

THE
GOSPEL MAGAZINE.

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"In doctrine shewing uncorruptness."

"Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees which is Hypocrisy."

To the Editors of the Gospel Magazine.

DEAR SIRS,

AS the doctrine of the ever blessed and glorious Trinity cannot be too often extolled, and as the church of God, particularly at the present moment, having need of line upon line and precept upon precept, I send you another grand attestation in the confirmation thereof, by a late servant of God, who is now in the full blaze and knowledge of the truth thereof. I am yours

Diss, June 9, 1834.

A DEBTOR OF GRACE.

ON THE TRINITY.

THE doctrine of the Trinity is a most adorable mystery, which never would have entered into the thoughts of angels or of men, unless he who best knows his own nature, had declared it in the holy oracles. It is a mystery which reason is so far from having been capable of discovering, if it had not been revealed, that she cannot comprehend it when it is plainly declared: and is obliged to confess, such knowledge is too wonderful for me. It is a mystery which amazes our hearts, overpowers our thoughts, and swallows up our words; in respect to which, logic complains for want of arguments to demonstrate, rhetoric for want of similitudes to illustrate, and grammar for want of terms to express it. But though it is incomprehensible to our reason, it is not incredible to our faith, that "there are Three Persons in the Godhead, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and these Three are One." We tremble at the thoughts of discoursing of this heavenly mystery, our words must be few and well chosen:

O thou who dwellest in light inaccessible, teach us what we shall say concerning thee, and captivate our thoughts to the obedience of thy word. Open to us the scriptures which thou hast written to lead us into truth, and not to lead us into false notions concerning

ourselves and thee, and enable us to take heed unto them as to a light that shineth in a dark place.

That God is One, or that the divine perfections are nowhere to be found but in one individual nature or essence, is a truth which cannot reasonably admit of dispute. Because your foolish hearts were darkened, ye blinded Gentiles, ye had gods many and lords many; but the Lord our God is one Lord, and has solemnly declared, Besides me there is no God. I know not any, and doth not nature itself teach us, that it implies the highest contradiction, that more than one being should be possessed of infinite perfection. Besides, is not the existence of one God sufficient to solve all the appearances in the world; and by consequence, is it not evident that the existence of two, or more gods must be entirely unnecessary? and how incongruous is it to suppose, that a divine nature may exist without any necessity for it, or to talk of a needless deity? But though God is One, yet there are Three Persons in the Godhead? Hold thy peace, vain philosophy; ask not how can such a thing be? Deny the being of a God, and the book of nature is full of inexplicable contradictions. Deny that there are Three Persons in the Godhead, and the book of scriptures is the most self-inconsistent of compositions; but let God be true, let reason be a fool, and every man a liar.

Even in the Old Testament there are many obscure hints of this tremendous mystery when we read, that God created the heavens and the earth; and the Spirit moved on the face of the waters; that God said, Let *us* make man after *our* image; that the Lord rained fire and brimstone from the Lord out of heaven in Sodom's evil day; that the Lord said unto my Lord, Set thou on my right hand; when it is said by Christ, The Spirit of the Lord is upon me—the Spirit of the Lord is upon me, the Lord God and his Spirit has sent me. Who sees not here a plurality of persons supposed—a trinity of persons evidently asserted? But may we not be allowed to think, that the full and clear revelation of this mysterious doctrine was reserved to grace the solemnity of the Mediator's inauguration to the high and saving work? Let us then repair to the banks of Jordan, where the glorious Redeemer condescended to receive the baptism of John. Lo! the Father is not seen in any shape, but heard in a voice of excellent glory; the Holy Ghost is not heard in any voice, but seen in the likeness of a dove, and the Son is both seen in the likeness of a man, and heard in the language of prayer and supplication.

From Christ's baptism let us proceed to our own. This initiating ceremony of our holy religion is performed in the name of the sacred Three; for so is the commandment of our Lord and Saviour, "Go teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Shall we add in corroboration the solemn apostolical benediction pronounced in the name of these Three glorious Persons—The love of the Father,

the grace of the Son, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost be with you all.

Produce your strong reasons, ye that would destroy this everlasting foundation. How is it that ye do not understand that this is a doctrine interwoven in the texture of the bible, and in the whole scheme of our most holy faith? Shall it be pretended that perhaps the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are not all personal names? Whose personality then will you deny? The Father's? Nay, the Father's person is an expression used by an inspired apostle; or is it the personality of the Son that you would call in question? Neither is this pretended. But we much question the personality of the Holy Ghost; What if he be no more than the influential power of God? But if he were not a true and distinct person how could he be grieved? How could he be tempted? How could Ananias and Sapphira lie unto him? How could he be said to search all things, even the deep things of God? How to distribute to every man as he WILL? How could he say, Separate unto me Paul and Barnabas for the work whereunto I have called him? Or, how could he say unto Peter, Go with the messengers of Cornelius, for I have sent thee?

Or if their distinct personality is allowed, will their proper divinity be objected to? But what title, what attributes, what works, what honour is ascribed to the One God even the Father, which not is also ascribed to the Son and Spirit. Let us begin with the Son. He it is whose name is the Lord our Righteousness—the great I am—the true, the great, the mighty, the only wise God, blessed for ever. He it is whose goings forth were of old, even from everlasting: who knows all things; who promises, Lo I am with you always, where two or three are met together in my name, who is the same yesterday, to day, and for ever. Neither are there any works like unto his works. The world was made by him, by the word of his power the world is upheld; and by the price of his blood the world is redeemed. Look unto him and be ye saved all the ends of the earth: for he is God, and there is none else, besides him there is no Saviour. Can any forgive sins but God? Can any judge the world but God? No, blessed Jesus, and these works are thine—Thou thought it not robbery to be equal with God. Even in the days of thy flesh, conscious of thy true divinity, thou didst not reject divine honours; all the angels worship thee; into thy hand have dying martyrs resigned their departing spirits; and when thy wrath is kindled but a little, blessed are all they that put their trust in thee.

Nor can we think less honourably of the third sacred person. He is called God, the Holy, the Eternal Spirit. Whither shall we go from his presence? or how declare all his mighty works—the creator of the world—the inspiration of the prophets—the sanctification of believers, and the resurrection of the dead, are some of his divine performances; and what more can be necessary to con-

vince us that divine honours are his due, than to remark, that in his name we are baptized, and against his person the dreadful unpardonable sin is said to be committed. We presume not to explain the relation of these divine persons to one another, As to the generation of the Son, who shall declare it? nor need we be ashamed to profess our ignorance of the Spirit's procession from the Father and the Son. O may it be our distinguished attainment to cultivate the most blessed correspondence with the Sacred Three, to have access by one Spirit to the Father through the Son. Then may we wait in humble hope that in the day of final consummation, we shall more clearly perceive how the Son is in the Father and the Father in him. In the meanwhile let us adore what we cannot comprehend. Let us never think of this mystery but with reverence, nor ever speak of it but with a serious mind.

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No. IX.

THOUGHTS ON DIVINE SOVEREIGNTY, MORE ESPECIALLY AS IT IS
DISPLAYED IN THE LORD'S DEALINGS WITH HIS OWN FAMILY.

The conclusive Letter.

HAVING briefly reviewed the exercise of the Sovereignty of the Lord in the eternal choice of his people, in their regeneration, calling, and teaching, in their providential allotments, afflictions, chastisements, trials and temptations, I now make a few remarks on the same principle, as it is displayed in *death*, intending in this letter to conclude my observations on Divine Sovereignty.

This great and distinguishing principle is visible in several particulars when the death of the people of God is considered. First, as the time is fixed for their introduction into the world of nature, so also is the *time* of their departure, for their days are determined, the number of their months is with God; he has appointed bounds which they cannot pass, Job xiv. 5. But this time depends wholly in the Sovereignty of the Divine Will; for some, like the child of David, are removed almost as soon as they see the light; while others remain to count seventy or eighty summers before they return to the dust out of which they were taken. The former are accepted, and are exempted from all exercises, save those of momentary disease and dissolution: the latter have to bear the burden and heat of the day, to take up the cross and fight the good fight of faith for many years, before their toils are brought to a close, and they are gathered to their fathers.

The Sovereignty of the Divine Will is also eminently visible in the *manner* of their death. Some, like the good old patriarch Jacob, are gathered with a gentle arm, like flowers of a peculiar fragrance, while others seem to be driven out of this state of existence by the storm and tempest. I might cite the case of Josiah and Eli in proof of this assertion. Without provocation Josiah went out to fight with Pharaoh Nechob, king of Egypt, who came up

against the king of Assyria; and though Pharoah Nechoh, by divine direction, assured Josiah that he had not come out against him, and wished him to retire, yet Josiah would go out to fight with him, and he received a mortal wound in the battle. And after Eli heard that his two sons were slain, and that the ark of God was taken by the Philistines, "he fell off the seat backwards, and his neck brake, and he died." Some too have been stoned, some sawn asunder, and some slain with the sword, Heb. xi. 37. while Enoch "was translated," not from Llandaff to Durham or to Canterbury, but from earth to heaven "that he should not see death;" and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven." I have long considered the cases of Enoch and Elijah as containing proofs, not only of Sovereignty but of great love and care. During the life of the former there was no written revelation, and during the life of the latter the lamp of revelation cast but a dim light in the great doctrine of the resurrection; yet these extraordinary cases shewed that by the operation of divine power the body was capable of existing in another state of being: and though the living saw the bodies of the dead consigned to the grave, still they might conclude that the grave was not to be their final habitation. These instances, with many others which might be taken, shew that sovereignty is displayed as much in the *manners*, as in the *time* of the death, or removal of the covenant people of God.

Other circumstances connected with the death of the people of God must not be omitted; those which contain the account of the Lord's presence in the hour of dissolution. Some have gone to the grave in silence, and appear to have been put to bed in the dark; while others have been highly favoured in their last moments, and have left their dying testimonies to the praise of Jehovah's love and faithfulness. The persons of some above mentioned, may be taken by way of illustration. Josiah was mortally wounded in battle by the archers, and he left no testimony, but—"have me away, for I am sore wounded." Eli died in silence. Abraham left no dying testimony, though he had been so highly honoured by his God; but Jacob, moved by the Holy Ghost, both rejoiced and prophesied; and resting on his great salvation, gathered up his feet into the bed, and bounded to the everlasting hills to join the church triumphant.

The same, or similar remarks, will apply to David, when the closing scene of his life is contrasted with that of his successor. Solomon was highly honoured in early life, and enjoyed much of the divine presence; but his latter days were not so brilliant as his former ones. His "evening time" was not attended with much light, nor was his death bed distinguished by the strains of triumph; yet his book of Ecclesiastes shews that he was neither forgotten nor forsaken by his God. If I may use a figure, during the afternoon of his life there was an eclipse, and he died in the evening; his Saturday night of time was cloudy, but on the Lord's

day morning of eternity, his immortal spirit shone "like the sun in the kingdom of his Father."

The last days of David present a different scene, he was eminently honoured in a short time before his departure, and under the illumination of the Holy Ghost poured forth the language of gratitude and praise. His confidence in the everlasting covenant and his own personal interest in it are beautifully expressed; and though two charges which he gave upon his death bed prove that he was man, yet his dying testimony shews that the strength and joy of faith were his portion when he left his earthly throne to "take possession of the joy." All these things, in their vast variety, "God worketh with man;" and he shews the freeness of his grace, while it is distributed in sovereignty.

But another proof of the great principle of sovereignty has yet to be given, when the dead are to be raised, when they are to hear the voice of their Maker, when the scattered dust of the whole posterity of Adam will be gathered and joined to the spirits that have gone before, that the last decisive sentence may be pronounced, and body and spirit united enter into the state of their eternal destination. But the same sovereignty was visible in Egypt when the Lord put a difference between the Israelites and the Egyptians, will be visible in this transaction. We are informed by the apostle that "the trumpet shall sound and the dead shall be raised;" but, *the dead in Christ shall rise first*. The trumpet shall sound and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, but the wicked dead shall not hear the first signal. This pre eminence shall be confined to the righteous, whose scattered remains shall be called for, and they will answer. Job. xiv. 15. However changed in form, for matter cannot be exterminated by man, or wherever scattered, they shall all be gathered, whether they have been deposited in "the quiet church yard," or have found "an ocean grave."

And what a proof of Almighty care, of Almighty wisdom, and of sovereign power in the preservation of the whole! in bringing forth the same bodies that were worn below, the same that were "bought with a price," those that were included in the redemption of the Saviour; for the identity of the body must be preserved, or the redemption purpose of the Lord Jesus Christ would lose some of its efficacy, nor would he have the actual purchase of his blood, or see the entire "travail of his soul:" besides it would, virtually, be a denial of the resurrection. But the same vile bodies will be raised and fashioned like unto his glorious body. Phil. iii. 21. In that lucid description of the resurrection given by Paul, he assures us that the same body that was sown in corruption will be raised in incorruption; that the same body that was sown a natural body will be raised a spiritual body. Again he observes, that the trumpet shall sound and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, for this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. Nor does he leave the subject without giving

a reason for this mighty procedure; for he says, as "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, neither doth corruption inherit incorruption." The same bodies, therefore, that were redeemed by Christ, and that were laid in the grave *natural* bodies, will be raised *spiritual* bodies, and this can only be effected by the power of him who "shall change our vile body that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the mighty working, whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself." Phil. iii. 21.

But the "change," and "mighty working" mentioned in the above text by the apostle, will not be confined to the sleeping dust of God's elect, it will extend also to the saints who are alive at the second coming of Christ; for though "the dead in Christ shall rise first," yet those who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. 1 Thess. iv. 16, 17. These two, shall exhibit another proof of the sovereignty of divine power, for they shall be taken out of the midst of the living multitudes, and be made the subjects of a "change," that they may change no more. "Behold," says Paul, "I shew you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed; for this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality, and then shall be brought to pass the saying, Death is swallowed up in victory." The same natural bodies of the living saints must be the subjects of this "change," and without disease or the agonies of dissolution, shall, "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye," become "spiritual bodies:" and "this also cometh forth from the Lord of Hosts, who is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working."

Of the *manner* of this extraordinary change I know nothing. *How* this "natural body will become a spiritual body," I cannot explain, any more than I can explain how the Three Divine Persons exist in One Eternal Essence; but the Holy Ghost has declared this shall be effected by the "mighty working" of God. Without pretending, therefore, to explain that which is confessedly beyond my capacity, I will adduce a case or two which may be termed parallel, and which will prove that the same sovereignty of divine power has been displayed before, and the examples have been left on record for our instruction.

The cases alluded to are those of Enoch and Elijah. We read that the latter "went up by a whirlwind into heaven," and that the former "was translated that he should not see death." Without the agony of death, and without entering the dark repository of the grave, they entered heaven. Neither Enoch nor Elijah was to be "the first fruits of them that slept;" this honour was to be reserved for him, who was to be declared the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead. Rom. i. 4. Yet they

exchanged a state of grace for a state of glory, and in their whole persons entered into the joy of their Lord. It is my humble opinion that this was not done without the same "change," which the living saints will experience at the second coming of Christ; because flesh and blood would no more enter heaven *then*, than they can *now*; corruption would not then inherit incorruption, their "natural bodies" must be made "spiritual bodies" to prepare them to dwell in the immediate presence of Jehovah, and to make them capable of that fulness of joy which was to be their eternal portion. I humbly conceive the "change" which these holy men experienced, and the "change" which the living saints will experience are the same; and the Sovereignty of the Divine Will, and the operation of Divine power will be illustriously displayed, for the people of God shall in all things have the pre-eminence. As the dead in Christ will first rise, so also those who are alive in Christ upon the earth shall be first changed. The dead saints raised, and the living saints changed, will be caught up together in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, so that the same sovereignty which shines in the eternal choice and regeneration of the people of God, shall be eminently visible in the change of the living saints and in the resurrection of the dead. "Christ, the first fruits," to be *first*; "afterwards they that are Christ's at his coming:" and when he has delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father,—*"then cometh the end,"* 1 Pet. xv. 20—24. when the myriads of the dead will be collected to witness, not the clamour of the battlefield and the trumpet of victory, nor the approach of the conqueror, who having slaughtered millions is misnamed a hero—but to witness,

A scene that yields
A louder trumpet and more dreadful fields;
The world alarmed, both heaven and earth o'erthrown,
And grasping nature's last tremendous groan;
Death's ancient sceptre broke, the teeming tomb,
The righteous judge—and man's eternal doom."

I remain, dear Sir, with regard,
Thornton Rust, Yorkshire,
July 16, 1834.

A MINISTER OF CHRIST'S
GOSPEL.

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To the Editors of the Gospel Magazine.

MESSRS. EDITORS,

Wishing you to preserve in your valuable arsenal, so as to be handed down to posterity, I send for insertion the valuable remarks of John Bradford, late of Wadham College, Oxford, on a work of Andrew Fuller's, entitled *The Gospel its own Evidence*. Like his brother the Anabaptist Robert Hall, both were similar in their views. They had a sort of religion to live by, and get a livelihood, as great numbers of their cotemporaries have done, and are now

doing, but when brought to the test in a dying hour, they could never meet the swellings of Jordan; they have been put to bed in the dark with the curtains drawn round them. How true are the words of God exemplified, "They that honour me I will honour, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed." The awful day in which we live calls for a resurrection of our old worthies, and I trust the Editor will let one of them here speak again, though dead, in the pages of his favourite work, the Gospel Magazine. He was a most wonderful man in his time, highly gifted with superior talents, which will shew by the *gleanings* which I have here sent from this keen spirited discerner of gospel truths. I am your friend,

GUSTAVES.

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS RESPECTING ANDREW FULLER'S
TREATISE.

IN writing the following remarks on some expressions used by Mr. Fuller in a book entitled, "The Gospel its own Evidence," I shall, at the same time, give the reader some little information of the manner which I became acquainted with Mr. Fuller's principles; and how my mind has been affected by them.

I had not been called by grace much above two years, when I came to reside at Birmingham; and was, at my first coming there, invited to dine with a Mr. Harwood, who seemed to receive me with great kindness and liberality, and at the same time lent me a book written by Mr. Fuller "The Gospel of Christ Worthy of All Acceptation." He made me promise to read this book throughout, and at that time I can truly say, I was wholly unacquainted with any of those disputes in which I have since been engaged. At the time when I was first called, I knew nothing of any particular doctrines, nor religious controversies. All I knew, and all I could say, was chiefly, if not wholly, confined to my own experience. Having made a promise to read this book, which had been so strongly recommended by such a man as Mr. Harwood, I expected to find something about JESUS CHRIST—something that would engage my heart, and stir up my affections towards that dear name, which, I can truly say, was so precious to my soul; but alas! not one word, either of light, or life, or love; but when he came to argue upon that point "That faith was not believing my own Interest in Christ," I never can forget, though it is impossible to describe, what I felt at that time; my heart sunk within me; it seemed to overturn all that the Lord had taught me, and to contradict what I had been preaching about the SPIRIT's work. I laid the book by, determined never to touch it more; but as I was frequently reminded of my promise to read the book through, I would sometimes take it up, then throw it down, and fall upon my knees, crying out, LORD! LORD! let me not be deceived! Oh,

let me not be deceived, nor be the means of deceiving others. At last I returned the book to its owner, and with such expressions of decided disapprobation, that I found him from that time to be one of my most bitter enemies.

When I heard myself branded with the name of an Antinomian, I then begun to read different authors, and as my soul became more and more established in grace, I began to see a little through the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive. I have not only read Mr. Fuller, but other modern authors on the same subject. I have now by me a variety of remarks on the nature and tendency of their principles, which I would collect and publish, but I cannot afford the expence; nor run any risk, for I would not lay any additional burthen on those kind friends among whom I labour.

I am persuaded that many ministers, as well as private Christians, seem to embrace Mr. Fuller's principles without understanding either their nature or their tendency. If the remarks made in the following Letter should be the means of undeceiving such, the end is answered. As to scurrility and abuse, it is what I am so accustomed to receive, that I am prepared to meet it; and am free to own that I hate their principles as much as they can hate mine; though one of them, a Mr. Spencer, a Baptist Minister, at Aulcester, has given it in his own hand-writing, that no devil in hell holds worst sentiments than Mr. Bradford does; but whatever be my sentiments, I see no reason to retract them, and am so far from wishing to disguise them, that I endeavour to express them in the fullest and plainest manner, and that too, without equivocation or mental reservation. And I do consider Mr. Spencer abundantly more honest, in avowing his Socinian principles, than when he pretended to be a Calvinist. I am well convinced that every principle which has a tendency to set aside the *personality*, work, and office of the SPIRIT, will lead to Socinianism, and at last end in Deism. However Tom Paine and Mr. Fuller may, at present look different ways, nevertheless they are as closely tied together, by the cords and bands of carnal reasoning, as ever were Sampson's foxes, when tied tail to tail.

The Examination in our next.

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THE BELIEVER'S INTERCOURSE.

"God will surely visit you."

OUR Dear Lord and Saviour now visits his church and people in the chariot of providence; sometimes in his favourable dispensations when he comes to build up Zion, he appears in his glory, and regards the prayer of the destitute. Thus when the Lord brought Israel out of their Egyptian bondage, with a high hand and outstretched arm, plaguing Egypt, slaying their first born, and at length bringing his church and people through the Red sea, while, at the same time, he overthrew Pharaoh and his host, on which

occasion Israel sang : so likewise, when he turned back their captivity from Babylon, and settled them again in their native land, and caused the city and temple to be rebuilt, and daily sacrifice and oblation to be offered, this was a favourable visit in the chariot of providence. These were gracious visits that the Lord made to his people, riding in the chariot of providence, with the bright side towards her ; and how often doth he visit particular believers, by favourable dispensations of providence, when they expected nothing but death and destruction. He has interposed mercifully for their deliverance, and made them sing with David, " I was brought low, and he helped me." He redeemeth my life from destruction, and crowneth me with loving kindness and tender mercy."

Sometimes the dark side of providence appears in gloomy and wrathlike dispensations, as when he sets up the right hand of the cruel enemy over them, gives them like " sheep to the slaughter, to be killed all the day long : " When he breaks them with breach upon breach, and rushes upon them like a giant ; " as in the case of Job : when he cast the three children into a fiery furnace, and Daniel into the lions den. These, and the like dispensations, have a very black and dismal aspect ; and in this case the church and people of God are ready to cry out with Jacob, " All these things are against us." And yet the black chariot of providence is bottomed and lined with love, grace, and mercy, as appeared in the case of Job, Daniel, the three children, and Jacob ; and so the scriptures come to be fulfilled, that " all the ways of the Lord are mercy and peace to them that love him," " All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."

But I do not speak so much of the visits that the Lord Christ makes unto his people in the chariot of providence, as the visits he makes to them in the chariot of the gospel revelation, and ordinances of his appointment, such as word, sacrament, prayer, meditation, Christian conference, and the like, which are so many happy places, in which the Bridegroom comes and visits his bride, manifesting forth his glory to her, spreading his banner of love over her. Now, as to the visits that Christ makes to his bride of this kind, in the chariot of the gospel revelation, there are these few things I would remark concerning them.

The first visit Christ makes is in the day of conversion, when he draws by the veils of ignorance, unbelief, error, and prejudice, and manifests himself in his divine glory, fulness, suitableness, and excellency, in such a way as ravishes the heart with love and loveliness. This is called the time of espousals, because then it is that the consent of the bride is gained, and her heart drawn after the bridegroom with the irresistible cords of victorious love. Of this the Lord puts Israel in mind, when he says, " I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals, when

thou wentest after me in the wilderness, in a land that was not sown."

The heart of the sinner being thus caught with the glory of Christ, he, for holy and wise ends, withdraws commonly his sensible presence, and leaves with a promise of his returning in due time; "I will not leave you comfortless; I will come to you;" "He that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and manifest myself unto him," "I will see you again, and your hearts shall rejoice."

Christ is many times present with his people, when they are not aware of it. An instance of this we have in the case of Jacob. The Lord there appears to him in a dream, and when he awakes, he says, "Surely the Lord is in this place, and I knew it not;" and Mary, she is weeping, and saying, "They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him." She was speaking to Christ himself, but knew not that it was Christ, but supposing him to be the gardener, said to him, "Sir, if thou hast borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away." So we see the same in the case of the disciples going to Emmaus, Christ was conversing with them, and opening unto them the scriptures, reproving them for their unbelief; and yet they did not know that it was he, until, upon reflection, they say one to another, "Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked with us?"

Every visit the Lord makes unto his people is an assured pledge of after visits, until he comes to consummate the marriage at the end of day; for, as we are told, "His going forth is prepared as the morning." As the break of day is a pledge of the sun's rising, and his rising is a pledge of his ascending to the meridian or mid-day; so every visit that Christ makes to the soul makes way for further discoveries of his glory, until the day of glory break, and all shadows for ever flee away.

The Lord loves sometimes to surprise the soul with his visits, he comes even at midnight, when little looking for him, "Or ever I was aware, my soul made me like chariots of Amminadib;" Zion under a dark cloud of desertion says, "The Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me:" But, all on a sudden the Lord comes, and says, "Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee."

These sensible surprising visits of Christ, are but rare, and of a short continuance: they are like a bright blink of the sun from under the cloud, which in a little is presently overcast with a new cloud, like that of the disciples upon Mount Tabor, at Christ's transfiguration, they saw his countenance to shine as the sun, his raiment white as the light, and a voice saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased:" but ere ever they were aware, a

dark cloud intercept all. So it is with the christian while here, in a state of imperfection, and is not able to bear a constant fellowship with the Bridegroom, I mean bright sensible manifestations, the old bottles cannot bear much of that new wine. Paul himself was in danger of being lifted up with pride, through abundance of manifestations; and therefore a messenger of Satan was sent to buffet him. By this way the souls longs for heaven, saying, "I desire to depart, and be with Jesus, which is best of all."

It is thought, that long twenty years intervened between Jacob's Bethel visit, and his visit he got. When the Lord appeared unto him, saying, "I am the God of Bethel, where thou anointedst the pillar, and thou vowest a vow, unto me." It is no strange thing for the saints to be walking in darkness, and seeing no light: and, in this case, they are ready to cry with David, "How long, how long wilt thou hide thy face from me," "Where are thy former loving kindnesses," "Hath God forgotten to be gracious? will he be favourable no more?" The reason of this withdrawing is either some idol harboured, or to hide pride from their eyes, or to quicken the soul's longing after himself, or to teach and train them up unto a life of faith upon the promise; for here "we walk by faith, and not by sight."

Although the Lord may be long absent, yet he will return at length, when his own time comes, which is best both for his glory and our good. He will not contend for ever, neither will he be always wrath, lest the spirit of his people should fail within them, "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning," "Thy Maker is thine Husband. For a small moment have I forsaken thee, and in a little wrath have I hid my face from thee for a moment: but with great mercy will I gather thee, and with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer."

Let him come when he will, or how he will, he is welcome; for he brings all good with him. He brings his Father with him, "My Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." He brings the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, along with him; and then the soul is anointed as with fresh oil, which makes the heart glad, and the countenance to shine. He bring peace and joy with him, a "peace that passes all understanding, a joy that is unspeakable, and full of glory." He brings victory over sin, Satan, death, and hell, along with him; and, in a word, he brings pardon of sin, and all manner of salvation, along with him. And therefore, I say, let him come when or how he will he is welcome.

His last visit will be to fetch his bride home to himself, which he is now preparing for reception, for her to enter into the joy of his Lord.

THE FALL AND RISE OF MAN.

And the Lord God commanded the man saying, of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat, but of the tree of Knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it, for in the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die. Gen. ii. 16, 17.

As in Adam all die, even so in Christ, shall all be made alive. 1 Cor. xv. 22.

It is the sacred volume only that affords us the means of knowing the true state and standing of man before and after his fall. On reading Genesis ii. we find that man was created upright with a free will to do good or evil, and life and death set before him as the consequence of either.

The commandment given to Adam was previous to the Lord God making the woman, who was bone of Adam's bone, and flesh of his flesh; and not until after the woman was made did the fall of Adam occur, he therefore was her head and representative.

Adam no doubt with Eve, were surprisingly beautiful, majestic, attractive and agreeable, even so that the brute creation honoured them with their willing presence without fear, and to whom Adam in his wisdom, gave names according to their several qualities or sagacious dispositions, which were naturally created in them without any savage inclination or destructive intention; but when Adam fell all creation fell with him, and in consequence forsook that once noble person under whose shadow and company they were so happy to abide, forsook I say, as the awful inventor of the destruction of himself and them, by his transgression. No doubt Eve was Adam's delight and his bosom friend, and on whom the keenest affections of his soul were placed, inasmuch as his very life was bound up in her, and they were not separated in their lives nor divided in their death.

It is said that the serpent was more subtle than all the beasts of the field, which the Lord God had made, and he framed by craft the work of destruction; knowing the commandment of God to the man, he set about this work by attacking the woman as the weaker vessel, and by whom an easy accomplishment could be effected to overthrow the man, he being altogether too equal to the temptation, and impossible to be beguiled by the serpent, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression, and became the instrument of the man's destruction, of which he was not deceived.

The serpent seems to have been the most familiar, as well as the wisest of all the beasts of the field, and his wisdom to exceed all conception, having also the power of speech, and under his wisdom and crooked invention got access to the mind of Eve, so as to carry her away from her integrity.

Many notions and false conceptions are entertained concerning this serpent, some or most people imagine, that it was what is

most commonly termed the devil, or Lucifer, a fallen angel, but whatever man may conceive of it, God has not said it was so, therefore they may thank themselves for imbibing a deception. God created man upright with powers equal to a law, which he gave him, and set up a creature of deep wisdom to try his stability by, this I think can be well proved if the history is attentively read; and it is the duty of every Christian to attend to the voice of God and not the voice of man.

For the serpent's suggestion to the woman's seed, Gen. iii. 2. here he endeavoured to infuse into the mind of the woman that sin which is the root of every other sin, unbelief of God's word, so as to doubt whether he really had said so or not. "And he said unto the woman, yea, hath God said ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden." This was his crafty way of throwing the woman off her guard, as he seems to lay great emphasis upon the word "every tree," that is without exception; herein she answered him rightly, pointing out the exception. The serpent failing in this hatched a falsity, as in verse 4. and said "Ye shall not surely die." He then excited a spirit of curiosity, knowing that this would suit the woman's taste, said "For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil," thereby shewing that this was the reason why they were prohibited from eating of the tree, and that their forbearance kept them in blindness and ignorance of that wonderful knowledge which was not only calculated to exalt them, but to make known all that God himself knew.

Eve having listened to the temptation, and the proposed terms seeming so easy and bid so fair for such a glorious event, was immediately caught away with the temptation, and resolved upon the trial to prove the effect, by resisting the commandment and slighting the penalty in the violation of the law, was for having her eyes immediately opened to see and receive that wisdom, and thereby became the unhappy object of sin and death, by eating of the tree of knowledge, the fruit of temptation, and communicating it to her husband who also did eat; and the eyes of them both were opened, as it is stated: "And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof and did eat, and gave also to her husband and he did eat: and the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves aprons." Thus we see that in the temptation they fell into sin, not being able to withstand the trial: "Then when lust was conceived, it brought forth sin; and sin when it was finished, brought forth death," James i. 15. But the man was not deceived in his act, but the woman, read Paul to Timothy, first epistle, ii. 14, 15. "And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression. Notwithstanding she shall be saved in child-

bearing ; if they continue in faith and charity and holiness, with sobriety." Saved by faith in the promised seed, having the love of God shed abroad in the heart by the power of the Holy Spirit ; and as they had lost all holiness in themselves, they were to obtain a stedfast immoveable righteousness, which would make them acceptable to God for ever in the promised seed, and in him were to have a sober, steady, and desirable faith in God's promise of mercy, and which they would never have known or enquired into unless they had forfeited God's favour in breaking his law and being made sensible of their sin : having done so, God in their awful case gloriously displayed his mercy, being determined to have a seed to serve him, and get himself the glory of their salvation, so that when sin abounded grace did much more abound.

The man and woman thus having sinned, and their eyes opened in consequence, found to their cost that they stood naked to the vengeance of God, with a guilty conscience, covered with darkness, shame, and despair, endeavoured to hide themselves from the presence of God, fearing the horrible threatenings of the most terrific tempest with horror, endeavoured to hide themselves and instead of becoming, as they were led to believe, to a higher order of beings, fell into the dreadful dilemma of devils without any means of escape, the good that they once knew was now exchanged for evil, and they came awfully to know both good and evil. But God who is rich in mercy for his great love wherewith he loved them, and as nothing was or is too hard for him turned even the fall of man to his own glory, in man's complete recovery, raising him up and placing him beyond a relapse, and not trusting him a second time with his own power, but secured him in one who could never fall—one who could never be carried away with temptation, nor would hide himself for shame, though rocks might rend and graves might open, and with storm and tempest not dismayed. Thus was man raised up to sit in heavenly places, or upon heavenly things set on in Christ, God having had a remedy at hand, which being found only in himself, instead of restoring man to a state of created happiness, has raised him up to a state of increased blessedness, even to be a partaker of divine nature in Christ, the promised seed, making man more like himself, he, God, being not only natural but spiritual Father, and saved man at the same place wherein their destruction came, by the woman, who should bruise the serpent's head, leaving an eternal enmity between her seed and the seed of the serpent ; so God saved the man through the woman, by whose means he fell, and gave the woman faith to conceive the promised seed, to that end that he might be saved through the woman.

We read that a tree was the instrument of destruction, and its fruit death, so also we find that a tree was the instrument of salvation, and its fruit life ; the first laying man open to revenge for sin, the second defending him from it by covering all his sin ; and as even the touch of one was forbidden, the very leaves of the

other are to be gathered for healing, holding forth in a figure the pure words of the Lord for healing the souls, the saints being built upon the doctrine of the apostles and prophets, and they lay as so many stones in the foundation of the temple of God, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone. As the sin of Adam produced pain, sorrow, and death, on the other hand the righteousness of Christ produces holiness, joy, and everlasting life; and not only that, but fruit for the church to live upon, and leaves to heal their wounds; of this first there is a continual supply, for upon Christ the tree of Life in the midst of the garden of God, grew both apostles and prophets, and the scriptures; one to feed the church, the other to comfort it; not so with the fruit of the tree of Knowledge, of good and evil: for proof of the above read Rev. xxii. 2.

In further proceeding with this subject, it will be well to consider that God in himself is a Triune being, as the Three in One Jehovah, and has revealed himself under three distinct characters. How he exists in this three-fold union it is not in the wisdom of any creature to define; but so he has described himself, and the three covenant characters he has been pleased to use, are Father, Word and Spirit, 1 John i. 2, 3. And in the beginning it is said, "Let us make man in our likeness, in our own image;" and after man's fall it is said, "Behold the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil." This mysterious relation is discovered in Christ, who is not only man but God; and that in order to make a sufficient atonement for man, who was created in the image of God, and to answer all the requirement of law and justice, Adam being unable to make any atonement, or do any righteous act to merit the favor of God, the requirements of justice being that of an infinite nature, Adam's iniquity being great and his sin infinite; Job. xxii. 5. "Is not thy wickedness great and thy sin infinite?" No finite atonement could satisfy justice, man had become indebted to, or fulfil the law he had broken, the law being spiritual, but Adam was carnal and sold under sin; infinite justice could not be satisfied with so short a payment, nor could justice have received satisfaction in Adam's eternal damnation; and as God could not go without satisfaction, and that in a way consistent with his own perfections, some one must give it; nor could any atonement be received from one unequal to himself, therefore the sword awoke against the man—God's equal, God's fellow, God's shepherd, who was held accountable for the sheep.

In reading Genesis iii. we find that the woman was not held accountable for the sin, though it began and was finished in her, but the man, and on whose account the ground was cursed, he being the woman's head and representative, was the object to suffer on her account; and having taken her sin knowingly upon himself was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression; nor was Christ deceived in taking upon him the sin of the

church. Adam did not put away his wife, nor complain, when sentence of death was passed upon him; nor did Christ put away his bride or complain when he was led as a Lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before his shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth.

God said to Adam that he should get his bread by the sweat of his brow until he returned to the ground, for saith he, "dust thou art and to dust thou must return," and sent him forth from the Garden of Eden to till the ground. They were driven out of paradise into the wide world, the ground was to bring forth thorns and briars to the man: here he was also a figure of the man Christ Jesus in his sufferings for the church, turned out as it were from house and home, and nowhere to lay his blessed head; from the manger to the cross he was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.

As Adam did not put away his wife for her folly, so Christ will not put away his bride; he hateth putting away, and when he shall take her home to himself, there is to be a glorious feast prepared for her, called the marriage supper of the Lamb, her days of mourning having ended, Rev. xix. 9: after which there will be no more going out, but she shall ever be with the Lord, and until then she is preparing or getting herself ready, she is all glorious within, and her clothing is of wrought gold, and being espoused to Christ, her heavenly husband, she shall be brought to him in raiment of fine needle work.

Man was created, male and female, the woman being bone of the man's bone, and flesh of his flesh, the woman was made of the man, but in the second Adam we find the man made of a woman, and that in all points like unto his brethren, and made under the law, to redeem those that were under it; but as to his Godhead, without beginning or end of days, or set up and appointed in the wisdom of God, as the Redeemer of the church from everlasting, therefore his salvation is like himself, an everlasting one, the church inheriting all things through and in him, as her lawful head and husband, as it pleased the Father that all fulness should dwell, out of him, she receives of that fulness and grace for grace, and it being planned in him, the Spirit of God, hands it out to the church. What a sweet bait is Christ in the gospel net, spread for sinners by the fisher's of men. O reader, may it be thy happy portion to taste and see that the Lord is good.

After God had made coats of skins to clothe Adam and his wife, which figures forth the sacrifice of Christ's body, and his durable righteousness to clothe; the Lord God said, "Behold the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil. And now, lest he should put forth his hand and take also of the tree of Life, and eat, and live for ever: therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. So he drove out the man: and he placed at the east end of the garden

of Eden cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of Life." By the deeds of the law no flesh shall be justified. These cherubims appear to me to signify law and justice with a drawn sword, flaming with vengeance against sin, keeping the way of the tree of Life, and stood in the way of all attempts to obtain salvation by the law, justice requiring man's blood without sin, for without the shedding of blood there is no remission; it also shews that the way to God is through the rent vail of Christ's flesh. God, in his threefold character of Father, Word, and Spirit engaged herein, on behalf of fallen man, therefore the Word took upon him or became flesh. We see the words fulfilled, "behold the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil as God;" and as knowing evil, and being evil, are very different, Christ became a pure offering for man, and although made in the likeness of sinful flesh, in him was found no sin, no not even a spot or blemish, and although perfect man, upheld all things by the word of his power, that is by his Godhead; for the head of Christ is God, against whose human nature justice was to wreak his vengeance, and the sword bid to awake against him, as in Isaiah, "Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord: smite the shepherd and the sheep shall be scattered, and I will lay mine hand upon the little ones."

The sword of justice turned every way, and Christ atoned for sin every way; he not only fulfilled the law but magnified it, and made it honourable; in the garden he was met by justice who laid hands upon the man, and in his awful grasp made him sweat great drops of blood, falling to the ground; as also he was made to till the ground, to wear the thorns it produced, and in the end to suffer for sin in his own body on the tree. What a tree of living fruit was this; there the sword of justice took the last drop of his hearts' blood and drenched him clear of the whole; there he finished the transgression of his people and made an end of sin, and brought in an everlasting righteousness, and his people are made the righteousness of God in him, he thought it no robbery to be equal with God; but it would have been robbery in the first Adam to be made an equal with God but in Christ: how inconceivably great is the righteousness of the church in him, and this will shew to you how inconceivably great must be the sin for which he atoned.

Reader art thou, for thyself, sensible, by the teaching of God's Spirit, if thou art a believer, how great the debt of guilt is, he satisfied justice on thy account, look at it: it was God's mercy in giving a Saviour for a ransom, who was a man born indeed to trouble, born in the very bowels of sin, and conceived in the midst of iniquity, that he might be, even in his birth, a pure sin-offering to bear the sins of many. Here the miraculous power of God brought forth a clean thing out of an unclean: how deep thy fall, fellow sinner, and how high the right-

cousness of Jesus lifts thee up. Here is a tree of life indeed, and thou mayest sing of him as the church did in Songs ii. 3. "As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons. I sat down under his shadow, and his fruit was sweet to my taste. In me, said the Lord, is thy fruit found." And again,—thus is all the fruit to take away thy sin. Now thou mayest put forth the hand of faith and take of the tree of Life, and live for ever: there is no sin, or sorrow, or death in Jesus. By this, therefore, shall the iniquity of Jacob be purged, and this is all the fruit to take away his sin. Isaiah xxvii. 9. "To him that that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of Life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God." Rev. ii. 7. Blessed then is he that hungereth and thirsteth after righteousness, for he shall be filled, both in time and beyond the grave. On either side of the river there is the tree of Life, bearing twelve manner of fruits, yielding it every month, and the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations; yes, on both sides of the river this tree of Life stands in time and eternity, in the church below and in the church triumphant above; bearing twelve manner of fruit, being the doctrine of the twelve apostles to feed the church with, which is the foundation of the church's faith, and like the gates of Jerusalem, which were twelve, and every several gate of one pearl; so there is one Lord, one faith, and one salvation. Rev. xxi. 19—21. Their doctrine one, being Christ, the pearl of great price, as Paul saith, 1 Cor. i. 23. "We preach Christ crucified;" and again, Acts xiii. 38. "Through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins." This is the fruit of Christ's death, and the church is made the happy receiver of it by right in him, see Rev. xxii. 14. "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of Life, and may enter in through the gate into the city."

The leaves of this tree of Life are very different from those adopted by Adam to hide his shame: as these heal man's wounds which he has received through the fall, and when received and applied, they are good news and glad tidings, with a complete cure; they heal all diseases, giving the conscience peace with God.

Having attempted to shew, in a short way, as far as my small capacity will allow, the fall of man from his created happiness, and his rise to an uncreated blessedness in Christ, I must leave you, my dear reader, to improve and add to it what is lacking, and rejoice in our fixed state in Jesus, the Rock of Eternal Ages, eternally secure; and although we in a state of time, fall back and fall down, we never can fall off the rock nor fall away.

Art thou, my reader, thus experimentally fixed upon this Rock of Ages, if so, come let us sing with Hannah, My soul doth magnify the Lord and my Spirit rejoices in God my Saviour; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered

me with the robe of righteousness; and conclude with that grand chorus—Now unto him that loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and made us kings and priests to God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

Islington, Aug. 1834.

JOHN STYLE.

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ANSWER TO THE QUESTION OF A. H. ON JUSTIFICATION.

To the Editors of the Gospel Magazine.

MESSRS. EDITORS,

A QUESTION, as to what was that distinction to be marked between justification by grace and justification by faith, was asked in your March number. Now what might have been your worthy correspondent's motives for asking that question, it is impossible for me to say: it might have been for information, or it might be he was merely stirring up the pure minds of your readers by way of remembrance; for surely there has much good been derived ere now by the simply asking of a question. But let our friend A. H. have what motives he may in this matter, it can make but little difference; seeing the question is a most important one, and the subject to which it calls our attention of the most enlivening description. Justification is at once a grand, a sublime, a heart-cheering doctrine; and if Jehovah's covenant acts of grace would bear comparison, the one with the other, we should be apt to say, that of justification far surpasses in value all the rest. Indeed it is a great thing for poor sinners to be justified in the sight of a holy God; to have a righteousness commensurate with the standard of Jehovah.

Among mankind there is frequently a justifying of each other in their conduct; and this they may do, either privately in their own minds, or before the individual's face, or in the face of the public at large. Should the man who thus undertakes to justify another in his doings, be a man of a reprobate mind, it would be no difficulty for him to justify the most immoral act, because any species of immorality would come up to his standard; but if he be a man of high moral worth, the standard of his own mind is raised and the value of his justifying the deeds of another is raised accordingly. The standard of purity in the mind of the spiritual man being inconceivably higher than that of the natural man, the value of the deed is, consequently, enhanced in proportion. Yet what is man at his best estate? What is all this compared with the Lord justifying of his chosen family? What value shall we attach to that great act of Jehovah in justifying of his people? We cannot set a value thereon; it is beyond our estimate. The powers of our soul will never be able to comprehend its fullness; beside there is this difference between one man justifying of his fellow in a deed which he does, and Jehovah's justifying of his people; if I justify another it is the deed which the rather I justify, and the man in doing of the

deed ; but with the Lord it is vastly different, he justifies his people in their persons, by removing away their filthy doings and imparting his righteousness unto them.

Thus justification, spiritually considered, is the imputing to a poor sinner the righteous acts of another ; so then the poor sinner's state becomes elevated in proportion to the value of that righteousness imputed to him. And it is not a little striking, that while the Lord says, the very heavens are not clean in his sight, and his angels he chargeth with folly, yet, speaking of his church, in her justified state, he declares *she shall be called the Lord our righteousness*. For our Lord Jesus Christ, whose righteousness it is that is imputed to us, he being God and man in one person, the very Emanuel, God in our nature, his righteousness becomes a suitable righteousness for us, capable of being attached to our persons, whilst the value, and the glory of that righteousness, is that which Deity hath stamped upon it.

Adam's righteousness was that of a man ; angels are but creatures, whilst in Christ we possess all the righteousness of God. Nor had we to wait until he took on him our nature, wherein to work out our righteousness for us, inasmuch as there could not possibly be any distrust between the persons of the Trinity : purity could not mistrust purity, neither could the unchangeable God scruple to take his own word. But our Lord Christ engaging in covenant, before the foundations of the earth were laid, to take on him, in due time, our nature, and in it to work out a righteousness for us the pledge was taken, and the righteousness attached to us, even before it was wrought out.

Now to follow up this sweet train of argument we would shew, that justification, let it be designated how it may, or in whatever light scripture may set it forth, still it is justification by grace. And this will more plainly appear, if we follow our argument still closer to the subject. Can there be a possibility of a wicked man meriting the removal of his own wicked deeds, and the attachment of the righteous doings of another to his person in the place of those unholy deeds in such manner removed ? For any man to say, (as many in our time do) that it is possible he must either be speaking a wilful falsehood, or his intellects must be deranged. What ! a wicked man to merit the imputation of another's righteousness. It is monstrous ; not merely error, but folly so to talk ; an absurdity ; an imposition upon the rational faculties of man.

Your correspondent hath well said, Sirs, that salvation is all of grace ; for if justification be entirely of grace, salvation as a whole, must be of grace also, for this plain reason ; if wicked men could not merit the imputation of Christ's righteousness, neither could they merit in any way the glory and the happiness attached to the possession of that righteousness ; and if they could not merit these neither could they be chosen, set apart, or called thereto, according to any merit of their own, but all must be of grace.

Having laid this down as a data, that we were everlastingly justified in the purposes of God, according to the good pleasure of his will; we shall now proceed to notice what is the meaning of the Holy Ghost, when he speaks of our being justified by faith. Scripture is ever the best interpreter of scripture, and as our Lord so frequently illustrated his doctrine by parables, there will be no harm, nay, we shall find much good, in quoting one of those parables as matter of illustration for our present subject.

We are told that two men went up unto the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, the other a Publican. The Pharisee is not painted in his blackest colours; his righteousness, such as it was, he acknowledged to be an imparted righteousness—the gift of God. But here he sought for justification, not in the imputed righteousness of Jesus, but in that affable, kind, and pious disposition which he acknowledges was imparted unto him; and in this thing he failed, he found not that justification which he thus unscripturally sought after; he sought it, but he found it not, because he sought it by the works of the law, and not by faith in the righteousness of Jesus; by which thing we see that imparted gifts, however good, do not justify our souls before God, but the imputed righteousness of Christ alone can justify us in his sight, and this received by faith in the heart is the only thing that can justify us in the court of our own conscience.

In the character of the Publican we see all the Lord's family, when called by divine grace, a chosen vessel of mercy before all worlds, redeemed, yea justified in Christ, and altogether precious in his sight. The Holy Spirit calls and awakens him from his sleep of sin and death; shews him his lost state, works in him contrition for sin, draws him, irresistably draws him to the temple, there to pour out his soul before God, but he comes up a trembling sinner. Ask him, Does he justify himself? No, saith he, I could justify the Lord in cutting me off for ever, but as for justifying myself, how can a sinner like me be justified? No; I am an unjust man. He smites upon his breast—he casts his eyes to the earth, for he dares not look up so much as to heaven, he is so guilty; with a broken heart he ejaculates—“Lord be merciful to me a *sinner*!” Well, the Lord was merciful, for Jesus himself tells us, that he went down to his house justified. And let me ask, Was it his prayer that justified him? That prayer, however sincere, with all the accompaniments of contrition and sorrow of soul, could not justify him before God any more than the Pharisee's imparted gifts; and if this man's prayer would justify him even in his own conscience, it follows so might the Pharisee's good deeds. And indeed if he could be justified in his conscience as before God, merely by the offering up of a prayer, there needed no application of the righteousness of Christ to his soul, neither does it mean simply, that immanent act of justification; because he was from all eternity justified before God, in the righteousness of his Redeemer, as much so before he

came to the temple as he was after. Just the same when he felt himself a condemned sinner, as when by precious faith he could read his title clear to mansions in the skies. But was he justified in his own conscience before he came, or when he had come to the temple? Had the blood of sprinkling been applied with power? Could he see himself a redeemed sinner, or had he been experimentally clad in the righteousness of his Redeemer. No. But though with unutterable groans, yet in faith, and in the Spirit he cries—Lord be merciful! and ere he returned to his home the Lord was merciful, for he sealed to him the pardon of his sins, and enabled him by faith, heaven descended faith, to fly to Christ, not only for succour, but for that justification which he could not find in himself. And this experimentally clothing him in the righteousness of Christ is what the Holy Ghost calls justification by faith. It is all of grace as you will see, yet is it necessary to distinguish between Jehovah's eternal decree of justification, and the application of the matter of that justification, the righteousness of Christ, to our souls. Thus as it proceeds immediately from the covenant love of God, it is emphatically styled justification by grace; but as it is received in our hearts, or manifestively made known, it is called justification by faith from the method by which it is received.

But, Sirs, in turning again to your correspondent's question, I find I have not as yet, answered it so satisfactorily as I had thought. A. H. says, he has frequently been struck, whilst reading the holy scriptures, more especially Paul's epistles, to find that salvation is represented to be by grace, and justification by faith, with but one or two exceptions. How should there be only one exception to this, that is sufficient, the analogy of scripture must be maintained: but with all due deference to our brother, I must contend that justification by grace is as frequently spoken of as justification by faith. Indeed this must be an oversight of his, for in the latter part of the question, he avers his firm belief that justification is wholly of grace; and if the same is not so constantly set forth in holy scripture, how came his soul to be established in that belief.

If A. H. or any of your readers, will turn to Rom. iii. 22—26, they will there see that justification is wholly of grace; and the Lord the Spirit makes to his people a declaration of the righteousness which they have in Christ, and the reception of this declaration by precious faith operating in the heart, is called justification by faith. The apostle in this place clearly marks the distinction, and yet sheweth that salvation is all one, and all of grace. And this distinction may be traced out by the experience of the children of God as long as they are in this world. Jehovah is unchangeable, he never did nor ever will see iniquity in his people; Christ hath wrought out a righteousness, and in this before God we are eternally clad; yet how often do we go mourning from day to day because of our vileness: we do not, perhaps, doubt our

interest, yet we are not living in the enjoyment of Christ and his fullness, our consciences become burdened, but by and by the righteousness of our Redeemer is again made manifest, and we, once more, by faith, receive the declaration of the Lord, that in Christ we are without spot or blemish, and are enabled to rejoice in the same to the praise of the glory of his grace. Thus then we may say that the righteousness of Christ is the matter of our justification; grace is the good will of God by which it is bestowed and made manifest; and faith as wrought in the heart by the Holy Spirit, is the respective medium by which we become experimentally acquainted with that righteousness.

West Ham Abbey, April 23.

RUSTICUS.

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THE FOUNDATION SURE, BECAUSE CHRIST IS THE ETERNAL SON OF GOD.

Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect, it is God that justifieth.

BLESSED be the God of glory for causing the souls of his people to rejoice in his discriminating favour; for the sovereignty of Jehovah is considered by many, at this day, as an act of injustice; and preachers pretend that for the glory of God to be promoted, it is their wisdom to withhold it from their hearers:—but this is the wisdom of the world, which knoweth not God, and sheweth the rancour of men's hearts to the sovereign sway of God; were they made alive from the dead, and acquainted with the glorious things that are spoken of the Zion of God, they would not charge the electing love of God with scandal and leading to licentiousness; but it shews where they stand, setting up free will, which is an evidence of being dead in trespasses and sin, and confirms that precious truth—the election hath obtained it, but the rest are blinded: all glory be to the Triune God of Israel, for his beloved ones can bow to his precious sceptre, and sing of his sovereign and unchangeable love. Who then shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect?

Now as there is a holy Sovereign, his laws are holy, just and good, and therefore are immutable, and he that offendeth in one point is guilty of all, and justice requires a perfect obedience; for cursed is he that continueth not in all things that are written in the book of the law to do them; we hear a deal about the mercy of God, but very little about his justice. When the apostle exclaims, Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect! he says it is God that justifieth, therefore it is the holy lawgiver that pronounceth his people just; so it is not of him that runneth, nor of him that willet, but a poor outcast, in whom were seven devils, shall be selected. Peter the blasphemer, Paul the persecutor, the Thief upon the cross, and numbers as vile as they, and all in a way hon-

orable to justice; and O how glorious it is to grace! Where is boasting then? The objects of eternal choice were ever holy in the self-existent Son of God. O my soul, thou hast trodden down the enemy through the mighty Conqueror, the Father's co-eval Son in truth and love.

There are many mongrel preachers and hearers too, that talk about falling from grace, but blessed be God, all his beloved ones that are embraced in the everlasting covenant, will surely sing aloud for joy, for they are the inhabitants of the rock and cannot the chosen seed now set too their seal—that God is true.

We look back and behold the wonderful works of the eternal Spirit in raising us when dead, and discovering what we are by nature, and also the riches of God's grace in the salvation of such unworthy creatures, and though we are rebellious creatures our God is still our refuge: for as the great Surety bore the mighty load—as the sword of Divine Justice smote the Shepherd for the transgression of the sheep—that as the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and by his stripes we are healed. Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? But brethren beloved, our unbelieving hearts may often condemn us, but God is greater than our hearts, and the devil may very often bring against us false accusations, but our heavenly Father will not suffer us to be tempted above what we are able. We may be brought to our wits end, but never can find the end of Jehovah's loving kindness and tender mercies, having loved his own that were in the world, he loveth them world without end. What, Does any poor child of God think that their rebellion will cause God to cast them away? Nay, he hateth putting away. What, shall the purpose of eternal Majesty be frustrated? You are black, but comely in Jesus thy head—the victory is sure—the work is finished, and we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. Eternal love can never change, and as God justifieth who is he that condemneth.

Though we are the subjects of Satan's malice, and the frowns of ungodly men, and they use all the stratagems and craft imaginable to bring the objects of divine grace into confusion, they cannot prevail; for God taketh the wise in their own craftiness, and his purpose shall stand, and he will do all his pleasure. O the wonderful depths of eternal love, opened to the view of the election of grace by God the Spirit, in the person of God the Son. The righteousness of the church is the Son of God, and blessed be God the Father. Jesus is also our sanctification, redemption, and wisdom: we are complete in him who is the Son of God and the Son of man, the wonderful complex person, the fulfiller of all his covenant engagements in the behalf of his spouse.

I must remark that I have received great consolation and edification from your pages. All praise belongeth to the Triune God of Israel, for your noble stand for the truth as it is revealed; for

if Jesus was not God and man, making one person, the salvation of the church, I should have no hope—and to deny that the Spirit is a divine person in the Godhead, it cannot be, for he has proved a God of comfort to me, blessed be the Holy Ghost the Comforter, for his testifying of Jesus. Undoubtedly the enemy meant this controversy in the Magazine for evil, but God meant it for good; for the fullness of the Godhead that dwelleth in Jesus, has been sweetly shewn and most ably defended by the Lord's servants, the beloved Editors, and others; and that while thousands are puffed up with their supposed wisdom, and setting themselves up above Jehovah, they shall receive to themselves the wages of eternal death; and that as strong delusions cover the earth, and gross darkness the people, and many believe lies, and make lies their refuge, and hide themselves under falsehood, they will receive damnation who believe not the truth, but love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil; reject the true light, Christ Jesus, and walk by their own sparks and receive the just recompense of Jehovah's wrath, they are deceived and are deceiving, being heady and high minded; not submitting themselves to the salvation of God, whose end is destruction.

Dearly beloved Editors, that whilst you are exposed to the wrath of men and devils, there are now a remnant that bless God that you stand fast in the glorious truths of a free grace gospel.

Somersham, Huntingdonshire.

A TRAVELLER.

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ON PUNISHMENT FOR SIN.

I AM charged by Ebenezer that I wrote in a "*bitter spirit*," if he imagined I did he should not have attempted to add fuel to fire, but rather strove to have damped the coals by the cooling sincere milk of gospel reproof, and not to have added food to the flame.

Suffer me yet to speak once more to Ebenezer in sincerity as in the sight of God, without any design of giving offence, and may he and I, a poor Hermit, learn to prize rebukes above flattery, as all truly wise men prize wisdom above rubies.

You have acknowledged that I have nowhere said that God's children are punished for their sins. Now nothing can be plainer than this honest declaration and confession from your pen, therefore let this put an end to all strife; and remember you have nowhere said, and may you ever be led by the Spirit so to write, as not to infer, that God's children are punished for their sins, under the new covenant, then this short and sharp contention between us will be ended.

And should I again emerge from my sinless cell (for my cell never sinned) with the light of God's countenance shining upon my soul's visionary powers, beholding brother Ebenezer within visionary sight, I am determined not to quarrel with him nor yet to flatter, which is in the sight of God the worst of the two, but will run

to meet him, offer him my hand, my heart, my water, my bread, and a seat in my sinless cell.

Perhaps he may be agreeably entertained with its situation. It stands in a sweet solemn spot; I do not always reside here, but it is a place of my frequent loved retreat. I have said it is near Cedron, that bitter stream; but it is nearer the spot where my best Beloved wept and sweat, bled and groaned, sighed and cried, prayed, and poured out his soul like water, in sore travail and dreadful agony, under the pains of the lowest hell and hottest wrath of the divine displeasure, justly due to me for all my innumerable immense hellish, black, scarlet, aggravated, diabolical, damnable, hateful, cursed crimes. O it is here I hate and abominate them and myself for committing them. Sure I am I never hated them with a perfect hatred till I found this spot. I never saw them in their infernal hellish hue before—I never saw so much of the love of Christ before—I never knew what it was to have the believer's body of sin, as Ebenezer calls it, mortified before; neither can I believe he does, except he frequents this spot, notwithstanding all Belzebub's cudgels, nor the old * worn out stumps of Moses's rod; his blows only make the old man turn, if possible, blacker, swell and rebel the more, but never mortified one member yet, except it were to the quickening and strengthening of another, and what good did that do a bruised reed like me.

But when the Spirit of Truth came he led me to this delectable garden spot, called Gethsamene, and there convinced me of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. Of sin, because I did not half believe in him that died for my sin, so that sin was not half subdued in me; so I found that whatsoever was not of sheer faith was sin, and according to your faith be it unto you. Of righteousness, because it were impossible, not having true fellowship in his sufferings; I could ascend by faith with him in his righteousness, because he is gone to the Father. Of judgment, because here was the centre spot in the vast circle of immensity which wisdom pitched upon, for the great and awful day of judgment, (the wondering angels will never witness another like it) for God's elect. The judgment was set and the books were opened, one volume containing their sins, another their demerits of the whole elect world; the books were too large for this world to contain them, but the whole must be laid upon the Son of God, and with amazement saw their full contents in the full blaze of God's wrath set in the light of his countenance; no marvel then at his strong cries and agony—Father if it be possible, &c. &c. Although he, the Son of God was judge himself, yet in this his humiliation, his right of judgment was taken from him, and no one present to declare his glorious name, his deathless fame, and his eternal generation. But Justice calls to Vengeance smite the judge of Israel, and Mercy cries, let the

* Worn out on the back of Christ to all true believers....*Toplady*.

sheep go free. Love says I will turn me to the little ones, but no mercy nor favour was shewn to the King of Glory, until Tophet had exhausted all its rage.

And now be it known to Ebenezer, and to all, or to as many as may read these lines, that my sinless perfection is to be found only in my risen and glorified Redeemer, who has fulfilled all the laws' demands, and wrought out and brought in a sinless robe for me.

And although I cannot be rid of sin while in a sinful body, yet he who died to redeem me from all iniquity, hath said sin shall not have dominion; and since I have been favoured to walk in this far valley of vision, I have found the Lord has been with me, for his rod and staff has been my comfort and defence.

Messrs. Editors, may the riches of his grace remain with you, and all who love the truth. Amen.

*From my Cell, near Cedron,
April 23, 1834.*

A HERMIT.

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To the Editors of the Gospel Magazine.

THE BISHOP OF EXETER AND THE WESLEYAN METHODISTS,
RESPECTING A COALITION.

MESSRS. EDITORS,

DR. PHILPOTTS was little known till lately, except as a learned and clever writer of political pamphlets against the Roman Catholic claims. But though he had been most determined in his opposition, he nevertheless became quite silent when the ministers of the day, with the sanction of the King, were carrying their emancipation bill through the houses of parliament. This *silence*, at that time, occasioned most violently agitating suspicions, insomuch that some of the High Church Tory party, regarded him as an apostate from their cause. What quieted him, and restrained his resisting hand, cannot perhaps, certainly be known to any but the duke of Wellington and Sir Robert Peel, whose violated principles and consciences will probably keep them long in remembrance of it; but every body knows that he very soon after became possessed of the see of Exeter, in addition to the valuable living of Stanhope, which living there can be no doubt he would be still holding in *commendam*, had not the administration of affairs passed into other hands.

Now, however, since he has become bishop of Exeter, and all further opposition to the Catholic freedom, and the prying spirit of reform must be unavailing, he seems to have turned his attention to matters of a more interesting character, as effecting the spiritual and eternal interests of men. We all feel, as it were, instinctively, and it would be strange indeed if Dr. Philpotts did not participate in the feeling—that it would be highly improper in a bishop either to busy himself in secular affairs, or be “greedy” of power, and patronage, and “filthy lucre.” He has determined not to be

“a partaker of other men’s sins,” and, by laying on his hands cautiously, means to provide better than of late years has been done by others, for what is technically, I believe not scripturally, called “the cure of souls.” His purpose, as stated in his Letter to the Archdeacons of his Diocese, is, “to require examination of every person presented to him for institution, in whose case there appears to be *ground of apprehension* that he is either *unsound in doctrine*, or *deficient in those attainments which are necessary for the due performance of his sacred duties*.”

This indeed would be matter for congratulation among “the faithful in Christ Jesus,” if there were anywhere existing sufficient proof that the bishop is himself “*sound in doctrine*,” that he does subscribe *ex animo*, the doctrinal Articles of the National Church, according to the true, grammatical, and obvious sense of their eminent compilers. But, on the contrary, there is much reason to suspect that this learned prelate is corrupt in doctrine; that he is tainted with the leaven of the pharisees; and that he holds the very principle upon which the pernicious heresy of Popish despotism is founded, namely, justification by works of righteousness which men do. His Lordship’s very looks indicate this. Who can behold the solemn gloom, the uplifted hand and the eyes rolling much of their white to view in public devotional exercises, without thinking of the fleshly efforts of the will-worship and hypocrisy of pharisees? The loud sighs, and groans, and amens of the Wesleys, are scarcely surer indications. But I proceed to indubitable *facts*, which clearly shew to every person of sound mind, this Prelate’s long religious predilections and inclinations.

When his Lordship held a visitation at Plymouth, last autumn, the 28th of September, one of the lessons appointed for the day was the second chapter of Tobit, an Apocryphal book, instead of which the clergyman reading prayers chose a chapter in Isaiah: (I believe the fortieth, but I am not quite sure, though present on the occasion.) After the sermon, the bishop surrounded by numbers of his clergy, mildly rebuked the reader for his irregularity, and plainly intimated that he would have preferred the reading of Tobit, agreeably to the canon. What formality and gnat straining.

The pharisaical and ridiculous romance of Tobit, ought not to be called apocryphal; it is evidently fabulous, and one would think could have no countenance but from men of dark and superstitious minds. Among other things, Tobit says, xi. 9, 10. “I slept by the wall of my court yard, being polluted, (by burying dead bodies) and my face was uncovered. And I knew not that there were sparrows, (or swallows) in the wall, and mine eyes being open, the sparrows muted warm dung into mine eyes, and a whiteness came in mine eyes, and I went to the physicians, but they helped me not.”

He was ultimately cured of his blindness, we are told, by the

application of a part of a fish's liver. But most likely that which gains credit with the Bishop, is the leading article of Tobit's theological creed, expressed in these words, iv. 8. "Because that *alms do deliver from death*, and suffereth not to come into darkness." Sad to tell, the time is come when men turn away their ears from the truth, and are turned unto fables. 2 Tim. iv. 4.

Now if a bishop's canonical strictness in matters indifferent, can lead him to prefer the writings of an ignorant visionary or dreamer, before those of an inspired prophet, his fraternal regard for the Wesleyans ought not to surprise any one. It is perfectly natural that Arminians have an affinity for each other; they are all of the same self justifying family, whether Churchmen, Non-conformists, or Papists. The Wesleyans are avowedly Arminians, and the Bishop of Exeter being so too, justly concludes that he and they are one in all the essentials of their religious principles, and that the matters of difference between them in circumstantialities of discipline and practice might be easily reconciled. But supposing the case, that *all* the bishops are Arminians, is the Church of England, *therefore* Arminian? Most certainly not; she is now what she ever has been and ever will be, so long as her Articles are allowed to remain unaltered, and that is decidedly Calvinistic, her enemies as well as her best friends being judges. It is on account of her prominent Calvinistic features that many whom she has nourished and brought up to dignity and honour, have endeavoured by various devices to throw a veil over her, in order to observe her maiden beauties and excellencies, and to make her more agreeable to their corrupt minds; but her voice of invincible truth, in her formularies and creeds, cried out, and still cries out, against them, and they would with shame have turned from her for ever, leaving her naked to her enemies, if she were not well endowed with worldly wealth, gentility and grandeur. Who can say how many stick to her *now* for *what she has not* for what she is.

However, be this as it may, the Bishop of Exeter, feeling perhaps the weakness and danger of his present position, with the menace or friendly warning of the King's minister before him, and the clamours of millions of tythe payers behind him, has expressed in his Charge to the Clergy, lately published, an anxious desire for a coalition with the Wesleyan Methodists, and earnestly appeals to them whether they are not guilty of the sin of schism in continuing in a state of separation. Encouraged thus by their Diocesan, some of the Cornish clergy seriously contemplate plans, and hail with much apparent satisfaction, the anticipation of a union which, as they think, promises an immense accession of numerical and moral strength to the Establishment. One of them, Mr. Polwhele, who once made himself notorious by his unmanly and ungodly opposition to faithful Dr. Hawker, has actually promulgated a "scheme," in a Letter addressed to the Bishop, which *scheme*, if ever it be carried into effect, is fully calculated to bring us back by rapid

strides, to all the unity and all the superstition of Popish idolatry.

"May the Lord confound their politics,
And frustrate their knavish tricks."

What the Bishop and the Wesleyans are about just now it is impossible to say; but that something is carrying on between them with a view to an alliance may be inferred from the following paragraph, which appeared in the *Christian Advocate* of Monday, January 27, "Who, we should like to know, is the Superintendent who has been closeted with the Bishop of Exeter in his palace in that city? By whom was he commissioned to seek the interview? What was he authorized to communicate? These are important questions." But to return to the "Scheme," which is a curiosity in its kind, and quite worthy of its author. What changes are brought about by time and circumstances! Men with "Vicar of Bray" principles may well be expected to flatter and court at one time, those whom they hated, despised, and persecuted at another. But can such men be trusted? Will the Methodists trust them, forgetting such contumelious treatment of their fathers? They must naturally ask, "What is the *motive* to this change of manner? Is it *love of us and our ways*, or to make us auxiliaries in the pending struggle about endowment?" Let them beware of an unholy confederacy and alliance, for the thoughts of man's heart are unfathomably deep. They who cry hosannah to day, may cry crucify to-morrow: and priestly domination has ever been a treacherous and dreadful thing.

Mr. Polwhele distinguishes the Wesleyan Methodists "under a threefold classification." Speaking of the first and best class he says, "Among other recent evidences, their rallying around us in opposition to 'the Catholic emancipation,' was a signal instance of their attachment to the National Church. It brought conviction to my judgment that had once too fastidiously *disdained* them! It won my heart that had once been *bitter* against them! And on other memorable emergencies, their alacrity in protestations expressive of anti-revolutionary principles, throughout your Lordship's diocese, must preclude every idea of insincerity. There are persons, it is true, who yet suspect, (notwithstanding appearances or professions) some sinister ends—who talk of the mask of hypocrisy—who are profuse in terms of discouragement, describing an ill-assorted coalition—who even start up poets in comparing 'a specious unanimity to the stillness that precedes a storm, and to

'The torrents' smoothness ere it dash below.'

for me, I can perceive no reason to justify suspicion.

Here, then, after investigations that leave no ground unsearched, and discussions, I trust, unprejudiced, we arrive at the conclusion, that the project of a treaty with the Wesleyans, is not to be slighted as chimerical. What this project may be, or in what manner it may

in prudence be submitted to their *reason and religion*, my brethren may have considered; though not one of them has spoken (as far as I know) without reserve, and caution, and distrust. Much has been obscurely hinted; but no measures have been specified. Our object, indisputably, is this—to call back to us the Wesleyans, evidently inclined towards us, and to render them our co-adjutors in ‘good word and work,’ for *their* sakes, as well as our own.

“It were useless to attempt a conciliation with this people by any plan requiring the extinction of their present system. They are too well persuaded of its merits to suffer it to be destroyed. And Methodism feels less desire to be incorporated with the church, than the church to be incorporated with Methodism.” What a confession! What a compliment paid to Methodism!

After pointing out their mistakes in imitating some observances of the early Christians, he concludes thus:

“And if our object be not a mere illusion, it may possibly be attained by the introduction of public devotional services at the meeting-house, consentaneous with the canonical services of the church; and, moreover, by the creation of some additional offices in respect to church discipline and duties.”

This interesting Paper will be concluded in the next Number.

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THE BLASPHEMY OF THE PRE-EXISTERIAN SEXUAL-SOUL-CREED.

(Continued from p. 414.)

None can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him. But GOD will redeem my SOUL from the power of the grave or hell; for he will receive me. Selah! PSALM XLIX. 7, 15.

IN the two former essays, the Godhead, and Incomprehensibility of the Sonship of God the Son, was *unanswerably* proved, and set forth by the scriptures of God the Holy Ghost; and, that the essential Son of God was only known by divine revelation, and believed in by faith of the operation of God. Indeed it is impossible that God, as to the mode of his existence, should be *comprehended* by a creature so low and so degraded as man; because in that case Jehovah must first cease to be *infinite and eternal*,—attributes which are not to be conceived either by the multiplication of things or of time. What is infinite and eternal must for ever remain at an immeasurable distance beyond the uttermost of a creature’s power to calculate or to conceive. We can state, said a spiritual man, what God is *not*, rather than what he *is*, unless we speak of him in his own words. Thus it may safely be asserted, that God is *not a liar*; that he is without sin; that he can neither *deceive, impose, cheat, nor assume names like imposters*. By this, (as Augustine hath observed) there is no derogation of his Omnipotence, because

sin and error proceed from infirmity; and therefore if God could lie, sin, deceive, impose, cheat, &c. he would cease to be omnipotent. God is the God of truth. And it will be our mercy not to seek for him out of the limits of divine revelation, beyond which we are sure only of finding nothing but uncertainty; but within those bounds we can hear nothing but truth. *And cursed is he who removeth this his neighbour's land mark.* Deut. xxvii. 17.

“What is a creature,” says an admirable writer, “considered in nature? a *nothing* in regard to *infinity*.” And can any spiritual man be so deluded as to believe what John Stevens has *written*, to the contrary? Is it possible, that any spiritual man who is *sane* can be so stupidly *vain* as to believe, that the assumption of a creature-nature of the highest order by the Most High, would not be an act of *infinite humiliation*? Then how truly so, to be made in the likeness of sinful flesh, Rom. viii. 3. His soul was *sorrowful*. He was *made*, not *conceived*, in all things like unto his brethren; and made *under the law*, and not *before the law*. A perfect man who knew *no sin*, but knew weariness, sorrow, and grief. Being *made* in the likeness of sinful flesh, a man of sorrows, *under the law*, and not before nor *above the law*, is indeed, an *infinite display of love and humiliation*. Reader, if thou believest these truths, thou wilt never assent to that Pharisaical lie, the pre-created existence of the human soul of Christ; nor to the following statement put in the form of questions, by John Stevens, in his Letter to the late Mr. Rees, p. 44, 45. queries of the most subtle kind.

“What eclipse, (says Stevens) of our Lord’s glory can be supposed to attend his assumption of an * intelligent spirit of the greatest perfection possible to be derived from God?”

I answer, as Stevens intends by an intelligent spirit, a human soul without a body, it would be but part of a man, *an imperfect creature, inferior as such to all creatures that God created*. And it would be an eclipse of the infinite greatness of his humiliation, in not being made *under the law, after the fall*, a soul without sin, but full of sorrows †,

“What loss, (says Stevens) can his divine honour hereby sustain?”

I answer: that loss which God sustains from the human-soul pre exterians and infidels *who do not believe the God of truth, but make him a liar*; that do not give unto Jehovah the *glory due unto his name*, 1 Chron. xvi. 29. Psalm xxix. 2. xcvi. 8. *but charge him with assuming names as a gracious imposter*.

“Can we imagine, (says Stevens,) his personal blessedness was thereby diminished?”

* He here calls the *soul*, an intelligent spirit.

† The essential Son of God became true and very man *after the fall of man*, that the *love of God* might shine forth in its fullest splendour, and the highest instance and evidence be given of it to the elect in their fallen state and sinful circumstances. S. E. Pierce.

I answer, every *imagination* is to be cast down, and every *thought* brought into captivity to the obedience of Christ 2 Cor. x. 4. Christ is Jehovah, the essential Son, who is called the Word, and was made flesh. He was made in the likeness of sinful flesh, *a man of sorrows*. Jehovah is no *stoick*, he is *long-suffering*, *merciful*, &c. his attributes are himself. He is full of *compassion*. *And such is the life of God*, that those persons who are alienated from the life of God are described as *past all feeling*. Eph. iv. 18, 19. Jehovah's personal blessedness cannot be diminished by the vile misrepresentations of bad men, but *the Holy Spirit may be grieved*, as in the scriptures it is said; and there is a day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgments of God, who will render to every man according to his works—that make the God of truth a liar,—that believe not the record that God gave of his Son. Rom. ii. 5, 6. 1 John v. 10.

“Or that his ultimate glory, (says Stevens) would not be greatly heightened thereby.”

I answer: that God is under no obligation to the devil for introducing sin, the greatest of evils, into our world, nor to the human-soul pre-exterians for these serpentine questions; nevertheless the evil the devil did *wilfully*, and what these men, I hope do *ignorantly*, God will overrule for good. I am confident that God's essential glory can never be *heightened*, much less *greatly heightened*, by the assumption of our nature. But upon this last query I beg the reader's attention to what that blessed man, Dr. Hawker, has written on the subject; and may it warm the reader's heart, through his almighty unction, who alone can enable us to read with profit.

“When we consider how infinitely glorious the self existing and *incomprehensible* Jehovah is, in his *Trinity* of persons, dwelling eternally in his own glory; and that his glory could receive no addition from the praises of his creatures; for all his divine perfections must have been the same, though man or angels never had been; but yet, for their happiness in the contemplation of his glory, he was pleased to go forth in the manifestation of himself in those various acts, whereby the Lord might be known in the several departments of nature, providence, grace, and glory: I say, when we consider Jehovah in this view, and stand impressed with this conviction no less on our minds, that the making some manifestation of this his glory to his church, which he chose in Christ before the world began, is the sole cause for which that church is called into being, and all the after acts of creation took place, what an holy awe, and profound reverence, do such thoughts beget in the soul. From hence it plainly appears, that this great and almighty Lord, being infinitely blessed in himself, and in the personalities of his own nature and essence, raised up the magnificent structure of creation in all its departments, to make the church in Christ blessed in the knowledge of himself. So that in the person

of God's dear Son he might unbosom himself, and come forth, as it were from the invisibility of his being: *not to add to his glory, for that can receive no accession*; but to make the church happy in the suitable apprehension of him. What a subject is here opened to the contemplation! A child of God when *regenerated in spirit*, and raised from the Adam-fall of *spiritual* death, may, and can in some measure, begin in this life the contemplation; but a whole eternity will not be enough to fill in the infinite boundless subject."

Here, reader, you have the sanctified meditation of a *spiritual man*. Compare what he has testified, with the *soul-man's* beguiling questions, and may the Lord give thee an understanding in all things. The sword of the Spirit divides between the *soul* and the *spirit*. Heb. iv. 12. consequently, there is as great a difference between a *soul-man* and a *spiritual man*, as there is between *reason* and *faith*. Every natural man is a *soul-man*; but a regenerated man is a *spiritual man*.

No doubt all the disciples of the Pharisees will look down with pity upon us who are so *weak*, as to "*hold the mystery of faith in a pure conscience.*" 1 Tim. iii. 9. Contempt and pity are to be expected; for reason is natural, faith is supernatural. Reason in fallen man is, in a certain sense, below *knowledge* in animals; faith is *spiritual*. "The ox *knoweth* his owner, and the ass his master's crib; but Israel *doth not know*, my people *doth not consider.*" Isaiah i. 3. "Yea, the stork in the heaven *knoweth* her appointed time; and the turtle, and the crane, and the swallow, *observe* the time of their coming; but my people *know not* the judgment of the Lord." Jer. viii. 7.

Whatsoever is not of *faith* is *sin*: then the human pre-existerian plain-reason creed is *sinful*, for it is not the mystery of *faith*. And if *sinful*, it is *damnable*; for it is the rejection of the revelation which the essential God hath made of himself. If the Father be not the essential Father, he is not God. If the Son be not the essential Son, he is not God. If the Holy Spirit be not the essential Holy Spirit, he is not God. The Three that bear record in heaven are One. And they are one in essence, though Three distinct in person. And though they are not *One* in the same respect as they are *Three*; for the Father is not the Son, the Son is not the Father, neither is the Holy Spirit, the Father, nor the Son; nevertheless they are the Three, one essential God *that cannot lie*.

God only can know God. His revelation of himself must be beyond the reach of reason to comprehend; for it is the revelation of himself who is the infinite and incomprehensible Jehovah, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. But this is not beyond the apprehension and enjoyment of *faith*, the gift of God, a supernatural and a super-reason act.

Allow me to remind the reader, that it is not the intellectual man, nor the reasoner, *but the believer that shall be saved*. When John

was in the womb, he did not *reason*, but he leaped for joy, through *faith*. All unbelievers are reasoners; and the greatest reasoners are generally the greatest infidels. And it is Jehovah's pleasure that thus it should be; for it seemeth good in his sight that no *flesh* have whereof to glory in his presence. To this intent he has chosen foolish ones whose faith confounds the wisdom of the wise. For it is, without controversy, a great mystery, that God manifest in the flesh should be believed on in the world. 1 Cor. i. 27—29. 1 Tim. iii. 16. There have been *reasoners* in all ages, in the outward church, who have made void the word of God as far as they were able by their traditions.

Reasoners understand the scriptures *literally*, when they are favourable in the *letter* to their abominations; but when otherwise, then they have recourse to *assumption*, figures of speech, analogy, prolepsis, *elliptical* passages, &c. wresting the word of revelation to their own destruction.

I shall mention one instance among others to prove it, whereby these men's duplicity may be perceived. The words "Only begotten," Stevens reads, *literally* and *sensually*, to suit his notion of God the Father begetting a *sexual soul-son, without a body*, which he nick names, a pre-eminent man*. But as he cannot read the names Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, in Deity as essentially so†, he has recourse to assumption; but calls it, a *gracious* assumption, lest we should discover his fraud and delusion, or should imagine he meant what I hope he will shudder at, what I hope he has done *unwillingly*, namely, represent the eternal Three in Deity to be no better than *hypocrites, professing to be by name what they essentially are not*. As a consistent writer; however, he was bound to apply his *notion* of *assumption* as much to the words *only begotten*, as to the names *Father, Son, and Holy Spirit*: and he must himself admit, that he *would have done so* had it suited his pharisaical tradition. But the doctrine of the Trinity in Unity, of the Three

* "Christ, (says Stevens) is all the way *first*: he was *first* in heaven *without a body of flesh*, and he is *first* in heaven with a body, *Enoch and Elijah excepted*." Stevens's Display, p. 125.

Reader, what object had Stevens in thus *artfully attempting* to exalt Enoch and Elijah with *bodies, pre-eminently* so as in his opinion, above our Lord Jesus Christ? For according to his *exception*, *Cristh was not all the way first*.

† In Stevens' tenth observation he says, "Thus by including the ancient *existence of the soul* of our Lord, we obtain a *plain reason* for the names of Father and Son, and at the same time maintain a *personal distinction*, too evident, to be readily misunderstood, or fairly denied. For by the Son being *human* as well as *divine*, he is sufficiently distinguished from the Father who is *only divine*." Stevens's Display, p. 30. So that the Son of God must have a nature different to the Father, in order to be his Son. How monstrous! But he omitted to tell us at the same time, by what *angelic* nature the Holy Spirit was sufficiently distinguished from the *Father*. As the angels are *spirits*, cannot he invent a *created or preceding angelic* nature for the Holy Spirit's personal distinction. He might call him the *angel of God*, or the *angel in God*, as he calls the Son, the *man of God*, and the *man in God*. As the *angels* are *spirits*, it would equally suit his plain reason creed.

that bear record in heaven, the One Father, Eph. iv. 6. the One Son, John iii. 16, 18, and the One Spirit, Eph. v. 4. co-eval, co-equal, co-essential, and co-eternal in One, is *too mysterious for Stevens's human reason*, and therefore he rejects it.

Amongst other devilish devices there is a dreadful one secretly hidden under the human pre-existence scheme. It is very seldom hinted at, lest its *devilish* doctrine should be discovered. A denier of the distinct divine personality of the Son of God professes to believe in the indivisibility of the Trinity in Unity; but, being the *slave* of his reason, the devil enters into him through *that door*, and leads him captive by it at his will. If the Trinity in Unity be *stedfastly* believed, were the Trinity, some of them ask, incarnate? * This, no doubt, led Stevens to say, in his Letter to Irving, "That it was the *immortal man reserved* in the Lord Christ that came out, &c. with the *assumed* names of Immanuel and the Son of God." And this explains what he had before *obscurely* stated, in his Letter to Mr. Rees, p. 41, &c. "If (says he,) the Trinity in Unity be *stedfastly believed*, and their essential sameness admitted, the existence of the *first creature* can no more tend to destroy that belief, than the *last*. In most cases, I apprehend, *men who have been misled*, as it is pretended, *by the pre-existence, have had no real*

* John viii. 42. Jesus said unto them, if God were your Father, ye would love me: *for I proceeded forth and came from God*; neither came I of myself, but he sent me.

John xiv. 26. But the Comforter, the Holy Ghost, whom *the Father will send* in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance whatsoever I have said unto you.

John xv. 26. But when the Comforter is come, whom *I will send* unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of Truth, which *proceedeth from the Father*, he shall testify of me. Here is the Son *proceeding*, and the Holy Spirit *proceeding* from the Father. We know that the properties of the sun that rules the day are indivisibly united in that greater light; nevertheless the *heat proceedeth forth* and comes from the sun, and *incorporates itself with the shutter to my window*, but the *light* does not. Yet all the while the heat is incorporated therewith, the properties of the sun *remain in the sun undivided*. Is it then too hard for Jehovah, that one of the persons in Jehovah should proceed forth and come from Jehovah, and be incarnate, and the indivisibility of the Trinity in Unity remain at the same time entire? The scriptures of God the Holy Ghost prove the fact incontrovertibly. There are two parallel passages in point, namely, Prov. xxx. 4. "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 the ends of the earth? What is his name, and what is his Son's name, if thou canst tell?" The other scripture is, John iii. 12, 13. "If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you of heavenly things? And no man, (oudeis,) no creature, hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, the Son of man *which is in heaven*." He, the essential Son of God, was after his incarnation the son of MAN. Now if no man, not even Enoch nor Elijah, hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, we are sure that Christ the Jehovah, Luke ii. 11. was speaking of himself as the essential Son of God, who only hath immortality, *dwelling in the light which no man (anthropos)* can approach unto, whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen. 1 Tim. vi. 16.

belief in our Lord's self-existence to resign." So that Stevens apprehends some Dagonites do not believe our Lord had self-existence to resign, *whereas he and others profess to believe our Lord had and did resign his self-existence.* Therefore it was this sexual male-soul without a body or spirit, *which had been reserved in the Lord Christ, that came out of his secret glory into a fleshly visibility; for otherwise if the Trinity in Unity be stedfastly believed, unless the immortal man only came, the Trinity in Unity were incarnate.* No doubt a *negative atonement* will do for *negative sin*, which constitutes part of the Pre-existerian creed. Therefore in his opinion, it was the *sexual male-soul* that was reserved in the Lord Christ that came out; and thus our Lord, as he calls this soul, *resigned his self-existence.*

At the final tribunal, all these presumptuous reasonings will be for ever silenced. Reasoners may now annoy the people of God with their fiery darts; nevertheless Stevens may more easily persuade a sensible man, that hot roasted food has not incorporated the heat of the fire, because the coals and the light of the fire are not incorporated with it, than draw away a spiritual man from the faith of the great mystery of Godliness, God manifest in the flesh, so as to induce him to believe, that it was the immortal man, and not God in the person of the essential Son, that was made flesh and dwelt among us; or that it was not the essential Son of God that was manifested, to destroy the works of the devil. 1 John iii. 3.

As these men cannot understand how one of the persons in Jehovah could be incarnate, without disbelieving the indivisibility of the Trinity in Unity, they invented the creation of this sexual soul, without a body or spirit, and nicknamed it, *a man in God*, the first-born of every creature, by whom God made the world, and which was *kept in Goph* or Paradise, until it came out of its reserve into *fleshly visibility*. It was, I presume this creature, of which Stevens speaks, in his Letter to Mr. Rees, p. 16. in the following obscure manner:

"It was blood-shed atoned; human blood *essentially* considered, but *relatively* the blood of God. This was *efficacious* blood, and had its *efficacy* from being the *blood of his person*, but it NEVER COULD HAVE BECOME THE BLOOD of his person, had it not been ORDAINED to be so by the SOVEREIGN WILL of GOD." What he really meant, by its becoming the blood of his person *by ordination*, we should not have known, but for his Letter to Irving, about the *immortal man* *. This part of Stevens's creed one of his disciples has confirmed in a letter, highly commended by the antichristian authors

* Page 11. That the reader may not be deceived by Stevens' *mystified* expressions, respecting the blood of Christ, I beg to remind him that Christ was GOD, and therefore his *blood* is called his *own* blood, the blood of God, and his righteousness, the righteousness of God. *If it were not so, it would not be efficacious* blood, for the blood of bulls and of goats *shed* under the Levitical priesthood was *covenant* blood, and was by the *ordination*, and *sovereign will* of God; yet with all those advantages, the HOLY GHOST hath declared, it was

of "Celestial Filiation," which letter is admitted to have been perused and approved by Stevens, before it went to press, and was sanctioned by him after it was published; so that we may be sure it is Stevens's creed. In this* letter the penman writes thus: "He that spared not his own SON, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him freely give us all things? What son is this that is said not to have been spared, but to have been delivered up for us all? *Is it an uncreated Son? a divine Son, co-equal with the Father? Was Deity not spared? Who would thus prostitute the expression?* He who was delivered for our offences, was also raised for our justification; *but to what do such passages allude, but to the child born, the Son given, the first-born of Jehovah.*"

Here the penman stops—but why so? Why did he omit the names *Wonderful Counsellor, the Mighty God, &c.* Why did he misquote the scriptures, as Satan did when he tempted Christ? Did the HOLY SPIRIT prostitute the expression when he testified that the Son given was THE MIGHTY GOD? It is an awful fact, that when men know no more of sin than the deadly notion of its being a negative evil, they care not how they blaspheme. And such men's consciences will be satisfied with a negative atonement—a sacrifice made by one who was not the *Mighty God*. Isaiah ix. 6. It was to set up this negative atonement for negative sin, as they call sin, that Stevens betrayed "I am" into "I was."

As the anonymous writer, calling himself *Amor Veritatis*, does not believe the Son given, was the *Mighty God*, he has no right nor title to the name of "*Amor Veritatis*." And he will surely not be offended, as he believes in the doctrine of assumed names, at being considered a non-essential assumed *Amor Veritatis*†

The spiritual man has not so learned Christ. It is not what man says, but what the Holy Spirit saith, that he believes. "If it be enquired how Christ could act, obey, and suffer, in his human nature, without an impeachment of his Godhead, he will be answered,

not possible that such blood should take away sins. Sophisticated expressions are never used but to deceive.

* This Letter is addressed to one Frederick Silver, Esq.

† Arius, the propagator of the false interpretation of Col. i. 15, arose in the beginning of the fourth century. His views of the atonement, and of the blood of the everlasting covenant, were personal, and not merely by ordination and sovereign will. He apprehended the personal merit of Christ's blood to be wonderfully beyond that of a man in God, or a man sent from God; for he believed that Christ was superior to the cherubim, and that he made the worlds. Since his time, his heretical creed has undergone many changes. Some deny the doctrine of the Atonement. Some believe in the doctrine of the Trinity, and that Christ's satisfaction to divine justice was finite, but sufficient; and in Stevens' Socinian notion of *sinless souls and sinless bodies*. And some believe that Christ was the first creature, that he was a man in God: and others, that he was only part of a man in God, that he was the beginning of the creation, and that by him God made the worlds. The devil cares not what a man believes, provided he does not believe in the true Christ, God the essential Son manifest in the flesh.

that his divinity alone could and did enable his humanity to do and suffer all that was determined of him; and, therefore, instead of degrading, his obedience yields the strongest proof of the vastness of his love, *and the omnipotence of his person*. He had power to lay down his *life*, and *he had power to take it up again*; that is, his divine hypostasis could give up his human life, and at pleasure assume it again *."

The Son of God manifest in the flesh, is God-man, One Person, the Messiah who suffered in the flesh, and was put to death in the flesh. 1 Peter iii. 18. iv. 1. Infidels, indeed, have made his dolorous cries on the cross an objection to his Godhead. But infidelity and ignorance of the scriptures are frequent companions. His *heel was bruised*. The obedience, sufferings, and death of Christ, were the obedience, sufferings, and death of God the Son, because his Divine Person was never separated from his human nature, amidst all he endured for us, not even in death itself. The hypostatical union had such a stability as could not possibly admit of dissolution. If it had not, the wrath of God poured out upon Immanuel, made sin and a curse for us, would have crushed a mere creature; however high and exalted, to atoms. But a bone of him was not broken. The Divine Person, therefore, when Christ suffered and died, was no more separated from the human nature; than the soul of man is separated from the body in sleep; at which time, the body may be said to be insensible to the soul's indwelling, although the union is perfect and entire †. See John ii. 19. x. 18.

The *spiritual* man knows sin to be a ‡ *positive* evil; and that a great multitude which no one (*oudeis*) can number, out of every kindred, tongue, and people, and nation, could not be redeemed but by an atonement infinite. And without shedding of blood there is no remission of sin. But, the blood of whom? "What created being could step forth and say, 'take my life for the lives of millions of men, and let my perdition prove an atonement for them?' *It would have been presumption and madness for any finite being to have offered the change. No holy creature could have been guilty of it; because the root of presumption, is ignorance and sin.* All the

* Serle's *Horæ Solitariae*.

† As Aaron laid both his hands on the head of the scape goat, and confessed over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel; so all the iniquities of the children of God were laid on Christ, and imputed by God the Father to him with all their guilt and filth. "The human nature of Christ, *though united and existing in personal union with the Son of the living God*, felt, endured, and sustained those agonies, which were of the nature of the torments of hell, and that desertion of God, which is the sting of hell. Hence he cried, My God! My God! why hast thou forsaken me?" See Mr. S. E. Pierce's *third Discourse delivered previous to the Celebration of the Lord's Supper*, p. 51—2.

‡ Stevens asserts sin to be a *negative* without a doubt. See his *Second Letter to Dr. Hawker*, p. 45.

angels in heaven, blessed with holiness and wisdom, could not but see that no *finite sufferings* could have made an atonement to the *infinite justice* of their Maker, and that the destruction of one creature could never answer the deserved destruction of millions of creatures—a destruction to keep equal with the guilt, necessarily without intermission or end.”

“The scripture shews that **HE** only, whom all the angels worship, was to perform this astonishing task of suffering; and that **HE** only, who breathed into man his original life, would restore him, by a new and incorruptible birth, to the possession of that forfeited life. From one end of the bible to the other, it appears to be the office of *one* Person to atone for, reconcile, and restore; and of *another* person to effectuate, apply, and complete, all that was necessary for the divine glory, and for human salvation.

“Thus Jehovah was to be reconciled by Jehovah: thus Jehovah became a *Saviour*, and the *only* Saviour: and thus Jehovah is the *Sanctifier* of those unholy creatures, who are the objects of his mercy and redemption.”—*Serle, H. S.*

(To be Continued.)

A REPLY TO VARIOUS CORRESPONDENTS ARISING OUT OF THE BAPTISMAL CONTROVERSY.

SEVERAL letters have been received, *pro* and *con*, on the above subject of litigation, not only lately, but in the years that are past, and has been repeatedly declared that our pages shall not be made a stage for watery gladiators to fight upon. We have endeavoured, as much as possible, to keep the bonds of peace, that brethren should not fall out in the way to the kingdom of heaven; so that instead of disputing about outward ceremonies and non-essentials, which profiteth nothing, they would lay the stress upon the purifying virtue of the Redeemer's blood, and the sanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit, destitute of which, whosoever liveth is counted dead before God. It is the self-abasing peculiarity of faith, to rest upon the Lord Jesus Christ only, for pardon and acceptance, and to eye him as the fountain and foundation of every blessing in time and eternity, in contradistinction to outward forms, and to the proud claims of pharisaism and hypocrisy. Knowing there is a legal bias in every heart to be led away from the simplicity of the gospel, a sort of judaizing Christianity, resting on forms and modes, we impress upon our readers, and most earnestly caution them in the words of the apostle to, *Beware of the concission*. We have held up a hand post with the following inscription, as a watch word, so as to be written on the tables of the heart of all professors of Godliness, that, he is not a Jew, or a Christian, which is one *outwardly*, neither is that the true circumcision, or the true baptism, which is outward in the flesh: but he is a Jew or a Christian, which is one inwardly, and circumcision or baptism is that of the *heart*, in the

spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.

Let it be fixed upon the mind of the simple hearted of the flock of Christ not to be deluded by the mere *opus operatus*, by *modes* and *forms*; nor to be led astray by those who, be they *Pedobaptists* or *Antipedobaptists*, who assert that the ceremony of baptism is essential to faith; for many it is to be apprehended are gone to hell, who have been dipt and sprinkled, and many gone to heaven, who were never dipt nor sprinkled. And What is baptism? It is not inward regeneration. It is not the seal of the covenant. It is not being buried with Christ in his sufferings, nor is it an engrafting into Christ. It is what the scripture plainly and explicitly declares, *only* a **FIGURE** of that which doth now save us, or as the Church of England asserts, an outward and visible *sign* of an inward and spiritual grace of being born again. Therefore, Christian believer, let no man beguile you, with the shadow of things, for the substance which is, Christ in you the hope of glory. If ye be dead with him and risen with him, why are ye subject to ordinances, that is, why make them the fountain which is only the stream. Why give them the mastery, when they are only subordinates. Under such impressions of their inferiority, touch not, taste not, handle not, for all of them perish with the using, and will ere long cease for ever.

Are we then against the ordinances and statutes of the Lord's house, God forbid. But there is such a thing as "*The law of carnal commandments.*" "*The first covenant had also ordinances of divers services, and a worldly sanctuary, which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation.*"

There are two standing ordinances in the church which will continue until the end of time, namely, baptism and the Lord's supper; the one an initiatory command, the other a commemorative one. But alas how has the church of God been distracted, by those who are wise in their own conceits, magisterially lording it over the consciences of others respecting the performance of these two rites, which are only temporary.

But how is it that men have so varied in their opinions; one has his way, and is dogmatical and overbearing, another has his way, and is alike positive, and authoritative. What is the honest, simple hearted to do, between the imperious, haughty, overbearing spirit of such party men, particularly when the exact mode in disputation is *not revealed*, nor will ever be settled on this side of time. Let them on dependance on God act according to their *own judgment* in concert with other good men, keeping this injunction in view; that every thing be done in decency, and in order. *For why* should the conscience of one be a rule for another, or his liberty be judged by another man's conscience. "*Whatever is sold in the shambles that eat, asking no questions for conscience sake.*" Dont

quarrel, bite and devour one another; is not the whole land before you Separate then thyself; if they will take to the left hand go thou to the right; or if they depart to the right hand, then go to the left; let not the church of God be kept in perpetual broils, in contentions which profiteth nothing. If they make walls of separation, and debar you from communion with them, why should you wish to pass their threshold; it is mean and contemptible to intrude upon another's privacy against his will. Serve the Lord in the beauty of holiness, as far as he has made known to you the order of his house, and call no man master on earth, so as to be under his haughty domineering 'shackles, who is a like imperfect creature with thyself. Remember as the Lord's free servant, that the time is come, that men shall not worship in Jerusalem, or on any other mountain, but they that worship the Father shall worship him in spirit and in truth. Therefore go thy way, eat thy bread with joy, and drink thy wine with a merry heart, for God now accepteth thy person and thy works.

We have given our opinion with that modesty and humility, which is necessary from one man to another, upon points of disputation, particularly on those matters which have had the sanction of all the national churches in Europe, and of some of the brightest stars of the Reformation, and also of some of the most eminent servants of God in the last and present generation. Let every one therefore be persuaded in his own mind, and not arrogantly trample over another, for to his own Master he standeth or falleth.

If one man is disposed to have more water than another, let him have it, where is the harm; if he wishes to dispense that element on an object at a certain stated time, he is certainly at liberty so to do. If another thinks a little modicum is sufficient, and chooses his own time and way to distribute it, why is he to be insulted with jokes and jibes, and be told he is "following the erroneous traditions of his fathers, that he is baptizing his fingers, so as to chill the the poor babes, disturbing them, making them squeak like pigs." These are the men who talk of *scurrilous language and bitter spirits*, and that we should be meek and lowly, and not provoke one another to strife and contention.

Far be it from us to make a retaliation—this is not our spirit, nor the weapons of our warfare; we leave all such skirmishes to those who are disposed to be disorderly and contentious. On this subject we only claim the privileges of God's ancient people, under a former dispensation, and to obey the voice of the Lord our God, where he commands—Blow the trumpet in Zion, gather the people, sanctify the congregation, assemble the elders. Gather the CHILDREN and those that SUCK THE BREASTS, to present them before the Lord, as he does not refuse the little ones to be registered among his professed people.

Now as the promise is—Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings God will ordain strength, and perfect praise; where is the impro-

priety in presenting or dedicating our offspring unto the Lord, in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Don't put a bar and tell us they are in their non-age, and cannot believe. We know they are imbecile, and so were and are all the Lord's redeemed family before they were regenerated by the Holy Spirit. Young and old were in their sins, neither washed, swaddled, or salted. Yet some were set apart and sanctified in the womb, and who can tell, but God who is rich in mercy may take compassion. The sprinkling them with water, is in *token or emblematic* of the Holy Spirit's washing and cleansing, who says—I will sprinkle clean water upon them and they shall be clean, then *who shall forbid* water in anticipation thereof; not him who said, Suffer little children to come unto me and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven; no, for the lambs are all alike precious in his sight as the sheep; nor will he blame us when we stand in his immediate presence, with prematurely breaking the statutes of his house. If through discriminating grace, we should meet our little ones in the kingdom of glory, they will not charge us with folly or presumption, when we took them up in the arms of faith, and presented them before God, by the sprinkling of water and the sign of the cross, in token that they should fight under the banner of Christ, and be his faithful soldiers and servants unto their life's end. The burthen of the song will not be about water baptism, but Worthy is the Lamb who has washed us in his blood, and has made us kings and priests unto God and his Father.

By this time we must have tired our reader's patience, but we trust they will excuse us for the intrusion, when we inform them, that these lines which appear to them desultory, proceed from the investigation of *thirteen* letters sent us on the subject of Baptism, which had they been inserted, would have occupied the whole of one number of the Magazine. It will be perceived that we stand upon the *defensive* side, rather than enter upon a useless, unprofitable, endless contest.

Indeed it is painful to us, and with reluctance that we touch upon such a subject, which has distracted the Church of God for centuries that are past with a *pertinacity of dictation* as to create disgust, tending to vain janglings, and the sowing of discord among brethren, more like fiends than the children of one family. Nevertheless what says the scripture,—Cast out the bond woman and her son, for the son of the bond-woman shall not be heir with the son of the free woman. So then brethren, *we are not children* of the bond-woman but of the free. For in Christ Jesus, neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature. As many therefore as walk according to this rule, PEACE BE ON THEM, AND MERCY, AND UPON THE ISRAEL OF GOD.

London, Lord's Day, August 17.

THE EDITORS.

CORRESPONDENCES ARISING OUT OF THE TEMPORAL HUMAN SOUL PRE-EXISTENT OPINIONS.

THANKS be to God for his UNSPEAKABLE GIFT, the gift of his Son, who was in the bosom of his Father from everlasting; equal in power, might, majesty and dominion. SELF-EXISTENT, without any difference, or inequality, forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself *likewise*, took part of the *same*. Bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh. In soul, and in body, *in all points*, like unto his brethren. Herein is contained the life blood of the Christian system. The whole of revelation must stand or fall by it. And let it be indelibly impressed upon our mind, that there can be no true religion without the *true object of worship*, and which cannot be worshipped unless known.

Consider, Christian reader, the foundation principles of your believing—review them carefully. See that your feet stand firm on the rock of ages. Simply attend to the word of God, which, under the Holy Spirit's teaching, will lead you into all necessary truth. Pay no regard to sects or parties, for the grand heresy of the day is, in denying the dignity of Jesus, and his eternal, divine, distinct personality, and substituting a created humanity. But be not surprised, for it is declared—No man can say Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost. Nevertheless it is written, all the children of God shall be taught of him, and be brought to the knowledge of him, not theoretically but practically in the understanding. He that believeth on the Son of God, hath the witness in himself; he that believeth not God, hath made him a liar, because he believeth not the record that God has given of his Son. And what is the record? "He gave his only begotten Son," not a created being, but the eternal Son of the Father, who lay in his bosom with all the appellation and attribute of the divine nature.

Here is no need of puzzling the weak in faith with metaphysical subtleties, and a long round-about course of unintelligible terms and phrases. Truth once lighted up shines on every thing around it; the same thread of reflection will guide us through the labyrinth of that great mystery, God manifest in the flesh. God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh. All the ancient prophecies foretold that Messiah should be the Eternal Pre-existent Son of God, and man of the seed of the woman—exalted and debased—master and servant—priest and victim—king and subject—immortal and mortal—subject to death, but conqueror over death and hell.

The above introduction took its rise from the receipt of some letters sent us respecting the "*Pre-existent Human Soul of Christ, styled the Glory-man, associated with the Trinity*;" and we are happy to say the high tone used on this mythological subject, is much abated of

its ferocity, and its witty profane jests. There appears to be a submissive turn of mind more for inquiry than dogmatizing; questions are reverently put rather than decisions. Indeed it comes to this, that we must submit, not to the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Spirit teacheth. For of all the wild vagaries that could ever enter into the mind of man, is that of a created *human soul*, existing in an unbounded void, an eternal abyss. An *animal*, made before any thing was made, and to lay in the bosom of the Father as his only begotten Son; and not only so, but this *human soul* acting a part in the drama of the creation, and calling the universe into existence from the mighty chaos, and now governing it and keeping it in order. This is a direct model of the mythological philosophy preserved by *Diogenes Laertius*, a summary of *Pherecydes Syrius's* doctrine concerning the rise of things, and beginning of the world. Jupiter is represented as of a material principle of the purest nature, consisting of the vital vivifying ether, who by his immediate invigorating power, produced and ordered all things in heaven and in earth, who sets upon this immense world, whose eternal hinges are turned up by him.

Jupiter omnipotens rerum, reumque, deumque,
Progenitor, genitrixque.

Let us cast aside all these fabled visionary notions, a sort of fairy kind of creation; and reflect, that a tendency to inquiry, stretched beyond its due bounds racks the labouring overburthened breast, and lead to a strain of madness. How often has it been seen that men of the greatest talent, by an over conceit of themselves, have been left to believe the greatest monstrosities. Those who trust to the strength of their reason, betray often the greatest weakness. Sampson and Peter like, when God from whom all our sufficiency cometh, *leaveth* us to ourselves, our strength departs from us, and we become weak as the most silliest of men. In the deep mysteries of Godliness, to reason rightly is to submit our reason to the wisdom of God. We are then growing wise when we begin to discern how feeble and foolish we are. An absolute *perfection* of understanding is impossible in this state of things; but those who make the nearest approach to it, are such who are not high minded, who have the sense to discern, and the humility to confess their own insufficiency.

A letter signed "*Investigator*," a term is used beyond our understanding, namely, "*The glory-man* was in heaven before this earth was called into existence, and was associated with the Trinity." Now the *glory man* is an expression without any meaning; nor are we partial to the term God man, which ought to be God and man; nor less can we embrace the notion of a *human creature* being made before time, and denominated the Son of God. This is a *dark retreat*, in order to obscure the glory of the eternal

pre-existence of the Son of God ; here is the Arian's and Socinian's subterfuge. But our Christ is the Lord of Glory, the eternal Son of God ; the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. This is a hidden mystery, the wisdom of God in a mystery, which calls forth our devout contemplation and adoration ; for through him we have access by one Spirit unto the Father.

We do not wonder that the above correspondent, like the Arian and Socinian, gnashes his teeth at the creed of Athanasius, in holding up the Son of God as self-existent ; that " he was from eternity co-equal with the Father and the Holy Spirit, as touching his Godhead ; and only inferior as respecting his manhood. God of the substance of the Father, *begotten* before all worlds, who lay in the bosom of the Father ; and man of the *substance* of his mother, born in the world." Take this admirable creed, Christian reader, which deserves to be engraven on a rock, bind it not on your foreheads, but in your bosoms, it will act as a charm at all times to those unbelievers who deny the Personalty of the Son of God, so as to rob him of his self-existence, and pull him from his eternal throne, degrading him into a mere creature. Consider that if Jesus Christ be not self-existent, there is no atonement, no Mediator, for he expressly declares, that if ye believe not that I am, ye shall die in your sins. Athanasius's malediction so much talked about, is no more than a transcript of our blessed Lord's words, and that of the apostle Paul's declaration transmitted to the Galatian converts, and denounced against their corrupting teachers.

As our readers must be aware that this investigation is on a subject that involves our eternal interest, we trust that they will patiently bear with us in our lengthened remarks, being jealous for the honour and dignity of Christ's self-existence ; for if the Son of God be inferior to the Father, the scriptures are a jumble of inconsistencies, and we are gross idolaters. In pursuing this inquiry, it becomes us humbly to apply with reverential awe to the Holy Spirit, that we may know the truth as it is in Jesus. Being assured the inspiration of the Almighty giveth wisdom, and that a man can receive nothing, much less an acquaintance with the mysteries of the Redeemer's kingdom, unless it be given him from above.

London, September 4.

THE EDITORS.

Literary Intelligence.

The Autobiography of a Dissenting Minister will be ready for publication about the middle of October.

"The Country Town," will form the fifth number of the popular and useful series of Treatises on domestic Economy, now publishing by the Rev. Charles B. Tayler, under the title of "Social Evils and their Remedy," and will appear early this month.

Friendship's Offering for 1835, will be published on the 1st of November.