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DOCTRINES OF THE CHURCH IN NEWMAN-STREET
CONSIDERED.

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.

IN considering the Doctrines which have been promulgated through Newman-Street, it is important to remember that Mr. Irving's teaching, respecting the human nature of our Lord, had the distinct sanction of that which they believe to be the Spirit of God. Mr. Irving himself declares, in a letter to Mr. Baxter, that three several testimonies, "in power," were given by Mrs. C. and Miss E. C. to the general correctness of Mr. Irving's statements respecting the human nature of our Lord: and in consequence of Mr. Baxter's opposition to those statements, Mr. Irving was called upon "to maintain them more firmly than ever" (Baxter's Narrative, p. 104, 105). Moreover, in the very same letter which contains this important fact, Mr. Irving says, concerning the flesh of Christ, that it had "a proclivity to the world and to Satan," and that "the law of the flesh was there all present" (Baxter, p. 107).

In order to form a scriptural judgment on these things, it is needful to consider attentively the state in which we, as the descendants of

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Adam, are placed before God. There are three particulars which mark our condition as sinners before Him :—First, Original, or Vicarious Guilt, imputed (or reckoned) to us on account of the transgression of our first parent, of which the 5th chapter of the Romans treats. Secondly, Original Sin, or Indwelling Corruption. And thirdly, Actual Transgression.

The distinction between imputed transgression, and indwelling corruption is often neglected. It may thus be illustrated:—The children of an exile in Siberia, though innocent of rebellion themselves, *might* yet be involved in all the penalties of their parent, and be punished for and on account of *him*. Even so the one transgression of Adam in the garden, exposes all his posterity to be treated by God as transgressors on account of him. The penalty of death would still have impended over them, even though they could have been born pure as angels in themselves.

But, secondly, it soon became apparent that all the *natural* descendants of Adam were not only subject to the penalties which another's transgression had incurred, but that they had also derived from him a corrupted nature, even a law of sin in their members, which the 7th of Romans describes. With a view to manifest this evil, a law was proposed which was "holy, just, and good;" and it was promised that all who kept it should enter into life thereby. But this, instead of saving, worketh death in every one *naturally* born of Adam; so that the commandment ordained to life, is found to be unto death: for instead of delivering from the original penalty, or proving a corrective for indwelling corruption, it rouses into activity the sin that was dormant before, and therefore is ineffectual in leading unto life; not from any defect in itself, but through the sinful weakness of those to whom it is addressed. Thirdly, we have multiplied personal transgressions—the foolish thought, and word, and action; and he that offendeth in one point is guilty of all.

Now it is written of the Lord Jesus Christ, that after the fulness of time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made *under the law*. He was miraculously conceived; and "THEREFORE," though deriving His manhood from a sinful Mother, was born spotless and holy, even as it is written, "That *holy thing* which shall be

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born of thee, shall be called the Son of God." Nothing can be more express than this declaration; and God could not call that *holy*, which, standing by itself and unbenefited by mediation, had in itself "a proclivity to the world and to Satan, and the law of the flesh, all there present."

There is no difficulty in discerning this.—Only let it be seen from the Scripture what sin is, and then exclude it from the person of Immanuel, and we have the sure basis of truth whereon to rest, believing where we cannot understand.

The Lord Jesus was as free from indwelling sin as from actual transgression: yet nevertheless He was a member (so to speak) of the exiled family, and was therefore born subject to their penalties. But He was made under the law; and being essentially holy, He was able to fulfil the law, and so to rise above the penalties to which He had become subject on account of Adam's guilt. He was able to enter into life by keeping the commandments; and the very same law which had been death to every other, was unto Him life, even as it is written, "If there could have been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law." On account of our sinful flesh, to us the law was "weak;" but strong unto Him, because He had no sinful flesh, but was essentially the Holy One. He learned obedience in the midst of suffering, and was proved to be the righteous One, who might have entered into life by Himself alone, but who preferred to lay down His life that he might take it again, that so, through the knowledge of Him, many might be justified.

All that the soul of a saint recognises as true in the writings of Mr. Irving, respecting Christ being in "that condition of being and region of existence which is proper to a sinner," will be found to be altogether comprised in the fact of His being born under the curse of the exiled family, vicariously incurred. But He rose out of this "region" through the power of His own inherent holiness; and therefore never would have come "into that experience into God's action which is proper for a sinner," unless He had chosen to abide it for the sake of others. And when He had chosen this, then it pleased the Lord to bruise Him, and to lay upon Him iniquity; a burthen

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which He felt just as if it had been His own iniquity: without having any sin, He was made to feel the consequences of sin, even so as to say, "Mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up; they are more than the hairs of my head, therefore my heart faileth me." But this was not because He was "in our region of existence," but because he was pleased, whilst being there, to become the sin-bearer for others.

Perhaps no text is more important in connection with this subject than the 3rd verse of Rom viii. "God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh." A Believer need not be told what "sin in the flesh" or indwelling corruption means; it is another name for his natural self; and God could do no otherwise than deal with it in judgment; but He judged it in His dear Son, as bearing it *representatively* for us. The word "condemned" feebly conveys the meaning. God passed the sentence of death upon it; or (as it were) transfixed it with the nail of death when Christ was crucified, even as it is written, "Our old man was crucified with Him;" so that a Believer can rejoice over it as a crucified enemy, which, however it may struggle, shall not prevail. In this passage then, it is God who is said to inflict the punishment—Christ, as the mediator, to receive it on account of our "sin in the flesh"—and we, as Believers, to know this enemy crucified with Him, i. e. virtually destroyed.

Mr. Irving frequently quotes this text; but, unobserved, he applies it as though it were Christ condemning sin in his own flesh, instead of God condemning it in the person of Christ; whereby Christ is exalted into the throne of judgment, and His humiliation as the sin-bearer set aside. And this is a just example of the manner in which mediation and atonement are overthrown by this evil system.*

I will only add, that not only have none of the published statements been recalled, but the doctrines are still taught by the missionaries from Newman Street, as any one who has an opportunity of probing them with pertinent questions will readily testify. In a Tract written by their present missionary† in Dublin, the doctrine of imputed

* Irving's Human Nature of Christ. p. 14.

† Hardman. pp. 68 & 83.

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righteousness is called “a fiction,” and it is said that “Christ assumed our very fallen nature to expel sin therefrom.”

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It must be manifest to all who know even a little of what is now passing in the Church of God, that the present is a time of perplexity and sorrow to very many; and that some have been shaken to the foundations of their faith. Indeed we might be discouraged very greatly, if we did not know that the Church, like the Bush which burned without being consumed, shall surely be preserved through every trial, because of the grace which was given it in Christ Jesus before the world was. In our time of weakness, we have need more especially to remember the grace—to comfort the feeble-minded, and earnestly to resist the least departure from the doctrines of Christ.

The Church of God, as being preserved in Christ, have certain blessings, which time cannot alter, nor circumstances change. “They are the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.” It is true even of the little children, that “they know the Father.” “Sonship” has been, since the resurrection of our Lord, the characteristic distinction of the Household of Faith. The holy men of old who lived before the incarnation of the Lord, though sons as to God’s purpose, yet, as to their *felt* and *manifested* relationship to Him, differed nothing from servants (Gal. iv.) But when the Son of God was sent forth, and redemption had been effected by His death, the time of manifested adoption was come. The character of the Lord’s teaching to His disciples, which prospectively reached forward to the time when they should be able to understand and realize His instructions, clearly shows that they were henceforth to consider themselves as the family of a Father which was in heaven; and as soon as the perfectness of their redemption was proved by His resurrection from the dead, His

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first words refer to the blessed relationship which was now substantiated for ever:—"Go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father and *your* Father, and to my God and *your* God:" for God had sent forth His Son to redeem them, that they might *receive* the adoption of sons.

But the disciples, even after He had thus declared the consequence of His resurrection, were not yet able to realize the truth of this relationship; and they were commanded by the Lord to wait at Jerusalem for the promise of the Father, which, said He, "ye have heard of me." What this promise was, we learn from the 14th of John. "And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you for ever." "The time cometh when I shall no more speak unto you in proverbs, but I shall show you plainly of the Father." They were to receive the Spirit of adoption. They had received the adoption of sons by the death and resurrection of Him IN WHOM they were adopted; and *because* they were sons, God sent forth the Spirit of His Son into their hearts, crying Abba, Father. Here was the fulfilment of the promise. The 8th of Romans, and the 4th of Galatians, describe the eternal immutable heritage of all Believers in all possible circumstances; and they mark the possession of the Spirit of adoption as being a *distinctive characteristic* of this dispensation of Sonship; so that every one who has the Spirit of adoption, has received the promise of the Father—has the *Comforter dwelling in him*—is baptized with the Holy Spirit, even though there should be no other sign of His indwelling presence. It was on the day of Pentecost, that the Apostles received that Spirit "who was to abide with them for ever," even the Spirit of adoption, who enabled them for the first time to say (what none before could say), "Abba, Father:" and whosoever has since been enabled to utter the same cry, has received a Pentecostal gift. The same may be said also of such passages as the following:—"He which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God; who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts" (2 Cor. i. 21). And again, "In whom also, after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise which is the earnest of our inheritance" (Eph. i. 14).

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We live the life of faith in proportion as we practically realize, according to the mind of God, the circumstances in which we are before Him; for faith seeth things as He seeth them. It is, therefore of unspeakable importance to know "the things which have been freely given to us" of Him, especially at the present time, when this endowment of the Church has been doubted and denied; for it has been frequently said of late (and perhaps more frequently imagined), that the Church has ceased to possess the promise of the Father. Yet we could not feel that God was our Father, nor know our union with the Lord, without the Spirit. The experimental knowledge of these relationships, with all their practical consequences, depends entirely on the personal presence of the Spirit, of whom it was said, that He should "abide for ever;" so that if the Holy Spirit had been withdrawn as soon as what are usually called His *miraculous* manifestations ceased, the Church of God must, for ages past, have sunk back into bondage under the elements of the world, and known nothing of their adoption, nor of the blessedness of their union with Christ. But the experience of true Believers, in every age since the day of Pentecost, sufficiently disproves this. They have rejoiced in their adoption as children, and have known that the Spirit helpeth their infirmities.

One of the chief blessings which flow from His presence, is the gift of a spiritual understanding. It is very frequently mentioned in Scripture:—"I cease not to pray that ye might be filled with all spiritual understanding" (Col. i). "The Lord give thee understanding in all things" (2 Tim. ii). "The Son of God hath given us an understanding" (1 John v). "The eyes of your understanding being enlightened" (Eph. i). "In understanding be ye men" (1 Cor. xx). "Be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is" (Eph. v). It is the precious gift of God to His children, in order that they may be enabled to "judge" and "prove"* all things aright, otherwise their judgment must be in the flesh; but it is written, "The Son of God hath given us an understanding;" and the measure of it will

* "Prove all things, hold fast that which is good." \ "The spiritual man judgeth all things."

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doubtless be suited to the requirements of the time, in the case of every one who really looks to Him ; so that he may confidently prove all things and not walk in uncertainty : for God hath not given the spirit of fear, but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.

And if we do indeed believe that “many false spirits have gone out into the world,” we may well understand the necessity of this gift. If God had not given a *spiritual* understanding whereby to judge, we must have received every thing untried (for the natural mind could profit nothing), and so we must *nessarily* have been deceived whenever Satan transformed himself into an angel of light. And if we do not estimate our privileges, and refuse to obey the commandment to be men in understanding ;—if we mistrust our power when the Lord has spoken, what is this but unbelief?—It is not humility, but it is doubting the truth and faithfulness of God.

A Believer’s knowledge may be limited ; but every Believer possesses some *certain* knowledge. There may be mysteries which he cannot comprehend ; but though unable to explain, he *understands* that God has revealed them, and therefore knows them to be true, and believes. He possesses *certain* knowledge, and this knowledge is as a test whereby he may prove other things. And therefore it is written, “Though an angel from heaven preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.” “If any bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed.” The character of the claims which have lately been advanced in Newman-Street, has driven back many Believers from considering and judging them as they ought. Yet the very greatness of the claim makes it the more necessary that it should be judged ; and though our right to judge has been denied, and although they have commanded us not to judge but to believe, yet in this we have to obey God rather than man.

The claim is this :—that an ordered Church has again been formed by the Lord, having not only Elders, Pastors, and Evangelists immediately appointed by the Spirit, but having Apostles also. Now, if this were so, we surely might expect the signs of an Apostle : but supposing them to be withheld in judgment upon unbelief (though evidence has never been refused by the Lord, except when super-

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fluous and unneeded), yet the moral signs could not be wanting, and they are these;—in doctrine, sound speech that could not be condemned; in practice, separation from the systems of this present evil age.

Infallible truth in doctrinal statement is the least we could expect from a Church under direct Apostolic government; even as the Church at Jerusalem was able to say—“It seemeth good to the Holy Ghost and to us.” If the Lord were pleased to reconstitute an Apostolical Church, it would doubtless be found to be a sure witness of His mind in things in which His children might need instruction. It would give no uncertain, no erring testimony. It would speak the things which become sound doctrine.

The doctrines of the Church in Newman-Street have been widely promulgated through the “Morning Watch,” and the writings of Mr. Irving. We may therefore refer to these publications as affording a satisfactory criterion of judgment.

In a paper written by Mr. Irving in 1832*, it is said that the truth, according to his views, has not been advanced for the last 1500 years. His doctrines therefore profess to be new. If they referred merely to some point of prophetic inquiry or scriptural information, such a statement might possibly be true. At any rate, it need not create alarm. But his statements do not refer to any point of secondary importance; they concern the vital and fundamental doctrines of the Gospel of Christ.

Perhaps there is nothing on which real Christians have in all ages been more entirely agreed, than in their sentiments respecting sin; that it consists not in the outward act, nor in the deliberate purpose of the soul only, but in the secret unseen propensity or bias of the human mind. It is a thing which the children of God daily know and feel to be *in itself* sin, though not imputed to those who believe, *for Christ's sake*. It is their burthen and their sorrow; for it lusteth against the Spirit, so that they cannot do the things that they would. “The concupiscence of the flesh, against which the good Spirit lusteth,

See Frazer's Magazine for March and April, 1832.

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is not only the punishment of sin, and the cause of sin, but it is also sin" (Augustine). "This infection of nature doth remain, yea, in them that are regenerated; whereby the lust of the flesh, called in Greek *φρόνημα σαρκός* (which some do expound, the wisdom; some, sensuality; some, the affection; some, the desire of the flesh), is not subject to the law of God. And although there is no condemnation for them that believe and are baptized, yet the Apostle doth confess that concupiscence or lust hath of itself the nature of sin" (English Articles).

So also the French Protestant confession:—"We believe that this *taint is truly sin*, because it makes all and every man, not even those little ones excepted that lie hid in their mother's womb, guilty in the sight of God. We affirm, also, that this taint, even after baptism, is truly sin, as far as refers to the fault of it." The confession then goes on to state, that though sin, it is not imputed to them that believe.

So also the Lutheran confession:—"These defects, and this concupiscence are a thing that is under condemnation, and in its own nature deserving of death. And this original taint is truly sin, bringing men under condemnation."

And lastly the confession of Saxony:—"This whole corruption we affirm to be sin, and not simply the punishment of sin, and a thing indifferent. *Ambiguities are to be avoided in the Church.* Therefore we expressly call these evils corruption, which is often called by ancient writers 'evil concupiscence.' This evil concupiscence we affirm to be sin; and we assert that this whole doctrine concerning sin, as it is set forth and determined in our Churches, is a doctrine which has had the perpetual consent of the true Church of God."

Here are the testimonies of many saints. But the testimony of the Scripture is conclusive: for it teaches us that this corruption both when resisted, and, what is more, when so dormant as to be unknown even to ourselves, is sin in the sight of God. "I had not *known* sin but by the law, for I had not *known* lust except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet." The law did not create the sin, it did not create the evil tendency; but it manifested its existence, and made the

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Apostle know that sin was in him. And, therefore, the very object of the chapter is to shew that since restraint and resistance could effect no change in our bodies of sin, restraint and resistance could, therefore, open no way of deliverance or hope. It is this fact which is made by God the foundation of His scheme of mercy. The necessity of God's creating "A new thing in the earth" (for these are the words in which Scripture describes the miraculous generation of the Lord), that so we might be made new creatures *in Him*, is grounded on this truth of the evil tendency's being in itself sin. But this is that which is denied in the following words:—"I deny that it is unholiness to be tempted through the mind, provided the will yield not to the evil suggestion, provided the will consent not to the evil consciousness" (Irving's *Orthodox Doctrine*, p. 153).

If it had been said that the guilt of unholiness was not charged upon those who resisted the evil propensity, because Christ had borne the guilt instead of them, every Christian heart would joyfully have responded to the blessed truth. It is, indeed, true, to use the words of Mr. Carlile in the "Morning Watch," that "No sin is in the Scriptures imputed to the saints for having a law in their members warring against the law of their mind, so long as by the power of God's Spirit dwelling in them, they resist its influence." This is true, and more likewise. But why is it *not* imputed to *them*? only because it *was* imputed to Christ. But if Christ had had these sinful propensities, where was the Lamb provided for Him? He would have had no sin-bearer. And yet Mr. Carlile goes on to say that these evil passions did exist in our Lord's human nature (p. 136, "Morning Watch," No. ix).

The following are the words of Mr. Irving ("Doctrine of our Lord's Human Nature") respecting the human nature of our Lord *after* it was taken into personal union with Himself.*

* I am hardly justified in using words which seem to give to Christ's human nature an abstract existence apart from Himself. He derived His human nature from His mother; but then it was her nature, not His. There was no human nature which could be called His, until He was made flesh and dwelt among men as Immanuel.

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“Conceive every variety of human passion, every variety of human affection, every variety of human error, every variety of human wickedness which hath ever been realized inherent in the humanity, and combined against the holiness of Him who was not only a man but the Son of Man, the heir of all the infirmities which man entaileth upon his children” (p. 17). “Was He conscious then to the motions of the flesh and of the fleshly mind? In so far as any regenerate man is conscious of them, when under the operation of the Holy Ghost.”“I hold it to be the surrender of the whole question to say that he was not conscious of, engaged with, and troubled by, every evil disposition which inhereth in the fallen manhood, which overpowereth every man that is not born of God; which overpowereth not Christ, only because He was born or generated of God” (p. 111).

“Manhood, after the fall, broke out into sins of every name and aggravation, corrupt to the very heart’s core, and from the centre of its inmost will sending forth streams black as hell. This is the human nature which every man is clothed upon withal, which the Son of Man was clothed upon withal, bristling thick and strong with sin, like the hairs upon the porcupine.”.....“I stand forth and say, that the teeming fountain of the heart’s vileness was opened on Him; and the Augean stable of human wickedness was given him to cleanse; and the furious wild beasts of human passions were appointed Him to tame. This is the horrible pit and the miry clay out of which He was brought” (p. 126). “I believe it to be most orthodox, and of the substance and essence of the orthodox faith, to hold that Christ could say until his resurrection, ‘Not I, but sin that tempteth me in my flesh;’ just as after the resurrection, He could say, ‘I am separate from sinners.’ And, moreover, I believe that the only difference between His body of humiliation and His body of resurrection, is in this very thing—that sin inhered in the human nature, making it mortal and corruptible till that very time that He rose from the dead” (p. 127).

If Christ had been “troubled by every evil disposition which inhereth in the fallen manhood,” and if He could have said, like the Believer, “Not I, but sin that tempteth me in my flesh,” how was not Christ personally a sinner? There are only two ways in which

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this question can be answered by those who maintain these doctrines. They must either deny that the evil propensity is *in itself* sin; or else consider the human nature of the Lord as something distinct from Himself *personally*. The last is very plainly the doctrine maintained in the "Treatise on the Human Nature." I suppose a hundred quotations might be made therefrom, in which the name Christ is given not to Jesus, as being God and Man in one person, but to the Word acting in and surrounded by the flesh as by a garment. The whole purport of the book appears to be this, to represent the Incarnation as the imprisonment (so to speak) of the Eternal Word in sinful flesh, against which He had continually to struggle, just as the Holy Spirit in us is *separate* from, and struggles against, our evil nature. The flesh of our Lord, to use Mr. Irving's illustration, stood to Him in the same relation as a pit to the person who is in it, or as a garment to the person whom it covers; and thus the true doctrine of the incarnation is denied.

For the true doctrine of the incarnation is this—that God and Man were *ONE* Person in Christ; that all His actions were not those of God *simply*, nor of Man *simply*, but of God and Man united in One Person, never to be divided. "Two whole and perfect natures, the Godhead and Manhood, were joined together in One Person, never to be divided, whereof is *one* Christ, very God and very Man." Let us not then be deluded by the repeated assertion, that He was "sinless in sinful flesh;" for the explanation of this either alters the definition of sin, or otherwise explains away the reality of the union of two natures in *one* Person. If there had been sin in either nature, it must have been sin in Immanuel.

But the distinctive characteristic of the Lord Jesus, in being the "Word made flesh," was little recognized by Mr. Irving. If any thing is plain from the Scripture, it is this—that the Lord Jesus, from the moment of His birth, and long before "He was anointed with the Holy Ghost and with power," was, in virtue of His miraculous generation, the Holy One:—"The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; THEREFORE also, that *Holy Thing* which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." It was not until thirty years after this that

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He was baptized with the Spirit.* But Mr. Irving denies that Christ's holiness was derived from an "extraordinary" work of the Holy Ghost, different from that experienced by Believers, and traces His holiness to an "*anointing of the same kind*" (p. 140) which Believers receive: otherwise, he continues, "the fruits of holiness in us cannot be after the same completeness." Here then there are two dangerous perversions of the truth: for first, the holiness of the Lord Jesus is made to depend, not upon His miraculous generation, but in His being "anointed"—i. e. baptized with the Holy Ghost and with power; and secondly, it is implied that the fruits of holiness in us can be equally complete with those of the Lord Jesus; whereas we know that His were perfect *in themselves*, and that our's are only acceptable *through Him*: "Ye also as lively stones are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God *through Jesus Christ*." Such is the testimony of Scripture; but the whole tendency of the paragraph from which I am quoting, as, indeed, of the whole work, is to bring down the Lord Jesus from the essential peculiarity of His position as Mediator, and to assign to Him the characteristics of those who are "*adopted in Him*." The two following passages supply sufficient evidence of this:—"It is an heretical doctrine that Christ's generation was anything more than the implantation of that Holy-Ghost life in the members of His human nature, which is implanted in us by regeneration" (p. 140). And again, "He was conscious to the motions of the flesh and of the fleshly mind, in so far as any regenerate man, when under the operation of the Holy Ghost, is conscious of them" (p. 111). May we look at these things with a holy humble jealousy for the preservation of the comforting and sanctifying truths of God; for there can

* The Holy Spirit, when He descended and abode upon the Lord Jesus, became His guide in service, as it is written, "He was led by the Spirit into the wilderness." "Through the Spirit He gave commandment unto His Apostles." The truth of His being Immanuel, God manifest in the flesh, was *proved* by His ability to follow perfectly and without any failure, the leadings of the Holy Spirit. What a Believer is able to do imperfectly (Gal. v. 17.) by regeneration, He was able to do perfectly without regeneration in the natural state in which He was born into the world: naturally we live contrary to the Spirit; whereas His natural condition as Man was not contrary to the Spirit.

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be no false doctrine respecting the person of our Lord, which does not affect the very foundations of our salvation.

If Christ could say until His resurrection, "Not I, but sin that tempteth me in my flesh;" then not only would He have been unable to say, "I give *my flesh* for the life of the world" (for it would have been a *blemished sacrifice*), but He Himself would have become individually deserving of death; so that, to use the words of Mr. Irving, He "*must have died*" (p. 91). Now, the Lord's own words seem purposely intended to set aside such a doctrine: "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I may take it again. *No one (οὐδείς)* taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father." "Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and He would presently give me more than twelve legions of angels; but how then shall the Scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?"

Nothing can be more important than rightly to distinguish between Christ, in His own independent individual character, and as He is in His official relation to us. If we can conceive of Him, apart from the responsibilities which attached to Him as Head of the Church, we can understand how, as the Holy One, He was ever ready to enter into the Holy Place without paying any price for the remission of sin. But He did not enter thus: He entered as the High Priest, who had also become the Head and Representative of His body the Church; and in this character it was that He could not enter without blood (Heb. ix. 12). It was needful that He should die:—"Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth *alone*." The unclean state into which a clean person was brought by touching, even unawares, the body of an unclean man or beast, very clearly indicates what the contracted defilement of our High Priest must have been. Without having any of the sin, He had every consequence of the sin, in trouble of mind as well as suffering of body. He felt as though the sins were His own, "so that He was not able to look up:" and it is in this respect only that the type of the goats in Lev. xvi. falls short in illustrating the manner in which sin was imputed to the Holy Lamb of God.

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But in the treatise above referred to, it is stated that these sufferings were not inflicted upon Him “because He was *considered* that which really He was not,” viz. a sinner; in other words, that He was not punished exclusively for *our* sins, but because of that condition of being into which He had come. Now, it is fully allowed, as has been stated in the preface, that He was born into our “condition of being” in the sense of being born out of Paradise.* And also that He *exposed Himself to the danger* of receiving all the punishment which followed upon the imputation of Adam’s offence: but though exposed to it, yet He rose above it all, because He was by birth the Holy One, made under the law; who did not, as we, find it weak through the flesh, but effectually “ordained unto life,” because His flesh was holy. “This do and thou shalt live,” was unto Him a word of delivering power. So far, therefore, from His having been punished on account of the condition of being into which He had come, He would not have been punished at all, unless He had freely chosen, whilst standing as the “justified One,” to offer atonement to the Father, and to become the substitute and sin-bearer of all who believe in His name. But this is the blessed truth which Mr. Irving thus denies:—“The man who will put a fiction, whether legal or theological—a make-believe into his idea of God, I have done with: he “who will make God consider a person that which he is not, and act “towards him as that which he is not, I have done with. Either “Christ was in the condition of the sinner, was in that form of being “towards which it is God’s eternal law to act as He acted towards “Christ, or He was not. If He was, then the point at issue is ceded, “for that is what I am contending for. If He was not, and God “treated Him as if He had been so;—if that is the meaning of their “imputation and substitution, or by whatever name they call it, away “with it from my theology for ever.” (p. 116).

* Hunger, thirst, pain, &c. may fall on us, as men, in three ways. I.—As the mere consequence of being out of Paradise, and not having our natural wants properly supplied. This was experienced by the Lord Jesus. II.—The pain, &c. which is the naturally appointed result of transgression, or the working of indwelling corruption. This was never experienced by the Lord. III.—Pain, &c. as a judicial infliction from God. This was experienced by the Lord, when He was bruised as the sin-bearer.

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Here again there is not the slightest appearance of the distinction being recognized between Christ, as He was *personally*, and as He was *relatively* in connection with His Church. By becoming responsible for His bride, He *did* bring Himself into a condition, in which it was according to God's eternal law, to act towards Him, as being what *personally* He was not,—i. e. a sinner. "He died the Just *for* the unjust." "God made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God *in Him*." If God's law allows not the substitution of the innocent for the guilty, it is quite plain that the doctrine of vicarious sacrifice is at an end, and so every foundation of a sinner's hope is swept away for ever.

It is vain to answer and say to an anxious soul, earnest to find in the Scripture the warrant of its salvation, "That the sufferings of Christ procure me salvation by giving me an object of faith in God's love, in all extremities and under all conditions: and by giving me a proof that a person into my conditions brought, and in my conditions subsisting, may through faith, be brought out victorious in every conflict" (p. 166). This may be true, but where is there hope in this? It is a just and reasonable thing for God to say of His Holy One, "Because He hath set His love upon me, *therefore* will I deliver Him; I will set Him on high, because He hath known my name;" but there is no such reason for His delivering a sinful wretch whose will is worse than his actions, and whose desires are worse than his will. The taint of corrupt earthly affections is the hindrance. Where is the atonement for them?

The Scripture answers that Christ paid, as an atoning price, His own blood, whereby all who believe are justified from all things, and have peace with God: for the work of the Lord Jesus has a two-fold aspect: first,—towards God, as necessarily *requiring expiation*, and secondly,—towards the worshipper, as *receiving reconciliation* thereby. But Mr. Irving answers in the very words, and with the very argument of Socinianism, grounded on the unchangeableness of God; for he says, "that atonement and redemption have no reference to God; they are the names for the bearing of Christ's work upon the sinner, and have no respect to its bearing upon the Godhead."

Now it is wonderful that any one who does not utterly reject the

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Old Testament Scriptures should think such a thought as this. When the Lord God smelleth the sweet savour of Noah's offering, and says, that He will curse no more, what are we taught as to the *atonement* power of sacrifice? What are we taught by the High Priest entering within the veil and sprinkling, *not the people*, but the mercy-seat, that *he might not die*? Surely in this act the blood had reference to God *only*. "Go quickly," said Moses, "make atonement, for wrath is gone out." Indeed, out of the many places in which the word "atonement" is used in the Old Testament, there is, I believe, not one instance in which it is not used in reference to God. The holiness of our God required *expiation*; it needed an atoning sacrifice. He is unchangeably holy; though it is quite true, also, that He is unchangeably Love; and therefore His love freely provided* what man was unable to procure, even a Lamb without blemish and without spot. He found the ransom. The atoning work of the Mediator was the result, and not the cause of His love. But the Scripture, while it testifies of the love of God in providing the sacrifice, testifies as plainly of its necessity in relation to His holiness:—"To declare, I say, at this time His righteousness, that He might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus." The righteousness of the Father in having remitted past sins, as those of Abraham and the fathers, was vindicated by the atoning offering of the Son. It justified the exercise of love by Him who had said, that He would by no means clear the guilty.

One part then of the work of the Lord Jesus is entirely set aside in this treatise; but if we inquire as to the result in reconciling those who believe, the answer is, "That it is no reconciliation of individuals, " but a reconciliation of human nature. It is not thine, it is not mine, " it is not Christ's, but it is the common unity of our being. Bare He " the sins of human nature? He bare the sins of all men. Bare He the " infirmities of human nature? He bare the infirmities of all men." (p. 95.) So, that if a sinner inquire respecting reconciliation with God, he must be told, not of the *blood*, whereby ALL WHO BELIEVE are justi-

* And Isaac said unto his father, "Behold the fire and the wood; but where is the lamb for a burnt offering? And Abraham said, My Son, God will provide Himself a lamb for a burnt offering."

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fied from all things ; but of the reconciliation of human nature carried, by means of the incarnation of the Son, through suffering and through death, and so at length reconciled unto God.*

The love of God towards the world, as declared in John iii. 16, is indeed a most precious truth : but the Scripture no where speaks of human nature being reconciled to God, nor of all mankind being reconciled, in the sense of having their sins borne by Christ. It can be said of the Church only, that He bore their sins in His own body on the accursed tree. The scape-goat typifies His relation, not to the world, but to the Church, even to those who believe in His name ; so that not only is the work of the Lord Jesus towards the Father set aside by Mr. Irving, but the result in blessing to the Church is done away, by its being represented as nothing more than the reconciliation of human nature ; nor can I see that the value of the blood and the perfecting of the Church by the One sacrifice, is recognized even in name.

Indeed the distinctive *value* of Christ's blood is unequivocally denied. The Scriptures speak of it as the *precious* blood of Christ—the blood of the Son of God. But the following are the words of Mr. Irving : “ The atonement, upon this popular scheme, is made to consist in suffering, and the amount of the suffering is cried up to infinity. Well, let these preachers, for I will not call them divines or theologians, broker-like, cry up their article—it will not do ; it is but the sufferings of a perfectly holy man, treated by God and by men as if He were a transgressor ” (Doctrines of Human Nature, 95, 96).

I would make no remark on the language, but would only observe that there is clearly no recognition of the *value* of the blood, as being the blood of Immanuel. “ The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten

* It is obvious that Mr. Irving assumes that all mankind were united to the Lord Jesus because He had a common nature with them. But the possession of a common nature is not *union*. Two vines planted side by side have a *common nature*, for they are both vines ; but there is no *union*, unless I could so insert the fibres of one into the other, as for nourishment to be communicated between them. The Lord Jesus then has a common nature with all men ; but is united, and that through the Spirit, with those only who believe, even His body, the Church.

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of the Father), full of grace and truth." And again, "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which *we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled* of the Word of life: for the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and show unto you that eternal life which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us," &c. This is the testimony of the Apostle John as to the nature of the Person who suffered and shed His blood. He saw in those sufferings something more than the sufferings merely of a perfectly holy man. But when the mind of any one has once been drawn to disbelieve or misconceive of the great mystery of the Incarnation, and to regard the Divine and Human nature as separate, in the same way in which the Holy Spirit is separate from the bodies of those in whom He dwells, we can easily see how such a mind would almost necessarily fall into such conclusions as these.*

* "It is an heretical doctrine that Christ's generation was something more than the implantation of that Holy-Ghost life in the members of His human nature, which is implanted in us by regeneration." (Irving's Cath. Confession, p. 140).

It has been observed by Mr. Goode, in a recent publication, that the real character of these doctrines is detected with the more difficulty, on account of the use of ordinary terms in new senses. "Atonement," which is the work of Jesus as Son of Man towards the Father, whereby a power of salvation indefinitely extensible was left in the hands of the Father for Him to apply according to His own good pleasure, is used as if necessarily equivalent to "reconciliation," which is only true of those who have been brought nigh by the foolishness of preaching, and made children of God by faith in Jesus; and "Redemption," in its relation to the saints who believe, is described by Mr. Irving as being, not the purchase of the whole man, in body, soul, and spirit unto God, and therefore unto faith, holiness, and everlasting deliverance; but it is made to consist in the deliverance of the human will out of bondage: and the way it is said to be effected is this;—"The person of the Word did take a human will under these very bondages into union with Himself, and acting therein, did deliver it completely out of all these oppressions of the devil, the world, and the flesh; which, if it were true, would have caused the Lord Jesus to need redemption as we do, because this human will was included in, and not separate from His Person. *Substitution* is His human nature, being considered as the substitute or representative of the whole human race, so that His human nature being brought in all things into a state of obedience to His divine nature, the whole human race were made *at one* with God" (pp. 113—117). The *sacrifice* of Christ is the mortification of the evil propensities of His human nature, terminating in the death of that human nature (13, 14, &c. Orthodox Doctrine). In connection with Mr. I's views of "Substitution," it is needful to remind the reader of what has been already said; that the possession of a common nature is not the same as *union*, and consequently that there is no union between *mankind* and *the Lord Jesus* in the flesh.

However much individuals in this party may differ from one another in their modes of expression, the same leading tenet is held by all of them. Mr. Camp-

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These are the doctrines contained in the writings which (as never having been disowned) are identified with Newman-Street in the estimation of the Church at large. These are some of the things which, on the ground of the Holy Spirit's having departed from the Church, we are commanded not to judge. But we do judge them as utterly contrary to the word of God, our sure and blessed rule. The least that can be said of them is, that they virtually deny the reality of the Incarnation, whereby God and man were made One Person—that they set aside the work of the Son towards the Father—that they mis-state its aspect towards the world, and deny its efficient application to the Church—that they identify the state of the Lord Jesus with that of a Believer, and the privileges of the Church with those of the world.

One of the steps to these things has been a rash attempt to *explain*, where we ought to *believe*, because we know that God hath said it. It is written, "Great is the mystery of Godliness—God was manifest in the flesh:" and again, "No one knoweth the Son but the Father." Let us ever remember this, if we are *obliged*, in defence of the truth, to write or speak of these things.

And why should we attempt to explain (when Scripture has not explained it) the manner of the union of God and man in one person, in whom two distinct natures were so marvellously combined as to render ONE Being only, even Immanuel, responsible for the actings of both alike. If we fancy that we have succeeded in explaining it satisfactorily to our foolish minds, it only proves that we have lost the truth. It is sufficient for us to receive by faith the stream of blessing which flows from knowing that unto us a Son is born, even a babe in a manger, whose name is called the everlasting Father. And it is our blessing also to learn practically, in comfort to our souls, that He was in all points tempted like as we are, *yet without sin*. This is written for us to *believe*, whether or not we are able to explain: and the poor

bell's expressions are, "Sinful flesh, flesh requiring to be overcome, having in Christ the same nature and *tendency* as in us, which had to be stamped with condemnation on account of its condition of *enmity against God*, a foe difficult to contend with." Mr. Erskine's are, "The taint of the fall, the rebellious body, tendencies opposite to God's character," &c.; and the Morning Watch teems with papers on this subject, upholding Mr. Irving's views. (Goode, p. 39).

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in spirit will receive the comfort of it, and at the same time believe what the Scriptures testify, that nothing which the Scriptures mark as sinful, that no sinful desire, was either known by Him or was in Him.* “He *knew* no sin,” (2 Cor. v. 21). “Sin was not in Him,” (1 John iii. 5). He was the Holy One from His mother’s womb; and when He was “anointed by the Holy Spirit” (Isaiah lxi.), it was not that He might be made holy or maintained in holiness, but that He might fulfil the work which the Father had given Him to do. And so it

* The following are the observations of Mr. Goode, in a recent publication:—“But it is said that if this view of the matter be correct, Christ was not ‘in all points tempted like as we are,’ for He was not tempted by evil inclinations; and therefore that this view overthrows all the comfort and encouragement to be derived from the doctrine of the sympathy of Christ. Now observe the unavoidable consequence of this reasoning.—If it be necessary that Christ should have had evil inclinations to contend with, in order to know the strength of the temptations that assail us, then it is necessary that he should have committed actual sin; for it will not be denied, that the strength of the temptation to commit a sin which has been for some time habitually indulged, is much greater than such a temptation when the sin has never been indulged. Every *actual* sinner then must despair of obtaining the sympathy of Christ in the temptations that assail *Him*. He must say, ‘Christ cannot sympathise with me, for He has never committed sin, and therefore cannot know how strong my temptations are.’ To make out this doctrine then, that Christ could not sympathise with us, unless He had been in all respects circumstanced as we are, it must be affirmed that Christ had evil *habits*, as well as evil *inclinations*; for if this doctrine were true, He could not sympathise with a man, who, after a long life of indulgence in sin, is tempted to repeat his sins, unless He had Himself committed sin in the same way.

“The assertion, that temptations to sin are no temptations to one who has no propensity or inclinations to sin to second them, is contradicted by this one fact, that *such* persons have *fallen* under those temptations. The pressure of the besieging temptation is not less because there is nothing within to give it admission into the soul. The governor of a fortress (if I may be allowed the illustration) that had been fiercely besieged, but was prepared at every point of attack, and had none within to aid his assailants, would know full well how to sympathise with the commander of one, that, when similarly attacked, had no sufficient power of resistance, and also had a betrayer within its own walls.”

A general assertion made by those who hold these doctrines, is, that *Incarnation and union is the principle of Justification; and that it is erroneous to hold that our completeness is through Substitution.*

It is quite plain that one who believes that justification comes by union with Jesus in the flesh through incarnation, cannot think that those who believe are *justified by His blood*. He deceives the world by saying that those on whom (according to the Scriptures) the wrath of God abideth, are justified—i. e. cleared from all things by the Incarnation; and deprives the Church of its distinctive privilege of having died and risen with Christ. The circumcision, death, and resurrection of the elect in Him, as unfolded in the Ephesians and Colossians—i. e. the state of the Church, not in themselves, but in their Head—is either not regarded, or is denied by those who hold these doctrines; and thus the great instrument is lost whereby is wrought practical circumcision and death to the world, viz. the testimony to the past operation of God, whereby not only Jesus, but all who believe in Jesus, have died and have risen again

IN HIM.

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is written, "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord hath *anointed me to preach* good tidings unto the meek" (Is. lxi.). "And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, and *shall make Him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord*" (Is. xi.). "He was *led by the Spirit* into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil" (Matthew). By the Holy Spirit He gave commandments to His Apostles whom He had chosen.

He was tempted of the devil; but the temptation was external, and the prince of this world could find nothing in Him. "It is no sin to be tempted;"—such was the temptation of our Lord. But there are temptations which *are* sinful, even those which arise from, or are combined with the easily excited evil in ourselves; and it is these of which the Apostle James speaks: "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God; for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth He any man; but every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust and enticed." Nevertheless, when resisted and mortified, through the Spirit, these temptations are not imputed as sin to those who believe, for Christ's sake. On the contrary, it is said, "Blessed is He that endureth temptation." With such temptations, Believers have to struggle daily; and one reason why the writings above referred to have taken so firm a hold on many minds, is, I believe, this,—that they draw so true a picture of the conflict with *internal* evil;—true when applied to ourselves, but utterly false when applied to the Lord the Mediator. Only let us find what the Scriptures pronounce to be sinful, and then we know what Jesus had NOT; and so, without exercising our minds upon things too hard for them, we shall walk in quiet decision of judgment, because of the light of God's Word.

It is very needful, that the attention of those who love the truth should be aroused to the real character of these doctrines. They have in them the power of much misapplied truth and profession of holiness, otherwise they would not deceive the saints: but we may be quite sure, that the commandment of God can never be really kept by those who do not abide in the faith of Jesus, who "do not hold fast the faithful word." It is written, "Buy the truth, and sell it

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not ;” and I cannot but believe that they who have these doctrines clearly brought before their understandings, and then wilfully maintain them, are to be withstood to the face, “as those who are subverted and sin, being condemned of themselves” (Tit. iii).

But on the other hand, let us beware of priding ourselves on our orthodoxy, and making it our trust. The fallen state of the Church—its need of the Spirit—the destruction which awaits every system which has been or is being formed by the world—the personal coming of the Lord Jesus, when judgment shall begin at the house of God ;—these things are not the less true because they have been testified of by some in Newman-Street. They are true, because they are the testimony of God’s own word ; and blessed are they who have ears to hear, and to obey.

NOTE ON PROPHECIES.

THE following are a few of the instances of prophecies which have proved false ;—

That at the end of three years and a half from the beginning of the prophecy of the witnesses, Satan should take to himself the sovereignty, and stand forth in all hideous power in the person of one man, to receive the worship of all the earth. The person who should be so energized of Satan, and be set up as his Christ, was at a subsequent period declared to be *young Napoleon*. (Baxter’s Narrative of Facts, p. 31).

At the time this latter point was prophesied, it was declared that within three years and a half, the saints would be caught up to the Lord, and the earth wholly given up to the days of vengeance.

The power came upon another at the same time, confirming the rapture of the saints within three years and a half.

The failure of this prediction is well known. The 14th of July, 1835, was the day on which the rapture of the saints should have taken place, and no such event occurred ; but those who believed the utterance, continued their expectation till the following month, but with no better success.

It was distinctly revealed in the power ; and, says one who spoke,

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“In it I was made to utter, that the American Indians were the lost ten tribes, and that they should, within the three years and a half appointed for the spiritual ministry, be gathered back into their own land, and be settled there before the days of vengeance set in; that the chief who was now [then] in London, was a chosen vessel of the Lord to lead them back; that he should be endowed with power from on high, in all signs and mighty wonders, and should lead them back, though in unbelief—that he would receive his power here, and be speedily sent forth to them.

“On another evening, I was made, in a most triumphant chant, to address him as the vessel chosen of God, and to be endowed of God for the bringing back of his brethren. The chief went away an unbeliever in the work, and none of the powers have been manifested” (p. 81).

“There followed an appalling utterance—that the Lord had set me apart for Himself—that, from the day I was called to the spiritual ministry, I must count forty days—that this was now well-nigh expired—that for those forty days was it appointed that I should be tried—that the Lord had tried me and found me faithful, and having now proved in me the first sign of an apostle, “patience,” (referring to 2 Cor. xii. 12), He would give to me the fulness of them, in the gifts of “signs and wonders, and mighty deeds”—that the Lord had called me to be an Apostle, and by the laying on of my hands and the hands of the other Apostles whom the Lord should call, should the baptism of fire be bestowed. Then was added a repetition of the fearful oath given on the declaration of my call to the ministry: ‘By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord:—by myself have I sworn. By myself have I sworn, that I will not fail you; I will never leave nor forsake you.’ I was commanded to go back to the Church, where my mouth was opened; and on the fortieth day, power should be given, the sick should be healed, the deaf should hear, the dead should be restored, and all the mighty signs and wonders should appear; Apostles and ministers should be ordained, endowed, and sent forth to the ends of the earth, to warn the world of the rapture of the saints, and make a people prepared for the Lord.”

It is true that there are those in Newman-Street, who claim the Apostolic office: but where are the signs of an Apostle? In Mr.

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* Baxter's own case, the whole proved false, and disappointment only ensued: he has seen the fearful delusion into which he fell; but no signs now seem to be required, as the office is held without them.

These are but a few instances of palpable failure in the prophecies uttered by the spirit in Newman-Street. "How shall we know the word which the Lord hath not spoken? When a prophet speaketh in the name of the Lord, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the Lord hath not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken presumptuously: thou shalt not be afraid of him" (Deut. xviii. 21, 22).

THE PROMISE OF THE LORD.

Matt. xviii. 20.

THE two leading features of Prophetic testimony, in its immediate application, were the exposure of the principles of Apostasy then at work; and comforting the hearts of the Remnant, who were groaning under the sense of it. The contrast to this was, the testimony of false prophets, who always lulled into security the many, and treated the groaning Remnant as the enemies of God and His people. "Because with lies ye have made the heart of the righteous sad, whom I have not made sad, and strengthened the hands of the wicked, that he should not return from his wicked way, by promising him life; therefore ye shall see no more vanity, nor divine divinations; for I will deliver my people out of your hand; and ye shall know that I am the Lord" (Ezek. xiii. 22, 23). In the period just before the Babylonish captivity, we find the two pleas of the Lord against His people to have been, either that they justified continuance in avowed evil, as though the case were so desperate that they could not serve the Lord; or, that they asserted their innocence, and that their state was one of which the Lord approved. "Thou saidst there is no hope; no, for I have loved strangers, and after them will I go: yet thou sayest, because I am innocent, surely His anger shall turn from me: behold I will plead

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with thee, because thou sayest I have not sinned" (Jer. ii. 25—35). These, therefore, are the two things which the Lord hateth;—contentedness with avowed evil, under the plea that there is no remedy for us, so that we must make the best of it; or forgetting the holiness of God, by giving the sanction of His name to that which He disowns, by asserting our innocence, and saying, "The temple of the Lord," &c. It is just here that the ministry of the prophets came in; they were raised up, as Apostasy was setting in, and their testimony multiplied as it advanced to a head. The Spirit of Christ in the Prophets, taking up the principles then working, carried them out in all their fearful result, looking through the long and dreary vista, to that great and terrible day of the Lord, in which they would be consummated, and met in judgment by the Lord. But whilst there was the most uncompromising witness against present evil, and testimony of God's sure judgment against it, there was invariably the promise of God's favour and protection towards the feeble Remnant, faithful in the midst of abounding evil. "The hearts of the righteous were not made sad."—"Say ye to the righteous that it shall be well with him, for they shall eat the fruit of their doings" (Is. iii. 10). To take one example—in the prophetic strain of Isaiah, chap. vii. to xii.—The Spirit in the Prophet, at the very time that apostasy was set in under king Ahaz, after shewing the unchangeableness of the counsel of the Lord, which would stand, in spite of all the failures of man, and all the confederacies against it, takes a discursive range, through all its minor developments, up to the great Apostasy. But in the midst of this gloomy prospect, there is the word of comfort for the faithful Remnant.—"Say ye not, A confederacy, to all them to whom this people shall say, A confederacy; neither fear ye their fear, nor be afraid.—Sanctify the Lord of Hosts Himself, and let Him be your fear, and let Him be your dread; and He shall be for a sanctuary." And when the promise of security is thus given to the Remnant, he fully opens the prospect of increasing judgment, in the oft repeated burthen—"For all this His anger is not turned away, but His hand is stretched out still."

In the Lord Jesus Christ was the perfectness of the Prophet, as well as of the Priest. He was that Prophet, into whose mouth

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Jehovah promised that He would put His words, and that he should speak unto the people all that he commanded them (Deut. xviii. 18). He had the pre-eminence as a Prophet; and, accordingly, we find in our Lord's discourses the principles embodied, which, though not understood at the time, were carried out into detail by the Apostles, under the guidance of the Holy Ghost, who led them into all truth, and brought to their remembrance the things that Jesus had spoken unto them. In the eighteenth of Matthew, we find the Lord marking, as His Spirit had done in the Prophets of old, the rise of that which, apparently trivial, would issue in the most disastrous consequences; not only meeting the evil by solemn warning, but viewing it in its results, and comforting His people at all times in the midst of it. The bane of Christianity is there marked as "Emulation," the total contrast to Him who did not strive, nor cry, neither did any man hear His voice in the streets. It is striking to observe how this spirit, which is the very cherished principle of the flesh, and which Satan would fain carry into the Church, showed itself in the disciples on occasions apparently the least likely to have excited it. Here we see the Spirit of Christ, and the spirit of the world: that which was to regulate the Church, and that which carries on the world, distinguished and set in the strongest contrast.

In Luke xxii. after the Lord had instituted the memorial of His death and sacrifice, and had spoken of His betrayal; instead of finding any sympathy in their minds, we read, "There was also a strife among them, which of them should be accounted the greatest." And so we read in the chapter before us, "At the *same time* came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" This question was asked after Jesus had, by the payment of the tribute money, exhibited the deep humiliation into which He had come for their sakes. The payment of the half-shekel, the offering of the Lord, Exod. xxx. 13—16, was demanded of Peter, which every one that was numbered, rich or poor, was to give, to make an atonement for their souls; and this money was to be spent in the service of the Temple. Peter answered hastily for His master; but Jesus, having first asserted His own right, as the Son, to be free from the payment, yet, as being made under the law, and having come to

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redeem them that were under the law, He fulfilled its righteousness in this, as well as in the baptism of John. It was at such a season as this, when the Son was humbling Himself as the servant, that the minds of the disciples were selfishly seeking exaltation for themselves in the kingdom of heaven. Little did they think that real greatness, the greatness of God, was in His ability to minister to weakness; that He who has His dwelling so high, should humble Himself to behold the things that are in heaven and in earth; that He who inhabiteth Eternity, and whose name is Holy, should dwell in the humble and contrite heart.

It was in this they needed to have the whole current of the thoughts of their minds entirely changed. They must be converted, and become as little Children, or they would not enter into the kingdom of heaven. To come into the lowest place here, was the necessary result of greatness in the kingdom of heaven. The only place of greatness in a world of evil, is necessarily to be of no esteem in it. The world knew not the Son: had He been great in its estimation, it must have been greatness in the estimation of those who had lost all moral perception. This is the hard lesson that we have to learn, and where we are constantly erring as the disciples of old did; the Lord knew it would be, because of its contrariety to the flesh. The necessary discipline, in order to teach His people their place of blessing, would be constant mortification, the cutting off the hand, the plucking out the eye. He who knew what was in man, did not merely meet the evil as it showed itself in individuals, but seeing its tendency, most solemnly warns against it, as affecting both the Church and the world. Presumed greatness in any, would be a stumbling-block in the way of the weak, power such as the flesh could recognize; authority which the world could own, would always be a stumbling-block in the way of the weak. Even supposing that it was not, as unhappily we know that it has been exercised against the poor of the flock, yet it would not be that which they needed. Their necessities craved that which was in fulness in the great and good Shepherd; authority in the hands of those who would be examples to the flock, not as those who would lord it over God's heritage. And not only so, the Lord has also marked the effect produced upon the world by the desire of greatness

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in the Church. He, whilst in the world, stood the humbled and separate One, and, therefore, His witness against it was so powerful. He was dead to all that was of credit in it, and thus testified that its deeds were evil: so long as He was in the world, He was the light of the world, and His people were to take His place where He left it. “Ye are the light of the world.” They by their separateness standing aloof from all its dignity and glory, were thus to be its light. But woe unto the world because of offences. When His people began to assume worldly greatness and fleshly distinction, then the witness was gone; then the veriest woe came to the world, because it was either deceived into the notion that it was itself owned of God, or confirmed in its unbelief by its quickness to mark the entire inconsistency of the professed disciples of Christ, with the precepts of their Master. This is the woe which now presses on the world; the only convincing testimony to it of the truth of Christianity is gone, the holiness and love of those who profess it. So blind, indeed, are Christians to this, that amidst all their boasting of an increase of godliness, it rarely comes into their mind that the one thing needful is wanting, both to answer the heart of the Lord Jesus, or the purpose of their being left in the world, “That they may be one, that the world might believe that Jesus was sent of God.” The Lord in leading on the minds of His disciples, proceeds on the assumption of their weakness. He takes up that as the place in which His eye ever saw them; He could only recognize them as “little ones;” and just in proportion as their standing in the world was otherwise, they ceased to be subjects of His condescending ministry of love, however in faithfulness He might chasten and rebuke them. He opens to us the great principle of heaven, as being that which ministers to weakness, placed in the situation of danger from surrounding evil. He would have His people always aware of this their blessing—that the real feeling of their own weakness was strength.—It was this that displayed God’s power, sustaining weakness, and making it triumphant over every obstacle. “My strength is made perfect in weakness.” The moment we assume any place of strength, and have that support which the flesh can rest in, our proper strength is gone. No human arrangements, however wisely made, and however, as man may think, directed to the Lord’s

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glory, can avail, because they must necessarily interfere with the revealed principles of Him who chooses the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and the weak things of the world, to confound the things that are mighty, and base things of the world, and things which are despised, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are." It is, therefore, as "little ones," that Believers are the subjects of angelic ministry, who are sent forth to minister to them who shall inherit salvation. "Take heed that ye despise not *one* of these little ones, for I say unto you, that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven." And this is heaven's blessed ministry; this ministry was His glory who came from heaven, not to be ministered to Himself, but to minister to others. Real greatness needed not the ministry of others; and in an evil world, the only place of real dignity is the ability to rescue from and to keep in the midst of it, that which had no strength against it. "The Son of Man is come to save that which is lost." But as if to open to us the whole mind of heaven, and to shew us its most favoured aspect towards us—as if to meet the subtle lie of Satan, that our insignificance is beneath God's notice, the Lord proceeds in the detail of blessedness of those who have no strength to shew how their necessity is graciously met.—"Even so it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that *one* of these little ones should perish." Thus out of weakness are they made strong. The Lord keep us in the abiding sense of the blessedness of our portion as little children.

That which the Lord had first applied in the way of individual blessing, He next applies to the Church collectively. He would not allow of an appeal from any of His people to the world, because it was a tribunal incapable of judging between brethren.—Its judgment being necessarily based on presumed right, not on grace. Hence, the injured party is put by our Lord in the place of the conciliator.—"If thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone; and, if he shall hear thee, then thou hast gained thy brother." This rule would necessarily prevent the assumption of preeminence among brethren; he would really be the greatest in the estimation of heaven, who had most to bear. The only appeal was to the Church, as that which alone could judge righteous judg-

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ment; and its award, in case of insubmission to its authority, was putting without its pale, regarding the offender as a heathen man and a publican. It appears to me, that the Lord, still keeping in view the tendency of the principle *then* at work in the disciples' minds, as that which would seek after visible greatness in the world, casts contempt upon all its glory by only owning it as the place into which those would be driven who were excluded by the Church. The solemn sentence of the Church, in excluding any from fellowship, would appear, in the sight of men, as a powerless act, attended with no immediate results, and not affecting the person or property of the offender. How unlike the award of a worldly tribunal! There the convicted offender is affected by its sentence in present shame, and loss of property, liberty, or life. But the seeming powerless sentence of those, to be excluded from whose fellowship would appear nothing to be dreaded, had the sanction of heaven, and involved consequences not only unseen but permanent:—"Verily I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven." The leading feature of this discourse of our blessed Lord, is the constant counteraction of the desire after greatness, such as would be cognizable by men. He is always putting His people and the Church in the place of weakness on earth, and giving them strength in heaven. His people, if in their proper place, would be, as Himself, the weak One on earth; for He "was crucified through weakness," but strong in the unseen power of God. Thus has the Lord met the necessities of His people at all times; however fearful the tide of Apostasy, it could never shut out the real blessing of the faithful Remnant, be it ever so small.—And the reason is, that whatever fearful exhibition of evil there may be in the visible Church, and however unable an insignificant minority are to testify against it, or to meet it in ostensible power, yet the blessing of the dispensation is open to them: and however little their strength, it is real, for it is the strength of heaven. And in order to meet the extremity of the case of His people, He who foresaw the fearfulness of that Apostasy which would come in, through the desire after greatness and love of preeminence, most graciously meets the case of the feeble few, faithful to Him in their weakness. "Again I say unto you, that if *two* of you shall agree *on earth* as touching any thing that they

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shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven: for where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.”

Now, taking this in its moral connection, with the point from which our Lord began this discourse, I believe it to be the abiding testimony to the blessing of His people under all circumstances. We have seen the Church set up most mighty in power and authority, in its entire separateness from the world, even to the merging of all worldly distinction in it. We have seen its spiritual and unseen power acknowledged even by those without (Acts ii. 43—47; iv. 37). We have seen Ichabod written on all this; and in vain search for another exhibition of convincing testimony against the world, by heavenly power and unity. That which then wrought in the minds of the disciples, even emulation, soon wrought effectually in the Church; and being of the flesh, *led* the Church to seek that greatness which the flesh could recognize; and has issued in that which we do see in Christendom—a system avowedly great in the earth, boasting its superior light above surrounding nations, apparently swaying their destinies, accrediting every worldly distinction, and giving the authority of heaven to principles the most opposite to those of Christ. This is beginning to be felt and acknowledged by thousands; and what shall they do? Whither shall they go? What would avail their feeble protest against evils inveterate, fondly cherished, and so entwined with everything around them? To reconstitute the Church would be to subvert Christendom. Now, the question in many minds naturally is—The professing Church has not abode in the goodness of God—it is that which is to be judged: are we still to tolerate it—still to cry “The temple of the Lord!” &c.? Again, we can see nothing standing in the plenitude of authority to which to look. Shall we say there is no hope? It is here the Lord meets His perplexed people; He neither forces them to own that as of Him, which He disowns Himself (save as to judgment), nor drives them to despair by holding out no hope. Here is their rest,—“WHERE TWO OR THREE ARE GATHERED TOGETHER IN MY NAME, THERE AM I IN THE MIDST OF THEM.” And this is the peculiar blessing of our dispensation—the promise of the Lord’s presence

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by His Spirit, under all circumstances — “Lo I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.” Let the Remnant be ever so small, even, if it were possible amidst the visible body, two or three only, still the blessing remains to them. The beauty and glory are departed; but to so insignificant a Remnant as this, is the word addressed by the Lord, “Meet together in my name;” and the promise, “I am in the midst of you.” That which constitutes this very dispensation—the abiding presence of the Comforter—the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, is what we are continually prone to forget. We are ever inclined to that which the world can receive, instead of casting ourselves upon that which is our portion. It is not now to go here or there; the Father is not to be worshipped in any given place; neither are Believers to look to any thing ostensible to attach themselves to, but to meet together in the name of Jesus. Meeting in His name is the entire counteraction of the two snares to which we are exposed;—either of courting fellowship with the world, or cherishing sectarian feelings. Men have been so long accustomed to seek the strength of an Establishment to rest on, as almost, if not altogether, to forget the communion of the saints. This is never closed to us by the Lord, however it may be to our unbelief; and the proof is this—that even two shall experience the blessing of it; for where the Lord’s presence is, can there be any thing lacking? It is, therefore, that the Apostle so presses the “not forsaking the assembling of *ourselves* together,” as that which would cheer and direct us in trying circumstances. But union with the world, or the exclusion of any brethren, hinders this effectually: the Lord’s Spirit is grieved or restrained, because we are not gathered in His name. Our foolish hearts crave something imposing—it is most contrary to them to continue in the faith of God’s promise—we have to watch against an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God. We have to watch against ourselves, lest any of us be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. And that is deceitful which would make us judge by appearances, and not righteous judgment; this we never exercise, except in doing God’s will. We are never, I believe, except by our own unbelief, placed in circumstances of balancing evil in order to choose the lesser. So full is the Word of

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God in its detail, so elastic are its principles, that we can be placed in no trying circumstances, but we shall find a way for us to escape, through the Spirit applying the Word, and thus guiding us by His counsel. Now the dilemma in which many of the Lord's people suppose themselves to be placed is this: they allow that it does do violence to their conscience, to accredit, as of the Lord, any system wherein the world has dominance; and they cannot construe into an approval of evil, His long-suffering with it. But they allege that they cannot see any thing around them with that real moral glory with which the Church was once invested, and which might claim their attachment, by affording that resting-place which their hearts sorrow after. They are in a strait; and if they do not violence to their conscience, it either interrupts their peace, or hinders their service. It is here the Lord meets them. He anticipated all their weakness, as well as their possible fewness. He knew the desire of their heart unto Him, and could sympathize with that hesitation, which would falter in acting in the face of presumed authority, and prevented, if we may use the expression, the desire of a real visible authority to stay upon, by throwing His people entirely off it on Himself:—"Whosoever two or three are gathered together in my name, *there* am I in the midst of them." Here, therefore, will be the wisdom of those who are led, by God's Spirit, to the discovery of the fearful departure of the Church from the goodness of God. Whilst they will mourn over their common sin in the departure of that glory which the Lord, on leaving the earth, bequeathed to his Church, they will not be looking for that which might present itself as another witness for Christ, in all the glory of power and authority; but remembering whence they are fallen, will be zealous and repent; and in their penitence they are met by the Lord, who, though He has no where pledged Himself to reconstitute that which man has marred, has pledged Himself to His people to be *ever* with them. And in the blessing thus secured to them, He has provided, at the same time, for the honour of His own name. He has invested them with power to put away from them any one, who is called a brother, who continues to walk disorderly after being warned. Thus, in the worst possible circumstances, two things are secured to the Lord's people—their strength and com-

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fort in His presence, and their right to regard as a heathen man, and a publican, any one who brings a scandal on his profession, and blasphemes that holy name by which He is called. The people of the Lord can always *act*. If they be His, they have His Spirit, and in that Spirit can meet together, and by that Spirit they can judge, and withdraw themselves from any brother who, after remonstrance, still continues to walk disorderly, so that the comfort of His worshippers, and the purity of His worship, is secured, by this charter of the ever gracious and loving Lord, to His very feeble Remnant. The simple principle is, that the Lord would never oblige His people to sin. Now, I believe it to be just as binding on a Christian to meet together with Christians, as to abstain from those things which may even shock the natural conscience. There is one Lawgiver; and who shall presume to say where His authority is to be qualified? He that said, "I say unto you, Swear not at all," said also, "Let him be to thee a heathen man and a publican;" and the one ought to be no less binding on the conscience of a true disciple than the other.

This I believe to be the leading of the mind of the great Prophet of the Church throughout this discourse. Clearly perceiving where the spirit working in the minds of His Disciples would issue, He looks to that, and amidst all the maze of difficulty in which they might be placed, provides the simple way for their escape; and in the darkest periods of the Church's history, we can find those who have been obedient to the Lord's direction, and found the blessing. The Lord Jesus, the Prophet, has not made the hearts of His people sad, nor strengthened the hearts of the wicked. He has not forced them into the assertion—"The Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord are these!" as though He sanctioned every species of worldliness: nor reduced them to the plea of slothfulness—"There is no hope, the matter is desperate." All that is needed for action and blessing, is faith in the Lord's word. He never is contented with the evil, however His people may be. It is a most fearful instance of the want of a sound mind, when we find so much perverse ingenuity, so many subtleties, so many analogies drawn, in order to lull the awakened consciences of many into contentedness with evil. Here is a plain direction of our Lord, which was given for them to act on, and applicable to any

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circumstances. And here is a plain answer to those who charge that as schism, which is bounden duty—separation from the world, as a necessary preliminary in order to our meeting together in the name of Jesus. Blessed be His name, He has not left us comfortless; and whilst it becomes us to be humbled to the very dust for our grievous departure from Him, let us not add this to all our other sins—either to charge Him with unfaithfulness, or to tempt Him by saying, Is God among us or not? Whoever believeth on Him shall never be confounded: even in the most disastrous times, when iniquity abounds and the love of many waxes cold, the Lord's people may assemble together, and exhort one another; and the more so as they see the day approaching. As it was of old, so it is now—"Ye have said, It is vain to serve God, and what profit is it that we have kept His ordinances, and that we have walked mournfully before the Lord of Hosts? And now we call the proud happy; yea, they that work wickedness are set up; yea, they that tempt God are even delivered. *Then* they that feared the Lord spake often one to another: and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before Him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon His name. And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of Hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him" (Mal. iii. 14—17).

 CRITICAL NOTICES.—No. 3.

I SEND you some additional verbal criticisms, of importance connected with truth, though comparatively insignificant in point of learning. Those who love the truth will not despise them.

It appears to me that while, in general, the authorized English Translation is one of incomparable value; on the subject of the dispensation of the glory to come, there are several passages which the

Translators have forced from their plain sense, in consequence of their not seeing or not believing in it; and, therefore, not seeing how it could be possible to take it in the sense the passages plainly represented—otherwise their pains are very remarkable. Some of these passages I will notice. There is one very important passage, of some length, exceedingly obscured by a fear, I suppose, of popular mistake. The word translated “condemnation” in John v. 24, and in v. 29 “damnation,” is the identical word rendered “judgment” in v. 22 and 27, and correctly so rendered. The word properly used for “condemnation” is different, as in Rom. viii. 1; κρίσις is the word in John, κατάκριμα in Romans. A plain and beautiful passage is obscured by this effort to meet common thoughts, or a fear of strange ones.

The statement of the passage is, that there are two things in which respectively the Son’s glory is shown—quickenings and judging. In the former, as a blessing, He exercises His power conjointly with the Father. In the latter, as the vindication of His honour against those that have despised it, He is alone, and executes it in the way in which He was despised; He judges as Son of man: but as to those who are quickened, there is no need of bringing them into *Crisis*, for they, through grace, have honoured the Son when the rest dishonoured Him unrighteously; and it is just out of such *Crisis* they are saved, as the subjects of the exercise of the Son’s quickening power; but that all men should honour Him, judgment is committed entirely to Him whom they dishonoured, securing His honour as the Father’s. These then are the two great instruments by which honour is brought and secured to the Son—Quickening Power and *Crisis*. They, therefore, that are quickened, do not come into *Crisis*—they have passed from death into life. How are they known? They hear Christ’s word, and believe on the Father which sent Him; thus we know that they have eternal life, and shall not come into *Crisis* at all. Before the Βῆμα (*Bema*) of Christ they may stand to have righteous appointment before Him; but into *Crisis* they do not come. This is the statement of 2 Cor. v. 10. “We must all appear before the Βῆμα of Christ, to receive the things done in the body, good or evil.” This then is the positive assertion of the Lord, that the quickened shall not come into *Crisis*, but have everlasting life. The same is the result of resurrection, when

this truth is disclosed. They that are in their graves shall come forth at the power of the same voice. They that have done good to the resurrection of life of which they have been made partakers, not to Crisis; and they that have done evil to the resurrection of judgment, a distinct thing, which is the result of the exercise of Christ's voice on an unquickened soul, and in which none at all can stand, as in Psalm cxlii. (LXX.) *μη εισελθης εις κρισιν*, Enter not into judgment with thy servant (Heb. and Eng. Ps. cxliii). Thus the resurrection of life, is the filling up the quickening power of Christ as to this mortal body, mortality being swallowed up of life: the resurrection of judgment, to *Crisis*, that is for the wicked only, for none can stand in it. The connection of this with present blessing is manifest; the beautiful connection with the exhibition of the power of Christ is made most plain. The change of the word destroys the consequence and connection of the passage. We cease to have the double exhibition of the power of Christ in its pursued effects, and we lose the present peace which results from knowing, conformed to our complete justification in Him who is Himself the judge, that we shall not come into *Crisis*—into question of judgment as to our reception at all. How indeed should Christ do it, save as despising His own sacrifice and righteousness, when it is before Him we stand? Our resurrection is a resurrection of life, whatever our responsibility, which 2 Cor. v. maintains complete in its place.

To turn to another passage (1 Cor. xi. 29, et seq.), where this word is misused: "He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh *damnation* to himself." The apostle is speaking of Christians fallen under chastenings of sickness, or even temporal death—sleeping (the common Christian word for a Believer's death), because of evils into which they had fallen; and tells them they are but eating and drinking judgment to themselves; but that when they were judged they were chastened of the Lord, *that they should not be condemned with the world*. They were Christians, and therefore chastening judgment came upon them here, that they should not be condemned along with the world. But if, says the Apostle, we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged of the Lord. The first word "judge" is here again a different one, *διακρινει*, discern ourselves—if by the

cherished use of the presence of the Lord with our souls, by the Holy Ghost, we discerned the springs of evil or circumstances of evil therein, which were the occasions of what called forth the chastening, we should not come under it. Examine yourselves—and how? By the light of the presence of the Spirit of God; and hence the importance of keeping it undimmed, ungrieved in the soul, and exercising oneself by examining watchfulness so as not to lose it, otherwise the very power of discernment is gone comparatively, by which the evil is discerned; we become blind, and cannot see afar off. The good Shepherd may restore us, and does, for His name's sake; but it is by chastening, and possibly sorrowful evil. Our wisdom is the spirituality by which evil is seen in its springs, not in its effects,—and the watching ourselves in this, so as that unconsciously the power of discernment be not weakened by losing the sense of the very evil which calls for it, and the remedy be the sorrowful but still loving stroke of the Lord's hand. “Make the heart of this people fat,” is the worst sorrow of judgment, but any measure of it in us is a grievous evil. May we, by thus discerning ourselves, be kept or made very bright and joyful in spirit, of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord; our estimate of holiness high; because our communion, and consequently understanding, is bright, even with Him who makes us partakers of His holiness.

Another passage I will now refer to (Acts iii. 19): “Repent, and be converted, so that your sins may be blotted out *when* the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord:”—read, “so that,” *ὅπως ἂν*, the times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord. The mission of Jesus, whom they had lost as a nation, would be on their repentance. It is not here, “Repent and be baptized every one of you,” and individual matter of salvation, as in the former sermon; but an address to the assembly of the Jews, explaining the position in which they stood by the rejection of Jesus, but that even so upon their repentance, Jesus would be sent to them again; and on their repentance and conversion, the times of refreshing would come from the presence of the Lord, *ὅπως ἂν ἔλθωσι*, the only sense of which is “so that they may come.” The sermon is a Jewish sermon to them as Jews. It states ver. 18th, the sufferings—21st, restitution of all things; Jesus in heaven till then; and on their repentance the seasons

of refreshing to come. I would also remark that “raise up,” ver. 26, refers, I apprehend, not to resurrection, but to the same words “raise up,” ver. 22, stating that what the Prophet promised was indeed raised up in the person of God’s Son, Jesus; the “sent Him to bless you,” was on His mission from the Father, but it was not done on repentance now, for He would send Him now fore-preached, in the times of refreshing which would be on their repentance. The *προκεκηρυγμένον* is the *προηλπικότης* of Eph. i. 12. The alteration *προκεχειρισμένον*, as to the matter, comes to the same sense, though it is of stronger reproach to the Jews as actually manifested and produced to them. But the whole passage is completely a Jewish sermon. To you first—ye are the children of the Prophets. The translators, I suppose, could not see the national repentance, or the dealing of the Lord with the Jews still, as a nation; and the passage is quite changed into rather unintelligible Gentile Theology.

We have a similar instance in Rom. xi. 31, “Even so have these also now not believed, that through your mercy they also might obtain mercy.” This is asserting that the Jews, as a nation, are to obtain mercy by the Gentiles’ mercy. So doubtless the translators thought; but it is a mistranslation, *οὕτω καὶ οὗτοι νῦν ἠπειθήσαν τῷ ὑμετέρῳ ἐλέει ἵνα καὶ αὐτοὶ ἐλεηθῶσι*: these have now disbelieved in the mercy to you Gentiles, that they also might be brought upon terms of mercy. Promises had belonged to the Jews; but they forbade to speak to the Gentiles that they might be saved, to fill up their sins always, so that wrath is come upon them to the uttermost. Thus, like mere sinners of the Gentiles, it was a matter, though true to Himself, of sovereign mercy to bring in the Jews; fulfilment of promise they had rejected in Him, who was a minister of circumcision to confirm them. God concluded all in unbelief; the Gentiles naturally—the Jews now, in the wisdom of dispensation, that both might come in on like terms of mercy, as the Jew surely shall on the latter day.

There is another passage which sometimes perplexes people with deep inquiries, which I believe take their rise merely from obscurity of expression. In Rev. xxii. 9, we have, “For I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren the Prophets, and of them which keep

the sayings of this book: worship God." And again, xix. 10, "I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus." Now this is commonly taken as if the angel had the testimony of Jesus, and was Himself as one of the Prophets. But it appears to me the rendering is simply this—*σύνδουλός σου γάρ εἰμι καὶ τῶν ἀδελφῶν σου τῶν προφητῶν*, "I am but a fellow servant of thee, and of thy brethren the Prophets;"—*thee* and the *Prophets* being in opposition, not the *Angel* and the *Prophets*: in the other, "of thy brethren which have the testimony of Jesus," which makes the passage very simple.

I would repeat here what has been noticed elsewhere, which makes an obscure passage very easy: "The glory of this latter house shall be greater than the glory of the former" (Hag. ii. 9);—this should be, I apprehend, "The latter glory of this house shall be greater than the former;" and this is not yet properly fulfilled. If we refer to the third verse, we shall see at once how "this house" is used as to both its states: the house is looked at as one thing—it is the Lord's house, the temple in different states; of which her first glory is one; and then, "how do ye see *it* now?" The unity of the house in all its states makes the sentence very plain. Many of these passages may seem very simple; but it must be remarked that one passage, where the mind is subject to Scripture, will arrest it in all its course; and thus all its principles will be more or less affected; and thus it becomes of great importance to free the mind from its difficulty.

There is a slight correction in I Pet. i. 11. which makes it more strong and clear. The sufferings, the *glories* after these, *μετὰ ταῦτα δόξας*. It enlarges the scope of the abounding glories of Christ to come, not His present glory, merely, at the right hand of the Father.

Backsliding and Apostasy.

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To the EDITOR of the "CHRISTIAN WITNESS."

SIR,

I should feel highly obliged for a Scriptural definition of the word "Backslider," as set forth in the word of Eternal Truth. It has indeed been a subject of debate in my mind, whether the term is, or is not, synonymous with "Apostate."

Your obedient Servant,

Z.

BACKSLIDING AND APOSTASY.

It is very difficult, if not dangerous, for us to attempt accurately to define the words used by the Holy Ghost in the Scripture of truth. Great, as increasing acquaintance with the word of God may prove to us, as is the nicety of the expressions used by the sacred Penmen, yet as they are things and facts which the Holy Ghost presents to faith, we are not left to philological distinctions, but the unlearned is led by the Spirit's teaching to gather the meaning of any word from the context. It is very well for us, who see through a glass darkly, to define the terms we use, lest in attempting to communicate any thing to others, we should darken counsel by words without wisdom. In the case, for example, of the two words proposed for our consideration, we are persuaded there is a real moral distinction, which verbal accuracy would by no means meet. And we would remark, that as the term Apostasy often occurs in this publication, we would avail ourselves of the present opportunity to show the sense in which it is used. And first of all, the word itself, "Backslider," does not occur in the New Testament; although there are expressions equivalent to it. Neither is the word "Apostasy" to be found in the Old Testament; although the thing is evidently described: and therefore there will be places where Backsliding may mean the state we would characterise as Apostasy.

The word most usually translated “backsliding,” which so often occurs in the prophet Jeremiah, simply means “to turn, or return :” * its moral sense being gathered from the context. Thus Joshua xxii. 16. “What trespass is this that ye have committed against the God of Israel, *to turn away* from following the Lord, in that ye have builded you an altar, that ye might rebel against the Lord?” (See also ver. 29.) And in the next chapter we find the word without any adjunct, used thus, morally (ver. 11, 12), — “Take good heed therefore unto yourself, that ye love the Lord your God. *Else if ye do in any wise go back*, and cleave unto the remnant of these nations,” &c. From these expressions, the meaning of “backsliding” may be gathered; although the term is not used. There is another word † more rarely translated “backsliding” only (Hos. iv. 16), “Israel *slideth back* as a *backsliding* heifer; and in the margin (Zech. vii. 11), “They gave a *backsliding* shoulder.” In other places it is translated “stubborn,” “rebellious,” “revolters.” Deut. xxi. 18—20, “If a man have a *stubborn* and *rebellious* son, which will not obey the voice of his father,” &c. “I have spread out my hands all the day to a *rebellious* people” (Is. lxxv. 2). “They are all grievous *revolters*.” (Jer. vi. 28).

In the 5th of Jeremiah both the words are used; and it will help to show us that a backsliding state is one of degree; and in this may be said to differ from Apostasy, which is one of fixed and settled purpose. This chapter sets forth the Apostasy of Jerusalem, and the way she was led into it: “Run ye to and fro the streets of Jerusalem, and see now and know, and seek in the broad places thereof, if ye can find a *man*, if there be *any* that executeth judgment, that seeketh truth.” Then the charge is: “Thou hast stricken them, but they have not grieved; thou hast consumed them, but they have refused to receive correction: they have *refused to return*.” And this was no partial, but a general defection. “I will get me unto the great men, and will speak unto them, for they have known the way of the Lord, and the judgment of our God: but these have altogether broken

* שׁוּב See also Num. xxii. 15.

† סָרַר.

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the yoke, and burst the bonds." Then their fearful judgment: "Because their transgressions are many, and their *backslidings are increased*," or strong. Lastly, "This people hath a *revolting* and rebellious heart, they are *revolted* and *gone*" (ver. 23). In chap. viii. 5, we have, "Why then is this people of Jerusalem slidden back by a *perpetual backsliding*? they hold fast deceit, they refuse to return." Had not the backsliding been continuous, it might have been remedied; but they went on from bad to worse. From these instances we may safely conclude that Backsliding is the subject of chastisement and warning, but Apostasy, of judgment. So far, therefore, as the state is one which God continues to deal with in the way of correction, it is Backsliding; but when God says, "Why should ye be stricken any more, ye will revolt more and more" (Is. i. 5), it becomes a state of settled departure from God — "they are gone away backward." It is Apostasy—and only to be dealt with in judgment, according to the word: "He that, being often reprov'd, hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy" (Prov. xxix. 1). It is important to remark how constantly backsliding is connected with a refusal to hear. And this, when it becomes habitual, brings about that moral state most hateful in the sight of God, and which He gives up to judgment; as it is written, Deut. xxi. 18 — 20: "If a man have a *stubborn* and rebellious son, which will *not obey* the voice of his father or the voice of his mother, and when they have *chastened* him will not *hearken* unto them, they shall say unto the Elders of the city, This our son is *stubborn* and rebellious; he will not *obey* our voice;... all the men of his city shall stone him with stones that he die." Here is the direct contrast to the one in whom God was well pleased, even the obedient son, whose constant language was, "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear."

And now, to turn to the New Testament; we have the words, ἡ Ἀποστασία, the Apostasy (2 Thes. ii. 3); and it is only here used in the sense we popularly attach to it. It occurs in one other place, Acts xxi. 21: "And they are informed of thee, that thou teachest all the Jews which are among the Gentiles, to forsake Moses:" ἀποστασίαν ἀπὸ Μωσέως. Here we see the kindred idea of the first word we considered in the Old Testament "to depart from." We

have the root from whence the noun is derived, often occurring in the New Testament, and used both in a good and bad sense : “ Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some *shall depart* from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits” (1 Tim. iv. 1). Again, Luke xiii. 13 : “ Which for a time believe, and in time of temptation *fall away.*” And in 1 Tim. vi. 5 : “ From such withdraw thyself.” 2 Tim. ii. 19 : “ Let every one that nameth the name of Christ, *depart* from iniquity.” These examples would show the impropriety of attempting a verbal definition, at the same time that they convey most distinct ideas to our mind. There is one verse, Heb. iii. 12, which may be said to be God’s own definition of Apostasy ; “ An evil heart of unbelief in *departing* from the living God.” In this indeed backsliding is included.

The Corinthians had declined, in respect of the purity of their communion ; i. e. they had gone back from the standard they had previously attained (1 Cor. v) ; also in respect of love in ministering to the Saints (2 Cor. xiii. 10) ; and as such were in the one case the subjects of the Apostle’s severe animadversion and threatening of heavy chastisement ; and in the other, of his earnest exhortation ; but these were not cases properly of Apostasy. In both cases there appears to have been warning : the warning was received, and led to repentance (2 Cor. vii), and the exhortation stirred up love. So the language of the Apostle to the Galatians : “ I marvel that ye are so soon removed from Him that called you” (chap. i. 6) ; and “ ye did run well” (ver. 7), proves a sliding back both in faith and practice ; and the Apostle’s fears and hope,—at one time, “ I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain ;” at another, “ I have confidence in you through the Lord,”—prove that whilst he saw the Apostasy in which their departure might issue, he looked on that departure as remediable. The evil heart of unbelief was not confirmed in departing from the living God. They were not beyond warning and being reclaimed, as the Jews were, to whom the Apostle addressed himself in the language of the Prophet Isaiah, giving them over to judicial blindness (Acts xxviii. 7). But where we shall see the distinction most clearly marked, is in the case of the seven Churches (Rev. ii. iii). These were so constituted that the

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Great Head of the Church, and its Bishop, could own them as Churches, and deal with them as He who walked in the midst of the Churches as the Son of Man, judging them. With His eyes of flaming fire He was quick in detecting their backslidings and exposing them — backslidings in practice, which if not repented of, would lead to Apostasy, and the removal of the candlestick. Hence the message invariably is, “I know thy works.” These Churches were in a state to be dealt with in exhortation, warning, and reproof, and chastisement. But if there was no ear to hear what the Spirit said to the Churches, they would be brought to the state already mentioned, as described in Jeremiah: “They would not hearken,” and therefore would only be dealt with by the Son of Man in judgment. “Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love” (Rev. ii. 4). Here is Backsliding, not Apostasy; but if the warning be not followed by repentance, there follows Apostasy, and thereupon judgment: “Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works, or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of *her* place, except thou repent.” Here we see the first declension in practice; and in the Church of Laodicea the last stage of backsliding verging on Apostasy; a state not beyond the reach of rebuke and chastisement, but just ready to be spued out of the mouth of the Lord. Now what is remarkable is, that the Lord Jesus Christ, as Son of Man, does not appear again till chap. xiv. 14, i. e. the Harvest and the Vintage. He could exercise direct judicial authority as Son of Man, and as the Bishop of the Church, up to a certain point; but when His message by the Spirit was rejected, then was Apostasy consummated, and He could only recognize the visible Church as that which He would meet in judgment. When therefore we speak of the Apostasy of the Church, we mean that settled departure from the principles of its original constitution by its Head, so that he cannot directly administer to it as the Church, because to do so would be to give the sanction of His name to evil. Now the constitution of the Church is the abiding presence of the Comforter; He is the foundation of its authority, the dispenser of its ministrations, the source of teaching, the author of holiness, the cement of its unity—in a word, its only strength. Now

we have seen Backsliding in those several particulars and warnings against it, but they would not hearken; and now the Church has settled down on another basis, which may, in general terms, be asserted to be the rejection of the Holy Ghost, in authority, ministration, teaching, and power; and substituting either fleshly order or popular election in its stead. The evil heart of unbelief has issued in departing from the living God. And the misery is, that we are so little sensible of the Apostasy—so little recognize the removal of the candlestick, that the necessity of an establishment of some sort is generally assumed by Christians as an axiom. Where can we see any thing like a candlestick under the immediate ordering of the Son of Man? The very claim to be so *now*, carries with it the stamp of Apostasy. Will any now be so bold as to claim the sanction of the Lord's name for the avowed evils of their respective systems? “Will ye steal, murder, and commit adultery, and swear falsely, and burn incense unto Baal, and walk after other gods whom ye know not, and come and stand before this house which is called by my name, and say, We are delivered to do all these abominations? Is this house which is called by my name, become a den of robbers in your eyes? Behold even I have seen it saith the Lord” (Jer. vii. 9—11). When therefore we assert the Apostasy of the visible Church, we mean that it has ceased as a whole to be God's witness in the earth except for judgment. But it must be ever borne in mind, that to be in an Apostasy, is not necessarily to be an Apostate. In the preceding dispensation, as Apostasy was setting in, God raised up His witnesses against it, in the persons of the Prophets, who were multiplied as it increased, and to them the poor of the flock gave heed. Even in Babylon, Daniel existed in all the individual blessing of his dispensation. And so from the time of the Lord's removing the candlestick, He has never left Himself without a witness; the Spirit in individuals has ever been found protesting against false doctrine or corrupt practice: and the Lord has made provision of blessing for them in their little strength. But not to pursue this here, we would remark three things: 1st,—that it has been God's method to own the partial truth held by any association gathered even in the name of man, as a testimony against the prevailing evil of the Apostasy. Hardly any one will be disposed

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to deny that the Society of Friends, however defective in doctrine, did raise a most decided testimony to the presence and power of the Spirit, and thus were capacitated to testify against truth held in ungodliness on the one hand, and a mere routine of formal ceremonies on the other. The same might be said of other associations, which, however they might assume the name of a Church, did not stand in the place of the candlestick ordered by the Son of Man, although His grace would recognize any portion of truth they held in righteousness, or any zeal for His name. The Lord "hewed" His fallen people by the Prophets (Hos. vi. 5); but the Prophets did not constitute the nation of Israel; and analogous to their ministry has been either that of individual testimony by the power of the Spirit, or the associations arising from it; but that does not make them the Church.

II.—As to individual Backsliding, the case is supposed in admonitions of this character: "Let us not be weary in well-doing; for in due season we shall reap if we faint not." "But to do good and to communicate, forget not." And these are the correctives to meet the continual tendency in us to grow weary in the service of the Lord, and to draw back. But here we must specially guard against the advantage that Satan might gain against us, in presenting to our view the energy we once had, and from which we have declined. Our wisdom is to discriminate between the energy of the flesh and power of the Spirit: that energy is soon gone when no results answering its expectations are realized; but in the Spirit there is continuance. Fruit to God is brought forth "*with patience.*" The excitement of the flesh is often mistaken by novices for the power of the Spirit; and when it fails, they may be led into trouble of conscience, from feeling that the buoyancy of spirit in which they were once carried on in service is gone, at the very time when in the judgment of a spiritual mind, their state may be more healthy, if they have exchanged carnal excitement for *patient continuance* in well doing." He that *endures* unto the end shall be saved. If it be asked, At what stage does backsliding become Apostasy? it may be answered, when discipline fails of reclaiming. It is hard for us to distinguish between the weakness of the flesh and settled purpose of the mind, as well as to enter into the great acquired power of Satan over those who, by back-

sliding, have been taken captive by him at his will. In the pride of our self-conceit we might have branded Peter or Cranmer as an Apostate, and yet the Lord knew them as His. But were they not Backsliders in act? This we can judge of, and deal with in discipline; but the Lord knoweth the heart, and "the Backslider in heart shall be filled with his own ways" (Prov. xiv. 14). As such he is an Apostate, he is avowedly gone from his principles; and when such a case is clearly made out, we may apply the word: as for example, in the case of many of those who, professedly being Presbyterians, have fallen into Socinianism. This case is supposed as one that might happen: "A man that is an Heretic after the first and second admonition reject; knowing that he that is such is *subverted*, and sinneth, being condemned of himself" (Tit. iii. 10, 11). May it not therefore safely be said, that though every Apostate is a Backslider, not every Backslider is an Apostate; and that Backsliding refers to a state in which a Believer has been, and from which he has declined: but Apostasy is the settled renunciation of a profession once made. He that is born of God may be a Backslider, and hence the way in which the Scriptures are written as "profitable for correction and reproof;" but he cannot be an Apostate, because "*His seed remaineth in him.*" This may be gathered from the solemn warning, Heb. vi*. Every possible attainment, short of a new creation, is there supposed as possible, and from these a falling away; but there says the Apostle, "Beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak: for God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of *love.*" "Every one that loveth, is born of God, and knoweth God." Most salutary therefore is it for us not to be resting in any of those attainments which might minister to our self-complacency, but to be exercised in that patient love, the work and labour of which always crosses the flesh. It is in this we are apt to be *slothful*, and to seek for knowledge, or some other gift, instead of the manifestation of God's own nature in us.

Lastly, we must bear in mind, that since that which was set up by God as His witness on the earth, even the visible Church, has failed

* Some light is thrown on this often perplexing passage, in vol. ii. page 105, &c. of this publication.

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of its purpose, and is in Apostasy; that the proper place of Believers and bounden service to the Lord, is testimony against the Apostasy of the professing body. As in the Apostasy, but not of the Apostasy, we must "go without the camp." Fidelity to the Lord now forces his people to enter their protest against whatever bears His name, but is not of Him. No plea of expediency, no dread of marring unity, ought to prevent our disowning the sanction of the Holy Name by which we are called, to whatever system virtually disowns Him as its only Legislator. "Let every one that nameth the name of Christ *depart from iniquity*,"—*ἀποστήτω ἀπὸ ἀδικίας*. It is actually so to depart in principle and practice, as an Apostate does from the truth as it is in Jesus. The iniquity may be covered up under seeming order, and may be even venerable by its antiquity; but it is sanctioned, and we cannot depart from iniquity without protesting against that which accredits it. The most aggravated form of evil, is glossing it over with the name of good; the sure mark of Apostasy is calling evil good, saying, "We are delivered to do all these abominations," having the form but denying the power of godliness: "from such turn away." It will therefore be our wisdom to cultivate that Spirit which will make us of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord, in order to separate between "the precious and the vile;" and to allow no plea of personal convenience, no assumption of authority, to interfere with our departing from that iniquity which the Lord will judge: "I have told him that I will judge his house for ever, for the iniquity which he knoweth: because his sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not" (1 Sam. iii. 12). It is a solemn principle of judgment; a man might be walking apparently blameless before the Lord, and yet by sanctioning evil, helping on judgment. Let us beware of the sophistry of our own hearts, which are ever prone to palliate evil. It is to the workers of iniquity that the Lord says, "Depart from me, I never knew you." And therefore, whatever definite application may be given to the call, yet it is our wisdom to look at it as continually addressed to ourselves: "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues."

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THE VERITY OF THE REVIVAL OF THE APOSTOLIC
CHURCH IN NEWMAN-STREET AND ELSEWHERE,
EXAMINED; OR, THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE TRUE
CHURCH TO BE READY TO MEET HER LORD.

DEAR AND BELOVED BROTHER,

MANY of the topics of our last conversation have recurred to me, and I have been pressed in spirit (since personal intercourse is at present impossible) to commune with you by letter. On one especially, and that of the deepest interest to us both—"The verity of the revival of the Apostolic Church in Newman-Street, and elsewhere"—I would now write. Two things tend to give liberty in this communication; first, the consciousness of an excellent gift of grace in you, that, while ready to hear every brother, you will receive nothing from any, howsoever dear, till you have compared it with the word and the testimony: and, secondly, your perception that God's gift in me is that of a spiritual judgment, which, though weak, was given, not for my sake only, but chiefly for the glory of Jesus, in the service of His members.

If the Scriptures are to be our guide and standard of right and wrong, the principles and practice of the primitive Apostolic Church should surely be our pattern as to the fellowship of saints. There are indeed Churches many, and principles of Church constitution many and diverse, yet the Spirit has sanctioned but one:—to be again conformed to that, from which we ought never to have departed, should be our ambition and prayer. The only question preliminary to this is, that of individual salvation. Now if there is one single truth of which I can be confident, it is this, that I have received the gift of the Holy Ghost, the blessed Paraclete, for whose presence and sake it was even expedient (John xvi. 4.) that Jesus should go away. The evidences of the possession of the Spirit are clear and unanswerable.

To my own self, there is, first, consciousness, in every sensibility and in every act of divine life, as satisfactory, to say the least, as consciousness of natural life is in any question raised concerning it: and,

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secondly, as the necessary result of the Spirit's being present with a view to permanent blessing, there has been the communication from Him who has thus made me a temple for His residence, of moral principles, through faith in the truth as it is in Jesus.

To the world around, which can judge of that which is within, only by its results in action, there is also a double testimony: first, actions characteristic of these moral principles; and secondly, gifts not natural, and therefore, exhibitivè of the presence of One who is above nature. Yes, beloved friend, I do know, blessed be God, the answer of the Apostle's prayer, "That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, in the knowledge of Him: the eyes of your understanding being enlightened, that ye may know what is the hope of His calling, and what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward who believe; according to the working of His mighty power which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenlies, far above all principality and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world but also in that which is to come: and has put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be Head over all things to the Church, which is His body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all." This I do know; for I, who was dead in trespasses and sins, under the power of the spirit of disobedience, and was by nature a child of wrath, have been quickened together with Him, being raised up and made sit together in the heavenlies in Christ. Wondrous grace! that I should thus be brought into living fellowship with the Father and with the Son—fellowship in nature and life ["partakers of the divine nature" (2 Pet. i. 4); "Know ye not that Christ is in you?" (2 Cor. xiii. 5.) "He that is joined unto the Lord is one Spirit" (1 Cor. vi. 17), &c.]; fellowship in object and purpose; fellowship in power, and blessedness, and glory; and therefore, fellowship in the obedience and sufferings of the Man of sorrows, "filling up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh, for His body's sake, which is the Church."

This distinctive mark of the present dispensation, extending from

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the day of Pentecost to the day of our Lord's appearing a second time, without sin unto salvation, has been too little thought of. It is one, however, which distinguishes the present from every former period, and is most marvellous. That we should now be able to sing, "Glory and dominion unto Him that loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father;" that we should have the indwelling of the Holy Ghost making us now, even now, at this present time, sons of God, yea sons and daughters of the Lord God Almighty, so that as Christ is, so are we in this world; and if children then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if so be we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together; these are indeed privileges to marvel at and admire. I rest not here, longer that just to remark how generally the saints have forgotten this, and how, therefore, their services to the Lord are more like those of the Israelites when making bricks without straw, than those of the children of the Father's love. Concerning graces and gifts testifying of the Spirit's presence in blessing, I would remark briefly, first, as to the former, that of all the evidences of the truth of Christianity, I know none more remarkable than this, even the communication to me, in whatever feeble measure, of the character and works of God Himself. When I remember what I am by nature, and what the character of all my own works was in times past, and is still, whenever they appear, and then contemplate in me the works, graces, and fruits of the Holy Ghost, I quite wonder, and admire Christ in me;—I say *admire*, and surely I ought, for it is not myself, but Christ in me, in whom is seen love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, holiness, obedience, &c.;—to think that I, whose subjection to selfishness had filled me with hatred to both God and man, that I, even I, should love God, having confidence in His love; and for that love's sake, should be dying daily for my brethren who are in the world, that they may also be saved. And this is our Lord's witness in us to the world, for "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another" (John xiii. 35, and xvii. 21—26). Secondly, As to gifts I should be a fool to boast to you, seeing how before my God I can boast in nothing save Christ crucified, risen, and soon to be openly glorified; yet there is a time to

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speak of these things, and to point out what He has given us, ascribing all the glory to His grace; and that time is now. But, first, let me say a few words on the sanability of the Church's disease. That there has been, since the day of Pentecost, as complete an Apostasy* (standing off or departure) from the principles of the dispensation, as there ever was at any former period, cannot, I think, be denied. I do not allude to the present state of things, but to the dark ages of the Church previous to the Reformation. Taken as a whole, the Church was then unquestionably apostate from the truth, execrating every doctrine of salvation, and even withholding the Scriptures. Placing myself at the commencement of Reformation, I would ask, how far is restoration from the present dominion of superstition and worldliness to the primitive glory of the Church possible? Can *the whole* outward and visible Church be brought back into a full exhibition of the truth as it is revealed in the word? Certainly not; for, first, it is contrary to the whole analogy of God's dealing to restore a dispensation *as a whole*; for He displaces that which falls away by something better; secondly, the Scriptures are express, that the present Church, whose characteristics should have been those of *election* and *suffering*, is to be rejected in judgment (on account of sin) in order to make way for another, in which truth shall have universal sway throughout the earth, in the fulness of external glory. The Spirit of the Lord in the

* It may be well to observe, that 'apostasy' and 'purity' are indefinite, unless the laws and matter of that of which they are spoken are known. If we used the term 'purity' as applied to God, we should mean something wide of that which would be our thoughts, when using the same word in reference to the Church in its present militant state. Again, Apostasy is the departure from, or practical renunciation of, principles given of God; but Apostasy of an individual and of a body, differ widely; because the laws of individual salvation and Church congregation differ.

The law of individual salvation has ever been the appropriation, through the Spirit, of God's moral character.

The law of the Jewish polity, was the recognition of Jehovah as God and King.

The congregational law of the present Church, is the recognition of the Holy Ghost as Christ's vicar, through the written Word.

So that an Apostate Church may contain many individuals who are not apostate—*i. e.* the Church of Rome was apostate just before the Reformation, yet every one in it was not apostate, as an individual, though doubtless each was guilty of the Church apostasy. It was apostate, just because, like all the sects of our day, it stood off from God's principles of congregational association; yet as many of its members as loved Jesus, as individuals, were not apostate.

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Apostles, continually predicts Apostasy and judgment; and never, even in one single passage, admits the possibility of a renewal of the whole. The 9th of Romans is most distinct on this point—"Continue in goodness, OR be cut off." Again, "Thou standest by faith, be not high-minded, but fear," &c.; the only alternative, "fall under judgment." But while both analogy and express Scripture negative universal restoration, both suggest the hope and expectation of partial renewals; for though Apostasy, as was predicted, has fearfully prevailed, and the Holy Ghost has been grieved and quenched exceedingly, yet God has not forgotten the remnant according to the election of grace. Though the outward Church has, as a whole, proved a false witness, losing the truth and despising the Spirit; yet, in those that come unto Jesus, God's grace shines forth. For now (as in every former and future dispensation) it must be seen, that, whilst man cannot stand, whatsoever be the fulness of the truth, privilege, and power of the Spirit dispensed, or the limitation put upon Satan, Jesus can, and will, keep the good gift in His members. In the midst of Apostasy, and even judgment following on it, we have seen in Daniel and his followers, how faith can immediately administer, to him that exercises it, all the blessing of the dispensation; and not to him only, but, in the appointed time, to a remnant of the nation also. If this was the case *then*, how much more so now? because *then* the blessing and privilege of the individual, as a believing, faithful servant of God, and of the outward Church, of which he was but a member, was not one and the same, but two distinct things, differing in their very nature; *now* they are one in nature and essence, the blessing and glory of the outward Church being nothing more than the concentration or accumulation of that of many individual members, the light and power of each of whom was increased by such association. To enlarge upon this:—under *that* dispensation, the blessedness of Daniel, as an individual servant of the Most High, was in the sweetness of repose in his God and Master; but the nation's (Israel) blessing was in outward glory in the land. True, there was only one way in which the faithful servant could spend his strength, namely, in looking after that in which his Master's glory was concerned; nevertheless, it is clear that Daniel might have known the

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full blessedness of being God's servant, yea, and even have realized to himself in Nebuchadnezzar's court, earthly glory (which was part of the nation's promise) without God's returning the captivity in any measure. There was, therefore, *then*, a difference between the blessing of the individual and that of the outward Church—the nation Israel. But this is not so *now*; for each individual stands at the fountain head of the present Church's glory, and has perfect right to it, even if the only Believer in the world—the testimony of the witness, as a whole, being nothing but the necessary result of many individuals standing in their full enjoyment of privilege. This is seen by a reference to John xvii. 20—26, in connection with Acts ii. 44—47: and iv. 33—37. The Spirit is mine, and the glory is mine, and the name of God is mine, whether others possess them or possess them not; but when many are living in the enjoyment of these, then, and then only, is the object of these present revelations fully answered: "That they all may be one, as thou Father art in me, and I in thee, that the world might believe that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them as thou hast loved me." How beautifully is the result of this prayer on the part of Jesus, and of faith on the part of the saints, seen in the church at Jerusalem! and how clearly is its declension to be traced to the forgetfulness of these unities, the enjoyable common property of all believers (Acts. vi. 1—3)! Surely the possession and exhibition of such love (one heart and one mind, and all things in common) was the greatest glory the present witness ever knew, for herein she both resembled Him to whom she was espoused, and met the desires of His heart and mind for her. It has also often struck me, how much more she effected through this fellowship than through any endowment or gift of power. See for instance, in Acts. xii. the deliverance of Peter from prison and death, in answer to the prayers of those who, though praying, had not faith to expect an answer. And so it must ever be; for when the saints are standing with one heart and one mind, desiring the glory of the holy child Jesus, the Father's ear is open to them, and the Spirit's power is unrestrained: in such cases, then, there is no fixed limit to their power; for the question is not, "Has the Holy Ghost dispensed to any of us ability to do this or that particular thing, as in gifts of healing, miracles," &c.

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but is our God able to do this, and is it His will to glorify His Son ; and is union our right position before Him? The contrast, in quantum of power possessed, is as great as between one who has a right to draw a daily measure of water from a living spring, and the man to whom the living spring pertains. The progress of my mind in truth, though slow, has been in the course in which most are led. When at rest as to individual salvation, through faith in the blood and righteousness, and the resurrection of Immanuel, the Spirit pressed much upon me the glory of Jesus. To glorify Jesus is His peculiar office—the object and end of His presence and operations. And who can thus with faith draw near unto the Saviour, without perceiving the answer in Him of every need and every necessity? Not one single thing that self can crave, left unsupplied. And with what object is all this superabundant profusion of grace displayed, but just that our minds and hearts might be won to seek His glory, and His alone, above and around whose Person the bow of our glory is stretched. Within the veil I behold the Lamb that was slain, alive again for evermore : whilst waiting for His coming, to take unto Himself the kingdom and reign, how oft and pressing has been the question,—Are His saints ready to meet Him if He come now? Alas! no; His people are in confusion, His disciples rent and divided—no unity, no love, no forbearance among them; but the carnal mind manifesting itself in “ I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Cephas,” &c. &c. It is lamentable to see how innumerable the sects are, and how there is not one single thing called a Church, such as God can recognize as His faithful witness, because not one built upon the principles laid down in the word for congregational association; consequently not one, from the Establishment down to the lowest sect, capable of receiving, out of each of the remaining sects, some who might love God, without a compromise of its peculiarities; none come together simply as saints, “ after Apostolic order and precedent.” Alas! how seldom do the saints even perceive the importance of this. Their thoughts seem limited to themselves: for any thing more than individual salvation, or at most, individual testimony, few have a thought; and the few who admit the necessity of visible unity, have still acted upon the principle of self; for they have formed “ a Church” for themselves, instead of yielding themselves to the

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principles of "the Church," as laid down in the word. The first and great Schismatic in England, has clearly been its Hierarchy, for it was first in point of time; and by not adopting the grounds and principles of the Church constitution found in the New Testament, it has sanctioned the flesh in separatists from it, yea, and forced the Holy Ghost, if indeed He would glorify Jesus by any full display of truth, to raise up other witnesses for the many parts of truth it despises. The Lord has revealed a basis for His Church, and principles for her organization and regulation, but they are not those of the Establishment or any of the other sects; so far from it, they are practically renounced by all of these parties. With divisions, also exist the liberty of the flesh, the love of the world, and of traditions: moreover, so artfully has Satan blended truth and falsehood, that sin, and worldliness, and subjection to Himself, are all sanctioned for *religion's* sake. Who can perceive this, and be conscious that the Lord's glory is concerned in it, yea, and that the sins and ignorances of brethren are our own (for we are one with them in Christ), but must anxiously seek to gather together the saints out of sin, and tradition, and folly, to meet Him who cometh quickly. Oh! He does come quickly, and His saints look not for Him, but are in the midst of worldliness, like Lot in Sodom. Unprepared for His coming, how can they meet His precursor Antichrist, who, with all the strength and artifices of Satan to sustain him, will soon appear, deceiving if it were possible, even the very elect? And why is it that the saints do not come together in love upon the principles and foundation of the primitive Church; "speaking the truth in love, growing up into Him in all things, which is the Head, even Christ: *from whom the whole body fitly joined and compacted by that which every joint supplieth*, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love?" Do they not recognize the universal desolation around? Can they not perceive the beauty and comfort of such a position? Are they not ashamed to think of the Lord's appearing while His people are in such confusion, lest both He and they should be ashamed at His coming? All these things are felt and freely confessed by many, both before the Lord and before man, and yet no deliverance wrought, by reason of despondent

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unbelief and disobedience. We wait, say they,—Wait ! for what ? Have we not every thing as means which the primitive Church possessed ? The Holy Ghost is not changed, either in nature or power ; neither is He withdrawn, though sadly grieved ; neither has the truth ceased to be truth, — “ The glory which thou gavest me, I have given them, that they may be one.” These were the powers which, when known by faith, first modelled the Church ; and they are sufficient to reproduce the same effects, at any time, according to the measure of faith. And if it be not disbelief of the continued grace of God, then can it only be disobedience which hinders* ; because, if the Spirit has been continued, we have still the power to return. The duty to do so is more imperative than may at first sight appear ; for as the glory of the Church was but the concentration of that of many individuals, the full weight of guilt for the absence of it rests upon the individual whose position is such as would hinder its development. Again, the fullness of love incoming and outgoing, is the privilege and duty of the individual as such ; and this can be found only when and where God’s object is answered, namely, among saints associated together in the Spirit. Let us beware, lest in unbelief we seek to clear ourselves

* It is evident from what has been said before, that the individual can never in the present dispensation, find himself in the midst of the Apostasy of the Church, and feel bound passively to remain under and support it ; but must immediately cleanse himself from every thing which hinders the Spirit and is opposed to the truth ; for in himself he possesses the Spirit (or he is none of Christ’s) and the truth, and is responsible to God by them to be prepared for the union of the saints collectively. This is important to notice, because so long as there was a difference in nature between the individual’s blessing and that of the outward Church, it was not so. The Jews were *ordered to abide* under, and voluntarily to serve the king of Babylon ; neither had they power to return. This is still more clear, if we consider how the nature of the oppressor necessarily depends upon the nature of the thing oppressed. Jesus, as Head of Providence, then took up the Jewish nation ; and when they refused to obey Him, He raised up another nation to oppress them. His glory, in the nature of things was no more tarnished by connection simply with Nebuchadnezzar than with the Jews. But now Jesus, as Head of the Church, has called those that bear His name to dwell in the living exhibition of love. When they forgot His commands, He gave them up to their own courses, and they have subjected themselves to the world, the flesh, and the devil, under many a fair and specious guise. To say that God requires His saints, when they have discovered their evil connection with these things, still to abide under them, is nothing less than blasphemy ; for it charges God as being the sanctioner both of the world, the flesh, and the devil, and of His Saints grieving the Holy Ghost and despising the truth.

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of sin by taxing God with having been unfaithful to His promise of the continued presence of the Holy Ghost in the Church till the end: and again, lest, confessing that God must have been faithful to His promise, the spirit of disobedience should prefer a covering of hypocrisy in some system of man's devising, in preference to bearing the shame of our weakness and shorn locks, by returning and renouncing every head save Jesus, and every principle of unity save that of fellowship in the Spirit. Surely it is nothing but unbelief and rebellion which hinder any from recognizing and submitting to the Spirit as the only authority and power among the saints when gathered together, if even but two or three, in the Lord's name. And yet how few are there who do not seem resolved to deny the Holy Ghost His place and presence among the saints as the vicar of Christ, as well as the principle of fellowship, 'Mutual dependence of the members on Him.' This, moreover, is obvious, that if we cannot have fellowship in the way and mode God enjoined, then must we not attempt it; yea we cannot have it at all; but every member must be dissociated from the rest. But as many as are members of Christ's body, of His flesh, and of His bones, are members one of another, associated by the common life of the Spirit; and this is all that is needful to fellowship. I bless God for His grace, that I know that His Son cometh quickly, and that it has pleased Him to enable me, in the hope of this, to have fellowship in His sufferings for the Church's sake: yea, I count not my life dear to me, if so be that I can gather His saints together out of selfish worldliness and sectarianism, to be ready in the fellowship of the Spirit to meet my Lord and theirs.

But I digress; the gifts of the Spirit were my thesis. In 1 Cor. xii. 8—11, we have them declared to be diverse: "For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another, the word of knowledge; to another, faith; to another, the gifts of healing; to another, the working of miracles; to another, prophecy; to another, discerning of spirits; to another, divers kinds of tongues; to another, the interpretation of tongues: but all these worketh that one and the self-same spirit, dividing to every man severally as He will." And as to offices in the Church, "He gave some, Apostles; some, Prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, Pastors and Teachers; for the

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perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ" (Eph. iv. 11, 12. and 1 Cor. xii. 28); first, Apostles; secondly, Prophets; thirdly, Teachers; after that, Miracles; then gifts of healing, helps, governments, &c.

Let the infidel unbeliever mock and scoff at these things, and let the hypocritical formalist deny our need of them; the truth of God remains undisturbed. If a man does not believe that there is such a person as the Holy Ghost, it is of course impossible for him to admit that certain powers and actions originate from Him.—And again, if a man admit His blessed existence, and the truth of God that He is to remain with the saints in His gifts of office* (Eph. iv. 13), and gifts of edification† (1 Cor. xiii. 9, 10), yet cannot recognize His gifts in that which he thinks is the Apostolic Church, one of two things must be the cause—either He is not a Believer at all, not having as yet received the Spirit, and therefore *of course* he cannot discern; or, that which he reckons the Apostolic Church is no such thing: and till he leaves it and stands in a position in which the Spirit will be without constraint, though himself and others may as individuals possess the Spirit, His presence cannot be clearly seen among them *collectively*, as many members of the same body of which Christ is Head; for whatever energy there be of the Spirit allowed, it is attributed to a wrong origin. Blessed be God! we that believe, do know that it is a sin of AWFUL magnitude to tempt God like Israel of old, saying, "*Is God among us?*" The graces and gifts we have received, we dare neither deny nor attribute to any origin save the Spirit. I bless God I have received gifts both for edification and office; not that I boast therein; to me the gifts I have unquestionably received, are very small things indeed, when compared with the moral glory and personal presence of the Comforter. For the bestowal and possession of some of them, I am distinctly conscious of responsibility to Christ and His Church. On account especially of comparative misuse of the gifts of faith, and prophesying, and speaking forth under the power of the Spirit to exhortation, edification and comfort (1 Cor.

* "*Till we all come unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.*"

† "*We know in part and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.*"

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xiv); of some gifts of office, and of dreams,* I do feel deeply humbled before my God and Father. In another and more faithful brother, I see and have used the gift of the word of wisdom, of knowledge, and of one more rare still, the discerning of spirits; in another all the energy of the Spirit's gift goes forth in faith. I do not remember ever yet to have met with any pretending to possess the gift of healing, such as that recorded in Acts iii. 1—9. and xiv. 8—11, &c. by which one man could bid another, in the name of Jesus, immediately to arise and be well; though immediate answer to the prayer of faith, I have frequently known and received. Well do I remember on a brother's bursting a blood vessel, the second or third time it had occurred, our not rising from our knees till he was made well and whole, and he has been so from that time to this; and on another occasion, our continuing one day waiting beside the bed of a sick sister, till it pleased the Lord to raise her up, giving strength and causing to subdue a stiffness of the throat and neck from some rheumatic affection, which fixed the head in one position. The similar cases which occur to my mind while thus writing, are innumerable; but they are only proofs, either that the effectual fervent prayer of one righteous man availeth much, or, that whatsoever two or three shall agree to ask, they shall receive: they are, therefore, no novelty to the Believer. I pass them by, because irrelevant; for they are so intimately and inseparably connected with the common principles of the every-day walk of faith, that no Believer can wonder at them; though had we time to open them, the grace of our common Father might be admired. The gift of miracles also I never saw in clear exercise, unless the subjection of evil spirits, of devils, and of maniacs to the name of Jesus be considered such; of which I have known frequent instances. Nor tongues have I ever met with; or, of course, if so, the power of interpreting them. The facility of acquiring languages given me in answer to prayer, has been remarkable; and if any of these gifts should at any time come upon me, I should not be the least surprised. How should I, dwelling in fellowship with the Father and with the Son, wonder at any thing save His grace and love? Besides,

* Dreams and visions of events future I have known frequently.

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possessing the originator of all these things in the person of the Holy Ghost, the less is included in the greater: all things are mine, not, blessed be God! according to my foolishness, but according to the purpose and counsel of love of Him, who, being mine own, is Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. Any and every gift might come upon me at any moment: the Lord grant that I may use those I have, whether as yet I recognize them or not! and in such case, those that are added, to the edification of His body; and may I not prove in understanding a child, like some of old (1 Cor. xiv), carnally glorying in the gift, and insisting upon using it whether to edification or destruction of the Church! I confess, however, that in carefully examining the word, I have thought I could perceive that tongues and the working of miracles had specific objects; and that these being answered, they would not be restored. But I am not assured of this; I will not enlarge upon it, for I am quite prepared, if the Lord be pleased, to be His instrument in this as in every other way. Unto the Father of Jesus I stretch forth my hands without fear or doubting, for *every* good and perfect gift which His infinite love and wisdom may see fit to bestow upon the saints through me; yea, and the Spirit oft maketh intercession within me with groanings which cannot be uttered. As to requests for specific gifts, *He* regulates my mind, who dealeth of these things unto every man severally *as He will*; so that here also it is neither of him that willeth, nor of him that seeketh, but of God that showeth mercy.

As to the Spirit's gifts in office, as some, Apostles; and some, Prophets; and some, Evangelists; and some, Pastors and Teachers; I would say two words: First, It is a matter of *faith* with every one that maketh not God a liar, that these things have continued, for they were given "for the edifying of the saints *until* we all come unto a perfect man." Secondly, There have been in times past many, both among the Reformers and since, and there are many now fitted, some for exhortation, edifying and comforting, some for Pastorship, and some for Evangelizing; now *to whom* are these powers, howsoever weak in measure, to be ascribed? There is no good gift but what cometh down from God; our only alternative, if we will not ascribe them to the Spirit, is to deck ourselves with His glory. God has written, that

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these things shall continue, therefore they are certainly among us. To impute the works of God to ourselves, not only argues great self ignorance, but is a very near approach to the sin of the Jews, who attributed the Holy Ghost's work to Satan: the difference is merely in *degree*, that we are not so completely enemies to God as is the devil; yet the principle of the two imputations is one and the same — the attributing the glory of God to an impure origin. But, beloved friend, we who have drawn near unto Him who discerneth the thoughts and intents of the heart, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, are not blinded as to the grace of our God in this respect. We possess and use many such excellent gifts, yea, all of them in the name of our Lord — even* Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors and Teachers.

Thus then I see in myself and others around, the clear evidences of Christ's resurrection. Say you, "these things are so indeed, yet are they in weakness?" True, dear friend; yet let us not despise the day of small things; let us rather remember why they are weak, even by the past and present Apostasy of the outward Church as a whole; and let us admire the goodness of our God, for except the Lord had left unto us *a very small* remnant, we should have been as Sodom and Gomorrah. If you deny that you can see them at all, I can only suppose that you are identified with some system whose principles are at variance with the Spirit's order. All the sects of our day, from the Establishment downwards, are thus guilty; for they have terms of communion other than the simple *one* found in the word, even "the recognition, through the Spirit, of the Father, as set forth in the Son;" and all have systematically excluded the Spirit's free energy in the Church meetings. To the members of any of these sects, *of course*

* There is a difference between the twelve Apostles of the Jews with the one of the Gentiles, born out of season, and the other Apostles spoken of in Scripture, though a correspondence, in that the work of all was the *ordering of the Churches*. The former seem to have held a much higher place, and one peculiar to themselves as witnesses of the resurrection, who had seen the Lord (Acts i. and 1 Cor. ix. 19), and had signs (2 Cor. xii. 12). The word Apostle means, simply, "sent;" I would call those now Apostles, who are sent with gifts of helps, governments, &c. for the ordering of the Churches; in which sense alone, I think Barnabas is called an Apostle in the Acts; and again, Silvanus and Timothy (1 Thess. ii. 6), and the brethren (2 Cor. viii. 23).

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the recognition* of such energies and powers of the Spirit is difficult ; for they are standing in places where these cannot and may not be freely exercised, into which they cannot fully come without disorder and confusion : and in fixing *through whom* the Spirit may speak among them, they have not only grieved Him, but blinded themselves as to their dependence upon Himself and His grace in that little energy he may still vouchsafe among them. Blessed be God ! though in weakness and in fear, and in much trembling, in leaving these things to return to “the Apostolic Church principles,” we have found that our God was still the same, and His gifts and calling without repentance. Many indeed underrate the comparative power of these things in our day, from want of observing the mode in which God works throughout redemption, hiding His power in the midst of weakness. Throughout the whole history of redemption, God, as though from consciousness that with Him is the residue of strength and power, is found under every circumstance to measure out His power in exact proportion to the exigency of the case ; and moreover (to which I particularly refer), to hide His almighty power in the midst of weakness. I pray you to observe it ; for it really manifests the perfection of His power and Godhead more than anything, and is most marvellous. A creature in all the wretchedness and infirmity of the fall is used by the Lord Almighty, infirmity being allowed to remain, but hindered working beyond a fixed limit, and yet the individual not conscious of constraint. The responsibility of the creature, or the perfect freedom of his will, *never* destroyed, *never* in

* It has been said by some, with a view of obviating the force of this, that the present pretension to the *χαρίσματα* of the Spirit is unhappy, because we cannot bring forward and show those, the exercise of which would bring conviction to the open infidel ; an objection which identifies him who makes it with the infidel himself ; for who are we that we should judge God, or be His counsellor, as to what He should or should not give. The Church and the world being now identical, visible signs cannot be expected to any great extent, because, first, she who should have had them as love tokens of her Lord’s approbation of her collective state, has been and is unfaithful ; secondly, they to whom they would, in our own country at least, be signs, *profess* to be “of the Church,” i. e. to have spiritual discernment, and thus neutralize their claim to gifts. But is it really meant to be said that we have not any of the *χαρίσματα* by any one pretending to be spiritual ? The *χαρίσματα* (Rom. xii. 6) are prophesy, ministry, exhorting, giving, ruling, showing mercy.

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the least interfered with; but the weak, and infirm, and responsible instrument made *willing* in the day of the Lord's power. Moses affords a remarkable exemplification of this, on many and diverse occasions. Jehovah would use him, but not as a passive tool, impelled by constraint contrary to or without the exercise of judgment; but only made willing and left under responsibility. Thus we find him declining at first to undertake the mission, angering God by declaring his insufficiency, &c. and even when invested with power, and when being used to give the people water, refusing to do so in God's way, and choosing one of his own. So Jeremiah determined that he would not speak; and so Jonah ran away from the work to which he was called, and in which he was being used. The increased power of the Spirit at the day of Pentecost, so far from changing or altering this great principle of action (which is one most intimately connected with the whole scheme of redemption), greatly confirms and establishes it. For we are told that the spirits of the Prophets are subject to the Prophets; and when one is prophesying in the Spirit, the rest are ordered to sit by and judge (or discern how far the matter spoken accords with the truth of God). What! judge a man's words, he speaking by the Holy Ghost? Yes; and more than this, every energy of the Spirit which, from circumstances, would not be unto edification*, is to be refused. A gift of tongues is not to be used in the Church, unless there be one that can interpret, present: and in the midst of prophesying, one may have to stop, a matter being revealed to another that sitteth by (1 Cor. xiv. 27—32). Peter also had to satisfy *the judgment* of the Church on the subject of his obeying the Lord's command, "Go ye unto all nations," &c. when he had gone to the Gentiles (Acts xi). Paul had to travel all the weary way to Jerusalem, about the question of circumcision being binding on the Gentiles; and when there, the solution of the difficulty was by no oracular response, but by a deliberation in council. So we find him exhorting Timothy and Titus to remember their responsibility, and exercise a *sound judgment* as to the subjects they choose to ordain as Elders or Deacons; and submitting himself to his own converts,

* I would add, "or according to order," as a woman in the Church assembly.

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“I write unto you as unto those that are spiritual, judge ye what I say.” The Apostle describes himself as having many tears and temptations, being in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling; in the midst of trial and sorrows, under deep consciousness of responsibility; as having to glory in infirmity, as in the thoughts of some weighty by letter, but in *bodily presence weak, and in speech contemptible*. Where then was that outward show of power and majesty, which you attach to the idea of the Holy Ghost’s presence, in him who was not a whit behind the chiefest of the Apostles? And if it was not to be found in him, how comes it we are expecting it to be in us? Oh! my brother, it is because we are carnal, thinking that by fleshly power, and an exterior bearing of majesty, the Spirit’s presence is marked, instead of by a deep sense of weakness and dependence upon God. Above all, the evidence of my service to the Lord being by His Spirit, is this, the abiding consciousness of my weakness, foolishness, and insufficiency for any of them whatsoever; and this, oft whilst in apparent desertion of the Lord, conversion and establishment of the saints were following my ministry, which to myself has no power, so that all the glory and praise go to the Lord. And are we indeed so stupid as not to have observed this ourselves, or not to be able to remember it, as the remark of almost every preacher, that the time of the Spirit’s power through His servant, either in conversion or building up, is seldom the time of great sensible enjoyment, but often of embarrassment and straitness both in thought and expression; and again, that seldom when the speaker is greatly enlarged, is there any great blessing to the hearers? If Paul were to come among us, I verily believe the great difference between him and us would be his more perfect apprehension of weakness, feebleness, and insufficiency; and I am confirmed in this by such passages as these: “We are fools for Christ’s sake, but ye are wise; we are weak, but ye are strong; ye are honourable, but we are despised—the offscouring of all things unto this day” (1 Cor. iv. 9, 10, 13). “I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection, lest I be a cast-away” (ix. 27). “The sentence of death is in ourselves,” &c. (2 Cor. i. 9; iv.—vi. &c. &c.) The life of the Christian is dependence; the strength of that life, consciousness of dependence; and he who has most of these,

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approaches most nearly to the Lord Jesus in the day of His humiliation, and can therefore be most used by the Lord. Sure I am of this, that many, in the conceits of their own minds about what the Spirit's presence *must* have been in that day, have now rejected many of His gifts, or imputed them to a wrong origin. Not that I say they are as clear now, or ever again will be, as in the primitive Church, **WHEN THE FULNESS OF THEIR POWER MARKED GOD'S SANCTION OF THE CHURCH AS A WHOLE.** The proportion may be as that of the glory of Israel after its return, contrasted with that in the day of Solomon; or, alas! the union and love of the present day when compared with that recorded at the commencement of Acts. While the saints are standing, one for Paul, and another for Cephas, &c. it is *love* and mercy to withhold any great power of such things; for the fleshly mind, thus evinced, cannot use them save to individual exaltation and condemnation. If we would seek in love to one another more, greater favours might perchance be evinced. Howbeit, gifts we have, in what feebleness soever; and they cannot come save from the Spirit. But what is a stronger confirmation to a Believer than even experience itself, the continuance of the Holy Ghost with the saints is a matter of faith, for so it is written: "I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you for ever" (John xiv. 16). "Lo I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world," &c. &c. "He gave some, Apostles, and Prophets, and Evangelists, and Pastors, and Teachers, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ *till we all come* unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ" (Eph. iv). "We know in part, and we prophesy in part; but *when* that which is perfect is come, *then* that which is in part shall be done away" (1 Cor. xvi). The purpose of God is so plainly revealed that the Holy Ghost (His graces and gifts dispensed after the sovereignty of the divine will) should continue, that I will not listen to any argument which denies this; for He that advances it, has made God a liar.

But I fear you will think I wander sadly from the question; so I will at once proceed to it. The only feeling I can have, on hearing

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that any brother or brethren have received the Holy Ghost, is that of joy unfeigned and thankfulness to God. While Joshua, who had not these things, said, "My lord Moses, forbid," he, who had partaken of them replied, "Enviest thou for my sake? Would God that all the Lord's people were prophets, and that the Lord would put His Spirit upon them." Alas! my sorrow is quite on the other extreme; for the practice and feelings of the saints almost universally is, "We have not so much as heard of there be any Holy Ghost." Oh no! for the seal of the Spirit, or for signs exhibitiv of His presence, praise, honor, and glory be unto our Redeemer! The full possession of the Spirit by every saint on earth, would not detract from my enjoyment through Him, but rather confirm and strengthen it; yea, for this purpose it would be given. I know indeed no sign of the unbelief of these days more strong than the excessive disquietude occasioned among the saints by this report of an outpouring of the Spirit. At first one might suppose that it was an enemy who had appeared unexpectedly: sure I am that the hearts of many have been more shaken than a saint's would be, if abiding in fellowship with the Father and with the Son, at the revelation either of Antichrist or Satan. From the wonder and amazement expressed, we might imagine that they knew not the Holy Ghost at all, and had not received of His graces and gifts. And what means all the questioning, 'Yes, but if it be true?' but just a denial that the Holy Ghost in the Believer is *able* to obey the written word, "Believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God." All this argues, alas! sad unbelief and misapprehension of privilege; I speak of the saints themselves; for the conduct of the outward Church generally has been just that of open infidelity. Secure in the bosom of God my Father, and in fellowship with Jesus, Lord of all, I will now tell you what the Holy Ghost has enabled me to discern concerning this revival of the Apostolic Church. As a whole, I doubt not that this discernment is the Lord's; though, doubtless, mingled with much of my infirmity. But first let me make a few remarks, independent of any judgment formed, concerning the spiritual manifestations. The testimony of the letters from Scotland recording its commencement, sent by one who took a lead in it there, as well as that of many with whom I have conversed, who have been subject to it, is,

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that the workings of the Spirit are by constraint on the bodily faculties; and this is evident in intercourse with them. The Lord, say they, speaks through us as a man speaks through a trumpet or other passive instrument. This is important, because, first, *it seems* contrary to Scripture; and secondly, *it appears* to make the Spirit responsible for every word, not leaving any possibility of mistake from the infirmity of the vessel, as is supposed in 1 Cor. xiv. You are aware that Mr. Baxter has distinctly declared, that the Spirit among them predicted several gross falsehoods through himself, that the time is past, and the events not realized.—He adds, that the Spirit in other gifted persons pledged itself to the Spirit in Him as being one and the same. Mr. Mac Neile also has averred, that the Spirit uttered falsehood concerning himself, and misquoted Scripture in a remarkable way. Why when these statements were made in private no answer was returned, and still more why no public notice has been taken of them by the *leaders* of the work, now that they have been told unto the whole Church, remains to be seen. For myself I pronounce no verdict on the case. The mode of operation, I confess, pains me; it reminds me of the Pythoness, the Montanists, &c.; yet I read, “there are diversities of operations,” and so forbear, with this single observation, that granting it is “an operation” of the Spirit, it is clearly of the number of those not intended for Church edification, since the very constraint it brings with its exercise, would clearly and unquestionably exempt it from the regulations laid down by the Apostle for the Church meeting.

As to the nature, however, of the Spirit among them, I feel totally unable to form any judgment, because the very unrighteous way in which, by their walk, they set at nought Scripture, and thwart and quench that which I know to be the Holy Ghost’s energy, render it very difficult, if not altogether impossible, to divide in them between the flesh and Spirit. Conceding, however, that they had not the Spirit’s gifts previously, and that this is the gift to them of the same Holy Ghost which I have; nevertheless I altogether and entirely withstand them, and refuse to have any fellowship whatsoever with them, because they are to be blamed for withstanding the Holy Ghost in the very point of contest peculiar to our day. The day of the Lord is at hand, and the grace of the Lord is now striving to gather together the saints out of

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all the specious forms of Apostasy, and worldliness, and confederacies of the flesh, into readiness to meet their Lord, a witness and warning to the professing Church and world that judgment is at the door. Now it is in this very point that they are found hindering His energies, and withstanding both God and His saints. It is no unimportant work in which they are engaged; for whilst many are lagging behind the Lord, content to be *in the way*, as they think, and are forgetting the necessity of stedfastly and incessantly gazing upon their guide, in pleasant enjoyment of fair scenes around, these have advanced before Him, and are found preventing and perverting the energy of the Spirit to make the Bride ready for her Lord's return. They are right, perfectly right, as to their *professed* principle of Church union and Church order; it is the truth of God Himself. The Holy Ghost is the only energy in the Church of Christ, the only power and authority; and where the fellowship is not simply in Him, then there is no fair exhibition of the Apostolic Church at all, which is but one, even that over which Christ is the Head. These things they hold in principle distinctly, and the devil abhors and dreads the promulgation of them in righteousness and truth; it is Satan himself, and none other, who is trying, through the inconsistency of their practice and principles, and other means, to bring these most important truths into disrepute. They do hold these things in word, but in practice deny them; just like Peter, when Paul rebuked him, they would in practice support pure unmingled truth by principles of a carnal worldly nature, thus building again the things they have destroyed. And, therefore, if each of them was endowed as highly as Paul or Peter, yet would I not give place, by subjection, no not for an hour. What are they to me? from them I received nothing. The Lord has ordained me; and by Him alone have I been taught: yea, and in conference they have added nothing to me. I deliberately repeat it;—if they had all the powers of the Pentecostal effusion, every one that is led by the Spirit is bound by responsibility to Christ, and the desire to see the saints gathered back into the Apostolic order, that Christ may be glorified by the Spirit, to withstand them, because they use not whatsoever power they may have for the purpose for which *alone* it was given, but by it contend against and withstand the Holy Ghost's gracious effort to glorify Jesus

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by associating the saints together again as saints. In this, though individually children of God, they are serving Satan and accomplishing his ends. I beg you to observe, that against the divine origin of the Spirit among them I here pronounce no thought, nor concerning the disorderliness in heresies, in women speaking in the Churches, in the use of tongues when no interpreter is present. The one first and great question is this, "Is the work of the Lord being carried on by them upon God's revealed principles?" The answer is at once, The gathering of the saints in the fellowship of the Spirit, is altogether hindered and opposed. The Holy Ghost's energy and purpose has now some time been too obvious to be longer unperceived—to gather the elect remnant in the Spirit out of the power of the world, the flesh, and the devil, to be ready to meet their Lord. For this purpose *they* profess to have been raised up: this is the purpose of God; and though the whole outward Church is in arms against it—it, as the counsel of the Lord (I believe), shall stand. In England they profess to stand as the representatives of it (blessed privilege if rightly used!); but, alas! through them Satan is bringing it into disrepute, for they hold it neither in righteousness nor truth. Not in righteousness; because heresy is unrebuked among them. I enter not into the specific forms of false statement among them, as to the humanity of our Lord, &c.—It is written, "No man knoweth the Son, but the Father only." Any analytical investigation, therefore, of the mode of combination of the Godhead and manhood* in one person, must be the working of the carnal reason; because that which is not revealed, *cannot* be the subject-matter of an exercise of faith; and by this alone, all their testimony is as much destroyed, perhaps more so, than if they had lived in open unholiness and sinfulness. Not in truth; because, if subject indeed to the Spirit, they would recognize, first, Christ's power and authority, and it alone; and, secondly, the doctrine of the written Word. Now the test of Christ's household is—"As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are sons of God:" but the unity of the Spirit these practically deny, as I have found to my sorrow. They say, indeed, that the unity of the Church is in the Spirit alone: but

* Let me not be understood to detract from the Scripture doctrine of the Lord's humanity; who, being of the seed of Abraham, was tempted like as we are in all things, yet without sin.

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on this they act not—recognition of their gifts being their terms to full communion. I speak advisedly—they are prepared even to say, and have said—“Dear brother, it grieves us that there should be these divisions among us,” to one with whom they had refused even to pray, and that in private, but five minutes before; “because he could not pronounce any judgment as to the origin of their gifts.” This is schism and sectarianism; and consciously to sanction it, is to be guilty of despising the unity of the Spirit. Again, as to the regulation of God’s family; so far are they from recognizing Christ’s ordination, that they deliberately reject those whom He has ordained, and sent with many seals to their Apostleship, casting them out: thus did not the Church at Jerusalem towards Paul. And, to leave no doubt on the subject, what is their plea? You have not been ordained by us, nor by the Church of England!!! whilst, at the same time, they recognize, as authorized teachers, those whom it has ordained, but with whom the Holy Ghost never thought of working, because unordained by the great Head of the Church. More than once, also, have they rejected men sent of God, because not either sanctioned by themselves or the Church of England; and received others not sent of God, because so accredited. As to doctrine, their testimony is rarely that of joy and rejoicing, either in the full and perfect forgiveness of sin through the blood carried within the veil, or in the discriminating sovereignty of electing love. But that on which I chiefly rest here is on the doctrine of fellowship. In the first place, their doctrine of combination is not that of the primitive Church:—“The glory which thou gavest me I HAVE GIVEN them, *that they may be one*”—the lifting up of the Believer’s heart and mind out of time and its circumstances, into the presence of the Lord of glory: but, contrariwise, they maintain that it consists in that which is but the sign of this—viz. gifts or endowments of limited power. They teach also, that the present dispensation is partly of earthly things. In consistency with this, see the parade and show in Newman-Street. I need not wait, to prove that Infant baptism, as conducted in the Establishment, is wrong; that regeneration does not necessarily follow upon water baptism, as stated in that office; neither need I pause, to show how contrary to truth is that which necessarily flows out of this, namely, national religion, with all the false doctrines practically

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involved in it. Now they uphold both of these, especially the latter, with all its guilt of fornication; and require God's children, for its sake, to prostitute themselves to the world. More than this, they condemn those who, for the sake of conscience and Jesus, have renounced it and the glory of this world, under whatsoever form.

I would enlarge upon this a little, retracing the means by which the present position has been assumed. Any one sufficiently acquainted with the history of the work, may recognize the following steps, and behold how great a matter a little fire kindleth. It commenced in Scotland among a few obscure individuals, in whom false spirituality, or morbid excitement of affection and feeling, had destroyed all spiritual judgment. On their hearing of the primitive union of the Church and its then endowment of wisdom and power (conscious of the want among themselves of such union, as well as the absence of such gifts), they blended the two together as cause and effect, assuming that they had no union because no gifts; the reverse of which was probably the truth, for, even at Jerusalem, the gifts followed the being of one accord in one place. They then set themselves to pray for *gifts*. Now here it was that Satan snared them in their partial truth. The Holy Ghost was with them; and the truth given was not only sufficient, if faithfully acted upon, to have purged them from dead systems and brought them into fellowship one with another in the Spirit; but, moreover, made them responsible for being so. Then, in whatsoever weakness, they would have found the Spirit sufficient for love, and order, and mutual edification. But they knew not that the personal presence of the Spirit, and the gift of glory, and the declaration of the Father's name, were the dynamics of union and power; and they made it to depend upon the presence of gifts of a certain class. Herein they committed three sins; first, they denied that God's gifts and calling are without repentance; secondly, they contemned the Spirit still left them, and the truth; and thirdly, removed the responsibility of the Church which flowed out of the continuance of these things. The taxing God with unfaithfulness to His promise of the Spirit's abiding, was folly; and see this in their argument, — "We must expect a return of the Spirit, and give God no rest till it is vouchsafed, because the expressed purpose of

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God is, that the Spirit should abide for ever :” i. e. we are bound to look for a return of the Spirit, because He was never to go away. They have thus also set their own wisdom above God’s, giving pre-eminence to that which passeth away, over that which abideth for ever ; and setting the possession of limited gifts of power by man (a subject of wonder only in man’s day, and in a world of weakness) above the fulness of God’s love shed abroad by the Spirit in the hearts and minds of sinners : which will never cease to be a wonder and a praise, and this with the view of producing *union* ! The Apostle’s “Doth not even nature?” might fairly be borrowed to show the folly of such a course for such an end. Hence also they have ordered so many to remain in evil, yea, in the worst streets of Babylon (as they say) till they have power !!! the veriest delusion Satan ever coined ; for what is this practically, but just “Continue in sin (not that grace may abound, but) till you cease from sin ?” The real question at issue between myself and them, is one of overwhelming moment, to wit, “whether or not the professing Church is responsible to God for their past and present abuse and neglect of the Spirit and His gifts?” And this, I believe, is God’s controversy with all the sects of our day, and with themselves among others. They maintain that we are *only* responsible for being without the originative energies of Church constitution through past sin, so making God’s promise of none effect, yea, declaring that His faithfulness has failed. I stand by God’s word ; God *has* continued them, because He said He would, and that the Church will neither believe their presence, nor obey God in using them, and that therefore her guilt is that of continued, increasing, persevering obstinacy and self-willedness ; taking to herself the glory of the Spirit, hiding His light in her, and declaring it is her own. In truth, the possession of the glory and the Spirit by the saints, brings with it a responsibility of no light character to all Believers. And if this were simultaneously recognized in every town throughout Christendom, then simultaneously and without concert would there be in every such town, a renewal at one and the same time, and without any greater subjection the one to the other, than is found imposed by the truth as it is in Jesus. But these judge their brethren, and do not fear to threaten those whom God has thus led, because “they follow

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not us." The ground on which most of them maintain their position, also savours of the old principle—self. Instead of its being said, "This practice accords with the principles revealed in the word for Church association, and has therefore a claim upon every believer, independent of all practical abuses, which, however great, belong to the individual perpetrators," what have we? but, "I heard the manifestations, and they searched *my* heart and mind, and led me to more individual devotedness, and therefore I counted them to be of God, and so joined it." Another painful evil hence resulting, has been that attention has thus been fixed upon the form of the Church at the time it was perfect, instead of the principle which, when fully received, moulded that form, and would now in measure, if believed, tend toward the same again. They despised the true sources of Church constitution for the form's sake; and thus attributing its well being to outward gifts, they have erred like all other sects, through abstract views of right and wrong, as to Church form. In this respect, the present dispensation differs widely from the last. In that, God moulded the form of a kingdom, &c. sanctuary, &c. to embody a principle, and gave rules (distinct from the directions as to formation) for the administration and regulation of it, when thus brought into being. In this, He gave principles to organize a form, and which, because sufficient to organize, were sufficient to regulate. No outward conformity to an abstract form will now therefore suffice; for the only value of the form originally was, and still is, its being the result of the exercise of principles innate in the Church. What then have they done, but like so many children playing at Church, made one man a Pastor; and another, an Evangelist; and another, an Angel; totally independent, yea, and oft in direct contradiction to the Holy Ghost's gifts in the respective individuals. This is a great moral mistake, far too common in our day, not to perceive that true spirituality consists in following after God in His thoughts, words, and ways; instead of preceding Him. A Pastor, for instance, is wanted, as it seems to man, in some place; one not the least fitted is made so, under the impression that God will follow our foolishness, and give gifts to adorn our systems; this has been frequently done by those who have drafted men out of places and offices, for which they have been remarkably

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fitted by the Spirit, into others for which they neither had nor have, one single requisite. The third step in the process, was, an appeal to the Spirit, instead of the mind of Christ—"as it is written;" and then (the mind being drawn off from the substances of faith to imagination) fourthly, easily have entered false doctrine, heresy, recognition of false systems, &c. &c.

In *word*, then, they recognize the right character of the present dispensation, as set forth in Eph. i. to iii. and I Cor. xii. and xiv. inclusive, but in practice afterwards deny it; first by denouncing and rejecting brethren who saw it before themselves, and are acting upon it more simply and truly than themselves, because both holding and practising the unity and the authority of the Spirit, which they do not; and secondly, by conceding authority, during its absence, to a succession in the flesh, and a so called Church, which, on their own showing, is not the Apostolic Church at all. Christ, as the Lamb* with the seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth, they refuse to acknowledge; for while in word they admit the perfect unadulterated administration of the Spirit (that the perfect complete order and government of the Church is by Christ through the Spirit alone), they denounce those 'who follow not us,' and acknowledge that in which another rules besides the Lamb: declaring also that the Spirit is not sufficient, so making more to be needful for a revival of the Church than for its original constitution. They see, indeed, that ordinances will not do without spiritual power, nor spiritual power without ordinances; but that the two should and must be conjoined; but then, instead of having both ordinances and power from the Spirit, they maintain the Spirit's power, but ordinances from and through, and in a fleshly carnal channel,

* They boast of being the only recognizers of Christ as the holder of the seven stars and seven spirits (Rev. iii. 1); i. e. of ordinances as well as of power; declaring that all others take up either with ordinances without power or with power to the contempt of ordinances, if they do not despise both the one and the other. Now these are the titles of Christ in office previous to the apostasy, after which He is the Lamb with the seven horns and seven eyes. To declare that He is still in the former, is to remove their own foundation, for all their arguments rest upon the fact of Gentile apostasy—Instead of taking up with ordinances, through fleshly succession, they should have recognized God's power, and have waited for ordinances growing up out of that.

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speaking great swelling words against those who, in simplicity, adhere to the ordinances delivered to the saints in the written Word. In these things they refuse to recognize Christ as the alone and sole Head of the Church as to endowment of power, order, and grace. Whilst at the same time they commit the sin of Jeroboam, recognizing a worship and persons to conduct it, not only unsanctioned by God, but in direct contradiction to those which He has enjoined. This is their sin and guilt, and herein do they grieve and wound the Lord, casting out God's Spirit, and recognizing that which is evil. They know it not indeed; but whilst professing to seek the unity of the Spirit, they are rending and tearing the saints one from another, by means of a question about the origin of certain gifts; and at the same time are driven to impute the energy and obedience of those who, led by the Spirit, contemn all tradition, and, adhering to what is written, are prepared to follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth, to Him who is the spirit of lawlessness and misrule. The spirit of disobedience among them is most fearful; in cases innumerable I have known them prohibit a man's leaving circumstances under which neither the Spirit of God nor conscience could remain ungrieved, and throw the sin of disobedience upon the Spirit among them.

Yes, my dear friend, whilst professing to seek that which is the aim of the Lord the Spirit — viz. the gathering together of the saints in the fellowship of the Spirit in righteousness, truth, and practical separation from the world, the flesh, and the devil, to meet the Lord Jesus, they have brought in principles of the flesh as a new condition of communion, giving a place and preeminence (on pretexts derived from fleshly and carnal grounds) to many things prohibited and condemned by what is written, while at the same time they reject much which He has ordered, and wherein He is found; and *therefore* in fervency of desire that the gifts they have received may be effectually employed, we must resist the evil they have conjoined. The gifts of discernment and of a sound mind, they do not pretend to have received; nevertheless their babyhood of understanding is extraordinary. Between the possession of a gift, and its use to edification, they seem unable to divide; between conscience, which is of the first Adam, and an understanding enlightened through the Spirit, and between reason (which

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is of nature, with the carnal judgment thence flowing), and the Holy Ghost (with His gifts of spiritual understanding and judgment), they can discern no difference. This is evinced thus—the moment I (as one bound to obey my Lord, and judge all things, and try the spirits whether they are of God, not by the reason of the flesh, but by the Holy Ghost and the Word), directly I say I would do so, I am met with—“You must not reason, you must not carnally judge; this matter is to be received by conscience, and not by judgment.” Again, between the Headships of Jesus, Lord of all, as Head of the Church, and Head of Providence (and therefore of magistracy, kingly and military power, &c.), they cannot separate; and thus they claim, by allegiance to the Head of the Church, many in the pomp and pride of these offices, who, because disciples, ought to have nothing to do with them, save to obey. Any thing like practical forgetfulness, or renunciation of the glory of the world, they term humility in the flesh, and say that it excludes the power of fellowship in heart and mind with the Lord.

God gives privilege to bring responsibility, and to give strength under it: Man would take the privilege either for personal aggrandisement, or to remove the responsibility.—This has caused many to join this work. The proud heart loves the supposed infallibility here formed; and the timid heart the removal of the fear and trembling of duty and service to the Lord, in the midst of such awful alienation from God, and such individual weakness. Who can go forth in service to the Lord in this day, especially if independent of the systems of man's raising, without feeling weak and feeble, and ready to perish in the toil. Oh it would be very sweet *to the flesh* to get rid of this sense of weakness; but, unhappily, to do that, we must get free from the Spirit of God, and from the work of God: for it is this very sense of weakness which is at once the proof of our fellowship with God in work, and of our strength in Him under it. The flesh loves it not, and lusts against it; but let us, who are spiritual, rather glory in our infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon us; for when we are weak, then are we strong in the Lord.

Yours, &c. &c.

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P.S.—“The work,” as Mr. Irving called it, can only be looked upon in one of two ways, if true; either, first, it is something *sui generis*, entirely and altogether new and unprecedented; or, secondly, it is a revival of the primitive Apostolic Church. In the latter light they placed it at first, and fairly enough quoted the Scriptures, which describe the Church’s original constitution, to show the possibility of such a thing among a remnant now. Viewed in this light I have nothing more to say. To my surprise they have lately shifted their position, and declare that this is no revival at all, but a new thing; and either the ark of salvation for the remnant of the dispensation, or the restoration of the Apostasy. I do not mean that they profess to be ignorant which it is; but that, at different times, they assert and maintain different things. When they take the former ground, all that any man may ask them is, for ‘the credential or mark that they are so:’ and this, inasmuch as if they be so indeed, all who are not found with them will be destroyed. Now, if they reply,—“Our return to the principles, constitution, order, and government of the primitive Church;” this, whether the pretensions were true or not to the full extent, would have weight, if they really were so doing. But this is not the case: they say and do not. The moral claim such a thing would have upon every beholder to join it, both through the judgment of the mind and the affections of the heart, would be quite sufficient. It is clear it would be folly to demand Scripture in proof that such a thing should be; for it would have an equal claim on the saint, whether it were the ark of dispensation or not; and every one led by the Spirit would join it. If, then, they rested upon its moral claim, I would say not one word; but when they consider this deficient (as indeed from inconsistency of practice and principle in their case it is), and attempt driving God’s children into it by terror, I dare not be silent. They boast great words about the day of judgment being actually come, and of Apostasy having come to its height, and the judgments actually commenced; talking about analogy, of which they know next to nothing. They tell me, for instance, that “the whole analogy of God’s dealings, and not analogy only, but ample, the whole revealed character of God, shows that He never does come to judgment without providing for a remnant an ark, a

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“Zoar, a pillar of cloud and smoke, a Pella, &c. and that it would be contrary, and in direct opposition, to the whole character of God, as given in a book written to describe His method of dealing with men through a course of six thousand years, not to find some place or other into which He does invite His people to retire.” Now what is this but just sheer ignorance, quoting analogy *just* when analogy fails, and arriving thereby at a conclusion (not only without one single Scripture to support it, but) distinctly and unequivocally denied by the very letter of the Scripture. The conclusion is, that there must be a Pella, or such like refuge, provided *on earth*; now the Scriptures say No, it is to be in the heavens, a cloud of glory.—Then, say they, analogy fails; yes, because the connection of this dispensation with the next is totally dissimilar from that of any two preceding; hitherto the remnant saved out of that which was destroyed, became the seed of the next; now all found in this, will rise into glory with Christ, the seed of the next being Jews, who have had no part in this. So far from judgment having already commenced, it can easily be shown that Apostasy has not come to its full; and that signs, not as yet seen, are to precede,—as a violent persecution, the revelation of the person of Antichrist, &c. &c.

The other position, that it is the restoration of the Gentile Apostasy, is still less tenable. They tell me, that “an Apostasy is the falling down from a certain standing, *σράσις*: we read but of three;—first, Adam, and all men in him; secondly, the Jewish Church; thirdly, the Christian Church. God created Adam, and the Devil cast him down, and he has never been restored: God set up the Jewish Church, and the Devil cast it down, and it is yet in ruins: God then set up the Gentile Church, at Pentecost, and the Devil cast it down; turned the woman, the spotless bride of Christ, into the mother of abominations: thus far, then, the Devil appears stronger than God. But all these shall be restored, and God manifested to be, in flesh, stronger than Satan, yet in inverse order to that in which they fell: first, the Christian Church to be prepared to meet her Lord: secondly, the Jewish Church, after He is come; thirdly, all mankind, through the preaching of the Jews.” “Again,” say they, “the analogy of the Jews and the

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“Gentiles is perfect ; in both cases, Apostasy issuing in judgment ; “which, in both cases, leads to renewed mercy.” In the first of these assertions the *only* mistake is the forgetting into what place the return of the Apostasy casts the saints, even into the presence of the Lord Jesus in glory : in the second, besides other mistakes, there is the oversight of this, that judgment on the Gentiles has *not yet* been poured out.

Here we must demand Scripture basis, for the expectation is quite novel. On asking for Scripture, I have been told it is found throughout the whole word, from beginning to end, *if men will but see it* ; this to me is just saying, that it is no where to be found save by a mind preoccupied with it ; and, accordingly, not one single passage has been adduced which, in connexion with its context, could mean any such thing.*

THE preceding Letter, which has been put into our hands, we consider of interest to our Christian friends, as containing much valuable argument, calculated to meet, in many points, the false ground on which numbers have fixed themselves in the present day. The deep importance of the principle which it upholds—the reality and abidingness of the presence of the Comforter—and the unchangeableness of the Gift of God, cannot be too strongly pressed at a moment when so many, who feel responsibility, do not realize their actual strength in God, and so many more are halting in faithfulness towards Christ, because they wait in the slothfulness of unbelief for something more than the means which God has given before they will obey. But, whilst we are fully aware of the value of the general argument, it

* I would just notice that it has been most strangely assumed that there is a passage in Joel, in which the outpouring of the Holy Ghost is called the former rain, as given at the day of Pentecost ; and that it is said, the Lord will give also the latter rain in its season. Now, if it were so, the Jew alone would be the recipient ; but, in fact, it is false ; and any one reading the chapter, will see at once that *the rain* is not the Spirit at all, but a promise of something quite different in nature, object, and time.

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appears to us, that the necessary distinction between the Spirit's not being in power in the Church, and its still dwelling, the same promised Comforter, in the individual Believer, should have been more strongly pressed. With the latter, it is now as always, "He shall abide with you for ever;" and in proportion to their faith, Christians feel the truth and comfort of this, and especially in these evil days, in connection with the promise of Jesus, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name," &c. But not so with the former. As a collective body, the Church has not the Spirit in power, nor can we say with the writer, "the blessing and glory of the outward Church were nothing more than the concentration or accumulation of that of many individual members;" for neither is the simple gathering of all the separate units, supposing such a thing possible, all that is now lacking to us, since there would still be a decided loss of former glory, not merely in the felt weakness of present power of the Spirit, but in the absolute defect of many spiritual gifts which once existed.

It may appear also to the minds of some, that the writer, in speaking of himself, seems to assume individually too exalted a ground; and that it would have been better to assert universally and unrestrictedly, the full extent of the actual privilege and responsibilities of the household of God, from the first member to the last, as derived from the immutable principles of the dispensation, than to exemplify them by a particular instance. In reply to this supposed objection, the writer states, "I have found that general statements are often pointless, because they are thought to be *indefinite* instead of *universal*." If I say "the saints are risen with Christ," every body agrees, not understanding the nature of the necessary connection of saintship with resurrection in Christ, supposing it to mean, some are, and some are not. If I say "all saints," &c. this is doubtingly acceded to by many; who then try to escape with the thought, "I may be saved without knowing I am a saint, perhaps." But if I say "I, because a saint, am risen with Christ," I find it instantly disputed, because somehow or other, it is an *argumentum ad hominem*. With regard to the individual application of expressions which were first used of themselves by the Apostles, it should be remembered that these were true as to them only *because they were members* of Christ's body,

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in which I have as sure a place as they ; and in which I have responsibilities and privileges as great, according to the proportion of my faith : I assume no authority herein, I only recognize privilege, and responsibility, and grace.—[ED.]

“ **YE ARE THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD; A CITY THAT IS SET ON AN HILL CANNOT BE HID.**” Mat. v. 14.

THE world has ever judged that it can do well without God’s interference in its course—that it has enough in itself, if faithfully and skilfully used, for its own present joy ; and a moral power, which, if duly heeded, will give a full title to everlasting life and blessing. The experience of ages has not destroyed this delusion ; the stream of past time, strown as it is with the wreck of man’s diligent folly, flows on unregarded. History tells one simple, though varied tale of sorrow, crime, and death : we read it from our childhood, and only think that our generation is a wiser one, and do not see in all that is past and present, the mere expression of an evil condition, which man’s wisdom can never remedy or improve. It was God’s abounding mercy, in the knowledge of the blessings that his shortsighted and perverse creatures were casting away (even while extolling their own wisdom to one another), to reveal the truth to them, telling them that separation from Him left them the prey of all evil ; that nearness to Him, and knowledge of His will, secured to all, wisdom and happiness : that they were afar off from him, and therefore, the victims of sorrow and crime : but showing also, as the fruit of His own marvellous grace, a way of return, and therefore, a sure remedy for all the evil of their condition.

The Deluge—the discomfiture of man’s pride at Babel, and the

subsequent universal idolatry, soon proved how incredulous the heart was to so humbling a revelation of what cannot be changed by that incredulity, for it is truth. The revelation was, doubtless, universally known, though promulgated orally, and kept in trust by the succession of the Sons of God. At the birth of Noah, several of the fathers were living, all of whom must have conversed with Adam, Methusaleh and Lamech dying but a little before the deluge. Noah was the last witness for truth, or preacher of righteousness in the old world, and the declarer of the same unerring truth in the new: and from his family instruction, the truth must have been universally known in the new world; for all were his family.

God thus gave to the world the light of truth; He gave it to some in trust for others, not a written revelation indeed, which is a far greater mercy, for that is ever consistent and perfect; but by speaking the truth through living men, and enabling them in action to live the truth they spoke. The children of Seth were the election of God in the antediluvian world: and while they were personally happy and blessed in God's favour; they were to fulfil another purpose in election, to bear witness to the world of what they had more than others—the knowledge of God, “holding forth the word of life,” in life or death. Abel spoke in his death, and “yet speaketh;” Seth, in his life, but yet more fully Enoch—for “he walked with God, and was not;” and he spoke too, in the triumph of His translation, of resurrection-glory, the portion of righteous Abel as well, when “the Lord cometh with His ten thousand saints” (Jude 14). In the days of Enos, “men began to call upon the name of the Lord,” or, “to call themselves by the name of the Lord;” purporting either way an union in truth. This associate body, or the Church, was then the light of the world; and while consistent in separation unto God from the evil practices of the Cain world, God's desire in them of mercy to others was answered: but, alas! it is written, that, “when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them, that the *sons of God* saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose.” There ceased to be a living revelation of truth, light was mingled with the darkness, and God unknown, except in the faithful remnant Noah, who “found grace in the eyes

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of the LORD,” and of whom it is emphatically said, “ According to all that God commanded him, so did he.” The earth was soon “ filled with violence, for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth;” and how could it do otherwise? The light to God’s way had been almost quenched, at least was too feeble in Noah to give light to the multiplied world; the Church, the world’s moral teacher, had become corrupt; and what was to save an ignorant world from corruption? for that was its own way. The darkness quenched the light—Belial overcame the truth—Idols were set up in God’s temple—the world was wedded to the Church—the daughters of men to the sons of God; and so the Lord destroyed man, whom He had created, from off the face of the earth (Gen. vi).

In the rapid and complete departure from the ways of God into idolatry, of Noah’s descendants, we have another signal proof of the indifference of man to the wisdom of God: the “ deep calling unto deep,” the roar of the destroying waves, and cries of the lost, were so recent, that it would be thought impossible men could be so madly rebellious, were it not on record. The grace of God, however, shone the brighter, like the light of the pillar of glory over the darkness of Egypt’s fate, when He called Abraham from the land of the Chaldees, and put him and his descendants in trust with “ the oracles of God,” that they might teach them, by word and act, to the world. I do not say that all the meaning of the election of God is declared in this; far from it: but I do say, that there is no right understanding of God’s act of grace in election, whether with reference to one or many, unless we see that while the blessing is direct and special to the elected, it is mediate to the world; that the possession of blessing is a trust committed to them to exhibit to the world.

Israel thus, when brought out of Egypt (then first recognized as God’s people, Exodus iii), was an election from among the nations of the world unto Jehovah, to declare to the world out of which they were taken, the blessings they realized, in a fellowship of which the un-circumcised knew nothing.

They were to be God’s living revelation to the world; they alone had “ the oracles of God,” and by careful and obedient conformity to them, they were called to show a compact and living image of the

truth, formed in that mould. It was as though God had said to all the nations of the world, “I have told you what was true wisdom, but you would have none of my counsel; but I cannot let you perish. I will prove your folly to you: I will form a people for myself; and in my dealings with them, and their consequent joy, might, glory, and abundant prosperity, you will see and learn what you have lost and are losing.” To this end did Jehovah separate a people unto Himself: “Marvellous things did he in the land of Egypt, in the field of Zoan” (Ps. lxxviii. 12). “He shewed His signs among them, and wonders in the land of Ham” (Ps. cv. 27): “and turned their rivers into blood; and their floods, that they could not drink” (Ps. lxxviii. 44). “Go,” said the Lord to Moses, “stand before Pharaoh, and say, Let my people go, that they may serve me: for I will at this time send all my plagues upon thine heart, and upon thy servants, and upon thy people; *that thou mayest know that there is none like me in all the earth...* And in very deed for this cause have I raised thee up, for to show in thee my power, *and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth*” (Ex. ix. 14—16).

“He made a way to His anger; He spared not their soul from death, but gave their life over to the pestilence: and smote all the first-born in Egypt; the chief of strength in the tabernacles of Ham; but made His own people to go forth like sheep, and guided them in the wilderness like a flock. And He led them on safely, so that they feared not: but the sea overwhelmed their enemies” (Ps. lxxviii. 50—53). And yet it is written, as to Israel, “Our fathers understood not Thy wonders in Egypt; they remembered not the multitude of Thy mercies;...nevertheless He saved them for His name’s sake, *that He might make His mighty power to be known*” (Ps. cvi. 7, 8).

Was it possible, after such signal proof of the blessing attendant on being the Lord’s, who had so used His power in behalf of the people of His love, that any should prefer trusting in the chariots of Egypt to “the arm of Jehovah, that cut Rahab and wounded the dragon,... which dried the sea, the waters of the great deep, and made the depths of the sea a way for His ransomed to pass over?” (Is. li. 9, 10). Yet so it was; for not only did the nations of the Amalekites, Amorites, Moabites, &c., rise up against the people who had “the shout of this mighty King among them;” but the very people who had learnt the

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strength of that arm in their own deliverance, left it in after-days for the chariots of Egypt that it had overthrown (Isaiah xxx). Oh! marvellous folly! why were not all subject to this King of kings? The history of the Rechabites, and the crafty Gibeonites too, is proof to us, that all might have flocked around the camp of Jehovah, and been blessed with His favoured people.

But the revelation was but partial in the deliverance. It asserted the sure exercise of a power that nothing could withstand, in behalf of His chosen people: but how became they His people? We answer, that the cause which originated their blessing was the choice of His own will; for none had the slightest title to any favour—all were alike mad and wicked: but this too, though a true part of revelation, is not all; for how were they brought nigh? I answer, by blood. The people of His love were not absolved from guilt by any arbitrary act of emancipation; but the blood of the Paschal Lamb was their title, and their gracious Father’s “power unto their salvation” (Rom. i. 16). The blood of the Lamb, and the waves of the Red Sea, were the significant witnesses to the world of God’s only method of bringing any people into fellowship with Himself. Circumcision also, and the perpetual stream of blood that flowed in Israel’s camp, told broadly and in living characters, the same solemn truth, that “without shedding of blood, there is no remission of sin.” Every Israelite, therefore, personally by circumcision,—Jerusalem and the priesthood, in the holy ceremony of the “daily sacrifice,”—and all Israel, in its yearly gathering to the feast of the Passover, proclaimed the necessity of cleansing, before any could draw nigh unto God; and in this they were “the light of the world.”

But in more than this; for when the Lord had brought them to Himself in the wilderness, He revealed to them His will; and, in obedience, they were to exhibit that will to the world, showing the world’s disobedience by their obedience—the world’s ignorance by their knowledge. And thus Jehovah speaks to them: “Now, therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: and ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation” (Exod. xix. 5, 6). So also Moses: “Behold I have taught

you statutes and judgments, even as the Lord my God commanded me : keep therefore and do them ; for this is your wisdom and your understanding *in the sight of the nations, which shall hear all these statutes, and shall say, Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.* For what nation is there so great, who hath God so nigh unto them, as the Lord our God is in all things that we call upon Him for ? And what nation is there so great that hath statutes and judgments so righteous as all this law which I set before you this day ?” (Deut. iv. 5—8). A reference to the 14th of Numbers, in which the intercession of Moses for the people is recorded, will show how the glory of God in His actings with that people, as witnessed by surrounding nations, was the subject nearest his heart, who was the great type of the coming Mediator ; and the answer of the Lord will show too how nothing can defeat His purpose to manifest Himself in and through a people, before the face of all men : “ As truly as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord.”

The wilderness-state, however, was in itself the witness of the support that would ever be given to those who trusted in God, though surrounded by enemies, and without sustenance from earth. Jehovah was their leader—their covert from the storm—the glory in the midst of them ; and heaven opened its rich store to feed them where the earth was barren ; and Israel’s undiminished strength, unworn clothing, and unswollen feet, as they came to Jordan’s banks from their forty years’ toilsome course, said to the world, “ I will never leave nor forsake the people of my love ;” and it should have met but one answer, “ Blessed is the man who putteth his trust in the Lord ; in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength.” In this they were the “ light of the world ;” and Rahab is a solitary instance of the shining of that light into a heathen’s heart, as she came, like Ruth in other days, to put her trust in the Lord God of Israel, and to shelter herself under His wings.

But the completeness of Israel’s distinct witness was in the Land, the typical reward of righteousness. “ A good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths that spring out of valleys and hills ; a land of wheat, and barley, and vines, and fig-trees, and pomegranates ; a land of oil olive, and honey ; a land wherein thou

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shalt eat bread without scarceness, thou shalt not lack anything in it; a land whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills thou mayest dig brass” (Deut. viii. 7—9).

Its gift to them was the witness to the world of the happiness of “that people whose God is the Lord: yea happy is that people that is in such a case” (Ps. cxliv. 15);—the destruction of its previous wicked inhabitants, a proof of the certainty of righteous judgment on iniquity; in both “a light to the world:” and in all that followed while Israel walked in obedience—the sure periodical rains from heaven, independent of all natural chances; the consequent abounding fertility of their hills and valleys, with their stores and streams of honey and milk; the security of the homes of the people during the feasts of worship, when all the males were gone to Jerusalem, leaving all that was dear to them apparently unprotected; the supernatural abundance of the sixth year, making provision for the two following; the sabbatical day, month, year, and sabbath of sabbaths or Jubilee, in which the God of revelation was declared as Creator of all things in the face of the world; the armies of chariots and horses from heaven, that ever shielded or went forth with the armies of Israel against their enemies (2 Kings vi. 17), when they trusted in God; superiority indeed in all things, and in all circumstances while they owned their own inherent weakness, and used their privilege of leaning upon the arm of Jehovah, and that superiority not the effect of human skill or diligence, but entirely arising from the direct interference of God, irrespective altogether of human calculation, and oftentimes by the setting aside of the order of His own creation,—in all and far more than this, were Israel’s people, Israel’s laws, Israel’s abundant riches and wondrous prowess “a city set on an hill”—a voice to the whole world, saying, “Happy is the people whose God is the Lord: come, and put your trust under the shadow of His wing.”

In this place of high and holy trust, Israel failed; all outward prosperity was but the result of obedience to the holy will of their God; if they had prospered in iniquity, it would have been encouragement to the world’s abominations; and it could not be, for God is holy; and His word to Israel was, “And ye shall be holy unto me, for I the Lord am holy, and have severed you from other people, that

ye should be mine” (Levit. xx. 26) ; but they failed in this, according to the word of the Apostle : “ *For the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you, as it is written*” (Rom. ii. 24). That there was a remnant, as in the antediluvian world, ever true to their trust, the 11th of Hebrews is proof to us ; but Israel collectively walked according to the deceit of its heart, “ as a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke ;” and the fearful word of judgment was pronounced by their rejected Prophet and Messiah : “ Behold your house is left unto you desolate.”

The city of solemnities, the central point of gathering for all obedient worshippers, was razed to its foundations, and not one stone left upon another ; the people sifted as corn through a sieve into all the nations from which they had been visibly separate hitherto ; the former and latter rain ceased to fall, the milk and honey to flow ; and the heart of Israel and the land of glory became alike withered and sterile. Thus the city the Lord had set on an hill, became first a Babel, and then was sowed with salt : the light He had lifted up to give light to the nations, became fainter and fainter, flickering in its socket till it was finally quenched ; and the candlestick was removed out of its place ; and no voice spoke from Israel except in sorrow and mourning, as though it had said (as it still speaks) ! “ Woe ! woe ! to the Apostate. “ If the salt have lost its savour, wherewith shall it be salted ? it is thenceforth good for nothing but to be cast out and trodden under foot of men.”

“ I am the light of the world” was the title assumed by the blessed Son of God, as bringing, in His own humbled person, all the brightness of the Father’s moral glory into this dark world. Dim was all light before : it is true, that it had shone in the darkness from the very first ; but, as in creation, three days had passed away ere the scattered radiance was gathered into one body of light (Gen. i.), so as to moral light, it had shone but obscurely, even where it was true. All that God had thought about us, all that He was Himself, He had been telling little by little from the beginning ; but so untutored was the fallen world, it was but the milk of the babe at first ; all was partial till Jesus came ; and then all truth, all that the unknown unseen Father was, stood in the face of Israel and the world embodied : and He said

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O gracious word !), “ I am the light of the world.” He had come to shine in all that pure and holy light upon this dark and tainted world : and it has shone and is shining still in that faithful record which the Holy Ghost has dictated ; but how few are entranced by its brightness ! alas ! how few think of the charity of that living revelation of the Father. Men know that ignorance shuts up nearly all the channels of natural joy, and they strive to be wise ; but God’s wisdom, God’s truth, God’s heart and will have been personified before them, and they love darkness rather than that light, for it is holy and pure, and their deeds are evil ; and we who say and know that we love it, through the imparted grace of our God, are ever seeking that it should not shine so brightly, but will rather turn back to some obscurer and dimmer light, and think *that bright enough*. I believe there should ever be a living transcript of the inspired record. It is true, if this fails, the record stands ; but the record is rather (I would say this very humbly) the pattern by which the living thing is formed by the Spirit ; if any thing is contrary to that, it is darkness : but the Church is called into the place of the “ true light,” informed by His Spirit, to stand in charity to the world by living the truths the record teaches ; the Word, I should say, was for the Church,—the Church for the World. Is not this what the Lord means when promising to send them the Comforter ; viz. that he was to be directly their Teacher and Comforter ; and that through them He was to act upon the world ? “ When He is come, He will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment ; of sin, because they believe not on me ; of righteousness, because I go to the Father, and ye see me no more ; of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged” (John xvi. 8—11).

“ Ye are the light of the world : a city that is set on an hill cannot be hid,” said the Lord Jesus to the little flock gathered around Him out of the apostate and stiff-necked Israel, to those who were to bear witness of Him far and wide, when He had ascended into His glory, and to hold His blessed and life-giving words in trust for others ; the representatives and teachers of His Church : and thus surely in them did he address the whole Church, and place them by that brief emphatic charter on the highest eminence of holy privilege, confirmed in the words of the Apostles, in after-days, “ Do all things without

murmurings and disputings, that ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God without rebuke in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom shine ye [margin] as lights in the world, holding forth the word of life” (Philip. ii. 15). “Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people, *that* ye should show forth the virtues [margin] of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvellous light” (1 Pet. ii. 9). “Ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord; walk as children of light (for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, and righteousness, and truth); proving what is acceptable unto the Lord” (Eph. v. 8—10).

“Ye are the light of the world; let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.” Shall we cavil at these simple and solemn words? do they not assert the condition of the elect Church, holy and beloved, to be that of a revelation of their unseen Father to the world, who are in darkness and ignorance? or, in the language of the Apostle, the Epistle of Christ to the world, saying, “Ye will not come to me that ye might have life,” written with the Spirit of the living God on the fleshy tables of their hearts, and uttered to the world in language more emphatic and eloquent than any other, their lives of holy charity. It is not my object here to express the sorrow of my heart, by any comparison between the words of Jesus and the Church’s actual condition; but I will quote the words which mark what the light should be, as placed so near, and clearly leading to the Church’s title, “ye are the light of the world,” and let my readers judge: “Blessed are the poor in spirit—blessed are they that mourn—blessed are the meek—blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness—blessed are the merciful—blessed are the pure in heart—blessed are the peacemakers—blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness’ sake—blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake: rejoice and be exceeding glad;—ye are the salt of the earth—ye are the light of the world.”

I say unto you, “Swear not at all—resist not evil—give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee, turn not thou

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away—love your enemies—bless them that curse you—*do good* to them that hate you—and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you.”—“ *What do ye more than others?*”

“ Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven; but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven” (Matt. v).

There is in every way a distinction between the light revealed through Moses and the Prophets, as to conduct, and that taught by the Lord Jesus, which is the Church's rule. The way of salvation must ever have been the same, though only typically and prophetically declared till Jesus came: but every principle of conduct became amplified almost into contrast: so also the character of the testimony to the world in external things; there ceased to be any *present* recompence, and the Church stood in suffering, as its Lord, to declare God's entire alienation from the world that had rejected His Son, and to declare in its separation that it was saved by hope, that its recompence was future, that a time of surpassing glory was coming, and that those who suffered with Him would be glorified together with Him. There ceased to be any witness in earthly prosperity, that it was well with the righteous; but the Church was called to declare that it was begotten again to an inheritance *reserved in heaven*, incorruptible, and undefiled, and that would not fade away. It was to declare the brightness of its reward, and the glory of that inheritance, by a steadfast refusal to be tainted with any thing that was esteemed by man; its place was another world—its principles those of another world—they could not suit this—they left a man a prey to all wickedness in this, and therefore made him a constant sufferer in some way—the child of hope and promise—the antitype of the destitute fathers, and not of prosperous Israel—strangers in a strange land—walking in a course so contrary to the course of this world, that every breath must strike some note of discord on the heart attuned only to heaven and the glory there—risen with Christ—setting their affections on things above, and called to live the principles of heaven on earth, the charter and rule of the house of God in the midst of a world in all things ignorant of aught so morally bright and beautiful.

The abundant riches of Israel were the present proof to the world of God's favour to them, and a foreshowing of the riches of heavenly glory,—not yet given to the saint,—but future. All that Israel was in this world, the Church will be in immortality in the world to come; and any who use Israel's condition as a title to present earthly prosperity are not saved by hope (Rom. viii. 24); are not witnesses of future glory; but are ignorant of the Church's place, to show by its present poverty (though it may be God's almoner of plenty to others) the full revealed light as to the world's judgment and resurrection-glory.

But where would not this strain lead me? alas! far and wide, into all that at times passes as a dark and heavy cloud, muttering its thunders around my heart—the false and perilous condition of almost all things around, “deceiving and being deceived;” fearful words! “In such an hour as ye think not, the Son of Man cometh.” “When they shall say, Peace and safety! then sudden destruction cometh upon them as travail upon a woman with child, and they shall not escape.” “Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing but to be cast out and trodden under foot of men.”

If we judge by the sight of our eyes, and by the hearing of our ears (and this Jesus did not ever), we may hear the music of rejoicing in the Church, and see their banners floating for conquest; but if we say, as He did, “As I hear I judge,” and do give heed to the holy and searching word of the Lord, this will not shut from us His solemn assurance, “If ye continue in His goodness, if not ye shall be cut off;”—“as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth;” and we shall take up our parable and say in sorrow of heart, “Alas! who shall live when God doeth this?” (Num. xxiv. 23); going forth from the proud city with Jesus to Mount Olivet, as ready to ascend after Him to glory, weeping over it as knowing its coming desolations, though many as dear to Him as we are may be saying, “See what manner of stones, and what buildings are here” (Mark xiii. 1).

But the purposes of God cannot be frustrated—“As I live, all the earth shall be filled with my glory;” and the time, I believe, is rapidly hastening on, when the elect out of each dispensation, in the full

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glory that they have figured on earth, gathered together from the depths of the sea and the heart of the earth; wherever their dust has been—burnt to ashes—scattered to the winds—lost in the rapid tide; all will be gathered together, when “the Lord shall descend with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel, and the trump of God;” and *when caught up to meet Him, they shall descend with Him, conformed to His likeness in all things—living stones of a living city—the new Jerusalem—the habitation of Jehovah—the bride of the Lamb—the assembled choirs to utter Jehovah’s praises on their harps of gold—warriors on white horses—kings and priests unto God—“The light of the world; a city set on an hill which cannot be hid.”*

Thus it is written, “God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved) *that in the ages to come He might shew the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Jesus Christ.*” Here then is the end of election, that the saints in their high and exalted state, in their preeminence of glory, raised far above angels, principalities, and powers, proving in their own joy, that the Father hath loved them, even as He loved the Lord Jesus, *should show*, in all they had attained to, the happiness of that people whose God is the Lord! their moral conformity to God—their visible conformity to Jesus in the resurrection—their far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, seen and known by a peopled world, in the *ages to come*—as kings to rule in righteousness (and how kings without subjects?); as priests to minister (and to whom except those in dependance?); as joint inheritors with their Lord of mediatorial glory (and a mediator is not of one, but God is one; therefore it has reference to others): and thus it is revealed in the book of the prophecy of the Church, “I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down from God, out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband; and I saw no temple therein, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it: and the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. *And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it [the city, the Church]; and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it. And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there. And they shall bring the*

glory and honour of the nations into it.” “ In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, *and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations*” (Rev. xxi. & xxii).

The elect body in glory are here described bearing the light: the nations, all the nations that are saved from the judgments described in the 19th chapter, walk in the light of it, and are blessed; for they see the Lamb's glory and the glory of His bride.—In the midst of the saints is the tree of life (surely the Lord Himself), and its leaves are for the *healing of the nations*. Is there not, then, a peopled world, blessed remotely, or blessed through the dominion, not of the King of kings only, but the kings His fellows? Oh! most wondrous calling! “ the kingdom and glory of God;” surely “ the sufferings of this present moment are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be *revealed in us*;” and for this “ the whole creation groaneth and travaileth until now,” and never will be delivered from the bondage of corruption to which it has been unwillingly subjected, until this manifestation of the sons and heirs of God, joint heirs with the First-born among many brethren (Rom. viii. throughout): but then it will be delivered, and the creature too, into the glorious liberty of the children of God. Surely it is most true that the world shall know the Lord, from the least to the greatest; and through the Church too, but when? when the Church has attained its stature, and will give unfailing witness, in the lustre of its inherited glory in the resurrection, to the mortal world beneath, to that truth which the life and resurrection of the Lord Jesus declared, and which their feeble faith now, and their possessed reward then, will for ever declare, “ Blessed is that man that maketh the Lord his trust, and respecteth not the proud nor such as turn aside to lies” (Ps. xl. 4. the new song of the Lord in His resurrection).

The beautiful and comprehensive prayer of the Lord Jesus in John xvii, opens to us the same result;—the world had rejected Him: “ O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee;” but He presents the election as the immediate objects of His anxiety and love—“ I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me, for they are thine.” And what does He pray for? their security in the world in the knowledge of the Father, separation from the evil of the world, and their eventual unity when the number out

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of every nation, people, and tongue, are called ; for they cannot be one, as a numbered body, till then ; and the Lord surely prayed not for less than this : and further, He prayed for their unity in the possession of the glory ; the ultimate desire of His heart in them, their possession of all they were destined to—unity in life and glory. And I would say, that a knowledge of this, or the prayer of Jesus imprinted on our hearts, would cause us to strive for unity now, and hasten to the glory.

After He has expressed the desire of His heart for His Church, He prays for the world, but mediately, or through the Church, “that they (the Church) all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us : *that the world may believe that thou hast sent me*” (ver. 21). To believe that He was sent of the Father, was and is the ground on which the elect stand :—“And they have believed that thou hast sent me” (ver. 8). Then does Jesus pray that after the election is completed, or they are *all one*, by seeing and knowing that unity, “the world may be saved, or believe that He was sent of the Father.” Further, He says : “And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them ; that they may be one, even as we are one : I in them and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one (the perfection in unity being in the glory only) ; and *that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them as thou hast loved me*” (ver. 23).

How distinctly may the purpose of God be traced in this wonderful prayer ! first, the whole election (“I pray not for them only, but for *all* who shall believe on me through their word”), *out of every nation, kindred, people and tongue*, as seen in Rev. vii. ; and then the world blessed through them ; but not blessed till the Church is taken from suffering and trial to the glory prepared for it ; “The firstfruits of God’s creatures” (James i. 18) waved before Him, as gathered from the north, south, east and west ; the hundred and forty-four thousand sealed ones, redeemed *from among* men, the firstfruits unto God and the Lamb (Rev. xiv.) ; and then, after judgments upon Christendom (as so fully detailed in the Apocalypse), universality of subject blessing. The second Adam and His favoured Eve having dominion over the works of God’s hands, and a peopled and happy world ; saying, “O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth, *who hast set thy glory above the heavens*” (Ps. viii).

The mighty and royal conqueror, having subdued His enemies under His feet, with His queen in gold of Ophir, and raiment of needlework, by His side (Ps. xlv.); judging the people with righteousness, and the poor with equity (Ps. lxxii. throughout); those who have been faithful in His grace over a few things, made rulers over many, and partaking all their Lord's joy (Matt. xxv. 21). Having overcome, and therefore sitting with Jesus on His throne, even as He overcame, and is now with the Father on His throne; (Rev. ii. 26, 27; iii. 21); “glorified together” (Rom. viii.) and coming with Him into the world, “when He comes in flaming fire, glorified in His saints, and admired in all them that believe in that day;” coming to judge, first in destroying the sinners out of the earth, and then to rule in equity and love; so that that coming shall be as the rain upon the mown grass; men shall be blessed in Him, and *all nations* shall call Him blessed. Israel shall say, “Blessed be the Lord God, the God of Israel, who only doeth wondrous things;” and all nations shall say, “Blessed be His glorious name for ever, and *let the whole earth be filled with His glory*” (Ps. lxxii). “O clap your hands, all ye people, shout unto God with the voice of triumph; for the Lord most high is terrible, He is a great King over all the earth; Sing praises to God, sing praises: sing praises to our King, sing praises. For God is the King of all the earth: sing ye praises with understanding. God reigneth over the heathen: God sitteth upon the throne of His holiness” (Ps. xlvii). The city of God will come down from heaven, prepared as a bride for her husband, the true city of the great King; this tabernacle of God will be with men; and He will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God Himself shall be with them and be their God (Rev. xxi). “Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised in the city of our God, in the mountain of His holiness; beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is Mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the great King; God is known in her palaces for a refuge” (Ps. xlviii). “Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God” (Ps. lxxxvii). “Behold the tabernacle of God is with men;” “*The Light of the World; A CITY SET ON AN HILL, THAT CANNOT BE HID;*” SET ON HIGH, TO GIVE LIGHT TO ALL THAT ARE IN THE WORLD.—Amen and Amen.