

Divers & Strange Doctrines

STATED AND EXAMINED.

BY

TERTIUS.

“Jesus Christ *the same* yesterday, to-day, and for ever.”—*Heb.* xiii. 8.

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Divers and Strange Doctrines, &c.

“Jesus Christ *the same* yesterday, to-day, and for ever.”

FOR a full, and as appears to me, a just also and convincing estimate of what is held and taught by Mr. J. N. Darby and some of his adherents, respecting both a certain class of non-atoning sufferings ascribed to the Lord Jesus, and also the doctrine of the Cross, the reader is referred to the two pamphlets whose titles are given below.*

But there has also emanated from the same school a further class of teaching, not less new and peculiar than the former, and bearing not less closely upon fundamental truth. These two branches of doctrine are in close moral relation to each other, inasmuch as both alike affect the Person and work of our blessed Lord; but specifically they are widely separate, as will be seen. Meanwhile the fact of their existence, and their wide acceptance also as a higher order of evangelic teaching, demands imperatively a calm investigation of their character. I shall now set forth briefly the grounds of my own conviction that the authors of the papers presently to be noticed, stand committed to statements which involve—

I. A dividing of Christ's Person.

II. A heterodox estimate of the Incarnation, as expressed in certain remarks on the life and nature of the Lord.

* “The Close of Twenty-eight Years of Association with J. N. D., &c., by W. H. D.,” and “Grief upon Grief, by P. F. H.” London: Houlston & Wright.

In addition to the evidence contained in these papers, some later and striking proofs have offered themselves to me during the progress of this examination, which are subjoined in the form of an Appendix.

III. A contradiction of the Scriptural doctrine of His enduring Messiahship.

IV. A new and untenable theory respecting the dying of the Lord "to sin"; and

V. A false description of His risen life, and in immediate connection with this, an erroneous statement of the same doctrine in its application to the believer.

On the first of these five positions Mr. Dorman has already expressed himself, briefly but convincingly, at page 42 of his pamphlet. I shall not here repeat his words, but produce from other sources some additional proof of the allegation here maintained, that the Lord's Person is in effect divided, and therefore dishonoured, by the later teachings of this school.

But before doing so I would ask from my reader his careful attention to the text of Scripture which stands at the head of this paper. "*Jesus Christ,*" the Apostle says, is "*the same, yesterday, to-day, and forever.*" We have here an inspired declaration, which while it involves the doctrine of Christ's eternal Sonship, and unchanging nature as *Divine*, asserts also specifically, the unalterable identity of His person as the *Son of Man*. For until his birth of the virgin, God's Son was JESUS neither in fact nor name, though *in purpose* He was the predestined Saviour of His people from eternity.

Keeping this important truth in mind, let us turn now to the following extract from a paper in *The Present Testimony* for 1863.* The writer is speaking of the death of Christ, and on this solemn subject states his mind as follows: "He died so as to make a final and judicial separation of *Divine life* from the whole *first Adam condition*, because there was nothing but sin there, in will; and transfers, so to speak, *the Divine life that was in Him* to a new and heavenly sphere." †

* Approach to and Delight in God: Sin and Sins. P. T. Part lix. Without speculating on the authorship of this article, I shall treat it simply as an anonymous essay, for the appearance of which the Editor of P. T. is alone responsible.

† The italics are my own.

To enable the reader to understand what is meant by Christ's being "in the first Adam condition," I will cite, before noticing the above extract, another from a separate paper in which the same subject is treated, At page 76 of a small volume entitled "Notes and Expositions by J. N. Darby," we have : "But what do I find in Christ ? He has taken the place of the first Adam down here for us : He has died in it, and there is a total end of the whole state for those that believe. Now I reckon myself dead to sin, because Christ has died. He was treated as *being in that place*, and He *died*, and the whole thing is ended—ended for me, under judgment of another's bearing. As a believer I shall still feel the workings of the old nature, and have to judge it ; but I see Christ taking *it* for me, and judgment executed upon *it* in His person on the cross, and now He is out of *it all*, alive again for evermore. That life is *wholly gone*, in which He laid *it* down, and the old nature to which sin and judgment applied is gone. Just as a man who may be in prison, awaiting there the punishment of his crime, and he dies ; the *life* to which the *punishment is attached* is gone. It is impossible that there can be any longer a question of punishment for the sin ; the life is gone to which the sin and its punishment attached. *Just so was it with Christ,*" &c. &c.

Now although my immediate object is to prove only that these writers divide in their teaching the sacred person of the Lord, I cannot but feel that in these two passages alone, I am confronted by a cloud of errors all at once. For first, we have the Lord set, without any limitation or reserve, "in the place or condition of the first Adam," and "dying there." But if such expressions are to be taken in their simple force, they teach (as Mr. Newton taught) that the Lord was *obnoxious* or *liable* to death, because woman-born ; *i.e.*, that death *was the natural sequel of His birth—a mere variety of Irving's heresy*. For Adam the first knew death only as a *sinner* ; to live therefore and to die *in his condition*, is (may the words be forgiven, for assuredly the thought is far from the heart of Mr. D.) to live and die *in sin* ; and that this

is no unfair deduction from the writer's words is evident, since besides the assumption of the first Adam's place and condition, he ascribes to the Lord that very nature which, he says, the believer has to judge—"I see Christ taking *it* for me," &c. Taking *what*? The reader must determine by the context.

Again, the doctrine of sin and its removal by atonement, is here stated in a manner quite at variance with the testimony of Scripture. For whereas in the words of God we read such precious assurances as these: "He hath laid on *Him* the iniquity of us all;" "Himself bare our sins in his own body on the tree;" "By the which will we are sanctified, by the offering of the *body* of Jesus Christ once for all," &c., the teaching of this and similar passages in these writings is, that sin "attached" or "belonged" to a certain "life" which Christ took, and in the quitting of which life the work of atonement is made to consist; and that this life being once laid down is "left" for ever—or in other words, the instrument of our deliverance is broken and abandoned by Him who used it, and a part of *Himself* is, as it were, forfeited and left in the hand of the enemy, as the price of His thus diminished honour as the Captain of our Salvation!

Nor is this cast of teaching peculiar to Mr. D.: it appears to have been extensively adopted and often repeated, though not always in the same terms. One further example is here added, from another writer of the same school. "In giving up His life He gave up also the *sin attached thereto*, so that it is effectually put away, having been left in the grave, from which He arose triumphant in the power of a *new life*, to which righteousness as distinctly attaches itself as did sin to that life which He gave up on the cross."* These writers differ in detail, but are essentially agreed. Both leave the life which Jesus laid down, in the *dust*. Mr. M. however confers upon the Lord a *new life*, (whether human or divine he does not say) while on the hypothesis of Mr. D. that which is "gone" has no successor. As to the

* Mackintosh's Notes on Genesis. Fourth Edition, p. 64.

dismal attenuation of sound doctrine (if indeed so mild a term is adequate in such a case) which speaks of either "sin" or "righteousness" attaching to "a life" of our Lord, instead of *Himself* bearing sin and expiating it by His precious death, and *Himself* being essentially the Lord our Righteousness, it is left to the spiritual judgment of the reader.

How different the Lord's thoughts were as to the giving and resuming of His life, the simple reader may gather from such Scriptures as John x. 18, and Acts ii. 27, 31; in which latter passage the word "soul" is the same as that translated "life" in the former.*

I shall revert to these extracts when examining in detail some of the remaining positions, but confine myself at present to the assertion so distinctly made in the first of them, that by the death of Christ a *separation* took place between the Divine life and the whole first Adam condition. Without now insisting further on the faultiness of particular expressions, it is plain upon the face of this statement that if the Lord did what is here ascribed to Him, He *ceased definitively* from His *humanity*. For from the first Adam, through his mother, he received a *nature*, which enabled Him to own himself in very deed a *man*† and the "*Son of Man*," the true seed of the woman,‡ and so to live through His appointed days on earth that the first announcement of the Holy Ghost, when sent down from heaven by the Father in the name of His ascended Son, was to testify to "Jesus of Nazareth, a *man approved of God*," as then and there sitting at the right hand of God. But, says this writer, "the very nature" in which He wrought the atoning work is gone, "with the life also which he quits in dying." § Then there

* *Ψυχή* His proper human life or soul, as distinguished from *ζωή* which He spiritually has and *is*. In the divinely-permitted taking of this life consists His death; though it was *Christ*, and not a part of Him, who *died* (they killed the Prince of life), and its resumption, according to His word, declares Him to be in fact what in the truth of His person He ever was: "the *Resurrection and the Life*."—John xi. 25; Romans i. 4.

† Matt. iv. 4, John viii. 40. ‡ Gal. iv. 4.

§ "That very nature left behind in which he was responsible and suffered for sin."—*Ib.* p. 77. Compare "By nature children of wrath."

is, according to this teaching, a man indeed at God's right hand, but a man without either human nature or human life! The "Jesus of Nazareth" whom his enemies reviled, and over whose head Pilate placed his "accusation," is not *the same* Jesus as He whom God raised up from the dead. For a man with another nature is not *the same* and cannot be.*

"By man," says the apostle, "came the resurrection of the dead," and points to Jesus as the Man, but does not distinguish between the life and nature of the Christ who died for our sins, according to the scriptures, and was buried, and that of Him who, by the same scriptures, also rose again.† The Lord, moreover, our modern teachers tell us, "transfers the divine life that was in Him to a new and heavenly sphere;" or to quote from the other paper, "He has done with the old thing altogether, and has got into a new one (that very nature left behind, in which he was *responsible* and suffered for sin)‡ and NOW He is the heavenly man in the presence of God," &c. This language is explicit; but is it true? Is it "now" only, or as risen from the dead, that Jesus is "the heavenly man"? What then is His description while retaining still the life which He laid down?

It will be proper here to cite a few passages of scripture on this very important point. First, in Eph. iv. we have the express declaration that "He that *descended* is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens,"

* "We are" or "shall be," as contrasted with "we were," is a fit personal description of God's saints: "He is" must be affirmed of God manifest in the flesh, whether in humiliation or in glory.

† 1 Cor. xv. *passim*.

‡ It is far from my desire to seek occasion, or to make a man an offender for a word, but what careful reader can help seeing the utter unsoundness of this assertion? for if by His first Adam *nature* or *condition* Christ was *responsible* for sin how could He "abide alone?" (John xii. 24) and what becomes of the truth of His own question to His too-forward follower, in Matthew xxvi. 53? I judge the writer's *words* only, not His thoughts, when I aver that one *naturally* responsible for sin, is neither "holy, harmless, undefiled, nor separate from sinners;" or, in other words, that such a Christ is *not* the Christ of God.

&c. ; a distinct anticipative refutation of the notion of a natural or vital difference between the dying and the rising Christ. "The second man is from heaven," says the same witness at the close of his elaborate defence of an essential point of the faith once delivered ; " nay, rather," alleges this later interpreter, " He is *now* (after having got rid of the human life and old nature which He took) the heavenly man." But, John replies, not in his own words, " No man hath ascended into heaven save He which *came down* from heaven, even the *Son of Man* which is in heaven." And again, " What and if ye shall see the Son of Man ascend up *where He was before ?*" Some other scriptures will be quoted, and more will be said on the subject of the Lord's life a little further on : what has been already advanced is sufficient to show that this system of interpretation, by transferring His divine life only to the heavens, and leaving what is human in the grave, does clearly divide the proper person of the Lord.*

II. In regarding the human life and nature of the Lord as something which He took for a temporary purpose only, and affirming that to this life sin attached, so that His position in the days of His flesh may be illustrated by that of a felon lying under a capital sentence, (Christ being really without sin, as Mr. D., with every christian holds) the teaching of this school falls very far short of the true doctrine of the Incarnation.

For by that doctrine as set forth in scripture, instead of

* It may be well here to show also the intrinsic foolishness of this new form of doctrine. "*He transfers,*" says the writer ; but, if this means anything, it saves the integrity of the Lord's person. It is *Jesus* who does this, the child of the virgin, called the Son of God. (Luke i. 35.) To transfer the divine life that was in Him then, is no other than Himself to re-ascend to God in person ; for surely divine life was in Him, whether here or there. In other words, this teaching, but for its mischievous adjuncts, would be no more than a gratuitous redundancy of speech. The writer seems embarrassed by the difficulty of his task in undertaking thus to expound the mystery of the resurrection ; for he introduces it with a "so to speak." Alas, my brother, why speak at all as an *expositor* on that which Christ's apostles were empowered only to declare ? Can you hope to give sound *information* on this subject when God holds His peace ?

the vital dualism which this teaching implies, we have language of quite a different order. Descriptive expressions are employed which embarrass and confound the natural intellect, but are perfectly intelligible to a faith which is content to remember that as yet we know nothing as we ought to know, even of that into which we are allowed to search, while it forbears to scrutinize that which its Author has declared to be beyond its knowledge.* We there read that "the Word was made flesh," that "God was manifest in the flesh," that "in Christ dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily," that "the eye that saw Him saw the Father also, while His dwelling with His people was the dwelling also with them of the Holy Ghost."

But this false picture of the mystery of godliness makes all that is human in His life to be *temporary* only, and allows nothing to be transferable to a heavenly sphere but the "divine life that was in Him." Who then, it may be asked, is the *Man* who is Jehovah's fellow? the Man for whose sake there is made of a despised village in Galilee such honoured mention in the heavens into which He now is gone? And again, if the glory of the only begotten of the Father shone forth from the person of the Word made flesh, when Jesus stood and walked on earth, the as yet unslain Lamb of God, must not that glory suffer an essential diminution if the "life and nature" which were the appointed medium of its revelation, and in which He fulfilled His Father's pleasure to the death, are both now "wholly gone?" That Christ is now no longer known after the flesh, *i.e.* that believers now look on Him with new eyes as being themselves new creatures—not in the flesh, but in the spirit†—beholding Him not as the twelve did ere the Spirit had been given, but according to the power of that *understanding* ‡ which regards adoringly the full truth of His person, is most true; but to imply that a personal

* Matt. xi. 27; Prov. xxx. 4-6.

† Compare Rom. viii. 9. ‡ 1 John v. 20.

change has passed upon the Lord, and to treat His assumption of human life as no more than a temporary, though necessary, means to an end, is to forget that the Son "abideth ever,"* that the despised of man is also the "I AM,"† and that He whom God hath now highly exalted, is the same, and *holds the same name and nature*, as He who when "found in a fashion as a *man*" was obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.‡ It is, in fact, to commit, inversely, the sin of Israel's unbelief. *They* stumbled at Jehovah because they judged Him by His outward guise; *these*, because resting too exclusively on the truth of His divinity, seem unable to believe that the same life and nature which produced the tears of Jesus, must inherit also for eternity His compensating joys.§

III. Reserving some further consideration of the consequences of this new opinion for the last head of our enquiry, I proceed now to show that the scriptural doctrine of the Lord's Messiahship is also contradicted by the teaching of this school. At page 7 of the number of the "Present Testimony" already quoted it is said, "He died to all that was here, even to *His own Messiahship as born of the seed of David according to the flesh*, and opened the door by His death to those heavenly things of which He was able to speak," &c.; and in the following page it is added, "Christ has died to the whole world and sin, and to *everything* which is in the world and connected with sin. It is *passed and gone as non-existent*." The statement now before us amounts to a declaration that the Lord's own Messiahship as born of the seed of David after the flesh, has been died to (and

* John viii. 35. † John viii. 58. ‡ Phill. ii. 8—10.

§ P's. xvi. 2, xxi. 4-6.—It is possible that those who accept these statements, may allege when speaking of "life" the writer means only the blood which Jesus shed for our redemption, and that "by nature" is intended "circumstantial state or condition." But such an explanation, if it seemed to save his orthodoxy as a spiritual thinker, should but aggravate the blame attaching to him for perversity of speech. For as in the case of the Lord's sufferings, so here also, years of private remonstrance have produced no change in his expressions. It is for the reader to judge if they answer to the apostle's requirement in Titus ii. 7, 8, and 2 Timothy ii. 15, 16.

is consequently "passed and gone as non-existent,") as a preliminary to His entering upon and revealing those heavenly things of which He had to speak. The reader will at once perceive that this strange announcement is but a particular aspect of the principle already laid down so broadly in the extracts above quoted: for if by dying Christ "made a final separation of divine life from the first Adam condition," and the "nature" and "life" which He "took" are also wholly gone, it is evident that "His own Messiahship" also, which belongs to Him expressly as the seed of David, is gone with the life and nature which can alone be thus properly described.

But on such a supposition it may first be asked what becomes of Jehovah's covenant with David?* and of the annunciation to the virgin?† and of the voices of the prophets? not to speak of the Lord's own words of promise to the twelve,‡ and their confirmation by apostolic testimony of the assured though deferred fulfilment to the nation of Israel of those promises which are expressly *theirs*.§ For it was of David's seed that God would raise up One, not to *die* only, amid the derision of those who would none of Him and chose Barabbas, but also to *sit upon his throne*. Angels and inspired men are alike at issue with the extraordinary statement of this modern witness. And lest it should be supposed that nothing more is meant by these expressions than the cutting off of Messiah as foretold by Daniel, we are carefully assured, not that Messiah died or was cut off, but that Christ died *to* His Messiahship, which was consequently "passed and gone;" that "there is indeed a Christ who is also *now*," Mr. D. says, "the heavenly man;" but inasmuch as the "life" which He received through the virgin of David's lineage is "wholly gone," the Messiah, or Christ of Israel is also gone, and their sweet anticipative song, "Unto *us* a child is born,"|| &c., receives no echo from the fact fulfilled, though the

* Ps. lxxxix. 34—36, cxxxii. 11. † Luke i. 31, 32. ‡ Matt. xix. 28.

§ Acts xii. 30, xiii. 34, Rom. ix. 4—xi *passim*. || Isaiah ix. 6, 7.

prophet comforted his soul in the assurance that the zeal of the Lord of hosts would perform what He had said. For if the "divine life" only of the Lord be translated to another sphere, "the fruit of David's body" can certainly no longer claim to sit upon his throne.

But it is time to bring this statement to its proper and decisive test, by weighing it against apostolic testimony on the self-same topic, namely, the resurrection of the Lord: and does it not seem as if this particular form of aberration from sound doctrine had been noted and condemned, in anticipation, by the Spirit of truth, when He moved the apostle, in addressing to his own son in the faith his final warnings as to the doctrinal perversities of the "latter" and "last" times, to charge him in the following words: "Remember that Jesus Christ *of the seed of David*, was raised from the dead *according to my gospel.*"* Paul had evidently strong misgivings as to the constancy of his successors in maintaining this essential doctrine of the faith; but to deny it is plainly to preach "another Gospel." This witness is enough, but it may well be corroborated by the lips of the risen One Himself. It is He who is ready to appear who says, "I am," not the root only, but the "*offspring*" also "of David." The spirit of theorising may blind and ensnare the minds even of the most gifted men, but *God's words* alone will stand; and it is He who hath said that David shall not want a *man* to sit upon his throne.† But a man without human "life" or "nature" is NOT a man according to the plain speaking of inspired truth.

IV. A new and untenable theory has also appeared in these writings respecting the death of Christ. My proof of this error is taken from the same paper as the preceding; a paper, as the author expresses it, "presenting questions tending to conduct to *more light*; in part as *acquired instruction.*" We have first at page 8 the Scriptural statement, "Christ died to sin and for sins." The writer then proceeds to notice "the difference of sins and sin." "It is not new," he observes, "but I do

* 2 Tim. ii. 8.

† Jer. xxxiii. 17—21.

not think Christians have sufficiently remarked the force of St. Paul's reasonings on the subject."

He begins with "sins," and with all true believers finds atonement for them in the Cross. "The blood of Jesus, the Cross, is the blessed answer to them." Then, after noticing the distinction between sins in act, and the sin or innate principle of evil which produces them, as set forth by the Apostle in chapters iii. to v. of his Epistle to the Romans, he calls our especial attention to chapter vi. That chapter, he says, carries out distinctly the thought expressed by the Apostle at the close of chap. v., viz., that "sin has reigned, death being the proof of it," and, he continues, "introduces death as that which closes the evil, that our state being one of sin, as alive as children of Adam, death closes that state. We are crucified with Christ, do not any longer exist as before God, as alive in the flesh. But what was *this death* in Christ? Here we have *no* dying for sins, but to sin."

The first thing to be noticed here is that the death of Christ is accounted for *apart* from atonement. "Dying for sins" means atonement, says the writer, and we have *none of that* here. What this dying to sin means is next explained: "He died *to that scene*, died rather than fail in perfect and absolute obedience, in glorifying God. And He did so glorify Him, and, perfect in all things, *closed all connection with this world*, and with man as in a state of sin. *He died to sin once*, closed all connection of man with God, as on the ground of *living in the flesh*." The reader will be reminded by some of these expressions of the doctrine of the Lord's first-Adam place and responsibilities already noticed. But let us enlarge our extract. "There was not a movement of His life," the writer continues, "which was not the *perfection of the Divine nature in a man*, in the midst of the temptations through which we pass; and having completed and finished that obedience, He died to the whole *sphere and scene of existence*, really died to it, and in resurrection entered on another, which did not belong to that order or state of things, but which had its starting point, its *womb of existence*, in death to it."

The personal description of the Lord presented in this latter passage belongs rather to the second head of our enquiry : indeed the several branches of this doctrine are so closely interwoven, as to make it difficult to state them separately without repetition. For a moment, then, let the reader's attention be recalled to the subject of the Incarnation, and let him ask himself, were the movements of the life of Jesus only "the perfection of the *Divine nature* in a man"? Had this "Man" then no *human* nature, not less perfect in its kind? Is "the divine nature" operating in "a man," a just expression of the mystery of Godliness, or of the movements of His "life" who lived, as man, upon the words of God, and whose ear was wakened morning by morning to hear as the taught? * And when it is written of Him who endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, that for the joy that was set before Him He endured the cross, despising the shame, is it meant that the "human life" which Christ "took" had no part in this blessed aspiration, and that the "Man of sorrows" is *vitally* different from Him of whom the heart of David was inditing a good matter, when, with a tongue like the pen of a ready writer, he spake of the things which he had made touching *the King*?

Returning now to our immediate question, we find the author of these extracts so treating the death of Christ as to exclude from his view the notion of atonement ; and for this he cites an Apostle as his authority. My *general* answer to this is, that such a mode of viewing the Lord's death is at variance with *the constant teaching of the Holy Ghost* ; nor shall I waste the reader's time by proving this. With respect to the Apostle's teaching in Romans vi. I hope to make it plain, that although "atonement" is not *formally* the topic of that chapter, it lies in the very essence of the doctrinal summary in verse 10.

Reconciliation or atonement, and the manner of it, have been fully treated in the earlier part of the Epistle ; and

* Is. l. 4, compare Is. xl. 1—3 and xlii., *passim*.

the believer, already justified by faith, is instructed in this chapter as to the manner and order of his *walk*. The antinomian wickedness of the natural mind is anticipated and rebuked by an assertion of his position in the sight of God, as both dead and risen again with Christ by faith, and now standing representatively before God in Him. But, as another has well observed, both motive and power are needed to produce in us a practically holy life, and both are supplied to us by the Apostle's teaching here ; the Lord being Himself put before us as the pattern of our steps, as well as the author and finisher of faith. What He has done personally and in our stead, by dying once for all to sin, we are to reckon to ourselves also by faith ; and in the consciousness of our full emancipation from sin's bondage, we are called upon to yield ourselves to God. No longer reckoned among the living of this world, because buried with Christ by baptism into death, we are, while yet in bodies of humiliation, and in conflict with the flesh, to be as those who have indeed done with sin in having died to it—to disallow it therefore under all its forms. For as Christ, after taking sin on Him for us upon the cross, has freed Himself for ever by his death, so should we also assert *practically* the liberty with which Christ has made us free.*

The form of the Apostle's teaching is simple, though figurative. Sin is represented as a *power* which once held absolute sway over God's children, but which lords it now no longer, seeing they are no longer under law, but under grace. But how has this change been effected ? By Christ's dying once for all to sin ; or, to quote from what is written to the Galatians, "I through the law am dead to the law by the body of Christ." Death, which for a moment had dominion over Him, when by the grace of God He tasted death for our sakes, has now dominion over Him no longer. "For," the Apostle says, "in that He *did* He died unto *sin* once, but in that He *liveth*

* Compare as to the general drift of Paul's doctrine here, 1 Peter iii, 18, and iv, 1.

He liveth unto *God*." An equal necessity is stated in both clauses of this verse—sin and death are as inseparable as life and righteousness. If Christ took sin on Him, He must as surely undergo its penalty by the judgment of God, as He naturally, as the Just One, both before and after His atoning passion, lived and lives again to God. He died to sin. Acknowledging its power over man, in whose outward likeness God had sent Him into the world, He submitted* to it as our ever blessed Substitute, when God made Him to be sin for us. Sin reigned in death: † by dying Christ assailed it and destroyed it, for His people, in its citadel. He has now done with sin, except to judge it in His unrepentant adversaries; while His chosen, who rejoice in Him and have no confidence in the flesh, are taught to judge and disallow it in themselves.

Enough has perhaps been said to disprove the perilous notion that atonement has no place in the Apostle's present teaching. For Christ's dying *at all*, it will surely be admitted, was *for us*; but that is *essentially* substitutional atonement. To view Christ's death apart from this is, I do not hesitate to say, subversive of the Gospel. It is not therefore for the sake of commending a particular interpretation of Rom. vi. that objection is here taken to this writer's language, but as a protest against what is felt to be a vicious principle of Scriptural exposition. God sent His Son into the world *for sin*, and that He might in due time taste of death a body was prepared for Him. But His nature has nothing in common with the sin with which He charged Himself. He is the Saviour from sin, from the first assumption of His name. He did not die therefore to His nature, nor to any thing else but *sin*. All other things He would resume, when death was past, in the power of redemption; but to sin He died definitely and once for all.* His dying is its end, for Him and His. When He had by Himself purged our sins, He sat down on the right hand of the

* Romans viii, 3. † Romans v, 21.

‡ Ἐφάπαξ compare Heb. vii, 27 and x, 10.

majesty on high. He died to sin, He lives to God—words hardly to be explained satisfactorily by His “dying to the present scene,” “closing all connection with the world,” or “ceasing from the position of being in a *mortal body* upon earth.”*

V. I turn now to the last of the questionable positions enumerated, viz., that a false description is given in these writings of the Lord's risen life; and, in connection with this, an erroneous view of the same doctrine in its application to the believer.

What the Scriptures teach on this deeply interesting topic, while it offers nothing to the prying of the “fleshly mind,” gives all it needs to a simple and confiding faith. Besides the general declaration that the Lord shewed Himself to the Apostles whom He had chosen, by many infallible proofs, we are told expressly that on His first interview with them after His decease, He assured them of His personal identity by an appeal to their familiar consciousness. “*Handle* me and see,” was His word to those who could not trust their eyes and ears; while to convince their yet incredulous but joyful minds that He had indeed fulfilled His word, and taken again the very life which He had laid down for His own, He asks for meat and eats it in their presence.† And as His actions, so are His words also, for an unwarped spiritual understanding, the most perfect assurance of His unchanged personal identity before and after death. For when He had opened their understandings that they might understand the Scriptures, “He said to them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to *suffer*, and to *rise again* from the dead the third day,” &c.

Now with this last verse in my mind, I cannot but

* This last is the explanation offered by the Editor of *The Present Testimony* to one who, on the first appearance of this singular paper, addressed him in a tone of enquiring remonstrance, and was told in reply that to question such statements was to resist the Holy Ghost and the truth! As that correspondence is of no private interest I am free to make this passing reference to it. To the thoughtful reader it will suggest reflections of a sad and solemn kind.

† Luke xxiv, 36-43.—See also Acts x, 41.

remember also with what words the Lord rebuked the presumption of Sadducean ignorance when it sought to cloud the pure brightness of God's words by the officious intermeddling of natural intellect: "Do ye not therefore err, because ye know not the scriptures nor the *power of God?*" And if the error of these was "great," because they spoke amiss of that great act of God by which the promised change is to be wrought on the bodies of those who, without losing their personal identity, are to be "found in *Christ*," may not a yet weightier rebuke be apprehended by any who, when handling the mystery of godliness, speak where inspired men are silent, and so speak as to seem to contradict the very words of God? But that the teaching of these writers on this point is open to this heavy censure, must, I think, appear to all who will attentively consider it: for after having, according to the peculiar dualistic theory already noticed, represented the "human life" of Christ as something distinct from His *person*, a something which, as we have seen, they suppose the Lord to have taken and got rid of for a special purpose only, the *rationale* of the Lord's resurrection is stated in the following terms: He "transfers, so to speak, the *divine life which was in Him* to a new and heavenly sphere, where flesh or sin could not come—the resurrection state." "In *this life of Christ*," the same writer continues, "as risen with Him, our sins all atoned for, *we live*, He Himself being our righteousness, according to His acceptance in the value of His work."

We may first notice in this extract the same unwillingness on this teacher's part to connect the work of atonement with *sin*, as distinguished from *sins*, which marks his exposition of Rom. vi., though surely it is the believer's comfort to know that if he is "clean every whit," it is because the justifying blood of Jesus Christ the Son of God "cleanseth from all *sin*." But to the point of his teaching on the resurrection: his statement is that when both the *life* and *nature* to which sin and judgment "attached" or "applied," is *wholly gone*, the Lord transferred *the divine life* which was in Him to

another sphere, &c. Without repeating what has been said with reference to the manifest opposition of this teaching to the general truth of the Gospel, which rests all its precious promises upon the demonstrative proof that He who was delivered for our offences was also raised again for our justification, I shall here quote only the Lord's words of reassurance to the beloved disciple who had swooned at the divine brightness of His presence, after he had turned to look upon the voice which spake with him, when a suffering prisoner for the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ: "I am He that liveth and *was dead*, and behold *I am alive* for evermore, Amen."* The Living and the Dead is here the same; but if this modern doctrine is to stand this cannot be, since by dying Christ abandoned altogether what He had laid down. As far then as that life is concerned (and this system of interpretation does not give death any further hold upon His *person*) He not only *was* dead but *is dead still!* because the life which He laid down, is according to this view absolutely "left" and "gone."

But He is risen, they affirm, that is, He has transferred the Divine life that was in Him to another sphere. But is any sober minded Christian ready to accept such a "transferred Divine life" as a just equivalent to the person of the risen "Saviour"? When Stephen's eyes were filled with the light of heaven, which shone down to cheer him in his dying faithfulness, it was the "Son of Man" from whom that brightness came. And when the time comes for the holding of the great assize, and the nations are summoned to the bar of truth, it is the "Son of Man" who will preside in that dread day. Is then the "Son of Man" "*less by a life*" above the heavens than He was below them? And is the Man whom God has ordained to be the judge of men † a man in name only, not in nature? If "lifted up" upon the cross to die will He be a stranger to Himself when he ascends His throne? Yet such is the plain effect of our new teaching on this point.

* Rev. i. † Acts xvii. 31.

And has the author of this paper, and have the abettors of his views, reflected on the words which they employ? For what ideas are to be attached to a "life" which, on their shewing, is no better than a servicable tool which its employer can dispense with, after once using it, as a thing quite separable from himself? But if Jesus had sympathies He has them still, for He is, they would themselves acknowledge, certainly the *same*. If He once loved His own He loved and loves them *to the end*. But if so, what was, and is, and *must* be the medium and ministering faculty of such love? *Humanity* must sympathize with men. But can *lifeless* humanity fulfil the truth of that character which the incarnate Son of God sustains as the one Mediator between God and men? For it is not by virtue only of the "divine life which was in Him" that the *man* Christ Jesus has received *that* name and place. And again, is the "human life" of the "man approved of God" to be like our sinful and death-stricken lives, "as water spilled upon the ground"?* And do the thoughts of Jesus perish like our thoughts?† Is He whom God the Father sanctified and sent into the world to be found, as regards his "human life," no better than one of the princes?‡ Let not such questions seem extravagant to any, for assuredly what Jesus thought and hoped and feared and felt, was not peculiar to His "Divine Life" only, but proper to One whose life did not belie His form, and who when in the days of His flesh He offered up prayers and supplications, with strong crying and tears, unto Him who was able to save him from death, was *heard* in that He feared. But salvation from death was not in His case, as it is in ours, the substitution of a new and better life for that which death must reap; it was the triumphant vindication, rather of the purity and excellency, in the estimate of the Righteous Father, of that life which the hand of wickedness had been allowed to ravish from the earth. The resurrection of the Lord is, among other things, proof that the life which for a measured

* 2 Samuel xiv. 14. † Psalm cxlvi. 4. ‡ John x. 34-36; Psalm lxxxii. 6, 7.

season ceased, when by means of death the Son of God destroyed him that had the power of death, was *interrupted* only, not *annulled*. It was laid down, but not abandoned. It was given in willing obedience, into the hands of One who, after accepting it in righteous grace as the alone ransom of His people, restored it with an endless honour to its owner. What Jesus prayed for in His agony He received when He arose, and the life which He dreaded to lose was assuredly the same as that which He received. As it was *God* that proceeded forth from God and came, by human birth, into the world which He made, so is it *Man*, who after having done His Father's business upon earth, is gone up to that glory which He had with Him before the world began.

It is proper to notice in connection with this subject that there are two forms of Antichrist denounced by the Spirit of truth, the one denying that Jesus is *already come* (ἐληλυθότα) in the flesh, the other that He whose distinctive appellation till His kingdom is revealed is "the Comer" is not coming (ἐρχόμενον) in *the flesh*.*

But it is said further by these teachers that "in this life" (the transferred divine life) "of Christ we live." Most christians however find their joy and peace in believing simply that because *Jesus* lives they shall live also, that they have already by God's gift eternal life, and that that life is in His Son; that if they live it is not they but Christ that liveth in them, and that Christ is *Himself* their life, &c. Now it is evident that an important difference exists between apostolic teaching on this point, and the doctrine of *The Present Testimony*, since where Paul and his fellows put Christ *personally* this modern view puts Christ with a divine life only, or (to speak reverently of a topic which true reverence indeed is loath to touch), Christ *minus* the *vital* distinction of His humanity. Consequently it is by a figure of speech merely, that they who believe are either Abraham's seed or heirs according to the promise; for certainly Christ did not receive from Abraham "the divine life which was

* 1 John iv. 2, 3, and 2 John 7.

in Him," and yet by personal description He is Abraham's seed. I do not pause to notice further the incongruity of such teaching with the name and relations of the "last Adam," but revert once more to the emphatic warning of the Apostle as to the forms of Antichristian doctrine which we are taught to shun, and close this part of my task with the simple assertion that living in a transferred divine life of Christ can by no means be accepted as a just expression of the believer's standing. It is neither the same as our life being hidden with Christ in God, nor does it agree with the Scriptural doctrine of living by the faith of the Son of God who, says the Apostle, "loved me and gave Himself for me," who is therefore *Himself* in His unchanged and unchangeable identity, both the dying surety of His chosen, and their everlasting Life. "He that hath the *Son* hath *life*, and he that hath not the *Son of God*, hath not life." And again: "Of *His fulness* have all we received and grace for grace." He is *personally* the source and power of that which characterizes believers as "partakers of the divine nature," and "children of the Living God." To tell christians therefore that they live in the divine life of Christ, is to divert their minds from the Lord's true person, and to substitute a *mental conception* for a living truth; to teach them moreover, (so far as such teaching has any meaning in it) that God's adopted children are no longer *men*, since life in a divine life is no true expression of humanity, whether natural or federal, *i.e.*, whether derived from the first Adam or the last. But such teaching is not more intrinsically empty than it is dangerous also, from its manifest tendency to puff up the fleshly mind, and to intercept faith's view of its proper Object. For a *life*, whether human or divine, is an abstraction when contemplated by itself. Living therefore in a particular life of Christ has a very different sound from that doctrine of life eternal which consists in the knowledge of the true God and Jesus Christ whom He *hath sent*. The joy of God's children is full when by faith they receive the message which reveals to them the *manifested* life which eyes have seen, and hands have handled, "even that

eternal life which was with the Father, and was manifest unto us;"* but a "transferred life" is what neither eye hath seen or hand handled, and of which no mention has been made by those whom Jesus sent to testify of Him. Living in such a life is neither "living in Christ" nor "Christ living in us," both which are scriptural expressions, and convey suited and most precious meanings to the simple christian; for to such Christ is no mental abstraction, but the objective and personal Truth of God, the life of His children and their way and end; the ever blessed portion, therefore, and resting place of faith.

Without attempting to determine the measure of responsibility attaching to the several writers of this school, and regarding him only, for the present, from whose acknowledged papers many of these extracts have been taken, I find myself obliged to conclude sorrowfully but deliberately, that in the instances reviewed in this and the preceding pamphlets, he has incurred the grave charge of introducing into the church of God, or that part of it in which he has occupied so prominent a place as an accepted and highly valued teacher, views and opinions both "divers and strange" respecting the person and work of our Lord Jesus Christ, and therefore dishonouring to that name. Nor is it possible to regard these statements as casual oversights merely, or the inconsiderate language of crude thought; their appearance in so many papers, and not always in the same hand, makes it quite evident that it is *doctrine* and not language only, that we have here to prove.†

For a moment let us turn to contemplate a self-drawn portrait of inspired apostolic zeal and devotedness. Paul had a charge committed to him, and a course to run, and to finish that course with joy was the goal of his ambition, as a minister of God and a divinely furnished

* 1 John i.

† In a letter of this teacher addressed originally to a convert to his views, but copied and circulated by some who considered its reasonings satisfactory, he boldly challenges this issue. Refusing to amend particular expressions until the merits of his doctrine are determined, he thus puts himself upon the judgment of the church of God at large.

champion of the faith. As to the limit of that course, his own words tell us explicitly that it was "to testify the gospel of the grace of God;" while as respects the attainment of his aim, and the fulfilment of his trust, we have the deep-drawn utterance of his calm and solemn joy, in his parting words to his dearly beloved son: "I have *fought* the good fight, I have *finished* the course, I have *kept* the faith." *

But with respect to the special class of sufferings which this writer ascribes to our Lord, and in the delineation of which he has incurred the charge of heresy, it is by his own admission *not contained* in the gospel of the grace of God, † *i.e.*, it lies outside the sphere of apostolic testimony; yet by him, and his more devoted followers, it is contended for as part of "the truth," and opposition to it is avowed to be no better than resistance to the Spirit, and an instigation of the devil. Plainly then the author and persistent maintainer of this view occupies one of two positions: either he has a divine commission and authority to extend the ancient limits of true testimony, or he is an innovator in a guilty sense. But the former of these suppositions is precluded for the true disciple, by the fore-gone declarations of the Spirit: the faith to be contended for has long since been delivered in its completeness to the saints. Any additions therefore to the teaching of God's messengers is not development of divine thought, but a *departure* from the faith.

Nor is this sad but necessary reasoning less applicable to the points of new doctrine which form the subject of this paper. For of the five positions which have been examined, not one receives the slightest countenance from apostolic teaching, while some, as has been shown, contradict the Lord himself, as well as His inspired scribes, in *terms*. Yet denunciatory language has been levelled by their defenders against those who question these positions as strong, or even stronger than those directed against the opposers of the "sufferings." The alterna-

* 2 Tim. iv, 7.

† See the quotation at p. 8 of Mr. Dorman's pamphlet.

tive is fairly and plainly open to the reader, to be determined according to his conscience in the sight of God.

It is needful now to consider for a little space, this strange but sadly interesting phenomenon on its moral side. A richly gifted and once highly honoured servant of Christ, and who holds still a large place in the affectionate remembrance of many who once learned from his lips, in happier days, a sounder gospel than his later writings teach, is found, at the latter end of his career, teaching things which he ought not, and in danger, as a consequence of his far-extended influence, of becoming the founder of a school of doctrine which threatens more and more widely, to diverge from the standard of apostolic testimony. For of the readiness of some at least of his adherents to embrace and give currency to his opinions (with the rash amplifications and recklessness of expression which usually mark those who dispense erroneous teaching at second hand) we have already some alarming proofs. And is there nothing to account for this heavy token of the Lord's displeasure? I feel that such a question is superfluous to the godly and thoughtful reader; yet it may not be amiss for a fool to give his explanation of the stroke from which he is smarting in the company of wiser men. I would say then briefly, first, that there has been an attempt to perfect in the flesh what was begun in the Spirit, and with the usual result; and secondly, that what is now making so many ears to tingle is but an avenging by the Lord of His own neglected warnings to us all.

I. They who, now many years since, began in humility, and spoke trembling in their joy, as the grace and glory of their own standing as new creatures in Christ, together with the true excellency of the church as God's building, dawned on them in the midst of the latter day confusions, refused then to be known by any other designation than what is common to all saints, or to claim any other corporate position than as a part of the widely scattered "brotherhood" of Christ. Acknowledging the oneness of Christ's body, and the common church-mem-

bership, therefore, of every sincere believer, they were bold to assemble as true worshippers of God, with no other license than the words of Him who bought them, and under no other direction than the inspired Scriptures, with the assured presence of Jesus, by the Spirit, with his own.*

To trace the steps by which this catholic simplicity, which sought no further shelter than the great Name in which it boasted, and, for a season found both peace and order, through subjection to God's words, has changed in these latter years into a definite *ecclesiastical system*, might prove a salutary task to one with heart and leisure to accept it, but cannot be attempted here. We have rather to ask ourselves with what eyes He who pastured them so tenderly while yet indeed "a little flock," may be supposed to view the pretensions of "the brethren" under their more modern and self-chosen designations of "a competent witness to the unity of the body of Christ," and a special representative of the "church of God on earth." †

II. That they who judge evil otherwise than in the fear of God, as well as in direct obedience to His word, will sooner or later be self-convicted of the thing they judge, is an unalterable but, alas! easily forgotten maxim of divine government, in the church no less than in the world; ‡ and it will be difficult for any one who has accurate knowledge of the history of "the brethren" since 1844 to escape the conclusion that a divine *Nemesis* has brought on us this latter shame: on us, I say, in the interest of all who by grace are partakers of Christ; since the errors and afflictions of *some* of His living

* Rom. viii. 9, 1 Cor. xii. 13. 2 Cor. iii. 17, Matt. xviii. 20.

† "He is outside the church of God on earth," wrote Mr. D. respecting one who had been excluded for "self-will" by the central board of rule, though unconvicted of any scripturally defined occasion of exclusion, "for he is out of it in London," &c. The first of the above quotations is from the *Present Testimony*; the letter from which the second is taken may be read at length in the lately published tract "Christian obedience not Ecclesiastical Independency."

‡ Rom. ii. 1, Matt. vii. 1—4.

members are, or should be, the confession also and burden of the rest. Who then, I ask, that truly knows the Lord and thinks upon His words, can doubt His angry censure of that habit of casting the most injurious imputations upon blameless men which has of late years acquired for Mr. D. and those who have followed in his wake, so undesirable a notoriety in the church of God? Can he or they believe in their hearts, when closeted with God, that by pronouncing those who in the fear of God demurred to their unscriptural course of discipline, "dishonest," "unfaithful," "insubordinate," "companions of blasphemers," &c., they were giving utterance to the true mind of the Spirit? or do they, again, seriously think that to put away as "leaven," from the "table of the Lord," men at least as sound in faith and practice as themselves, was merely ratifying by an act of obedience what the Lord had already determined by His word?*

While writing thus, I do not wish to overlook the very important fact that there was evinced in many quarters, a practical indifference to the grave doctrinal errors propounded by Mr. Newton, which provoked a just jealousy on the part of those who had really judged those errors, and fully warranted and called for a watchful discrimination in owning or disowning, as sound disciples, those who were open to question on a presumed complicity with what was justly denounced as at variance with fundamental truth.

It is not for desiring to be "set together for the defence of the Gospel," that the exclusive party are to be blamed, but because having professedly this end in view, they sought to attain it by unscriptural means. But unless a man strive lawfully he is not crowned.†

Alas for the swift and sad decay of that once happy fellowship, which has indeed, through God's rich grace,

* As to those of his own party who sometime since, on examination of Mr. D.'s writings on the sufferings of Christ, found themselves obliged to acknowledge their apparent affinity on certain points to those of Mr. Newton on the same subject, they were concisely summarized by the accused as either "knaves or fools."

† 2 Tim. ii. 5.

borne many a pleasant fruit that He has garnered, but which is now become little better than a burden of well merited reproach! The Lord has indeed cast down with the hand the crown of pride; and for beauty there is baldness, and for the attractive loveliness of Christ, which once drew after it so many of His wandering sheep, there has been too generally substituted the repulsive pretentiousness of a self-satisfied purism. The mere sympathy of party threatens to supplant the charity of God; yet while the new commandment seems among us virtually a dead letter, we are like those of old who stayed themselves amiss upon the God of Israel.* For assuredly the climax of our sin is the attempt to charge upon the *Holy Ghost* the responsibility of all that is credited as orthodox and orderly within this model "Church."

And here, lest I sin, I stay my pen. It is difficult to write without a passionate emotion on these things; but anger is not always righteousness, and to fear and take warning is better for men of like passions than to chide.

One word only would I add both of exhortation and encouragement to those who, with hearts still true to Christ, are entangled in the meshes of this system. *Make no attempt to mend what God has broken.* Your need is not correction only, but *deliverance*. Sin cannot be *explained* to God's glory, but must be *confessed*. Remember that "that which hath been is named already, and it is known that it is *man*; neither may he contend with Him that is mightier than he."† God withers our own work that we may turn to *Him*. "The Brethren," as a recognised party in the Church, have ignominiously failed, and we have reason to bless God, amidst our shame, that such has been the case, for the success of a party is but a victory of evil in the Church. But the truth which first united them is the *unchanging truth of God*, and while systems die because withered by His breath, or if they seem to live stand only for a while

* Isaiah xlviii. 2.

† Eccles. vi. 10.

until the time of shaking come, He still abides the living refuge of His saints. The same all gracious Lord who yesterday was known and gloried in as the present strength and comeliness of those who clave to Him and to His sayings, is to-day rebuking and chastening in love. But His place is for ever with His people, and they who can, in simple faith, refuse all other ties than those which bind to Him, will find that He is still "as one that serveth" among them that think upon His Name.

Christians are charged by the spirit to mark two classes of persons in the great house of outward profession, the one for avoidance,* the other for imitation and intimate association.† May that wisdom which is from above, and which is refused to none who, in their conscious lack of it, desire it of God in *faith*, be the guiding instinct of all who in this day of difficulty and delusions seek still to walk with one another in His light.

* Rom. xvi. 17. † Phil. iii. 17.

APPENDIX I.

To meet with palpably erroneous teaching in the midst of what is generally valuable, is always painful ; and still more so is the necessity which the paramount importance of maintaining the authority of scripture sometimes imposes on us, of regarding with distrust publications written, with sincere intention, in the interest of truth. Whether such necessity exists in reference to the periodical from whence the following extracts are made, must be left to the candid judgment of the reader. They are here offered as a further illustration of the mischievous effects of *thcorizing* in the things of God.

In the *Bible Treasury** for August, 1866, it is said with reference to the Lord Jesus, "before He left Gethsemane the *whole* power of Satan was *totally* destroyed."† Then it must be asked (without stopping to speak of his power over others), how came the Lord to *die*? Had Satan

* The publication in which the papers on "The sufferings of Christ" originally appeared.

† Since this paper left my hands I have learnt that the editor of B. T. ascribes the word "totally" to an error of the press : it should, he says, be "morally."

Accepting, as I am bound to do, this emendation, what meaning, I must ask, are we to attach to such a statement? For it is certain that the "power of darkness," distinctly visible in all that passed from the moment when Judas and his followers appeared, attained its *acme* in the crucifixion scene. If the writer only means that when the self-devotion of the Just One had been finally resolved, and He set His face definitively towards Calvary, the Adversary's power was as good as gone, because presently to be destroyed (as it respects God's saints) through his own last effort against Christ, every believer will agree with him. But in suggesting this interpretation I feel by no means sure that I correctly represent the writer's mind.

It is the (as I judge) *false* prominence assigned to Satan at Gethsemane which has given rise to this assertion, and others of a still more questionable kind.

then nothing in the *cross*? Did the Serpent *not* "bruise the heel," as well as tempt the Spirit, of the "woman's seed"? The simple believer who treasures in his heart the Apostle's assurance that it was "by means (not of His anticipative agony in the garden, but) of *death*," that the Deliverer destroyed "him that had the power of death, that is, the devil," may well feel staggered by this statement; which is, however, but a natural fruit of the theory propounded in the writings on "the sufferings of Christ." But here, as in other cases, human ideas contradict the Word of God.

The above quotation from B. T. may perhaps diminish the surprise which would otherwise no doubt be felt by the reader if told that he is no longer to refer expiation or atonement specifically to the death of Christ! Yet such is the doctrine precisely and formally laid down in the September number of the same periodical. The writer's words are these: "Now that which was *properly* expiation and atonement was *not* the pure, however precious, act of Christ's *death*. Of course death was necessary for this, *as for other objects* in the counsels of God, but it is what Jesus went through from and *with* God, when made sin—it is what He suffered for our sins not only in body but *in soul* under divine wrath, that the atonement *depends* on. Many besides Jesus have been crucified, but atonement was in no way wrought then," &c. It has been shewn already how the scriptural doctrine of the *cross* has fared in the hands of one of these later expounders of God's mysteries;* we have now before us a yet riper, and if possible more evil, fruit of the same system of interpretation. Aiming at superior accuracy and (I am most willing to believe) hoping by his words to extol still higher the Lord whom he desires to honour, the writer of this passage has in fact *subverted*, in its essential point, the true gospel of God.

For first it will be admitted that what is here called, the "act of Christ's death" was the act also of *laying down His life*, which the blessed Sufferer affirms was "for His

* See the Appendixes to the pamphlets of W. H. D. and P. F. H.

sheep," or in other words, was the effective atonement for their souls. If the Lord institutes the supper of remembrance it is, as the apostle tells us, that we may shew His *death* until He come. When *reconciliation* or atonement is expressly spoken of in scripture, it is never in connexion with His sufferings specifically, but always with His death; the two are never separated in the Spirit's mind, but the decisive stress is always laid upon the latter. If *propitiation* is treated, it is through faith in His *blood* that it is found. I should rather vex than edify a sober christian reader by multiplying quotations in proof of the established principle, that the very essence of a sacrificial atonement is the death of the accepted victim. My hope is that those who read this paper know too well that it is "in the body of His flesh through *death*" that God has reconciled His chosen to Himself, to be lightly moved to change this solid ground of their confidence and rejoicing in His sight. There is in truth an astounding rashness in this new version of the doctrine of atonement. If Paul states the essentials of the Gospel, he begins by telling us that "Christ *died* for our sins," &c. If another witness, led by the Spirit to remind us also of His suffering, bears his testimony to the same effect, he lets us know that "Christ has once suffered for sins, the Just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being *put to death* in the flesh," &c, that is, he joins inseparably what this writer not only distinguishes, but separates in such a manner as to lay the burden of expiation not on the death which yielded the atoning blood, but on the sufferings which preceded it, thus exactly inverting in its order the inspired testimony of the Word. And so universal is this testimony to death as the true point of expiation that in numerous passages the word "suffer" is manifestly used to represent the dying of the Lord.* The past humiliation of Jesus and His present glory turn equally upon His "*suffering of death.*"†

Nor let us fail to mark the effect of this new teaching

* See Luke xxiv. 26, 46; Acts i. 3; iii. 18, xvii 3; Heb. ix. 25, 26.

† Heb. ii. 7:

on the believer. For the *known*, he is here invited to take the *unknown* in exchange. We know by the testimony of God, that Jesus *did*, and that by so doing He is become, as the Lamb once slain, the rest and peace of His redeemed; but we do *not* know (nor can any but Himself), the mystery of His personal endurance, who thus "poured out His soul unto death." Our hearts are indeed taught to consider Him who "not only suffered many things" before His last act of obedience, but who for the joy set before Him, "endured the *cross*," when God made Him to be sin for us. To meditate with a still increasing love and wonder, the grace of Him who Himself bare our sins in His own body on the tree, is the most heart-enriching species of that fellowship with the Father and with His Son, Jesus Christ, of which the Spirit makes us capable as saints; but the *rest* of our souls is found, not in what He felt, but in what He *did*, when He gave Himself to death as the propitiation for our sins. He is Himself our Peace. And as if to rebuke beforehand the impertinency of our natural imaginings, the Holy Ghost in His chief treatise on the doctrine of expiation omits all mention of what this writer affirms to be the essential point of the work of atonement ("what Jesus went through," &c., "not in body only but in soul," &c.) and grounds the believer's full assurance of faith upon the ever blessed fact that by the will of God we are sanctified "by the offering of the *body* of Jesus Christ once for all," &c. As to what Jesus went through "*with* God, when made sin," it has, I suppose, a meaning in the author's mind, but as I fail entirely to comprehend it I must leave it as it is. Meanwhile let the godly reader rejoice or weep, as it seems best to him, over the statement that the *dying* of the Lamb was indeed necessary, but in no pre-eminent sense: "of course death was necessary for this, *as for other objects* in the counsels of God!" &c. *

* In the December number of B. T., which came into my hands on the eve of the publication of this pamphlet, the editor attempts to justify his position by contrasting it with the "fatal error" of some who make atone-

Teaching of this kind, if received into the soul, will affect its disciples in one of two ways: it will unsettle and distress them through the felt impossibility of attaining an adequate conception of the Lord's personal sufferings, on which atonement according to this view, specifically depends, and hinder indefinitely their true peace (for solid peace cannot rest on what is in itself unknown), or it will puff up the natural imaginations of those who easily adopt it, with the flattering notion that they are enjoying a more elevated species of gospel than that which nourishes the faith of ordinary christians. It is the very nature of Esoteric doctrines to foster spiritual pride; and that the peculiar views of this school are of this description is evident both from the acknowledgment of its leader that not one christian in a hundred apprehends his teaching on the Lord's sufferings, and from the

ment "consist in the bare death and blood of Christ, without the bearing of God's judgment of sin." The bare death and blood of Christ! It is not thus that Scripture speaks of the "Lamb of God" and of the "precious blood of Christ." Polemical zeal is rarely a tender sentiment, and there is little of either reverence or love in words which thus estimate the sacrificial worth of Him who "gave Himself for our sins." But the reader will see clearly that in trying to avoid one kind of "error" he has fallen into another far more "fatal." It argues, no doubt, a low tone of soul whenever christians' ears (if indeed they can ever be) are deaf to the dying cry of their ever blessed Substitute; but to make, as this writer does, the death of God's fore-ordained Lamb available "only because He suffered the forsaking of God for sin," is to "teach otherwise" than the spirit of truth, by stating the doctrine of the atonement in terms quite at variance with the plainest apostolic testimony.

With reference to the laborious effort made in the same number to prove the identity of Mr. Darby's views on the "Sufferings" in 1847 and in 1858, it may be said, first that this act of zeal is rebuked by Mr. D.'s own declaration in the latter year that what he then wrote was not only new to his readers, but in part also to *himself*; and secondly, that even were it as the editor of B. T. avers, it would merely exemplify a very common case. For it is usual (though no doubt blameworthy) for men whose minds are for a time engrossed by one species of evil to overlook another. The germ of Mr. Newton's doctrine is contained in a paper against Irving of a date many years earlier than the matured and formal publication of his views. This attempt will have no other effect than to show to one who weighs dispassionately the merits of this controversy, that as there are certain moral features of resemblance between the opposing systems of Messrs. N. and D., so also are they alike in their historical development. To make it required courage, but hardly of that kind which earns for men the praise of being "valiant for the truth."

commiserating tone in which the writer of the article now under our notice speaks of the dulness of those who find a difficulty in recognizing and accepting these later and (as he imagines) more exact and faithful expositions of the Gospel.

I will borrow, however, from this paper one very just reflection, which shall be given in the writer's own words, with reference to the rash boastfulness of Peter on the eve of his denial of his Master: "Alas! in divine things there is no more certain forerunner of a fall than self-reliance." Even so, my brother, and well it becomes us all to bear this carefully in mind. And now let me ask you to look steadily at least, if not admiringly, at the seven hurtful leaves of vanity which form the crown of doctrinal pretension now distinguishing the party to which you are attached; a party which by some special enchantment of the arch-deceiver continues to suppose itself in a peculiar sense the true representative of the unity of Christ's body, the Church, and a mirror of sound doctrine in a day of blasphemy and rebuke. Your present creed contains, among other forms of doctrine,

1. A Christ who is said to have known the subjective experiences of a Saint ignorant of grace, who suffered wrath and indignation at the hand of God apart from atonement, and who therefore, on this view, could not suffer atoningly for others.

2. A Christ whose "act of death" does "*not properly*" constitute the work of expiation or atonement.

3. A Christ whose "death to sin" is something distinct from that which "was necessary" to the work of atonement (though, as we have seen, they say atonement *depends* on "something else"), and who was, moreover, death-smitten "as Messiah, as a man," apart from his atoning work.

4. A Christ who takes the first Adam's place and dies in it; who is *naturally* responsible for sin, having taken for us that *nature* which as saints *we have to judge*, so that a convicted felon under sentence is considered an appropriate figure of the Word made flesh!

5. A Christ whose work of redemption consists, not in laying down His life and taking it again, but in quitting a life and nature to which sin "attached," or "belonged," or "applied," and having done with it.

6. A Christ now risen, but whose "human life" and proper "Messiahship as the seed of David" are alike "over" and "gone" and "non-existent;" and

7. A Church of Christ which now lives, not in Christ personally as the Scriptures teach, but in the "transferred divine life" of Christ.

Beloved brethren, your present glorying surely "is not good." The Lord whose eyes are as a flame of fire, is examining this new house of your building, and smiting it with many a breach. But He is the refuge and reward of those who hearken to the Spirit's word unto the churches, and hold fast what they have received from Him. Unsanctified *theology* may "take away the heart" no less than "whoredom and new wine;"* and we must have wandered far from Him for such things to happen as now are. May the spirit of gracious supplication be bestowed upon us all, that with our faces towards Zion we may turn again *to Him*. He has suffered much at our hands, and has truly again been wounded in the house of His own friends. Yet He is evermore *the same*, and even now is waiting to restore and comfort such as feel and say that they have sinned.

* Hosea iv, 11, 12.

APPENDIX II.

SINCE the completion of the preceding Appendix, a small paper, extracted and translated from a larger one in French,* has come into my hands ; and as it is being diligently circulated (I presume without the knowledge of its author) among the waverers of his party, as a sufficient refutation of what has been publicly alleged against his peculiar teaching on the sufferings of Christ, it seems proper to notice it briefly in this place.

If therefore, in the following remarks I address myself personally to Mr. D., it is not as holding him responsible for the *appearance* of this paper, but because it is necessary to deal with it on the ground on which his English editor has chosen to place it. Nor can I envy the boldness of any one who, with a knowledge of the present state of this controversy, could venture to put forth this extract for such a purpose, and at such a time.

For the complaint of Mr. D.'s opponents is not, as this paper would imply, that he insists upon the value and importance to the believer of the doctrine of Christ's sympathy, as taught by the Spirit in Hebrews ii. and iv., but that he imputes an *action* to the Father and a *passion* to the Son, of which that Spirit makes no explicit mention either in the Old Testament or the New ; and which, as an unauthenticated theory, rests solely for its support on certain arbitrary assumptions of its author.

Of the four pages of which this apology consists, the first and a part of the second are devoted to the unnecessary but specious task of proving that "there *are* sufferings of Christ, sufferings of infinite value to us,

* "The Non-atoning Sufferings of Christ. Translated from the French of J. N. D." Price One Halfpenny. London : Morrish.

which are not atoning," and of endeavouring to charge on those who impugn his own particular teaching, a neglect of the distinction made in Psalms xxii. and lxix. "between the sufferings on the part of man, and forsaking on the part of God." The extraordinary temerity of those who are responsible for the circulation of this statement at the present juncture will be best appreciated by the reader who has bestowed the most attention on what has really been alleged.

He next turns to consider those who "have raised a special difficulty with respect to His sufferings for the remnant of Israel." And here, after laying broadly down the very questionable dogma that "the sympathies of Christ for the remnant" form "the *principal* subject of the Psalms," and noticing that many Christians are not sufficiently enlightened to accept this principle of interpretation and its consequences, he proceeds: "We should not lead the weak to doubtful disputations. I do not think that what I have said would do this." But what you have said, my brother, is that Christ endured a non-atoning smiting from God, and that he underwent the subjective experiences proper to the remnant when, without the knowledge of forgiveness, they are in anguish at the prospect of God's anger which they have deserved; and this, not as their atoning substitute, but to learn it for them for their future comfort, &c. Now if you really "do not think" that these and other similar notions, such as Christ's non-vicarious sufferings, even on the cross, are "doubtful disputations," yea, doubtful enough to have agitated to their hearts' centre not a few even of your own most attached friends and fellow-labourers, your opinion on this point must surely be regarded as *unique*.

When, in the following section, you say; "*Every christian believes that which I teach*, although all do not apply it to the remnant of Israel," you make an assertion much more bold than wise. For if so, whence the present controversy? But, not to dwell longer on the inconsistency of this strange statement with existing facts, do you indeed regard it as a point of the "common faith," that God smote Christ, in indignation and wrath,

on His own account, as Messiah, as a man, and *apart* from His atoning sacrificial work? Did ever such a view of Christ appear in any christian creed? or that the Holy one "went through" what sinners feel when shut out by a sense of their iniquity from the comfort of God's favour, or, to speak more concisely, that He felt like one with an unhappy conscience before God, and that too apart from His atoning work? But these are specimens of what you *teach*; and stranger than all else, this "wrath on Christ which was not vicarious," a doctrine which when it appeared in Mr. Newton's tracts, you promptly denounced as a "pure unmingled heresy," has now become in your eyes only a part of what "every christian believes."!

To proceed with your paper: it is surely a doctrine dear to every saint that "in all their affliction He was afflicted;" but there are few, I trust, who, when once they comprehend the import of your teaching on these points, will be disposed to accept as true the low view you have given us of the Perfect One, who, though He knew men with a perfect knowledge, had in order to qualify Him as the Comforter of His afflicted people, not only to "suffer, being tempted" at the hands of Satan, but to learn (as their *associate*, not their delivering substitute) how God feels and acts when sinful man is before Him unprotected by redemption. Nor can I believe that the general sense of Christians will adopt your version of the garden scene. We are on holy ground here, and should speak softly if we speak at all; but the prominency you have given to the adversary in that scene, supporting your view by a misplaced quotation,* is to my mind at least, neither scriptural nor true. That Satan could or did intrude on the sacred privacy of God's beloved, as He poured His grief into the bosom of the Father, is an hypothesis which I reject. The perfect sensibilities of Jesus are sufficient to account for His utterances at that solemn crisis without supposing the

* "This is your hour and the power of darkness,"—words spoken by the Lord *after* His agony in the garden.

extraneous stimulus of Satanic pressure. I confess a strong repugnance to such a notion, as not only out of keeping with the scene itself, but as seeming also to derogate from the absolute perfection of the Sufferer.

Spiritual men may differ in their judgment on this point; and when scripture is silent we do well to put forth modestly our own conjectural thoughts: but to adopt, as you have done, this very "doubtful disputation" as the *basis* of so new and strange a theory as you have started, is a proceeding to which, I am inclined to think, not "every christian" will consent.

Presently you ask: "Does any one believe that He did not suffer from the forsaking of His disciples, the treason of Judas, the denial of Peter?" No christian, doubtless; but why ask so irrelevant a question? what have these things in common with His enduring "a non-atoning governmental wrath from *God*," or going through the troubles which men feel who have an afflicted conscience before God? The next paragraph maintains (against some imaginary adversaries, I suppose) that Ps. lxxix and xxii depict sufferings of Christ on the *part of men*, even unto death. No doubt, my brother, but why this waste of zeal? None whose objections to your teaching I have read, has questioned this. The contrast in your writings is not, as you here imply, between men's malice and the forsaking of God, but between what *God* inflicted on His son *apart* from expiation, and that which He laid on Him as the atoning Lamb.

We are now at the last page of this ill-timed paper, and the repetition of sound and undisputed christian doctrine which fills a part of it calls only for a further protest against its irrelevancy to the point in hand: but when the writer, disclaiming "controversy," says, "it seems to me that what I have said will be received by every true christian," that his object is "to present the truth which is found in the word, in such a manner that the weakest christian may see that what I say is scriptural," and that "the church of God ought not to be deprived of the virtue of these *precious facts*," it is necessary to reply that, by his own admission, the third class

of Christ's sufferings is a subject of "difficulty;" that few comparatively, of his readers, comprehend his views; that, so far from being plain and scriptural, they are not only "new to most," but "in many cases new" to his own mind also;* that *none* of this peculiar teaching is comprised in "what we, as christians, have to say to," or that, in other words, *the entire scheme is speculative, and beside the gospel of God.* Now it is my comfort to believe that few christians, strong or weak, will perceive that "facts" relating to the Lord Jesus Christ, of which His own apostles plainly had no cognizance, are "precious" to those whose chief praise must ever be to continue in the things which they have heard.

This paper was written, says its author, "by request of others," and "to calm all anxiety which the suspicion of grave errors might have produced." But we are surely far beyond *suspicion* in this matter? grave errors have been *charged* distinctly on this writer, and on others who partake his views, *not one of which* receives the least direct notice in this tranquillizing paper! And can Mr. D. (or they, rather, who have ventured to circulate this paper in his name) think so poorly of the spiritual *integrity* of his adherents (not to speak now of their spiritual *discernment*) as to suppose that after perusing the open accusations brought by his opponents against what he has distinctly written, they will be satisfied by a reply which evades or ignores their allegation *upon all its points*?

The following sentence contains the only allusion even to these charges which Mr. D. has deigned to make, while it distinctly affirms also his unchanged adhesion to his exceptionable views; "I am not senseless enough to maintain that a pen purely human and feeble may not have expressed itself badly on such subjects, but I see *nothing at all* to retract from the statements themselves."

Now what these statements are, and what kind of doctrinal addition they contribute, by "a pen purely human," to the faith once delivered to the saints, the

* Sufferings, pp. 35, 59.

reader of this and the two preceding pamphlets is, if a believer, competent to judge.

In his closing sentence Mr. D. expresses his belief that his teaching will enable the christian "better to lay hold on the *whole extent* of the sufferings of Christ." In sober sadness I reply, if this be so, a part is better than the whole.

May we, as new born babes, be found desiring, not speculative disquisitions which tend only to a faith-corrupting mysticism, but "the sincere milk of the word, that we may *grow thereby*."—1 *Pct.* ii. 2.

