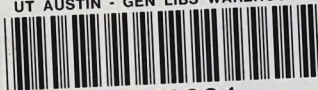


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LETTERS

TO

BARTON W. STONE,

CONTAINING

A VINDICATION

PRINCIPALLY OF

The Doctrines of the Trinity, the Divinity and Atonement of the Saviour,

AGAINST

HIS RECENT ATTACK,

IN

A SECOND EDITION OF HIS "ADDRESS."

BY THOMAS CLELAND,

*Pastor of the United Presbyterian Churches of New Providence
and Harrodsburg, Mercer County, Ky.*

"Many false prophets are gone out into the world." *John.*

—Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness. *Paul.*



LEXINGTON, K.

PRINTED FOR THE AUTHOR, BY THOMAS T. SKILLMAN,

1822.

182691

1941

1941

LETTER I.

INTRODUCTORY OBSERVATIONS.

DEAR SIR,

When I first read your late work, purporting to be "a second edition" of your former, it was my decided opinion that it carried its own confutation with it, and therefore did not deserve an answer. Especially, as my reply to your first "Address" remained unanswered, and which virtually answers even your second, although you say, it is "considerably enlarged." From these considerations, aided probably by the influence of that indolent indifference, and culpable neutrality, which courts self-indulgence, while others are expected to lift up the standard against the enemy, I had concluded to let you pass without notice. It is no doubt, the opinion of many that your miserable performance does not deserve an answer, especially, as every argument which it contains has been repeatedly refuted. I have, however, lately concluded that they judged more correctly, who thought that even the weakest reasonings should be exposed, lest they might be imagined to be strong; and that even the most hackneyed arguments should be replied to, lest they might be conceived to be new. Your having likewise assumed to yourself the title of Elder of the "Christian Church;" and the guardianship, as it would seem, of the Christian body in the states of Ohio, Kentucky and Tennessee; together with the lofty appearance of a Biblical critic,—all combine to bestow upon your labors by association a consequence which (barely) rescues them from present neglect, though certain it must be, it cannot operate to secure them from future oblivion.

Your attack being made upon those doctrines of the christian faith, which I conceive to be fundamental, I hold it my duty to expose the weakness of your reasoning, and

to bear my testimony aloud, against your doctrine. Between duty to God and to his church, and respect for man, it were criminal to hesitate. The task, indeed, is not without its difficulty. "To seize what is fugitive: to fix that which is ever in the act of change: to chain down the Proteus to one form, and to catch his likeness ere he has shifted to another:—this is certainly a work not easily to be accomplished." I hope I shall be credited, when I declare, that I conscientiously believe your sentiments to be of such a heretical stamp and pernicious tendency as to require only to be unmasked in order to be put down.

To this object, my efforts shall be directed: and so anxious am I to effect this point, which in such a case I conceive to be vital, that it is highly probable I shall expose myself to those imputations which are generally cast upon the liberality and the politeness of the writer, who scruples not to press home truths in a direct manner and without compromise. I am prepared to submit to whatever consequences may follow, so I have the good fortune to accomplish this object. Those pernicious sophistries which are opposed to the fundamental truths of Christianity, should be treated in an *undisguised* and *positive* manner. The *gentle* reader may be indifferent to truth or error; the *soft* Divine, the *downy* Doctor and the *courtly* Controversialist, may combat the most flagitious tenets with serenity; or maintain the most awful of religious truths in a way that misleads the unwary reader into an opinion of their making but little impression on the writer's own heart; but I readily acknowledge, I am not one of those opposers of what I believe to be damnable doctrines, who can reason without earnestness, and confute without warmth. To the good Lord I pray, in the mean time, that I may be preserved from such expressions of fiery resentment and virulent invective that too often find their way into writings of controversialists, a finished specimen of which the public have lately seen, in your angry letter to the Rev. John R. Moreland.

The work that we now have under consideration presents itself to the world, as a "second edition" of your "Address" to those churches over which you preside, as their ecclesiastical head, and only *learned* champion. They

swallow down your writings, it seems, with great avidity, and after going through a seven years process of digestion, they cry to their Elder again for more, which to him is so gratifying that he speedily sends forth another portion, "corrected," in its *quality*, to make it more palatable, and "considerably enlarged" in its *quantity*, that they may be more amply supplied. As for your corrections, they are so few and inconsiderable, that it appears scarcely worth the name to call your book a corrected edition; only a few expressions are *silently* omitted, which exposed the weakness of your argument, and rendered you liable to the merited censure of a candid reader, as well as just animadversions of a literary opponent. Your enlargements, I was glad to see for several reasons. You are less disguised: error, the higher it rises, and the more it accumulates, the more likely it is to fall by its own weight; and moreover, our reproach is measurably taken away, by either the acknowledgements, or silence, of many of your adherents, who accused us of slander and misrepresentation, when we charged their leaders with holding such errors.

In attempting to expose the fallacy of your sentiments, and the weakness of your arguments, I shall consider myself at liberty to make a free use of your former productions; without wholly confining myself to your second edition. I plead justification here from your own declaration, on the fourth page of your introduction. It is in these words: "Yet I am not conscious that the sentiments in general expressed in my former publications are at variance with any expressed in this." Some things "were written *unguardedly*, in language not sufficiently plain to convey my real meaning:" but this difficulty only seems to affect "opposing brethern;" for "to many," you add, "the language is sufficiently definite and conveys the the meaning I designed." To "attach those errors to a man which he has publicly disclaimed; and hold him up to public execration for an expression or sentiment which he has relinquished," you say "argues a want of candor and christian honesty." It does: But the implication comes with an ill grace from you, who inform us, that your former publications contain no sentiments "at variance with any expressed in this." What sentiments have

you "relinquished?" What "errors" have you "publicly disclaimed?" None. Shall we find it in these words: "If in my first publications I have written any thing contrary to this book, I cordially relinquish them." No: for you express yourself with ambiguity and uncertainty: "If I have written," &c. And in the very next sentence declare: "Yet I am not conscious that the sentiments in general expressed in my former publications are at variance with any expressed in this." The whole statement appears to exhibit an entire lack of that explicitness, frankness, and unhesitating ingenuousness, which every honest man, when convinced that he has erred, desires to avow, and openly to manifest. Here we have an *intimation* of errors disclaimed, and yet there are none acknowledged; of things written unguardedly, and in language not sufficiently plain, and yet plain enough too to express your real meaning; and of sentiments relinquished, and yet none are positively disavowed.

"In this edition," you say, "I have brought to view some of the doctrines of my brethren, who oppose us. I have taken them, not from individual authors, but from their own professed creeds and standards." Truly, sir, there is not a single fundamental doctrine of our creed, whether expressed in our confession of faith, or in our bibles, against which you have not levelled all your artillery, and industriously endeavoured to demolish the only foundation of our hope. You need not say, "in this edition:" for seven years ago, without provocation, when no pen was stirring against you, and when the most of us thought that you had sunk into oblivion among the hills of Tennessee, you was there plotting, and writing a book of more than a hundred pages, in which you raked together a large portion of the filth of ancient heresies, which you industriously scattered over the states of Tennessee, Kentucky and Ohio; and with which, you expected to prostrate those obnoxious creeds and standards, which would not yield to your "simple views," your expanded charity, and which, like Mordecia in the gate, greatly intercepted your march in the high road of happiness and reformation. Pray, sir, who commenced this literary contest? this "war of words," as you are pleased to term it? Let your "Two Letters

on Atonement," published seventeen years ago, answer this question. Who, without provocation from any literary opponent whatever, renewed hostilities, after publishing to the world, that he "never expected to appear again as a writer in public?" Your "Address" published seven years ago will dictate the answer. Now, for the hero of a party, a man of war, to set up such a piteous moan, such a complaining of abuse and ill treatment, from bigots, and untempered zealots, as you have done in your prefatory address, which follows your introduction; really exhibits an unmanly aspect; and bears the characteristic marks of peurility and cowardice. In this review, it will be seen, whether it is true that you have taken those doctrines, which you have attempted to expose, from "creeds and standards" *only*, or whether you have not in your great zeal to complete the work of destruction, *invented* doctrines, and *made* sentiments for your opponents to your own liking, and better adapted to your purpose, being more flexible, and promising a speedier triumph over them than over those stubborn creeds and confessions, which have stood the shock of ages, and the imbecile attacks of enemies of every description.

That this may not appear a groundless censure, take the following instance out of many: You make us to say, "that God has not lost his right to command, though we have lost our right to obey." (p. 84.) I challenge you to produce out of any book but your own, especially any written by those whom you oppose, such a sentiment as here charged upon us in the latter member of the quotation. Such a gross, uncouth declaration, you never heard suggested by any minister, or any enlightened member of our church, during the whole period of your connection with them. And you will find it in no acknowledged creed or standard upon earth. That man, by reason of his unholiness and enmity of heart, has no *spiritual capacity* for any *holy* exercise (which we believe saving faith to be,) and that by reason of a total want of *holy disposition* of heart he is *morally* unable to obey God, are truths we firmly believe. But who ever dreamed, much less said, that because of man's state of depravity, and consequent moral incapacity, that therefore his

moral obligation or right to obey God was lost. The rebel angels will ever be *unable* to love and obey God;— devils *cannot* love; but, surely, no man in his senses will say, they are not under *obligation* to love and obey; because their rebellious enmity is the very *cause* of their inability.

Other instances of a similar complexion, equally falacious, and censurable, appear throughout your book; the most of which shall be noticed, in their proper places. You may call this, “strictures on trifles, disregarded by the more intelligent,” as often as you please: straws are trifles, but they show which way the wind blows; and if we should forfeit our standing among the intelligent in your estimation, by stricturing on your errors, false criticisms, and misrepresentations, yet I trust we shall have courage enough not to be frightened from our duty, by such a menacing proscription.

I have entered upon this work with great reluctance. There is no pleasure in being under the necessity of rebutting at almost every step, the sophistries and misrepresentations of an unfair and disingenuous antagonist. It cannot be done honestly and plainly, without incurring the censure of illiberality and hostility. No man can wade after you through the muddy swamp of false theology, erroneous criticism, illnatured invective, ungenerous insinuations, and unfounded misrepresentations of the doctrines and sentiments of your opponents, without having some unpleasant feeling, and without being implicated by the unthinking and injudicious with some unjustifiable imputation. I have without hesitation, and without feeling personal animosity, endeavoured to expose your errors on divinity, and your defects as a writer; a liberty I allow to others with regard to myself, if they think proper. The lack of literary leisure and opportunity, as well as competent talent, has, I have no doubt, rendered my work more defective in point of matter and style than it otherwise would have been. In this controversy nothing *new* as to evidence or argument has been advanced on either side; nor indeed can there be; for the subject has been exhausted long ago. It appears new to those only who have not had opportunity or inclination to attend

to the controversy. I write therefore, not for fame:—not for pleasure:—not for your conviction, or the conversion of your devoted followers. But for the edification of the body of Christ; the establishment of the wavering and unsettled; and to intercept if possible the progress of the Arian and Socinian heresies. I might also add, to comply with the earnest request of some of my ministerial brethren, and others from various quarters: and likewise to redeem a pledge, which a friend of the cause made for me to the public, by issuing a prospectus without my knowledge, concurrence, or approbation.

LETTER II

THE TRINITY.

DEAR SIR,

You acknowledge that, when "Luther, Calvin, and others, made a bold stand against the corruptions of the church, the Lord prospered their labors;—that light began to dawn, and pure religion began to revive and smile upon the benighted world." This is an acknowledgement not very favorable to your cause; because, it is well known that these reformers taught the very doctrines you are endeavoring to destroy. This I need not undertake to prove, for you surely cannot deny it. "The Lord wonderfully preserved them, and prospered their labors." Yes, that is the fact. God owned his truth, and the truth made the people free. The reformation took place in the sixteenth century. And it is remarkable that all the churches in Christendom, which cast off the delusions of Popery, still retained the doctrine of the Trinity as a fundamental article of the Christian faith. However they might differ from each other in smaller matters, they all perfectly harmonized in this one principle. The confession of the Helvetic, the French, the Belgic, the English, the Scotch, the Polish, the Saxon, the Bohemian, the German churches, the churches of the Swedes and Danes, besides the different denominations of dissenters in England: These all agreed, that the doctrine of

the Trinity is not only scriptural, but fundamental in christianity. And moreover, if the truth of this doctrine depended upon historical evidence of the fact that the ancient fathers, as they are commonly called, and the successors of the apostles, believed the doctrine, as Trinitarians now do; the question is at once settled beyond fair debate by Milner, Simpson, and Horsely, in their patient researches, and faithful extracts from the writings of the first ages of Christianity. But as we are not on this ground, we shall apply to the law and the testimony for the establishment of the Trinity.

And here I am met at the first step, with an old hacknied objection: "The word *Trinity* is not found in the Bible." And pray, sir, where will you find the word *Unity* in the bible employed to express the nature and *modus existendi* of the Godhead? The poverty of human language in expressing any thing relative to the divine nature, compels us to express our notion of the divine simplicity by the term *unity*. And this word by all anti-trinitarians is triumphantly used not only in all their arguments, but likewise gives name to a large portion of them who style themselves Unitarians; without suspicion of difficulty, or dread of falling into *mystery*, which they so lavishly use in a way of scoff and banter against their opponents. "In truth, Jehovah, as it respects his pure existence, is *no object of number*, but *above number*; because number implies *limitation*. To his understanding, or, which is the same thing, to his being, *there is no number*. Ps. 147. 5. (marg.) But when he reveals himself acting for salvation, then only he gives us to undersand, that this simplicity exists in a personality perfectly compatible with it, and that this personality is engaged in a covenant of offices under the name of *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghost*, to accomplish a work, which shall be the admiration, contemplation, and delight of all created intelligences forever."

I know, as well as you, that the words *Trinity*, *Incarnation*, *Essence*, and such like, are not to be found in the Bible; but I also know, that the *truths*, to which these words relate, and which we design to express by them, are not only to be found there, but are the very sum and substance of that book. Without any breach of charity it may be affirm-

ed, that the objection is raised merely for cavillation. When men lack strength of argument, they are driven to this pitiful shift to get rid of an opponent they are not able to refute. You appear to me to have had more need for this kind of objection, than any writer of similar pretensions, that ever came under my inspection.

We are not afraid to acknowledge that "the word Trinity is not found in the Bible." But we fearlessly avow that the *truth* conveyed by that term is to be found there. The Greek word *Trias*, or Trinity, was introduced into the church in the second century, to express the threefold personality, or triune appellation of the Godhead. This and the terms before mentioned were employed by the fathers of the church in opposition to various heretics for a clearer or more full and definite expression of their doctrines, and have been very properly retained to this day. While there are false prophets, and seducing spirits in the world, who, having departed from the faith, are industriously employed in disseminating damnable heresies, denying the Lord that bought them; the orthodox christian may safely adopt this as a watchword, whereby he may be distinguished from an enemy of the Truth. As the use of all terms is to communicate knowledge, and as these terms convey the notion of the truths we wish to set forth, we shall disregard the quibble about their not being found in the Bible, and use them whenever we have occasion for them. If we are to be confined to terms of scripture entirely, it will be absolutely necessary to use the scripture only in the two languages of Hebrew and Greek, in which they were originally written, otherwise the objection, if of any force at all, lies against every *translation* in the world, and renders your own performance of little account, seeing you have used many words and phrases not to be found in the Bible.

As I desire to write for common edification, though with little hopes of your conviction, I shall endeavour, before I enter fully into the subject, to show what we understand by the terms, *trinity*, *person*, *essence*, *mystery*, &c. as commonly employed in this controversy.

By the word *essence*, we mean the *Divine Nature*, the *Theion*, the *Theotes*, the *Godhead*, which is *self-existent*, unde-

rived, and eternal. In this divine nature or essence there is found, according to the book of Revelation, a *threefold personality*, with *personal properties* and *personal characters* ascribed to each, and who are called *Father*, *Son* and *Holy Ghost*; and we call these, *Three Divine Persons*; who appropriate to themselves the incommunicable name or title *Jehovah*. These two principles laid together, which must be equally true; if the authority of revelation is to be regarded, may be made to harmonize with themselves, and all other parts of the sacred volume, by conceiving that the unoriginated *essence* is an inseparable *unity* of three coequal and coessential subsistences, which, beyond the low ideas of human composition or comparison, are a distinguishable *Trinity*. A *plurality in unity* is inferable from that noted passage in Deut. 6. 4. which Unitarians triumphantly oppose to the doctrine of the Trinity: "The Lord our God is one Lord:" which in the original is *Jehovah our Elohim is one Jehovah*. Here the word *Jehovah* denotes the *incommunicable essence*; and the word *Elohim* implies a *personal plurality* in that essence. As the former name relates to the divine incommunicable nature of the Deity, so the latter characterizes him as the moral governor of the world. They are frequently joined together in order to shew, that though the essence be one and the persons three, they are reciprocally pledged in every promise, and in every covenant engagement, revealed to man.

By the word *persons*, when applied to the Godhead, we do not understand, some *separate* existences of a *different* nature; but *united personal* distinctions in the *same* nature. The terms *person* and *essence* are neither synonymous nor convertible; and therefore it is acting a very *disingenuous* part in our adversaries to *confound* them, and then make us say, there are three essences and consequently three Gods. We think we have spoken plainly when we have said that, "though *each* person be of the *essence*; yet the *three* together do constitute **THE ESSENCE**; which is inseparably connected with each of the persons in willing and acting in the economy of man's redemption."

In our contemplations on this great subject, the distinction between a human and a divine person ought to be particularly attended to, as it would in some measure free

the mind from perplexity, and save a great deal of time and unnecessary debate. Peter, James and John, were three persons, but they were *separated* from each other; they had only the same *kind* of nature, which is generally called a common specific nature, but not the same *individual* nature with another person. They were likewise as many *beings* as they were persons, each one having his own proper being, *separate* and *distinct* from all other persons or beings of human kind. But none of these things are applicable to the *divine* persons in the Godhead; for they, however distinguished by their *personal characters*, and *properties*, are *never* separated, as having the same divine essence or nature. And moreover, this nature is the same *individual* nature of the persons in the Godhead, and because the Divine Being or essence is but one, therefore the Godhead of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, is the very same; and this is what we understand when we say, there are three persons in the Godhead of the same substance, equal in power and glory, and do constitute the only living and true God. But why should we be obliged to explain ourselves so often on this subject? We repeat it again, that we use the word *person* and such like terms, merely from the poverty of language; merely to designate our belief of a real distinction in the Godhead, and not to describe or explain *how* three are one and one three, but to express our belief of the *fact* which revelation has discovered and ought never to be combated with the "voice of Reason" which you have set up to clamor against it. It is one thing to be assured of a truth, another to answer all the difficulties that encounter it. You are well assured of the *underived existence* of the Deity, but when you will give me an *affirmative definition* or description of that existence, I will pledge myself to furnish you with one, of the *modus existendi* of the personal distinctions in the Divine Essence. Try the *eternity* of God by the same rule, and what can you do with it? "What is the *eternity* of God? You answer by telling me that there never was a time, when he did not exist, and never can be one, when he will not exist. True; but then what was *time*, before the planetary system, which measures it, had an existence; and what will *time* be, when these heavens and this earth

shall be blotted out? Besides, passing over this difficulty about time, you have only given a negative description of God's eternity; you *deny* certain things of him, and then aver that he is *eternal*. Yet because you cannot affirmatively describe eternity, you would not refuse to believe that God is *eternal*. Why then should I reject the belief of a distinction in the Godhead because I cannot affirmatively define it?" (Stewart's Letters to Channing, p. 37.)

You have laboured hard, and so likewise has your Unitarian brother Thomas Smith in a late production against Trinitarians, to shew that a trinity of persons in the Godhead is subversive of the doctrine of the Divine Unity, and therefore untrue. But not only have you failed in giving a true representation of our views of that subject, but you have also failed in being able to tell us what the divine *Unity* is, about which you can talk and preach and write so familiarly. You never can do it. "It is," says the writer last quoted, "a clear point I think that the Unity of God cannot be proved without revelation. It may perhaps be rendered faintly probable. Then you depend on Scripture proof, for the establishment of this doctrine. But have the Scriptures any where told us what the *divine Unity* is? Will you produce the passage. The *oneness* of God they assert: But this they assert always, *in opposition to the idols of the heathen—the polytheism of the Gentiles—the gods superior and inferior, which they worshipped.* In no other sense have the Scriptures defined the *ONENESS* of the Deity. What then is *oneness*, in the uncreated, infinite, eternal Being? In created and finite objects we have a distinct perception of what we mean by it. But can *created* objects be just and adequate representatives of the *uncreated ONE*? Familiar as the assertion is, in your conversation and in your sermons, that God is *one*, can you give me any definition of this *oneness*, except a negative one? That is, you deny plurality of it; you say God is but one, and not two, or more. Still I ask, in what does the divine Unity consist? Has not God different and various faculties, and powers? Is he not almighty, omniscient, omnipresent, holy; just and good? Does he not act differently; i. e. variously, in the natural and in the moral world? Does his

unity consist, then, appropriately in his essence? But what is the essence of God? And how can you assert that his unity consists appropriately in this, unless you know what his essence is, and whether oneness can be any better predicated of this, than of his attributes?"

"Your answer to all this is; 'the nature of God is beyond my reach; I cannot define it. I approach to a definition of the divine Unity only by negatives.' That is, you deny the numerical plurality of God; or you say there are not two or more essences, omnisciences, omnipotences, &c. But here all investigation is at an end. Is it possible to show, what constitutes the *internal nature* of the divine essence, or attributes; or how they are related to each other; or what internal distinctions exist? About all this, revelation says not one word; certainly the book of nature gives no instruction concerning it. The assertion then, that God is *one*, can never be fairly understood as meaning any thing more, than that he is *numerically one*; i. e. it simply denies polytheism, and never can reach beyond this. But how does this prove, or how can it prove, that there may not be, or that there are not distinctions in the Godhead, either in regard to attributes, or essence, the nature of which is unknown to us, and the existence of which is to be proved by the authority of the Scriptures only?"

"When Unitarians, therefore, inquire, what that distinction in the Godhead is, in which we believe; we answer, that we do not profess to understand *what* it is; we do not undertake to define it *affirmatively*. We can approximate to a definition of it, only by negatives. We deny that the Father is, in *all* respects, the same as the Son; and that the Holy Spirit is, in *all* respects, the same as either the Father or the Son. We rest the *fact*, that a distinction exists, solely upon the basis of revelation. In principle then, what more difficulty lies in the way of believing in a threefold distinction of the Godhead, than believing in the divine Unity." (Stewart's Letters, p. p. 45, 46.)

I have given the above quotation, not only because of its sterling worth, but likewise that it may be seen, what we mean when we assert that the doctrine in question is

a *mystery*. It will also show the mistaken zeal of those reasoners of the present day, who in their rage to *simplify* every doctrine of revelation by theories, fabricated to reduce the mystery of its doctrines by "the voice of reason," afford a specimen of the effrontery of that incurable ignorance, which is ignorant even of its own want of knowledge. With an air of insult you tell us (p. 18) that "Mystery is one of the names of the whore of Babylon, written in large letters on her forehead." You forgot this, when at the bottom of your 26th page, being pressed with a difficulty, you come forward and say: "Should any ask how it is that the Father in all his fullness dwelleth in the Son? I reply in Paul's words, "Great is the *mystery* of godliness, God was manifest in the flesh." This is quite a handsome manœuvre to get rid of the mark of the whore, by slipping in Paul between you and danger, while poor Trinitarians have no refuge whatever, because they modestly acknowledge their inability to dive into those things which are altogether unfathomable.

The grand objection against the doctrine of the Trinity on account of its seeming absurdity and contradiction, may be either true or false, absurd or otherwise, according as it is explained or understood. If we say, that three are one, and one three, exactly in the *same* sense, the thing is not only absurd, but impossible; it is a contradiction. But to say, the Divine Being is only one in *essence* and three in *person*; that he is three in one respect, and only one in another respect, is no absurdity, no contradiction; but may be an eternal truth, founded in the nature of things. We feel not ourselves at all answerable for all the inconsistent and unjustifiable definitions and explanations that Trinitarians have given on this subject whether in their public symbols and standards or otherwise. But some of them I believe have written so guardedly and definitely on the subject, that our opponents must lack either knowledge or honesty, if they will persist in palming upon us the absurd notion of three distinct essences or Gods.

Dr. Isaac Barrow, one of the first of Christians and scholars, says, "That there is one Divine Nature or Essence, common unto three persons, incomprehensibly uni-

ted, and ineffably distinguished; united in essential attributes, distinguished by peculiar idioms and relations; all equally infinite in every divine perfection, each different in order and manner of subsistence; that there is a mutual existence of one in all, and all in one; a communication without any deprivation or diminution in the communicant; an eternal generation, and an eternal procession, without precedence or succession, without proper causality or dependence; a Father imparting his own, and the Son receiving his Father's life, and a Spirit issuing from both, without any division or multiplication of essence: these are notions which may well puzzle our reason in conceiving *how* they agree, but should not stagger our faith in assenting that they are true; upon which we should meditate, not with hope to comprehend, but with dispositions to admire, veiling our faces in the presence, and prostrating our reason at the feet of wisdom so far transcending us." (In Simpson's *Plea for the Deity of Jesus*, p. 351.)

Dr. Horsely, I believe the greatest and most successful modern defender of the catholic doctrine of the Trinity and Deity of our Saviour, says; "I maintain, that the Three Persons are one Being; one by mutual relation, indissoluble connection, and gradual subordination: so strictly One, that any individual thing, in the whole world of matter and spirit, presents but a faint shadow of their unity. I maintain, that each person by himself is God; because each possesses fully every attribute of the divine nature; but I maintain, that these persons are all included in the very idea of a God; and that for that reason, as well as for the identity of the attributes in each, it were impious and absurd to say, there are three Gods;—for, to say there are three Gods, were to say there are three Fathers, three Sons, and three Holy Ghosts: I maintain the equality of the three persons, in all the attributes of the Divine nature.—I maintain their equality in rank and authority, with respect to all created things, whatever relations or differences may subsist between themselves: differences there must be, lest we confound the persons, which was the error of Sabellius; but the differences can only consist in the personal properties, lest we divide the substance, and make a plural-

ity of independent gods." (Horseley's Tracts, p. 201.) If you still ask how can these things be, and still call for demonstration? I reply; first rid yourself of difficulties and mysteries, and show how you can investigate a single attribute of the Great and Blessed God without perplexity, before you make unreasonable demands and unjustifiable requirements of others. Tell us how the spiritual essence of God fills heaven and earth, without extension or division into parts. Can you form an idea of a power, no more exhausted by the creation of a world, than by the production of an insect? How is God above the heavens, and beneath the earth, yet hath no relation to high or low, distant or near? What relation has he to time, who is no older this day, than when he made the world; to whom that which is past is not gone, and that which is future, is not to come? We could press you with a thousand such questions respecting the essence and attributes of God. But we will lower our demands; tell us, "how the bones do grow in the womb of her that is with child,—how thy garments are warm, when he quieteth the earth, by the south wind." A little lower still; define to us the essence of a straw, or of a single grain of sand, before you tauntingly insult, and reproach us with the mark of the whore of Babylon, because we profess to be unable, to find out God, or study the Almighty to perfection.

But I come now to examine your book a little on this subject. I shall be brief, as I wish to save time and patience, and especially as this point is so closely connected and interwoven with the Deity of Christ, which will be our next subject, which if established, confirms this of course, for they stand or fall together.

You admit that those who hold to three persons in God, do not use the term, in its proper or common, but in a qualified sense, so as to exclude the notion of three distinct beings. This is the fact, as I hope I have made fully to appear. "What this qualified sense should be, has long puzzled divines, and in no proposition are they more divided." I am not quite so sure there is such discrepancy amongst those who hold the catholic doctrine of the Trinity. But let it be so; does this prove the doctrine untrue, or only shew that even good men may err through the weakness and the pride of understanding in diving into

things beyond their depth. Were you not puzzled here, when in your former work, (p. 9.) you wrote thus: "I believe there are three distinctions in Godhead; but I cannot express them in more appropriate terms than those used by the inspired Apostle—Father, Word and Holy Ghost?" In my reply, it was admitted that there are three distinctions in the Godhead, and I maintained them as I do now, that they are *personal distinctions*, inasmuch as the personal pronouns, *I, thou, and he*, are applied to each indiscriminately, and gave this as a reason why we used the term *persons*, when applied to Godhead for the want of a better term. It is not a little remarkable that you have dropped your belief respecting the "three distinctions in the Godhead," as it does not appear in your late work, though formerly acknowledged to have the sanction of an inspired Apostle. You assign the cause of this perplexity among divines on this subject to be, that "no idea of it is to be found in revelation or reason." Pray, good sir, do not bring in reason here to settle a point about a matter which is entirely of revelation, and which demands reason's assent, not her demonstration. As for revelation, is there *no* idea of this doctrine in the admission of "three distinctions in Godhead," Father, Son, and Holy Ghost? *These three are one*, you also admit in the work before us. Your words are: "They are one, or agree in their testimony." (p. 8.) Are you not afraid of making persons in the Godhead, when you can use the personal pronouns *they* and *their*, with so much familiarity? It is admitted (page 11) "that the Scriptures speak of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost—and that these three are *one* in some respect, none will deny." They are "one in spirit, purpose and mind." (p. 9.) Thank you, sir, for this concession; I now hold you to it. Is not the spirit, purpose, and mind of the Father, eternal? Of this there cannot be the shadow of a doubt. (Deut. 33. 27. Eph. 3. 11. Job 23. 13.) So then likewise must the spirit, purpose, and mind of the Son, and Spirit be. (Micah 5. 2. Heb. 9. 14.) From these texts we find that God is eternal, the Spirit is eternal, and that the *goings forth* or *emanation* of the Son, (like the rays from the sun in the heavens) have been *of old, from everlasting*, or, as the word is, *from the days of eternity*.

We admit then that these three are one, in spirit, purpose and mind, *unchangeably and eternally*; while the oneness of Christians respects their mystical union to Christ, being *joined to the Lord and one spirit*, and likewise as it respects their accordance with and conformity to the divine mind in that imperfect *resemblance* they bear to the moral image of their maker, by whom they are created in knowledge, righteousness and true holiness. That the doctrine of three persons in the Godhead is "principally founded on 1 John, 5. 7." as you assert, we do by no means admit, though it is often quoted in proof of that point. It can be well spared in this contest, and yet the doctrine suffer no loss in respect of its confirmation. We know it is a disputed text as to its genuineness. But it is not a little curious to see how you commence war against it; first, by criticising away its common interpretation to make it capitulate upon your own terms; and, as if this were not sufficient; you set up the usual outcry of interpolation and corruption against it, with a design no doubt of weakening its force against you;—"not found in Griesbach's Greek Testament—not found in the Syrian Christians' Bible—many learned men reject it," &c. And yet after all you are so flexible and good-natured as to be "unwilling to reject it." This admission is made no doubt with the greater facility, because you relied upon the success of your criticism, as you imagined, in destroying its testimony in favor of Trinitarians. We will make a few remarks on this two-fold mode of warfare which you have employed against this text. I will not quote the whole paragraph, but present the idea contained in it, and shew that it is incorrect, and the criticism of no account. 1 John, 5. 7. There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word and the Holy Ghost, and these three are ONE. Now you affirm, that "from reading the context, it is plain, that the matter testified of, is that Jesus is the Son of God. That the three are one, or agree in their testimony; as in the next verse, the three witnesses on earth *agree in one*. To say these three are one God, would contradict the original; for the word *hen*, translated *one*, is in the neuter gender; and cannot agree with the word God." It will agree, sir, with the word *Theian*, which is

neuter, and means Divinity or Deity. This word the Christian Fathers used with great frequency and familiarity when they intended to include the three principles in the divine nature, in the *to Theion*; which will certainly much better connect with the text in question, than the word *marturian*, rendered testimony, and which is feminine. Your idea is, that the words translated, "these three are one," only mean, one in testimony, or that their *testimony* is one; but this word in the original being of the feminine gender, will not unite with *hen* in the neuter. Besides, I aver that the writer of the text was not speaking of *testimony*, but of *persons*; else why does he use the word *três* (translated *three*;) in the *masculine* gender? Or why is the expression so remarkably varied in the next verse, these three *agree in one*, not these three *are one*? I believe these remarks may suffice here; not made with imposing confidence; and if pronounced worthless, verily, I believe yours will be found no better.

Respecting the authenticity of this text we will say a few things. It is admitted that it is wanting in some ancient versions and manuscripts. But to this day it cannot be determined whether it was *interpolated* by Trinitarians, or *omitted* by the Arians and other Unitarian hereticks of that age. It is more likely to have been silently omitted by the latter in their copies, as a testimony so decided against them, than that the Trinitarians should directly *forge* and *insert* it; especially seeing they were not pressed for the want of it, having ample proof of the doctrine without, as all modern Trinitarians are ready to admit. But suppose it to be an interpolation; does not that circumstance prove, that the *Trinity* was a doctrine very early held and contended for, by the Christians of the first ages? But why must we suppose, that the passage is at all an interpolation? Because Griesbach, Marsh, Porson and others have asserted and proved it? The proof is contested manfully, and it is thought successfully, by Archdeacon Travis, and others who have advocated the text. But were the defect of positive proof in favor of the passage much greater than its opponents have been able to make out, it would still be with me an argument of its authenticity, that the omission of it (and any body

may try it) breaks the connection, and wonderfully heightens the obscurity of the Apostle's discourse. As you appear to attribute great weight to the decisions of Dr. Griesbach, whose Greek Testament is "reckoned to be the most correct," and who considers the text in question a corrupted one, I will make an observation or two for your information and others who are under the influence of great names.

While the great desert of Griesbach is admitted by some of the best of men, and while it is believed that he would not willingly, or conscientiously misrepresent facts or arguments, for, or against any reading, yet his decisions are far from being uncontroverted, by many of the best critics of his own countrymen. His whole classification of manuscripts, which lies at the very foundation of all his decisions in regard to the text, is rejected by Matthai as worthless, who Dr. Middleton calls the best Greek scholar that ever edited a Greek Testament, which he did in 12 vols. (between A. D. 1782—1789) and which approaches much nearer the *Textus Receptus*, or the text in common use, than the edition of Griesbach with whom he is at variance. Dr. Lawrence likewise, in his Essay upon the classification of manuscripts by Greisbach, "has rendered it more than probable, that Griesbach's account of facts is not unfrequently *very erroneous*; and that the principles, by which he estimated the value of manuscripts, and of course the genuineness of particular readings, are fundamentally erroneous." The character of Griesbach, frees him from the implication of design in misrepresenting facts or arguments, but he undertook a work which was too great for one person to accomplish, or even a whole generation of critics. One word more about this text. We again repeat it, that if it were added or put in, it was done in opposition to the heretics; and this was a sufficient evidence of the firm belief of the doctrine of the Trinity at that time. But if it was expunged by the Anti-Trinitarians, the Arians, &c. who, as St. Ambrose observes of them, were remarkable for this sort of fraudulent dealing with the Scriptures, then there was a great deal of reason for restoring it. Be it however genuine or otherwise, the same sentiment is found in other parts of

Scripture, and the ancient Christian writers abound with sentiments and expressions of a similar nature. * Polycarp died expressing his gratitude to God in these words:—I praise thee, I bless thee, I glorify thee, through the eternal High Priest Jesus Christ, thy beloved Son, through whom, to thee, with him, in the Holy Ghost, be glory both now, and to all succeeding ages. Amen. I do testify, says Tertullian, that the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, are undivided one from another. Again:—Two Gods or two Lords we never have named with our mouth: not as if the Father were not God, and the Son God, and the Holy Ghost God, and each of them God. Again:—I every where hold one substance in three cohering together. He alludes to this text also when he says, "*These three are one* (essence) not one (person); in like manner as our Lord hath said, *I and my Father are one* (essence) having regard only to the unity of substance, not to the singularity of number." St. Cyprian seems to have a full quotation of this text, with little variation:—"The Lord saith, *I and the Father are one.*" And again, concerning the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost, it is written—"And these three are one." (See Simpson's Plea for the Deity of Jesus, p. 294.) The above remarks will serve as a reply to that part of the sermon of your Unitarian brother Smith in pages 34 and 35, where this text has met with a similar treatment, only a little more hostile, for it finds no mercy, it gets no quarters, and is not suffered even to breathe. They also rebut his statement (in page 38) against the testimony in favor of the Trinity from ancient writers. But if this will not satisfy, I refer you both to Horseley's Tracts in controversy with Dr. Priestly, upon the historical question, of the belief of the first ages in our Lord's Divinity. * A more successful and triumphant refutation of Arianism and Unitarianism is not to be found. The great champion of the Unitarians is made to succumb, and, as Gibbon observes, "The Socinian shield of Dr. Priestly has repeatedly been pierced by the spear of Horseley."

Your attempt to explain away the import of the Hebrew word *Elohim*, translated *God*, is truly unfortunate, and serves to show, to what lengths a man will go, and to what miserable shifts he is often driven in a desperate

cause. This noun of plural termination, regularly formed from its singular, is employed by the historian of the creation in the very first line of his history; and in that short account, he uses it *thirty* times, and perhaps *five hundred* times more in one form or other in the five books of his writings. Now, is it not extraordinary, that Moses, the man of God, who was above all things careful to guard his people against idolatry, should in the very beginning of, and all the way through his Law, make use of a word for the name of God, which led them to think of a *plurality*, when the language afforded other words in the singular number that would have answered his purpose equally as well? What might be his reason? Upon the supposition of a plurality of persons in the Divine Nature it is easily accounted for, but not in a satisfactory manner upon any other. He meant, or rather the Holy Ghost, by whom he was inspired to write his history, meant, to give some hints and intimations of a doctrine more clearly to be revealed in future ages.

But you can account for it by the application of a rule in Robertson's Hebrew Grammar:—"A plural put for a singular denotes greatness and excellency." This rule applied to Elohim, the plural name of God, makes it express "dignity and majesty." For the same reason it is "given to Moses,—to the molten calf of Aaron,—the idol *Baal-berith*—*Dagon*.—*Ashberoth*.—*Baalzebub*, &c. &c. tho' each is in the singular; yet each is called Elohim, God, in the plural." Hence it is inferred that "these idol worshippers expressed their particular idol in the plural, because of its supposed dignity, majesty and excellence." (p. p. 9. 10) Truly this is humiliating enough! By this ray of light emitted from a Hebrew Grammar, you have succeeded in placing the tremendous name of God among the idols of the heathen. Sir, I am truly ashamed, to think that a critic, a scholar, and a sage interpreter of God's holy word, should give such occasion to the Philistines to triumph.

It is well known that the Heathens worshipped a plurality of Gods. If therefore they gave them plural names on any occasion, it is nothing more than might have been expected, without any rule of grammar to explain the reason

about it. Besides, it is not improbable, but the errors which prevailed among them, respecting the multiplicity of their gods, might take their rise from the Hebrew *Elohim*; and they might choose to speak of their deities in a plural form in imitation of this name. It is readily admitted, that in the Old Testament, the word *God* has various applications; it is applied to men, to magistrates, to idols. But it is not possible in any instances of this nature, to mistake the meaning. The adjuncts or context, always guard effectually against mistake. The words *God* and *Lord* are never applied to creatures without some diminutive character annexed to them, by which they are plainly designated from the true God; hence idols are called *strange gods*, (Deut. 32. 16.) *molten gods*, (Exod. 34. 17.) and *new gods*, (Jud. 5. 8.) So when applied to men there is also something in the context, which implies that whatever characters of honor are given to them, yet they are subject to the divine control. Inferior beings are never called *God* or *Gods*, simply or absolutely. When God says to Moses, *see I have made thee a god to Pharaoh*, no body supposes that any of the divine perfections were communicated to, or predicated of him, but plainly that he was in God's stead, as God's minister to inflict the plagues that he designed to bring on that stubborn monarch and his servants, by which he should be rendered formidable to them; not that he should have a right to receive divine honor from them. Wherever, therefore, the word *God* is used, the writer has added explanations of his meaning, which seem to place what he intended to assert, beyond the reach of fair debate. When the word is put absolutely, without any additional character of glory, or diminution annexed to it, it is always to be understood of the Great God. Is a mistake here possible!

But to show that your grammar rule is deficient and inapplicable, and consequently will not aid you in the attempt to destroy the doctrine of a plurality in Deity, try the strength of it upon the following texts where plural nouns are used in connection with singular verbs. Job. 35. 10. Where is God my maker, who giveth songs in the night? The word *maker* is plural; where is God my MAKERS? Eccl. 12. 1. "Remember thy Creator;" the word

is plural, *Creators*. Eccl. 9. 1. Wisdom (Wisdoms) hath builded, &c. Isa. 54. 5. For thy maker is thy husband, the Lord of hosts is his name. Here also the Hebrew substantives *maker* and *husband* are both plural. In all this there is nothing strange to a Trinitarian, seeing he believes, and can so easily prove, that the world and all men in it were created by a *trinity of persons* in a *unity of essence*. Gen. 1. 26. "And God said let us Us make man in OUR image, after OUR likeness." Gen. 3. 22. "And the Lord God (Jehovah Elohim) said, behold the man is become like ONE OF us." The word Jehovah is in the *singular number*, and expresses *all* the "dignity, majesty and excellence" that *belong* to Deity; and therefore, there is no necessity of resorting to the adoption of irregular grammar to do it, according to your theory; but Jehovah being immediately followed by ELOHIM, a plural noun, does it not plausibly, if not demonstrably, substantiate the doctrine for which we contend? I know how you, and the Arians, endeavor to evade the force of this argument, by introducing into your scheme an instrumental Creator, a subordinate God, or a super-angelic something, brought into existence somewhere between time and eternity, and made a copartner in the work of creation; and under this view, apply the above texts. But I trust we shall be able to shew, that such a theory is absurd and visionary. It surely does not very well become you, to say, that you "know not what the real sentiments of Arius were, having never seen them, but through the coloring of his enemies;" while, coloring or no coloring, you are, (according to the uncontradicted statements of all historians,) retailing from the pulpit and the press, nothing new, but the old worn-out, and often refuted arguments of that ancient heretick. And can it be possible that you are ignorant of this, when there is on record such ample and uncontradicted evidence of what the sentiments of this troubler in Israel were, (without the "coloring of his enemies;") from the open avowal and full adoption of the same by his successors, and more recent votaries and followers; who, not willing to own the name of their ancient father on account of its odious unpopularity, wish to pass under the self-assumed name of Unitarian, or Christian? Permit me here, to suggest, I

hope without the implication of effrontery or petulance, that if you would open Dr. Rees's *Cyclopaedia*, Art. *Arians*, you might have your ignorance of Arian sentiments measurably, if not wholly removed, by seeing an abstract of the real opinions of the ancient Arians, as they are given by Dr. Cave, and others, *in the words of Arius himself*; and also further particulars on the general subjects of his heresy. See also, *The Religious World Displayed*, by the Rev. Robert Adam, vol. 2nd. Art. *Arians*, and *Unitarians*. This is one of the best works of the kind I know of, for general and impartial information on the rise, progress, &c. of the different sects and denominations in the world.

Before I close this letter, which is already longer than I at first intended, let me very briefly drop before you a few scripture proofs more, on which Trinitarians place no small reliance for the establishment of their belief. I design not to *enumerate*, but barely *select* those passages which are best adapted to my purpose in such a limited production as this must necessarily be; and especially as it will be further supported by the establishment of the doctrine of the Saviour's Divinity, which will be the subject of my next letter.

Ps. 48. 16. And now the Lord God and his Spirit hath sent ME. The speaker in this verse is Christ, who in ver. 12. calls himself *the first and the last*; and declares himself to be sent not only by the *Lord God*, but also by his *Spirit*. Isa. 61. 1. The Spirit of the LORD GOD is upon ME, because the Lord hath anointed me, &c. The speaker again in this passage is Christ, and therefore, the text applies as the one preceding.

We shall proceed to the New Testament for proof on this subject, where, if it were necessary, we could produce upwards of one hundred places in which the three persons of the Divine Nature are distinctly mentioned together, either in the same verse, or in the course of the context. In Matt. 3. 16, 17, at the baptism of the Saviour; there appears to be a sufficiently plain and sensible demonstration of the doctrine of the sacred Trinity:—"Jesus ascending from the water—the *Spirit of God*, descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: and lo, a voice from heaven, saying, this is *my beloved Son*, in whom *I am well*

pleased." What do you think of the Holy Ghost *in a bodily shape like a dove*, (Luke 3. 22.) descending and *lighting upon Jesus*? Was it an operation of the Godhead only; a *qualitative* virtue? No, it could not be; for qualities, operations, and acts, cannot assume bodily shapes, nor any thing but what is in itself substantial. This circumstance, not only demonstrates to my mind the *personality* and *divinity* of the Holy Ghost, the third person in the Trinity, but likewise shows the reason and declares the import of our Lord's commission given to his disciples, Matt. 28. 19. *Go teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.* As a full and clear, yea, even a sensible demonstration of the Trinity was made at the beginning of the gospel, to use the words of Augustin: "The Father by a voice; the Son in the form of a man; the Holy Spirit under the figure of a dove;" even so in its continuance and application the divine Three in One are continually presented as a proper object of *worship* in every instance of baptism rightly administered in the *name* (not names) of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. If being thus baptized we are not dedicated to the worship and service of the sacred Three, then what else can it mean? If this is not the fact, then the whole Christian world (with a very small and to be sure not a very honorable exception) have been deceived. The primitive fathers, Justin Martyr, Irenæus, Tertullian, Cyprian, Athanagoras and others were all wrong, for they inculcated the very sentiment in their writings. Richard Baxter, who was a man of the most consummate abilities, as well as uncommon piety, says, "I unfeignedly account the doctrine of the Trinity, the very sum and kernel of the Christian religion, as expressed in our baptism.—The doctrine is neither contradictory, incredible, nor unlikely."

Acts 2. 32, 33. "I shall maintain," says Dr. Horseley, "that the three persons are distinctly mentioned, in a manner which implies the divinity of each. *Jesus—being by the right hand of God exalted and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost*"—of the Father—*para tou patros*—*The Father*: the substantive, with the article prefixed, describes a person, whose character is to be the Father—Paternity is the property, which individuates the

person: but from whom is the first principle thus distinguished? From his creatures? From them he is more significantly distinguished by the name of God. Not generally therefore from his creatures, but particularly, from the two other persons mentioned in the same period—Jesus and the Holy Ghost. And since this is his distinction, that he is the Father of that Son, from whom, together with himself, the Holy Ghost proceeds; it follows, that the interval, between him and them, is no more than *relation* may create; that the whole difference lies in *personal distinctions*, not in essential qualities.” This same great writer admits that “our knowledge of the personal distinctions is so obscure, in comparison of our general apprehensions of the general attributes of the Godhead; that it should seem, that the Divinity (the *to Theion*) is rather to be generally worshipped, in the three persons jointly and indifferently, than that any distinct honors are to be offered to each separately.”

1 Cor. 12. 4—6. “There are diversities of gifts, but the *same Spirit*—of administrations, but the *same Lord*—of operations, but the *same God*.” Here are the three persons, with the common order of naming them *inverted*, which shows that the Apostle considered it a matter of indifference upon the principle of their equality, otherwise, this would not have been the case.

2 Cor. 13. 14. “The grace of our *Lord Jesus Christ*, and the love of *God*, and the communion of the *Holy Ghost*, be with you all. Amen.” Here the *unity in trinity* is presented as the *source* of blessedness; as well as the *foundation* of our hope, and the *object* of our worship. That there is a real and not only a nominal distinction between the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit; that they are frequently spoken of in the holy scriptures in such terms as we ordinarily use when we speak of three persons; that, although the Son be often spoken of as really and truly a man, yet many things are said of him, which cannot agree to a mere man, or to any created being whatsoever; and that there are such things also spoken of the Holy Ghost, as cannot be accommodated unto a creature, cannot be denied by any man, who will but interpret the holy scriptures according to the ordinary sense and signification.

the words thereof, and not according to his own prejudices, or pre-conceived opinions.

But "the doctrine of the Trinity among the Jews is esteemed one of the greatest errors." (Smith's sermon, p. 39) Yes, and for this very reason, they refuse to adopt our New Testament, because they see it taught there. This argument about the Jews is much in our favor; and I much wonder at Mr. Smith, for giving us the advantage of it. We conceive it to be of considerable weight. Let us hear what Mr. Levi (whose sentiments are strictly Judaical) says, in the free and open avowal he has made in his correspondence with Dr. Priestly, once the champion of Unitarianism in England. He avows, that, "the divinity of Christ, —his pre-existence, and power to abrogate the ceremonial part of the law; as also the miraculous conception, are all taught in the Gospels;—and the ceremony just mentioned," i. e. baptism, "points out the essential qualifications of a Christian: consequently, *he that does not believe the doctrine of the Trinity, cannot be a Christian, if the Gospels be true.*" (Letters to Dr. Priestly in 1789, p. 24) What is this but an acknowledgement or declaration, which can amount to nothing less than that, were they [the Jews] to become Christians, the Trinitarian side of the present question, is that to which they would adhere as a truth taught in the Gospels. And is it not a fact that all Jews converted to Christianity do receive the doctrines of the Trinity and of the Deity of Jesus Christ as taught in the N. Testament. The divine inspiration of this book not being believed by the Jews, is the *reason* why they reject its doctrines as erroneous. Remove their infidelity, and establish their conviction of the divine authority of the N. Testament, and you remove their prejudices against the Christian Trinity and the proper Divinity of the Son of God. They no more take up stones to cast at him for making "himself God." Can Arians and Socinians boast of a single *converted Jew* in their ranks? Why press upon us Jewish objections, and why raise up against us Jewish opposition, when those very objections are in our favor? Verily, we have not much to fear when the allies of infidelity are brought in to testify against the truth, who acknowledge

at the same time, that a man cannot be a Christian without "believing the doctrine of the Trinity, if the Gospel be true."

LETTER III.

THE DEITY OF JESUS CHRIST.

DEAR SIR,

Having in a former letter plainly stated, and as I believe fully substantiated the Trinitarian doctrine, as commonly held by those to whom that name is applied; I proceed to examine the arguments and evidences you have brought against our Lord's Divinity. This is the subject of the second section of your book. In your first edition this section bore the title, "Of the Divinity of Jesus Christ." In the second, it bears that, "Of the Son of God." Then in the very outset you complain of being "charged with denying the Son of God; or in other words his divinity." Now, if I understand you, the Son of God and his divinity, mean just the same thing, and therefore there is evidently more ambiguity in the present title than the former. In this there was probably some special design. In your first work, you made this broad declaration "I believe in the divinity of Jesus in the fullest sense." This is left out in the work under consideration. Your belief in the divinity of Jesus in the *fullest sense*, was called in question, and shewn to be a declaration without foundation, by comparing your views when explained by yourself, with our public Symbol, Chap. 8, Sec. 2. It was also abundantly shewn, that by the *divinity* of Jesus, you meant one thing, and we another; that you held a *created pre-existent soul* of the man Christ Jesus, with nothing more than *derived powers*, and a *communicated divinity*; while we on the other hand held his *eternal pre-existence*, as the second person in the divine nature, and consequently, his *unoriginated and eternal divinity*. This is the *fullest sense* in which the divinity of Jesus is held by millions in the Christian world; and any plain man may see at once an *essential difference*. It was prudent enough therefore in

you, to drop that expression of your belief, in a subsequent work; but in the mean time did not candor and charity, forbid you to reiterate the complaint of an "unjust charge" against you for "denying the divinity of Jesus," without stating fairly and honestly the *ground* on which the charge is set up, by those, who have no doubt in their minds of your complete denial of the *proper divinity of the Son of God.*

In a work as limited as this must be, it would be unreasonable to expect a formal reply to every paragraph in your book; or even to every thing presented with confidence under the imposing name of argument. Quotations cannot be lengthy; yet your idea shall be presented *fairly* if possible. The following, I believe, is your principle argument from reason.

"The voice of reason is, that the same individual cannot beget itself, nor be begotten by itself. Therefore the substance of the Son was never begotten nor born. If it be granted, that the substance of the Son was eternal, and therefore never begotten, but still urged that the Son was eternally begotten; then it must follow that, what was eternally begotten had no substance, and therefore, was not a real being. This is virtually to deny the Son. If language conveys ideas, it is plain that the act of begetting implies a previous agent; and that the agent and the act must precede the thing begotten; therefore the Son could not be eternally begotten. If the Son be very and eternal God, and as there is but one only true God, then it will follow that the Son begat himself and was his own father!—that he was active in begetting, and passive in being begotten. I would humbly ask the advocates for eternal generation, did the Son of God exist before he was begotten?" (p. 14.)

It is no difficult matter to predict, much less to see, how men can argue against the sublime doctrines of the Bible when they come out upon them with "The Voice of Reason." Not being able to *conceive* how the three divine persons can be one Godhead or essence, nor how the Father and the Son can be one in eternal honors and attributes, which is abundantly taught in the Bible; rather than subscribe to this evidence, the pride of human understand-

ing boldly and confidently *reasons* about it from things *human* to things *divine*; and because a human son is inferior to his father, and was begotten by him at a certain point of time, it very gravely concludes, that it cannot be otherwise with the Godhead.

When you say, (in page 20) "Humbly would I suggest that Jesus is called the *only begotten* of the Father, because the Father begat him *of and by himself*, without the means of any other," is it possible that you can after this, be so blinded as to tride over our heads with "the voice of reason, upon the *analogy* of a *human* and a *divine* generation? What likeness, analogy, or parallel, can you institute between the *physical* or *literal* generation of a human being, and that which is *divine*, either as it respects the *modus generandi* of the Father, or the *modus existendi* of the Son? I deny that there is any; and I refer to your own *humble suggestion*, just quoted, to support me in the assertion. I deny that your reasoning has any force, because it has no foundation. But perhaps Noah Worcester, a brother in the same line with yourself, and whose Arian notions are very prominent in your book, will afford you a little aid here. "God," says he, "has endued his creatures with a power of procreation, by which they produce offspring like themselves. Why is it not possible that God should possess the power of producing a Son in his own likeness, and with his own nature." (Bible News. p. 58.) This requires no comment of mine. It shows what the voice of reason, and the reveries of imagination can do when the standard of revelation is deserted.

That the generation of the Son of God is something figuratively called a generation, cannot be denied. But what is its natural meaning when applied to the Son of God, or what may be its true sense when it is so applied in scripture, I shall not attempt to define. The Logos of God is doubtless eternal; for "In the beginning was the Logos, and the Logos was *with* God, and the Logos was God." From this passage the *eternity* of the WORD is as firmly established as the *eternity* of God, and all the criticism in the world cannot destroy it, without destroying the authority of the text. When therefore the Logos, is called the Son, the Son of God, &c. I understand, that this name

is expressive of a certain relation which the second person stands in to the first who is called the Father. Nor do I conceive that the birth or generation of the Son, is to be understood as if he was something that had been ever *made*, because his actual existence is from eternity, as I have proven from Micah 5. 2. and John 1. 1. And further, this is the necessary consequence of the confessed eternity of the Father. The personal subsistence of a divine Logos is implied in the very idea of a God, and the existence of the Son is necessarily and inseparably attached to the attributes of the Paternal Mind: insomuch that the Father could no more be without the Son, than without his own attributes. How could paternal attributes be ascribed to him, if they were older than the Son's personal existence? Paternity individuates the person who is called father among men; but how can any man sustain a paternal relation, or be called a father, who never had a son? By the generation of the Son of God, therefore, when it is spoken of as taking place at a particular time, is not to be understood as any *beginning* of his existence, which he ever had, when, to use the words of an excellent writer, "He lay as it were, unissued in the bosom of the Father, *as one brought up with him*, and where he energized only with himself;" but when the divine faculties were first exerted, or the Divine Nature became active on created things, according to some of the ablest of the primitive fathers, this was the exertion in which the Logos, or Son, came forth. This was not a beginning of his existence, but a display of his powers in the creation of the world, *for all things were made by him*. And if the belief of antiquity would have any weight here, I am fully authorized to assert that, at the time of the Nicene council, it was the language of the orthodox, that the existence of the Son was prior to his generation, and independent of it; understanding, as I have said, the generation of the Son, to be something *figuratively*, not physically or literally, called a generation; and not the *commencement* of his existence, but a display of his powers in creation. This is confirmed by Constantine the Great, who called that council, and who afterwards, writing to the Nichomedians, uses these expressions—"he was begotten, or rather he himself came forth (being ever

in the Father) for the setting in order of the things which were made by him." (Horseley's Tracts, p. 236.)

I am not sure that you and those who act with you make a distinction between *begetting* and *creating* as it respects the Father in the production of the Son. Mr. Smith says, "We are not disposed to urge that Jesus Christ in his pre-existent state was created." You said in your first Address, (p. 19.) "I have proved already that he was created or brought forth by God himself, the first of all." You now tell us, that "the Father begat him *of* and *by* himself, without the means of any other; but he begat and brought forth all other things by his Son." Then to make him out an instrumental creator, you cite Eph. 3. 9. "God *created* all things by Jesus Christ." Here the proof is fair as it respects you, that the *generative act* of the Father, is the same with his *creative act* in bringing forth his Son. Here all the force of your reasoning from analogy is lost forever, for human fathers never *create* their sons, as it seems God did his. Now for your views: "My own views of the Son of God, are, that he did not begin to exist 1820 years ago;" (i. e. when he was born) "nor did he exist from eternity: but was the first begotten (created) of the Father before time, or creation began." p. 19. Now here is a being, "the soul of the man Christ Jesus," (p. 17. 1st Edit.) "the Son of God," *created before* creation began! before time, and yet not from eternity! "Begotten by the Father *of* and *by* himself, without the *means* of any other;"—without a mother, must be your meaning! If you are not fairly entitled to the name of the Mistress of Babylon, then no Trinitarian need ever fear any other rival. But to cap the climax of mystery and absurdity, that being, whatever it was, that was brought into existence somewhere between time and eternity, assumed or was united to a human body *only*, without a soul! Your words are: "It is also affirmed by our brethren, the Son of God took to him a reasonable soul, as well as a true body.—That he took a reasonable soul is a doctrine without a shadow of Bible proof, the contrary of which is plainly declared. A *body* hast thou prepared me,—the word was made *flesh*, &c. If there is one text to shew that the Son of God took to himself a reasonable soul, I should be glad to know it." p.

17. That there is a shadow of Bible proof, and more than a shadow too, there can be no question. The term *flesh*, by a *synecdoche* (a part put for the whole, a very common thing in the scripture) is put to signify the whole man, soul and body. "All *flesh* is grass." (Isa. 40. 6.)—All *flesh* had corrupted his way. (Gen. 6. 12.) So likewise, by the same rule, the soul is put for the whole human person. Gen. 12. 6. "And Abram took Sarai his wife—and the *souls* that they had gotten in Haran." But what are we to understand, when in prophetic declaration, the Son of God is made to say "thou wilt not leave *my soul* in hell;" or, as it is commonly understood, in the state of the dead, or place of separate spirits? When his "*soul* was made an offering for sin, and was exceeding sorrowful even unto death," what was it, if not a *human soul*? How was he in *all things made like unto his brethren*, (Heb. 2. 17.)—how was he the *second Adam*? or how was the first Adam a *figure* of him that was to come, if Jesus Christ had no human soul? And if it was not a *reasonable soul*, then what was it! I will push these inquiries no further; but will agree that you shall settle this point by your own acknowledgment in your first Address, (p. 13) which I consider as good proof here, seeing you are "not conscious that the sentiments in general expressed in your former publications are at variance with any expressed in *this*." Your words are: "That the humanity of Jesus consisted of a reasonable soul and true body, but few, if any, deny. That his humanity, consisting of *soul* and *body*, was *created* or *produced*; all agree, who have not the spirit of Antichrist." If I were one of your disciples, I should begin to think it high time to look out for my own safety, when I heard the trumpet of my leader emitting such sounds of uncertainty and self-contradiction. After such a strong and proscriptive declaration seven years ago; who, of all your votaries, could have dreamed of such an approximation to the spirit of Antichrist, as now appears in the denial of the *real humanity* of Jesus Christ; for a human soul is surely *essential* to constitute human nature. And if Jesus Christ were not perfectly a man, possessing human nature really and truly in its pure and sinless state; I cannot conceive it possible, that any point in theology or morals can be proved

from the language of the New Testament. And will any one refuse his assent to the proposition, that Christ possessed a divine nature, because he cannot see *how* a union of the divine and human natures could take place; and yet believe that a human body was united to a soul not human? According to your account of the Son of God, it is impossible to ascertain what kind of a being he is. In attempting a rhetorical description of his death on the cross, you say, "It is not a mere man that suffers and dies." To what order or class of beings, then, does this new compound, and strangely mixed person belong? His existence did not commence with time, nor was it from eternity. He is a being *distinct* from the Father, and *inferior* to him; he is not God; he is not man; he is not divine; he is not human; nor is he angelic, for angels have no corporeal forms. If there be *mystery* in any theory, which has ever been proposed, respecting the person of Christ, it appears to me, it may surely be found here.

The *Docetae*, or *Gnostics*, the followers of Simon Magus, averred that Christ was a man in appearance merely, and not in reality. They likewise maintained, "that from the Supreme Divinity proceeded certain Eons, who were a kind of lesser Gods, (*dii minores*;) and one of which (Christ) created the world. This descended upon Jesus at his baptism, and forsook him at his crucifixion." Now, in what important respect that opinion differs from this, which holds that Christ had a superangelic soul, or created something answering in the place of a human soul, united to a human body, I confess I cannot see. We are no more likely, I apprehend, to be freed from *mystery* by your theory, than we would by that of the followers of the Samaritan sorcerer in the first century. To say as you do, that Christ was begotten by and of the Father himself, and yet "that the Father and the Son are not one substance." (p. 9.) And again, that "the substance of the Son was never begotten nor born;" (p. 14) then to say, "The old Father's expression is, the Son is of the substance of the Father, against which you have no objection," (Letter to Moreland, p. 10) are sayings and declarations which, if not contradictory, are certainly very problematical.

I will here introduce one argument which, though fami-

liar to Trinitarians, because it is as old as St. Austin, who is the father of it, yet I believe we might safely challenge the whole tribe of opponents to solve it, and indeed, if it were necessary, might venture to rest the issue of the controversy upon it. His words are to the following purport: "Christ, *by whom all things were made*, cannot be *made himself*. And if Christ be *not made*, then he is not a *creature*. But if he be not a creature, he must be of the *same substance* with the Father (the Creator:) For all substance or being, which is not God, is necessarily a creature; and what a creature is not, that God is. Now, if the Son is not of the same substance of which the Father is, he must inevitably be a *created substance*: and if he be a *created substance*, then *all things* could not be made *by him*. But *all things were made by him*. Therefore, he is of the *same substance* with the Father: and consequently is not only God, but the *true God*." (Hor. Sol. vol. 1. p. 421.)

Your reasoning powers appear to have had much to do with that passage of our Confession which says, "that the Son of God, the second person in the Trinity, being very and eternal God," &c.—did take upon him man's nature:—So that two whole, perfect and distinct natures, the Godhead and the manhood, were inseparably joined together in one person—which person is very God and very man, &c. The words "very and eternal God," sometimes converting them into the "one only true God," without any regard to the connection and explanation of the whole section, have employed your logic for three or four pages, which is really a tax upon patience to read, and by no means deserves a serious refutation. You have made us to say that, the very and eternal God was born of Mary—the very God suffered—the very and only God was crucified—yea, was dead—buried too—and continued three days and nights under the power of death—the Godhead and manhood in Joseph's tomb—two distinct Gods—one changeable, the other unchangeable—the one a living God, the other a dead, buried one,—all this say our brethren."—Pray, hold, Sir; dont call us brethren, if these things are true, lest you be counted insincere. Such a *pretended* friendship,—such a reiterated appellation of the term "brethren" above a hundred times in

your book, under such circumstances of horrid *misrepresentation*, is entirely gratuitous; it cannot be reciprocated; and really too much resembles the conduct of Joab to Amasa, when he called him, "my brother,—took him by the beard with his right hand to kiss him," while a sword in his left pierced him *in the fifth rib*. (2 Sam. 20. 9, 10.)

"Who suffered on the cross?" you triumphantly ask three times in one page. You answer not the question yourself, but make your *brethren* (as you are pleased to call them) do it, in the language of your sophistries and false inferences. But to the question, who died on the cross? Let Mr. Stone answer himself in another place, (p. 24) when probably he was not thinking of it: "It is not a mere man that suffers and dies; it is the Son of God." This is too indefinite, and we are still left in the dark: Let Mr. Smith answer. "Our view of the subject is, that the sufferer on the cross—was the greatest being whom the one God ever produced; that he was the greatest being in heaven or earth, his Father excepted." (p. 22.) Alas! We are worse off than ever! We must now travel back, to where? The beginning of time? That were to stop before we had scarcely commenced. We must travel beyond the confines of time up through the vast vista of unmeasured eternity, until we arrive at a point, a period, or what shall we call it; when some great being of distinct nature and separate existence from God was begotten, produced, or created, and afterwards inhabiting a little human frame at Bethlehem without a soul, itself answering in the place of a soul; a being not God, not man, but a new *compound* of a mere body and a non-descript *something*, with a borrowed name, and called the Son of God! I hope the honest Trinitarian will never hang his head any more when taunted and jeered by the great *rationalists* and *simplifying* theorists of the day, on account of the acknowledged mysteries of his holy doctrines.

As time is the measure of finite being, and as it is not possible to conceive of a medium between time and eternity; therefore, whatever was before *time*, which only *measures* creation, must be from eternity. Absurd then truly, and little less than a contradiction, to say that there was a *finite* being produced *before* time; for that is, in effect, to

assert that a *limited* duration is *antecedent* to that measure whereby it is determined or limited. The Socinian theory seems to me incomparably more rational, and more tenable, than any shade of the Arian hypothesis. If the evidence be not complete, that Christ was a real man, as to his human nature, from his birth, actions, sufferings, death, and affirmations respecting himself; then how is it to be proved, that he ever existed at all? The sufferer on the cross, if Peter may be allowed to speak, was "Jesus of Nazareth, a MAN approved of God." Acts 2. 22. But we are told that "Trinitarians and Socinians, though always contending, are in your view, the same on this doctrine;" and you tell Mr. Moreland that your views (meaning that the soul of Christ was the Son of God himself, the only begotten of the Father; and when united with flesh, was the very soul of that body,) are "as high above those of Arius, as Arius's is above Socinus and modal Trinitarians, yea as high as the heavens are above the earth." To what shall we attribute such assertions? I will not name it lest it might be offensive. They ought not to have been made. No *honest, intelligent* writer has ever before set Trinitarians and Socinians down together, and the very extracts that you have made from our public symbols might have taught you a different lesson. Prudence and modesty forbid you to villify the very company amongst whom you associate a few pages ahead, when with Socinians as well as Arians, you deny the *vicarious* obedience and *substitution* of Jesus Christ. Besides, do you know the difference between the *High* and *Low* Arians? Perhaps you may yet have to learn that you belong to the former class, as you seem to be in a state of progression, and may have arrived to that stage without knowing it.

The *High* Arians "believe the Father to be the one Supreme God over all, absolutely eternal, underived, unchangeable, and independent; they conceive the Son to be the first derived being from the Father, and under him employed in creating, and also in preserving and upholding the world." They concur with the *Low* Arians in "maintaining the pre-existence of Christ as a super-angelic Spirit, which supplied the place of a soul to him upon his conception and birth, and also his derivation from, and"

subordination to, the Father; but ascribed to him a higher degree, rank, and dignity, than the others, which created the distinction of *High* and *Low* Arians. (*Religious World Displayed*, vol. 2nd. p. 173. See also, Art. *Arians*, in Rees's Cyclop.)

Arianism in England, compared with what it has been, is but a faint echo, and daily growing fainter and fainter; the most of its abettors having, with the great Mr. Chillingworth, slid down the precipice into *Socinianism* below. This name, however, being unpopular and odious, they assume in the place of it the title of Unitarians. *Whiston*, the translator of Josephus, and *Thomas Emlyn*, a dissenting minister in Dublin, appear to have been the first of the Arians who claimed this title. This is the great *Thomas Emlyn*, as your Unitarian brother, Mr. Smith, calls him, who makes such a figure in the 19th page of his sermon, and in other parts of the same performance, where the Arian heterodoxy plentifully abounds. I mention these circumstances, which at first may be deemed unimportant; but my object is to show which way the current is flowing, and little doubt have I, but that the Arianism of this country in seven years more, will be extinct altogether, or swallowed up in the vortex of *Unitarianism*, which is only the modern name adopted in the place of *Socinianism*. On the atonement, you are already full up to the eyes in that heresy; and you have only to lose sight of that phantom of a *created*, pre-existent being, before which you fall down and worship, to plunge fully into the more consistent inconsistencies of the Academy of Hackney in England, or the new Divinity School of Germany.

I acknowledge this is digression; I will return to my purpose. A few words more on the pre-existence of Christ. That he had an existence before he took flesh upon him, and before he came into the world, is true of his *divine nature*; for he was a *divine person*, the second in the Godhead, before he became the *God-man*. But that notion which attributes to the pre-existence of Christ some intelligent nature *inferior* to Godhead, is without foundation, or shadow of proof, as we have already proven, and believe shall be able further to confirm.

Your notion of the existence of the Son of God before

time, and yet not from eternity, flatly contradicts the Apostle: "Wherefore in *all things* it behoved him to be made *like* unto his brethren." Heb. 2. 17. Now if Christ was made, as it behoved him to be made, and none can doubt it, he was *made in all things*, in all respects, *like his brethren*. According to your theory, it should have been, he was made in *some respects* like his brethren. Suppose you assert the pre-existence of all human souls, as some have done, to make things fit together; you can adduce no proof, that any human soul did ever exist before its body. Can you find the man; were you yourself ever *conscious* of any such pre-existence? Who ever has *remembered* any mental act performed by himself before he was born? If Jehovah has revealed the fact of any such pre-existence, where is it? If all the souls of men, therefore, were produced as early as Adam's was, no man knows it.

But if you still press your argument, we ask, how old was the Son of God? This you cannot tell upon your principle of pre-existence. But if you refer back the question to me, I reply, "he was twelve years old" when his parents went up with him to Jerusalem. Luke 2. 42. "He began to be about *thirty years* of age" when he was baptized and entered on his public ministry. Luke 3. 23. Now, according to you, this will apply to his body *only*, for what you call his soul, or whatever it might be, *was at that time older than the hills*. It will not do to read the above passages, *when his body had been born twelve years, or was twelve years old, &c.* Besides, he is frequently stiled by the Holy Ghost, *the child*, and *the young child*. Did his body alone constitute the child? Or how could he be a *young child*, if that soul which animated his body was older than Adam?

But the child Jesus *grew and waxed strong in spirit, — increasing in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man.* Luke 2. 40, 52. How could this be, if "he was the greatest being in heaven or earth, that God ever produced?" How could he who possessed *wisdom* to plan, and *power* to create and *uphold* all things, be reduced down and circumscribed in the little human frame of the babe of Bethlehem, by a limited wisdom which must increase with the growth of time and stature? And did all the fulness

The Deity of Jesus Christ.

of Godhead dwell in him *bodily* before he had a body. And if a distinct, separate being from the Father, created or produced by him, and being of course a finite being, how can a finite capacity on such a plan contain infinite perfections? How can a vessel, *finite* and *limited*, measure the infinite fulness of the Godhead? If he were not equal with the Father "in essence, being or eternity," as you aver; and "the divinity in him was eternal, because the fulness of Godhead was in him," as you acknowledge; how did he possess this divinity but by *communication*, or *transfer*? And if he possessed *ALL* the fulness of Godhead in this way, how much remained with the Father? If an earthly father transfer the *whole* of his wealth to his son, is the father still rich?

Having fully shewn the absurdity of your notion of Christ's pre-existence, I proceed a step further, to examine one still more absurd, if possible, which makes him out an instrumental creator. "The Lord Jesus Christ who is the Son of God, is the instrumental cause of all things," p. 20. "The Son," says Mr. Smith, "was the instrumental cause of the creation." This you have attempted to prove by a number of texts, whereas, there are but two in all the New Testament, in which the Father is said to have created all things by the Son, namely, Eph. 3. —"God, who created all things by Jesus Christ," and Heb. 1. 2—"By whom also he made the worlds." In the former, the words, *by Jesus Christ*, are not in Griesbach's Testament, which seems to be such high authority with you, and it has been ascertained long ago, that they are wanting in some ancient copies of the Scriptures. Of this, however, I take no advantage. The other passages you and your friend have cited, can no more ascribe an *instrumental* agency in creation to the Son, than to the Father, e. g. in Heb. 2. 10, it is said of the Father, that "it became him *for whom* are all things, and *by whom* are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make *the Captain* of their salvation perfect through suffering." But in Col. 1. 16, of the Son it is said, "all things were created *by him*, and *for him*." I aver likewise that the word *dia* in this connection designates the *principal*, as well as the *instrumental* cause. Rom. 11. 36, "All things are said to be of God (*ex autou*)

and by God (*di' autou*;) 'the very form of expression applied to Christ, in Col. 1. 16—20. So Heb. 2. 10, quoted above, and 1 Cor. 1. 9. But still the difficulty remains, how we are to explain or understand the phrase, "by whom he (the Father) made the worlds," Heb. 1. 2. The apostle's own words, it might seem, are entirely sufficient to prevent mistake here, verses 10—12: "And thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundations of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thy hands," &c. This is an address of the Father to the Son, and can't be misunderstood. If, however, the difficulty seems still to press, let us see if it may not be removed by Hos. 1. 7, "I (Jehovah is the speaker) will have mercy upon the house of Judah, and will save them *by Jehovah.*" Can any suppose that the second Jehovah in this place is the *instrumental* cause of Judah's salvation? Of a similar import is the phraseology in Gen. 19. 24: "And *Jehovah* rained down upon Sodom and Gomorrah fire and brimstone FROM JEHOVAH, out of heaven." Is either the first or second *Jehovah* in this verse an *inferior* being? How then can the phrase that *God made the worlds by his Son*, imply, of course, that the Son is of an inferior nature? That it does imply a distinction, between the Father and the Son, we have all along averred to be a scripture doctrine. "It seems to declare, also, that *the Godhead, in respect to the distinction of Son, was in a special manner concerned with the creation of the worlds.* What is there impossible or improbable in this?"

But there arises another objection to your theory; from the consideration of its being incompatible with the idea of creation, which is a production of something out of nothing, for God to make use of an instrument. If an instrument be made use of, it must be finite or infinite. The latter it cannot be, unless we maintain two infinities, the one superior and the other subordinate, which is absurd. The former it cannot be; for creation being a *supernatural* effect, which infinite power *only* can produce, and as infinite power cannot be exerted by a finite medium, therefore no such instrument can be used. Besides, creative power, which must be infinite, would be limited in its method of acting, by the instrument it makes use of; for whatever

power the principal has in himself, the effect produced by the instrument will be in proportion to its weakness. For instance; suppose a giant were about to turn over an house, and should make use of a straw or a reed to do it with, would not the weakness of the instrument render his power insignificant and ridiculous? So for God to make use of an inferior or finite being in the creation of all things, the power exerted by that being can be no more than finite, and therefore inadequate for the production of things supernatural, which require infinite power.

It will be inquired here, are not miracles supernatural productions; and were they not wrought by men as instruments? It is granted that miracles are supernatural productions. But they are a species of *creation*, or equivalent to it. The power that wrought them was as directly from God, as if no instrument had been present. It was the same power that opened one man's eyes, and raised the withered arm of another, though clay was used in the former case, nothing but a word in the latter. Men were not properly instruments in the hand of God, to produce supernatural effects. They who are said to have wrought them, sometimes used no action whatever therein,—they addressed themselves to God, that he would put forth his immediate power in the miracle to be wrought; they called the attention of the people; raised their expectation, and taught them to look for the divine interference. (See Num. 16. 28—33, and 2 Kings 1. 12.) Sometimes a visible sign was used, as in the cases of Moses's rod and Elijah's mantle dividing the waters of Jordan. But who supposes that the action of stretching the rod over the waters in the one case, or smiting them with the mantle in the other, had any tendency to produce those miracles? The power was the same without them; but they were employed to excite expectation, that God would put forth his immediate power to work.

One word more: What assignable reason can be given why God should make use of an instrument in creation at all, when he could have created all things, without difficulty, and without absurdity, by that very power which produced the instrument? I say there is none. But last of all. I oppose your theory, because, if ever there was one

directly opposed to, and contradicted by the word of God, yours certainly is. It is written; "GOD HIMSELF formed the earth and made it." (Isa. 45. 18.) "He ALONE spread out the heavens." (Job 9. 8.) "*Jehovah* that maketh all things, stretcheth forth the heavens ALONE." (Isa. 44. 24.) "I, even MY hands, have stretched out the heavens." (45. 12.) "He that BUILT all things is GOD." (Heb. 3. 4.) If the absurd theory of a proxy creator, an instrumental God, can be maintained in opposition to such express testimony as this, then we need no more wonder at the hardihood of men who can even deny the Lord that bought them.

LETTER IV.

THE SUBJECT CONTINUED.

DEAR SIR,

I come, now, in order, to the simple question, whether he who created the universe, is really and truly divine; whether he is God, in the true and supreme sense, or not? This is the fundamental question between us. In this discussion you will not require of me to enumerate and examine at length every text in the Bible, that I may suppose to have a connection with the subject before us. If the book is divine, a few passages, the language of which appears to be genuine, and above the condemnation of textual criticism; and such as appear to contain the best and most decisive proof of the point to be examined, will answer in the place of ten thousand. Nor will you be surprised if, in this selection of proofs for the proper divinity of the Saviour, I adduce some passages, which seem to have found no place in your writings. They are very positive and inflexible; so much so, that all attempts hitherto, to destroy their testimony by Unitarian critics, have only served to discover more than ever their entire nakedness.

John 1. 1—3. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made

by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made." verse 10, - - - "and the world was made by him." All known manuscripts, it is not denied, agree in the text here. And only some *conjectural* readings are recorded by Griesbach which are so entirely gratuitous and unfounded, that it is a matter of surprise why he should condescend to notice them. Mr. Smith has been more bold and adventurous than you, in attempting an explanation of this passage; but had he been as prudent as you in saying not a word about it, he would certainly have been commended for preventing the exposure of his weakness. He thinks "it not likely that John should have inculcated at his first setting out, the eternal Godhead of the Son, seeing he has furnished the most explicit evidence against it in the following part of his gospel." In support of this assertion, a few passages are cited which only apply to Christ's humanity and delegated office as Mediator and Messiahship, which by no means can tax the apostle with inconsistency and contradiction in asserting his Godhead. The above assertion, therefore, is without ground, or if of any account, must lead us back to the question, Is the book divine? If it contradicts itself, it cannot be.

"In the beginning was the Word," the *Logos*. The phrase *en arhe*, in the beginning, we will admit does not of itself *simply* signify *from eternity*, though I believe that the *Logos* did exist from eternity, as I have before shewn; and that his existence from eternity, is *implied*, though not *directly* proved by the expression may be safely and properly admitted. All that Mr. Smith can learn from the expression, *in the beginning was the Word*, is, that the *Logos* existed before creation; which we admit. But the *Logos* was God. The Unitarian Improved Version of the New Testament, proposes to render the word *Theos*, a god. "Does then," says Professor Stuart, "the Christian Revelation admit of gods superior and inferior? And if so, to what class of inferior gods does the *Logos* belong? And how much would such a theory of divine natures, differ from that which admits a Jupiter Optimus Maximus, and gods greater and less?" Mr. Smith, instead of telling us plainly what the apostle meant when he says, *the Logos was God*, evades it, by adroitly slipping it in among Tri-

nitarian differences and discrepancies, as he pretends to make out. But not satisfied with this as sufficient to scuffle the text out of view, he very officiously turns in to reason for them, and furnishes them with two supreme Gods; while he, happy man! having got rid of that stubborn thing, "*The Logos was God,*" gently slides off into a happy illustration of the phrase, "the Word was with God;" by introducing the sophistry of some "eminent writer," respecting the supposed identity of Luke and Sylvanus. "We may," says he, "consider the question being settled in the following manner: Suppose we were to find in any part of the New Testament this expression, Luke was with Sylvanus. We should immediately conclude that Luke was not Sylvanus, but a different being from him. The application is easy." p. 30. Yes, the application is easy enough on the Unitarian plan, which denies the three personal distinctions in the Godhead; which denies a distinct existence of the Father and the Son in the same essence. The application is easy; it denies that Luke and Sylvanus were the same individual; it acknowledges they were in company; but says nothing about their equality, or whether one was older than the other. All it can tell us is, that Luke was not Sylvanus, and Sylvanus was not Luke, but they were in company. Indeed, if the question is settled by this "simple example," as it is called, the Trinitarian has nothing to fear from the imbecile attacks of those who deny the proper divinity of his Saviour.

But the question still comes up; what can John mean when he affirms that the *Logos was God*, and yet was *with God*? I answer, that I understand him to mean, that he was truly divine, but still divine in such a manner, as to involve no contradiction in a distinction of existence between him and the Father. The word God in the first instance, I take to mean, God as Father, as it does in a great many cases; in the second instance, the Word was God, I consider it a description of divine being, of the Divinity, without reference to the distinction of Father; a use which is very common. That the word *Theos*, God without the article, does designate the Divine Being, who is the Supreme God, you cannot deny upon the principles of Greek syntax, or the usage of the Greek writers; see the chap-

fer in question, ver. 6, 13, 18; also Matt. 19. 26. Luke 16. 13. John 9. 33, and 16. 30. Rom. 8. 3. Eph. 2. 8. Heb. 9. 14, &c. &c. Many instances might be adduced, were it necessary, but I see no difficulty in supposing that God as Father is meant in the first instance in the text, and the divinity without reference to the distinction of Father in the second.

Still, what is meant by the *Logos* being *with God*? It indicates *union, conjunction, communion, and familiarity*, as might be shewn in many places. In John 1. 18. the only begotten Son is said to be "in the bosom (*eis ton kolpon*;) of the Father, which may amount to the assertion, that he was *conjunctissimus deo, most intimately connected with him*. And this might be illustrated by comparing those cases where christians are promised, as the summit of their felicity, that they shall *be with God* and Christ, and be where they are. But if it be inquired, *how* this connection between the *Logos* and God is? I answer, without hesitation or fear, that I cannot tell. The *fact* is asserted by the Evangelist, but he says not one word about the *modus*. If we could explain this, then perhaps we might be able to define the distinction, which we believe to exist in the Godhead.

If such be the difficulty and mystery of this connection, why, you may ask, was it ever asserted? I answer, in the days of the apostle, there were heretics, who maintained that Christ was a being not only *distinct from God*, but an *emanation from him*. The apostle's asseveration, that the *Logos* was with God—was from the beginning most intimately connected with him, and was *divine*, would, of course, contradict such an opinion.

I have no hesitation, then, in asserting that this passage in which, beyond all reasonable doubt, Christ is called *God*, in the full meaning of that word, as the context will support; has plainly and unequivocally taught us that this *God, Theos*, who was the *Logos*, created the universe. Will you tell me here that the creation of the universe can be performed by an inferior and subordinate Being. I ask how? You will answer, by *delegation*. What can be meant by infinite wisdom, and omnipotence (which must belong to a Creator,) being *delegated*? Can God delegate his per-

fections? If the act of creating the universe, the world material and immaterial, which no finite or secondary being can perform, does not designate the absolute, supreme, omnipotent, and omniscient Being; then no proof that such a Being exists can possibly be adduced. The Arian hypothesis therefore, which ascribes both the first formation, and the perpetual government of the universe, not to the Deity, but to an inferior being, deserves to be filed away among the fabulous legends of the heathen *dii minores*, or *lesser gods*. "Can any power or wisdom, less than the Supreme, be a sufficient ground for the trust we are required to place in Providence? Make the wisdom and the power of our ruler what you please; still, upon the Arian principle, it is the wisdom and the power of a creature: where then will be the certainty, that the evil which we find in the world, hath not crept in through some imperfection in the original contrivance, or in the present management; since every intellect, below the first, may be liable to error, and any power, short of the Supreme, may be inadequate to purposes of a certain magnitude? But if evil may have thus crept in, what assurance can we have, that it will ever be extirpated?" (*Dr. Horseley*.) But the Trinitarian is at home on this subject, quietly and comfortably listening to John teaching him, and declaring of the *Divine Logos*, that *ta panta*, all things, were made by him; and to Paul, saying, "He that built all things is God." Heb. 3. 4.

That the Bible every where appeals to *creative power*, as the peculiar and distinguishing prerogative of the Supreme God, and attributes it solely to Jehovah, cannot be denied, without denying the divine authority of the Bible itself. (See Gen. 2. 2, 3. Ex. 20. 11. Isa. 44. 24. Jer. 10. 12. Ps. 8. 3, 4.) If these passages make it plain, that *creative power* is the appropriate and peculiar attribute of the Supreme God, how can they attribute the creation of *ta panta*, the universe, to a *subordinate* agent, or to a *finite spirit*? And most of all, how could Paul say (Rom. 1. 20.) that the heathen were without excuse, for not acknowledging the *eternal power* and *GODHEAD* from the evidence which his *CREATING* power afforded—from considering the *THINGS THAT WERE MADE*, if the Supreme Divinity, who

possesses eternal power and Godhead, did not exhibit it in his *creating energy* when all things were made? But it is said of Christ, that *all things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made.* John 1. 3. What stronger proof do we want of the Godhead or Supreme Divinity of Jesus Christ?

But another text which you and your co-adjutor, Mr. Smith, were willing to let pass without trouble, and one which has given more uneasiness and created more difficulty in the way of Arian and Socinian criticism than probably any other, is, Rom. 9. 5. "Whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, WHO IS OVER ALL, GOD BLESSED FOREVER. AMEN." I have no doubt but you have looked with an anxious eye at this text. You have quite likely opened your favorite Griesbach, and finding his margin here filled with conjectural and other readings, to which he himself has attributed no considerable weight; and likewise learning that *all the collated manuscripts of the Epistle to the Romans contain the text as it stands: as do all the ancient versions, and nearly all the Fathers;* you have despaired of getting its vote in your favor, and therefore passed it by with silent neglect. *Epi panton Theos* is, literally, "over-all God." And if this does not describe him as the *head*, or the *ruler* of the universe; yea, if it can mean any thing less than, *supreme God*, pray, what does it mean? Will you substitute a conjectural reading, originating from theological speculation, against the plain and incontrovertible evidence of the integrity of the text? That were to introduce a principle fundamentally subversive of all interpretation and criticism; and we would have nothing more to do, but to reject the scriptures entirely, or mould them according to every man's own wishes. I aver then, that you cannot, without departing from Greek usage, and doing violence to the custom of language, devise a method whereby you can avoid the assertion, that Christ is *God over all*, or *Supreme God*. The expressions in the text are so full, and the contrast between the human and divine natures of the Redeemer so strong, that no honest arts are able to evade their force. "I must," says Dr. Doddridge, "render, and paraphrase, and improve this memorable text, as a proof of Christ's Deity, which, I think,

the opposers of that doctrine have never been able, nor will ever be able, to answer." (*Fam. Expositor on the place.*)

Another passage I adduce to prove the Supreme Divinity of Jesus Christ is, Heb. 1. 8, 9: "But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever; a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom. Thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows."

It is objected to our view of this passage, "That the Son here, under the appellation God, is said to have a God who anointed him. If he who is called God is the Supreme God, it follows that that God who was his God was more than supreme, which is impossible." (Smith's, ser. p. 28.) The fact that the person called God here, calls another being *his God*, I readily admit; but the conclusion, i. e. that he cannot be supreme, I must be permitted to deny. The text is a quotation from the 45th Psalm; where Christ is described as a king trampling upon his enemies. As the Messiah, the anointed King; and so to be considered as incarnate, and of course subordinate, sustaining a delegated office, he might, with the greatest propriety, call Jehovah his God. "Is it still a matter of wonder, that the same person could at any one time be called *God*, and have everlasting dominion ascribed to him, who, the next moment, calls Jehovah *his God*? It is a wonder of the same nature, as that which perplexed the Jews, when Christ asked them how David could call the Messiah *Lord*, while at the same time he was his Son. It is a wonder, which no ground but that of Trinitarians can ever explain. I mean the ground, that the divine and the human natures co-existed in Christ, and that in the same sentence, he could with propriety speak of himself as human and divine."

On this subject, the sacred writers thought it not necessary or expedient, on every occasion, to attempt a distinctive separation of the divine and human natures of our Saviour, no more than we, when we say, Abraham is dead, or Abraham is alive, think it necessary to add, *as to his body*, in one case, or *as to his soul*, in the other.

The Deity of Jesus Christ.

1 John, 5. 20. "And we know that the Son of God came, and hath given us an understanding, that we know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, eternal life."

Such is the conclusion of this most divine Epistle, which the author had opened with a declaration of the compound person of our Redeemer as God-man, and now closes his cautions and observations with another solemn declaration of the real and proper deity of the Son of God, whom the whole context requires that these words should be understood. The common laws of grammar require it. Christ is the immediate antecedent. The apostle who before asserted that Christ *was God*, and to have created all things, would find no scruple in calling him *true God*, which is confirmed by the other adjunct standing with it,—*"and the ETERNAL LIFE."* This is an expression familiar to John, which he applies to Christ as the author of spiritual and eternal life. And as it is nowhere found in his writings applied thus to the Father, the rules of exegesis compel us to construe both expressions, the *true God* and *eternal life*, of Jesus Christ. And if the *true God* is not really divine, who is?

Acts 7. 59. "And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit."

That the blessed Stephen, commonly called the first christian martyr, died a martyr to the *Deity* of Christ, I think there can be little doubt. He ascribed divinity to one who had suffered publicly as a malefactor. That was his crime none can doubt, who attends to the conclusion of the story. He "looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God," (the splendour of the *Shekinah*, for that is what is meant, when the glory of God is mentioned as something that may be seen,) "and Jesus standing on the right hand of God."—He saw the *Lord Jesus*, standing on the right hand of God. His declaration of what he saw, the Jewish rabble understood as an assertion of the divinity of Jesus: they stopped their ears; they overpowered his voice with their clamours; and they hindered him out of the city, to inflict upon him the death which the law appointed for blasphemers. They stoned

ed Stephen, calling upon God, saying, Lord Jesus; &c. I know the word *God*, is not in the original text, which might be better understood thus; they stoned Stephen, *invocating* and saying, &c. Jesus therefore was the God, whom the dying martyr invoked in his last agonies; when men are apt to pray, with the utmost seriousness, to him whom they conceive the mightiest to save.

The story of St. Paul's conversion, which is twice related by himself, and in which Jesus is deified in the highest terms, is another instance of our Lord's divinity. To adopt the language of Dr. Horseley; "I know not, Sir, in what light this transaction may appear to you; to me, I confess, it appears to have been a repetition of the scene at the bush, heightened in terror and solemnity.—Instead of a lambent flame, appearing to a solitary shepherd, amid the thickets of the wilderness; the full effulgence of the Shechinah, overpowering the splendour of the mid-day sun, bursts upon the commissioners of the Sanhedrim, on the public road to Damascus, within a small distance of the city: Jesus speaks, and is spoken to, as the Divinity inhabiting that glorious light; nothing can exceed the tone of authority on the one side, the submission and religious dread on the other: the recital of this story, seems to have been the usual prelude to the apostle's public apologies; but it only proved the means of heightening the resentment of his incredulous countrymen."

John 20. 28. "And Thomas answered and said unto him, MY LORD AND MY GOD." This is Thomas's confession of faith, accepted and approved of by his master.—*Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed.* But surely, if he had not been *really* God, he would rather have instantly corrected the apostle, than accepted of his confession. Shall we be told that these words of Thomas contain an exclamation or form of admiration? The grammatical construction will not admit of it, as the words *Lord* and *God* are in the nominative case. There was no such usage among the Jews; no phrase of this kind can be produced; by which they were accustomed to express surprise or astonishment. Nor is there any evidence that such a phrase, with the sense alleged, belongs to this language. But the matter is put out of question by the evangelist, who

tells us that Thomas addressed himself to Jesus; and said to him (*eipen atto*;) he did not therefore merely exclaim. He made a declaration that every lover of the Saviour's eternal Divinity, will ever admire and delight to adopt.

Isa. 44. 6. "Thus saith the Lord, the King of Israel, and his Redeemer, the LORD OF HOSTS, I am THE FIRST, and I am THE LAST, and BESIDES ME, there is NO GOD." This passage ascribes the titles *first* and *last* to him alone, *besides whom there is no God*. If therefore, there is no God, besides him who is *the first* and *the last*, and it can be made appear that these titles belong to Jesus Christ, then the conclusion will be fair, that, besides him there is no other God: Now for the proof: Rev. 22. 13. "I (*Jesus*) am alpha and omega, the beginning and the end, THE FIRST and THE LAST." This last passage calls up another important testimony in favor of the point in hand, and at once shews that it applies to Jesus Christ alone. "I am *Alpha* and *Omega*, the *beginning* and the *ending*, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, THE ALMIGHTY." Rev. 1. 8. No words can express more strongly, the eternal power and Godhead, than these do. Nor can the least appearance of reason be assigned why the text should be understood of the Father personally. The whole vision related to Christ, from whom immediately the revelation was given; and most of the expressions here used, or others equivalent to them, are afterwards spoken by him, and concerning himself:—(ver. 11.) "I (*Jesus*) am *Alpha* and *Omega*." And again:—"I am the *first* and the *last*." (v. 17.) That these titles, *Alpha* and *Omega*, *first* and *last*, should be repeated so soon, in a connection which demonstrates they are given to Christ, will appear very remarkable, whatever sense be given to the eighth verse. "And I cannot forbear," says the great and good Dr. Doddridge, "re-*wording* it, that this text has done more than any other in the Bible, toward preventing me from giving into that scheme, which would make our Lord Jesus Christ no more than a deified creature."

The reason, you assign for these titles being given to the Son of God, are scarcely deserving of notice. "Between the *Alpha* and *Omega* are all the letters, by which are formed words, and sentences; and by these words and sen-

tences are conveyed ideas and information. He is therefore called the Alpha and Omega, because from him we have received all the information, and revelations that divine wisdom saw needful." p. 23. The first part of this quotation is merely the invention of fancy, and might be answered in the same manner; but we forbear, and shall attempt to give a more substantial reason why Jesus Christ is called the Alpha and Omega, which are the names of the first and the last letters in the Greek alphabet, the language in which the apostle wrote. They imply; "That he is the first Cause and the last End, the Author and Finisher of all things, in creation, providence and redemption: the Beginning and the Ending, the Source of existence, of life and holiness, and of felicity, and the completion of them, in every sense, and in all respects." *Dr. Scott.*

But to "apply this text," you say, "as is generally done, to the being of the Son of God, as the first being, and therefore eternally God, is gloomy in the extreme. For if he is the first being, he is also the last; and if the last being, there must be an end of all other beings—therefore, the life of all the redeemed must come to a perpetual end." It is a wonder you did not add, *horesco referens!* There is no need of replying to such sophistry as this; and I barely quoted the passage, after what has been said, that it may be seen how easily it carries its own confutation with it. Is it argument? Is it reasoning? Did you think so yourself when you wrote it?

But let us proceed to further evidence. "Sanctify the LORD OF HOSTS HIMSELF, and let HIM be your fear, and let HIM be your dread; but for a STONE OF STUMBLING and ROCK OF OFFENCE to both houses of Israel." (Isa. 8. 13, 14.) 1 Pet. 2. 7, 8. "The stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, and a STONE OF STUMBLING and ROCK OF OFFENCE." There can be no question as to the application of both these passages expressly to the person of Christ. "If the Scripture, thus compared with itself, be drawn up into an argument, the conclusion may indeed be *denied*, and so may the whole Bible, but it cannot be *answered*. For example, The *stone of stumbling*, and *rock of offence*, as the *first* text affirms, is the *Lord of hosts himself*; a name which can be applied to no other

but the one, only, true, and supreme God. But, this stone of stumbling and rock of offence, as it appears from the latter text, is no other than *Christ*, the same stone the builders refused; therefore, *Christ* is the **LORD OF HOSTS HIMSELF**: and who dares to deny it.

Isa. 6. 5. "Mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts." There can be no mistake in the application of this passage. John 12. 41. "These things said *Esaias*, when he saw his (*Christ's*) glory, and spake of him." Jesus is the person here spoken of by John; whose glory *Esaias* is declared to have seen, upon that occasion, where the prophet affirms of himself, that his eyes had seen the Lord of hosts: therefore, Jesus is the **LORD OF HOSTS**." For this, and the above, see *Jones on the Trinity*, a very valuable work for a Trinitarian, and likewise deserving of your candid perusal.

The Psalmist, speaking of the Israelites in the wilderness, says; "they tempted and provoked the *Most High God*." (Ps. 78. 56.) But the Apostle, warning the Corinthians, refers to that same circumstance, and therefore says; "Neither let us tempt *Christ* as some of them also tempted." (1 Cor. 10. 9.) As these texts both relate to the same rebellious acts of the people of Israel, in the former of which, the person they tempted is called the *most high God*, and in the latter he is called *Christ*; the conclusion comes out fair and full, that *Christ* is the *most high God*. Can this mean a deified creature? Is it any thing short of supreme divinity?

Col. 2. 8. 9. "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men—and not after *Christ*: for in him dwelleth all the fulness of the *Godhead* bodily." Says the excellent writer last mentioned, "The apostle foresaw, that a thing calling itself *philosophy* would set all its engines at work to destroy the notion of *Christ's* true and absolute divinity.—For in him (says he) dwelleth all the fulness of the *Godhead* bodily; *philosophy* will dispute this, and undertake to demonstrate the contrary. But if you listen to such *vain deceit*, it will overthrow your faith, and spoil you for a disciple of *Jesus Christ*; therefore beware."

But this passage, with many other texts of the same im-

port, you admit, establish "the divinity of Jesus undeniably;" and in your comment, say, "In him dwelleth, not a part, but *all the fulness of Godhead*, or divinity, bodily." It is natural to inquire here, did that "soul or spirit of the man Christ Jesus;" that being "that was *created* or brought forth by God himself, the first of all," possess *all the fulness of Godhead*, before it had a body! This is not the language of the text, which evidently denies your notion of *created* pre-existence, which supposes that all the Divine Attributes, all the fulness of the Godhead *pan to pleroma tes Theotetos*, were conveyed entire into a "pre-existent soul," which you now call the Son of God. Can the capacity of a mere man, or any *created* being contain all the fulness of the Godhead? You acknowledge it is a *great mystery*, as before noted. Yes, it is; and greater upon your plan, than any Trinitarian mystery that ever you have ridiculed.

But because of this fulness of Godhead in "the soul of the man Christ Jesus," you ascribe to him the titles of "mighty God—everlasting Father—great God,—true God; and even Jehovah;" a name never yet given to any *created* intelligent being in the universe, ~~an~~ *incommunicable* name, ~~belonging coessentially to the unoriginated,~~ eternal Divinity. But in this *created* being, of separate and distinct existence from its Creator, into whom is *conveyed* all the plenitude of the Divine Essence, "centres all the glory of God and man—of heaven and earth—all the perfections of God," &c. p. 26. But how is this possible? How can all the glory of God and man centre in a being who is neither God nor man? Not God! for he was in his highest nature a *produced*, finite being, existing before time, yet not from eternity;—not man, for it was only a *fleshy body*, without that part of human nature called a *soul*, that was, greeably to your latest account, (Lett. to Moreland, p. 7.) assumed, or united to that being you call "the Son of God himself, who, as you aver, was the very soul of that body." The Trinitarian finds no difficulty in centering all the glory of God and man in the person of Immanuel, who is perfect God and perfect man, in the union of the *divine* and *human* natures, as I have before shewn, I hope plainly and abundantly. But to ascribe "all the perfec-

tions of God," to an inferior being, of *created, separate and distinct existence*, I say, is robbing God of his glory; and in the management of it, by an inaptitude of phraseology in your ascription of perfections and other divine names and titles to such a being, well calculated to deceive the people; who give you more credit than you deserve, respecting your high views of the Saviour, while they suppose you are really misrepresented by Trinitarians.

You acknowledge there "are two texts of scripture, which directly speak of the equality of the Son with the Father." Now one would suppose that, by the mouth of two such direct witnesses, the point ought to rest as sufficiently established; but this will not answer your purpose. These witnesses must either die by the barbarous hand of criticism, or their testimony must be set aside by sophistry. We will, however, call them up again, and re-examine their testimony.

The first you have had before you, and which was quickly despatched, (p. 28) is, John 5. 18. "Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he — said also that God was his Father,"—*Patra idion—his own proper Father*,—"making himself EQUAL WITH GOD." That the Jews understood him to assume an equality, not of power or authority only, but of nature, is evident, because their charge is founded upon his calling God his own proper Father. This you admit yourself: "The Jews concluded, that because Jesus said that God was his Father, that he was making himself equal with God." But you set aside their judgment here, as fallaciously grounded, equally as much so, as when "they at another time concluded he had a devil and was mad." My dear sir, are you not afraid to reason so? Do you suppose the evidence on which their conclusions were founded to be about equal in the one case as the other? "*Many of them said, he hath a devil and is mad; why hear ye him? Others said, these are not the words of him that hath a devil. Can a devil open the eyes of the blind?*" (John 10. 20, 21.) Here we see, "there was a *division* among the Jews," because of the Saviour's doctrines. Some of them, as unwilling to acknowledge his divine mission as you are his divine nature, cried out with heated animosity, He hath a devil

and is mad, while *others*; yes, mark it,—while *others* said, these are not the words of him that hath a devil; and they appeal to evidence:—Can a devil open the eyes of the blind?

In the case before us there is no division. Jesus had healed a man on the Sabbath day, for which he had as much power and authority as the Father; for in the preceding verse he says, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work. It was on this declaration they founded their charge of making himself equal with God; in which it seems, they were all agreed. But this will not do for you. "This of making himself equal with God, was undoubtedly wrong; for Jesus labors in the following verses to convince them of it." Well let us see how: "Then answered Jesus, and said unto them, verily, verily, I say unto you, the Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do." Here you stop with an "&c." and exclaim, "Surely if Jesus had been equal to the Father, he would not have used such language as this, directly calculated to mislead the people." But why did you not let the Saviour speak on, by fairly quoting out the whole verse, which goes on thus? "For what things soever he doth, *these also doth the Son likewise.*" Here is equality still, and such expressions were very unlikely to operate to the conviction of the Jews as to their improper conclusion. (v. 20.) "For the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth him all things that himself doth: and he will shew him greater works than these, that ye may marvel. For (v. 21.) as the Father raiseth up the dead and quickeneth them: *even so the Son quickeneth whom he will.*" This part of the Saviour's vindication you skipt over, and likewise the two following verses, which flatly contradict your assertion respecting the mistake of the Jews. "For the Father judgeth no man; but hath committed all judgment to the Son: **THAT ALL MEN SHOULD HONOUR THE SON, EVEN AS THEY HONOUR THE FATHER. He that honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father which hath sent him.**" Why did you make quotations before and after this passage, to confirm your declaration respecting the error of the Jews, while such a testimony was loudly contradicting you, and might complain of ill treatment, while your pen was entering others on your list of evidence, and these were silently neglected

or rudely passed by? Is this, Sir, fair and honest conduct in argumentative and controversial writing? Can you expect the intelligent to sanction it; and is it not calculated to mislead the ignorant? Here we have seen the Saviour's vindication against the cavillation of the Jews. He claims God for his own proper Father—assumes a right of operating on the Sabbath—power of imitating God in his works of providence—of quickening whomsoever he will, of those that are dead—the privilege of judging the world, and of being honored like as his heavenly Father is honored. That these are the pretensions of Jesus is evident from the whole context; and it clearly appears, that with something of a subordination on the part of the Son, they assert the most perfect identity of nature, the most entire unity of will, and consent of intellect, and an incessant co-operation in the exertion of common powers to a common purpose. He is either the true, proper, natural Son of God, or it is impossible to vindicate him from the most insolent and consummate imposture.

If the Jews misunderstood the Saviour, as ascribing that to himself which belonged to Deity only, he must have egregiously failed in his attempts to convince them of their mistake, when on another occasion we find them taking up stones to stone him for asserting, "I and my Father are one." This, in their estimation was blasphemy, and they assign it as a reason for their determination to stone him, "Because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God." This charge is not evaded, and it must be admitted to be true; or acknowledged that Christ dealt very disingenuously with his accusers, in suffering them to continue in their error. If he had been a mere creature, according to his external appearance, he had nothing to do but to tell them so, and all would have been easy. "I and my Father are ONE." In the original text, it is not *eis*, (*one person*;) in the masculine gender, but *hen*, in the neuter, *one thing*, or, *to Theion, one Divinity*. "If we attend," says Dr. Doddridge, "not only to the obvious meaning of these words, in comparison with other passages of Scripture, but to the connection of this celebrated text, it so plainly demonstrates the deity of our blessed Redeemer, that I think it may be left to speak for itself, without any labor-

ed comment. How widely different that sense is, in which Christians are said to be *one with God*, (John 17. 21.) will sufficiently appear, by considering, how flagrantly absurd and blasphemous it would be, to draw that inference from their union with God, which Christ does from his."

The next *direct* testimony in favour of the Son's equality with the Father, is Phil. 2. 6. "Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: v. 7, 8. But made himself of no reputation, and took on him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of man; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself," &c.

"They who are acquainted with the Greek, (you say) are well assured that our translation of this text is not the best." This I will readily admit; and hope we shall be able to get a better before we leave the subject. Professor Stuart, of Andover, in his valuable letters to Channing, p. p. 88—92, has given the best translation of this passage, that I believe is to be found; and which he has, in my opinion, fully established in his accompanying critical remarks, which are too lengthy and learned for popular use, and therefore I must deny myself the pleasure of inserting the whole of them here, but admit only a few extracts. His rendering is as follows: (v. 5—8) "Let the same mind be in you which was in Christ Jesus; who, being in the condition of God, did not regard his equality with God as an object of solicitous desire, but humbled himself, (assumed an inferior or humble station) taking the the condition of a servant, being made after the similitude of men, and being found in fashion as a man, he exhibited his humility by obedience, even to the death of the cross." The Greek of this passage not only admits, but demands such a rendering. This will appear from an examination of the word *morphe*, *form*, as it is in the common version. Schleusner, one of the best critics in the world, has, in his Lexicon, afforded ample evidence, that this word is not unfrequently synonymous with *phusis* (*nature*) and *ousia* (*being*.) In the passage before us, the meaning of it is too plain to be easily mistaken. "If you say, *morphe Theou*, *the form of God*, in the common rendering, means only a similitude or resemblance of God in *moral* qualities, as we speak of

Christians resembling God; then I ask, whether his humiliation consisted in depressing, or subjecting to a lower station, the moral qualities which Christ possessed?"

Will you say the phrase means, then, "a resemblance to God in respect to office; as magistrates are called gods? But, on the supposition that Christ was only a *finite* being, what office did he lay aside in order to become incarnate? If Christ be only a created being; who were his subjects, and what was his dominion, before his mediatorial kingdom commenced by the event of his incarnation?"

"But this is not all. If *morphe* mean only *similitudē*, then what is the sense of the next clause, where Christ is said to have taken upon him the *morphēn doulou*, (*the form of a servant*?) That he bore merely a resemblance to a servant, i. e. to *one who obeys*, or is in a humble station; or that he did *actually* take the condition of one who was in a humble, and depressed state, and persevered in it to the very death of the cross? The latter must be admitted, unless we hearken to the doctrine of the DOCTE, who taught Christ was a man in *appearance* only, and not in reality. If *morphe doulou* then means the condition or state of one who is humbled or depressed, and subjected to the command of others; does not *morphe Theou* mean the condition or state of one, who is truly divine?"

This is certainly much plainer and easier of comprehension than the common version, which seems to render a part of the apostle's reasoning in the passage nugatory, or at least irrelevant. In order to urge in the most effectual manner, the principle of Christian humility upon the Philippians, he proposes to them the example of Christ; "Let the same mind be in you which was in Christ." What was this; or how was it manifested? By the *fact*, that though essentially divine, (*en morphe Theou*), he did not eagerly retain his divine condition, but assumed the station or condition of a servant, (*morphēn doulou*) Here the relevancy of his reasoning is sufficiently plain. But how was it any proof or example of humility, that *he did not think it robbery to be equal with God?*—Nor will the Greek fairly bear this construction of our common version. The word *arpagmos*, translated *robbery*, does not seem here to signify an act of robbery, but "something which is eagerly to be

seized and appropriated." Moreover, our translators have placed the word *arpagmos*, next to the verb *egesato*, which by the rules of syntax does not belong there. The Greek syntax would place the words thus, as to their sense; *ouk egesato to einai isa Theo (kata) arpagmos*; literally, "he regarded not the being equal to God (as) *arpagmos*, as a thing to be eagerly sought or appropriated;" which, in my opinion, makes the apostle's meaning plain and forcible.

But you will tell me, that "the person spoken of in the text cannot be the only living and true God; for God cannot be emptied, humbled and exalted without a change." Pray, what do you mean by the word "emptied," when applied to Christ upon your own plan? Was the "pre-existent soul of Christ," or, if you will, the Son of God, *filled with all the fulness of the Godhead* before he came into the world; and was this *emptied*, or poured out, or left behind, upon his assumption of flesh? Why so fond of using a word that plunges yourself into such difficulties? But you will still press, and ask, how could "the one only living and true God be humbled, and exalted without a change?" I answer; this long title, we Trinitarians apply to the Divine Essence or Godhead: The Son of God, as we have told you again and again, is the second *person* (dont forget our explanation of the term) in the Divine Nature. To him belonged the *Morphe Theou*, before he humbled himself by taking the station or condition of a servant. In occupying, indeed, such an inferior humble station as that of a servant, consisted his humiliation; (*ekenouse eouton*) "made himself of no reputation," as we translate it. "Yet how incompetent must these translations be! So far as Christ is the immutable God, he cannot change; that is, he cannot *divest himself* of his essential perfections. He cannot cease to be omnipotent, omniscient, &c. But he may veil the brightness of his glories for a time, by assuming to himself a union with the human nature, and making this the organ through which he displays his perfections, during the time of the incarnation. Does the sun cease to shine—are his beams extinguished, when an intervening cloud obscures, for a while, his lustre? Or is the sun in any measure changed?" Before I quit this point, I must note one thing more,

It is the disingenuous manner in which you have treated Dr. Doddridge, whose translation of the passage before us, you say, is certainly the most literal: "Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be *as* God." This reading, you say, is confirmed by Whitby. It may be so. It is true likewise, that he has been censured for yielding here too much to the enemy, without any necessity. But what is your object in making Dr. Doddridge speak as though Christ were only *as* God, that is, having the similitude or resemblance of God, and not an *equality* with him? Did you think thereby to get his vote, in your attempt to destroy this strong text in favour of Christ's divinity? This I am sure you cannot do by fair dealing. Dr. Doddridge shall speak for himself. In paraphrasing on the text, he uses the following very definite and expressive language: "Being *in the form of God*, and having been from eternal ages possessed of divine perfections and glories—thought it not robbery and usurpation *to be*, and appear *as* God—assuming the highest divine names, titles and attributes, by which the Supreme Being has made himself known." Now, Sir, what good will this great man's testimony do you, when fairly stated? He has not more strongly and forcibly avowed the proper divinity of Christ in all his writings than here. Why did you garble his expressions, or give such a partial quotation of them as to make him speak what he did not intend; namely, that Christ was not *equal* with God, but only *like* him? Candour, truth and honesty, forbid such conduct. You would not like to be treated so yourself. But, as we have already seen, in the case of our Lord's vindication of himself against the Jews, this is not the first instance of unfair dealing of this kind in your book.

But suppose your point gained; suppose the phrase, *as God*, which is to mean, *like* God, be granted; and then admit that the expression, *form of God*, means resemblance of God; will it be a sensible declaration, or will it sound like the apostle Paul, to make him say of his master that, being in the resemblance or likeness of God, he thought it not robbery to be *like* to God? But, says Mr. Smith, in his *very lucid* comment on this text, "the form of any being is not that being whose form it is." (p. 33.) The same

logic appeared in your former production, but is *prudently* left out in the present edition; your expressions were: "Now the form of a thing, is not the thing itself." Such logic as this restores at once the reign of chaos, where every thing is *without form* and void. I used to think the form of a being designated *the manner in which that being exists*. But as there is now a great deal of New Light in the world, probably it is found to be a mistake. Let us try how the logic will work. Mr. Smith believes he is a human being; a human being *cannot* exist without *form*; but the form of a being is not that being whose form it is;—therefore, Mr. Smith is *not* a human being. So, also, a well *formed* horse is not a horse. And in Mark 16. 12. when Jesus appeared *en etera morphe*, in another *form*, it is to be understood, that it was not Jesus. So when he took "the form of a servant and the fashion of a man," he was neither a servant nor a man. May not such philosophy be the means of sending souls to perdition! Is there not some danger of being spoiled "through *philosophy* and *vain deceit*," so current in this day, and so industriously employed in simplifying and accommodating the great truths of Christianity to the standard of human demonstration, and the fickleness of human reason? Will you now permit me to repeat, that the version, which would correspond best with the real meaning of the passage in question, must express the following ideas: "Who being of divine nature, or condition, did not eagerly seek to retain his equality with God, but took on himself a humble condition," &c.

I have been the more particular on those two last passages, because of their importance, as being to the very point; and because it was necessary to vindicate their character from the clamours of false philosophy and criticism, which have been employed to set aside their evidence; tho' it is admitted they speak "directly of the equality of the Son with the Father." But it is also admitted, that "there is a sense in which Jesus may be said to be equal to God; as in 1 Cor. 15. 24, 28.—If in the end, the Son is to be subject to God, it implies that *now*, he is not subject; but he is not superior—therefore, he must be equal;—not in essence, being or eternity—but equal in the great work of

redemption; all power in heaven and earth being delivered to him," &c. p. 30.

Is not this an enormous tax upon credulity itself? A *finite, created, produced* being, equal to God, in the great work of man's redemption!! Existing too, independently of him, for he is not *now subject* to God. How can such a being occupy such a station? You again reply, by delegation; "all power in heaven, &c. being delivered to him." But I again ask; can God *delegate* his nature, or transfer his divine attributes to a being of limited existence, or created nature? And can any power, short of omnipotent, operate to the effectuating of man's redemption. Withdraw omnipotent power from the work of redemption, and it must cease. If the Son possess not the same nature of the Father in the unity of the Godhead, it is admitted readily, that he cannot be equal in essence, being or eternity, with the Father; but surely then he cannot exercise an omnipotent agency, without which, neither the creation nor redemption of man, is predicable of him. There is no sense whatever, in which a *finite* being, can be equal to Jehovah. You must take the ground of the honest Trinitarian here, or turn infidel; there is no medium.

You think we "are egregiously mistaken," if we expect to confute you by proving the divinity of Christ by ascribing the divine names, titles, attributes, &c. to him, that are ascribed to Deity. These you also ascribe to him, as well as we; but the difference, you aver, is this; the Trinitarian "ascribes these attributes and names to the Son, as in him from eternity. But you ascribe them to him, because the Father dwells in him." And does not God dwell in every saint, male and female? "If we love one another, *God dwelleth in us.*" (John 4. 12.) "Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, *God dwelleth in him, and he in God.*" (v. 15.) "He that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and *God in him.*" (v. 16.) Agreeably to your theory of *communicated* divinity, can any good reason be assigned why we should not ascribe divine titles and honors to the saints, and worship the Father in them because he dwelleth in them? If they are *partakers of the divine nature*, (2 Pet. 1. 4.) and if *filled with all the fulness of God*, (Eph. 3. 19) I cannot see why it might not be;

nor can I discover why we might not as consistently talk of a divine Paul, or a divine Peter, or a divine any body else, if a saint; as a divine Jesus, having only a *derived* nature, a *created* existence, and a *communicated* divinity.

I do hold most firmly, the divine nature of Jesus Christ from the ascription of the incommunicable attributes of Godhead to him so frequently in the holy Scriptures; and it seems you are willing to "acknowledge he was eternally divine," if we can "prove that he was eternal." This, I think I have done. I have shewn that, to exist before the beginning of the world, can mean nothing less than to exist from eternity. What life was manifested and seen; by John, but "that *eternal* life which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us?" (1 John 1. 2.) He had glory with the Father, *before the world was*, and was loved by him "*before the foundation of the world*" (John 17. 5, 24.) "He was set up, or anointed from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was—then was I by him as one brought up *with him*; and was daily his delight, rejoicing ALWAYS before him." (Prov. 8. 23, 30.)

These strong terms, which ascribe eternity to the Son of God, you have attempted to criticise away. "The Hebrew word *olem*, translated *from everlasting*, is much more frequently used for an *indefinite*, than for infinite time." (p. 21.) What is the difference? That which is *indefinite*, is certainly *unlimited*, as well as infinite, in this connection. What is *infinite time*? But admit *olem* to express a *definite*, instead of an infinite duration, as I suppose you intended; what then will it make of the existence of God himself? "Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth or the world, *even from everlasting* to everlasting thou art God." (Ps. 90. 2.) "Thy throne is established *of old*—thou art *from everlasting*." (Ps. 93. 2.) "O Lord, thou art our Father, our *Redeemer*, thy name is *from everlasting*." (Isa. 63. 16.) Here we find a similar phraseology in expressing the eternity of Jehovah. Let your criticism be applied, and it makes bad worse, if possible. It not only destroys the eternity of the Son, but of the Father also. A *little learning* is a dangerous thing. "Who hath ascended up into

heaven, or descended? Who hath gathered the wind in his fists? Who hath bound the waters in a garment? Who hath established all the ends of the earth? *What is his name, and what is his Son's name, if thou canst tell?*" (Prov. 30, 4.) Here is the Divine Creator spoken of as having a Son. They are of distinct personality, yet so incomprehensibly united as ONE in divine nature and perfections, as to challenge the whole world of intelligences to comprehend, or *find out to perfection*, either the name of the Father or the Son. Surely our Redeemer must be omnipotent and eternal, or words have no meaning.

I will make one effort more to put this matter beyond fair debate, and demand your redemption of the pledge of acknowledgment. Rev. 22. 13, is decisive on this subject of the eternity of Jesus Christ. "I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end." There is no possibility of mistake here as to the speaker; it is Christ. In the preceding verse he says, "Behold I come quickly." And in the 16th verse, the same person says, "I, Jesus, have sent mine angel," &c. Now, the same description that is here applied to Christ is given of the eternity of God, in chap. 21. 5, 6. "And he that sat upon the throne said—I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end." Who is the speaker? "God himself." (ver. 3.) And (v. 7.) "I will be his God and he shall be my Son." To know still more fully, what this form of expression means, we must recur to the old Testament, where we find it, divested of its peculiar shape. In Isa. 44. 6. Jehovah says, "I am the first and I am the last; and beside me there is no God;" i. e. eternity distinguishes me from all that are falsely called gods. So in Isa. 48. 12; after declaring that he will not suffer his name to be polluted, nor give his glory to another, he adds, "I am he, (i. e. the true God) I am the first; and I also am the last." Now if the same things be asserted of Christ, (as plainly they are in the texts under consideration) how can we avoid the conclusion, that the holy apostle meant to assert his eternal existence?

Now, Sir, let the holy Scriptures be interpreted according to the universal laws of explaining human language, if the writers of them, (the New Testament especially) have not ascribed to Christ CREATIVE power, omniscience, omnipotence,

omnipresence, divine worship, divine honors, and eternal existence, I will turn Unitarian at once. Never tell me any more that these attributes of Jehovah are *imparted*. How can *omniscience* be *imparted*? I can as soon believe that *omnipotence*, or *self-existence*, can be *imparted* to a finite being. A second *omniscient* or *omnipotent* being (omniscient or omnipotent simply by knowledge or power *imparted*) would at once establish all the absurdities of polytheism.

That *divine honors and worship* are ascribed to Christ, there is no doubt. (John 3. 23. Heb. 1. 6. Phil. 2. 10, 11. Rom. 10. 9—14. Rev. 5, 8—14. Acts 7. 59, 60. 1 Cor. 1. 2. &c.) Shall I be told here, that “the word *worship* signifies respect, reverence paid by an inferior to a superior;” and that the “divine writers never intended by the word *worship*, supreme respect was always to be understood?” Mr. Smith does say so; and to this I readily subscribe. But shall I therefore admit no distinction between that kind of worship or reverence called *obeisance* paid to creatures, and *spiritual homage* or *worship* paid to the Deity only? Is not the worship of angels *spiritual*? And what can be meant by things in heaven, i. e. beings in heaven, bowing the knee to Jesus, if spiritual worship be not meant? What other worship can heaven render? But shall I be told it was God’s command, “that the Angels should worship his Son,” and that had they not done it, they would have been rebellious?” Here I again most readily concur with Mr. Smith. But did ever God command his creatures to worship any being, not God? Never: “For it is written, *Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him ONLY shalt thou serve.*” (Luke 4. 8.) *For the Lord thy God is a jealous God.* (Deut. 6. 15.) “I am JEHOVAH, that is my name, and my glory will I not give to another.” (Isa. 42. 8.) But “the degree of reverence due, depends upon the object,” and here Mr. Smith has fairly come out with the *Latreia* and *Doulia* of the Roman Catholics, a famed distinction between *supreme* and *inferior* worship. In this he has followed his “Great Emlay,” who expressed the same sentiment in his *Vindication of the Worship of Christ*. That the Son may be an object of worship as well as the Father, Mr. Smith attempts to illustrate by an earthly king exalting his son, to “give him

the right hand as a co-partner with him in the throne," and commanding "his subjects to bow the knee and pay royal honors to him." p. 24. Here God and his Son are represented as *co-partners* in divine honours, &c. But we are naturally led to ask how; if we are *not* to honour the Son *even as* we honour the Father? "Co-partners!" Is it not strange that this phrase should appear in his book, after that *witty* declaration. p. 10. which says, "No person ever yet saw one of these coes in the Bible." It is my established belief that no theological controversialists are more unfair and disingenuous towards their opponents than the impugnors of our Lord's *essential* and *proper* divinity.

This same sermonizer, in order to evade the charge of worshipping two distinct beings, not only resorts to the papistical and unscriptural distinction of supreme and subordinate worship; but immediately turns upon the Trinitarian in the usual stile of false reasoning and misrepresentation, and charges him with the absurdity of worshipping "three distinct persons, as clearly three distinct objects, as three trees." How often must we be under the necessity of explaining ourselves here, to avoid misrepresentation! From the hint just given, I will venture a little further to illustrate our meaning respecting the triune object of our worship. I have seen a tree, whose body for a short distance, was a *perfect unit*, having but one set of roots, and the production I have no doubt of a single germ; a few feet up, regularly and distinctly dividing into three, with apparent equality in length and proportion; they were co-existent and co-equal; it was fairly (to use a technical phrase) a trinity tree; three in one and one in three; of the same substance, and operating together in the production of the same kind of fruit. Is not this a very different object, than three trees, which may be entirely distinct not only in their separate existence, but also in their respective species and fruits.

A similar representation every man can make with his hand; supposing it to have only the first three fingers. Here the same substance, the hand, exists in three ways, called three fingers; which co-exist, and are consubstantial; the one is prior to the other, not as to time, but in

numerical order only. Suppose the middle one were to assume a covering of clay for some special purpose; there would be no diminution of its essence, or its essential dignity; which, to be sure, would sustain a temporary eclipse, and in its assumed station, a temporary subordination, until the purpose for which that assumption was made, was accomplished.

Such representations are not novel. The most remarkable one probably ever known, is to be seen in the cavern of Elephanta, one of the most ancient and venerable temples in the world. It is very large, and composed of three heads united to one body, dedicated to the Creator, Preserver, and Regenerator of mankind. A plate of this image may be seen in Maurice's Indian Antiquities, with some account of it in the same work.

I wish it to be distinctly understood, that I do not introduce these things to explain the *modus existendi* of the sacred three in one, which no terms, no representations, no object in nature can do; but simply to illustrate my views in a way of *approximation* to that grand object; and to show how easily we may be misrepresented, by the introduction of objects and similes, entirely inapplicable, and as foreign from our views as polytheism is supposed to be from yours. That there is a threefold, personal distinction in the Godhead, is a *fact* that I believe, but, like every other fact revealed, I receive it simply on the credit of divine revelation. I can *define* it, when I shall be able to define *un-derived existence*, and divine *Unity affirmatively*.

I know that you and your party can press Trinitarians with many questions and unreasonable demands without first removing your own difficulties; but it should be sacredly remembered, that on such a subject, human language—language of finite and mutable beings, made up of terms to express their ideas, is of course incompetent, fully to designate the *mode* of union between the divine and human natures. That these two natures were united in the Saviour, the Scriptures fully decide; as when Jehovah styles him, "The man that is my Fellow." (Zech. 13. 7.) He is *Jehovah*, our righteousness, and also a *Branch* raised unto David, (Jer. 23. 5, 6.) David's *Root* or origin, and yet his *offspring*—David's *Lord*, and yet his *Son*—The *Mighty*

God, yet a child born, a son given—*Emmanuel*, or God with us, and yet born of a *Virgin*—over all, God blessed for ever, yet descended from the fathers according to the flesh—the second man, yet the Lord from heaven. *The Word was God, yet the Word was made flesh.* (Rev. 22. 16. Matt. 22. 45. Isa. 9. 6 and 7. 14. Rom. 9. 5. 1 Cor. 15. 47. John 1. 1, 14.) These and many other texts that might be produced, as plainly prove Christ to be man as they do that he is God. And now, passing over many texts that might be adduced further to prove his proper divinity, for the want of time, I shall, in a brief manner, notice some of those passages that are thought to be against us. The most prominent shall be selected.

1 Cor. 8. 6. *Unto us there is but one God the Father,—and one Lord Jesus Christ, &c.* This passage simply denies polytheism, *the gods many and lords many* in the verse immediately preceding. There is nothing in it asserted contrary to the catholic faith. Whether the Mediator is a person in the divine substance, is neither asserted nor denied. If the word *God* is used in an exclusive sense it will prove too much; for we may as well say, there is but one Lord, as that there is but one God. And may not the *one God the Father*, be the name of a nature, under which Christ himself, as *God*, is also comprehended?

Eph. 4. 5, 6. *There is one Lord, and one God, and Father of all, who is above all, &c.* This is similar to the preceding. God's being called one God, no more excludes Christ from that high title, than Christ's being called the one Lord, excludes the Father from the same appellation and dominion. *My Lord and my God*, is an excellent confession, which every pious Trinitarian loves.

John 17. 3. *And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.* To turn from all false gods to serve the one true God, and to believe that Jesus was the Christ, were two grand points, which all that were converted to the Christian faith were to learn. This, and no other, is the lesson conveyed in these words. They assert nothing more. The true God is used in opposition to false gods; and Jesus Christ in opposition to all other Saviours. St. Austin says, "the order in which these words are to be understood, is this—

That they might know thee, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent, to be the only true God. It is worthy of notice, that there is a wide difference between saying, "the Father is the only true God," and "the Father only is the true God." The former is our Lord's declaration, the latter is the meaning Socinians put upon it, which would exclude John's testimony of Christ, whom he calls "the true God and eternal life." (1 John 5. 20.) As for the inference, making him inferior, to the Father, because he was sent into the world; it is an old hackneyed Arian argument, repeated a thousand times, but is now too contemptible to merit serious confutation. To say that Christ was sent, and yet that he came himself, is no more contradictory than John 3. 16. and Eph. 5. 25. In the former passage it is said, "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son;" and yet in the latter, "Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it."

John 5. 19. *The Son can do nothing of himself.* This is certainly true of the Son, acting as a Saviour, under the delegated office of Mediator, and the servant of the God-head, by his own consent. But in other respects there is the most perfect equality in counsel and co-operation, as the latter part of the verse declares: "For what things soever he (the Father) doth, these also doth the Son likewise." Doth the Father raise the dead? So doth the Son likewise. (v. 21.) Doth the Father forgive sins? So doth the Son also. "Forgiving one another, even as God, for Christ's sake, hath forgiven you." (Eph. 4. 32.) In Col. 3. 13. "Forgiving one another—even as Christ forgave you." "He said unto the sick of the palsy, Son, thy sins be forgiven thee." But "who can forgive sins but God only?" (Mark 2. 5, 7.)

Mat. 20. 23. "To sit on my right hand and on my left; is not mine to give, but (it shall be given) to them for whom it is prepared of my Father." The words in the parenthesis are not in the original text, but supplied by the translators. Let these be omitted, and then the text will affirm what it now seems to deny. "It is not mine to give but to them for whom it is prepared." This is the plain rendering from the Greek, which reserves to Christ that act of power and authority, which he has elsewhere expressed in the fullest terms, as his own right:—"To him

that overcometh, will I grant to sit with me on my throne." (Rev. 3. 21.)

Mark 13. 32. "But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father." The common interpretation of this passage is, that Christ as God knew all things, but as man he knew not the day of judgment, which, I confess, never appeared to me very satisfactory. But Dr. Macknight and others, have proved, that the most correct translation of this passage obviates the difficulty. It should be rendered thus: "But that day, and that hour no one maketh known; no, not the angels which are in heaven, nor the Son, but the Father." Whether the criticism will hold good or not, it is evidently the most natural meaning, and fully answers the design of the place; and the fact has proved it to be true, that it was no part of the Messiah's commission to make known the day of judgment to the children of men; that they might be always in the posture of vigilant expectation.

John 14. 28. "*My Father is greater than I.*" We can infer no other inferiority here, than what is necessarily implied in the relation of a Son, and as the incarnate Messiah sustaining the mediatorial character. The expression in the text would have been a declaration of the utmost impudence, on a supposition that Christ was no more than a mere man or created being. But admitting that he was the eternal Son of God, then *en morphe doulou*, in the condition of a servant, and acting under him as mediator and delegate, to say, my Father is greater than I, is highly proper, and a sentiment worthy of his piety. "It is indeed hard to say," says Mr. Jones, "which of the two heresies is the most unreasonable and unscriptural, that of the *Socinians*, which never considers Christ as any thing but a mere man; or that of the *Arians*, who never look upon him as any thing but a *supposititious God*. Between these two gross errors lies the true catholic faith, which, as it allows him to be *perfect God* and *perfect man*, is never offended, or put to its shifts, by any thing the Scripture may have said about him in either capacity.

Mat. 19. 17. "*Why callest thou me good? There is none good but one, that is God.*" The literal rendering of this

passage will be thus:—There is none good, *ei me eis o Theos*, but the one God; that is, in common English, but God only. And this is put beyond dispute, by the occurrence of the same Greek phraseology, word for word, in Mark 2. 7.—Who can forgive sins—*ei me eis o Theos*, but God only? In a collateral passage, (Luke 5. 21.) the expression is varied so as to make it still plainer: “Who can forgive sins, but God (*monos*) alone?” But why did Christ put this question to this young ruler, “why callest thou *me* good?” For the very same reason that he asked the Pharisees, why David in spirit called him Lord; and that was to try whether they could account for it. The Psalmist had said long ago, *there is none that doeth good, no not one*. How therefore could this young Pharisee call him *good*, were he not God, seeing no mere man since the fall could set up a claim to that character. The text rather establishes the proper divinity of Christ, than otherwise.

1 Cor. 15. 24—28. “Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father—then shall the Son also be subject unto him,—that God may be all in all.” This is a fort for every Arian and Socinian that ever wrote or preached against the Deity of the Saviour. It is much relied on by yourself; and your brother Smith has kept this text as a reserve to cover all his forces,—“to confirm,” as he says, “all his former arguments.” Upon a close examination, perhaps it will not be found as strong as he expected. We shall endeavor to pay to it a particular attention.

The difficulty of this portion of Scripture does not arise from any thing in itself, but because it is an imperfect revelation. It is a hint thrown out concerning a great event which is to take place in the world of glory, but not pursued to any length. The force of it seems to lie in this circumstance, that when all the purposes for which Christ undertook the mediatorial office shall have been answered, that office shall cease, as being no longer necessary, and *absolute* Deity shall alone continue. The Son now occupies the station of dependence in a new, limited, mere temporary constitution of things, which we call the mediatorial kingdom. That kingdom, be it remembered, has all its *primary* references to *this world*, and not to the un-

verse *at large*; when its ends are accomplished, it will be fully and finally dissolved; things will revert to their old and universal channel; the Son will then deliver up his delegated dominion, under the temporary constitution, to his Father. All the offices belonging to that dominion will be resigned, because then there will be no further occasion for them. Thus, when a powerful prince sends his only son to some province of his realm, which is seditious, tumultuary, and rebellious, the son goes with command and strong force; but when he has quieted the commotions, and subdued the rebels, he returns conqueror to his father, triumphs, and delivers up the province in peace to his father, no longer uses the military command, dismisses his legions, resigns his temporary authority, and reigns "as co-partner," or joint-sovereign, in the throne with his father.

When the second person in the Godhead accepted an office in that new constitution of things, which the mercy of God set up for the salvation of sinners, it matters not how high or how low it was; what has the acceptance of that office, or the assumption of its duties, in the mediatorial kingdom, to do with his *essential* character, his *essential* nature, and his *essential* rights, which may and do subsist quite independently of that whole concern. He had a glory with the Father's OWN SELF, before the world was, from eternity; his *natural* and *essential* kingdom will have no end. But his mediatorial dignity and office will cease through eternity, as being no longer necessary. This view seems calculated to reconcile this passage with that other of St. Luke, where he says, *He (Jesus) shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.* (Luk 1. 53.) *It shall stand forever—an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away,—a kingdom which shall not be destroyed,—a throne which is forever and ever; and he shall reign forever and ever.* (See Dan. 2. 44 and 7. 14. Heb. 1. 8. Rev. 11. 15.)

Christ, in his exalted, glorified human nature, will wear the *honours* of his office, and of all his mediatorial performances, and of their secure and abiding effects and consequences; and will continue in a state of superior honour and glory, and sustain a blessed relation to the church as her Head forever and ever; and therefore, in

these respects also, his throne and kingdom shall never pass away or be destroyed. But the *present administration* of affairs, which Christ in his official capacity, according to a settled economy for a season, received from God, even the Father, personally, shall be surrendered or given up to God absolutely, (without personal restriction) as *all in all*, the immediate fountain of dominion, and blessedness; to rule and manage the affairs of the heavenly kingdom in a more immediate way, from thenceforth forever.

Once more: "The distinction in this case between the God and man in the joint person of Christ Jesus, is warranted by another part of this chapter, wherein the apostle has given us a key to his own meaning. "Since *by man* (says he) came death, *by man* came also the resurrection of the dead. For as *in Adam* all die, even so *in Christ* shall all be made alive." Here it is evident, he is drawing a contrast between the *man Adam* and the *man Christ*; so that unless it be done on purpose, no reader can easily mistake the meaning of what follows.—Then cometh the end, when HE (that is the *man Christ*, the second *Adam*) shall deliver up the kingdom, &c. for so it must be, according to the tenor of the apostle's discourse." Jones on the Trinity, Chap. 1. Sec. 25.

2 Cor. 8. 9. "For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor." It is objected that, "the person spoken of in the text cannot be very God, for God is unchangeable. He cannot, from being rich, become poor." (p. 22.) I reply: "He was rich," in eternal pre-existent *glory and felicity*;—was from all eternity *in the bosom of the Father*;—*was daily his delight*;—had a communion with the Father in all that he knew, (Mat. 11. 27) in all that he did, (John 5. 19) in all that he enjoyed, (John 17. 10.) He had a most perfect Oneness with the Father, possessing in himself all the fulness of the Godhead, and receiving together with him the adoration of all the angels in heaven. He was originally possessed of all the riches, glory and blessedness of the Deity, (Rom. 9. 5, and Col. 2. 9) and as the former of the world, *by whom and for whom, all things were created*, (Col. 1. 16) he was the rightful Lord and Proprietor of all the riches in the universe. Such was the glory he had with the Father before the world was

brought into existence. "He was rich:" but for our sakes he assumed our nature, and in that nature veiled his glory, and divested himself, as it were, of all his riches, *as to his own use of them*, and submitted in (*morphe doulou*) the form or condition of a servant, to the deepest poverty, so that in respect of his *humiliation*, in every respect he became poor, though in his official capacity, according to appointment, he was Lord and Heir of all things. What I have said on Phil. 2. 6. might have sufficed for our answer to the objection drawn from this text.

Col. 1. 15. "Who is the image of the invisible God, the first born of every creature." It is objected that, "as the one only true God was never begotten, nor born—then these expressions cannot apply to the Son as very God." The word *prototokos*, rendered *first born*, *first begotten*, may be applied to Christ three ways: 1. His divine generation, which I have before attended to. 2. His title and office, as head of the church, that he might be the first born among many brethren, (Rom. 8. 29) consequently the original Lord and Heir of all, according to the ancient rights of the first born in Israel. (Deut. 21. 17. 2 Chron. 21. 3, 16.) 3. The word is sometimes used to signify, not passively, the first begotten; but actively, the first begetter, the author or former of all things, as Christ really is, for by him all things were made. At any rate the word cannot be rendered so as to signify created, made, or a begun existence, as you wish to make out respecting the pre-existence of Christ.

Rev. 3. 14.—The beginning of the creation of God. This does not prove that Christ was the first being ever made or begun. It is one of his assumed titles, as the "Alpha and Omega, the BEGINNING and the ENDING—the ALMIGHTY." (Chap. 1. 8.) 'The Origin, Author and Ruler of the creation of God. The word *beginning* is sometimes used actively, signifying the first actor, agent, or the cause of a thing; thus it is said of Lachish, in Micha 1. 13. "She is the beginning of the sin to the daughter of Zion." This may suffice: on this subject I add no more.

I have thus summarily touched upon the principle texts which are employed by you, and your Unitarian fraternity, in opposing those doctrines which I have endeavoured to defend. It is possible, that nothing I have said will af-

ford conviction or satisfaction either to your mind or theirs, I have honestly endeavoured to search after the truth, and meet every objection in its strongest force. I acknowledge unhesitatingly, that the doctrines I have attempted to defend, are attended with circumstances of the most palpable incomprehensibility to the present confined and limited powers of man. But when once a doctrine is firmly established upon a scriptural foundation, the difficulties attending a full comprehension of it must give way in every case short of contradiction. The great question at present between you and me, is, What does the Bible teach on the subjects under consideration? It makes no difference what public symbols and individual authors have set forth on these subjects. Does the Bible teach them; and is that book divine? As ministers of the Gospel, and interpreters of God's word, you and I are placed under an awful responsibility, being accountable to the Judge of quick and dead. The faith that I avow, in which I am more and more established, the more I investigate the subjects, I never formed from human creeds or tradition. The sentiments advanced by you are not new, though they may appear so to a great many in this western country. With the views that I possess, I cannot forbear expressing my sincere regret, that such sentiments should be propagated. They are becoming however more prominent, as recently more explicit declarations have been made by you and your friends, so that you are better understood. I hope I shall always be ready to applaud that ingenuousness which openly avows sentiments, that are more privately inculcated, though I abhor the sentiments propagated. It is not hard to predict the event of the present course of things here, from what has happened in other sections of Christendom. "A short time since, almost all the Unitarians of New England were simple Arians." Now, it is said, there are scarcely any of the younger preachers of Unitarian sentiments, who are not simple *Humanitarians*; that is, in plain terms, *Socinians*. These sentiments have been, and still are, propagated with boldness in England, by Priestly, Belsham, Carpenter, Yates, Lindsey, and others. Such was the course pursued in Germany. The divinity of Christ was early assailed; inspiration was next doubted

and impugned. May not this soon be the case here, and as unlikely as it may now appear, yet it is very possible the divinity of the new German school, headed by Semler, and De Wette, and Eichhorn, and Paulus and Henke, and Herder, and Eckerman, and others, may, in a few years, be plentifully dissiminated in our country. The question at issue may soon be in substance, whether *natural* or *revealed* religion is our guide and our hope. And the sooner it comes to this the better, as the contest will then be more speedily terminated. The line of demarkation will be more definitely drawn. The parties will understand each other better; and the public will understand the subject of dispute, and be less liable to deception and imposition. You and your party are at present only in the rudiments of the more advanced and finished schools of England and Germany. You have only to abandon your unscriptural and inconsistent notion of a created, pre-existent instrumental Creator, and learn of Dr. Priestly that, "a derived pre-existent being, supposed to animate the body of Jesus, who is not also the maker of the world, is a mere creature of the imagination, whose existence is not to be inferred with the least colorable pretext from the Scripture." As you are not opposed to research, you might know, if you do not already, the road you are travelling, from an acquaintance with the present history of the church. You have brought up Nicholson to tell Mr. Moreland that he was "following the footsteps of the Presbyterians in Great Britain, who are now generally Unitarians." This same Nicholson had told you a few lines before your quotation that the Presbyterians, "continue to be one of the most numerous and respectable sects of Protestant Dissenters in England," and likewise says, "they acknowledge the *unity* and *equality* of three persons in the Godhead." This is his affirmation immediately preceding your quotation.

But you and your author ought to know that "the appellation *Presbyterian*, is, in England, appropriated to a large denomination of dissenters, who have no attachment to the Scotch mode of church government, any more than to Episcopacy; and therefore, to this body of Christians, the term *Presbyterian*, in its original sense, is improperly applied. How this misapplication came to pass, cannot be easily

determined; but it has occasioned many wrong notions, and should therefore be rectified." (*Religious World Displayed*. vol. 3. p. 48.) "It may also be remarked here, (says the same author, vol. 2. p. 301.) "that though many *Unitarians* are *nominally* Presbyterians in regard to Church Government, yet none of them are Calvinists, nor do they admit the Presbyterian standard of faith."

I know that Presbyterians are fallible beings. It is not the name that preserves from error. We have known some of the clergy themselves fall first into Arianism, and then into Shakerism; and one at this time, who industriously propagates the notions of *High Arianism*, under the imposing, self-created title of Elder of the Christian Church, was once a minister of the Presbyterian denomination. It is painful to record these things. They are true, and the world ought to know it. I solemnly disavow any intention to reproach or misrepresent. The true state of things ought and shall be known, as far as I can do it. I honestly believe what I declare, and can pledge myself, that when thoroughly convinced of the contrary, I will most willingly retract, and rejoice to find myself mistaken. But with your book before my eyes, the sacred volume in my hand, together with the ample and almost unanimous details of ecclesiastical history, how is conviction to be expected?

LETTER V.

THE VICARIOUS IMPORT OF THE LEGAL ATONEMENTS.

DEAR SIR,

I come now to examine your notions respecting the nature and design of the legal sacrifices and offerings instituted by Moses. It would be a task equally as irksome as unnecessary to follow you minutely through sixteen pages, to detect the many blunders, sophistical reasonings, and false criticisms which abound in that portion of your work, which appears to be only a lame imitation or imper-

fect detail, with diminished force, of certain Arian writers, whose works are well known by men of reading to have been refuted long ago. I allude particularly to Dr. J. Taylor of Norwich, in his *Key to the Apostolic writings*, and his *Scripture Doctrine of Atonement*:—likewise to Henry Taylor, rector of Crawley, and vicar of Portsmouth, in his *Apology of Benjamin Ben Mordicai to his friends for embracing Christianity, &c.* Not an idea,—not a sentiment have you advanced respecting atonement, both Mosaic and Christian, but it is to be found there; an ample, learned, and unanswerable refutation of which, you may see, if you will read Dr. M'Gee's masterly performance on *Atonement and Sacrifice*. And really, Sir, in a matter of such importance, touching your eternal interests, and also of others involved with you, it might be worth your while.

Such appears to be your hostility to the commonly received doctrines of Christ's atonement and satisfaction, that you have laboured hard in this part of your work, to overthrow the *vicarious import*, and *piacular* nature of those sacrifices under the ancient dispensation; so as to make them express nothing more than a mere *ceremonial purification*. This, to be sure, was highly necessary on your plan of denying the proper divinity of Jesus; for in diminishing the dignity of his person, it became expedient to diminish, or rather to destroy the *merit* of his work. To leave, therefore, the Mosaic institutions in full force against you in their *typical* and *expiatory* import, would have rendered all your efforts nugatory and unavailing. The impugner of our Lord's *divinity*, cannot *consistently* advocate his *propitiatory* sacrifice. These two fundamental doctrines support each other, and they stand or fall together. If I admit not the *real deity* of the Son of God, I instantly reject his *vicarious* and *propitiatory* sacrifice, and turn Deist; for I solemnly aver, I see no settled medium. All that is between, is hollow philosophy and mere illusion. "There are only three stages of declension," says an excellent writer, "from Christianity to Deism: Mr. Whiston hewed himself ready for the second, when he dared to charge the Scriptures of God with weakness and absurdity. Mr. Chillingworth had finished two of them, when he died, and was ready, I fear, for the third. Chubb, too,

whose name was formerly of some notoriety in the lists of infidel fame, but is nearly lost and forgotten in the crowds upon the rolls at present, was first an Arian, then a Socinian, and finally a Deist. Morgan, also, another phantom of unbelief, that once stalked about, formidable in nothingness, was a Presbyterian minister, who commenced an Arian and concluded an infidel." *Whitaker's Origin of Arianism*, p. 498.

But I proceed to examine your book relative to atonement, which is explained so as to signify reconciliation. (p. 35.) For this you say you have "the authority of our translators,—that learned body believed that atonement and reconciliation meant the same thing;" then you add in a note, "so frequently they translate the Hebrew word *keper*, reconciliation, which word is generally rendered atonement." After all, it is only "frequently" rendered so. It is admitted that these two words are sometimes used synonymously, but not always. Reconciliation sometimes means a being actually in friendship with God; through faith in the blood of Christ; but when synonymously used with atonement, it denotes the satisfaction of justice only, or the opening of a way by which mercy may be exercised consistently with righteousness. So the translators understood it, where you say, "The learned have, after diligent search, found one passage where the word in Hebrew, commonly translated atonement, is translated satisfaction. Num. 35. 31, 32. "Ye shall take no satisfaction for the life of a murderer—and ye shall take no satisfaction for him that is fled," &c. Why, really, here are two instances instead of one, where our translators have rendered the original word, satisfaction. But suppose it were but one, what then? If it be God's word, it is as good as one thousand. If our Maker speak but once, we must believe him if he should speak no more. Oh! but the translators, "that learned body" of translators, adduced as witnesses a while ago, will not do now. "I would ask the learned, by what authority did the translators, "that learned body," render this word satisfaction in this passage, and nowhere else; when commonly (yes commonly, not universally) they have translated the same word, atonement or reconciliation? Here the authority, or conduct of that learn-

ed body is arraigned; and from the menace just given, one would naturally expect to see them get a *learned* drubbing; but lo! instead of one single learned criticism offered; instead of adducing one solitary *fact*, to condemn them, they are arraigned by dark suspicion, and condemned at your inquisitorial tribunal for heterodoxy: "It may prove that they believed the doctrine;—but it can be easily proved, that they believed many doctrines which were false." (p. 65.) Now see what work you have made here! You have at once rendered *suspicious*, if not destroyed, the whole of the Bible in the present translation. How can your followers know, whither you are leading them by such a suspicious light? How will the infidel believe your scriptural quotations, and your Bible theories, if the translators are implicated with *many* false doctrines? And pray, what must the world at large think of the *candour* and *ingenuousness* of the man, who can triumphantly adduce their testimony to support himself against his adversaries, when lo! as soon as they speak a language not to suit him, they are immediately set aside on the score of heterodoxy!! They believed the doctrine of *satisfaction*, you admit. And does not the unanimous testimony of forty-seven translators, "profoundly skilled in all the learning, as well as in all the languages of the East," and consequently knowing the common usage of language, and acceptance of words, bear with considerable force on the point for which I contend? Does it not go very far towards settling the question in our favour?

That atonement and reconciliation are not always synonymously used, is further evinced from Rom. 5. 10. "For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." The apostle adds, in the next verse; "and not only so, but we also joy in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have received the atonement." Received the reconciliation, I admit to be the proper translation of the sentence. And what then? Does it not refer to the whole of the *pacification* that has obtained between God and the believing sinner, through the mediation of Christ; and not merely to the *atonement*, which is the *ground* of it? Or, to use the language of Dr. M'Gee, "the re-

conciliation which we have received through Christ, was the effect of the atonement made for us by his death." This very doctrine I will prove from your own book. "The land and congregation were cleansed—union restored—or an atonement made; and made too by the death of the offenders." (p. 38.) Very true: I understand here the death of the offenders, to be the sacrifice, the satisfaction, or atonement, as the prevailing operative cause or ground, with reference to, and in consideration of which, union, pacification, &c. take place. But how can the death of the offenders, which is an authorized act of the congregation of Israel, and the passive results and effects of that act, be the same? Is cause and effect the same? "The blood of victims or beasts destroyed the political separation between God and Israel, under the O. Test. and restored the political union between them." Let this be granted. Was it not with reference to this blood as the procuring cause that this union was brought about as the beneficial result? You add, "the blood of Christ destroys the moral separation between God and believers, and restores the union between them." But how destroyed by the blood of Christ? You reply, "When a man by faith in the blood of Christ is sanctified, cleansed, or washed from sin, then, and not till then, are God and man united, reconciled, or at one." What is the blood of Christ? Just now it destroyed the separation, &c. but immediately we are told that "faith" in that blood does it. Here the ground is shifted, and the blood of Christ is made an object for something called faith to act upon, in order to produce sanctification, reconciliation, union, &c. &c. If the blood of Christ is not the atonement itself, of separate and distinct consideration from reconciliation, union, &c. shed upwards of seventeen hundred years prior to the actual union, reconciliation, &c. of the believers of the present age; then what was it, or what can it be called, if not the blood of atonement? In all my life, I never yet heard a man pray for an atonement, but for reconciliation, union, purging, cleansing, always. Is it not an abuse of the laws of exegesis, and an outrage upon common sense, to jumble and confound all these terms together, as you have done, in order to get rid of the soul-animating, and heart-consoling doctrine of the propitiatory sacrifice of Jesus.

In order that the unclean person in Israel, "might be cleansed from the iniquity which he bears, the law requires that he bring a sin-offering," &c. (p. 41.) "The immediate effect of the sacrifice was purging," &c. (p. 47.) Now, here it seems, that purging is the effect of sacrifice, and in order to cleansing, a sin-offering must be brought. This is all true; but why is it said again and again, that atonement, reconciliation, purging, cleansing and union, all mean the same thing? And moreover, we are told that "atonement always implies sanctification." (p. 47.) This I presume is intended to express the same idea you expressed in the first book you ever wrote on the subject of atonement; in these words; "atonement differs not from regeneration;" for I understand regeneration to be sanctification begun. Well, now, we have a long list of synonymies;—atonement, regeneration, reconciliation, sanctification, union, purging, cleansing, and propitiation, all mean the same thing. Surely it is high time for the English language to have a new nomenclature. What a strange, ludicrous aspect would it give Scripture, were we to read it with your gloss. For instance, let the place of reconciliation and propitiation be supplied by sanctification. (Rom. 3. 23;) "Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation (sanctification) for sin." (1 John. 2.) "And he is the propitiation (sanctification) for our sins." "He loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation (sanctification) for our sins." (1 John. 4. 10.) And in Heb. 2. 17, it would read that Jesus came to sanctify the sins of the people. The inconsistency, and inaptitude, will more glaringly appear, if applied to the Levitical atonements, which you and the reader may do at your leisure.

I shall notice two instances more, wherein you attempt to make atonement mean reconciliation. The first is, from the etymology of the word. "Lexicographers derive the word *atone* from the two words at and one." And you refer to Johnson and Baily, without quotation. The former witness will be sufficient, and shall speak for himself.

"To Atone. (verb neuter) To agree; to accord.—2. To stand as an equivalent for something.

"To Atone. (verb active) To expiate."

"Atonement. s. 1. Agreement; concord. 2. Expiation; expiatory equivalent."

Now, as your notion of atonement excludes every idea of expiation, and satisfaction by sacrifice, why did you appeal to a witness so positively against you? Admit that in the neuter verb, it means to agree, to accord; yet, can you find any grammarian besides yourself, who can change a *neuter*, into an *active* verb, and thereby change the sense of it altogether. Why will you persist to write it again, in open violation of the established usage of language? This palpable blunder has been repeatedly exposed. Why then write it with your eyes open; and thus continue to call upon Dr. Johnson to establish your unscriptural theory, when any common school-boy, a mere novice in grammar, has only to open Johnson's Dictionary to confirm what I state. But more exceptionable still, is your attempt to support your notion by citing Acts 7. 26: "The next day he showed himself to them as they strove, and would have set them at one; that is, he would have reconciled them." These last words, you have made by quotation a part of the verse. It looks as though it were designed. And no doubt it has had influence on illiterate and superficial readers. But, Sir, it is truly astonishing that a man of your pretensions should cite that passage to prove, that *atonement* meant reconciliation, when there is no such word in the original text. He would have set them at one—*eis eirenen*; he would have set them at peace again. Where is there any thing like atonement; purging, cleansing, and propitiation here? Was any victim slain;—any blood shed;—or is there even the smallest hint in the original phraseology, to justify such an application? No, Sir; I boldly publish to the world there is not, and am willing to risque my literary and personal reputation upon the declaration. This was objected to in your former work, and yet it comes out again, *verbatim*, in a second corrected edition. Those little words *at* and *one* in the translation, had such a fascinating power, that the wand of truth itself, either unavailing or unemployed, has not been able to dispel the charm to this day. I would moreover observe, that you cannot shew a single book, except your own, in all the English language, where the word *atone*, signifies to *make one*. It is imposing a

new sense upon the word, by converting a *neuter* into an *active* verb. And I will finally add, on this part of the subject, that you not only have neglected the original, and strict signification of the term, implying sacrificial atonement, and imposed upon it a sense, which is at best but *secondary* and *remote*; but also decided on a partial and hasty view of the subject, even as confined to the English translation. We admit that in every case of atonement it was implied, that the *thing* or *person* atoned for, was thereby cleansed, and so rendered fit for the service of God; yet it must likewise be admitted, that by this they were rendered *pleasing* to God, having been before in a state of impurity, and unfit for his service, and being now rendered objects of his *approbation* and acceptance, as fit instruments of his worship. To make atonement then to God, was to remove what was offensive, and thus, by *conciliating* the divine favour, to *sanctify* for the divine service. To assume the latter as the *sole end* of the atonement, (which is an undoubted *consequence* from it) and reject the former, is a falacious proposition.

We come now to your principal argument against the *vicarious import* of the sacrifices of atonement, which existed under the Mosaic law. It is built upon the assertion, that, for unpardonable offences no atonements were made under that law: the transgressor must die unpitied and without mercy. I ask, why? You reply, "Because those sacrifices could not purge the offender from moral iniquity; and consequently no atonement was made for such offences under the law." (p. 37.) To this I offer three objections;—it is *untrue* in point of fact;—it is *sophistical* in point of reasoning;—and it is *impertinent* in point of application.

1. It is *untrue*; for atonements were made for some of those very offences, which appear in your list of unpardonable transgressions; I mean the cases of *adultery*, *perjury*, and *profane swearing*; which were not transgressions of the ceremonial, but of the *moral law*, the unbending rigour of which, in general, denounces death against every violation of it. (See Deut. 27. 26. Ezek. 18. 19.—23. Gal. 3. 10. Jas. 2. 10.) And yet for the crimes just specified, atonements were appointed, and the divine displeasure

thereby turned away. Thus it is decreed, that *if a soul* — have found that which was lost, and lieth concerning it, and SWEARETH FALSELY, then, because he hath sinned in this, he shall not only make restitution to his neighbor—but he shall bring his trespass-offering unto the Lord, a ram without blemish out of the flock; and the priest shall make an ATONEMENT for him before the Lord, and it shall be FORGIVEN HIM. (Lev. 6: 2—7.) And again, in a case of criminal connection with a bondmaid who was betrothed, the offender is ordered to bring his trespass-offering, and the priest to make an ATONEMENT for him—and the sin which he hath done shall be FORGIVEN him. (Lev. 19. 20, 22.) For the third case, see Lev. 5. 4—10. Comp. Exod. 20. 7, 14. Lev. 24. 16. Thus it will be found that these are cases of moral transgression, or violations of moral law, and consequently deserving the death which it denounces, and yet certain offerings, of a nature strictly propitiatory, were ordained to avert the divine displeasure.

2. Your argument is *sophistical*; for, from the circumstance of no atonement being appointed in those cases where death was peremptorily denounced, it is inferred; that as they “could not purge the offender from moral iniquity, consequently no atonement was made for such offences under the law:” whereas the true statement of the proposition evidently is, that *life was forfeited*, and the transgressor died, only because there was no atonement permitted to be made. “It is true, indeed, there is no express denunciation of death in those cases, where atonements were allowed. The reason is obvious, because the atonement was permitted to arrest the sentence of the law; as appears particularly from this, that when the prescribed atonement was not made, the offender was left under the original sentence of the law, which, in those cases, no longer suspended its natural operation, but pronounced the sentence of death.” But,

3. Your whole argument is *inapplicable*: We never maintained that the animal suffering in the place of the offender was designed to purge him “from moral iniquity;” or that it was any thing more than an *emblematic* substitute; the result of divine institution;—a vicarious symbol, representing the penal effects of the offender’s demerits, and

his release from the deserved punishment in consequence of the death of the victim. Neither do we affirm that the evil inflicted on the victim should be the same in quantity or quality with that denounced against the offender, or that the *literal* translation of his guilt and punishment could be made to the immolated victim; a thing utterly incomprehensible, as neither *guilt*, nor *punishment*, strictly speaking, can be conceived, but with reference to *consciousness*, which can no more be transferred than personal identity or moral qualities. But we do maintain that such a *symbolical* translation did take place, as to expose the victim to *suffering* in consequence of the offender's guilt, and at the same time it did *represent* to the offender the punishment due to his transgression, from the *temporary* penal effects of which, it also released him. Here is its *vicarious import*. But it did not stop here; it pointed the penitent offender to the blood of the Christian sacrifice, the Lamb of God, as a *real substitute* in his stead, whose blood could purge the conscience from *moral impurity*, and cleanse him from all sin. Is there any thing contradictory here? Do you inquire, what connection can subsist between the *death* of the animal and the *acquittal* of the sinner? I readily answer, I cannot tell. To unfold divine truths by human philosophy, belongs to those who hold opinions widely different from mine on the subject of atonement. It is sufficient for me that the Scripture has clearly pronounced this connection to subsist. That the death of the animal could possess no intrinsic virtue, is manifest; but that divine appointment could bestow upon it this expiatory power, will not surely be denied. If you can tell how the Brazen serpent healed the diseased Israelites, you may be able to account for this.

I think I have now positively proven the contrary of what you have asserted; namely, that "there were no sins for which the law required death, which admitted of sacrifice or atonement." As for those sins, for which sacrifice was admitted, you aver, that "the law never required the death of the transgressor." What then is the meaning of this law: "The soul that sinneth it shall die?" And also, "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them?" I am

greatly mistaken, if the law of God does not denounce death against every transgressor. The sentence, I believe, may be arrested by an *expiatory equivalent*, but this is not your plan, either as it respects transgressions of the ceremonial or moral law.

But here arises another objection to the doctrine of substitution; it is the assertion that atonements were made by the sacrifice of animals in some cases where *no guilt was involved*. You instance "the woman after child-birth, the leper, and the man with a running issue;" and ask, "what sin had they to confess? Yet for all these things the persons had to bring a sin-offering, by which an atonement was made for them." To which I reply: "the cases here specified did not involve moral guilt, and therefore can only prove that there were sacrifices which were not vicarious, inasmuch as there were some that were not for sin: but it by no means follows that where moral guilt was involved, the sacrifice was not vicarious. Now it is *only* in this latter case that the notion of a vicarious sacrifice is contended for, or is indeed conceivable. And accordingly it is only in such cases we find those ceremonies used which mark the vicarious import of the sacrifice. The *symbolical* translation of sins, and the consequent *pollution* of the victim, are confined to those sacrifices which were offered confessedly in *expiation* of sins, the most eminent of which were those offered on the day of expiation, and those for the high priest, and for the entire of the congregation, (Lev. 16. 15—28. and 4. 3—12, 13—22) in all which the pollution caused by the symbolical transfer of sins, is expressed by the burning of the victim without the camp." Dr. M'Gee.

And moreover, it deserves to be considered, whether the pains of child-bearing, and all the diseases of the human body, being the signal consequences of that apostacy which entailed those calamities on the children of Adam, it might not be proper, on occasion of a deliverance from these remarkable effects of sin, that there should be this sensible representation of that death which was the desert of it in general, and a humble acknowledgment of that personal demerit which had actually exposed the offerer to the severest punishment.

To make it appear that imposition of hands on the head

of the victim, which was common in piacular sacrifices, did not imply an acknowledgment of sin, you triumphantly ask, "did every woman after childbirth, who brought her sin-offering, and according to law, laid her hands on the victim's head—did she by this act confess her sin, because she had brought a child into the world?—Did the leper—the man with a running issue, by laying their hands on the heads of their sin-offerings,"——Stop there, and look into the texts you have referred to for this authority, and if you will not do it, I hope the honest reader will do it to satisfy himself; and he will find it to be the fact, that the offerers in these cases were not at all required to lay their hands on the heads of their respective victims. (See Lev. 12. 6—8. and 15. 1—15, 19—30. and 14. 1—31. Num. 6. 11.) Now, my dear Sir, though I do most cordially abhor your Socinian sentiments, and feel an honest conviction of the propriety of exposing them, yet I did believe you had honesty enough to have rectified such a gross mistake, such an unfounded statement, in a second *corrected* edition of your work. But behold, after the lapse of seven years, and after the exceptions made to it in reply, it now comes forward again, verbatim, and in the same triumphant tone, approved by its author, who must have been apprized of this unauthorized declaration the very day he first penned it. I ask again, where will you find it required of the puerpera, the leper, the man with a running issue, that they should lay their hands on the heads of their sin-offerings? You can shew no proof of it. Then why continue in such an open, barefaced manner, to combat us with *pretended* scriptural arguments and references of your own making. You may delude your followers, and satisfy them that you are very superior in charity and honesty to every body else, but how such a course as this will operate to the conviction of opponents, is not difficult to determine.

I contend that the imposition of hands upon the head of the victim, whenever that was required, in piacular sacrifices, implied a confession of sin, a symbolical translation of the sins of the offender upon the head of the sacrifice, and likewise an impressive mode of deprecating the evil due to his transgressions. This is evidently the case in those instances where moral guilt was involved,

but in not one where it was *not*. It also confirms the idea of the acknowledgment of sin being joined with imposition of hands in those sacrifices intended as a substitute for the offender, and as the accepted medium of expiation. The bare recital of the ceremony prescribed on the day of expiation, will put this beyond dispute. "Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, AND CONFESS OVER HIM ALL THE INIQUITIES OF THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat—and the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities," &c. (Lev. 16. 21, 22.) On this solemn occasion, the two goats made but one sin-offering, expressly so called in the fifth verse, and spoken of as such throughout the chapter, and presented jointly as the offering of the people. The death of the animal was requisite to represent the means by which the expiation was effected; and the bearing away the sins of the people on the head of the animal, was requisite to exhibit the effect; namely, the removal of the guilt. But for these distinct objects, two animals were necessary to complete the sin-offering. This is a most eminent type of the Redeemer of mankind, who was delivered for our offences, but raised again for our justification.

I now aver, that the ceremony expressed by the imposition of hands, accompanied with acknowledgment of sins, was enjoined in all cases of placular sacrifice, which is evinced from the general direction given to that effect, in the 4th chap. of Lev.;—from the ceremony of the scape goat and from the description in 2 Chr. 29. 23. of the sacrifice offered by Hezekiah, to make an atonement for all Israel.—They brought forth the he-goats for the sin-offering, before the king and the congregation, and they laid their hands upon them—and the priests killed them, &c. Your only reply here is, that, "laying on of hands, rather signifies to consecrate or devote the thing to God." Only "rather signifies;" but let it be so, and adopt Dr. Geddes' rendering of Lev. 1. 4. "And he shall lay his hand upon the head of the victim, that it may be an acceptable atonement for him." And on the words, lay his hand, &c. he subjoins this remark—"Thereby devoting it to God: and TRANSFERRING,

as it were, HIS OWN GUILT UPON THE VICTIM." In *McGee on Attonement*, p. 208.

As to your observations respecting the consecration of the priesthood for the service of the tabernacle; and of men to the gospel ministry by the imposition of hands, they deserve no attention here, on account of the total irrelevancy of these ceremonies to animal sacrifices offered for the sins of transgressors. There exists no analogy whatever, and their application to this argument, seems to betray a want of knowledge or sincerity in the attempt. Your introduction of the sheaf of wheat, to oppose the doctrine of animal sacrifice and substitution, is still worse. "A sheaf of wheat is said to be accepted for you. Lev. 33. 11. And he shall wave the sheaf before the Lord, and it shall be accepted for him: Surely the sheaf was not a substitute, nor sin imputed to it, and it accepted in the stead of the offerer!" (p. 43.) Never did I know an author to be more carried away by the mere *sound* of words. For no other reason can I conceive why this sheaf of wheat is brought in here. It is not a sin-offering;—not an animal sacrifice;—no life given;—no blood shed. *It was an offering of the eucharistic kind, whereby the offerer acknowledged the bounty of God, and his own unworthiness; he here rendered praise for favors received, and desired a continuation of the divine blessing.* Sir, are you not afraid that plain folks will begin to suspect you have a very bad cause, when driven to such shifts as these?

I must not pass over the very learned criticism you have given in pages 49, 50, on the words, *bear, bearing sins, &c.* as meaning *to forgive, to forgive sins*; as this is one of your enlargements, and especially as it is a specimen of new attainments in the Hebrew, "an imperfect knowledge of which you have acquired" since the publication of your first Address. As I desire to write for common edification, I regret very much the necessity I am under, of resorting to criticism, and from this consideration shall make as little use of it as possible.

In your critical research, by the help of Taylor, a Socinian writer, you have found the word *nasa*, "in twelve texts applied to God, as *bearing* the iniquities of the people—now, will any say, that when God is said to *bear our*

iniquity so often, he is guilty and unclean by imputation, and therefore must bear the punishment of iniquity? Impossible! Our translators did not believe it, and therefore translated the word differently;”—that is, *forgive—forgiven, &c.* But how are we to know that our translators did not believe this, seeing “they believed many doctrines which are false?” But references are likewise made to Joseph’s brethren, praying him to bear (*nasa*) their trespass; Pharaoh praying Moses and Aaron to bear his sin; Saul praying Samuel, and Abigail praying David, to bear their sins—in all which places the word *nasa* is translated *forgive*. “Surely in none of these cases can the doctrines of imputation of sin, and vicarious punishment be deduced.” This is the amount of this new criticism from “an imperfect knowledge” of Hebrew. And really, if I wanted to turn literary knight-errant to fight wind-mills, I might soon become an adept by acquiring only an *imperfect* knowledge of Hebrew, and making a bold use of it.

As for this much abused word *nasa* being rendered to *forgive sin, to pardon, to take away iniquity*, in that connection, or in that sense in which God is sought unto, or said to do it; let it be remembered that it never denotes the pardon of sin on any other principle, than that of a proper atonement for sin; and on this principle every penitent offender may plead with his Maker to take away his iniquity, to forgive his sin, using an expression that refers to the procuring cause of that forgiveness, i. e. the blood of atonement, which was poured forth while the victim appointed of God sustained the burden and underwent the suffering due to the transgressor. But I have to observe further, that a well known and established Hebrew critic, who had something more than “an imperfect knowledge” of that language, has not given the word in question, the sense of *to forgive*, but, “Transitively *to beat with sin, or sinners; to forbear punishing them.* Gen. 18. 24, 26, and 50. 17. Exod. 10. 17. and 23. 21. Numb. 14. 19. Isa. 2. 9.” This is the opinion of Dr. Parkhurst; who, in these references, has employed, as you may see, four out of seven, of the very passages you adduced in the case of Joseph’s brethren, Pharaoh, Abigail, &c. as proof of your theory, which at once shews your misapplication of the verb *nasa*.

But for the sake of argument, and to put this matter out of dispute, let us suppose that the phrase *bearing sin*, does not mean, *bearing the punishment or consequences of sin*; or in plain terms, let the words *bearing sin*, and *forgiving sin*, be synonymous and convertible, and see into what absurdities we are immediately involved. In every case where a man is spoken of as *bearing his sin*, we are to understand it of the man's *forgiving* his own sin; and when, to use your own words, "Jesus bore in his soul the sins of the world," it means he *forgave* the sins of the world; and when God is in Scripture said to *forgive, blot out, or pardon iniquity*, we are to understand, that God really *bore* it, even before Christ appeared in the world; and again, when you say, you "will patiently *bear* the merited reproaches of the righteous," it is to be understood that you will *forgive* the *merited* reproaches, &c. Really this looks like restoring the reign of chaos, and putting the whole art of reasoning out of countenance.

By this time, some plain reader may inquire,—why all this criticism;—all this particularity about words;—and why so much said about Jewish sacrifices and ceremonies;—what doth it profit? I reply, that hereby we discover the real design of all who deny the Deity of Jesus Christ. To do this consistently, it becomes necessary to set aside the commonly received doctrine of atonement by his blood; and of his substitution in the sinner's place. To accomplish this, it is indispensable to put down the testimony of the Mosaic atonements, and not suffer them to say one word in favour of substitution in any shape whatever. This would prove their overthrow at once. The blood of millions of animals testifying loudly against them, while discharging the N. Testament revelation of all appropriate meaning relative to the sacrifice of the Son of God, and establishing a language suitable to their own theories, would ruin them altogether. Hence the *old fashioned phrases* by which plain folks used to express, as they thought, the mind of God, such as *atonement, propitiation, ransom, redemption, Christ dying for us, in our stead, bearing our sins, &c. &c.* must now all be deprived of their old shape, and discharged as the "unintelligible language of our ancestors." An "imperfect knowledge" of the He-

brew, with the Socinian gloss of Priestly, John and Henry Taylors; can easily furnish a new nomenclature, which will define the word *atonement*, to mean, *atonement, reconciliation, propitiation, regeneration, union, sanctification, redemption, ransom, purging, cleansing, and any thing you please, except expiation, and substitution, and satisfaction.* The pardon of sin need have no other ground than the sinner's *repentance*, and the divine favour is afforded as the *reward* of his *obedience*. The blood of animals, and the blood of Christ being divested of all *vicarious* import and *expiatory* meaning, it is hard to tell of what use they really are, or wherein consists their proper significance in the redemption of mankind. That this is a correct representation, will be fully established, if not already, in the investigation of the next subject, with reference to which the present is considered as only preparatory.

LETTER VI.

THE SACRIFICE OF JESUS CHRIST PROPITIATORY.

DEAR SIR,

An innocent creature can be in no need of a Saviour;—in no need of repentance;—in no need of pardon;—in no need of sanctification. But a sinner, as such, is in want of pardon; and if his Maker thinks not proper to grant that pardon by an absolute act of sovereignty, he is in want of a Saviour; and moreover, if his nature at the same time that it contracted *guilt*, contracted also a *moral stain*, and became depraved, he will need a Sanctifier. That *we have all sinned and come short of the glory of God*,—that we are all *guilty* before God and liable to merited punishment,—and that God will not pardon by an absolute act of grace, are axioms in theology that need no proof. And if our natures have contracted a *moral taint*, we want some being or other, to restore our lapsed powers.

The Sacrifice of Jesus Christ Propitiatory.

A Saviour has been graciously provided for us, and imperiously becomes us not only to believe in him, but narrowly to examine, under the guidance of God's own manifestations, into the *nature* and *offices* of that Saviour; and at the same time, closely to consider, in what respects we stand in need of his assistance. These two views will have a tendency to throw light on each other.

From the foregoing letter, I think it must appear to every discerning mind, that the sacrificial terms of the ceremonial law, may be fairly applied to the death of Christ. But in the further development of this interesting subject, we shall introduce others, which open up more fully the true nature of atonement; and which give a proper description of that great sacrifice, as possessing in truth and reality that expiatory virtue, which the sacrifices of the law but relatively enjoined, emblematically represented, and imperfectly reflected. Having now the aid, both the Hebrew and Greek Scriptures, we cannot be easily mistaken. But to enumerate the various passages in which the death of Christ is represented to have been a *sacrifice*, and the effect of this sacrifice to have been *strictly propitiatory*, would lead to such a prolix detail, would be incompatible with the design of a work as limited as this must be. Nor can it be expected that I should notice every fugitive objection, or hackneyed argument which your book contains against the nature and design of the Christian sacrifice, the commonly received notion of which you have industriously laboured to destroy.

On a subject so delightful, and so consoling, as the *sacrifice* of Christ, against which you have raised such a host of Socinian objections, it were desirable to avoid the unpleasant task and unwelcome perplexities of disputatious criticism. But having resorted to this as your main effort, it becomes necessary to attempt its demolition; and by a little time and patience, we hope, with the divine assistance, to crumble this fortress, and complete its dilapidation.

For the sake of the plain reader, I will here endeavour to bring you to a point, by gathering your views, and presenting your theory of the sacrifice of Christ in such light, as cannot well be misapprehended. You had decla

ed that the "first effect" of the legal sacrifices was the purgation or cleansing of the transgressor; "the consequence of this effect was that atonement" took place between him and his God. "The union was restored, or atonement made—the sin covered—cast into the depths of the sea, so as to be seen no more." But how is this reconcilable with a previous statement made with approbation in a quotation from Dr. Doddridge, respecting the use of the sacrifices: "They were never intended to expiate offences to such a degree as to deliver the sinner from the final judgment of God in another world:" Or, in your own words, this "was not a forgiveness or justification of the spirit by faith or grace." What then was it, if those sins were *to be seen no more*? But to proceed: We here find an "effect," and "the consequence" of an effect, without definitely stating or exhibiting the *operating* cause, which I believe to be the *vicarious import* and *expiatory* nature of these sacrifices, as I have before observed, but which you will not admit in your scheme. What is merely *secondary*, and an undoubted *consequence*, you make the *sole end* of the atonement, and resolve the whole into a mere *ceremonial purification*. You deny that the victim was a *substitute* in the place of the offender, as a medium through which the divine *displeasure* against sin was *displayed*, or the divine *placability* obtained. If I am not mistaken, this is the true state of the question between us. Here we split exactly; and I firmly believe that your rout leads into the regions of infidelity; while the one for which I contend, runs a direct course to the throne of God, passing through the blood of the *substituted Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world*.

In so many words, you have declared, that "Jesus Christ, our great sacrifice, has died to cleanse us from sin, and make reconciliation;" which is certainly true, and will pass for sound doctrine in any orthodox pulpit. But how to establish these results, upon that principle which *denies* the doctrine of *substitution*, and *satisfaction*, in both the Mosaic and Christian schemes, is what has never yet been done. Nor can it ever be done on that plan which renders the pardon of sin *by blood* unnecessary; seeing the act of forgiveness is based upon the *repentance* of the sinner, and not

on the blood of expiation, or the *vicarious* obedience a passion of his surety. Shall I be told here, that it is God's *plan*, his own appointed *method*, to deal favourably with offenders through the intervention of bloody rites and sacrifices, which he could do without attaching to them the nature of expiation, or considering them vicarious. This I deny; and maintain that the pardon of sin by an absolute act of sovereignty, according to the notion of the deist, is a much more consistent scheme. I know that God deals with sinners when he saves them, according to the *plan*, and the method his infinite wisdom has seen fit to adopt; but we should be careful not to misrepresent *his plan*, by fabricating one in our own heads, according to our vague theories, and then proclaim to the world that it is an exact copy of the original that God shewed to Moses in the mount, and to his Prophets and Apostles in subsequent ages.

After stating what you call the designs of the blood of Christ, and the effects, and the consequences of the effect, using words and phrases contrary to established usage and the laws of exegesis; you complain of the charge of your having "denied the efficacy of his blood to redeem and save sinners;" and to rebut this charge, you raise the following anticipated questions: "How does the blood of Jesus effect these things in us? Or how does his blood sanctify, wash, cleanse, or purify us from sin? How does it take away sin—redeem us from sin?" &c. Your answer is very short: "By faith in his blood." This is very true upon the good old plan which I advocate. But in your scheme it may mean any thing or nothing. We are just where we were before. A new set of questions has to be settled. What is this faith? What place does it occupy in our justification? What does it see in that blood? Nothing like *satisfaction*;—nothing like *expiatory* virtue;—nothing like *meritorious* efficacy; it is not the blood of a *substituted* victim; it is not the *stipulated price* of our redemption; it must not flow to *appease* divine displeasure, or *satisfy* divine justice. O, Sir, I do behold such a dreadful hiatus,—such a horrid divulsion in your scheme, as leaves no discoverable foundation on which I could hope for salvation one moment!

From this gloomy prospect, however, I must not turn away, until, upon thorough examination, I shall find I have not been mistaken: This can be ascertained more fully by examining your notions respecting "the sacrifice of Christ Jesus," beginning at p. 52, and occupying 30 pages of your book. And as the principal force of your argument rests on the meaning of the words *bearing sins, taking away sins*, intended to express, as you suppose, not the *bearing of sins* in a way of *burden* and *suffering* for them; but merely the *bearing* them away, or putting them away by *forgiveness*, we shall examine into this matter particularly, and somewhat critically of course.

There are two words used in the 53d chapter of Isaiah to express *bearing sin*; the one is *sabal*, in the eleventh verse, and *nasa* in the twelfth. This latter is capable of various meanings, according to the nature of the subject with which it is connected. "So we find it," says Dr. M'Gee, "when joined with the word *sin*, constantly used throughout Scripture, either in the sense of *forgiving* it, on the one hand; or of *sustaining*, either directly or in figure, the penal consequence of it, on the other. Of this latter sense, I find not less than 37 instances, exclusive of this chapter of Isaiah; in all which, bearing the burden of sins, so as to be rendered liable to suffer on account of them, seems clearly and unequivocally expressed. In most cases, it implies *punishment* endured or incurred." *On atonement*, p. 240.

This same word, he informs us, when connected with *sins, iniquities, &c.* and also when combined with the words *disgrace, reproach, shame, &c.* "of which there are 18 to be found, and in all of them, as before, the word is used in the sense of *enduring, suffering*. The idea therefore of a *burden to be sustained*, is evidently contained in all these passages. Of the former sense of the word, when connected with *sins, iniquities, offences*, either expressed or understood, namely, that of *forgiving*, there are 22; in all of which cases, the nominative to the verb *nasa* is the person who was to grant forgiveness. To *forgive* then, on the part of him, who had the power so to do; and to sustain on the part of him who was deemed either actually or figuratively the offender, seem to exhaust the significations of the word *nasa*, when connected with *sins, transgressions,*

and words to that import." This, Sir, fully confirms what I before advanced in reply to the new matter which grew out of your imperfect knowledge of the Hebrew respecting the word *nasa* being applied to God, Joseph's brethren, &c. And I will now affirm, what you dare not to deny before any master of Hebrew language, that the generic signification of the word *nasa*, when applied to sins, seems to be that of *bearing, suffering, enduring*: and then, on the part of the sinner, it implies, *bearing the burden*, or penal consequences of transgression: And on the part of him against whom the offence has been committed, *bearing with, and patiently enduring it*.

To show the inaptitude of the word *nasa* being made to signify *bearing away, or taking away sin*; if I were confined to one single passage in the Bible, I would select, as marking most decidedly, that this word has not acquired the sense of *forgiving*, through the signification of *bearing away*, I say, I would select that very one, Exod. 10. 17, which you adduced to prove that it did. When Pharaoh says unto Moses *forgive, (nasa) I pray thee, my sin only this once, and entreat the Lord that he may take away from me this death*, if the word *nasa* were rendered *bear away, or take away*, it must then be, *take away the punishment of my sin*. Do you ask me why? I reply; because the taking away the sin itself is unintelligible, and it is only in the other sense that the word can be said to acquire the force of forgiveness, i. e. a remission of the merited *punishment*. But let the word expressing forgiveness, be also admitted to convey the force of *enduring, bearing with*, all is perfectly natural; and Moses having thus forgiven the *sin* of Pharaoh, might reasonably be called on to entreat the Lord to remit the *punishment*. The language of Scripture furnishes no authority for translating the word *nasa*, when connected with *iniquities*, in the sense of *bearing away*. But if you will press the contrary, we will give it one more trial. In Gen. 5. 7, compared with Jer. 31. 29, 30. and to the application of it also in Ezek. 18. 19, 20, and in Num. 14. 33. it will be found in all of these, that the sons are spoken of as *bearing the sins* of their fathers, and in none can it be pretended, that they were to bear them in the sense of *bearing them away*, or in any other sense than in that of *suffering for them*: the original term to express this, is sa-

bal in the passage in Lamentations, and *nasa* in all the rest. Now for the examples: Doth not the son bear (*nasa*) the iniquity of the father? To this the prophet replies, referring to the judicial dispensation under the new covenant, the son shall not bear (*nasa*) the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear (*nasa*) the iniquity of the son. In the passage in Num. the sons are said to bear (*nasa*) the abominations of their fathers. Now, in all these places, make the word read *bear away* the iniquity, &c. and then apply the sense of *forgiving*, and it at once makes perfect nonsense. The word *sabal*, in relation to *sins*, is exemplified but in two passages; the one in Lamentations just quoted—the *fathers have sinned, and are not, and we have borne* their iniquities; or, as Dr. Blayney renders it, *we have undergone the punishment of their iniquities*: the other is Isai. 53. 11. when speaking of Christ's suffering for his people: Dr. Lowth renders it, "For the punishment of their iniquities he shall *bear*." (*sabal*.) The force of this word will not admit of question. "In every passage," says M'Gee, "where it is not connected with the word *sins*, or *sorrows*, in the literal sense of *bearing a burden*, we can have but little difficulty to discover its signification, where it is so connected." Now when we see this word *sabal* so strictly and exclusively applied to the *bearing a burden*, standing connected with *iniquity* in the 11th verse, exactly as *nasa* is with *sin* in the 12th verse of Isa. 53. can any thing more be wanting to strengthen the argument concerning the word *nasa*? This part of Scripture seems designed to disclose the whole scheme and essence of the Christian atonement; and, from the frequent and familiar references made to it by the New Testament writers, it appears to be recognized by them, as furnishing the true basis of its exposition.

I will avail myself here of the testimony of the incomparable Lowth, in his admirable translation.

V. 4. Surely our infirmities he hath borne: (*Nasa*.)
 And our sorrows he hath carried (*sabal*) them:
 Yet we thought him judically stricken;
 Smitten of God and afflicted.

5. But he was wounded for our transgressions;
 Was smitten for our iniquities:

The chastisement by which our peace is effected
was laid upon him;

And by his bruises we are healed.

6. We all like sheep have strayed:

We have turned aside, every one to his own way;
And Jehovah hath made to light upon him the iniquity of us all.

7. It was exacted, and he was made answerable, &c.

8. He was cut off from the land of the living:

For the transgression of my people he was smitten
to death.

10. Yet it pleased Jehovah to crush with affliction.

If his soul shall make a propitiatory sacrifice,
He shall see a seed, &c.

11. Of the travail of his soul he shall see (the fruit)
and be satisfied.

By the knowledge of him shall my servant justify
many;

For the *punishment* of their iniquities he shall bear.
(*sabal.*)

12. And he bare (*nasa*) the sin of many:

And made intercession for the transgressors.

Here we behold the veil that covered the mystery of our redemption, which long lay hid beneath the shade of Jewish ceremonies and types, now lifted up by that prophet justly called evangelical, divinely commissioned to describe that great propitiatory sacrifice, whereby our salvation has been effected, as plain as it is possible for language to convey it. This chapter may justly challenge for its title, *the passion of Jesus Christ, according to Isaiah*. We feel disposed to set down in company with this blessed prophet, to enjoy the blissful hope that he did, apprehending no danger from enemies, and out of the noise of their cavillations. But no, this must not be:—Behold a host of Socinian critics, headed by Priestly, Sykes, J. Taylor, H. Taylor, Crellius and Dodson, with a number of undergraduates in their rear, pressing after them, all intent on making war upon the prophet, until they either destroy him, or effect a capitulation on their own terms. The usual method has been to single out one expression from this entire passage, and by undermining its signification, to

shake the whole context into ruins. To bear the sins of many, it is contended, must signify merely to bear them away, or remove them, by which nothing more is meant here, as one of them expresses it, than "the removing away from us our sins and iniquities by forgiveness." To help out with this theory, the apostles Paul and Peter are made to speak a sentiment they never intended: So when Paul says that "Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many, (Heb. 9. 28.) and (1 Pet. 2. 24) "Who, his own self, bare our sins in his own body on the tree," it is contended that the rendering should be, *He bare away* the sins of many, &c. Here again, *to bear sin*, and *to forgive sin*, are made synonymous and convertible, leaving out the idea of substitution altogether. To support this Socinian hypothesis you have introduced Isai. 53. 4. with Taylor's interpretation, which you endeavour to support by Mat. 8. 16. 17. where the evangelist applies that passage of the prophet to Christ, when employed in casting out devils and curing diseases. "Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses." The inference you wish to draw from this passage is, that as Christ's casting out devils and healing the sick, are to be understood of the removal of those evils; so his bearing sin, must be explained of his bearing it away, that is, by forgiving it.

I have two objections to the use you make of the text in Peter:—Your translation is erroneous; for the Greek word *anaphero*, which is there rendered *bare*, does in its primitive and most direct signification mean, *to bear up, sustain, endure, or shoulder up* any thing. It strictly signifies *to bear up*, not *to bear away*, and *to carry up*, not *to carry away*; and it is commonly applied in the sense of *offering up* a victim, as *carrying it up* to the altar: and therefore may be applied to Christ bearing up with him, in his own body, our sins (*epi xulon*) to the cross. It fairly admits the sense of *bearing as a burden*; and joined to the word *sins* or *iniquities*, it thereby signifies the *bearing their punishment, or sustaining the burden of suffering which they impose*. I am further supported here from another consideration; the simple sense of *phero*, is *to bear*, but with the force of the adjoined preposition *ana*, upward, it signifies *to bear up* as a burden, and in 133 passages of the Old Testament, it is used by the Se-

venty, in their translation of the Hebrew, in which it never occurs in the sense of bearing away.

But I further object to your reference of the text in Peter, to the 4th verse in the 53rd of Isaiah. It should be to the 11th and 12th. Because Peter quotes the very words of the prophet, and what is worthy of remark, he quotes them too in the language of the Seventy, which leaves not a single doubt of his stating them in the very same sense in which they used them; and that when he says Christ bare our sins in his own body on (or to) the cross, he means to mark, that Christ actually bore the burden of our sins, and suffered for them all that he endured in his last agonies.

As to the reference of Mat. 8. 17 to Isa. 53. 4. I have no objection; nor do I see any difficulty in harmonizing them without your gloss. Let the first clause in each relate to diseases removed, and the second to sufferings endured, and all will be plain and easy. The Greek words *elabe* and *ebastasen* in Matthew, bear to each other the proportion of the verbs *Nasa* and *Sabal* in Isaiah; the former in each of these pairs being generic, and extending to all modes of taking or bearing on or away: and the latter being specific, and confined to the single mode of bearing, as a burden. There are 26 places in all (exclusive of this of Mat. 8. 17) in the New Testament, in which the word *bastasso* occurs, and in no one is the sense any other than that of bearing, or lifting as a burden. I will here cite some of them, and apply your rendering in a parenthesis, and we shall at once discover its inaptitude and nonsensical shape. Thus Mat. 20. 12. "have borne (*borne away*) the burden and heat of the day." Luke 14. 27. "Whosoever doth not bear (*bear away*) his cross." John 16. 12. "But ye cannot bear them (*bear them away*) now." Acts 15. 10. "A yoke on the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear" (*to bear away*.) Gal. 6. 2. "Bear ye (*bear ye away*) one another's burdens:" And 5. 10. "He that troubleth you shall bear (*bear away*) his judgment." Rom. 15. 1. "We that are strong ought to bear with (*bear away*) the infirmities of the weak." The irrelevancy, and inconsistency of such a gloss, must evidently appear without further specimens; and thus is the origin-

al objection derived from St. Matthew's application of the prophecy, completely removed; since we now see that the *bearing* applied by the evangelist to *bodily disease*, is widely different from that which the prophet has applied to *sins*; so that no conclusion can be drawn from the former use of the word which shall be prejudicial to its commonly received sense in the latter relation.

As I conceive the establishment of this point as gaining at least half the battle, I must detain a moment longer on it: and as the testimony of your "learned Hebrew critic," Dr. Taylor, is important to me in this case, I shall here adduce it to confirm my statement respecting the word *nasa*. The purport of his criticism on that word, in his *Key to the Apostolic Writings*, (No. 162) is to *forgive*, and also to *bear away*, or *take away*, and this you have greedily swallowed as a delicious morsel of biblical criticism. But, Sir, I am really at a loss to know how you put it up with this same Dr. Taylor, in his definition of *Nasa* in his Hebrew Concordance, which I presume was under your eye when you wrote. Thus the Doctor writes: *Nasa*. "To bear, to lift up; to bear, to suffer affliction, trouble, terrors, reproach, shame, *punishment*, sin, iniquity. Lev. 5. 1, 17, and 24. 15. Numb. 18. 22. Ps. 59. 7.—88. 15. Jer. 15. 15. Ezek. 14. 10.—39. 26." Now, by carefully attending to this quotation, and especially the texts referred to, it may be seen how this author refutes himself very handsomely. It will be found, that to *bear sin*, is to suffer the *punishment* due to it, and two of the texts (Ps. 59. 7, and 38. 15) can apply to no other than the suffering Saviour.

I will connect with this the testimony of Dr. Parkhurst, whose consummate learning and industry no one can question. That part of his explanation which relates to the present controversy, is as follows: "*To bear, bear up as the waters of the flood did the ark. Gen. 7. 17.—To bear, carry as a burden. Gen. 45. 23. Exod. 25. 14.—To bear sin as an offender; to bear it himself as a burden, i. e. to be reckoned as a sinner, and punished accordingly. Lev. 5. 1, 17.—24. 15. et al. freq.—To bear sin in a vicarious manner, or instead of the sinner; and that whether typically, (see Exod. 28. 38. Lev. 10. 17 and 16. 21.)—or really. Isai. 53. 4, 12.*" (Heb. Eng. Lex. under *Nasa*.)

With such a testimony as that of Dr. Parkhurst, and even that of your learned friend Dr. Taylor, may I not triumphantly declare my point to be unequivocally established. And now, what is the result of this unavoidably prolix investigation? It is this: That the original terms, when connected with the word SINS, or INIQUITIES, are, throughout the entire of the Bible employed to signify, not bearing them away, in the indefinite sense of removing them, but sustaining them, as a burden, by suffering their penal consequences: and this not only where the individual was punished for his own sins, but where he suffered for the sins of others. This point being, as I conceive, fully and fairly established, your whole theory respecting the ancient sacrifices goes to ruins; and we behold, rising up more prominently than ever, the gospel salvation, though in embryo, beneath the shade of Jewish ceremonies and types, which were shadows of good things to come. Here we see the appointed victim bleeding as an emblematic substitute in the place of the transgressor, bearing the symbolical burden of his sins, which (by the imposition of his hands on its head at the altar, accompanied by the confession of his guilt,) were typically translated to it, and in consequence thereof, death is inflicted as the desert of those sins committed by the offerer. In this view of the subject the institution of animal sacrifice seems to have been peculiarly significant, as containing the very elements of religious knowledge. What memorial could be devised more apposite than this to exemplify that death which had been denounced against man's disobedience? What could more significantly exhibit the awful lesson of that death which was the wages of sin, and at the same time represent that death which was actually to be undergone by the Redeemer of mankind? Have we not here connected in one view the two great cardinal events in the history of man, the *fall* and the *recovery*? For my part, I will readily acknowledge if these things are not so, the Bible is a strange book, and the ancient ceremonial institutions it contains, the most insignificant in meaning, and inapposite in application. But there can be no mistake here. The sacrifice of Christ was a true and effective sacrifice, whilst those of the law were but faint representa-

tions and inadequate copies, intended for its introduction. They were merely preparations for this ONE SACRIFICE, in which they were to have their entire consummation. To this point let us now turn our attention, and see if we have not sufficient authority, from reason and Scripture, for its truth and unequivocal establishment.

In the first place, then, I lay it down as a self-evident, intuitive position, that a perfectly pure and innocent being cannot be the subject of pain and suffering where there is no guilt, either personal or assumed. This surely cannot for a moment be doubted. It is an axiom in morality universally acknowledged, that virtue and happiness, vice and misery, are as closely connected as cause and effect. The moral administration of God has wisely and gloriously displayed the truth and fitness of this principle; nor does the history of the universe afford a single instance of its violation. Not only so;—but it must be demonstrable, that there is an absolute, nay, a physical impossibility, from the very nature or constitution of moral intelligent beings, that any of them should endure the suffering of pain or death where there is no guilt *assumed* in the place of another, or where there is no *personal* delinquency on the part of the sufferer. For an *innocent* being, therefore, to feel pain, and die, without sin, real or imputed, would be at once a demonstration of the fallacy of the principle. The conclusion now to be drawn is legitimate and fair, that if Christ died for sinners at all, he must have suffered and died as their substitute, i. e. in their *room and stead*. Will you tell me here, that though he did not die as a substitute, yet he died according to the appointment of God, to answer a benevolent purpose, and produce much good? I reply, that God will never do evil that good may come; and the appointment of an innocent being without personal or assumed guilt, to long-continued, and in the last instance, intense suffering, would be doing that very thing. I see no way to justify the divine conduct in such a case. It would be an act of arbitrary cruelty, and a direct infringement of moral justice. Suppose the judge of your district were to enter up a judgment against you for the payment of a large sum of money for a debt you never *personally* contracted, or *assumed* to pay as surety for another

ther, and then tell you he did it not from any principle of law or equity, but to answer some good and benevolent purpose;—would you acquiesce, and admit that the *end* sanctified the *means*? Rather would you not complain, and demand where was the law, human or divine, that would support and sanction such a procedure. If then Messiah was cut off, *but not for himself*; if he *died for our sins*, having *no sin of his own*, but approved of God himself, being well pleased with him, can you tell me how it came about, that the inoffensive sufferer, the harmless, spotless Lamb of God, endured through all his life, but especially in his last agonies, such a scene of suffering and death, as terrified and convulsed creation to behold, if he died not in the sinner's *stead*? You have undertaken to enumerate five ends or designs of the death of Christ; namely: "To take out of the way the law that was against us,—to introduce the everlasting gospel,—to destroy death and the grave,—to bear down the dark vail between earth and heaven,—and to display the love of God to sinners;" but how you can get all these designs into operation without making the divine Being violate the principle of moral justice, still remains an enigmatical proposition, which the most acute Socinian ingenuity has never yet been able to solve. But the advocate of Christ's *suretyship* and *substitution* is quite at home here, and finds no difficulty. He not only can see what you have stated to be the *ends* of Christ's death, rather as the *results* of that death; but likewise, in that death itself he can discover a *vicarious sacrifice*, by which his guilt is expiated, a real atonement made for his soul; and hence he is brought *nigh to God by the blood of Christ*.

Another argument, no less weighty and invincible, is drawn from the nature of the divine law, and perfections of God. All men by the law are justly pronounced guilty and deserving death. This law is holy, just and good. It does not comport with the justice, truth and faithfulness of the divine law-giver, to suspend or remit its penalty; that were an act of unrighteousness and an infraction of his own perfections. He is, from his own nature, bound to execute the just and equitable sentence of the law, which being indispensable, must fall somewhere. It is easy to see the propriety of its coming down on the head of

the personal transgressor, but it will not refuse a proper, voluntary, adequate substitute, by which justice may be satisfied, the honours of the law maintained, and pardons obtained, without any flaw or chasm in the divine administration. There can be no remission of sin without satisfaction, made either by the sinner himself, or by a legal substitute assuming his place, and becoming answerable for the righteous claims of law in his pardon and restoration to divine favour. Will you tell me, "This scheme destroys the ideas of grace and forgiveness, for the surety to pay the full demand, and then the creditor forgive?" I answer, no. Waving the argument arising from the distinction between pecuniary and moral debt, let us take it upon the debt and credit plan, as the objection comes. Suppose you owe a large sum, and have no property or funds wherewith to pay it; you are arrested by judgment and cast into prison,—a benevolent man, say a son of your creditor, pays up the debt and releases you, the original creditor is satisfied, but lo! you are as much under obligation to the son, your surety, as ever; but suppose he did all this through disinterested benevolence, as an entire gratuity, and consequently forgives you the debt, is there not grace and forgiveness here, and yet satisfaction rendered to law and justice by the benevolent transactions of your surety? The debt is really paid, and freely remitted too by him who paid it for you. The father, your original creditor, does not object, nor does law object, if the son, your surety, thinks proper to forgive you the debt. Will you drive on a little further, and say with Socinus; "God is our *Creator*: our sins are *debts* which we have contracted with him; but every one may yield up his right, and more especially God, who is the supreme Lord of all, and extolled in the Scriptures for his liberality and goodness. Hence then it is evident that God can pardon sins without any satisfaction received." Here the deist will heartily join issue at once. But this is entirely a fallacious mode of reasoning. It confounds *right*, as it respects pecuniary *debts*, and *right*, as it respects *government*. The former may be given up by an individual without satisfaction, but the latter cannot, without infringing the claim of justice. Our sins are called debts, not properly, but metaphorically.

It is no uncommon thing for moral obligations to be expressed in language borrowed from pecuniary transactions. For a man to owe a debt of obedience, or owe his life to the justice of his country, or for one to pay a debt of gratitude — no one mistakes these things, by understanding them of pecuniary transactions. Without this distinction it is not difficult to see with what plausibility unbelievers may argue against the truth of the gospel, but likewise how the want of it has been the occasion of many errors amongst the professors of christianity.

But still, those who *pervert*, as well as those who *oppose* the doctrine of atonement, are not contented, and continue to press their objections. What need of satisfaction? Might not God forgive without it? Would it not show greater mercy? To which it may be replied, that God is not only *just*, but he is *justice* itself, justice in the abstract, he is *essential* justice. And justice, by its very nature, must exact to the utmost farthing; else it were not justice. To remit is *mercy*, it is not justice. And the attributes of God must not contradict and oppose each other: they must all harmonize and stand infinite and complete. How then can God forgive at all? How can infinite mercy and justice stand together? The wonderful economy of our redemption will answer, by referring to the obedience and passion of the Saviour. Here the mercy of God magnifies his justice: his justice exalts his mercy, and both his infinite wisdom. This is the sum and substance, the Alpha and Omega of the Christian religion; the contrary contradicts the revelation of God, and introduces the reign of chaos.

But I now proceed to confirm the doctrine of the Christian atonement, as a vicarious sacrifice, from the word of God. After what has been proven concerning the 53rd chap. of Isaiah, which contains the whole scheme and substance of the Christian sacrifice, I need not enlarge on those passages of the New Testament which so amply and comprehensively describe his matter, that the writers of that portion of revelation seem to have had that chapter perpetually in view, insomuch that there is scarcely a passage in the gospels or epistles, relating to the sacrificial nature and atoning virtue of the death of Christ, that may not

obviously be traced to this example. So that in fortifying this part of Scripture, we establish the foundation of the entire system. For the sake of brevity, our quotations shall neither be numerous nor lengthy. We are told in the words of our Lord, that the Son of man came to give *his life a ransom for many*, (Matt. 20. 28.) that, as St. Paul expresses it, he *gave himself a ransom for all*, (1 Tim. 2. 6.) that he was *offered to bear the sins of many*, (Heb. 9. 28.) that God *made him to be sin for us who knew no sin*, (2 Cor. 5. 21.) that Christ *redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us*, (Gal. 3. 13.) that he *suffered for sins, the just for the unjust*, (1 Pet. 3, 18.) that he *died for the ungodly*, (Rom. 5. 6.) that he *gave himself for us*, (Tit. 2. 14.) that he *died for our sins*, (1 Cor. 15. 3.) and was *delivered for our offences*, (Rom. 4. 24.) that he *gave himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God*, (Eph. 5. 2.) that we are *reconciled to God by the death of his Son*, (Rom. 5. 10.) that his blood was shed *for many for the remission of sins*, (Mat. 26. 28.)—These, and many others, that might be added, were it necessary here to enlarge the number of witnesses, all directly refer to the prophet Isaiah, and fully establish the propitiatory sacrifice and oblation of the Son of God. Against this host of testimony, so full, so positive, and so strong, one would think there could not possibly be an objection. But what will not human “philosophy and vain deceit” undertake, when the wisdom of man is to be exalted above the wisdom of God. We must now have another scuffle with Socinian criticism; the word *for*, in all these passages, is to have a gloss that entirely changes their commonly received import, and leaves us without a substitute. The metaphysical ingenuity of Dr. Priestly, with the industry and acuteness of Sykes and Taylor, have furnished the *rational* expositors of the present day, with quite an easy way of extricating themselves from the shackles of Scripture language. When Christ is said to have *died for us*, it is to be interpreted dying *on our account, or for our benefit*. Says Priestly, “If, when rigorously interpreted, it shall be found, that if Christ had not died, we must have died, yet it is still, however, only *consequently* so, and by no means *properly and directly* so, as a *substitute* for us.” He thinks the writers, being accustomed

ed to the strong figurative expression of the East, used the phrase, *he died for us*, "or *in our stead*, without meaning it in a strict and proper sense." You have joined with these your leaders, and seem to have mounted upon their shoulders, from which lofty elevation you have made a great display of criticism on the Greek preposition translated *for*, until you have criticised the very life out of it, rather than suffer it to express the idea of substitution. In the "many hundred places where *hyper* (*for*) is used in the New Testament, you have never found it translated *in the stead of* but in two texts. 2 Cor. 5. 20. "We pray you *in Christ's stead*," (*hyper*) and Philem. 13. "Whom I would have retained with me, that *in thy stead* he might have ministered unto me:" but in neither of these is the death of Christ implicated." (p. 80.) Well, what of that? Still it is true, that *hyper*, is, in these two texts, rendered *in the stead of*, and certainly means substitution there, let the subject be what it may; but bring it to the death of Christ, and it is *hyper* still, and will express the same sentiment. But by a certain magic, which has more to do in your criticism, than any writer I ever examined, you are enabled to find out that the word *hyper*, if it "must signify substitution," will make "Paul and other apostles suffer as substitutes for us—christians substitutes for one another, and in the same sense as Jesus was—christians substitutes for Christ, and suffered in his room and stead—Christ was a substitute in the stead of our sins—and entered into heaven in our room and stead." My dear Sir, did you think that either wise men or fools would profit by such an outrage on common sense as this? Must we attribute this gross departure from all rules of correct usage and interpretation of language, to a want of knowledge or sincerity? To one or the other of these alternatives we are inevitably left. Will you leave your learned languages for a moment, and turn over Johnson's Dictionary to the word *for*, and there learn that it has forty different acceptations, according to the subjects with which it is connected: you will there learn that in one of them it means substitution. Well, suppose I contend it means substitution in the remaining 39, and apply it accordingly; would you not at once set me down for a fool, a hypocrite, or a literary mad-

man. But I act just as consistently as you have done in your management of the word *huper*, which appears to have met your research in "many hundred places," and in only two are you willing that it shall have the force of substitution; and this, no doubt, the more readily, because the death of Christ is not the subject with which it stands connected. There are four Greek prepositions, *diu*, *peri*, *huper* and *anti*, used in the New Testament in explaining this doctrine; the two former refer to the occasion and cause of Christ's death, that is, *our sins*. Thus, in Rom. 4. 25, "Who was delivered *for our offences*," not in the *room* and stead of *our offences*, I grant. But when Christ died *for us*, the subject is changed, the manner of the expression is varied, and *huper*, whenever it refers to Christ's sufferings, it plainly signifies his being substituted in *our room and stead*; as in Rom. 5. 6. "Christ died, *huper ascbon*, for the ungodly." And Tit. 2. 14. "Who gave himself, *huper hemon*, for us." As for *anti*, I contend that it is seldom or never used but to signify the substitution of one thing or person in the room of another; thus, when Christ is said to *give his life a ransom*, *anti pollon*, for many, (Mat. 20. 28. Mark 10. 46.) this evidently implies his being substituted in their place, as the frequent use of it in other Scriptures evinces. (See Mat. 2. 22. and 5. 38. and 17. 27. Luke 11. 11. &c. &c.)

I could, were it necessary, abundantly establish the point in hand from examples drawn from Greek writers, who have used the word *huper* in all the force of substitution. Do you recollect the story of Seuthes and Episthenes in Xenophon? The former being about to put to death a beautiful youth he had captivated, was arrested by the latter, who being a great lover of youth, proposed to die in his stead: Seuthes asks him; "Are you willing, Episthenes, *huper toutou apothanein*, to die in his place?" Being answered, without hesitation, in the affirmative, by laying down his neck for the life of the lad, Seuthes turned to the youth and inquired *ei paisein auton ANTI ekeinou*, if he were willing, that he (Episthenes) should suffer instead of him?" Here *huper* and *anti* are used alternately in this single instance in the fullest sense of substitution, which no one can doubt. In the history of Greece it is recorded of Agesilaus, that he decreed, that if any one should give e-

way his horse or his armour, &c. in order to get rid of military service, that he must, at the same time, have some one ready, *huper autou apothanoumenon*, who would die in his place, if he expected to live; thereby giving him fully to understand; that for such a crime he must die himself, unless he could procure some one to take his place. Another instance we have in "Antilochus, who" throwing himself down, *tau patros HUPER apothanon*, to suffer death (*in loco*) in the place of his father, obtained such glory, that he alone, of all the Greeks, was stiled the lover of his father." The same idea is conveyed in the words of Caiaphas respecting our Saviour's dying *HUPER tou laou*, for the people, that the whole nation perish not. (John 11. 50.) In like manner, (2 Sam. 18. 33) when David saith concerning Absalom, *Tis doe ton thanaton mou ANTI sou*, there is clearly expressed David's wish that his death had gone *instead* of Absalom's. That a *vicarious death* is directly asserted in the above instances, I believe to be indisputable, and that the Greeks were accustomed to use the words *huper* and *anti* as having the force of substitution, there can be no question.

What then is the fair and honest inference that ought to have been drawn from the "many hundred places" that you examined where the word *huper* is used? Is it that, because the word does not necessarily imply substitution in all these passages, that therefore it does not imply it in any? Such kind of logic would soon shake all your work into ruins, and poorly was it worth while to employ it in this way against us. We admit that it would be improper to say that Christ died *instead of our offences*, yet we deny that it would be so, to say, that he died *instead of us*. It is sufficient, if the different applications of the word carry a consistent meaning. To die *instead of us*, and to die *on account of our offences*, perfectly agree. But this change of the expression necessarily arises from the change of the subject. For Christ to die, therefore, for *sin*, and *sinner*s, I understand it plainly to signify that he died to *expiate* the one, and *instead* of the others. When he is said to die *for sin*, *for our offences*, the occasion and cause of his death are referred to, and then the words *peri* and *dia* translated *for*, are commonly used; but when he died *for us*, the words

huper and *anti* are used to denote a *vicarious death*, and to express the real sense of substitution. This I have no doubt is the fact, and I am willing to rest my soul's salvation on it, as a Scriptural doctrine, explicitly set forth in the following and many more passages; viz. Rom. 5. 7, 8. "For scarcely (*huper*) for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure (*huper*) for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died (*huper*) for us." To deny that the word *for*, in this connection, means substitution might do for Bedlam, for sure no man in his senses can do it. 1 Pet. 3. 18. "For Christ also hath once suffered (*peri*) for sins, the just (*huper*) for (*instead of*) the unjust." Rom. 5. 5. "Christ died (*huper*) for, (*instead of*) the ungodly." 1 Cor. 5. 7. "For even Christ our passover is sacrificed (*huper*) for (*instead of*) us." Rom. 5. 8. "While we were yet sinners, Christ died (*huper*) for (*instead of*) us." Mat. 20. 28. "The Son of man came to give his life a ransom (*anti, for, instead of*) many." (See also Mark 10. 45.) Tit. 2. 14. "Who gave himself (*huper*) for, (*instead of*) us." In 1. Cor. 15. 3, it is said *Christ died for our sins*; and in Gal. 1. 4, *Who gave himself for our sins*; in both places *huper* is used to convey a *substitutive* force in the connection I have already noticed; an attention to which will obviate your statement respecting Mat. 26. 28. "This is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many" — (*peri*.) Here you say, "*huper* is explained by *peri*, which never signifies substitution." This you think is so conclusive that "the nicest critic cannot pervert it to signify substitution." Permit me just to hint here, what I think a nice critic would have done: Not only his nicety, but his honesty would have led him to quote the whole verse: "This is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many, for the remission of sins." This last part of the verse you left out. It seems to have a direct reference to the blood wherewith Moses established and sanctified the *first* covenant, and plainly marks out the similitude in the nature and objects of the two covenants, at the moment that Christ was prescribing the great sacramental commemoration of his own death. Even Dr. Priestly himself admits these words to imply, "that the death of Christ in

some respects resembles a sin-offering under the law:" a concession that naked truth ought to constrain every man to make. I therefore deny that the word *huper*, in Luke 22. 20. which is a collateral passage, is explained by *peri*, as you aver in the text in Matthew, so as not to imply substitution. The expressions of the two evangelists are not the same: Luke says, "This cup is the New Testament in my blood, which is shed (*huper*) for you." Matthew has it, "shed (*peri*) for many," adding what you left out, as before observed, so that *huper* is very proper in the first case expressing properly substitution, whereas *peri* is equally proper in the latter, having a substitutive force referring to our *sins* as the *occasion*, or necessitating cause of the blood of the new covenant, without which they could not be remitted.

I have been thus particular on this point, because I perceive it to be the last main pillar in your fortress on which you have particularly relied for support. How I have succeeded in diminishing its strength, I am willing that an impartial literati shall decide. To the candid, intelligent reader, I appeal. And to the modest, unlearned reader, I offer as an apology for troubling him with critical observations the real necessity imposed upon me, because a thorough investigation of the sentiments here opposed could not well take place without. I hope, however, he will have no further complaint on this score, during the remainder of this work.

That the obedience and death of Christ were *vicarious*, that is, in the *room* and *stead* of sinners;—that he acted as their *surety*;—that his sufferings were *propitiatory*, satisfying the law and justice of God for them, by *expiating* their *sins*, and thereby opening up the way for the exercise of free remission and justification; are truths that I believe we have fully established. And here would we stop, were it not that, we deem it necessary to notice some of your principal objections, which, though indeed futile and groundless, yet, lest they should be considered strong and unanswerable, we shall attempt their removal and thereby render the doctrines I have stated and defended the more prominent and certain. Some of those objections have already been set aside in the present letter, and the whole of them were one after the other refuted in my former let-

ters, which it seems for some cause you were not willing to answer. That you did not *condescend* to notice it, you dare not to say, for in one single place, your *critical eye* happening to light on a small inaccuracy respecting the word *isa*, which I had introduced in connection with a remark of Dr. Scott, you pounced upon it with great avidity, and soon dispatched it without mercy, by the superior force of your critical powers, and then hurried away, without attempting the refutation of one single point of doctrine. It is hence to be inferred, that if you had been apprehensive of a similar triumph on any point of theological discussion in my book, that it would have shared a similar fate. To abridge my present labour, gladly would I refer to that work as containing a fair refutation of your objections, but it is highly probable, many who may read this, will not have the opportunity of availing themselves of the benefit of the work referred to, not having it in possession, and never having seen it. Having upon a careful review, found it, on this subject, to contain sufficient strength, I shall make a liberal use of it, by adopting as much thereof as I may think proper.

Your first objection to the suretyship and satisfaction of Jesus Christ, is, that it is "unscriptural, or not found in the Bible" (p. 64.) And you contend, that "it is never said that the blood of Christ did satisfy God's law or justice, or that it was designed to satisfy them." And in another place; "It is a pity that so much is said and written on the doctrine of Christ's satisfaction,—when the doctrine is not contained in the Bible." And again; "People unacquainted with the Bible, by attending to a great part of the preaching and systems of religion in the present day, would almost conclude, that Christ died only to satisfy justice—appease the vengeance of God, and purchase grace. These things I do not believe to be contained in the Bible." Such declarations are so plain, that it is the more surprising to find among your followers, a number who roundly assert that you hold no such sentiments; and are almost offended if they are contradicted. Probably these are the "Calvanists and Arminians, that live in your communion, in the closest bonds of Christian union." They are very worthy of the name, no doubt: and I pre-

sume that Trinitarian Calvinists and Arminians as much covet their fellowship, as they are delighted with their consistency. Such a declaration, however, may, in some measure, answer the purpose for which it was designed.

In answer, however, to your objection, I will observe the following things: There are but three ways in which a sinner can possibly hope to escape inevitable perdition: namely, by personal conformity to the moral law;—the absolute mercy of God, or the vicarious atonement of Jesus Christ. This first is decided at once by the apostle: "By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight," and, "as many as are of the works of the law, are under the curse." As for the second, I have showed already the impossibility of such a scheme. And moreover, it is the principal refuge of infidelity. To pardon sin, as an absolute act of mercy, would be a total neglect of holiness; for mercy has regard to the object as miserable—not to his guilt, which is the cause of it: And for God to act mercifully, without manifesting his infinite holiness and justice in the condemnation of sin, would not be an act of holiness; and therefore, no such absolute act of mercy is possible with God. Besides, such a notion of forgiveness, without satisfaction to justice, renders the incarnation—the life—the sufferings—and the death of Christ, superfluous, and entirely unnecessary. If the way was so short, that by such an act, without satisfaction, sin might have been pardoned; why, says Dr. Bates, "should the infinite wisdom of God take so great a circuit?—The apostle Paul supposes this necessity of satisfaction as an evident principle, when he proves wilful apostates to be incapable of salvation, "because there remains *no more sacrifice* for sin:" for the consequence were of no force, if sin might be pardoned without sacrifice, that is, without satisfaction, which lays the only solid foundation for hope, and he that shall hope for mercy in any other way, will find, alas! too late, that he has deceived his own soul."

A single moment's reflection must convince any one, that God's essential justice, which must forever punish transgression, cannot admit of an act of mercy, without some adequate display of righteousness, in connection with such an act. The *propitiatory sacrifice* of the cross has afforded

meeting place where *justice* and *mercy* harmonize. The apostle, by one masterly stroke, has plainly shewn this in Rom. 3. 24—26. *Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God hath set forth to be a PROPITIATION, through faith in his blood, TO DECLARE HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS FOR THE REMISSION OF SINS—that he might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus.* According to this passage, *free grace* and *mercy* require a *propitiation*, even the shedding of the Saviour's blood, as a *medium* through which it may be honorably communicated. Here is a satisfaction that does not, as you suppose, *preclude the exercise of grace* in forgiveness, but likewise in which the displeasure of God against sin being manifested, *mercy* and *grace* to the sinner are exercised without any suspicion of his having relinquished his regard to righteousness. This is clearly to be seen, for in his *setting forth Jesus Christ to be a propitiation*, he declared his *righteousness for the remission of sins*.

Could such language as this be appropriate, if God exercised forgiveness *without* reference to the *satisfaction* rendered by the *ilasterion*, the *propitiatory sacrifice* in the blood of the Son of God? Here the title of the Mercy-Seat is applied to Christ, partly because it covered the tables of the law which were broken by the fall of man, to signify, that by him pardon is procured; and principally because God was rendered *propitious* by the sprinkling of the blood of the sacrifice on it, where he exhibited himself, as on a throne of grace, dispensing pardons to the people. The *ilasterion*, the name of the *figure*, is by the apostle applied to Christ, because he alone can answer the demands of the law by interposing between justice and our guilt, and by his own blood open the way for our reconciliation to God.

Before I dismiss this subject, I will present you with Dr. Doddridge's definition of satisfaction, as we understand it applied in the holy Scriptures. "Whatever that is, which, being done or suffered, either by an offending creature himself, or by another person for him, shall secure the honours of the divine government, in bestowing upon the offender pardon and happiness, may properly be called a SATISFACTION, OR ATONEMENT made to God for him." (Lectures, vol.

2. p. 217.) Can it be possible there is any inconsistency or contradiction here? He adds, "It is not here our intention to assert, that it is in the power of an offending creature to *satisfy* for his own sins, but only to shew what we mean when we speak of his doing it." The word *satisfaction* does not always, in strict propriety of speech, amount to the payment of a debt. It has been used in a sense signifying *to content a person aggrieved*, and is put for some valuable consideration, substituted instead of what is a proper payment, and consistent with a remission of that crime or offence, for which such supposed satisfaction is made, which is a circumstance to be carefully observed, in order to vindicate the doctrine, and to maintain the consistency between different parts of the Christian scheme. Expunge this doctrine of Christ's satisfaction from the Bible, who can tell why it *pleased* the Lord to *bruise* him,—to *bring him to grief*,—to make him a *sin-offering*,—to make our iniquities *to light upon him*,—to make him a *curse*,—to *number him with transgressors*,—to *condemn sin in his flesh*,—to *smite the man that is his fellow*,—to *spare him not*, but to *liveer him for our offences*;—who can understand the meaning of his last dying expression,—IT IS FINISHED,—say, who can tell what all these things mean, if you dismiss from the Bible the heart-consoling doctrine of *satisfaction* by the precious death of the Lamb of God? This very doctrine has made the streaming eye of many a broken-hearted sinner to glisten with joy; it has cheered the hearts of millions of living Christians, and was all their hope and ground of consolation and triumph in their dying moments. Was all this wrong? Was it all mistake? O, my dear friend, did you but know what you are doing, while you are endeavouring to destroy this only ground of hope and rejoicing, methinks that tears of sorrow and deep regret would be your meat day and night. Could your theory operate by a retrograde influence, and undo all that has been done on the ground of Christ's substitution and satisfaction, what havoc and disappointment, what changing and turning upside down of things, what shifting of ground, and remodelling of the doctrines and laws of the kingdom of Christ would take place,—ancient saints, who lived and died rejoicing on this very ground *only*, would find the

was all illusion,—all a mistake,—and that the ground and foundation of their hope,—the object of their faith,—and the standard of their experience, were *essentially* different from what they had expected. This is not imagination; let your scheme operate in a prospective direction, and the same results are better realized. Yea, listen to the speaking trumpet from England and Germany, and some of our northern states, and learn the awful consequences of *philosophizing* away into *rational* Christianity the fundamental doctrines of the Deity of Christ and his vicarious atonement.

It is further objected, that “this scheme imposes certain damnation on every one who ever sinned against the gospel, in one instance, by unbelief or disobedience. For, according to the scheme, the curse of the law was death, temporal, spiritual and eternal. But Christ could not suffer more than eternal death—could only satisfy the law *properly* and *fully*; consequently his sufferings could make no satisfaction for sins against the gospel.” (p. 66.) Here is certainly one of the most curious positions ever taken in divinity. ~~It is just this; that sins under the gospel are not to be recognized and punished by the law.~~ This is fairly contained in the premises, which makes one class of sins under the law to which the satisfaction of Christ is limited, and by which it is so properly and fully exhausted, that there is no surplus or remainder to apply to another class of sins under the gospel. “The inference then is, if God cannot forgive sin without a satisfaction, every transgressor of the gospel must be certainly damned.” Such logic as this cannot but put one in mind of the exclamation of an honest Quaker once, “O argument, O argument, the Lord rebuke thee?” How easy it is for an opponent, when he has a mind, to build up a man of straw for his adversary, and then with a great parade and show, wage war and obtain a victory over it.

It is again contended, that the doctrine of substitution “conveys the notion of two independent Gods. For one God cannot purchase any thing from himself, so as to satisfy himself.” This is the borrowed language of infidels, and is really too ridiculous to come from the pen of a Christian minister. The position is entirely without foundation

in truth, and of course, the conclusion is fallacious. It is no where said that God the Father paid the price of our redemption, or made the purchase of it, but Christ, by the offering of his soul and body, paid, as we believe, in his human nature what was accepted in the divine. The apostle moreover declares, that the "church of God was purchased with his own blood," (Acts 20. 28,) which, on the authority of Clarke and Greisbach, you say should be read, "The church of the Lord," &c. But how *Theos, God*, can be changed into *Kurios, Lord*, perhaps these men may better account for than I can. One thing, however, is very certain, and that is, the phrase "church of the Lord" is not a Bible phrase, as it is no where to be found, and this makes it evident that it is not according to apostolic usage: But let it be the church of the Lord, the church of Jehovah, still he hath purchased the church with his *own blood*, an expression which, no doubt, you can criticise away to suit your scheme. I will add once more; the sacrifices under the law were offered to God, and that he accepted them cannot be denied; yet his were both the animal that was sacrificed, and the person who offered it: Did not both really belong to him? And to him was not the offering made? Yet, what man in his senses would ever think about God's offering to himself, or paying himself in these ceremonies? Such inferences are too visionary and chimerical to deserve a serious refutation.

Again: "This scheme contradicts stubborn facts.—For, according to the scheme, the demands of law against the sinner were death, temporal, spiritual and eternal; and that Christ, the sinner's surety, suffered and satisfied these demands in the sinner's stead." Then, "why do the elect suffer temporal or spiritual death? Why does Christ live for evermore, and not suffer eternal death?"

Nothing, indeed, could, in our apprehension, be more completely stupid, than is the triumphant assurance with which this objection is frequently advanced. Be it remembered, that the fact of the Redeemer's undertaking and accomplishing the deliverance of his elect, can by no means involve the necessity of an instantaneous recovery from their thralldom.—Mercy, as well as wisdom, will evidently dictate such a mode of applying the great deliver-

ance as may be best accommodated to the circumstances of the case. But very evidently the reversal of the decree by which "it is appointed unto all men once to die," would be so far from comporting with the dictates of either wisdom or mercy, that the inevitable consequence must be a scene of horror and dismay, greater than we have words to paint. Suppose that no godly men were to die; then clearly every instance of mortality around us would bear on its front the indubitable attestation that the deceased had been adjudged to the place of torment. What havock such an assurance would make of human feeling, even of *sanctified* feeling, none need be informed. This is only ONE consideration, among many, that might be suggested in behalf of the reasonableness, and even necessity, of letting things take their present course. But because the Redeemer thus applies his remedy in the measure and manner best suited to the actual state of the world, is it therefore to be inferred, that no remedy of the kind contended for, is applied at all? Does it follow that, because he has not adopted what would evidently be an unpropitious and uncomfortable course, he must be debarred from taking *any* order on the subject? From death temporal he *will* deliver; but because the best interests, and the peace of the world, demand such an arrangement, the *last* enemy that shall be conquered is death.

As for Christ's suffering eternal death, no one ever said or thought so. You have charged the scheme you oppose, with holding that the "demands of the law were death temporal, spiritual, and eternal." In the first page of your introduction, you declared to the world that the doctrines you opposed were not taken "from individual authors, but from our professed creeds and standards." In what page of our public standard will you find the declaration respecting the demands of the law being death temporal, spiritual and eternal? You cannot show it on any page of that book, and this is not the only instance of departure from your own statement respecting the source from whence you have drawn out the doctrines you profess to oppose. But whatever the demands of the law might be, whatever may be the meaning of Christ being "made under the law," and being "made a curse for us,"

it is very evident he lacked not the capacity of sustaining the full measure of the curse; by him, of consequence, the penalty *was* exhausted when he subjected himself to its demands for the redemption of his people. As for the objection, at least strongly implied, with respect to the Saviour's not having endured death spiritual, as a part of the wages of sin, it rests on a ground entirely fallacious. The corruption of the creature, its enmity, its desperation, are the *necessary* consequences of the withdrawal of the divine communion. Men naturally hate God when they regard him only as the God of judgment, and in connection with their own guilt—they are, say the Scriptures, his enemies by wicked works." But to suppose the same liability to corruption, on the part of the Saviour, would argue no less absurdity than blasphemy. Still, however, in so far as the act of God is directly concerned in this matter, the Saviour did not escape even this portion of the penalty. Communion with his Father actually was suspended; and so keenly did he feel the infliction of this judgment, that on the cross he exclaimed, "my God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" The penalty, therefore, in every respect, was perfectly exhausted. That it did not involve an eternity of suffering, we ascribe to that very divinity of his nature which is denied by you, but without which, he must have evidently sunk beneath the untempered stroke of the Almighty arm: that it did not issue in the corruption, or, in other words, in the aversation of his heart from his God and Father, we ascribe to the fact that, constituted as he was, (divine as well as *human*) he was necessarily and unchangeably pure. "To redeem them that were under the law," it became necessary that he should be "made under the law;" his obedience was *unto death* in their behalf. "It became him," (God the Father,) "for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation (the Saviour) *perfect through sufferings.*" This was the only method by which many sons could be brought to glory; and of the *reasonableness* and *expediency* of such a dispensation, adopted by infinite wisdom, there can be no doubt—"IT BECAME HIM." To say "that God killed his Son," as you have charged upon us, is language worthy of

Tom Paine. We know that it pleased the Lord to bruise him, and we need not be concerned how it was done. To use the language of Bishop Watson, in reply to that arrogant and dogmatical theology that decrees the rejection of the doctrine of atonement, on the score of its *inconsistency*: "We know, assuredly, that God delighteth not in blood; that he hath no cruelty, no vengeance, no malignity, no infirmity of any passion in his nature; but we do *not* know whether the requisition of atonement for transgression may not be an *emanation of his infinite mercy*, rather than a *demand of his infinite justice*. We do *not* know whether it may not be the very best means of preserving the innocence and happiness, not only of us, but of all other free and intelligent beings. We do *not* know, whether the suffering of an innocent person, may not be productive of a degree of good infinitely surpassing the evil of such sufferance; nor whether such a quantum of good could, by any other means, have been produced." "By accepting the death of Christ instead of ours," says Bishop Porteus, "by laying on him the iniquity of us all, God certainly gave us a most astonishing proof of his mercy: and yet, by accepting no less a sacrifice than that of his own Son, he has, by this most expressive and tremendous act, signified to the whole world such extreme indignation at sin, as may well alarm, even while he saves us, and make us *tremble at his severity, even while we are within the arms of his mercy.*"

It is further contended, that "if Christ be the substitute or surety of the elect only, then the blessings of pardon, eternal life, &c. are procured for a part of mankind *only*, and cannot, in truth and sincerity, be offered to others." To this I reply, in the words of Dr. Scott: "There is such an infinite sufficiency in the atonement of Christ, and it is so proposed to sinners, as a common salvation for all who will accept of it, that a foundation is laid for the most unreserved invitations, exhortations and expostulations, and no sinner will be rejected who sincerely seeks this salvation. Yet these general truths perfectly harmonize with the secret purposes and foreknowledge of God, in respect of the persons who actually will embrace and obtain the proffered blessings." On Rom. 5. 15—19.

Dr. Owen, whose very name is a blister to heretics, and especially to Socinians, asserts, "That it was the purpose and intention of God, that his Son should offer a sacrifice of infinite worth, value and dignity; sufficient in itself for the redemption of all and every man, if it had pleased the Lord to employ it to that purpose; yea, and of other worlds also, if the Lord should freely make them, and would redeem them. Sufficient, we say, then, was the sacrifice of Christ for the redemption of the whole world; and for the expiation of all the sins of all and every man in the world." *Owen on Redemption. Book 4. Chap 1.*

In perfect accordance, with these, are the sentiments of President Davis, Witsius, Henry, Searle, Smith, Fuller, and many others, when treating on this subject. So that those who hold the sovereignty of God's election of his people to eternal life in Christ Jesus, their head, feel no ways impeded by the shackles which your Socinian ingenuity and industry have forged for them. Equally unfounded is your fifth objection, which supposes that the scheme of suretyship destroys the foundation of faith, and involves the necessity of an actual knowledge of our election and salvation, before we are authorized to believe in Christ as our Saviour. It is not at all surprising to find this doctrine *abused* by men who expect to make their *election sure*, irrespective of their *calling*; and it is less so, to find the doctrine *perverted* by those who confound the *warrant* for believing with the *nature* of faith itself, which are as distinct as the *naked word* of God addressed to sinners every day, and that *exercise* of heart, which, acting upon this warrant, *believeth unto righteousness*.

It is again objected, that "this scheme represents God as changeable—as being full of wrath against the sinner; but by the blood of Christ, he is appeased, or reconciled to the sinner, though he remains unchanged, and in the same state of rebellion against God and his government:" (p. 67.) This charge owes its origin to a lack of knowledge or honesty; if the former, it is certainly inexcusable,—if the latter, it is unpardonable in a man of high pretensions to *learning* and *charity*. Who ever held that God is reconciled to *impenitent* sinners? Where do you find a single paragraph in our public standards, from which you can

draw such an unhallowed, not to say blasphemous inference? Sir, is this the way you are redeeming the pledge so positively given in your introduction, that the doctrines you were about to drag to your inquisitorial tribunal, were to be taken "from our own professed creeds and standards only?" And are we to view it as a further specimen of your honesty with this declaration in the front of your book, afterwards to fabricate a *third scheme*, (in p. 76) represented and illustrated by a run-away soldier—apprehended—tried—condemned—commiserated and released by an officer getting five lashes in his place, &c. &c. and then gibbet it up to public disapprobation and contempt, thereby to aggrandize your own scheme, at the expense of your opponents, by rendering theirs odious and contemptible? You have asserted it to be a privilege "not only to state your own views of doctrines, but also to state the views of others." I have no objection, provided it be done fairly and honestly. But I had rather be allowed, if convenient, to speak always for myself, than that another should give my sentiments a meaning I never intended, and a coloring they will not bear. Just such a treatment we are now receiving from you. A more headless, shapeless mass of Arianism, Socinianism, and Pelagianism, accompanied with the most bare-faced contradictions, false coloring and misrepresentation, I can honestly say, I believe I never saw in the same compass, as I find comprised in the pages of your book.

It is strongly implied in your objection, that there is no wrath in God; and that for God to be reconciled to us, would make him changeable. But, be it remembered that, the displeasure of God, is not like man's displeasure, a resentment or passion, but a judicial disapprobation: which, if we abstract from our notion of God, we must cease to view him as the moral governor of the world. The Scriptures represent a reciprocal opposition between him and the sinner: "My soul loathed them, and their soul abhorred me." (Zech. 11. 8.) "God is angry with the wicked every day;" and their "carnal mind is enmity against God." (Ps. 7. 11. Rom. 8. 7.) That reconciliation was necessary on the part of God as well as on the part of man,—that the Divine Being is placable, and that his judicial disapproba-

tion can be removed, without a change of his nature, can be directly proved by the word God. "And I will establish my covenant with thee, and thou shalt know that I am the Lord: That thou mayest remember, and be confounded and never open thy mouth any more, when I am PACIFIED (*kaper*, reconciled) toward thee for all that thou hast done saith the Lord God." (Ezek. 16. 62.) Again, (Luke 18. 13.) "God be merciful to me a sinner." In the original it is, (*ho Theos ilastheti moi to amartolo*) *God be propitiated*, *be pacified*, *be reconciled to me a sinner*; for the word, *ilastheti*, will bear either of these renderings. But without multiplying quotations, I will recite a case exactly in point to the main argument before us, in which there is described, not only the *wrath* of God, but the turning away of his displeasure by the mode of sacrifice. The case is that of the three friends of Job—in which God expressly says to one of them, "My wrath is kindled against thee, and against thy two friends:—Therefore, take unto you now, seven bullocks and seven rams, and go to my servant Job, and offer up for yourselves a burnt-offering; and my servant Job shall pray for you: for him will I accept, lest I deal with you after your folly." (Job 42. 7, 8.) This case is most decisive, and speaks louder than a thousand arguments, and must forever demolish the foundation of your *fabrick*. And thus the doctrine of God's being *propitiated*, *appeased*, or *reconciled* to the sinner through the sin-stoning blood of the Lamb, is most firmly established, and placed beyond the reach of Socinian criticism and cavil forever.

But lastly: It is urged, that the scheme you oppose "contradicts the gospel plan of justification by faith. For it represents the sinner as justified by the surety-righteousness of Christ imputed to him.—The imputed righteousness of Christ is not once named in the Bible." As for the gospel plan of justification, or of any thing else, I apprehend they are words without any definite meaning in your plan. Probably the term justification means the same as atonement, if you had explained it. As for the imputed righteousness of Christ not being named in the Bible, is an assertion that avails nothing; the *doctrine* is there, and if you do not see it, or enjoy its benefit, the more is the pity. If Messiah brought in everlasting righteousness

and then was cut off, but not for himself (Dan. 9. 24, 26) and if that righteousness is *unto* all and *upon* all them that believe, (Rom. 3. 22) well may the justified believer *greatly rejoice in the Lord* OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS, and say, "my soul shall be joyful in my God, for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation,—he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness." (Isai. 61. 10. Jer. 23. 6.) Well might the apostle prefer the loss of all things that he might "win Christ, and be found in him, not having *his own righteousness*, which is of the law, but *that* which is through the faith of Christ, the *righteousness* which is of God by faith." (Phil. 3. 9.) "David also describeth the blessedness of the man unto whom God *imputeth righteousness without works*." (Rom. 4. 6.) It is worthy of remark, that the apostle here *alters* the words of David, so as to make them bear more fully upon his point: for David speaks only of the *non-imputation* of sin; (see Ps. 32. 1, 2.) whereas the apostle (doubtless under the inspiration of that divine Spirit who dictated the words) understood his words as expressing a positive *imputation of righteousness*; which view of them alone suited his argument. He, moreover, *leaves out* the words that more immediately follow his quotation, lest by citing them he should give occasion to an adversary to say, that our guileless state is, in some measure, united with faith in the matter of our justification before God. We are evidently justified by "the righteousness which is of faith," and it is equally as evident, that *it is of faith, that it might be by grace*. 'Tis not consequently, the mere *act* of faith that constitutes our justifying righteousness, any more than the exercise of love or any other work, for in such a case it would be our *own righteousness*, and not the righteousness of faith, which respects the *object* of faith, the Lord Jesus Christ, who is, in a similar way, called "our hope," (Heb. 6. 18) and who is "the *end of the law for righteousness* to every one that believeth." (Rom. 10. 4.) He is the *perfecting end* of the *moral law*, which says, "*The man that doth these things shall live by them*, (v. 5) and he did that which the law could not do, (ch. 8. 3) and secured the great end of it. The law is not destroyed, nor the intention of the law-giver frustrated; but full satisfaction being made by the death

of Christ for our breach of the law, the end is attained, and we put in another way of justification.

The doctrine for which we contend, when simply defined and stated is this: "The actions and sufferings of A, might be said to be *imputed* to B, if B should, on the account of them, in any degree, be treated as if he had done or suffered what A has done or suffered, when he really has not, and when, without this action or suffering of A, B would not be so treated." (*Dod. Lec. vol. 2d. p. 209.*) From this definition the following conclusions are fair and legitimate, viz: The *sin* of A may be said to be imputed, if B, though innocent, be upon that account treated in any degree as a sinner. On the other hand, the *righteousness* of A, may be said to be *imputed* to B, if upon account of it, B, though a sinner, be treated as if he were righteous. That Christ was treated as a sinner, the Scriptures plainly testify; he was *numbered with transgressors—suffered for sins—was made to be sin (a sin-offering) for us—was made a curse for us—for sin, condemned sin in the flesh*, and shall appear the second time *without sin* unto salvation, which infers that his *first* appearing was in some sense *with sin*; but having none of his own; we are at no loss to account for the meaning of these expressions, when we learn from Daniel, that Messiah was cut off, but not *for himself*, and Paul declaring that he died *for our sins*, and was delivered *for our offences*. All true believers, therefore, rejoice in the following declaration; "Their righteousness is, of ME, saith the Lord,—*In the Lord (our righteousness) shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory.*" (*Isai. 45. 25. and 54. 17.*)

But here comes an objection against the law-fulfilling righteousness of Christ, on which it is presumed great reliance has been put, to overturn the whole we have said. It is said "there are many precepts of the law which Christ could not have fulfilled. How could he have fulfilled the peculiar duties of a wife to her husband, or of a husband to his wife—of parents to children, or the duties of any relation he did not sustain?" I did think, that in a new, corrected edition of your body of divinity, this would certainly have been expunged, but instead of that, it comes in a little amended by the addition of the word, "literally,"

which was not in your first address. "There are many precepts of the law which Christ could not have fulfilled *literally*:" well, let it be literally; is this found in the Bible? No, not once. But your objection flatly contradicts the Saviour himself, who expressly declares that he came not to destroy the law or the prophets, *but to fulfill*—one jot, or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, **TILL ALL BE FULFILLED.**" (Mat. 5. 17.) If there is one jot or tittle, one single precept of the law unfulfilled, the obedience of the Saviour must be imperfect. But he has further declared that, to love the Lord with all the heart, and our neighbour as ourselves, are the two commandments on which do hang **ALL THE LAW** and the prophets." (Mat. 22. 37—40.) Moreover, the apostle Paul teaches that, *Love is the fulfilling of the law*, and this is the *one word* in which *all the law* is fulfilled, i. e. LOVE. This is the sum aggregate of the whole; so that whosoever shall "offend in one point," by omission or commission, "he is guilty of all." (Jas. 2. 10.) But here, again, according to your logic, James is wrong; for the man who has no wife, the woman without a husband, and the parent who has no child, cannot violate the *whole* law, or by offending in *one point*, be guilty of *all*, however numerous their failures are in other respects. The truth is, the Saviour completely fulfilled the universal law of love to God and man; nor is there a single precept of the gospel, the violation of which, would not be recognized and condemned by the law, which extends to every motion of our souls, and every action of our lives, and demands the universal perfection of our nature.

LETTER VII.

MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS.

DEAR SIR,

Having passed over several objectionable matters in the discussion of the subject in my last letter, which are deserving of some attention, and which, though they might have been incidently brought into that discussion, yet I

thought it most advisable to reserve them for another letter. On these topics my remarks shall be as brief as possible, that I may not exceed my intended limits.

The first thing I shall notice is your denial of any covenant having been made with Adam before his fall. "That the covenant with Adam was the moral law, you say, is directly contradicted by Moses—Deut. 5. 2—3. "The Lord our God made a covenant with us in Horeb. The Lord made not this covenant with *our fathers*, but with us, even us who are all of us here alive this day." This does not prove the point, nor is it at all applicable to the subject. This was the Horeb or *Sinai-covenant* which was made between God and *Israel* under the strict notion of his being their *political king*: it was a *national, temporary covenant of peculiarity*, relating only to *temporal blessings* of this life, and prosperity in the land of Canaan. It was between God and the Jews, as their *political king*, and they as his *national subjects*; and to that nation it was delivered as a *body politic*, under the form of a covenant of works, upon the fulfilling of which they were to inherit that land. This is the covenant that God made with their fathers, when he took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt. But with their fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, it was not, it could not be made personally. Being made with *Israel*, as a nation, it could be violated only by *public authority*. It contained their charter of national blessings and privileges, which has long ago been forfeited. It was *decaying* and *waxing old* when Paul wrote to his Hebrew brethren, and was then *ready to vanish away*. (Heb. 8. 13.) For a plain and satisfactory account of this matter I refer you to Dr. Scott on Exod. 19. 5, and Dr. Guise on Heb. 8. 6, in a note there. But "the law entered that the offence might abound." True; for *by the law is the knowledge of sin*. The law entered, which implies its prior existence. It was re-edited on mount Sinai, and published with awful sanctions, that the *knowledge of sin*, of man's offence, of his fall and corruption might abound, and therefore it was *added because of transgression*. But to prove your point you allege further, that "the gospel was preached to Abraham 430 years before the law;" surely not before the *existence* of the law, for without this there could be no sin, for where no law is, there is no transgression, conse-

quently no need of gospel. The gospel preached to Abraham was this: "In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed," (Gen. 22. 18. Gal. 3. 8.) which could not be disannulled or set aside by the law promulgated on Horeb, so many years afterwards. One of the very texts you have quoted in your favour, is one that I would have selected to prove directly the reverse; "until the law sin was in the world." Ah! how could sin be in the world without law? Its very existence is an evidence of the prior existence of law, for the violation of law gave birth to sin, the wages of which is death; and how long death existed as another evidence of violated law, the apostle will inform us: "Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses." This matter is completely established by the further affirmation of the apostle, that *by ONE man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that (in whom) all have sinned.* But how could all men *sin* and *die* in Adam, if he acted not in a *public* capacity as their *representative*, *covenant* head? It were impossible, and never can be accounted for otherwise. But what caps the climax of your philosophy on this subject, is the following argument: "If this law, or covenant, was given to Adam, he must have been a sinner when it was given; for Paul says, "The law was not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, 1 Tim. 1. 9." Here is false reasoning founded on a *perversion* of Scripture. The apostle here is fully satisfied that the *moral* law, as still continuing in force, and made the law of Christ's kingdom under the gospel state, is not designed to condemn by its damnatory sentence the justified believer in Christ, and therefore says, "the law is not made *against* (ou xētai) or does not *lie against* a righteous man." This is a fair translation, and is, no doubt, the apostle's meaning, and the application of it to the wicked is easy. But admit your intention in the use of the text as it stands in the common version, and what is its amount? It is this; that Adam, before he was a sinner was under no law, for the law is not made for a righteous man, but Adam being a righteous man before he fell, therefore no law was made for him; and the same will apply to saints on earth, and saints and angels in heaven; all are exempt from mor-

al obligation, for the law is only made for the lawless and disobedient, for the upgodly and for sinners. It is to be hoped, that you are the only person who has ever perverted this text, and although it is indeed a very singular one, yet it is not strange that the word of God should become so flexible, as to prove any thing that human invention, and human folly might devise, when in the hands of such a fertile genius and skilful interpreter.

That the law *was not* made for a righteous man, is evidently true, as it relates to its not being made to *condemn* him; that it really *is made* for such an one, as well as others, to be the *rule* of his obedience, and to restrain him from transgression, is also true, and entirely reasonable. "The divine Creator united in man the spiritual and corporeal natures; he formed him upright in his soul, and made ample provision for the comfort of his body; and as it would have been inconvenient to have brought all of the human family, which were to be in every generation, upon the earth at one time, and still more so, that, every one standing or falling for himself, the earth should be the common habitation of beings perfectly holy, happy, and immortal, and also of cursed perishing beings, he constituted the first man a representative of his race:" he was the type, or *figure of him that was to come*, which related to the *public capacity* which *both* sustained, and to the *conveyances* that were made by the actings of *both* to their respective seeds, as comprehended in, and placed under them severally, as appears fully evinced by the apostle's reasoning in Rom. 5. 12—21. and 1 Cor. 15. 22, 47. In the latter place, he tells us that, *as in Adam all die, even so in Christ, all, that are to be raised to eternal happiness, shall be made alive*: And he there speaks of Adam and Christ, as the *first* and *second* man; as if no other man had lived in the world between them; and in the whole connection, he sets out the resemblance of their public character and influence, though to contrary effects, on those that stand under them respectfully. That a covenant was made with "the last Adam," in whom life is regained, there is no doubt; (Ps. 89. 3. Isa. 42. 6. Heb. 10. 5—7.) the inference then is fair, that a covenant was made with the first Adam, in whom life had been lost.

We proceed a step further, to examine your theory respecting the condition of man after his fall. It affirms, that "Adam's disobedience brought condemnation to temporal death on all the world." (p. 72.) But how could Adam's act do this, any more than any other individual's act, if there was no law made for him *before* he sinned, and if you allow him not to have sustained a *federal* relation to his posterity, but to have acted in an *individual* capacity *only*? It is added, "Christ's obedience brought justification from that death upon all the world, by raising them from the dead—to answer for their own deeds and not for the deeds of Adam." If I understand this sentence, the import of it is, that *justification* and *resurrection* are the same thing. This is the more evident, because it is well known that your scheme forbids any merit to be attached to the obedience of Christ in behalf of sinners; it is not therefore, his obedience that justifies, but the act of raising them from the dead. Besides, the idea of all the world being justified by their resurrection from the dead, and then going to stand their trial before the judgment seat, is such a novelty in divinity, that I confess it is beyond my comprehension. The difficulty and absurdity of the thing is increased by the following declaration; "Adam, himself, suffered all the penalty law required, or justice demanded;—law had its full demand, and justice was satisfied with his death, seeing it was all that was demanded;—to talk of Christ as surety, paying the debt of temporal death, in the room of Adam and his posterity, is strange indeed, seeing Adam has paid it himself, and so has his posterity who are dead. He died not to pay the demand of law, but to free them from its curse already inflicted, which is death." (p. 68.) How absurd to talk of Christ dying to free Adam and his posterity from the curse or penalty of law, when justice was satisfied with *their* death, being all that was demanded. How unmeaning to talk of Christ freeing our race from the curse of law, when all who are dead have actually freed themselves, by paying in their death, the "full demand of law and justice," and all the rest are in a fair way to do the same. Poor Enoch and Elijah, who died not, are placed in a very unpleasant situation by such divinity, as their debt must remain ever un-

paid. And, moreover, if such visions as these can pass for sound divinity, then verily Christ is dead in vain, the human family paying *all* the demands of law and justice, can surely stand in no need of his interposition. You "grant this death, (*temporal death*,) would have been eternal had not Christ the resurrection interposed." But, pray, Sir, how, if law and justice have their *full demand*, and are fully satisfied by the temporal death of Adam and his posterity who are dead; and especially seeing that debt was paid, law and justice amply satisfied, and consequently their release obtained, before that interposition you talk of, actually took place? Why talk any more about men going to judgment, who have fully satisfied all demands of law and justice, who have no more debt to pay? Or why talk of an *interposition* by Christ in their behalf, when his *suretyship* and *vicarious* interposition are denied and ridiculed? Why any more dream of the eternal perdition of any of Adam's posterity, seeing they can claim their release, and God's government cannot refuse it, upon the ground of their having satisfied all demands against them. But let us examine the foundation of this theory, which is borrowed from Taylor, the Socinian writer before mentioned. It is this: that temporal death was all the penalty threatened by the law; "For God had said in the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die—more literally, *dying, thou shalt die*. (Marg.) For the very day he sinned, death (*temporal death*) seized on him, and preyed on the strings of life, till the last was cut, more than eight hundred years after he began to die." (p. 6.) The sentiment here maintained is this: that there was no other penalty or curse annexed to the law, but temporal death, which began, according to the marginal reading, and continued to be inflicted on Adam for more than eight hundred years, and then was satisfied by his death. Hence Adam became subjected to this penalty when he was under no law, (as we have before seen,) while a righteous man, and consequently could not violate any, you have not yet accounted for. But probably it will be done in your next edition, as you seem to be in a progressing way in the acquisition of new light in your theological career.

To suppose, as you do, that the phrase, *dying thou shalt*

die, signifies only temporal death, is not only destitute of force in reasoning, but likewise, it contradicts the scriptures in other instances, where it is used unquestionably to signify *eternal* death. "When I say unto the wicked man, thou shalt surely *die*," it is in the original, *dying thou shalt die*, the very form of expression which God used in the threatening of Adam, and the very same words are used again in Ezek. 33. 18. In chap. 18. 4. it is said, the soul that *sinneth it shall die*, and to the like purpose in chap. 3. 19, 20. and 18. 9, 13, 17—21, 24, 26, 28. and 33. 8, 9, 12, 14, 19, in all which places *temporal death* is not meant, because it is promised most absolutely, that the righteous shall not *die the death* spoken of: chap. 18. 21, *He shall surely live, he shall not die*: see ver. 9, 17, 19, 22, &c. &c. The phrase therefore can argue nothing concerning the nature of the thing intended; for it is evident that such repetitions in the Hebrew language, are designed only to put a strong emphasis on the word to signify the importance of it, or the certainty of it, and therefore, the repeating or doubling a word, we are told was in common usage among the Hebrews, the more to impress the mind of the hearer. When God *commanded the man, saying, of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat*, it is in the original, *eating thou shalt eat*, which will go to establish what has just been observed respecting Hebrew usage.

The inquiry now must be, what that death is, which was the threatening given to Adam in case of disobedience; what that death is, which the scripture every where speaks of as the proper wages of sin? To use the language of Dr. Bates; "Death in the threatening is *comprehensive* of all kinds and degrees of evils, from the least pain, to the completeness of damnation." It was doubtless a *deprivation* of that excellent state which man enjoyed, and principally it signified the separation of the soul from God, who is the fountain of felicity. A universal change of moral qualities in Adam, necessarily followed his transgression, and instead of the rectitude and holiness of his nature there succeeded a permanent viciousness and corruption. His soul degenerated from its purity; the faculties remained, but the moral qualities wherein the brightness of God's image was most conspicuous were lost; and

in an instant, from the image of God, he became transformed into the image of the devil. The body became a prey to all diseases, and feels the strokes of death a thousand times before it can die once. Life at length is swallowed up of death, and the first death transmits to the second. Adam in innocence possessed a *natural life*, resulting from the union of his soul and body; he had a *spiritual life*, resulting from the gracious influences of the Holy Spirit, and consisting of the image of God, and a ravishing sense of his love; and he was formed for immortality in body and soul, and so was in a capacity of *eternal life* and blessedness, in glorifying God, and enjoying him for ever. Here then he was capable of a *natural*, a *spiritual*, and an *eternal death*; to have soul and body rent asunder; to be forsaken by the spirit of God, and given up to the power of sin and Satan for ever; and to have God become his everlasting enemy. *All this he deserved*; and therefore, God meant *all this*, in the first threatening; and what makes it still more certain, is, that God has since very expressly threatened *eternal death*, and nothing less, in Rom. 1. 18. Gal. 3. 10. Mat. 25. 46. In Rom. 6. 23. and 8. 13. the word DEATH itself, is plainly used to signify *eternal death* and misery. None will deny, that the life which would have been Adam's reward, if he had persisted in obedience, was *eternal life*. Now as *obedience* and *disobedience* are contraries, as *threatenings* and *promises*, that are sanctions of law, are set in direct opposition; and as *promised rewards*, and *threatened punishments*, are properly taken as each other's opposites;—then it must be true, that the death which *stands opposed to that life*, is manifestly *eternal death*, a death widely different from the death we now die.

On this subject, you profess yourself "to be of the same mind of some of the Greek fathers. They believed that *many* were made sinners metonymically, that is, by being made subject to mortality and death, the effects of Adam's sin." This was also the opinion of Chubb, a name once famous on the list of infidel fame, and likewise of Socinian Taylor, who has been fully exposed, and ably refuted by President Edwards, in his unanswerable production on *Original Sin*. But the very sentiment refutes itself when

applied to the scriptures, as may be readily seen by a short trial. In the following passages, let the word mortality, meaning, as you have expressed it in another place, *temporal death*, be supplied in a parenthesis, instead of the word death, and the absurdity will be seen at once. "We know, that we have passed from *death* (mortality) to life, because we love the brethren: he that hateth his brother abideth in *death* (mortality.) (1 John 3. 14.) Again; (John 5. 24.) "He that heareth my word, and believeth, &c. hath everlasting life; and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from *death* (mortality) to life." To follow your metonymical notion, of putting the cause for the effect, we must change the common reading of a number of scriptures, thus: "By one man *mortality* entered into the world, and death by *mortality*; and so death passed upon all men, for in him all were become mortal. Until the law, *mortality* was in the world, but *mortality* is not imputed where there is no law.—Death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not been mortal, after the similitude of Adam's *mortality*.—But not as the *mortality*, so is the free gift, for if through the *mortality* of one, many be dead, &c.—You hath he quickened, who were *dead in mortality*." The like unpertinancy will be found in all those passages which describe man's apostacy and depravity; the mere representation whereof, is a sufficient refutation of such a trifling construction. But let the figure be set aside, and refer your theory (of temporal death being all that was comprehended in the original threatening.) to the following texts, and behold its inconsistency. John 6. 50. "This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and *not die*." Chap. 8. 51. "If a man keep my saying, he shall never see *death*." Chap. 11. 26. "And whosoever liveth and believeth in me, shall *never die*." Do you believe the Saviour here meant that believers shall never see *temporal death*? Again, when Moses says to the children of Israel, "See, I have set before you this day, *life and good, and death and evil—life and death, blessing and cursing*." (Deut. 30. 15, 19.) Is the *life and death* here to be understood as *temporal only*, or *eternal*? One question more: What does the Saviour mean in Mat. 8. 22, when he says, "let the

dead bury their dead?" Can those who are *literally dead*, bury each other; or is it not more rational to suppose that in this case, he allowed those who were *spiritually dead*, to bury those who were *corporeally dead*. That *spiritual* death makes no part of your creed, would appear from your declaration, that man only became *mortal* and subject to *temporal death*, and yet strange indeed, either through inadvertency, or that inconsistency which so often appears in your writings, the very thing is admitted, and described too, in language as strong as I could want it; "Spiritual death is an alienation of soul from God—having no love to him nor his ways—no desire after him—no delight in him—dead in trespasses and in sins." (p. 68.) This is the truth for once, if no more; and really it looks like something more than *natural* death had befallen mankind, notwithstanding your denial. But what is still more strange, is the reasoning you attempt to found on it. "To talk of spiritual death as due to law, and demanded by justice, is awful when rightly understood." Having thus described it as above, you exclaim, "Could a holy God, or a holy law, require this of a creature, without requiring sin? Could justice demand it, or be satisfied without sin? Could a holy Jesus pay this debt, without really being dead in sin?" Is this reasoning, or only the ravings of insanity? Can a man in his senses, be guilty of such a gross departure from the established laws of exegeses, and the sober dictates of common sense. Did you not know that this was sophistry when you wrote it? Do you believe in the eternal damnation of the finally impenitent? If you do, what will then be their moral condition? Will they not still continue in a state of "alienation from God—having no love to him—no desire after him—no delight in him;" &c. what *then* will be the demands of law and justice? What *then* will be the requirements of a "holy God, or a holy law?" Will depravity and rebellion be demanded as a debt to law and justice, or their punishment only? A man who is either unable or unwilling to discriminate between the obligation of an innocent creature to render obedience to the lawgiver, and the obligation of a guilty creature to suffer punishment for disobedience,—between depravity as a crime, and its punishment as a debt, demand-

ed by justice, is indeed a very *little* hero of a party, and poorly qualified to write for them a system of theology, as a standard for their faith.

But from the language of your book, it appears to me that you neither hold the doctrine of spiritual, nor eternal death. "We grant this death, (temporal death,) would have been eternal, had not Christ, *the resurrection*, interposed;" and as we have seen, that justification is as universal as the resurrection; therefore, the interposition of Christ, must, on your plan, prevent the eternal death of any of the human family. As for spiritual death, or human depravity, though you have correctly told us what it is, yet in that masterly piece of reasoning respecting your two artists, the thing is flatly denied. An artist "forms the complete image of a man,—he superadds the faculties of seeing, hearing, understanding, believing, &c." (p. 91.) Wonderful artist! Michael Angelo, Raphael, Canova, Wedgwood, and Bentley, with all the group of Grecian and Roman painters and sculptors, were but fools, when compared with *your* artist. They were celebrated for making images, busts, &c. but they never found out the art of making a *live image*, or of turning an *image* into a *rational creature*, or an *intelligent being*. But let us see the manoeuvres of this novel thing. The artist "speaks to his image—it hears and understands him. He relates to it a fact—it believes him. He calls it to come to him—it obeys him." This is a very tractable "it," of the *neuter* gender, much more so than a *he* or a *she* in the masculine or feminine, which would not so well apply to an image. But now for the application: "This image, I consider a true representation of mankind. God has made *them* capable of hearing, understanding, believing, and obeying." That man in the very depths of depravity, possesses *natural capacities* for doing these things, is granted, for they were never lost by the fall; but that he possesses *spiritual capacities* to do these things when in a state of wrath and enmity we deny; and adduce the following texts out of hundreds to prove it: "The *natural man* receiveth **NOT** the things of the spirit of God: for they are *foolishness* unto him; *neither* CAN he know them, *because* they are **SPIRITUALLY DISCERNED.**" (1 Cor. 2. 14.) "Because the *carnal*

mind is ENMITY against God: for it is *not subject* to the law of God, NEITHER INDEED CAN BE. So then they that are in the *flesh* (carnal state) CANNOT PLEASE GOD." (Rom. 8. 7. 8.) Moreover the Saviour says of the stubborn Jews, "now have they both *seen*, and *hated*, both me and my Father;" (John 15. 24.) And again; "ye *will not* come to me, that ye might have life." (John 5. 40.) "I have called, and ye *refused*, I have stretched out my hand, and no man *regarded*," &c. (Prov. 1. 24.) Now, it is evident that your image wages direct war upon these passages; denying human corruption, or that there is any defect or *moral obstacle* in the way of fallen man's compliance with the commands of heaven; holy angels and saints in heaven can do *no more* than your image can.

The other poor artist and his image which you have conjured up to give your opponent's doctrines a ludicrous and horrifying aspect, are not quite so respectable nor wonderful. The image is made, but alas! its author has not the magic power of transforming it into a *living being*. He "forms the complete image of man, with eyes, ears and mouth, and every feature and member in perfect symmetry.—He speaks to his image—it cannot hear.—He relates to it a fact—it cannot understand nor believe him.—He bids it come to him—it cannot move nor obey. He becomes enraged at his lifeless image, and stamps it in pieces with great fury." Poor *lifeless* image! Wicked artist! Irrational madman, and as fit a subject of mockery as ever were Baal's prophets, but unlike them, thou hast turned thy fury upon a poor, lifeless, dumb thing; instead of venting thy vexatious spite and disappointed ambition upon thyself. But now for the application. "What could the spectators conclude, but that the man was irrational, to be thus enraged at a dead image? Shall we impute such conduct to the holy God? Yet I am certain I have heard it done." Pardon me, Sir, if I deny that you ever did. That you may have dreamed it,—or that in your haste and great anxiety to fix a mark of ridicule and contempt upon the sentiments of those who oppose you, you may have imagined such a thing, I will readily grant. But that you can find any such abominable absurdity in those "creeds and standards" to which you gave a solemn pledge to the

public to confine your animadversions;—that you can find it in any book but your own, unless it may be from the pen of some disingenuous opponent like yourself;—that you ever heard it from the pulpit, or from the mouth of any Presbyterian clergyman during the whole time that you studied or preached with them; I take upon myself most positively to deny. And if you ever publish a third edition of your so much desired work, and repeat this charge, we do earnestly ask that it may be followed by proof; that if such a moral monster is found in our denomination, he may be a subject and an example of ecclesiastical censure. It is also requested of you to point out the page, the sermon, or the paragraph that contains the blasphemous sentiment charged upon us, in the 84th page of your book, which puts it into our mouths to say, that by sin “we have lost our right to obey” God. A man who could say as you have in your introduction, “I am well assured that every sentence I write will be read with a critical eye;” and yet, under that beacon, could publish to the world such unfounded charges and gross misrepresentations as these, and many more with which your work abounds, deserves to be plainly dealt with by sharp re- buke and honest reprehension.

After what we have seen of your notions respecting the state and condition of man being subject only to mortality, and liable to temporal death, it excites but little surprise to hear you deny that sin is an infinite evil. “To magnify its evil to infinity, transcends divine authority.” This declaration is founded on the following proposition: “To say, that God gave finite creatures an infinite law, is the same, as that he laid them under an absolute necessity of committing sin, seeing they have not infinite capacities to fulfil it.” This kind of logic goes to prove that saints and angels in heaven are either under no law at all, or that if they be, it is only a *finite*, limited law, that does not require them to love God, who is infinite, throughout an infinity, that is, an *endless* duration; for this is the simple meaning of the term, when applied to the obligation of creatures to love God, or to their punishment for transgression. As it can be proved that the obligations of the creature to love and obey the blessed God, are derived from the OBJECT, and

are therefore INFINITE: so it is capable of strict demonstration, that the violation of those obligations is infinitely criminal; sin, *objectively* considered, that is, with respect to its object, is an infinite evil. Sin, therefore, *deserves* an infinite, or an everlasting punishment. The nature of this punishment is not an arbitrary infliction, but a necessary consequence of moral evil. This proposition can be denied on no other principles but such as are subversive of the government and perfections of God; or principles virtually atheistical.

But the idea of sin's being an infinite evil, you will "destroy the distinction of greater and lesser," but to this it may be replied, that the least sin may be an infinite evil, because of the infinite obligation we are under to do otherwise, and yet all sins not be equally heinous. To be forever in hell, is an infinite evil in respect to the duration; but yet the damned are not equally miserable: Some may be an hundred times as miserable as others, *in degree*, although the misery of all, *is equal in point of duration*. That God is infinitely holy and amiable, and deserves to be, and actually is, the moral centre of the intelligent system, cannot be denied. It is equally undeniable that consequently, we are under infinite obligation to him. We are infinitely to blame if we do not; and does not infinite blame deserve an infinite punishment? Is not justice satisfied with the infinite, i. e. endless punishment of guilty rebels? And is not justice fulfilled with the temporary obedience and finite suffering of the sinner's surety, when he was made *a curse*, although neither in *quality* nor *quantity* like the curse which the personally guilty endures, yet, owing to his transcendence and infinite worth, was rendered amply equivalent and accepted in his place? This, I trust, we have abundantly proved in a former part of this work, respecting the sacrifice of Christ.

For the sake of some of those good "Calvinists and Arminians," that you boast of having in your communion, it may be necessary to present the real views of the sufficiency of Christ according to your scheme: for, verily, there are some who profess to be your admirers, who will not believe that you deny the doctrine of *vicarious atonement* and

faction. Probably they gather this from the following declarations: "It is not a mere man that suffers and dies," and yet he is not God-man. He suffered pain, persecution, and death—not because, or on account of his sin, but for, or on account of ours." (p. 53.) This looks a little like substitution or vicarious suffering—like the very thing we want from you all this time. Let us examine a little further. "In bearing the burden of our iniquity, Christ suffered not only in body, but in soul." Ah! he has got a soul now it seems, and surely it cannot be an *unreasonable* one. But now the whole secret comes out. "As the prophets, seeing the miseries, pains, and distresses, coming upon the wicked nations around, are said to bear their burden; the effects of this burden were, that the prophets' souls were filled with pain; pangs took hold of them, as the pangs of a woman that travaileth; they were bowed down at the hearing of those calamities, and dismayed at the seeing of them." And now, lo! the solemn conclusion follows: "So Jesus bore in his soul the sins of the world." Not in a way of actual burden and suffering to *expiate* them. No, but just like some of the prophets and other good men who suffered before him, the affections of sympathy, terror, dismay, consternation, persecution and death. And if you can assign a reason why one of these suffering prophets could not have answered the purpose of burden and suffering on account of iniquity, just as well as the creature Saviour you have brought into your system, *eris mihi magnus Apollo*. Can you tell me how *sympathetic sufferings* could affect, or in any way benefit those who had died before he came into the world? According to the representation you have given, all the sufferings of a Saviour, had only a *prospective* reference, and were occasioned by the miseries, pains, and distresses *coming upon* the wicked nations around. And further; if he suffered only as a pattern, or example, of heroic virtue, or whatever it might be, so he were not a substitute, of what benefit under the heavens could he be to those whose existence had ceased before his advent, and consequently before he suffered? Upon the principle of a real and proper sacrifice for sin by the Lamb of God, slain from the foundation of the world, and who was the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever, in the dignity

of his person, and in the virtue of his sacrifice, and extending from the fall of man to the end of time, no such difficulties can arise. Surely upon such a plan as yours there can be no *retrospective* reference in the sufferings of Christ. How could he bear in his soul the sins of that part of the world who were dead at the time? How could the blood of Christ be a price, a ransom for those who had by temporal death suffered all the penalty law required, or justice demanded? A scheme so visionary, and fraught with so much difficulty and inconsistency as this, ought never to have seen the light.

According to your theory, the words *redeemed, bought, purchased, ransomed*, are all to be understood not *literally*, but *metaphorically* and *figuratively*. By the same construction we ought to be consistent, and carry it out to make our salvation a *figurative* salvation, and our redemption only *metaphorical*. What weight, however, this has in the argument, I cannot see; for it must still be acknowledged that a price or ransom was paid some how or other, and that this price was Christ himself, or his blood. There is on sacred record an instance of a person's paying a sum of money, as a *ransom for his life*, when it was forfeited, (Exod. 21. 29, 30.) and if such a consideration, when exacted as a price of redemption, be stiled a ransom, then one person laying down his life for another, may, with equal propriety, be so called. Christ having *bought us with a price*, by giving *his life a ransom for many*, may therefore well be stiled our Redeemer. There is no redemption without price. The word would be unmeaning without price. True, we read of Israel being *redeemed out of Egypt, and Babylon*; and Jacob speaking of his deliverance from evil by the angel, styles it his *redemption from all evil*, and oftentimes in scripture, deliverance from evil is called *redemption*; but this is done with reference to that ransom which Christ was in the fulness of time, to pay for his people, and this is confirmed by the fact, that no deliverance that God wrought for his enemies, and the enemies of his people, is ever called by the name of redemption.

As for your comparison, by which you would represent our views of the means of redemption, by setting our government to negotiate with the Dev of Algiers, for the

covery of American citizens detained by him in slavery, by paying to him a stipulated sum of money; it is too gross to deserve a serious reply, and savors too much of the sentiment you published some years ago respecting the devil getting the blood of Christ as the price of our redemption. This obnoxious thing, I know you profess to disavow, and shift it upon St. Augustin and his disciples: you also deny that your writings, if "fairly construed, speak any such sentiment." I declare to you, that I feel no pleasure, not the smallest gratification, in reiterating this subject, nor would I do it but for two reasons; the one is, because, to me your disavowal has never appeared satisfactory, but rather carries with it a contradiction, in renouncing the words you first used, but continuing to retain and vindicate the sentiment; particularly in your late letter to Mr. Moreland. The other is, that I think you pervert the apostle's meaning, in Heb. 2. 14, which you have quoted from the first, to make him father the sentiment. In your two letters on Atonement, published in 1805, you write thus: "I now inquire, what was the price given for our redemption?" You answer yourself: "The blood of Christ is every where in scripture, declared to be the price given, Acts 20. 28. Rev. 5. 9," &c. Then you proceed: "It may now be asked if Christ, or God in Christ, redeems from the devil and sin, and if he gave his blood as the ransom or price, who got the price? The apostle to the Hebrews, 2. 14. answers: For as much as the children were partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil! Here we see that the devil had the power of death, and he got the price, which was the death of Christ." (*Letters on Atonement*, p. 24.) Now, you must pardon my blindness, if I am unable, by fair construction, to put any other meaning on the words, than what they literally and plainly express. When you undertook to explain yourself "a little more fully" on this subject to Mr. Moreland, I really confess I was disappointed. "The devil and wicked men thirsted after the blood of Christ." This is true, but they did not thirst after it as the price of our redemption, any more than they did for the blood of Stephen and the other holy martyrs. But "they

saw if Jesus were permitted to live, all men would gather him, and the kingdom of darkness would be ruined. So they desired the death of the apostles, lest they should defeat their interests and turn the *world upside down*. "They thirsted for his blood, and at last obtained, or got it at Calvary.—This blood was the price of our redemption. But did the devil obtain and receive it *as such*,—did he know it at the time,—was it stipulated to him, or could he make any more of it than the blood of a holy martyr? Especially too, when, according to you, it was only a *figurative price*, or a *figurative redemption*. But it is further added, to express "the idea in the very words of inspiration for through death Jesus destroyed him that had the power of death, that is, the devil, and delivered them who, through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage. Was Jesus under the *power of death*, and subject to bondage in the same way that sinners are? Was he under the same kind of necessity of dying that they are? Had the devil the *power of death* over the Saviour, as a *subject* of his kingdom? Did he who said "the prince of this world cometh and hath *nothing in me*;" and of whom it is said, that, "it was *not possible* that he should be *holden of death*;"—did he subject himself to the devil, to suffer death as a thing unavoidable? No, thanks to heaven, the power of laying down his life was his own. *I lay it down of myself, I recover it as my own act and deed, for I have power to lay it down, and to take it again.* He did not fall into the hands of his persecutors, because he could not avoid it, but because his hour was come. *No man taketh my life from me.* He laid it down *voluntarily*, as a matter of *right and choice*, and not of *necessity*, which he could not prevent. He felt not the *sting* of death; nor did he enter the *tribunals* of death as a *subject*, but as a *conqueror*. Satan had the power of death over the human family, because he first seduced them to sin, and sin was the procuring cause of death; he may be said to have the power of death, *as he draws men into sin*, the wages whereof is death,—*as he terrifies their consciences with the fear of death*—*as the executioner* of divine justice, and as being the *tormentor* forever and ever. Jesus destroyed him; not his *existence*; but his power and dominion from the soul.

people, who are freed from the sting of death and the
er of the grave. Seeing therefore, your sentiment is
oneous, untenable and offensive, at least suspicious,
evidently calculated to excite justifiable animadver-
, and probably censorious reflection, would it not be
better way, by explicit disavowal, and manly boldness,
enounce it altogether, and thereby remove all ground
uspicion, and cut off all occasion of cavillation for ever?
t now only remains to make a few strictures on your
ons of faith, to bring this discussion to a close, which
already been too long. "The bible," you say, "plain-
teaches that the whole work of regeneration and sal-
on from sin, is the work of the Spirit." (p. 82.) To
I most heartily subscribe. But what the Spirit is, or
it he has to do, in your system, really, I cannot see;
temporal death is all that justice demands of the sinner,
mortality is all that ails him. As for regeneration, that
ns the same as atonement, which is such a prolific term,
it is found capable of engendering, and bringing
h a whole litter of words at a time, not of rich va-
y of definition, not possessing any due combination of
ers to generate more, but all of the same family, and
speaking the same language; so that if atonement and
eneration be the same thing, then the former is as much
work of the Spirit, as the latter. "It is also plain
God begins, carries on, and perfects this work by means
his word,—believed by us." Ordinarily this is true,
not always, nor can means answer in the place of di-
agency, which God can, and I have no doubt, often
s employ on the souls of heathens and idiots, to qualify
r natures for heaven; they are incapable of being
wardly called by the ministry of the word, and there-
, God, "who worketh when and where, and how he
seth," can save them by Christ, through the agency
his Holy Spirit, without means. But upon your plan,
uch effect can be wrought, seeing you deny any ope-
on of the Spirit prior to believing. "The bible gives
o ground to expect these operations, while we abide
nbelief." (p. 83.) Who then does the Spirit *reprove*
in? Who are they that "resist the Holy Ghost," that
quench the Spirit, and stifle his holy suggestions? Does not

the Spirit strive with, and powerfully stir up, the minds of many who are not born again? Are not the natural powers of men strongly excited, and conscience influenced in part to perform its office, notwithstanding the strongest opposition of the carnal heart? Did the Holy Spirit never operate on your heart, to convince you of sin, before you believed? Did you obtain religion when you were "in the labyrinth of Calvinism," or since you fell into the vortex of Arianism? Probably the following statement will shew us how you got religion. "Suppose God, having handed me the bible, should thus speak: Take this book—in it are all things necessary for you to know, believe and do—believe them as the truths of heaven, and come to me and ask, and I will give you the Holy Spirit, and every promise of the New Testament; on this plan, you should be encouraged to activity in every duty, in the confident expectation of help and salvation." (p. 84.) All this may do for one who is a disciple of Christ, a child of grace, and one who desires to do his master's will; but apply it to the infidel,—to the heart of enmity,—to those who are naturally God's enemies, and withhold every other influence but that arising from the mere objective force of the declaration made, and will any of all this tribe be saved? The fact is, we have here another evidence of your denial of human depravity—here is no moral inability or hindrance—no lack of holy disposition;—the rebellious heart is not here,—the sinner is as docile and obedient as the *living image*, we saw a while ago;—he believes and comes to God, it seems, without the Spirit,—first saves himself, and then comes to God for salvation. Such a divinity may sooth carnal hearts, and bolster up the false hopes of deluded souls, but to the thoroughly convinced and deeply awakened sinner, it is like the friends of Job—a miserable comforter.

A great outcry is made against the doctrine of the inability of the unregenerate to believe the gospel. "To say that God requires sinners to believe, when they have not capacities to believe, amounts to the same thing," i. e. "eternal damnation." What you mean by "capacities," I am unable to see; if the sinner does *not* lack *spiritual capacity* to see things which cannot be seen otherwise than

by *spiritual discernment*, then it is admitted he lacks none at all. But this admission cannot be, while God's word opposes it. (1 Cor. 2. 14.) You and all those who can so readily, and so boldly rise up and call in question the sovereign and unalienable right of God, to command apostate beings to perform obedience, which, from their unholy condition, they are *morally unable* to do, forget that you are not only trampling on divine authority, but likewise take part with such rebels in denouncing it as an act of tyranny and injustice in their sovereign to command them to do what they are unable to do; and verily, it argues little respect and reverence towards the divine Being for worms of the dust to say he must do so, and so, or be arraigned as "a God of matchless cruelty, tyranny, and injustice." Does God command any *natural impossibility* of his creature? I believe he does not. Does he command any *moral impossibility*, i. e. any thing he is *morally unable* to do? I believe he does. Well, you say then, that I make him "a God of matchless cruelty, tyranny, and injustice." The quarrel is not with me, but with God himself; if it be so, it is not my fault. Ezek. 18. 31. *Make you a new heart and a new spirit.* Isa. 42. 18. *Hear ye deaf, and look ye blind that ye may see.* Jas. 4. 8. *Cleanse your hands ye sinners, and purify your hearts ye double minded.* Eph. 5. 14. *Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead.* Jer. 4. 4. *Circumcise yourselves to the Lord, and take away the foreskins of your hearts.* Now here are things required of sinners, which they are certainly unable to do; but there is no difficulty in accounting for the kind of inability they are under in all these cases; it is certainly of that description which implies a deep criminality, as the conditions described, and the rectifications called for in the texts fully evince. Yet I find no inconsistency here; for I believe there is a point, though I pretend not to demonstrate it, where the *duty* and the *dependance* of the sinner unite;—where *divine* and *human* agency meet. I see it in the valley of dry bones. (Ezek. 37. 1—10.) I see it in Phil. 2. 12. 13. "*Work out your salvation with fear and trembling.* For it is God which *worketh in you* both to *will*, and to *do*, of his good pleasure. I see it in 1 Cor. 2. 9. *For we are labourers together with God,*

Faith is not a discretionary compliance on the part of the creature, with mere invitation. It is as much a *duty*, as any other required act of obedience. 1 John 3. 23. "This is his *commandment* that we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ. Mark. 1. 15. *Repent ye and believe the gospel.* It is an act or exercise of holy obedience: (Heb. 11. 6. Rom. 6. 17. and 10. 9, 10.) It consequently is the *effect* of regeneration, otherwise there is no holiness in it we grant, nor could it then be called an act of *obedience*, for there is no such thing as obedience without the heart. Prov. 23. 26. My son give me *thine heart.* But it is "*with the heart man believeth unto righteousness.*" (Rom. 10. 9.) That the *order* of regeneration is prior to saving faith, is proved by John 1. 12. 13. Who are they in the first of these verses, that *received* Christ and *believe on his name*? The next verse answers, only those "who were born, not of blood, &c. but of God." 1 John 5. 1. "Whosoever *believeth* that Jesus is the Christ, is *born of God*:" his believing is the *evidence* of his regeneration. If this is not admitted, then, Every one that *loveth* is born of God, and every one that doeth *righteousness* is born of him, (Chap. 4. 7. and 2. 29.) must mean, that both loving God, and doing righteousness, are *prior* to regeneration, which would be a gross error and perversion of scripture.

But "faith depends not on the will, inclination, or disposition, but on testimony. God gives you the Bible, saying, "believe the truths of heaven, and come to me and ask, and I will give you the Holy Spirit:" Can you do this without "will, inclination or disposition;" and if so, will God accept of it, and be pleased with it as an act of obedience? But the illustration is as unfortunate as the position: "Were I from home, and a messenger should come and inform me that my wife was dead, I should believe it, not because I was willing, but because of the testimony of the messenger. Now, I should suppose there was a difference between the testimony as your *warrant*, and that *act* of your mind upon that warrant in *receiving* it as true. The *proclamation* of Moses to the dying Israelites, calling upon them to look to the brazen serpent for healing, was one thing; and *complying* was another thing;—the former

was their *warrant*, and really I cannot believe they *complied* without will, inclination or disposition. Cyrus' proclamation throughout all his kingdom, was a sufficient warrant to every Jew to return to the land of Israel; yet none went but those "whose *spirit* God raised to go up;" (Ezra. 1. 1—5.) The warrant itself was as good for one as for another, nor was it by any means invalidated by those who did act upon it. We see, likewise, the agency of God, both when he "stirred up the spirit of Cyrus, to make the overture, and also by a simultaneous divine movement on those "whose spirit he raised to go up." Just so, I believe, he now acts by means of the gospel proclamation, (not without his own divine energy,) in bringing his people from a foreign dominion to the New Jerusalem above. Moreover, I would observe, that your belief respecting your dead wife, is entirely inapposite, and by no means justifiable, as going to establish the true notion of gospel faith: for instance; the objects of faith are as widely different as a dead wife, and a living Redeemer. Belief in the former case, no way relates to salvation, or involves spiritual concerns; not so the latter. The former is a mere physical act of the natural understanding, with reference to a physical object, with its appropriate results, but the latter is a *complex exercise* of the understanding *assenting*, and the will *consenting*, the one being *persuaded of*, and the other *embracing* the object, so as to believe in Christ *with all the heart*, a sone who is precious to all who believe. The faith that you preach in your book, is certainly not gospel faith, either as to its *nature* or *object*, its *warrant* or *exercise*.

To the question, "How does God give faith?" You make the apostle Paul answer in Rom. 10. 17; "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." If you can prove by this, that hearing *gives* faith, you can also prove by the same text, that the word of God *gives* hearing. The proper meaning is, that God gives faith, by the word as a *mean*, or an instrument which he ordinarily employs in his moral kingdom, to save the souls of men; in which view it might be said also, that salvation cometh by hearing, by the word, &c. But your illustration is quite luminous: "Should I relate to my neighbour an incident in my knowledge, and he believe me, I surely am the

author and giver of his faith." (p. 86.) This is not true: You only gave him the *warrant*, but that *act* of the mind which received your testimony as true, was not in your power to give. A little onward, you call faith an "act of the mind," (p. 89.) which you distinguish from its "objects and effects," as being "very different." Can you then be the author and the giver of an act of the mind of another man? But if he should not believe you, agreeably to such a theory, you must also be the author and the giver of his unbelief.

But "the sinner is dead indeed; yet he can hear and believe unto eternal life." But how is the sinner *dead*, since we have been told he is subject to *temporal* death only? You quote for proof, John 5. 25—"The dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live." But why talk about the dead living, if they are *not* dead? The above declaration is akin to the following: "The scriptures assert that God justifieth the ungodly that believe." I deny that the scriptures assert any such thing. Every sinner is ungodly *prior* to justification, but the man whom God justifies has not the *existing character* of an *ungodly* man at the time of the justifying act, nor does he believe *as* an ungodly sinner, but as one who is actually *born of the Spirit*. You say, that "regeneration, salvation, justification, and sanctification are the works of the Spirit." (p. 85.) But in this discussion, we found, according to you that regeneration and sanctification meant the same as atonement, and justification the same as the resurrection; and what salvation is, or what the work of the Spirit is; who, or what the Holy Ghost is, we are left to conjecture. A theory so visionary, so contradictory, and so unscriptural, as you have sent out to the world, may pass with you and your disciples for the "old unsullied light which shines in the bible;" it may be admired and adopted by those who wish not to be beholden to the merits of redeeming blood for salvation; and by the simple hearts of others who are deceived *by good words and fair speeches*; but the honest and cautious inquirer after truth, the true follower of the good Shepherd, will flee from the voice of the stranger, and rejoice that, though "many deceivers are entered into the world," and "false teachers among the people,"

who privily bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them," yet, "the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal; the Lord knoweth them that are his."

LETTER VIII.

MR. STONE'S ORDINATION.

DEAR SIR,

Notwithstanding I have already transcended the limits had assigned to this work, yet I must crave indulgence a little longer, while I address you on a subject of a different nature and tendency from those which have preceded. Being of a personal character, and not tending to general edification, it is therefore reserved to the last. To have inserted it in the proper place, would have, in some measure, broken in upon the connection of the theological discussion, which I wished to be preserved entire. To me, I confess, the present subject is unpleasant:—To you, it must be painful, as it must affect your personal sensibility. But I cannot avoid it. Both my personal and ministerial character stand unjustly impeached before the public tribunal in your late address to Mr. Moreland. There I think you have rashly and unjustifiably implicated me with *falsehood* and *slander*, in reference to my former animadversions on the circumstances of your ordination. After stating to you *fully* and *frankly*, as I thought, in a private communication, the circumstances that induced me to make those animadversions, I could not believe that your infinite liberality, and unbounded charity, would have permitted you to charge upon me, without foundation, two of the foulest crimes in the black catalogue. You are pleased to say to Mr. Moreland, that you "had fully answered Mr. Cleland's slanderous publications;"—that he, (Mr. Moreland,) had "given the lie to every one, who certified the falsity of Mr. Cleland's publication;"—and that you "happily slipped out from the slanderous publications of Mr. Cleland." I never wrote but *one* pub-

lication in which you had any personal concern. But you have twice used the phrase, "*slandrous publications,*" I suppose to make the charge the more weighty, and impress upon the public mind, that I had been an industrious slanderer. I might here apply the ancient adage, *Physician, heal thyself.* But what *falsity* of my publication have those men, belied by Mr. Moreland as you say, certified against me? You have got them to certify that you were ordained by the West Lexington Presbytery, which is not true, as the records of Transylvania Presbytery will show. I presume you wrote their certificates for them, and, if so, you must bear the blame of this error yourself. Men, however, ought to be cautious always how they sign certificates presented to them by an *interested* party. They have certified, in page 32 of your book, that you preached among them, when you was their pastor, "*the pre-existence of the human soul of Jesus Christ;*" which sentiment, in the 17th page of the very same book, you have denied, as we have before noticed. They likewise say, that you adopted the Confession of Faith with reserve, as you had before stated to me, in a private communication, which statements I was willing to admit, without your being under the necessity, so far as I was concerned, of proving them. Your proof, when I saw it, did not in the least affect me. I felt no criminality. I attached to myself no personal guilt or responsibility. I thought I had satisfied you in my reply to your private letter. I did not see that your certificates implicated me, as my name was not mentioned, and that which you attempted to rectify, you only said was "*a mistake in some.*" I therefore passed them by, without designing to give them any public notice whatever. But I now think it due to the public, as well as my own personal character, to lay a fair statement of this matter before the world; and let the candid judge whether I merit the heavy imputation of slander and falsehood, or not.

On reviewing your *Sabellian* notions concerning the Trinity; your *Arian* views respecting the *person* of Christ; and your *Socinian* theory, which denies the *expiatory sacrifice* and the *redeeming mediation*, as well as, with the *Arian*, the *essential Deity* of the Saviour; finding you in such compa-

ny, and then hearing you boast, "that for nearly twenty years past (from 1814) your mind had not wavered respecting its truth," i. e. the divinity of the *created, pre-existent, human soul* of Christ; and knowing this twenty years belief would carry you back beyond your licensure and ordination;—I say, taking these things together, I really was excited to inquire, how it could be that, with all these obnoxious tenets, you ever obtained a clerical admittance and standing in the Presbyterian church. Being stated clerk of Transylvania Presbytery, and having the records in possession, I examined them. They give the time, place, and circumstances of your ordination full and fair, without noticing any reserve, as I informed you in my answer to your private letter, which will be seen presently. Seeing now, that your doctrine concerning faith is, that it depends not upon the will, inclination, or disposition, but on *testimony*;—how can you blame me for believing the testimony in the Presbyterian record on which I acted? Presbyterian usage in ordinations is well known. Several questions are proposed to the candidates, to be answered in the affirmative;—one is, "Do you sincerely receive and adopt the confession of faith of this church," &c. The testimony before me said you answered in the affirmative. Your twenty years belief, comprising the errors before mentioned, carrying you back to that period, (4th of Oct. 1798) and even beyond it, induced me to think that you dissembled when at your ordination you *sincerely received and adopted* a creed, directly and fundamentally the reverse of which you secretly held at the time, and which you have since published to the world.

The notion of a pre-existent human soul, you say, you "received when a student of divinity." This we now see is the clue to your whole book;—on this dogma is founded your denial of the *proper divinity* and *real atonement* of Jesus Christ. As a moral Archimedes, this *DOU POU STO* was never wanting; and the fulcrum and two-forked lever were always ready at hand to aid the designs of your logical mechanism. With this *created, pre-existent human soul*, linking with, and binding to itself all the theological farrago published in your different productions, you made your way through licensure and ordination into clerical

standing, among ministerial brethren whose souls ever abhorred the foul errors which you must have then concealed from them, and for some time covertly maintained, until you were detected and cast out of the church. But with regard to the testimony on which my former animadversions were founded, believing it, as I did, to contain a true statement of your ordination, how can you make it out, and publish to the world, that I have dealt in falsehood and slander, when even the immaculate Mr. Stone himself might have *unintentionally* erred in the very same manner? And, moreover, did charity and candour authorize you to charge me with those wicked crimes, *after* the explanation I gave you upwards of *six years* before, as you have done in your angry letter to Mr. Moreland? To cast as much light on this subject as possible, I will here insert your letter to me, dated 21st April, 1815, shortly after my publication appeared, and also my answer. It is as follows, viz:

“SIR; I discovered in your late declamatory production a bold stroke aimed at my moral character. You were under a mistake,* in stating that, without reserve, I had, at my ordination, “received and adopted the Confession of Faith as containing the system of doctrines taught in the holy Scriptures.” I did object to some articles contained in the Confession, and one was the doctrines of Trinity, &c. I made my objections known at that time to some, if not to all the preachers—some of them laboured to convince me. I told them that thus far I would go, but no farther; I would receive it as far as I saw it agreeable to the word of God. When I was publickly asked, “Do you receive,” &c. I answered aloud, to be heard by a large assembly, “I do, as far as I see it agreeable to the word of God.” This I can prove by hundreds. Mr. John Lyle was there at the time, and a few nights ago in this place (Lexington) related the circumstances of that transaction to the company as it really was. Mr. Lapsley was present, when Mr. Lyle gave the relation. Now, Sir, as you say you will rejoice to find yourself mistaken, I have corrected the mistake. You certainly see that you have injured me. This injury you can repair, by making your acknowledgment of the mistake as public as you have the mis-

* Call it mistake as often as you will, but you must not call it slander.

take itself. I am persuaded you will do it, and without reserve, and thus save me the trouble of doing it myself. At the close of your book you style yourself my *sincere friend*: Is it the part of a sincere friend to ruin his friend? Or, if he has tried, will he not acknowledge and repent of the evil? Do, Sir, let me hear speedily from you, whether you will rectify the mistake yourself, or permit me to do it. The matter does not admit of delay. Farewell.

BARTON W. STONE."

To this letter I returned the following answer a few days after its reception.

"Sir; Your letter of the 21st ult. came safe to hand. Its contents I have specially noted. The circumstances of your ordination, as related in your letter, are, in my opinion, the most curious and forbidding of any, of a similar kind, I ever heard of. You did, you say, "object to some articles contained in the Confession, and one was the doctrines of Trinity, &c." Now, how far this "&c." goes, is hard for me to say; and, it further shews, to my mind, that ambiguity and want of explicitness, everywhere observable in your writings. "The doctrines of Trinity, &c." I suppose we are certainly at liberty to include the *Deity* of Jesus Christ, as one of those objected to; especially as it was on that subject, *particularly*, that you made the statement respecting your twenty years belief; and I have my doubts whether any Presbytery, even the most corrupt, would ordain a man who would tell them that Jesus Christ was not equal to the Father "in essence, being or eternity;" or whether the Transylvania Presbytery ever dreamed that you held such obnoxious sentiments at that time.

"When publicly asked,—"Do you receive, &c." you say, you "answered aloud, to be heard by a large assembly,—I do, as far as I see it agreeable to the word of God." Now, who in his senses will say, that this was not a mere sham—a solemn NOTHING! Your conduct was impolitic, to say the least of it; and *that* of the Presbytery unfaithful and disorderly. What happiness could you expect by imposing yourself on a society contrary to their established rules? Was this the way to ensure future peace and harmony in that society? Could it be desirable for an honest man to put his head among a people in society, when he knew there existed such a difference of sentiment, as might at some future period, and in some other section of that society, endanger his standing, and destroy his peace? Admitting they were willing to dispense with their strict laws for his accommo-

dation, this would afford but little encouragement, seeing that society would not be acting a faithful part to themselves, nor their connection at large. If the Presbytery were satisfied with such an adoption of the Confession, as you state, they acted just such a part; and no wonder if they should afterwards see the folly, and smart for it too, as they certainly have in the trouble and difficulty they have had with the very man in whose case they so flagrantly transgressed. You received the Confession "as far as you saw it agreeable to the word of God." Alas, pray, Sir, could you not receive the Alkoran, and the *Shake* Testimony in the same way? If it really was as you say, then I candidly confess, that so far from your sincerely receiving and adopting the Confession, that you did not adopt it at all. It was nothing but a solemn farce. It was doing things in a way that I should most certainly have objected to, had I been in your place, or acting as a member of Presbytery.

"As for the "bold stroke aimed" at your moral character" in my "declamatory production;" I will venture to say, that another person looking at the statement you made, with the same circumstances before him, that were before me, in animadverting on that declaration, would have viewed the subject in the same light that I did, and would have noticed it in a similar way, without having any intention, or feeling any desire to aim a bold stroke at your moral character. The records of Presbytery are in my hands, as their stated clerk. This, I thought was the best evidence in the world. If they did not give true history, I am not to blame for it; I took it for granted they did, and so I presume you would have thought and acted in a similar situation. The Presbytery state, that when you made application to preach within their bounds, that they "examined your credentials, and likewise your acquaintance with *doctrinal* and *experimental* religion, and having received satisfaction," &c. And at your ordination they state that after the "several steps had been previously taken, agreeably to the directory of this church he (the presiding bishop) then proposed to Mr. Stone the questions appointed to be put to candidates previous to their ordination, and Mr. Stone having answered these questions in the affirmative, and the congregation's having answered, &c." Now, Sir, I need not inform you what those questions are, appointed to be put to candidates, and which the Presbytery say by their record you answered in the affirmative, prior to ordination. And when I look at our form of government on the subject, and predict the conduct of a Presbytery upon it, and then compare the history with it in your case, without their having recorded an

thing like what you have stated in your letter; surely you must see that any person writing on the subject would be compelled to make the same statement of facts that I did. You ought therefore to blame the Presbytery and yourself, for not having made a true record of your singular case, however irregular and censurable it might have been.

“Were I therefore to make any acknowledgment of the mistake, which, however, I am not authorized to do without contradicting the record of Presbytery, it would have to be accompanied with such strictures as would not, in my opinion, help the matter much, if any at all. Admitting your statement to be true, you have my real and candid opinion of that matter in the preceding part of this letter, which I should publish, were I to resort to newspapers or hand-bills, which would be the last resort, and, of all others, the most unlikely way of remedying the evil. And as it seems a matter of indifference with you whether I “rectify the mistake” myself, “or permit you to do it,” I therefore leave the matter with yourself, it being your province and not mine to disprove the record of Presbytery; supposing that you can do it more to your own satisfaction; and if done *fairly*, by stating the evidence, I had before me when I wrote, and placing the matter as it should be, I shall certainly not have the least objection; but if otherwise, I shall as certainly reply, by giving my views of the case similar to what are contained in this letter, which you are at liberty to publish if you choose.

“When I styled myself your *sincere friend*, I did it not *thoughtlessly, hypocritically, or ceremoniously*. I am sincere in wishing your return to truth and sound doctrine. I am sincere in praying for your soul's eternal welfare, and can assure you that no man would do more to accomplish these ends than myself. I am your sincere friend, when I tell you the truth, and endeavour to point out your errors. I hate not the man, but his sentiments.

“Should you answer my “declamatory production,” as it is thought you will, I can assure you, that you are quite welcome; and welcome too to call it what you please, and even to have the last word, unless I deem a reply necessary, in which case I am your pledged antagonist.”

How you managed this matter I never heard, except in one instance, when you came over to Harrodsburg, and after preaching, you made a *verbal* statement respecting the *manner* of your ordination, at which the people listened; but not feeling much interested about it, one way or the other, it had little or no effect, and but few really knew

your object. Probably you were more *full and explicit* further off; but you never sent any *written* corrective after my "declamatory production," until your certificates were published last summer in your *body of divinity*, which you supposed authorized your malignant and triumphant assertion of my slander and falsehood.

But if it be true, (and we have no reason to doubt it from your own declaration) that you really held the odious sentiments before and at the time of your ordination, which you a few years afterwards published to the world, and which you have recently enlarged in two editions of your *standard work*, the only alternative that remains, is, that you deceived the Presbytery, by concealing your real sentiments, and passing upon them a counterfeit. In this way, and no other, were you *smuggled* into the ministerial office by imposing on those good men who gave you the right hand of fellowship, to take part in the ministry with them; as little suspecting, as the Trojans did when they laid down their wall to let in the wooden horse filled with armed men, that they had received into their circle a man covertly bearing with him such a troublesome and pernicious host of Arian and Socinian sentiments as were shortly after let loose upon them. The ministers, recorded present at your ordination, were, "Messrs. Crawford, M'Namer, Tull, Rannalls, Blythe, J. P. Howe, S. Findley, W. Robertson, Marshall, Cameron, and M'Namer." The first four are dead, the last is well known on the rolls of Shakeram; not one of the rest have I yet conversed with on the subject; yet I can pledge myself in their behalf, had they known your real sentiments at your ordination, that neither they nor their brethren deceased would have laid hands on you. And the only excuse or apology which could consistently be offered by or for them, for not arresting you at your ordination, or protesting against it, from the manner you adopted the Confession, is, that believing, in their goodwill and charity towards you, that your difficulties being merely speculative, and not fraught with danger, as to yourself, or as affecting any fundamental article of gospel doctrine, they must have thought an interference entirely unnecessary. The only communication I have obtained, and the only one I have sought for from any of the brethren

who ordained you, will be found in the following extract from a letter addressed to me, at my request, by the Rev. Dr. Blythe.

“As it respects what took place, at the time Mr. Stone was ordained, I am not able to state the particulars. I have little doubt, but that gentleman did at that time, make some objections to the *terms* in which certain doctrines are expressed, in our Confession of Faith; but that he did make objections to any of the leading *doctrines* in that formula, no person will believe, and he knows it not to be the fact. Much less, will the world believe, that he ever expressed any doubt on the all-important doctrine of the divinity of Jesus Christ. Mr. Stone was originally from the same section of the country with myself, and, I think, was licensed by the same Presbytery that gave me license. I am acquainted with the very special and particular manner in which that Presbytery examined their candidates on all the leading doctrines of the Confession of Faith; and nothing could induce me to believe, that the Presbytery of Orange ever would have licensed any man holding such abominable sentiments as Mr. Stone has recently avowed, and now says he has always held.

“From the circumstance of Mr. Stone's having originated from the same quarter of the country with myself, and from a strong personal friendship for him, there existed between that gentleman, and myself, the most perfect intimacy. I do not hesitate to say, that in none of our private and confidential conversations, which he knows were not a few, did he ever express himself so as to lead me in the slightest manner, to doubt the soundness of his faith, as to the *proper divinity of Jesus Christ*. That Mr. Stone may have held the same sentiments on that subject formerly, that he does now, I will not pretend to deny; but if he did, I am confident he deceived me, and, I believe, deceived the presbyteries that licensed and ordained him.

“What that gentleman hopes to profit by publishing to the world, that he has never changed his opinions, I cannot conceive. By this course, he avoids the imputation of that which has happened to some of the greatest and best men our world ever saw;—a simple change of sentiment; but he must incur with every man of a moment's reflection, the heavy imputation, of having deceived his bosom friends, and the presbyteries which licensed and ordained him: for no man can for a moment believe, that if Mr. Stone had given to his opinions any such

shape as they have lately assumed, he would ever have been either licensed or ordained, by any presbytery belonging to the General Assembly. The thing speaks for itself.

"A thousand times have I thought of this once bosom friend with a pained heart. Gladly would I have cast over him the mantle of charity. But alas! every year has but furnished fresh proofs, that "he went out from us, because he was not of us."

This not only confirms my own opinions on this subject, but also I suspect measureably anticipates the impressions and opinions of the other members of the Presbytery who assisted at your ordination, and which shall be procured, if necessary, should this matter be further agitated. And should that be the case, you need be at no more trouble to prove what I most cheerfully admit; namely, that you excepted to the Confession of Faith, at your ordination, and that long ago you held and preached the *created, pre-existent* human soul of Christ. Your certificates are only calculated to blind the ignorant, and mislead the uninformed, and prevent them from seeing the true state of the case as it really is. I say, therefore, I would rather admit, than otherwise, what you have attempted to prove. These very things make your case look suspicious at least, and in the opinion of many, tend to plunge you deeper into the ditch.

I have one remark to make on your quarrel with the Presbytery. "The Presbytery have done me injustice in omitting a note of my exceptions in their minutes." (p. 34.) Sir, this charge falls with redoubled force on your own head. You took a seat in the Presbytery as a member the very moment after your ordination; and you sat with them two days afterwards, and it is presumed heard the minutes read over, as is always the case before the signatures of the Moderator and Clerk. You must have then known the omission you now complain of. Did you complain of it then as a member of Presbetry having a deeper individual interest in it than any other person present? Did you ever ask for a rectification of the mistake, or ever complain, before, that it was not done for your benefit? No, you never thought of it till you saw my letter, and the innocent, unsuspecting brethren, probably never thought of the danger of incur-

ring the heavy imputation of *injustice* twenty three years afterwards.

"The Synod," too, "have done me greater injustice, in that noted minute of theirs, in which they declare to the world, that they have suspended me, because I seceded from the Confession of Faith. Could I have seceded from a book I never received in any other sense than I yet receive it? I will receive any book, as far as I see it consistent with the word of God. I stand on the same official ground now, that I did before their vote and minute of suspension." I will inquire again; did you make this any part of your defence before the Synod? Did you *then* take this ground, and tell the Synod you were at their defiance,—that you never had *acceded* to their book, and, therefore, you never *seceded* from it;—was it hinted,—was the *manner* of your ordination thought of at all by yourself or a single member of the Synod, many of whom were retent members, and never heard of your novel case? Again, I ask; would you ever have thought of this charge, had it not been for the information afforded you in my letter respecting the record of Presbytery? Such conduct in a *great* man looks little,—it looks worse,—it looks *disingenuous*.

But you stand on the same *official* ground now, that you did before their vote of suspension. This is certainly very problematical at least. Though you will regard the authority of our General Assembly with as little concern now, as the fugitive Arab regards the authority of the Emperor of Russia, yet with us it is sufficient that they have decided, that a licensure, or ordination in our church; "*without explicit adoption of the Confession of Faith, as being highly irregular and unconstitutional.*" (See *Min. of 1807, and Digest. p. 139.*) Your ordination, therefore, being *irregular and unconstitutional*, was certainly *invalid*. You were willing however, to consider yourself a regular member of the Synod on as high official ground as any: they thought so too; and from that stand they hurled you. But it seems they were mistaken,—they missed their mark, as you dodged but of the way, and now your official standing is as good, it seems, as ever. Let us try it *logically*:—Things that are equal to one and the same thing, are equal to one another; this is the axiom; now for the proposition:—an *illegal suspension* from ministerial office, where the same subject is im-

plicated is *equal* in point of *validity* to an *illegal ordination*. Now for the dilemma. If Mr. Stone's ordination was a *nullity*, so was his *suspension*, but if Mr. Stone's ordination was *valid*, so was his *suspension*. You may here take choice, and the assistance of the foregoing scholium, axiom, proposition and dilemma, two corollaries inevitably follow, viz: from the first member of the dilemma, Mr. Stone *never was ordained* minister; from the second, he *never has been in official standing* since his suspension and deposition. I think your official standing about as good as Richard M'Nemar, John Dunlavy's, and Matthew Houston's, who, no doubt feel as happy, as leaders of Shakerism, and can make triumphant a boast of having "*wisely slipped* out of the chains forged in Westminster," as you do now, at the head of the Arian party in the three states of Tennessee, Kentucky and Ohio. If you are on official ground, so are they; as it is well known you all stood and fell together, under the same ecclesiastical discipline.

You and your party have assumed to yourselves the style of Christians. We doubt not the sincerity of the professions of many of you, but we do not, and in conscience cannot think you *fairly* entitled to that appellation. Believing and inculcating the doctrines we do, you must, by your unbounded charity, excuse us for holding you up as dangerous enemies of the faith once delivered to the saints. "One thing is certain: if *your* creed be true, *ours* is *fatally* erroneous." Upon fundamental principles, and in regard to ecclesiastical discipline, we cannot *conscientiously* maintain christian fellowship and ministerial brotherhood. Your infinite liberality ought to excuse us. But on another account you ought not to wish it. Take your books into your closet, and before Him who searcheth all hearts examine its contents; mark all the ugly names and harsh insinuations it contains against opposing brethren, as you call them. Particularly cast your eye on page 18, where we are denominated the "daughters" of "the whore of Babylon," having "the same mark:" where we are designated by the star that John saw, (or as you paraphrase it, "the angel of the church) fall from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit—with this key (not the key of knowledge) he opened the dark cabinet of hell, and let out a flood

smoke (the doctrines of devils, and commandments of men) which darkened the sun," &c. &c. O what a sweet flow of charity this is! No wonder your pious soul was excited to burst forth in the highly *appropriate* prayer that followed; "O Lord, with the breath of thy mouth, blow away the smoke from the air, that the sun of righteousness may break forth with healing in his beams," &c. How flexible, loving, good-natured, and even meretricious must that charity be that can sacrifice all principle, and stoop to embrace such *bigots*, such *strumpets* of Babylon, such *sooty fellows* from the dark cabinet of hell, laden with doctrines of devils and commandments of men, and even quarrel with them too, calling names, and muttering a thousand harsh insinuations, because they cannot permit her to associate with them in their pulpits, and at the solemn feasts of Zion. Sir, there is an incongruity, a glaring contradiction in this thing, which, though it may go down with the ignorant and the selfish, will never pass with men of sober judgment and correct discernment for any thing more than a mere shew of *pretended* friendship, fanatic zeal, and unconscious hypocrisy. You have long given abundant occasion to opposing brethren, and many others, to suspect your lack of that charity you boast so much of, and the want of which in others you so unmercifully condemn. There is certainly a great contrast between your tongue and your pen,—between your soft, insinuating personal manners, and the harsh invectives, and religious animosity that abound in your writings in your different attacks upon the sentiments of others. Such a discrepancy in a man's character, is fitly represented by the Psalmist: "The words of his mouth were smoother than butter, but war was in his heart: his words were softer than oil, yet were they drawn swords." But I am admonished of the necessity of closing this address. I have used great freedom and plainness of speech with you, I hope, without feeling any spirit of animosity. I cast myself upon the mercy of God, and ask his divine forgiveness for what he may see amiss either in the sentiment or conduct of this work, which I also submit to the judgment and candor of the religious public. With respect to you, I remain unambitious of the honour of the last word. Be it however understood, that if you should think proper

to make any further defence, or any new attack, I am not pledged either to reply or be silent.

P. S. Since the above was written and sent to the press, I have received the *official* account of your licensure, in an extract from the records of Orange Presbytery. It stands full and fair, and completely exonerates me from your harsh censure of falsehood and slander; and throws you back, notwithstanding your certificates, on suspicious ground; exactly where I found you, when I first animadverted on your singular case. If you held the doctrines published in your first edition, twenty years before you wrote that book, consequently antecedent to your licensure, on which occasion, (according to the Presbyterial record,) you sincerely received and adopted the Confession of Faith,—then, according to the following testimony, you must have acted the part of a *dissembler*, and deceived the Presbytery that gave you license. The following is the document alluded to, which will speak for itself. It comes certified as a true extract from the records which are in the possession of the Rev. Colin M'Iver, who resides in Fayetteville, N. C.

“HAWFIELD'S CHURCH, April 6, 1796.

“Messrs. Stone, Foster, and Tate, delivered discourses on the subjects assigned them, at our last stated sessions of Presbytery; and were examined on divinity in general; which discourses and examinations, were sustained as parts of trial previous to licensure.”

“Messrs. Barton Stone, Robert Foster, and Robert Tate, having gone through the trials assigned them by Presbytery, with approbation, and having adopted the Confession of Faith of this Church, and satisfactorily answered the questions appointed to be put to candidates to be licensed, the Presbytery did license them to preach the gospel of Christ, as probationers for the holy ministry, within the bounds of this Presbytery, or wherever they shall be orderly called.”

Did you adopt the Confession of Faith at this time with exceptions? Did Messrs. Foster and Tate likewise? Or were you licensed differently from them? If this record is not true, am I guilty of slander and falsehood *again*, because I depend on it as *testimony* “without will, inclination or disposition?” If the declaration in your first edition re-

acting your *twenty years belief*, contained the *truth*, why
it now left out in your second "corrected and considerably
enlarged" edition? Why not stick to the truth, and again
publish the declaration, or "confess the foul fact like an
honest christian?" As a man of open, ingenuous, undis-
guised character, general rumour appears to be against
you. As a literary polemic, or controversialist, your writ-
ings, from beginning to end, speak for themselves, and, on
every point, are evidently unfavorable to you.

NOTE: It was not until the foregoing work was ready for
press, that the Author identified the person who issued
the first proposals, pledging him to reply to Mr. Stone. In
the 6th page of this work, the Author has stated that this was
done without his "knowledge, concurrence, or approbation;"
which is true, as it related then to his own views and intentions
respecting the course he had intended to pursue, which was, to
draw no further public attention to Mr. Stone's book. But these
expressions are not by any means intended to impugn the mo-
tives, intentions, or conduct of the friend, who, through misap-
prehension, thought himself authorized by me to issue the pro-
posals in question. Being a sincere lover, and able advocate
of the truth, and (as he believes) a friend to the Author, who,
having been made acquainted with the circumstances that in-
duced him to act as he did,—he most cordially approves his
friend's intentions and conduct; and if any bad results from
the publication, it must be measurably attributed to that cir-
cumstance, which induced the Author to change his mind, and
undertake the work which he now tremblingly holds forth to
the public. The very excellent and able reply of the Rev. Mr.
Whitman, of Hopkinsville, to Mr. Thomas Smith's sermon, has
superceded the necessity of the "appendix" that was contemplat-
ed by the first proposals to accompany this work; and therefore,
as thought proper, by the intended Author, to abandon it for
the present.]



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