among the Jews, who taught that the resurrection would be partial, being confined to the bodies of the just, according to that ancient saying accepted amongst them, that "the sending of the rain is on the just and the unjust, but the resurrection of the dead is of the just alone." In direct opposition to this view, we are taught that the resurrection of the dead belongs not to the just alone, but to the unjust also. (See Dan. xii. 2; Acts xxiv. 15; Matt. xxv. 34, 41.) We are also taught that as no kind of men, so no person, shall be excluded. (1 Cor. xv. 21, 22; John v. 28, 29; Matt. xxv. 32; Rom. xiv. 10; 2 Cor. v. 10.)

2. THAT OF THE Gnostics, or knowing ones, who, in the Apostles' time, marred the simple Gospel by the introduction of Oriental subtleties. The favourite dogma of these Gnostics was that matter is in itself essentially and incurably corrupt, and is the cause of all corruption. Hence, they denied the possibility of a literal bodily resurrection. Nothing but a spiritual resurrection could find a place in their creed; the soul, renovated by faith, is *raised* to newness of life; and no other resurrection is to be anticipated. This error cuts up by the very roots the hope of those who have believed in Christ; for, "if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen." He is still under the power of death. We have no evidence of the sufficiency of his atoning sacrifice; our faith is vain, we are yet in our sins. (1 Cor.

* Dr. Wardlaw.

† Dr. Candlish.

xv. 13-17.) This error also flatly contradicts the many passages which assure us of a resurrection *at the last day*, for it maintains that, in the case of believers, that spiritual resurrection is "past already" (2 Tim. ii. 16-18), leaving nothing to hope for but the casting off of this mortal body, and the soaring of the spirit in unending life and liberty. Very different is the doctrine taught in such texts as these:—John xi. 24, vi. 39; Matt. xiii. 39; 1 Cor. xv. 52.

3. THAT OF BARON SWEDENBORG, who flourished during the first half of the eighteenth century. In the year 1743, he began to promulgate his novel dogmas, affirming that the Lord himself appeared to him, and honoured him with a Divine mission to men. He totally denied the resurrection of the material body, teaching, like the Gnostics, that it perishes at death; but he maintained that the soul, immediately after death, *rises* into the spirit-world in a spiritual body which was enclosed in the material body; and that in this spiritual body he lives as a man through eternity, either in heaven or hell, according to the quality of his past life. It is easy to see that such views as these can never be made to accord with the sublime doctrine of the resurrection of "all that are in the graves" and in the "sea," which is to occur when "the trumpet shall sound," at the coming of the Lord.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE GENERAL JUDGMENT.

I. How do we argue the certainty of a judgment to come ?

1. IT IS ARGUED FROM THE ANOMALIES THAT PERVADE THE ENTIRE SYSTEM OF GOD'S PROVIDENTIAL GOVERNMENT. There is no doubt that we live under a retributive government, and that cognisance is taken of our actions by an ever-present Being, who loveth righteousness, and hateth iniquity. And yet, in all ages, there has been a manifest disagreement between the conduct and condition of men. Vice has often had the upper hand, while righteousness has been depressed and overwhelmed. The wicked have prospered, having even more than heart can wish. The righteous have been the victims of severe and diversified sufferings. This fact is often referred to in the Scriptures. (Ps. lxxiii. 1-13; Eccles. viii. 14; Jer. xii. 1.) And there is no way of reconciling these apparent contradictions except by supposing that in another yet unknown state, vice would receive its due meed of punishment, and righteousness its reward; for, either the idea is erroneous of our living under a moral government at all, or that moral government must have another scene of display, where its impartiality shall be vindicated, and every discrepancy removed. So that it is a truth forced on our attention by what is passing in the world, that men shall be reckoned with in another state for their actions, and receive distributions of happiness or misery proportioned accurately to the things done on the earth. There is no alternative, if we hold not the truth of a judgment to come, but the holding that this creation is not under a moral government.

2. IT IS ARGUED FROM THE POSITIVE STATEMENTS OF HOLY SCRIPTURE. It was a subject of Old Testament revelation. (Jude 14, 15; Eccles. xii. 13, 14.) But in the New Testament it is revealed in clearer and fuller lustre. (See, amongst other passages, Matt. xxv. 31-46; Acts xvii. 31, 32, xxiv. 25; Rom. xiv. 12; 2 Cor. v. 10; Heb. ix. 27; Rev. xx. 11-15).

II. For what purpose may we suppose the judgment to be appointed ?

The day of judgment is not to make God himself better acquainted with the character of men, but to make both men and angels better acquainted with the character of God. Not to add to God's knowledge, for that is infinite, but to add to the knowledge of his creatures. The day of judgment, indeed, is another grand dispensation, when there will be a further display of the glory and character of God. The character of God has already been displayed in creation and redemption, and partly in providence; but it will then be displayed in the development of his government. In this world the moral government of God is the most obscure of any of his dispensations; but at the day of judgment his moral government will be so openly manifested that the justice, the faithfulness, the holiness, and goodness of God will be gloriously displayed in the presence of an assembled universe, to the confusion of the wicked and the admiration and joy of the righteous.* Thus viewed, although some would think it a process almost superfluous, considered with regard to men alone, it may, and doubtless will, have a most important influence upon the interests of God's moral empire in general.

III. *Will the one judgment include all the race?*

By some of the leaders of modern Millenarianism it is supposed that the judgment, properly so called, will be confined to the wicked. But nothing, surely, can be more contrary than this to the plainest and most explicit intimations of holy writ. (See especially Matt. xxv. 31, 46; 2 Cor. v. 10; 2 Thess. i. 7, 10; Rev. xx. 11, 15). It is impossible to explain these passages on any other supposition than that the righteous and the wicked will be judged together, and both at the coming of Christ. "When his people are crowned, he would not have one of their enemies absent; and when the ungodly are doomed, he would not have one of the righteous absent."

IV. *Who is to be the Judge?*

The throne of judgment is to be occupied by the Lord Jesus. (Matt. xxv. 31, 32; Acts x. 42, xvii. 31; John v. 22, 27; Rom. xiv. 10; 2 Thess. i. 7, 10; 2 Tim. iv. 1; Rev. i. 7.) From these passages we perceive that it is in his capacity as *Mediator* that all judgment is committed to the Son. Observe the combined wisdom and mercy of the appointment. *He is God*, and therefore must know every particular of character, every action, every motive, every thought, every word, so that there cannot rest any suspicion on any of his decisions. He cannot be imposed upon by any show of piety; he cannot overlook it when real. But then, *he is also "the Son of man;"* he has borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows; and therefore will he put himself in the position of those who are brought to his bar. He will know

* Dr. W. Cooke's "Explanation of Scripture Difficulties."

exactly what they have had to contend with, and will be able to adjust each sentence to the opportunities and capacities of the being on whom it is passed. It is one of the most beautiful of the arrangements of redemption, that the offices of Redeemer and Judge meet in the same person, and that person Divine. It secures towards us tenderness as well as equity; the sympathy of a friend, as well as the disinterestedness of a righteous arbiter.

V. In what sense are we to understand the promise that the saints shall judge the world?

See Matt. xix. 28; Luke xxii. 29, 30; 1 Cor. vi. 2, 3. Expositors are not agreed as to the nature of the promise, or the time of its fulfilment; but it is generally understood to refer to the day of judgment, and to imply that "the saints, after being judged themselves, shall be assessors with Christ in the judgment wherein he shall condemn all the wicked, as well angels as men."

VI. What will be the attendant circumstances of the general judgment?

They will combine every element of greatness, beauty, and terror which will be worthy the unparalleled occasion. The Judge "shall come in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory" (Matt. xxiv. 30, xxvi. 64; Rev. i. 7); the flaming fire, unfolded in the cloudy darkness, and flashing forth as the emblem of the purity, and the power, and the consuming jealousy of the Holy One and the Just; "and all his holy angels with him (Matt. xxv. 31; 2 Thess. i. 7); forsaking their sublime occupations, and descending from their lofty seats, ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands shall encircle his throne and swell his triumphs. "The trumpet shall sound" (Matt. xxiv. 31; 1 Cor. xv. 52; 1 Thess. iv. 16); it is the voice of the Judge calling for the sleeping dead—calling with a voice which is instantly heard, understood, and obeyed; for they that are in the graves come forth. Then shall ensue the conflagration of the globe (2 Pet. iii. 7, 10-12); forsaken of its inhabitants, all its stores of fire shall be unmasked, every mountain shall be a Sinai, and the flame universal; yet who shall heed the sight? for the great assize will have begun. The books will be opened (Rev. xx. 12); first, the book of remembrance; for an exact account is kept of the life of every individual, so that when he is arraigned, all the particulars of his conduct will be produced, and made to determine the tenor of his sentence; secondly, the books of the law and the Gospel, which contain the rule whereby all are to be judged; and lastly, "another book is opened, which is the book of life," in which are registered the names of all those happy persons who, according to the arrangements of Divine mercy, are entitled to the privi-

leges of a citizenship in heaven. And now the judgment will proceed; actions, words, thoughts, even "every idle word" and "every secret thing" (Matt. xii. 36; Eccles. xii. 14), all entering into the decisions of that day. How long the judgment will occupy, and where it will be held, and how it will be conducted, are questions which no one can answer. But the results by which it will be followed are clearly revealed. A public and visible separation will be made between the two classes that are gathered before the throne (Matt. xxv. 32, 33; Mal. iii. 18); and the whole will be closed in the solemn, final, immutable settlement of the destinies of all that, from the beginning to the end of time, shall have lived upon the earth.

VII. *What are the principles on which the judgment will be conducted?*

The unvarying statement is, that men shall be judged "according to their works." (Rev. xx. 12, ii. 23, xxii. 12.) If men have believed in Christ—and this is the only appointed method of salvation—the sincerity of their faith will be proved by their works; for "faith worketh by love," and love will prompt to all those acts of holy obedience which are enjoined in the Bible. And if they have not believed with the heart unto righteousness, their want of faith will be evidenced by their works of disobedience to the great law of their being. "Their works" will, therefore, constitute the great subjects of inquest; and the formula of final sentence will run thus: "Inasmuch as ye *did* it; and inasmuch as ye *did it not*." But, in guiding the decision of the last day by "works" alone, the business will be so conducted as to produce in every mind a full conviction of the consummate rectitude of the Divine government. (Gen. xviii. 25; Acts xvii. 31.) Every man shall be dealt with in conformity with that rule, "Unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required." (Luke xii. 48.) The heathen shall have *his* standard of trial, and the Christian *his* (Rom. ii. 12, 16); while among all those who have been privileged with the Gospel, exact reckoning will be made of the talents of each, and the opportunities and privileges of each (Matt. xxv. 14-30); and the measure of punishment accurately adjusted to every measure of guilt. (Luke xii. 47, 48; Matt. xi. 20-24.) Actions will be estimated by their motives and by their intrinsic worth—not by their pomp and their showiness; and the cup of cold water, the prison visit, and the pious wish shall not lose their reward. (Matt. x. 42, xxv. 35, 36.)

VIII. *When it is said, that in the judgment day, cognisance will be taken of every act, are we to anticipate an exposure of all those sins which have been repented of and forgiven?*

There are two classes of passages, between which, at first sight, there appears some discrepancy. The first class teaches that *nothing* will be overlooked—every work, with every secret

thing, whether good or evil—will be brought into the open court. (Eccles. xii. 14; Matt. x. 26.) The language of other passages represents Divine forgiveness as so complete that the sin is “blotted out,” not to be mentioned, not remembered, cast into the depths of the sea. (Isa. xliii. 25, xlv. 22; Jer. xxxi. 34; Ezek. xviii. 22; Micah vii. 18, 19.) It becomes us not to dogmatise on a point like this; but we incline to the notion that the blotting out of the sins of the pardoned, their not being remembered, etc., are merely to be regarded as strong expressions to signify the abundant pardon granted to penitent faith. Their sins shall not be mentioned or even remembered *against them* for ever. At the same time, it is certain that the saints in their holiest transports are not ashamed to refer to the sins which are washed away (Rev. i. 5, 6); and it may be that the universal exposure of all past sin at the judgment day may promote the glory of God, by magnifying the riches of his grace in the forgiveness of it—and the glory of Christ, by showing forth the infinite efficacy of the blood which cleanseth—and the glory of the Spirit, by illustrating the power of his saving grace. And certain it is that, if an increasing revenue of praise is brought to the Triune God, there is not a redeemed spirit that will shrink from the disclosure of the very worst acts of his former life; rather, will not each one give utterance to more rapturous adoration and thanksgiving for the great salvation, which sets him down among the living in Jerusalem, after all that he has done?

IX *What will be the results of the great assize?*

1. THERE WILL BE THE DIVISION OF THE WHOLE FAMILY OF MAN INTO TWO CLASSES—the good and the bad. (Matt. xxv. 32, 33.) No other orders of men will be seen or recognised there. All earthly distinctions of rank, honour, attainment, and privilege, will have passed away. “They that have done good, and they that have done evil,” will be the sole remaining distinction; and with one or the other of these classes each individual shall find a place. What separations will then take place—pastors from people, teachers from scholars, husbands from wives, parents from children, friends from friends—each assigned a place far from the other; and the separation will be irreversible, and known by those who undergo it to be irreversible. It will be the scene and the season of everlasting separation.

2. IMMEDIATELY CONSEQUENT ON THIS SEPARATION WILL BE THE FINAL AWARD. (Matt. xxv. 34-41.) “Then,”—when the universe is assembled, and all are intensely bending to hear, “then shall the King say to them on his right hand, *Come*”—a word which will collect around him all the loyal and the sanctified in the creation—“*Come, ye blessed of my Father.*” How comprehensive the title! reaching through eternity; causing everything in the universe to cast a benignant aspect upon them; appointing them heirs of blessedness. “*Come, inherit the king-*

dom." *A kingdom* is yours—freedom and dominion not to be questioned, royalty shared with the King of kings. A kingdom *prepared*, adapted in all its arrangements to your renewed natures; a state in which your lofty aspirations and desires have been amply and expressly provided for. "Prepared for you," in the covenant of redeeming love, "before the foundation of the world." Oh, what a welcome this! What ravishing accents to those addressed! Then will they rise and rise, until, in one long and triumphant procession, they enter on their inheritance; and then, in immaculate holiness, in supreme honour, and in ecstatic bliss, they begin their immortality.

"Then shall he say to them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared," not for you, except as the result of your own sin, but for others with whom you have chosen to mingle, even "the devil and his angels." It is a sentence in which are gathered up, and compressed into one, all the curses of God, requiring an eternity to comprehend and exhaust them. Now shall the wicked pass away, driven by angel spirits, the ministers of the great King (Matt. xxii. 13), to the prison-house of devils, where the remembrance of the past, the consciousness of the present, and the anticipation of the future, all combine to infix an incessant agony of woe.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE DURATION OF FUTURE PUNISHMENTS.

I. *What are the two views on this subject which have been held in opposition to the general opinions of the church?*

1. THE ANNIHILATION THEORY, one of whose most influential and learned advocates was Archbishop Whately. It is argued that immortality was not one of the original attributes of human nature, but is secured for us through the atonement of Christ. All, therefore, who fail to accept the blessings of that atonement finally perish in annihilation. And to support this view, the Scripture terms "to perish," "to be destroyed," "to die," when applied to the future state of the wicked, are interpreted as meaning the total extinction of being. It may suffice to reply, that if there are some texts in which certain words are used, which, *taken by themselves*, are capable of such a meaning, there are others, many others, in which both the future existence and the eternal punishment of the wicked are most plainly declared. And while the death, loss, destruction, and perishing of the soul are quite susceptible of a meaning in harmony with eternal existence and torment, the latter cannot possibly be made to bear a meaning in harmony with the future annihilation of being. Let any one carefully note the passages that will be adduced in the course of this chapter, and he will find this statement abundantly verified.

2. THE RESTORATION THEORY, the substance of which is, that "bad men, after enduring punishment in various degrees, according to their respective measures of evil desert, and being corrected and reformed by the punishment, shall all finally be delivered, and brought to the possession of happiness." This view was advocated in the third century by Origen, and is now held by the whole body of Socinians, while it is almost universally opposed by those who hold the Divinity of Christ and the atonement by his death—a circumstance which awakens the suspicion that, in some way, it springs from the same inadequate estimate of the evil of sin and of the justice of God, as does the denial of the vicarious sacrifice of Christ. In dealing with this theory our one appeal is to the word of God. "And we require to be on our

guard against interpreting its phraseology under any predisposing bias, even should it wear the aspect of both piety and benevolence; seeing that the piety and benevolence alike may be mistaken and false, founded in erroneous and partial conceptions.”*

II. In what way is it proved from Scripture that future punishment is changeless and eternal?

I. THE TERMS EMPLOYED TO DESCRIBE THAT PUNISHMENT, WHEN HONESTLY INTERPRETED, CAN SIGNIFY NOTHING SHORT OF PROPER ETERNITY.

First, we have the word αἰώνιος, (aionios,) which strictly and properly signifies eternal, ever existent,† and, throughout the New Testament, is applied indiscriminately to the duration of future woe as well as of future blessedness. Thus we have “everlasting fire” (Matt. xviii. 8, xxv. 41); “everlasting punishment” (Matt. xxv. 46); “everlasting destruction” (2 Thess. i. 9); “eternal damnation” (Mark. iii. 29); “eternal fire” (Jude 7); “everlasting life” (Matt. xix. 29; John iii. 16); “eternal life” (Luke x. 25; John iii. 15); “everlasting habitations” (Luke xvi. 9); “eternal in the heavens” (2 Cor. v. 1); and many other instances. Now, surely, it is natural and fair to understand the term, in each occurrence of it, as having the same extent of meaning; and far from fair to take it as meaning strict and proper eternity when applied to heaven, and as meaning only an indefinite period of time when applied to hell. Besides, in one passage (Matt. xxv. 46), there is an evident and pointed antithesis between life and punishment, and of both it is affirmed that they are everlasting, the same Greek word being used in both cases, though improperly varied by our translators. Ought not this one passage to be enough to decide the point? Who that heard the “Faithful Witness” use one word on both sides of the alternative could hesitate about his meaning by it the same thing?

Secondly, we have the words εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα, “for ever,” applied to future punishment; “the mist of darkness is reserved for ever” (2 Pet. ii. 17); “the blackness of darkness for ever.” (Jude 13.) And that this signifies nothing less than eternal duration is evident from the use of the same term in other places: “Christ abideth for ever” (John xii. 34); “God blessed for ever” (Rom. ix. 5); “his righteousness remaineth for ever” (2 Cor. ix. 9); “shall live for ever.” (John vi. 58.)

*Thirdly, we have the phrase, εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων, which is generally translated “for ever and ever,” and might, perhaps, be rendered, “through the durations of durations.” This form of speech is very intelligible, and may be properly called *the superlative*. What is “the holy of holies” but the most holy? or “the heaven of heavens,” but the highest heaven? And what*

* Dr. Wardlaw.

† Dr. Wardlaw’s “Systematic Theology,” vol. iii., p. 730.

are "the durations of durations" but that duration which is the greatest of all—that is, proper eternity? "The smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever" (Rev. xiv. 11, xix. 3); "tormented day and night for ever and ever." (Rev. xx. 10.) Nothing can be more evident than that this is used to indicate an unlimited duration; for it is employed: (1.) To point out the eternity of the Most High. (Rev. iv. 9, 10, v. 14, x. 6, xv. 7.) (2.) To indicate the everlasting praise which shall be rendered to him. (Rev. v. 13, vii. 12.) (3.) To mark the endless duration of his government. (Rom. xi. 15.) (4.) To describe the endless duration of the blessedness of the righteous. (Rev. xxii. 5.) And it is for Socinians to show where the Apostles have used this phrase in a sense manifestly limited.

The fact is, the word *alov* is composed of two words, *dei ov*, which signify *always being*. It denotes strictly and properly the whole duration of that being to which it is applied. When used concerning present things—such as the hills or mountains (Hab. iii. 6), an age (Eph. iii. 21), the life of man (1 Cor. viii. 13), etc.—it comprehends the whole of their present existence; and when used concerning future things, it comprehends the whole of their future existence. On this subject our best lexicographers are agreed, and in accordance with this view the words are uniformly used in the Scriptures.*

2. ACCORDING TO THE UNIFORM TENOR OF SCRIPTURE, THE PRESENT LIFE IS THE TIME OF PROBATION, AND THE ONLY OPPORTUNITY FOR SEEKING A MEETNESS FOR HEAVEN. Let the following passages be pondered:—Prov. i. 24-28; Luke xiii. 24-29; Isa. lv. 6; Eccles. ix. 10; Matt. xxv. 10-12; Rev. xxii. 11. No hint is anywhere to be found that the accepted time, and the day of salvation, shall extend beyond the present state—not one hint in all the Bible of any offer of grace beyond the limits of the present state.

3. IN THE CURRENT LANGUAGE OF SCRIPTURE, THE STATES OF MEN BEYOND DEATH ARE REPRESENTED AS FINAL, AND NO INTIMATION IS EVER HELD OUT OF ANY SUBSEQUENT CHANGE. Job xxxvi. 18; Prov. xxix. 1; Eccles. ix. 10; John iii. 36; Matt. xxvi. 24; Luke xvi. 26, xiv. 24.

4. THE DESCRIPTIONS WHICH ARE GIVEN OF THE PUNISHMENT OF THE WICKED ARE ALTOGETHER INCONSISTENT WITH THEIR FINAL RESTORATION TO VIRTUE AND HAPPINESS. It is described (1) as a burning, Matt. iii. 12, xiii. 30; Heb. vi. 8; (2) as destruction, Matt. vii. 13; Rom. ix. 22; 2 Thess. i. 9; (3) as perdition, John xvii. 12; (4) as the loss of the soul, Matt. xvi. 26; (5) as death, Rom. vi. 23, i. 32; James i. 15, v. 20. Take what view we will of these representations of the nature and design of future punishment, it is impossible to reconcile them

* Hare's "Preservative;" and Dr. A. Clarke's Note on Matt. xxv. 31, and Gen. xxi. 33.

with a final restoration to glory; because to be burned in hell is not to be blessed in heaven; destruction is not restoration; perdition is not salvation; the loss of the soul is not its recovery; and death is not everlasting life.

5. NOR MUST IT BE FORGOTTEN THAT THE STATE OF FUTURE PUNISHMENT IS A STATE OF CONSTANT AND PERPETUAL SIN, THOSE WHO DWELL THERE BEING ABANDONED TO THE UNCONTROLLED EMPIRE OF EVIL; AND THE CONSTANT RECURRENCE OF SIN MUST, OF NECESSITY, FROM THE PRINCIPLES OF THE DIVINE GOVERNMENT, BE CONNECTED WITH THE CONSTANT RECURRENCE OF PUNISHMENT. All the springs of holy influence are dried up; every agency for conversion is gone; "there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin;" all the elements of evil are collected and combined to intensify the enmity of the lost spirit towards God and his eternal Son. And hence "the punished sinner of this life becomes progressively, unceasingly, the everlasting sinner of the life that succeeds it. In this way of conceiving them, the *punishments* of hell are but the perpetual vengeance that accompanies the *sins* of hell. An eternity of wickedness brings with it an eternity of woe. The sinner is to suffer for everlasting, but it is because the sin itself is as everlasting as the suffering. This is so far from requiring proof, that proof would really be required to establish the contrary. They who start at the disproportions of an eternal punishment to a temporary sin, cannot deny the proportion when the sin and the punishment are alike eternal—when the surrender of the soul to the moral evil it has chosen (a principle universally recognised in Scripture) is made the direct punishment of its earthly choice, and all else follows in the way of exact and proportioned penalty."*

III. *What are the leading objections which have been urged against this doctrine?*

1. THERE ARE CERTAIN TEXTS WHICH ARE ALLEGED TO ASSERT THE FUTURE RESTORATION OF ALL RATIONAL CREATURES TO HOLINESS AND HAPPINESS. Let us examine them:—

Rom. v. 20, 21.—"Where sin abounded, grace," etc.—a beautiful passage, showing that the grace of the Gospel was designed to be as extensive and complete as the guilt and contamination of sin. But this design can only be secured "through righteousness;" that is, as stated in the 17th verse, by those "who receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness." And what does this prove concerning those who "receive the grace of God in vain," and who have "not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God"?

Rom. viii. 21.—"The creature itself shall be," etc. This is the "hope" of ἡ κτίσις, "the creature." And it should un-

* Rev. W. Archer Butler, Professor of Moral Philosophy, Dublin.

doubtedly be connected with the preceding verses, thus: "The earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God—(for the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same)—in hope *that* (or) the creature itself also shall be delivered," etc. What a strained interpretation must be put upon these words before "the bondage of corruption" could be made to signify "the everlasting chains under darkness" in which the lost are held! And how vain to represent the lost as living and "waiting" "in hope" and "earnest expectation" of deliverance, when a voice from heaven announces, "between us and you there is a great gulf fixed," etc. (Luke xvi. 26.) The passage does not and cannot refer to them, otherwise there can be no truth in these words, "They *shall not see* life, but the wrath of God *abideth* on them." (John iii. 36.)

1 Cor. xv. 22.—"For as in Adam all die, even so," etc. Strange that such a passage can be imported into this controversy, when the most cursory glance of the context shows that the exclusive reference is to the resurrection at the last day, when "all shall be made alive," "some to everlasting life, and some to shame and *everlasting contempt*." (Dan. xii. 2.)

1 Tim. iv. 10.—"Who is the Saviour of all men," etc. How can he be "the Saviour of all men," it is asked, unless he delivers all from the torments of hell? In a very important sense he is "the Saviour of all men." He has provided salvation for all, and he has actually saved all from that "judgment which came upon all men" through "the offence" of Adam. But he is the Saviour "*especially* of those that believe;" for "he that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life," while "he that believeth not shall be damned."

1 Tim. ii. 4.—"Who will have all men to be saved." The meaning of the Greek word *θελει* is that God *wills*, desires the salvation of all. It is the same glorious truth that is announced in Ezek. xxxiii. 11; 2 Peter iii. 9; but there is nothing here to warrant the notion that they who "will not come to him that they might have life" shall be rescued from the "everlasting punishment" to which the Great Judge will doom them.

These are the principal passages that have been adduced in support of the restoration theory. And one is amazed at the theological trifling which could seek to screw such a theory out of such texts as these.

2. IT IS ALLEGED THAT THE FUTURE PUNISHMENT OF THE WICKED IS INTENDED FOR THEIR CORRECTION, AND THAT THEY WILL ULTIMATELY BE SUBDUED BY IT TO ALLEGIANCE AND LOYALTY, AND THUS BE PREPARED FOR THE HAPPINESS OF HEAVEN. This is one of the strongholds of the universal restorationists, but it is altogether destitute of proof. Many of the afflictions of *this* life are the chastisements of parental love, intended for the amendment of those that are exercised thereby

(Heb. xii. 6-11; Prov. iii. 11, 12); and hence "happy is the man whom God correcteth." (Job v. 17; Ps. xciv. 12, 13.) But we look in vain for a single text to prove that correction is the end of those judicial punishments which are inflicted on the incorrigible; and equally in vain for a text that pronounces the man "happy" upon whom God poureth forth "indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish." Besides, how inconsistent with the whole system of the Gospel to trace the salvation of man to any other cause than the atonement and mediation of Christ! Those who are reformed by their punitive sufferings would pass into another state, acknowledging no debt of obligation to the precious blood of Christ. It is the purgatorial fire to which they owe their happy change, and no song would ever escape their lips in adoring gratitude to the Lamb that was slain. To such fearful issues are we driven by overlooking the distinction between the wholesome chastisement of a Father and the judicial punishment of a righteous Judge. God is not a governor who merely gives rules of conduct to his subjects, and chastises the transgressors for their amendment; but who maintains his authority by declaring himself that "one Lawgiver who is able to save and to destroy." (James iv. 12.) The penalties by which his laws are enforced are capital punishments, which will be so inflicted upon the finally impenitent as to make it manifest that "he that made them will not have mercy on them, and he that formed them will show them no favour." (Isa. xxvii. 11.)

3. IT IS ALLEGED THAT THERE IS NO PROPORTION BETWEEN THE DURATION OF THE SIN COMMITTED AND THE DURATION OF PUNISHMENT INFLICTED; AND THAT IT WOULD BE MOST UNJUST IN GOD TO VISIT WITH ENDLESS INFLICTION CRIMES COMMITTED IN TIME SO LIMITED. This objection is based on the assumption that the demerit of sin is to be estimated by the time occupied in the perpetration of it. Was such a principle ever recognised in our criminal courts? Is it deemed unjust to inflict a seven years' punishment on one who has robbed his neighbour in seven minutes? or to cut off *for ever* from human society one who *in a moment* has stabbed his neighbour to the heart? The turpitude and desert of sin are to be calculated on far higher grounds—on the dignity and authority of the Lawgiver—the reasonableness, justice, and goodness of his laws—the adaptation of those laws to the prosperity and happiness of the subjects—the extent of the obligation to be obedient—the nature and effects of the crime committed—the degree of dishonour and injury done to the Lawgiver—and the consequences, near or remote, of a breach of social order. Now, are we, with our very limited powers and narrow views, competent to enter upon a calculation of such vast extent? Should we be, even supposing we were innocent and pure? Still further can we ever be, whatever our powers, seeing that we are parties in the cause, deeply interested, and necessarily partial and biassed in our views? Is a

guilty party in a human court ever suffered to be his own judge and jury, and to fix the measure of his own desert? And, surely, nothing can be more presumptuous than for finite, guilty men to pronounce on what it is right and just for the great God to do, and that in regard to the punishment of their own sins committed against himself. No one in existence, save that infinite Being himself, is capable of forming anything like a fully adequate conception of sin's exceeding sinfulness, or of its penal desert. His word declares that "*it is a righteous thing* with God to recompense tribulation" to sinners, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven for the purpose of "taking vengeance on them." And if he sentence them to be "punished with everlasting destruction from his presence" (2 Thess. i. 6-9), who are we that we should withstand God? Rather let us bow in humble submission, saying, "Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are thy judgments." (Rev. xvi. 7.)

4. IT IS ALLEGED TO BE INCONSISTENT WITH THE INFINITE BENEVOLENCE OF GOD TO SUBJECT HIS CREATURES, FOR ANY DEGREE OF GUILT, TO UNENDING TORMENT. "The question is, in what sense do we speak of God as the possessor of such an attribute? If it be meant to imply that benevolence is the absolute and permanent rule of moral government, unregulated in its exercise by any law of rectitude, not qualified by any considerations of truth or wisdom, but over-ruling the whole constitution and course of nature so as to bestow happiness, we have a right to ask, where have we the proof of such benevolence as the rule of Divine actings? Where find we any trace of this exclusively benevolent God? The depth, heaving with volcanic fires, says 'It is not in me.' The sea, mingling its roar with the cries of the drowning, says, 'It is not in me.' 'Not in me,' says history, as she shows on her every page some record of misery and triumphant wrong. 'And not in me,' says Revelation, who knows of no God but one—one of whom it is said, 'All his ways are judgment; a God of truth, and without iniquity, just and right is he.' (Deut. xxxiii. 4.) No; we know nothing of the goodness of God except it is exhibited in harmony with his other attributes—guided and controlled by the conditions of infinite righteousness. We dare not set God against himself, or attribute against attribute. We claim for him infinite benevolence, as much as our objectors do; but it is in a higher and worthier sense, namely, as the benevolence of eternal rectitude, as the benevolence which, while it has no pleasure in the death of the wicked, and delighteth in mercy, 'will by no means clear the guilty'—a benevolence which, instead of making for itself a throne on the ruin of other perfections, combines with and magnifies them all. 'Mercy and truth are met together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other.'"

5. IT IS ALLEGED THAT IF FUTURE PUNISHMENT BE NOT REMEDIAL, NO END CAN BE ANSWERED BY ITS CONTINUED INFLICTION. Is any mortal man in a position to pronounce on such

a question? Surely the subject is one far beyond our reach, quite out of our province. For aught we know, the existence of eternal misery may hereafter be shown to be essential to a perfect government, and necessary to the highest ends of purity, and righteousness, and truth. It may be that the entire universe of rational beings, over which the government of God extends, is interested in, and benefited by, the eternal perdition of ungodly men. But this is one of those "matters" of which God has given no "account" to his creatures on earth; and it is most unseemly and inconsistent with our character and condition to pry into the secret.

Thus we see that the clear statements of the word of God are not in any way shaken by the cavils and objections of men. The doctrine of eternal punishment stands firm in the overwhelming terrors of its truth. While the glories of heaven are changeless and interminable, so are the tormenting miseries of hell. He who sinks into Tophet rises not for ever. His groans are for ever; his curses are for ever; his blasphemies are for ever. All for ever—*emphatically and purely for ever!*

IV. Does the eternal duration of future punishment imply in every instance equality of degree?

This has sometimes been assumed, and then urged as an objection to the doctrine. But, it is very plain, that sufferings may be at once infinite in duration, and various as to degree. And that there will be great diversity in the degree of torment in the bottomless pit is most clearly taught. (See Matt. xi. 20-24; Luke xii. 47, 48; Rom. ii. 11, 12.) We know not in what manner this variety will be produced, but we may rest assured, that all will be regulated by a principle of unimpeachable equity. This, however, we must never forget: that the lightest of punishments that shall come upon the lost will be sufficiently severe to produce "weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth." Even the "few stripes" that will be inflicted on the least guilty of them "that did commit things worthy of stripes," will prove that "it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."

CHAPTER XIX.

THE SABBATH.

I. What are the leading theories that have been advocated with regard to the Sabbath?

1. That the Sabbath was not instituted at the creation, but was first ordained during the sojourning of the Jews in the wilderness (Exod. xvi. 22-30); and that when Moses connected the Sabbath with his account of creation in Gen. ii. he spoke *proleptically*, or by anticipation, not designing to assert that God *then* blessed and sanctified the seventh day, but that when, 2,500 years afterwards, he appointed a Sabbath, it was for the reason there given, that "God rested on the seventh day from all his work." The inference from this theory is, that the Sabbath is purely a Jewish institution, and is continued under the Christian dispensation for the sake of the beneficial purposes which the public and regular observance of it promotes, rather than from any direct and positive declaration of the will of God. This view was advocated by some of the ancient Fathers, and in modern times by Dr. Paley, in his "Moral and Political Philosophy." And it is probable that this work has done more in fostering lax notions concerning the Sabbath than any other work that has issued from the press.

2. A second theory has prevailed to a considerable extent among the Lutheran and Reformed Churches on the Continent, and is in substance adopted by the Society of Friends; viz., that the Sabbath was given to the Jews as a figure of that spiritual rest which was to be enjoyed by the faithful under the Gospel; that, with the other types and shadows, it was abolished by the coming of Christ, so that there is now no peculiar sanctity of one day above another, and no *Divine* authority for the observance of a Sabbath. Yet, on account of its necessity and utility, its use has been retained, and the first day of the week set apart by *civil* and *ecclesiastical* authority.*

3. A very popular theory of the present day, and which differs little from the above, has found some warm and learned advocates in high places. It is thus expressed by Robertson, of Brighton: "I am certain that the Sabbath is not a perpetual obligation;

* Rev. J. W. Thomas on "The Lord's Day."

that it was Jewish, and that it passed away with Christianity, which made all days and places holy. Nevertheless, I am more and more sure, by experience, that the reason for the observance of the Sabbath lies deep in the everlasting necessities of human nature, and that, as long as man is man, the blessedness of keeping it, not as a day of rest only, but as a day of spiritual rest, will never be annulled.

4. A fourth theory, which is by far the most daring, is the offspring of German Rationalism, and has been advocated by Rev. Baden Powell, M.A., late Savilian Professor of Geometry in the University of Oxford: that the account of the six days' work with the seventh day's rest is not to be regarded as an historical narrative, but as a poetical fancy; that the precepts of the Decalogue were addressed only to the Jews, and were never designed for Christians; that under the Gospel one day is not more holy than another; and that the introduction of the Sabbath is a corruption of Christianity, inconsistent with the spiritual service which it requires.

These various theories are all designed to denude the Sabbath of its high authority as a positive and permanent institution of the living God. And if the day be not "sanctified" by God himself, it is vain to talk of "the everlasting necessities of human nature," or of "civil and ecclesiastical authority," or of "beneficial purposes;" it will soon cease to exert any influence on the hearts and consciences of men, and will be hailed merely as a day of recreation and amusement.

II. *How is it proved that the Sabbath is an original institution, coeval with the existence of man, and not a mere festival of the Jewish Church?*

1. BY THE PLAIN MEANING OF THE WORDS IN GEN. ii. 1-3. The statement that the Mosaic account of creation is merely a poetical fancy, "the adaptation of a poetical cosmogony already familiar to the Israelites," is perfectly gratuitous. The language is that of history—a plain and unvarnished record of facts. And what the historian relates about the seventh day, he relates as *done at the time*, with the very same simplicity with which he relates the associated transactions of creation as done at the time. There is nothing whatever indicative of its being a mere allusion to something that took place at a future age; and the idea could never have been entertained, except for the purpose of supporting a preconceived theory.

2. BY THE NATURE OF THE THING, WHICH IS ALL IN FAVOUR OF THE SIMPLEST INTERPRETATION. If, as is admitted, the Sabbath was a commemoration of God's work of creation, why should not the commemoration commence from the time the work to be commemorated was completed? Was it not so with all other commemorative institutions—such as the Passover, the Lord's Supper, etc.? and why not thus with the Sabbath?

3. BY THE DIVISION OF TIME INTO WEEKS. This division existed amongst the Patriarchs, as we learn from Gen. viii. 10, 12, and Gen. xxix. 27,* and among all nations, from the earliest periods to which history and tradition reach. However remote from each other in local situation, and however dissimilar in national manners, customs, and institutions, an extraordinary concurrence is discovered in the use of this arbitrary method of dividing time. "The division of the year into months is very old, and almost universal; but the period of seven days is by far the most permanent division of time. It was used by the Brahmins in India with the same denomination employed by us, and was alike found in the calendars of the Jews, Egyptians, Arabs, and Assyrians; it has survived the fall of empires, and has existed among all successive generations."† And not only have all the nations of the East made use of a week consisting of seven days, but the same custom prevailed amongst the ancient Romans, Gauls, Britons, Germans, the nations of the North, and of America. As far, in short, as any information is preserved to us of times and nations so remote, it authorises the conclusion that all mankind, as if by common consent, adopted from the first the hebdomadal division of time. Now, such a concurrence in the apprehensions and usages of mankind on the subject can never be resolved into mere accident. Nor are there, as in the other principal modes of computing time, astronomical phenomena to suggest the weekly notation. Neither can it arise from any arithmetical reason; for all nations compute other things by tens, not by sevens. We are therefore shut up to the conclusion that it originated in some positive appointment, or some tradition anterior to the dispersion of mankind, which cannot well be any other than the memory of the creation and primeval blessing of the seventh day. Noah and his family would bring the knowledge of it over the Flood, and from them it descended to their posterity, who, in their dispersions, carried it with them into all parts of the world. This is the key to the otherwise inexplicable enigma.

4. BY THE TRACES OF THE SABBATH, WHICH ARE FOUND TO HAVE EXISTED AMONG THE PAGAN NATIONS OF ANTIQUITY. We do not mean to assert that it was recognised by all, or properly observed by any. But that *any* remains of the Sabbatic institution, or traces of its existence, should be found in the midst of that moral and spiritual degeneracy, may justly be regarded as a striking testimony to the truth of that primitive religion, of which the sanctification of the seventh day was an important part. It

* "Fulfil her week." The week here mentioned is that of the marriage feast, and did not relate to the years which Jacob afterwards served.—Scott *in loco*. For confirmation of this view, see the account of the marriage of Samson, Judges xiv.

† Mrs. Somerville's "Connection of the Physical Sciences."

is evident that some of the traces, to which we refer, could not have been derived from the writings of Moses, but must have descended from a more ancient and primitive source. Thus Linus, who is mentioned by Eusebius as among the poets that flourished before the time of Moses, speaks of the seventh day as observed among pious persons; and Homer, who lived nearly a thousand years before the Christian era; Hesiod, whom some suppose to have been contemporary with Homer; Callimachus, who flourished about B.C. 230; and many others, make direct and pointed reference to the seventh as a sacred day. Now, we say of this, as of the former subject, such a concurrence of sentiment could not have been the effect of chance. These traditions all point to a common source, and can only be accounted for by the existence of some ancient law or custom in the family of Noah, recognising the sanctity of the seventh day before the separation and dispersion of mankind.*

5. BY THE VERY TERMS IN WHICH THE SABBATH IS INTRODUCED IN EXODUS XVI., where we find the first mention of the Sabbath in the history of Israel. Have we here anything of the style of legislative enactment, or the first introduction of an unknown ordinance? The people are commanded to gather a double portion of manna on the sixth day, but no reason is assigned (see verse 5); an omission that is perfectly unaccountable on the supposition of no Sabbatical rest having previously existed, but perfectly natural on the contrary supposition. And when the rulers of the people reported to Moses the fact of this double gathering, he alleges the sanctity of the Sabbath as accounting for the extraordinary supply, and as the reason for preparing a double portion on the sixth day (verses 22, 23); but there is no hint that the Sabbath was a new and unknown institution; he simply alludes to it as an existing institution, with which they were already acquainted. Had it been new, it would have been enjoined in a positive and particular manner, and the nature of it laid open and explained, otherwise the term would have conveyed no meaning.

6. BY THE TERMS IN WHICH THE REASON OF THE ORDINANCE IS ASSIGNED IN EXODUS XX. 11. "Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath-day, and *set it apart*;" that is the true import of the words 'hallowed it.' These words express a past time. It is not said, therefore the Lord *now* blesses the seventh day, and sets it apart, but therefore he *did* bless it, and set it apart in time past; and he now requires that you, his chosen people, should be ob-servant of that ancient institution."†

7. BY THE TERMS OF THE FOURTH COMMANDMENT (Exod. xx. 8, 11.) "*Remember* the Sabbath-day to sanctify it." The expression obviously implies the pre-existence of the institution, and their previous knowledge of it. And if it existed before their time,

* "The Lord's Day," Rev. J. W. Thomas, chap. vi.

† Bishop Horsley.

when was it instituted, unless at the period of creation? If not then, there is no formal institution of it anywhere to be found.

III. *What are the principal objections to this view of the primeval origin of the Sabbath?*

1. IT IS OBJECTED THAT IF THE SABBATH HAD BEEN INSTITUTED AT THE TIME OF THE CREATION, WE SHOULD HAVE HAD SOME NOTICE OF IT IN THE INSPIRED ACCOUNT OF THE ANTEDILUVIAN AND THE PATRIARCHAL AGES. But no conclusion can be drawn from a consideration so purely negative. Excepting Jacob's supplication at Bethel, scarcely a single allusion to *prayer* is to be found in all the Pentateuch, yet who can doubt that prayer formed part of the daily exercises of every saint? No particular instance of *circumcision* is recorded from the time that the Israelites settled in Canaan till the birth of Christ; but can we suppose that it was neglected? No express mention of the Sabbath occurs in the Books of Joshua, Judges, Ruth, the First and Second of Samuel, or the First of Kings; but no one questions that it was regularly observed all the time included in these histories. And why should we marvel if the mention of the Sabbath is omitted in the very brief and compendious history of the Patriarchs, even though it may have been devoutly observed by them all?

2. IT IS OBJECTED THAT THE EXPRESSION OF MOSES, "THE LORD HATH GIVEN YOU THE SABBATH" (Exod. xvi. 29), PROVES IT TO HAVE BEEN FIRST INSTITUTED IN THE WILDERNESS. But that this kind of phraseology proves nothing against the antiquity of any precept is most obvious. Our Lord said to the Jews, "Moses *gave* unto you circumcision;" but that this did not mean *original institution* he at once asserts, "not because it is of Moses, but of the fathers," etc. (John vii. 22.) And God is said to have *given* his statutes and judgments, as well as his Sabbaths, in the wilderness. (Ezek. xx. 10-12.) But is it to be inferred from this that there were no Divine laws "given" to men prior to the time of the exodus? Previously existing institutes and laws may be represented as "given" to a particular people, when, in a systematic and embodied form, they are delivered from heaven to that people.

3. IT IS OBJECTED THAT THE SABBATH IS SPOKEN OF AS "A SIGN" BETWEEN JEHOVAH AND THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL (Exod. xxxi. 13, 16, 17; Ezek. xx. 12, 19, 20), AND THEREFORE IT MUST HAVE BEEN PECULIAR TO THAT PEOPLE. But the same thing is true of the whole law, not the ceremonial code merely, but the moral (Deut. vi. 8); and yet no one will say that the precepts of the moral law were exclusively Jewish. The truth is, whatever formed a distinction between the Israelites and other nations was a "sign;" such a sign was the giving of the law and the possession of it, and all the institutions for the promotion of godliness—the Sabbath among the rest. But that this proves nothing

against the original institution is plain; for when the Sabbath is spoken of as a sign, the reason assigned for its observance is not at all a reason peculiarly Jewish, but simply the great original reason that God rested on the seventh day. (Exod. xxxi. 16, 17.)

Thus, none of the objections adduced can be made in the least degree to invalidate the testimony concerning the primeval origin of the Sabbath. He who questions this original may, with equal justice, question the truth of any of the acts recorded as having been done on the six preceding days.

IV. By what arguments do we prove that the Sabbath is of universal and perpetual obligation?

1. BY THE FACT ALREADY PROVED, THAT IT WAS INSTITUTED AT THE CREATION. Dr. Paley himself admits that "if the Divine command was actually delivered at the creation, it was addressed, no doubt, to the whole human species alike; and continues, unless repealed by some subsequent revelation, binding upon all who come to the knowledge of it." The inference is irresistible. And here we take our stand. The Sabbath was appointed at the creation of the world. It is therefore cut off and severed from the ceremonial law of the Jews. To no dispensation does it owe its existence, or authority, or right. It is from the beginning. It is the parent of dispensations. It is the root of religions. And the abrogation of the Jewish law no more releases the worshippers of God from a religious observance of it, than it cancels the injunction of filial piety, or the prohibition of theft and murder.

2. BY THE FACT THAT IT IS INCORPORATED IN THE MORAL LAW. The code of the Jewish law may be divided into three parts: the Levitical, or what related to the religious ceremonies of that dispensation; the civil, or what referred to national politics and jurisprudence; and the moral, or what related to moral duties. The two former were, in their nature, limited and temporary. But moral duties belonged to the Jews in common with all mankind—they were of universal and perpetual obligation. Now, the law of the Sabbath holds its place among the moral precepts. It is found in the Decalogue, the doctrine of which our Lord sums up in the moral duties of loving God and our neighbour. That law is our law as well as the law of the Jews. Our Lord upheld its authority, announcing it as God's testimony to the end of time (Matt. v. 17, 18;) and it is established and confirmed by the Gospel, as the rule of all inward and outward holiness. (Rom. iii. 31.) It belongs, therefore, to no one age or nation. Wherever there is a moral and responsible being, the moral law, of which the Decalogue is a clear and comprehensive summary, is binding on his conscience, and with it the day of consecrated rest. The position taken by some writers on this subject is, that, whilst all the other commandments belong to essential morality, and are of lasting obligation, the fourth is an exception. "It is not easy to

imagine a more incredible paradox than this :—that one commandment, of a merely national scope and temporary obligation, should have been associated, in a summary of moral duty, with nine others of perpetual obligation ; that it should have been placed in the very central niche of all the commandments, as on one side directly touching the honour and worship of God, and on the other the rights and well-being of man ; that equally with all the other commandments it should have been spoken by the voice of the Most High, and written by the Divine finger on one of the tables of stone ; and yet that this one ‘ word ’ alone of all the ten should be merely ceremonial and temporary, the rest being all of a moral nature and of permanent obligation. Surely, it must be felt as if no arguments could establish such a paradox as this.”*

3. BY THE OBVIOUS UNIVERSALITY OF THE DESIGN FOR WHICH THE SABBATH WAS INSTITUTED. It was given as a memorial of the creation. And is it not as much the duty of Christians to retain a devout remembrance of the power, and wisdom, and goodness of the great Creator, as it was of Adam, of the family of Abraham, or of the Jewish Church ? It was given as a season of rest ; and human nature stands as much in need of a weekly rest as it ever did. It was instituted as a day of blessing and sanctity. And from what people, or nation, or kindred would God withhold a boon so identified with their spiritual interests ? In fine, the indispensable necessity and important subserviency of this institution to the physical, moral, and religious welfare of mankind, prove that it could have no local or temporary design, but must be intended for every part of the universal family over which our Father in heaven presides.

4. BY THE WORDS OF OUR LORD, “ THE SABBATH WAS MADE FOR MAN,” for universal man, without any restriction to age or place. In this respect it is broadly distinguished from any institution of a merely ceremonial kind. Circumcision was for the seed of Abraham alone. The Levitical law was for the Hebrew nation alone. But the Sabbath is for man—for man, whether in innocence or guilt, of Jewish or of Gentile origin. No particular family or nation can monopolise its privileges. They belong to every one who was represented in the person of our Federal Head. Our Lord’s own practice was the best comment on his testimony. “ It is monstrous to pretend that he who ‘ was made under the law,’ and who came to ‘ fulfil the law,’ and to ‘ fulfil all righteousness,’ even legal righteousness, violated the law of the Sabbath. He observed it most strictly. He vindicated it in its true sense, as it had been from the beginning, and in its benignant purpose. At the same time he added to it a lustre of blessing by his deeds of mercy, and a spiritual glory by his Sabbath teachings, such as it had never known before. His miracles in no sense violated the rest of the Sabbath. He did no servile work in performing them ;

* Dr. J. Rigg, “ Sunday Magazine,” 1866.

they involved no toil or fatigue; they were not done for wages; they were not what Isaiah denounces as 'doing one's own work,' but they *were* refreshment. So far from being opposed to rest, they were in harmony with it in its deepest and richest sense. They sent healing and refreshment home to the secret springs of body and soul; they filled the spirit with a well-spring of gladness. They brightened the Sabbath with the heavenly glory; they made it indeed a rest and a refreshing. They beautified the Sabbath-day both to the healer and the healed."*

V. But are there not certain scriptures which plainly announce the entire abolition of the Sabbath under the Christian dispensation?

Two such scriptures have been paraded with much confidence: *Rom. xiv. 5, 6.*—In reference to this text, I observe: (1.) The word "alike" is not in the original, and ought not to be inserted, as it is calculated to convey an idea never intended by the Holy Spirit. (2.) The Apostle does not mention the word Sabbath in this passage, nor is there any evidence that he is making any allusion to it. But (3.) there were many *festive* days among the Jews; and the Apostle was probably referring to these as being no longer obligatory, for the whole Jewish ritual was done away by the fulness of the Gospel dispensation.† If, however, the allusion is to the Sabbath, the dispute concerning it, which the Apostle would silence, related, not to the permanent obligation of a day of rest, but to the seventh-day Sabbath of the Jews. "There were, doubtless, Jewish Christians out of Palestine, who, before the destruction of the Jewish commonwealth, learnt, in the spirit of St. Paul, to understand that the glory had passed from the Jewish seventh day, and had settled on the Christian first day; as, on the contrary, there were Gentile converts, and converted Jewish proselytes, who, out of respect for the Jewish law and the letter of the Old Testament, not only celebrated the Lord's day after a Christian sort, but strictly kept the Jewish Sabbath. In regard to all such, the great Apostle of liberty and of tolerance taught, in his large-hearted way, that 'he that regardeth the day, regardeth it to the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it.'"‡ Whichever view we adopt, the permanence of the Sabbatic institution is not in the least degree affected.

Col. ii. 16, 17.—From this text no less a man than Calvin drew the conclusion that the sanctification of the seventh day is no indispensable duty in the Christian Church. The truth, however, is, that in the apostolic age the first day of the week, though it was observed with great reverence, was not called the Sabbath-

* Dr. J. Rigg, "Sunday Magazine," 1866.

† Dr. W. Cooke.

‡ Dr. J. Rigg, "Sunday Magazine," 1866.

day, but the Lord's-day. It was so called that the separation of the Christian Church from the Jewish communion might be marked by the name as well as by the day of their weekly festival: and the name of the "Sabbath-days" was appropriated to the Saturdays and certain days in the Jewish Church which were likewise called Sabbaths in the law, because they were observed with no less sanctity. Of these, St. Paul in this passage speaks. The Judaising heretics were strenuous advocates for the observance of these Jewish festivals in the Christian Church: and St. Paul's admonition to the Colossians is, that they should not be disturbed by the censures of those who reproached them for neglecting these Jewish Sabbaths. The first day of the week was now their holy day; but the Sabbaths of the Jewish Church were abolished, nor was the Christian, in the observance of his own day of rest, to conduct himself by the rules of the old pharisaical superstition.*

VI. Have we sufficient authority for the transference of the Sabbath from the seventh to the first day of the week?

Let it be premised that the institution may remain intact, though the day be varied. The essence of Sabbath law is that one day in seven, the seventh day after six days of labour, should be appropriated to sacred uses. Accordingly, we find that, in the original institution, it is stated in general terms that God blessed and sanctified the seventh day, which must, undoubtedly, imply the sanctity of every seventh day, at whatever given time the cycle may commence. In the Decalogue it is also mentioned in the same indefinite manner with respect to time, nothing more being expressly required than to observe a day of sacred rest after every six days of toil; the seventh day is to be kept holy, but not a word is said as to what epoch the commencement of the series is to be referred. It is the seventh simply in reference to the six before mentioned. We mention this because some have asserted that if we are bound by the moral law, we must observe the seventh day, reckoning from Saturday as the Sabbath. For this notion we conceive there is no ground whatever. The day may be changed, while all that is essential to the Sabbatic institution is retained, provided the alteration be made on a just occasion, and by competent authority. Now observe,—

1. Our Saviour asserts his dominion over the Sabbath. "The Son of man is Lord," etc. (Mark ii. 28.) Claiming a rightful jurisdiction over it, he takes it under his protection, and speaks of it with the authority of a legislator who has a right to explain, defend, regulate, or change his own institution. And it seems not unlikely that he spake thus in anticipation of that change of the day which was afterwards to be effected by his own resurrection, and in commemoration of it.

2. If God appointed the first Sabbath to commemorate the

* Bishop Horsley's Sermons.

finishing of creation ; and if, when the law of the Sabbath was enjoined upon the Jews, an additional reason arising out of their own circumstances supervened upon the former (as see Deut. v. 12-15), is there not presumptive evidence that in accomplishing a work greater than that of creation or of the deliverance from Egyptian bondage, he would associate the commemoration of it with that seventh portion of man's time which he peculiarly claims for himself ?

3. In that work of redemption which was completed when our Lord arose from the dead, the character of God was displayed with a lustre which threw the glories of creation and of every other Divine operation into the shade. It was the grand manifestation of God's moral attributes, the grand source of man's eternal blessedness. If, therefore, this should be associated with the Sabbath as a memorial, it must have the chief place. It must take precedence even of creation, and be *first* in man's grateful and reverential commemoration. How, then, shall this priority be marked ? how shall the superior importance of redemption be recognised and testified in the celebration ? Why, the day shall be changed. Creation had the day before ; redemption shall have it now. As from the time of the first promise God was worshipped as Creator and Redeemer, so from the time of the fulfilment of the promise by the finished work of Christ, he shall be worshipped as Redeemer and Creator. Such an arrangement recommends itself to our minds as reasonable and right. It is no more than we might have been prepared to expect.

4. Accordingly, although our Lord had kept the seventh-day rest, according to the law, as soon as he had risen from the dead we lose sight of the seventh day as the interval of rest, and find substituted for it the first, upon which the Master was careful to put special honour. (1.) Having risen from the tomb on the first day of the week, he gave a marked preference to that day for regular and repeated visitations to his assembled disciples. (See Luke xxiv. 36 ; John xx. 19, 26.) And if he meant thereby to encourage them to separate themselves from the ceremonial worship of the Jews, to commemorate his resurrection by a weekly Sabbath, and also to assure them of his presence and blessing while they did so, his conduct was wise, gracious, and intelligible. (2.) It was on the first day of the week, the disciples being "with one accord in one place," that the Holy Spirit descended in the plentiful effusions of his grace, and opened the promised kingdom of heaven among men. (Acts ii. 1-4.) (3.) It was on the first day of the week that the Christian Church, under the direction of the Apostles, met together to unite in peaceful worship, to hear the word of God, to partake of the Lord's supper, and to lay up in store for the assistance of others. (Acts xx. 6, 7 ; 1 Cor. xvi. 2.) And it is fairly presumable that such a custom, so sanctioned, is equivalent to a Divine precept. (4.) It was on the first day of the week that St. John, being in the isle of Patmos,

was in the Spirit, and was favoured with a glorious manifestation of his Lord's presence—another appearance of Jesus on the first day of the week—immediately followed by the most sublime discoveries of things in heaven and in earth. (5.) And it was the first day of the week which received in that age, and has ever since retained, the distinctive appellation of "the Lord's day" (Rev. i. 10), a name implying all the sacredness of a Sabbath, with the still higher claim of a day consecrated to the memory of redemption. And its being so called by one who, at the time he wrote, was under the plenary inspiration of the Holy Ghost, is sufficient to prove that the day was chosen and hallowed by him whose royal name it bears.

Now, reviewing all these facts, we say that, though there is not on record any Divine command to change the Sabbath from the day on which it was held by the Jews, there is what is equivalent. There is the fact that our risen Lord again and again selected "the first day of the week" for his solemn visits to the disciples. There is the fact that the first day of the week was crowned by the descent of the Spirit and the formation of the Christian Church. There is the fact that the appointed rulers of the Church of Christ, whose business it was "to set all things in order" which pertained to its worship and moral government, sanctioned the change of the day, and the permanence of the institute. There is the fact that ere the last survivor of the Apostles died, the change had become universal, and the first day of the week was so solemnly consecrated to Christ as to receive, among Christians, the designation of "the Lord's day." And from all these facts the fair inference is, that the change of the day was made by Divine direction, that during those forty days in which the Saviour spake to his disciples of "the things pertaining to the kingdom of God," he announced his will that this institution of his church should be observed on the first day of the week, and thus be a permanent memorial at once of the creation and redemption of the world.*

VII. *What is the bearing of Heb. iv. 9, upon this question?*

Dr. Wardlaw and others regard it as direct inspired authority for the appointment of the first day of the week as the Sabbath of the Christian Church. Observe, the word *rest* in this verse is not the same in the original Greek with that which is so rendered throughout the chapter. It is (as see margin) "a Sabbathism, or the keeping of a Sabbath." The Apostle is writing to Hebrews; and reasonably might it be expected that amongst the topics to which he adverts connected with ancient observances and the changes made under the new economy, the Sabbath

* See on this subject "Watson's Institutes;" Dr. Wardlaw's "Discourses on the Sabbath;" M'Owan on "The Sabbath;" Rev. J. W. Thomas on "The Lord's Day."

should not be without notice. Here, as we believe, the notice is. Read the 9th and 10th verses, and you will observe the striking analogy between the reason assigned for the new Sabbath day, and that originally assigned for the old. Just suppose Christ to be meant by "he that is entered into his rest," and the analogy is perfect. As when God ceased from his work of creation, the day of his resting was hallowed as a Sabbathism, or a day of commemorative rest and religious celebration, so when Jesus finished *his* work, and rested from it in his resurrection and ascension, that blessed day was in all time coming to be the day of Sabbatical rest and celebration. According to the ordinary interpretation of this passage, the 10th verse neither assigns a reason nor adduces a proof of what is affirmed in the 9th. Whereas, on the view now given, the analogy between God ceasing from the work of creation, and the Son of God ceasing from the work of redemption, is beautiful and striking; and the reason thence arising for a new "Sabbatism to the people of God" is pertinent and satisfactory.*

VIII. *In what manner should the day be celebrated?*

1. IN SEEKING FOR SCRIPTURAL DIRECTIONS FOR THE OBSERVANCE OF THE SABBATH, WE MUST DISTINGUISH CAREFULLY BETWEEN THE COMMANDMENTS OF THE MORAL LAW, AND THOSE OF THE POLITICAL AND CEREMONIAL LAW OF THE JEWS. What was moral was perpetual, what was ceremonial was temporary, and is done away in Christ.

2. FROM THE TEACHINGS OF OUR LORD WE LEARN THAT WORKS OF PIETY, NECESSITY, AND MERCY ARE PERFECTLY COMPATIBLE WITH THE DUE OBSERVANCE OF THE DAY; *e.g.*, the labours of the priest in the temple (Matt. xii. 5); the leading of cattle from the stall to watering (Matt. xii. 11; Luke xiii. 15, xiv. 5); the circumcising of a man child, and, *a fortiori*, the healing of the sick and infirm among men (John vii. 22-24); the doing of good (Matt. xii. 12); and the satisfying of hunger. (Luke vi. 1-5.) These are obviously specimens, rather than a perfect catalogue, of permitted works.

3. BUT THE SABBATH IS A DAY OF SANCTITY. "God blessed it and sanctified it" (Gen. ii. 3); pronounced it holy, set it apart for himself; and dedicated it to holy purposes. THERE MUST, THEREFORE, BE THE LAYING ASIDE OF EVERYTHING THAT MAY IMPEDE THE SPIRITUAL OBSERVANCE: (1.) All secular business and toil (Exod. xx. 8-11), from which the servant-man is to abstain as well as the master-man, the maid as well as her mistress. (Deut. v. 14.) Except the works of necessity and mercy, there should be one unbroken and universal repose. (2.) Frivolities and amusements. (Isa. lviii. 13.) (3.) Conversation upon subjects that are unconnected with and opposed to spirit-

* Dr. Wardlaw's "Discourses on the Sabbath."

uality of thought. (Isa. lviii. 13.) AND THERE MUST BE THE OBSERVANCE OF WHATEVER WOULD PROMOTE THE HIGHEST INTERESTS OF OUR BEING : (1.) Attendance on the public worship of God (Heb. x. 25), which must be regular, punctual, and devout ; for it is a day of " holy convocation." (2.) Performance of the relative and private duties of religion. In this way " call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable."

CHAPTER XX.

THE CHRISTIAN SACRAMENTS.

I. *What is the meaning of the word sacrament ?*

The word is derived from *sacramentum*, a term which the ancient Romans used to signify (1) A deposit which was placed in the hands of a Pontifex, or superior priest, by every one who commenced a suit against another in a court of law, and was regarded as a pledge that he considered his cause to be good and valid ; (2) The oath taken by the Roman soldiers, binding them to be faithful to their commanders and the common wealth ; (3) A bond, or covenant, by which parties bound themselves to the performance of specified conditions ; and (4) By the Fathers of the Latin Church it was used as the translation of the Greek word, *μυστήριον*, *mysterion*, "mystery," both the words, in this connection, meaning a secret, and denoting the hidden or spiritual signification of an external type, symbol, or representation. It is therefore clear that the word *sacramentum* denotes something that is eminently and especially sacred. We have adopted the word from the early Latin Fathers as the most usual designation of "the Christian mysteries." And because of the peculiar sacredness which it denoted, and the military oath of fidelity which it expressed, we say that Christian sacraments are "*sacred appointments or ordinances, in which, while we receive blessings from God, we deliberately bind ourselves to him in covenant engagements.*"*

II. *What are the three leading views of the sacraments of the Church ?*

1. THAT OF THE CHURCH OF ROME, which makes the sacrament little better than a charm or incantation. According to this view, "the matter of the sacrament derives from the action of the priest, in pronouncing certain words, a Divine virtue, provided it be the intention of the priest to give to that matter such a Divine virtue, and this grace is conveyed to the soul of every

* Dr. Hannah's MS. Lectures.

person who receives it, except when opposed by the obstacle of a mortal sin.”*

2. THAT OF THE SOCINIAN HERESY, which runs to the opposite extreme, and regards the sacraments as mere ceremonies, sustaining an emblematic character. Their sole use, therefore, is to cherish pious sentiments in the individual who observes them, and to be the badges of a Christian profession before the world.

3. THAT OF THE GREAT BODY OF PROFESSING CHRISTIANS, who, following an expression of Paul (Rom. iv. 11), when he is speaking of circumcision, consider the sacraments as *signs and seals of the covenant of grace*.† As “*signs*,” they exhibit to the senses, under appropriate emblems, the same benefits as are exhibited under another form in the doctrines and promises of the Word of God, so that the eye may affect and instruct the heart. And they are not signs merely of the grace of God to us, but of our obligations to him—obligations, however, still flowing from the same grace. As “*seals*,” they are a Divine pledge or security that God will give unto the receiver all the grace of the covenant to which it refers, according to his obedience to its proposed terms. And they are our seals or pledges that we consent to the conditions of the covenant, and engage ourselves to the performance of them. The sacraments, therefore, are not charms, nor are they mere remembrancers; they are federal, or covenant acts, in which the persons who receive them with proper dispositions solemnly engage to fulfil their part of the covenant, and God confirms his promise to them in a sensible manner. “According to this account of the sacraments, *the express institution of God is essentially requisite to constitute their nature*. No rite which is not ordained by God can be conceived to be a seal of his promise, or the pledge of any event that depends upon his good pleasure; hence, that any rite may come up to our idea of a

* Watson’s “Institutes.”

† The following definitions express the views of three great representatives of Protestant Christianity:—“The sacraments are holy, visible signs and seals, appointed by God for this end, that by the use thereof he may the more fully declare and seal unto us the promise of the Gospel, viz., that he grants us freely the remission of sin and life eternal for the sake of that one sacrifice of Christ accomplished on the cross.”—Heidelberg Catechism.

“A sacrament is an holy ordinance instituted by Christ, wherein, by sensible signs, Christ and the benefits of the new covenant are represented, sealed and applied to believers.”—Westminster Shorter Catechism.

“A sacrament is an outward and visible sign of an inward spiritual grace given unto us, ordained by Christ as a means whereby we receive the same, and as a pledge to assure us thereof.”—Catechism of the Church of England.

sacrament, we require words of institution, and a promise by which the two are connected together.”*

III. *How many sacraments are there?*

The Romanists plead for seven. Peter Lombard, who lived about 1140 years after Christ, was the first who dared to elevate to the same rank of sacredness and importance as baptism and the Lord's supper five other ceremonies. But they are superstitious additions. “They have not any visible sign or ceremony ordained of God,” and they stand in no direct connection with any covenant engagement entered into by him with his creatures. *Confirmation* rests on no scriptural authority at all.† *Penance*, if it mean anything more than repentance, is equally unsanctioned by Scripture; and if it mean “repentance toward God,” it is no more a sacrament than faith. *Orders*, or the ordination of ministers, is an Apostolic command, but has in it no greater indication of a sacramental act than any other such command—say, the excommunication of obstinate sinners from the church. *Matrimony*, which probably was called a sacrament at first, from a misapprehension of Eph. v. 32, is no pledge and seal of the evangelical covenant, nor was it instituted for any such purpose. And *Extreme Unction*—the ceremony of anointing a dying person, when all hope of recovery is gone—is a mere human ordinance,‡ and has nothing in it of a sacramental character. Those who take the Scripture as their sole authoritative guide restrict the term sacrament to those signs and seals of the evangelical covenant which are expressly recognised as such in the sacred book. In consequence, they know of no other sacraments, or, in other words, of no other emblematic institutions, which are at the same time enjoined means of grace, than baptism and the Lord's supper. All persons who invest other ceremonies of religion with this sacramental character incur the guilt of adding to the words of God.

IV. *Are the sacraments of perpetual obligation in the Church?*

* Watson's “Dictionary,” art. *Sacrament*.

† There is no reason to suppose that the confirmation mentioned (Acts xv. 41), consisted in anything more than a faithful exposition of the Gospel, with encouragement to live in the belief and practice of it; for it is added (Acts xvi. 5), “So were the churches established in the faith.”

‡ The plea urged in defence of it is James v. 14, 15. “But the anointing there prescribed was for the sick, that they might recover. This, I think, referred to the administration of proper medical aid, while fervent prayer was also to be offered up for the recovery of the sick. Extreme unction is administered only when all hope of life is gone,” and in order to convey grace to the patient, of which there is not one word in the sacred text.

On this point orthodox Christians in general are at issue with the Quakers, who contend that the sacraments were only intended to remain during the infancy of the Christian Church. In opposition to this view, I remark:—(1.) The Christian sacraments were instituted by Christ as the Mediatorial Ruler and Judge of men, and that in the most express and unequivocal manner. (Matt. xxviii. 18-20, xxvi. 26-28; Luke xxii. 19.) (2.) These institutions were never withdrawn by our Lord, nor is any intimation given in Scripture that they were intended only for a time. (3.) The reasons for the original institution of the sacraments apply as forcibly now as at the first. Men are as unapt to apprehend spiritual truths, and therefore need those Divine symbols to help their conception. They are as prone to unbelief, and need these seals and pledges of their Father's love. But if the law of the sacraments answered no other purpose than that of testing our obedience, it would be worthy of God to give, and it would be our duty and interest to obey.*

V. *What is the nature of baptism?*

It is the initiatory rite into the New Testament Church, and is a sign and seal of that spiritual covenant to which aforetime circumcision had stood thus related. As a *sign*, it represents the poured out and cleansing influences of the Holy Ghost, which constitute the great promise of the Christian dispensation. And as a *seal*, it is on God's part a visible assurance of his faithfulness to his covenant stipulations; and on our part a pledge by which we make ourselves parties to the covenant, promising to fulfil its conditions, and claiming our right of inheritance in its truths, mercies, and hopes.

VI. *Who are the proper subjects of baptism?*

It is clear, from the whole of the New Testament, and is not disputed, that Christian baptism ought to be conferred on adults on their repentance and faith. But we contend that the children of baptised believers are also entitled to that sacrament. A summary of the arguments upon which the justification of infant baptism rests, shall be adduced.

1. THE COVENANT WHICH GOD MADE WITH ABRAHAM WAS THE COVENANT OF GRACE. Of this covenant we have an account in Gen. xvii. 1-14; and that it was not wholly, or even chiefly, a political and national covenant, but the general covenant of grace, is obvious from the character of the blessing it promised. First—"I will be a God to thee and to thy seed after thee"—a promise which includes the highest spiritual blessings, and that has ever been acknowledged and felt by God's people as the fulness of the blessing of the Gospel of Christ; in evidence of which, see Jer. xxxi. 33, xxxii. 38-40; Ezek. xxxiv. 23, 24, 30;

* Rev. T. Jackson's MS. Lectures.

31, xxxvi. 25-28, xxxvii. 27; Heb. viii. 10; 2 Cor. vi. 16-18. This promise is given to Abraham personally, and to his seed after him; *i.e.*, all the persons who should imitate his faith. (Gal. iii. 7, 9, 29.) Secondly—"Thou shalt be a father of many nations," which we are taught by St. Paul to interpret more with reference to his spiritual seed, the followers of that faith whereof cometh justification, than to his natural descendants. (Rom. iv. 16-17.) Thirdly—"I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger," the temporal promise being but a type of the higher promise of a heavenly inheritance. (Heb. xi. 9, 10, 13.) Fourthly—"In thee shall all nations be blessed;" and this blessing, we are expressly taught, was nothing less than the justification of all nations, that is, of all believers in all nations, by faith in Christ. (Gal. iii. 8, 9, 14.) Consider, then, the blessings here promised in the light of the texts referred to from St. Paul, and it must be evident that the covenant made with Abraham was the Gospel covenant. Indeed, it is expressly called "the Gospel." (Gal. iii. 8.)

2. THE COVENANT WHICH GOD MADE WITH ABRAHAM IS STILL IN FORCE, AND WILL BE TILL THE END OF TIME. This is plainly asserted in Gal. iii. 17, and Rom. iv. 16. It had no connection with "the law," or Sinaitic covenant; for it existed four hundred and thirty years before it, and was not at all disannulled or set aside by it; and believers in Christ, under the New Testament dispensation, are "heirs according to the promise." Heirs of what? Of the blessedness promised in the covenant to Abraham and his seed. Thus it was "an everlasting covenant," intended to continue while a believer is found upon the earth.

3. FROM THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE ABRAHAMIC COVENANT TO THE SUBVERSION OF THE JEWISH NATION, INFANTS, BY THE APPOINTMENT OF GOD, WERE ADMITTED TO A SHARE IN ITS BENEFITS, and therefore received circumcision as its sacramental sign and seal. (Gen. xvii. 10-13.)* Being thus

* The objection alleged against this view by our Antipædobaptist brethren is, that the covenant with Abraham included temporal blessings, such as the possession of the land of Canaan for an inheritance; and, therefore, circumcision on his children was the sign and seal of the covenant, merely in reference to the promise of temporal and national blessings. But this objection is overthrown by the fact that the same rite was enjoined and performed on those who had no share whatever in the temporal part of the Abrahamic covenant. Thus it was performed by Divine command on all the male servants of Abraham's household and their children; also on Ishmael and on Esau and their children, who diverged into distinct nations, and had, therefore, no share in the *temporal* promises of the covenant; yet it was said to be the sign of God's covenant to them, even as it was to Isaac and Jacob. But if a sign of God's covenant to them, who had no share in the *temporal* promises, of what part of the covenant was it a sign to them? Plainly, of the *spiritual* part—the promises of redemption, which had no restric-

circumcised, they were placed under covenant with God, and at its frequent renewal were openly acknowledged as under the bond, and entitled to the privileges of the covenant. (Deut. xxix. 10-13; Josh. viii. 35; 2 Chron. xx. 13.) They were made, and acknowledged to be, part of the church of God, the children of God by adoption, and graciously entitled to take God as their God.

4. THE CHILDREN OF CHRISTIAN BELIEVERS WERE NEVER CUT OFF FROM THIS PRIVILEGE WHEN THEIR FATHERS WERE RECEIVED INTO THE CHURCH, WHETHER THEY WERE JEWS OR GENTILES BY BIRTH. Explicit authority for relinquishing a practice is quite as indispensable as explicit authority for commencing one. And had there been a design to exclude children from the covenant of grace, it would without doubt have been denoted in the inauguration of the Gospel economy. But no change or limitation is intimated, either by special instruction or implication. On the contrary, the sign and seal of the covenant is authorised to be imparted with a universality commensurate with the commission to make disciples and to teach. (Matt. xxviii. 19.) We therefore conclude, on the surest grounds, that the children of God's people still stand in a covenant relation to him, and have a right to the initiatory ordinance of that covenant.

5. BAPTISM IS NOW, BY DIVINE AUTHORITY, SUBSTITUTED FOR CIRCUMCISION AS THE INITIATORY SIGN AND SEAL OF GOD'S COVENANT OF GRACE. That circumcision as a sacrament is abolished, St. Paul most strenuously maintained. And that baptism has taken the place of the Abrahamic rite is manifest: (1.) From the initiatory character of the two rites. In the words of the great commission (Matt. xxviii. 19, 20; Mark xvi. 15, 16), baptism was expressly made the initiatory rite by which believers of all nations were to be introduced into the church and covenant of grace, just as circumcision had formerly been. And if baptism do not sustain this character, the new covenant has no such initiatory rite or sacrament at all. (2.) It is manifest from the following scriptures:—*Col.* ii. 10, 12, where baptism is expressly called "the circumcision of Christ"—the phrase being put out of the reach of frivolous criticism by the exegetical addition "buried with him by baptism." And the only reason for which he can call baptism "the circumcision of Christ," or Christian circumcision, is that it has taken the place of the Abrahamic circumcision, and fulfils the same office of introducing believing men into God's covenant; and entitling them to the

tion or limitation to race or nation, but included Ishmael and Esau, as well as Isaac and Jacob, Gentile as well as Jew, bond as well as free; and the sign and seal of God's covenant on the children of such, was God's open and public attestation of their salvation and their title to eternal life, and, by consequence, of their real membership in his true spiritual Church.—Dr. W. Cooke.

enjoyment of spiritual blessings. *Gal.* iii. 27, 29, may be adduced to the same effect: "For as many of you as have been baptised into Christ have put on Christ. . . . And if ye be Christ's" (by being thus baptised and putting on Christ), "then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." Just as circumcision, believingly submitted to, was the means by which Jews and strangers became the spiritual seed of Abraham, and the heirs of spiritual and heavenly promises, so baptism, when believingly submitted to, is followed by the same blessed results. The conclusion is therefore inevitable, that baptism has precisely the same federal character as circumcision, and that it was instituted for the same ends, and in its place.

Now, as the infants of believers were, in former ages, taken together with their parents into covenant with God, by the sacramental seal of that covenant,—as the same covenant, under a fuller, clearer, and simpler discovery of it, forms now the basis of the Christian Church,—and as the privilege of bringing our infant offspring for admission into the covenant, and of having its token applied to them, has never been repealed, it necessarily follows that they have a right to Christian baptism; for baptism is now the only appointed token or ceremony of admission.* Accordingly, *there is abundant evidence that the children of converts to the faith of the Gospel were actually baptised along with their parents, in the time of the Apostles and the Apostolic churches.*† If the previous state of things were really inconsistent with the spiritual nature of the new dispensation, and

* Nor is this view of the subject weakened by repentance and faith being required as antecedent qualifications for baptism, in such passages as *Acts* ii. 38; *Mark* xvi. 16; for all such passages were addressed to *adults* from whom repentance and faith were required as conditions of salvation. A like profession of faith was required by Jewish proselytes prior to their circumcision. And not only a profession of faith, but actual faith was required from Abraham before he was circumcised; for before he was circumcised he believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness; and thus "he received the sign of circumcision," etc. (*Rom.* iv. 11.) Yet, notwithstanding this requirement of faith from him as an adult before he was circumcised, his progeny were required to be circumcised before they could either repent or believe. The truth is, that both baptism and circumcision presuppose a state of grace, which adults, being sinners, cannot have without repentance and faith. But infant children require no repentance, having committed no actual sin; and they require no faith, because, as their fallen state is involuntary, and brought upon them by another, so is their salvation involuntary and absolute, through the undertaking of Christ; and being already in a state of grace, and in God's covenant, baptism does but recognise in infants already the same state of grace as that into which adult believers are brought by repentance and faith.—*Dr. W. Cooke, "Infant Baptism Defended."*

† *Dr. Wardlaw on "Infant Baptism."*

were therefore to be discontinued, it seems not unreasonable to expect that the language on this point should be plain and decisive. Instead of this, we meet with language in perfect accordance with the previous state of things, precisely such as writers whose minds are habituated to it would naturally use, and such as readers in similar circumstances could not understand in any other way than one. In Mark x. 13, 16, our Lord explicitly declares young children (*βρεφῶν*, infants) to be subjects of his kingdom—partakers of its privileges and blessings; and am I to believe that he, at the same time, cuts off all such from any external sign of connection with the kingdom he was establishing? that he declares them partakers of the blessings of the promise, and yet forbids the outward token of such participation to be any longer administered to them? In Acts xvi. 15, 31, 33; 1 Cor. i. 16, we are taught that the Apostles baptised “households” or families; and a man’s house (*οἶκος*) most properly means his children, his offspring, his descendants, and is generally used to denote these even exclusively. (See Ruth iv. 12; 1 Kings xiv. 10-14, xvi. 3, xxi. 22; 1 Tim. iii. 4, etc.) It should be noticed, too, that the baptism of families is mentioned in a way that indicates its being no extraordinary occurrence, but a thing of course. We are warranted, therefore, to assume that such was the usual practice, unless it can be shown that these cases are not fair specimens of what was customary.

LET IT BE FURTHER CONSIDERED THAT WE HAVE NO RECORDED INSTANCE OF THE BAPTISM OF ANY PERSON GROWN TO MANHOOD THAT HAD BEEN BORN OF JEWISH CONVERTS, OR OF GENTILE PROSELYTES, TO THE FAITH OF CHRIST; * nor have we, in any of the Apostolic Epistles, the remotest allusion to the reception of such children, by baptism, into the Christian Church. And the simplest explanation, and one in every respect sufficient and satisfactory, of the total absence of everything of the sort, is the supposition that the children of the converts who composed the churches had been baptised with their parents, on these parents entering into the fellowship of the church.

NOR SHOULD IT BE OVERLOOKED THAT INFANT BAPTISM HAS, WITH VERY FEW EXCEPTIONS, BEEN PRACTISED IN THE CHURCH FROM THE APOSTOLIC TIMES. Tertullian, who lived about 200 years after Christ, was the first opponent of infant baptism of whom we have any account; and he opposed it, not as an innovation or departure from Apostolic practice, but as being inconsistent with certain superstitious notions of which he had become the advocate. His opposition proves that the baptism of infants was the general practice of the church in his time; for he never pretends to say that any part of the church had held or acted upon his opinion. Origen, who was con-

* Dr. Wardlaw on “Infant Baptism.”

temporary with Tertullian, expressly declares infant baptism to have been the constant usage of the church from the Apostles. Cyprian, who wrote about 150 years after the Apostles, gives fuller testimony to the fact. Nor is the slightest vestige to be found by which the practice can be traced to any origin on this side of the Apostolic age.*

Now, let all these things be taken together, and the conclusion will be forced upon us, that the children of converts to the faith of the Gospel are the legitimate subjects of christian baptism. To the very common demand of our Baptist brethren,—“Produce an express precept authorising the baptism of children;” we retort the demand,—“Produce an express precept repealing and setting aside the ancient injunction and practice which existed under the same covenant of promise with that which constitutes the ground of fellowship in the Christian Church.” And as to the objection that infants ought not to be baptised, because they cannot understand the nature and design of that sacrament, it applies with equal force against the circumcision of Abraham’s male descendants. If infants cannot understand the nature of the sacrament, the parents can, and ought in the use of it to dedicate their offspring to God, claiming for them the grace which that sacrament symbolises, and which God pledges himself by that sacrament to impart.

VII. *What are the uses of infant baptism?*

It is reasonable to expect that there should be some uses apparent of whatever the God of wisdom enjoins; and on this subject we feel no difficulty in meeting the inquiry.

I. INFANT BAPTISM IS A MEMORIAL OF FUNDAMENTAL TRUTHS. It emblematically reminds all who witness it of the inherent corruption of our nature, and of its consequent need of the washing of regeneration. And it brings before our minds the truth that little children are subjects of the spiritual kingdom of Jesus Christ, and partakers of its blessings. The second man, the Lord from heaven, has cancelled the great original offence, and has so far removed its existence and its effects, that “the free gift has come upon all men unto justification of life.” The whole case of the child has been thus met and provided for by these redemptionary arrangements. And baptism seems to signify and commemorate this glorious fact. It is the sign and the seal of the covenant of grace which secures and ratifies this provision. On this ground we have far better reasons for the baptism of an infant than we can possibly have for the baptism of an adult. Baptism is administered to an adult because he

* Dr. Wardlaw on “Infant Baptism.” For proof of the uninterrupted practice of infant baptism from Apostolic times, read Wall’s “History of Infant Baptism,” and his “Defence” of it against the “Reflections” of Dr. Gale.

professes to be a believer in Christ, and to have an interest in his redemption. But we can have no infallible certainty that such is really the case. In an infant there is no possibility of mistake. As certainly as it is a sharer in "the offence" and "condemnation" of "the first man," so certainly is it a sharer in "the free gift" and the glorious "righteousness" of "the second man." The irresponsibility of the child, so far from invalidating its baptism, is the very thing that invests it with certainty.*

2. INFANT BAPTISM IS A REMEMBRANCER OF IMPORTANT DUTIES, AND AN ENCOURAGEMENT TO THEIR PERFORMANCE.

(1.) *The ordinance is inseparably connected, and all Christian parents ought so to regard it, with the incumbent duty of bringing up their children for God.* For what does the very institution of infant consecration, whether by circumcision or by baptism, prove? It proves that we are not left to choose whether our children shall be religious or not. That they are to be so is a ruled case; since, in their earliest days, the Triune God claims their services, and in token thereof puts the sacred mark of his covenant upon them. When the child arrives at years of discretion, the very first thing in which it should be instructed is the duty and privilege connected with this covenant transaction. It should be taught the knowledge of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost, in whose undivided name it has been baptised; and every means should be taken to persuade the child to become intelligently and voluntarily a party to its own baptism.†

(2.) *The ordinance is inseparably connected with an obligation imposed upon the church of caring for those who are thus brought within its pale.* If baptism has really initiated them into the visible church, and if this relation to the church is not nominal, but real—not a thing mystical, airy, intangible; but a blessed verity—surely, they are entitled to the offices and assistances of the church, to official instruction and oversight, until they are fitted, by personal repentance and faith, for the privileges of its full and complete membership. The young ought thus to grow up within the precincts of the church, under her protecting and sheltering wing. It has been decided in heaven and upon earth—decided by their merciful God, by their parents, and by the church,—decided, so far as it can be without their own voluntary consent, that they are to be the consecrated servants of God. And a very serious obligation now devolves upon the church, as well as upon the parents, to give fulfilment and consummation to the design thus commenced in baptism, by bringing the children to a sincere and intelligent consecration of their service to the Lord.‡

* Wardlaw on "Infant Baptism;" and Rev. John Baker, "Wesleyan Methodist Magazine," 1859.

† Ibid.

‡ Ibid.

VIII. *What is the proper mode of Christian baptism?*

It has been successfully shown by a detail of learned criticism that the words βαπτω and βαπτισω may signify either sprinkling, pouring, or immersion. But even were it to be admitted that *immersion* is the primary import of the word *baptism*, yet every one at all versant in languages is aware that it is not by tracing back a word to its earliest etymology that its actual meaning is to be ascertained, in particular applications of it, at subsequent periods. Even in our own language we should run ourselves into innumerable mistakes and absurdities, by the adoption of such a test of the import of terms. The sole inquiry ought to be, what is the sense in which it is used by the Scripture writers? And it appears to me that there is enough to satisfy any candid man that *sprinkling* and *pouring* have the full approval of these writers in their use of the term.* Observe the following facts:—

1. BAPTISM WAS A FREQUENT PRACTICE AMONG THE JEWS, UNDER THE OLD TESTAMENT DISPENSATION; BUT IT WAS PERFORMED BY ABLUTION AND SPRINKLING, AND NOT BY IMMERSION. St. Paul speaks of “divers washings” (Greek, *divers baptisms*) as constituting part of the service of the tabernacle (Heb. ix. 10): *e.g.*, there was the washing of the priests, preparatory to their entrance on the duties of their office (Exod. xxix. 4); and whenever they went into the tabernacle. (Exod. xxx. 17-21.) And there were the washings of the people when they had contracted any ceremonial uncleanness (Numb. xix. 13, 17-20); and of leprous persons, when they obtained a cure. (Lev. xiv. 7-9.) Now, these were cases of purification, and in them *sprinkling* is prominently mentioned as one of the appointed forms (Numb. viii. 5-7, xix. 13, etc.); and yet the Apostle calls them “divers baptisms.” To say, therefore, that baptism is nothing but the immersion of the whole body is to contradict the language of the Holy Ghost.

That the Jews in the days of Christ attached the idea of purification to the term *baptism*, and that they performed the rite by sprinkling and ablution, appears from the fact that they applied the term to their manner of purifying various domestic utensils; “as the washing” (Greek, *baptism*) “of cups and pots, brazen vessels and tables.” (Mark vii. 4.) “The word βαπτισμος applied to all these, properly and strictly is not to be taken of dipping or plunging, but in respect of some things of washing only, and in respect of others of sprinkling only.”† “At any rate, whatever be supposed as to the ‘pots and cups,’ it surely requires the prejudice of system to fancy the immersion of the beds or couches,

* Wardlaw on “Infant Baptism.”

† Dr. Lightfoot, “Hebrew and Talmudical Exercitations,” Mark vii. 4.

which are meant by the word rendered improperly, in this verse, *tables*.”*

We are led to the same conclusion respecting the meaning of the word baptism by the accounts which the Evangelists give of the manner in which the Jews purified themselves, in order to their preservation from ceremonial pollution. In Luke xi. 37, 38, and Mark vii. 34, the word rendered “wash” is, in Greek, *baptised*. Now, what kind of washing or baptism was that which they practised? No one can suppose that before every meal, all the family, and every stranger who visited them, plunged their whole bodies under water. It consisted particularly in washing the hands: “Except they wash their hands oft, they eat not.” Margin, “except they wash diligently;” in the original, “with the fist;” Theophylact, “up to the elbow.” With this view the context agrees, Mark vii. 2, and Matt. xv. 1, 2. And let it not be said that the Jews immersed their hands, and that therefore the term baptism is applied; for the Oriental mode of washing the hands was by pouring water on the hands (see 2 Kings iii. 11); a practice which is continued to this day. Here, then, is conclusive proof that the term *baptism* is used in Scripture to denote sprinkling and ablution in general, and is not at all confined to immersion.†

2. ACCORDING TO THE SCRIPTURAL ACCOUNT, IT IS MUCH MORE PROBABLE THAT JOHN BAPTISED BY SPRINKLING OR POURING THAN BY IMMERSION. For (1.) His baptism gave no offence as containing anything new or strange, which we cannot conceive would have been the case had its mode of administration materially differed from that to which they had been accustomed. (2.) The number of the people who attended John’s baptism was such, that it appears impossible he should have immersed them all. It seems, from Matt. iii. 5, 6, that a large majority of the adult population came to be baptised. Now, John’s ministry did not continue much longer than one year, and the greater part of his baptisms were performed during the first half of this period; for from that time Jesus began to preach and baptise, and John’s influence declined. (John iv. 1, 2, iii. 26, 30, v. 35.) Then we must recollect that John was a preacher (John i. 23; Matt. iii. 1), and much of his time would be occupied in addressing the successive companies who came to him. “Now, it may be safely asserted that it is impossible for one man—for the people were all baptised by *him*—to immerse in the waters of a river so many as 200 persons in one day, or 1000 in a week, or 30,000 in a year. If, instead of being engaged in teaching the people, he had stood in the water for nine or ten hours of every day, he could not have immersed during the few months of his ministry more than a few thousand persons.

* Dr. Wardlaw on “Infant Baptism.”

† Rev. T. Jackson’s MS. Lectures.

Josephus estimates the number of persons present in Jerusalem at the passover at 2,700,000. If we take only one-third, 900,000, as being inhabitants of Judea, Jerusalem, and the vicinity of Jordan, and if we suppose that one-third of these might be designated the whole population, we shall have the number of 300,000 who were baptised by John. Such a work could not have been accomplished in less than ten or twelve years, supposing him to have been engaged every day in this laborious occupation.* (3.) The difficulties and inconvenience which would have attended the immersion of so many people render it absolutely incredible that they were baptised in this manner. If they were baptised naked, John's baptism was one of the greatest outrages upon public decency; if with their clothes on, a change of raiment was necessary; and where could all these people retire, in that open and uncultivated country, for that change? "It seems, therefore, that they stood in ranks on the edge of the river, and that John, passing along before them, cast water on their heads or faces, by which means he might baptise many thousands in a day; and this way most naturally signified Christ's baptising them "with the Holy Ghost and with fire."† (4.) The texts of Scripture which are adduced to prove that John immersed contain no such proof. John baptised "IN Jordan" (Matt. iii. 6; Mark i. 5); but the Greek word *ἐν* might with equal propriety be rendered "AT the Jordan," for it is so rendered more than a hundred times in the New Testament. But if we take the text as it stands in our version, immersion does not necessarily follow; for "had John stood in the water, however shallow, or had he stood in the bed of the river at the water's edge, and poured the water on those who came to him, the historian not only might have used the same expression with propriety, but could hardly have used another."‡ But it is said that John iii. 23 certainly proves immersion. I answer that the words rendered "much water" are literally "many waters," or streams of water, which, considering the crowds who came to John, was of great importance even for drink and cleanliness. On all these grounds I maintain that that there is no proof that John baptised by immersion, but there is strong presumptive evidence that he administered the ordinance by sprinkling or pouring.§

3. THE EVIDENCE OF THE NEW TESTAMENT IS IN FAVOUR OF THE ADMINISTRATION OF CHRISTIAN BAPTISM BY SPRINKLING OR EFFUSION, AND NOT BY IMMERSION. (1.) On the day of Pentecost it seems that about three thousand were baptised in Jerusalem. (Acts ii. 40.) Now, a considerable part of the

* Godwin's "Christian Baptism."

† Wesley's Note on Matt. iii. 6.

‡ Dr. Wardlaw on "Infant Baptism."

§ Rev. T. Jackson's MS. Lectures.

day was occupied in preaching ; and is it likely that, at the close of the day, so great a number could have been provided with change of raiment, and then separately immersed, even if all the male disciples had been employed in the service ? Besides, where could the service have taken place ? There was no river in Jerusalem or its neighbourhood, and it is not likely that they would be allowed to pollute the public tanks or reservoirs. (2.) In the case of the Ethiopian (Acts viii. 38, 39), perhaps a nice criticism might show that the Greek means no more than going "*to the water*," and coming "*from the water*." But, taking the passage as in our authorised version, "it does not follow that he was baptised by immersion. The text neither affirms nor intimates anything concerning it."* Indeed, nothing can be clearer than this, that the act of baptising is something quite distinct from either the *going down* into the water, or the *coming up* out of it. Read the words again, and you will see that if the two phrases had any reference at all to the *mode* of baptism, it would follow that Philip was immersed under the water, and emerged out of it, as well as the eunuch, which no one supposes.† (3.) The most natural interpretation of the narrative of the baptism of Saul (Acts ix. 17-19, xxii. 16), and that of Cornelius and his family (Acts x. 46-48), is that it took place in the house, or even in the room where they were. (4.) Lydia and her family were most probably baptised in the *proseucha*, where she received the truth. The place was by a river, but no intimation is given that any of them were immersed in its water, or taken within its banks. (5.) The improbability that the jailor and his family were immersed is very striking. (Acts xvi. 32.) It was night ; there was no time to travel to any distant place in quest of a river ; nor were Paul and Silas, lacerated by the scourge, in a fit state to descend into one ; nor is it likely that the family, in their circumstances, and charged with the care of the prison, would have gone abroad at that unreasonable hour ; still less likely that they would have been plunged into a reservoir in the house, where water was kept for culinary purposes. Upon all these cases observe two facts : first, the rite was of easy observance, inas-much as we never find any delay in the administration of it, whatever the time, the place, or the subjects ; secondly, in no case do we find the people removing to any particular place for baptism. I conclude that it could not have been administered by immersion, which in some places was impossible, at some seasons would be dangerous, and to some people destructive of life and health.‡

4. SPRINKLING OR EFFUSION IS MORE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE GENIUS AND SPIRIT OF CHRISTIANITY THAN IM-

* Wesley's Note *in loco*.

† Wardlaw on "Infant Baptism."

‡ Rev. T. Jackson's MS. Sermons.

IMMERSION. For (1.) it most correctly represents the spiritual influence which baptism symbolises. Though that influence is called baptism (Matt. iii. 11), it is never spoken of as an immersion, but often as a sprinkling or pouring. (Isa. xlv. 3; Ezek. xxxvi. 25; Acts ii. 32, 33, x. 45.) (2.) It accords the most fully with the universal character of Christianity. Some nations inhabit regions of ice and snow, where immersion, during the greater part of the year, is impracticable, especially in the case of delicate persons. Will it be said, let such persons defer their baptism till summer? This is not in the record. With the Apostles, no ordinance of Christ is impracticable at any time. Besides, life is short; and are men who desire to comply with the Lord's will to die in the neglect of a sacrament, by which their right to salvation is recognised, because it cannot be administered with safety? Such consequences are not connected with the practice of sprinkling. (3.) It is, beyond comparison, the best adapted to that calm and collected state of mind in which an adult person should receive this holy sacrament. It is a covenanting ordinance; and when an adult person receives it, there should be a believing apprehension of Christ and of salvation, with an entire surrender to God. In order to this, the man should be in full possession of his mental faculties, and free from distraction; but the act of immersion, especially in some cases, produces excitement, agitation, and tremor, which are totally destructive of mental recollection. The administration of the rite by sprinkling obviates this inconvenience. And the mode which conduces most to edification is in fullest accordance with the spirit of the Gospel, and therefore is to be preferred. (4.) There is nothing in any Scripture allusion that leads to a contrary result. Two texts are often adduced as containing an undoubted allusion to immersion. (Rom. vi. 3, 4; Col. ii. 11, 12.)* "And the mind may easily habituate itself to the idea of likeness between being let down under *earth* and raised out of it, and being let down under *water* and raised out of it. But where is the likeness between the latter of these and the carrying of a body by a lateral door into a cavern hewn out of a rock, and that body reviving, and coming forth by the same door? which were the real circumstances of the burial and resurrection of the

* Mr. Wesley, in his notes on these texts, says that "the ancient manner of baptising by immersion is manifestly alluded to here." Yet in other places he denies that there is any proof that either John or the Apostles ever immersed; and in a treatise on baptism which he abridged from a volume that his father published, he declares that nothing can be inferred in favour of immersion from these passages, and adds, "there is no clear proof of dipping in Scripture." (See Wesley's "Works," vol. x., p. 189). The fact is, this concession in favour of immersion is an inadvertency, directly opposite to his opinions recorded in other places.—Rev. T. Jackson.

Saviour. I confess this resemblance has always appeared to me but a far-fetched fancy.”* What, then, does St. Paul mean by “buried with him in baptism”? He intimates that there is in all believers a mystical conformity to Christ. He died for sin; they die *to* sin. (1 Pet. iv. 1, 2; Rom. vi. 8, 11.) He died by crucifixion; they have crucified the flesh, and are crucified to the world. (Gal. v. 24, vi. 14.) He was buried, concealed from the view of man, and removed from all intercourse with the world; they are buried with him in the sense of being separated from the spirit and example of the world and their former corrupt practices. He was raised; they are risen with him, risen from the death of sin, having, as it were, left their former selves and character in the grave. (Col. iii. 1.) He is alive for evermore; they live a life, spiritual, divine, heavenly. (Gal. ii. 20; Col. iii. 3.) He is seated at the right hand of God in heavenly places, and they are blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ. (Eph. i. 3, 20.) Now, when baptism is rightly received, it is the entrance upon the Christian life in which all this mystical conformity to Christ is realised; for under the term baptism he comprehends all that baptism signifies, just as Peter does (1 Pet. iii. 21), where he shows that it is not the outward washing that saves us, but such a change in our state and character as produces “the answer of a good conscience towards God.”

This is an outline of the evidence in favour of baptism by sprinkling or pouring: and when Christian baptism is administered thus, it answers to the national baptism which the Israelites received, administered by God himself. (1 Cor. x. 1, 2.) They were not immersed in the cloud, for it was above them; nor in the sea, for the ground was dry under their feet: baptism, therefore, in their case was administered by sprinkling. And when men pass from the Egypt of their fallen state, they should be baptised in the same ancient and significant manner.†

We sum up the whole of what has now been advanced in the words of Dr. W. Cooke:—

1. That any one of the three modes of administering the rite of baptism is lawful.
2. That sprinkling or pouring has the sanction of Scriptural authority, as a mode under which the Holy Spirit represents his holy influences on the soul: “I will sprinkle clean water upon you.”
3. That this mode of applying water baptism answers the instructive purposes for which the ordinance was appointed.
4. That this mode is adapted to all ages, all countries, and all circumstances.
5. That probably this was the most frequent mode in which

* Dr. Wardlaw on “Infant Baptism.”

† Rev. T. Jackson’s MS Lectures.

baptism was administered in Apostolic times, especially when the great multitudes were baptised by John, by the Saviour, and by the Apostles on the day of Pentecost.

6. That, seeing several modes of baptism are lawful, the choice may be left to expediency or propriety, and that, therefore, all angry controversy on such a question should for ever cease.*

IX. *What is the nature and design of the Lord's Supper?*

"It is a commemorative sign and seal of the covenant of our redemption."† In other words, "it is both a sign and a seal of the grace of the new covenant, which is offered to us, and confirmed to us, in every celebration; and when we communicate in faith, we become anew parties to this covenant, and its grace stands afresh confirmed to us."‡ That the Lord's Supper is a covenant or sacramental rite may be deduced from the words, "this is my body; this is my blood"—the elements being a *sign* or representation of the sacrificial offering of the body and blood of Christ as the price of our redemption; and from the words, "this is my blood of the new testament," or covenant, "which is shed for many," etc. The covenant itself was ratified by the blood of Christ, which is therefore called "the blood of the everlasting covenant;" and "the cup" is a visible *sign* that this covenant exists in full undiminished force from age to age, and a visible *pledge* that the God of the covenant will give to the receiver all the promised grace of the covenant on the appointed terms. And the believing communicant, as he takes the elements into his hands, gives a public and visible indication that he consents to become a party to the covenant, and binds himself to fulfil all its conditions.

X. *What is the relation of the Lord's Supper to the Jewish Passover?*

It was instituted in place of the Passover, as baptism was substituted for circumcision; and there are many resembling circumstances between the two ordinances: 1. The Passover was of Divine appointment, so was the Eucharist. 2. The Passover was a sacrament, so is the Eucharist. 3. The Passover was a memorial of a great deliverance from temporal bondage; the Eucharist is a memorial of a greater deliverance from spiritual bondage. 4. The Passover prefigured the death of Christ *before* it was accomplished; the Eucharist represents, or figures out, that death now *past*. 5. The Passover was a kind of federal rite between God and man; so is the Eucharist, as it points out the

* Infant Baptism Defended.

On this subject the reader would peruse with great advantage, in addition to the works above named, Hibbard on "Christian Baptism."

† Watson's "Institutes."

‡ Watson's "Conversations for the Young."

blood of the sacrifice offered for the ratification of the covenant between God and man. 6. As no person could partake of the paschal lamb before he was circumcised (Exod. xii. 43-48); so no person should come to the Eucharist till he has been baptised. 7. As the Jews were obliged to come to the Passover free from all defilement; so, in the eating of this bread, is the Christian to purge out the leaven of malice and wickedness. (1 Cor. xi. 27-29.) 8. As the Passover was to continue as long as the Jewish law was in force, so is the Eucharist to continue till Christ shall come. The many resembling circumstances abundantly show that this holy Eucharist was in great measure copied from the paschal feast, and was intended to supply its place, only heightening the design, and improving the application.*

XI. What is the meaning of the different epithets that are given to this sacred ordinance?

1. The most ancient, and perhaps the most universal, name by which the rite has been distinguished is that of the *Eucharist*, from a Greek verb, which signifies "to give thanks;" because it is a thankful remembrance of Christ's death. It is called the *Communion*, from 1 Cor. x. 16, because the faithful partakers of it have therein communion with the Lord Jesus, being made partakers of the benefits of his death, and communion with each other at this family feast of love. It is called the *Sacrament* in reference to the *sacramentum*, or military oath, because in it the disciples take the vows of the Lord upon them, and ratify the covenant engagements which they made at their baptism. It is called the *Lord's Supper*; but as our Lord instituted this sacred rite *after* supper, it seems to be improper to give it this name. In very early times the Christians, in imitation of our Lord, held a supper before the Eucharist, and thus they became confounded. By the Greek Fathers of the church it is called a *mystery*, because it represented spiritual things in emblem or sign.

XII. Is this institution to be a standing rite in the church?

It is; as we learn from 1 Cor. xi. 23-26, a passage evidently designed to teach the perpetuity of this ordinance in the visible church—its continuance as long as there should be a church upon earth in which to show it forth. "Show the Lord's death till he come"—till the affecting be turned into a joyous scene—till the grace ye draw from his first shall merge into the glory ye receive at his second coming—till he whose table ye bedew with tears, in "fellowship with his sufferings and conformity to his death," shall interrupt your communion, and break in upon you with his glory.†

* Dr. A. Clarke's "Discourse on the Eucharist."

† Dr. Brown's "Christ Second Coming."

XIII. *What are the leading errors that have been propagated concerning this holy institution ?*

1. THAT OF THE ROMISH CHURCH, which is as follows : " In the Lord's supper Christ is really, truly, and substantially contained; God-man, body and blood, bones and nerves, under the appearance of bread and wine." They attempt to prove it thus : " Our Lord himself says, ' This is my body.' Therefore, upon consecration, there is a conversion of the whole substance of the bread into the whole substance of Christ's body, and of the whole substance of the wine into the substance of his blood ; and this we term TRANSUBSTANTIATION. Yet we must not suppose that Christ is broken, when the host or consecrated bread is broken ; because there is whole and entire Christ under the species of every particle of bread, and under the species of every drop of wine." This absurd dogma, for denying which rivers of righteous blood have been shed by state persecutions and by religious wars, springs entirely from overlooking the simple fact that there is scarcely a more common form of speech, either in Scripture or in any language on the earth, than "*this is*" for this *represents* or *signifies*. We say of the busts in a museum, " This is Socrates ;" " that is Homer," etc. ; while everybody knows that the busts are only representations of those persons in sculpture. And instances of the same thing are found in every part of Scripture. (See Gen. xli. 26, 27 ; Dan. vii. 24 ; 1 Cor. x. 4 ; Matt. xiii. 38, 39 ; Luke viii. 9 ; Gal. iv. 24 ; Rev. i. 20.) And after such unequivocal testimony from the sacred writings, can any person doubt that " this is my body " has any other meaning than " this represents my body " ?

2. THAT OF THE LUTHERAN CHURCH. " Luther denied that the elements were changed after consecration, and therefore taught that the bread and wine indeed remain, but that together with them there is present the substance of the body of Christ, which is literally received by communicants. As in red-hot iron it may be said two distinct substances, iron and fire, are united, so is the body of Christ joined with the bread."* This theory was designated by the term CONSUBSTANTIATION, and was adopted probably in deference to what was conceived to be the literal meaning of the words of Christ when the Lord's supper was instituted. But as the Consubstantialists neither regard the consecrated elements as a sacrifice, nor attribute to them any physical virtue, nor render them objects of adoration, their errors may be considered rather of a speculative than of a practical nature.†

3. THAT OF SOCINUS AND HIS FOLLOWERS. They think that this solemn rite is not essentially distinct from any other ceremony. It consists of a symbolical action in which something external and material is employed to represent what is spiritual and in-

* Watson's " Dictionary." .

† Watson's " Institutes."

visible, and may therefore be of use in reviving the remembrance of past events, and in cherishing pious sentiments ; but that its effect is purely moral, and that it contributes to the improvement of the individual in the same manner with reading the Scriptures and many other exercises of religion. This doctrine, like all other parts of the Socinian system, represents religion in the simple view of being a lesson of righteousness, and loses sight of that character of the Gospel which is meant to be implied in calling it a covenant of grace.*

XIV. Who are the persons that may scripturally be partakers of this solemn ordinance ?

1. Every believer in the Lord Jesus, who is saved from his sins, has a *right* to come. Such are of the family of God ; and this bread belongs to the children. 2. Every genuine penitent is invited to come, and consequently has a right, because he needs the atoning blood, which by this ordinance is "evidently set forth" before the eye of his faith. But all open unbelievers, who reject the doctrine of the atonement made by the vicarious death of Christ ; and all profane and careless persons, who refuse salvation according to the terms of the Gospel ; and all uncharitable persons, whose bosoms are the seat of bitterness, wrath, anger, or malice, are excluded by the very nature of the ordinance from participating in it, and ought to be repelled by ministers, whenever, from compliance with custom or other motives, they would approach it.

* Watson's " Dictionary," art. *Sacrament*.

INDEX.

ADAM, placed under a covenant, 115; subjected to a test, 116; turpitude of the sin of, 117; penalty to which he was subjected, 118; the federal head of man, 120.

ADOPTION defined, 185; how it differs from pardon and justification, 185; the special privileges connected with, 185; assurance of, attainable, 185; the witness of, 186.

ANGEL-JEHOVAH, Christ the, 79.

ATOMIC THEORY explained, 107.

ATONEMENT, 131; meaning of the word, 136; satisfaction synonymous with, 135; the Socinian view of, 131; Dr. John Taylor's view of, 132; Maurice's view of, 132; Robertson's view of, 132; necessity of, 133; how made by the death of Christ, 134; errors concerning the doctrine of, 136; how proved from Scripture, 138; taught by Christ himself, 140; proved from the Jewish sacrifices, 141; collateral arguments in support of, 113; sufficiency of, attested, 115; Socinian objections to the doctrine of, 143; extent of, 152; extent of, Calvinistic view of, 152; extent of, Wesleyan view of, 152; proofs of the universality of, 153; texts supposed to limit the extent of, 155; objections to the universality of, 156.

BAPTISM, nature of, 287; infants proper subjects of, 287; substituted for circumcision, 289; uses of infant, 292; proper mode of, 294.

CALLING, the Scriptural view of, 167; effectual, 167.

CHRIST, pre-existence of, 78; the Angel-Jehovah of the Old Testament, 79; Divine titles given to, 83; Divine attributes ascribed to, 84; Divine works performed by, 84; Divine worship paid to, 85; miscellaneous proofs of the Deity of, 86; objections against the Deity of, answered, 88; writers on the Deity of, 91.

Divine Sonship of, 92; affirmed by Christ, 94; avowed by Nathanael, 93; avowed by the disciples, 93; avowed by Peter, 93; proved by the resurrection, 94; proved by St. John's writings, 95; proved by the Epistle to the Hebrews, 95; metaphysical objection to, answered, 98; importance of the doctrine of, 99.

Death of, in what light to be regarded, 131, 134: not a literal payment of debt, 136; not an equivalent for man's punishment, 137; does not necessarily secure the salvation of all the subjects of,

- 137; proofs of its vicarious character, 138; a propitiation, 138; a ransom, 138; a substitute, 139; the means of reconciliation, 139.
- CHRIST, imputation of the personal righteousness of, 175; second coming of, 225; the Judge of the world, 258.
- CHRISTIANITY, Evidences of, 32; benefits conferred by, 36; early propagation of, 34.
- CONSUBSTANTIATION, 302.
- CREATE, meaning of the word, 105.
- CREATION OF THE WORLD, 104.
- DAY, length of, in Gen. i., 109.
- DEATH, what is included in the penalty of, 118.
- DEPRAVITY OF MAN, hereditary, 126, 128; universal, 127; total, 128.
- DEVELOPMENT THEORY explained, 107.
- EARTH, antiquity of the, 104; state of the, before the Adamic creation, 108; does Scripture declare it immovable, 111.
- ELECTION, Calvinistic view of, 157; evils of the, 161; Wesleyan view of, 158.
- FAITH, justifying, defined, 181; imputed for righteousness, 181; the gift of God, 182.
- FINAL PERSEVERANCE, Calvinistic view of, 220; Wesleyan view of, 220; proofs that it is conditional, 220; objections to the Wesleyan view of, answered, 221.
- FIRMAMENT, does Scripture speak of it as a solid vault, 111.
- FUTURE PUNISHMENT, 263; annihilation theory of, 263; restoration theory, 263, and texts alleged in support of it, 266; proofs of the eternity of, 264; objections to the eternity of, answered, 266; various degrees of, 270.
- GENESIS, the relation of the first and second chapters of, 104.
- GOD, the term defined, 1; the proper notion of, 1; names given to in Scripture, 2; the existence of, necessary and independent, 2; causative, of all things beside himself, 3; an infinite Being, 4; omnipresent, 4; a spirit, 4; the only God, 4; origin of the belief in, 4. Existence of proved, 5; the historical argument for the, 5; the moral argument for the, 6; the *à priori* argument for the, 7; the *à posteriori* argument for the, 8; moral image of in man, 115.
- GUILT, meaning of the word, 124; hereditary, of man, 124.
- INSPIRATION defined, 41; differs from revelation, 39; theories concerning, 39; mechanical, 39; dynamical, 40; claimed by the Scriptures, 43; not disclaimed by St. Paul, 45; proved by miracles, 47; proved by prophecy, 54; proved from internal evidence, 57; extends to all the contents of Scripture, 60; plenary explained, 60. Verbal explained, 61; claimed by the Scriptures, 62; how reconciled with differences of style, 64; how reconciled with minor details, 65; how reconciled with discrepancies in citations from the Old Testament, 66; how reconciled with alleged inaccuracies on scientific subjects, 67; how reconciled with alleged discordance in historical statements, 68.

- JEW**s, future conversion of, 233.
- JUDGMENT**, the general, certainty of, 237; design of, 237; will include all the race, 258; Christ the judge at, 258; saints shall be assessors with Christ at, 259; will the sins of the saints be revealed at, 260; the results of, 261; the attendant circumstances of, 259; principles on which it will be conducted, 260.
- JUSTIFICATION**, legal, 173; evangelical, 173; the same blessing as pardon, 173; how it differs from mere pardon, 173; Popish view, 174; Antinomian view of, 175; Calvinistic view of, 175; not the imputation of Christ's righteousness, 175; not by the law, 178; faith the instrument of, 181.
- LIGHT**, produced before the sun, explained, 110.
- LORD'S SUPPER**, nature and design of, 300; relation of to the Passover, 300; different names given to, 301; a standing rite of the church, 301; Romish view of, 302; Lutheran view of, 302; the proper partakers of, 303.
- MAN**, the race of, had one common origin, 112; original state and fall of, 115; moral image of God in, 115; placed under a covenant, 115; subjected to a test in Paradise, 116; hereditary guilt of, 124; hereditary depravity of, 126, 128; depravity of, universal, 127; depravity of, total, 128; virtues of, in his depraved state, 128.
- MATTER**, theory of the eternity of, 107.
- MILLENNIUM**, 234.
- MIRACLES** defined, 47; appealed to in the Bible, 48; objections to, 49; Hume's objections to, 49; philosophical objection to, 50; have they been wrought in defence of error, 51; of Egyptian magicians, 51; of false prophets, 51; of witch of Endor, 52; of the devil, 52; of the Bible, peculiarities of, 52.
- MOHAMMEDANISM**, early success of, 35; future overthrow of, 231.
- NEBULAR HYPOTHESIS OF LA PLACE**, 107.
- NEW HEAVENS AND THE NEW EARTH**, 226, 244.
- ORIGINAL SIN** defined, 122; writers on, 130.
- PERFECTION**, Christian, 201; how it differs from that of God, angels, and Adam, 201; defined, 202; what limits we assign to, 205; not attained in justification, 206; attained both gradually and instantaneously, 207; proofs that it is attainable, 208; may be looked for before death, 209; how is the attainment of verified, 210; objections alleged against the doctrine of, 211; is it capable of being transmitted, 217; of the Mystics, 217; of Pelagianism, 218; of the Oberlin school, 218; works on, 219.
- PERSON**, the term defined, 70.
- POPERY**, the future overthrow of, 230.
- PREDESTINATION**, two leading schemes of, 157.
- PROPHECY** defined, 53; how does it compare with miracles, 54; how does it verify a religious teacher, 54; what is necessary to the validity of, 54; how infidels evade the argument from, 55; why clothed in obscure terms, 56; is in the power of God only, 57.

- REGENERATION** defined, 193; not identical with Christian perfection, 206; Scriptural evidences of, 104; necessity, 105; by what agency produced, 196; instrument of, 196; relation of the Spirit's witness to, 197; how distinguished from repentance, justification and Christian perfection, 197, 206; baptismal, 198.
- REPENTANCE** defined, 169; does not of itself secure forgiveness, 171; precedes the exercise of faith, 171; union of divine and human agency in, 172.
- REPROBATION**, Calvinistic view of, 157; objections to the, 162; texts supposed to support the, 163.
- RESURRECTION OF THE BODY**, 246; essential properties of a, 246; a doctrine of the Old Testament, 246; where taught in the New Testament, 247; when will it occur, 247; will it be universal, 247; heresies concerning, 255.
- RESURRECTION**, First, the, 234, 248.
- RESURRECTION, BODY**, the, identical with that committed to the grave, 250; objections to the identity of, 251; germ theory, 252; in what does the identity of consist, 254; change it will undergo, 253.
- REVELATION, DIVINE**, contrasted with pretended revelations, 12; necessity of a, 14; possibility of, 16; probability of a, 17.
- SABBATH**, leading theories regarding the, 271; coeval with the existence of man, 272; objections to the primeval origin of, 275; universal and perpetual obligation of, 276; texts supposed to teach the abolition of, 278; transference of to the first day of the week, 279; in what manner it should be celebrated, 282.
- SACRAMENTS**, meaning of the word, 284; Romish views of the, 284; Socinian views of the, 285; signs and seals of the covenant of grace, 285; number of the, 286; perpetual obligation of the, 286.
- SANCTIFICATION, ENTIRE**, defined, 203; how it differs from regeneration, 206; proofs that it is attainable, 208; witness to, 210.
- SAUL**, conversion of, an evidence of Christianity, 32.
- SECOND COMING OF CHRIST**, 225; in what sense is it understood, 225; circumstances connected with—general resurrection, general judgment, the renovation of the earth, 226; when will it occur, 227; error of dating it too early, 227; events to occur before the, 230; millennarian views of the, 236; objections to the millennarian views of the, 237; texts alleged to prove its occurrence before the millennium, 241; sum of Bible teaching concerning, 244.
- SCIENCE AND SCRIPTURE**, teachings of compared, 113.
- SCRIPTURES**, contrasted with pretended revelations, 12; presumptive evidences of, 14; historical evidences of the credibility of, 17; genuineness of the books of, 18; authenticity of, 23; uncorrupted preservation of, 26; external evidences of, 29; internal evidences of, 29; alleged discrepancies of, 30; miscellaneous evidences of, 32; inspiration of the, 39; wonderful unity of the, 57; sublimity of the contents of, 58; absolute veracity of the, 58; moral influence of the, 59; compared with science, 113.
- SON OF GOD**, a title of nature, 92; evidences that it is a Divine title, 93; not given to Christ because of his miraculous conception, 96; not given to Christ because of his resurrection, 97.
- SPIRIT**, personality of the, 100; Divinity of the, 101; procession of the, 102; witness of the, 187.

TRANSUBSTANTIATION, 302.

TRINITY, meaning of the term, 70.

Doctrine of, defined, 70; differs from Tritheism, 71; differs from Sabellianism, 71; differs from Arianism, 72.

Is not contrary to reason, 72; Scripture proofs of, 73; sum of scriptural teaching on, 102; writers on, 76.

WITNESS OF THE SPIRIT defined, 187; direct and immediate, 187; antecedent to the witness of our own spirit, 189; how distinguished from mere delusion, 190; the common privilege of believers, 190; may be held in uninterrupted enjoyment, 191; relation of to regeneration, 196; to the entire sanctification of believers, 210.

WITNESS OF OUR OWN SPIRIT, 186.

ZENDAVESTA, 13.

TEXTS PARTICULARLY REFERRED TO AND EXPLAINED.

	PAGE.		PAGE.
Genesis i. 1.	105, 106	Romans ix. 13	163
Deut. xiii. 1-4.	51	ix. 17, 18	144
1 Sam. xxviii. 11-14.	52	xi. 29	168
1 Kings viii. 46, and 2 Chron.		xiv. 5, 6	278
vi. 36.	213	1 Cor. i. 26	168
2 Chron. vi. 36, and 1 Kings		vii. 6	46
viii. 46	213	vii. 10, 11	46
Prov. x. 30	111	vii. 12, 25	46
xx. 9	213	viii. 6	90
xxiv. 16	213	xv. 22	267
Eccles. vii. 20	213	2 Cor. v. 21	143
Isaiah ii. 2	238	xii. 12	48
vi. 9, 10.	165	Gal. iv. 21-26.	233
Ezekiel xxxiii. 13	223	Eph. i. 4	159
Amos ix. 11, 12	238	Phil. iii. 11	248
Zech. xiv. 16	239	iii. 12-14.	208
Matt. iv. 1-11.	52	Col. i. 12-17.	85
xix. 16	88	i. 15	89
xxii. 14	161	ii. 11, and Romans	
xxii. 30-32	247	vi. 3, 4	260
xxiv. 29-31, and Luke		ii. 16, 17.	278
xxi. 24-27.	242	2 Thess. ii. 1, 2	227
Mark xiii. 32	89	ii. 8	241
Luke i. 35	96	ii. 13, 14	160
xii. 45, 46	227	1 Tim. ii. 4	267
xix. 11-27	227	iii. 16	83
xxi. 24-27	242	iv. 10	267
John iii. 5	199	2 Tim. iii. 16	45
x. 15	155	Titus ii. 13	84
xvii. 9	155	iii. 5	200
Acts ii. 22	48	Heb. iv. 9	281
xiii. 33	97	xi. 3	106
xiii. 48	161	xii. 22, 23	238
xv. 15-17, and Amos		James ii. 24, and Romans	
ix. 11, 12	238	iii. 28.	183
xx. 28	83	iii. 2	213
xxviii. 25, 27.	165	1 Peter i. 2	160
Romans iii. 28, and James ii.		ii. 8	166
24	183	2 Peter i. 1	83
iv. 17	106	iii. 3, 4	228
v. 15	155	1 John i. 8	214
v. 20, 21.	266	v. 7	75
vi. 3, 4, and Col. ii.		Rev. i. 4, 5	75
11	298	iii. 14	89
vii. 14-25	214	xix. 11-16; 19-21	243
viii. 21	266	xx. 1-4	237
viii. 28-30.	222	xx. 4-6	248

SYSTEMS REFERRED TO, AND THEIR TENETS DESCRIBED IN THIS VOLUME.

	PAGE.		PAGE.
Antinomianism	175	Popery	174, 178, 248 302.
Arianism	72, 78, 101	Positivism	(note) 11
Arminianism	152, 158, 220	Sabellianism	71
Atheism	9, 107	Socinianism 78, 101, 123, 147, 178,	179, 285
Calvinism	152, 157, 175, 220	Spiritualism	(note) 10
Materialism	11	Sublapsarianism	158
Millennarianism	227, 236, 247	Supralapsarianism	157
Naturalism or Humanism (note) 10		Swedenborgianism (note) 71	
Pantheism	9, 107	Tritheism	71
Pelagianism	123, 179		

MEN OF EMINENCE REFERRED TO, AND THEIR CHARACTER OR WORKS DESCRIBED.

	PAGE.		PAGE.
Abaddie, Dr.	91	Leslie	77
Bates, Dr. W.	151	Lindsey, Theophilus	77, 150
Browne, Bishop	77	Lycurgus	13
Bull, Bishop	77, 91	Magee, Bishop	151
Burgesse, Anthony	130	Maurice	132
Burton, Dr.	91	Milbourne	77
Calamy	91	Morell	40
Carlyle	10	Newman, F. W.	39
Comte, Auguste	11	Owen Dr	151
Confucius	13	Priestley, Dr. Joseph	150
Darwin, Dr.	107	Randolph	77
Edwards, President	130, 151	Robertson, F. W.	132
Emerson	10	Sanchoniathon	13
Faber	77, 151	Simpson, D.	77
Fletcher, John	130	Smith, Dr. J. Pye	91, 151
Guyse	91	Solon	13
Hare	91	Spinoza	10
Hebden, Saml.	130	Stillingfleet, Bishop	77, 151
Hegel	10	Strauss, F.	10
Hobbes, Thomas	10	Stuart, Moses	91
Holden	91, 130	Taylor, Dr. Jeremy	130
Horsley, Bishop	91	Taylor, Dr. John	123, 130, 132
Howe, John	77	Taylor, Mr. Abraham	77
Hume, David	49	Wakefield, Gilbert	150
Hurriou	91	Wardlaw, Dr. R.	76
Jeanes, Dr.	130	Waterland, Dr.	77, 91
Jennings, Dr. David	130	Watts, Dr. I.	130
Jerram	151	Wilson	91
La Place	107	Zoroaster	13
Lardner, Dr. N.	150		

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