

THREE LETTERS

TO THE AUTHOR OF

“A Retrospect of Events
that have taken place amongst
the Brethren.”

BY

S. P. TREGELLES, LL.D.

“Every one of us shall give account of himself to God. Let us not therefore judge one another any more, but judge this rather that no man put a stumbling block or occasion to fall in his brother's way . . . Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another.” *Romans, xiv. 12, 13, 19.*

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❧ SUBJECTS. ❧



RYDE :
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- I. MINISTRY.
- II. FACTS CONNECTED WITH THE DIVISIONS
EFFECTED AT PLYMOUTH.
- III. THE SUFFERINGS OF OUR LORD.
THE APPLICATION OF THE PSALMS TO CHRIST.
LIBERTY OF TEACHING ON PROPHETIC
SUBJECTS.

LETTER I.

MINISTRY.

SIR,

I have attentively read the "Retrospect"* which you have recently published, and as it appears to me that you have sought to give a fair statement of facts, I believe you will not object to receive additional information on some points. This additional information, had it been in your possession previously, would have caused you to state various particulars in a rather different manner; and on some points, it would, I think, have changed the impression on your mind: however, I must fully own that you have probably found it no easy task to approximate to accuracy, when *the facts* which you had to gather, were dispersed in many documents, and when many of them were not before you *in that form*.

* *A Retrospect of Events that have taken place amongst the Brethren.* London: Published by Benjamin L. Green, 62, Paternoster Row; also, *An Appendix* to the Retrospect of Events.

I ought to mention to you, before I go into any statement, that I am one of the Christians who assemble for the worship of God in Compton Street in this town;—I have seen no reason to separate from my brethren in Christ because of opposition and accusation; and I desire to continue to act on those principles with regard to worship and communion, which I have for several years believed to be in accordance with the word of God.

Sad and grievous indeed have been many things which have taken place amongst those who formerly professed to meet as one in Christ; but all these things—and the opposition which has been brought to bear against those who now meet in Compton Street—do not make me desire to act on other principles than those which I stated more than nine years ago in a paper entitled, “The Blood of the Lamb and the Union of Saints.” The failure of those who *profess to act* on certain principles, does not condemn the *principles* themselves; otherwise, what shall we say of the Churches planted by the Apostles of Christ, which so soon departed from the Truth of God both in doctrine and in practice? Which shall we say, that they were not set on right principles, or that they failed in carrying out their principles?

Indeed, true principles in the abstract can never insure rectitude of action, unless there be a real

spirit of dependance upon “God and the word of His grace;” and even with regard to those who walk uprightly, how much sorrow may they not have to feel because of the conduct of others?—as a proof of this we may take the Apostle Paul—Christ’s most laborious servant—who was opposed and hindered up to the end of his course of labour, by the actings of men who themselves did not walk uprightly.

May I request you, then, to bear in mind in any remarks which I may now make, that I do distinctly hold that the ground of union amongst Christians on earth ought to be that on which they shall at last meet before the Throne above,—namely, their having through grace believed in the name of Christ, the Lamb of God slain for sinners.

The first subject on which I will remark is that of *Ministry*.

You appear to think that the views of Ministry held by “the Brethren” at large, and those entertained by Mr. Newton in particular and by others at Plymouth, were so different, that while “Liberty of Ministry” was upheld by “the Brethren” in general, this Liberty did not practically exist *here*.

On this point I must dwell at some length.

You will, doubtless, be surprised that I should inform you that the views and practices held and acted on in this place on the subject of ministry

were no innovations :—that “ the Brethren ” *used* to act in the same manner in other places as they did here ; and that the idea of unrestrained ministry and of not checking that which is not to edification, was a strange thing introduced amongst certain “ Brethren ” in after years, and that this used never to be for one moment contemplated when the expression “ Liberty of Ministry ” was employed.

You seem to think that no change or innovation may have taken place *here*, but that “ the liberty of “ ministry at Plymouth was in a modified form, and “ that there was a system there differing from the “ practices of the Brethren elsewhere.”

Supposing this to be a correct view of the case, who would be the innovators ?—those who in 1832 were *already* acting on certain principles here, or those who *subsequently* began to meet together in other places, and who were supposed by themselves and others to be acting on the same principles as those which had been adopted at Plymouth ?

I know something of the early days of the Brethren in this and in other places. I believe that I have a general acquaintance with the facts connected with those who have assembled for communion at Plymouth. I was associated with the Christians meeting here, when they were about eighty in number in the early part of 1835 : from those who were then united in fellowship I received

much information as to what had taken place during the four previous years : and since 1835 to the present time, I have known most things of moment which have taken place here ; for although this has not been my *residence* for the greater part of the intervening years, yet with the exception of 1842, no whole year has passed without my having been more or less in this place.*

Those Brethren who assembled in Plymouth for communion in 1831 had the thought prominently before them that the word of God gave them the liberty of meeting in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ for fellowship in obedience to His word, “ Do this in remembrance of me.” Many practical points were considered as occasion arose ; but it was well understood that they felt it to be their place before God to receive those whom Christ had received, even as they had been received by Him, to the glory of God. And as to ministry, they felt that they had liberty before God to use any gifts which they might possess,—whether for preaching the glad tidings of salvation to the unconverted, or in teaching believers and edifying one another. The point with them

* May I ask you to extend to me the same favour which you have shewn to another writer. You say (note p. 23), “ The author of *Shibboleth* seems to be a friend of Mr. Newton, but logic is logic, whoever is the author.” I, too, am a friend of Mr. Newton, and I willingly own myself as such,—but *facts* are *facts* from whomsoever they come.

was, that they had liberty from God to use whatever gifts the Holy Ghost might have bestowed on any, irrespective of human ordination or appointment.

I do not give even an outline of the History of “the Brethren” in this place: I confine my remarks to those facts which relate to ministry, and therefore I leave many points wholly unnoticed.

Church order was a subject which, of course, occupied much attention; and it was felt that order was necessary and right: with this thought the minds naturally sought for something of arrangement; and to this end it was considered to be right to *appoint an Elder* for preserving order in the assemblies. Liberty of ministry was recognised amongst those who possessed any ability from God; but it was considered that ministry which was not to profit,—which did not commend itself to the consciences of others—ought to be repressed.

And this was the sense in which the phrase “liberty of ministry” was used. The communion was open to the sheep of Christ—that is, to every one who professed to have been led to rest on a crucified Redeemer, and whose walk commended his profession. Just so with regard to Liberty of Ministry; it was intended to signify that all who were fitted by the Holy Ghost might minister; it was as needful for such to *shew* that they had fitness, as it was for those who wished for fellowship to exhibit to their

brethren that they were really taking the stand of Believers in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The appointment of an Elder was peculiarly, I believe, in connection with ministry in the assembly; at least, when appointed he was expected to exercise an especial oversight in that particular.

The person who was appointed thus to this office in the early days of the meeting for communion here, seventeen or eighteen years ago, was Mr. B. W. Newton,—a plain proof that the views of ministry which he entertained and acted on, *then as now*, were fully acquiesced in by the others then labouring in this place.*

I do not know precisely how long the office of appointed Elder was held by Mr. Newton; I know, however, that before the early part of 1835 he had voluntarily laid aside this office (which others had conferred upon him), as he had now seen such appointments not to be in accordance with scripture:

* Mr. J. N. Darby requested Mr. Newton to sit where he could conveniently take the oversight of ministry, and that he would hinder that which was manifestly unprofitable and unedifying.

Mr. J. N. Darby addressed Mr. Newton by letter, *as an Elder*: I have seen a transcript of such a document made (apparently for circulation here) in the hand-writing of Mr. G. V. Wigram: it was written by Mr. J. N. Darby, from Dublin, and it is addressed to *B. Newton, Esq., Elder of the Saints meeting in Raleigh Street, Plymouth*. The Chapel in Raleigh Street was the meeting-place here till 1840, from which time till Mr. J. N. Darby's division, it was used as a place for preaching, for prayer meetings, &c.

he thus became simply as before a brother labouring in the ministry with other brethren.

There were several occasions on which it was manifest what principles were *acted* on, when ministry was found not profitable. On one occasion Mr. Newton had in the assembly to stop ministry which was manifestly improper, with Mr. J. N. Darby and Mr. G. V. Wigram's presence and *full concurrence*: a plain proof that they *then* fully objected to unrestrained ministry.

I need not multiply instances which prove what the principle was or how it was acted on: there was restraint, not upon edifying teaching, but upon that which was unedifying; advice and exhortation *in private* were generally resorted to, but *when needful* the case was met in a more public manner. Amongst the few whose ministry was at all checked, there was not, I believe, a single case in which hindrance was imposed upon real gift for edification, or in which it was not *manifest* alike to teachers and taught that fitness for ministry had not been shewn.

In 1836 Mr. J. N. Darby did not consider that the standing of those who took the oversight in this place as to order and ministry was sufficiently *recognised*; he left Plymouth until this *recognition* was more definitely owned.

“Stated ministry but not exclusive ministry,” has been the principle on which we have acted all along

here; first in Raleigh Street, before Ebrington Street Chapel was built (in 1840); then in that place, where we assembled until last midsummer; and now in Compton Street. By “stated ministry” we mean that such and such persons are looked on as teachers, and one or more of them is expected to minister, and they are responsible for stirring up the gift that is in them; but this is not “exclusive ministry,” because there is an open door for others who may from time to time receive any gift, so that they too may exercise their gifts.

This was then the principle acted on in Plymouth before there was any other gathering for communion in England. This was what I found to be professed and practised in the early part of 1835—a period when there were no similar meetings for communion in England in any place, with the exception of Bath and the port of Salcombe in this county. When such meetings did arise in other places, there was no thought, at least for several years, of setting up liberty of ministry in the sense of unrestrainedness. I have had pretty much acquaintance with several localities, and I may specify Exeter and London as places in which it was believed to be right to judge whether ministry was to edification, and put a stop to that which was considered to be not so. In London this was done *repeatedly*,—far oftener, to my knowledge, than ever in Plymouth.

Thus for a long time, at least, the practices in several other localities did not differ *in any way* from those at Plymouth. I might, if needful, mention other places besides London and Exeter.

Had you been aware of the exact state of facts, you would not, I am sure, have made the remarks in the "Retrospect" p. 15. You say, "that Mr. Newton "had for a long time . . . entertained views on "ministry not in accordance with these held by the "Brethren." You would have added that the said Brethren must then have taken a democratic ground *at a later period*, for they set out fully sanctioning and fully acting on the views then and now held by Mr. Newton—before one of the many meetings of the Brethren existed in any place in England except Plymouth. The "loose and democratic" views of ministry to which Mr. Newton objected in other places, had sprung up as a later growth. You say, "But then it behoved him [Mr. Newton] to act in "such a way as that no one might mistake his "intentions or misinterpret his opinions. . . . "This was not the course pursued by Mr. Newton, "the question of ministry was one disguised and "*managed* at Plymouth. . . . We come to the "conclusion that Mr. Newton was, in this respect, "deficient in that sincerity which is the best ground "for confidence." I really believe, Sir, with the *facts* more fully before you, you will be the first to

feel and express regret at having formed an injurious judgment. There was *no concealment* as to the principles on ministry which were held and acted out here: and if liberty of ministry was (as you state) *generally* understood by the Brethren in some different sense (which, if correct, must be a recent thing), surely, the responsibility rested upon those who used this term in such a new signification.

I am well aware that Mr. J. N. Darby has professed great objections to Mr. Newton's views of ministry: and yet he had for years sanctioned them; and I, for my own part, am not acquainted with any definite statement of his on the subject, which is not in substantial accordance with Mr. Newton. Certainly, Mr. J. N. Darby has often enough in my presence denounced the loose and democratic views of ministry which *some* were introducing—views which he considered to be subversive of the fact of gift from the Spirit of God still being bestowed on individuals;—once (in the end of 1843), he said, in allusion to the manner in which some Brethren spoke of the Spirit in connection with the assembly, that "if they talked in such a way, it might be truly said of them that they met in the name of the Holy Spirit and not in the name of Christ." Until Mr. J. N. Darby came to Plymouth in March 1845—"invited" (as you inform me) by some who did "not approve of the progress of events there"—I do not

know that he raised objections to Mr. Newton on any point connected with *ministry*. If he did so, he had much changed since the time when he had so fully recognised the position held at Plymouth by Mr. Newton. I only add, in connection with Mr. J. N. Darby, that the sentiments on ministry which he has expressed in "Operations of the Spirit of God," part iii., are what Mr. Newton had been *accustomed* to refer to as stating what *he* believed to be the Truth. So little was Mr. Newton conscious of any substantial difference on this point between Mr. J. N. Darby and himself.

I am well aware that some years ago there were introduced in London very democratic views of ministry—utterly subversive of all godly order, utterly opposed to subjection to the Lordship of Christ, and contradictory to all Scriptural doctrine of the gifts of the Spirit bestowed on individuals. It was well known how little I accorded with those who advanced such sentiments: I held to the principle which has already been referred to as "stated ministry but not exclusive ministry;"—this, which was merely not introducing a change, was not at all in accordance with the feelings of those who wished to leave every thing without restraint. You may perhaps be aware that at Rawstorne Street, London, Mr. G. V. Wigram took the prominent place at that time: how or when he ceased to accord with Mr.

Newton on the subject of Ministry I know not; but when these democratic views were circulated, he published a Tract (in 1844, I believe), of four pages entitled, "On Ministry in the Word." I extract two of the questions and answers.

"E. Do you admit 'a regular ministry?'"

"W. If by a regular ministry you mean a *stated* ministry (that is, that in every assembly those who are gifted of God to speak to edification will be both limited in number and known to the rest), I do admit it; but if by a regular ministry you mean an *exclusive* ministry, I dissent. By an *exclusive* ministry I mean the recognising certain persons as so *exclusively* holding the place of teachers, as that the use of a real gift by any one else would be irregular. As, for instance, in the Church of England and in most dissenting chapels, a sermon would be felt to be *irregular* which had been made up by two or three persons really gifted by the Holy Ghost.

"E. On what do you build this distinction?"

"W. From Acts xiii. 1. I see that at Antioch there were but five whom the Holy Ghost recognised as teachers, Barnabas, Simeon, Lucius, Manaen, and Saul. Doubtless, at all the meetings it was only these five, one or more of them, as it pleased the Holy Ghost, who were expected by the saints to speak. This was a *stated* ministry. But it was not an *exclusive* ministry; for when Judas and Silas came (xv. 32), they were pleased to take their places among the others, and then the recognised teachers were more numerous."

These statements are sufficiently explicit.

I am not aware of Mr. G. V. Wigram having *avowed* any total or partial change of view on the subject of ministry; but I think such a change should have been *avowed* before he joined in any opposition to Mr. Newton on this head: to condemn Mr. Newton's sentiments was in effect to condemn what he had published himself.

I understand that in one place, (after Mr. J. N. Darby had effected his division here in 1845), it was distinctly and publicly stated that Ministry would not continue to be *judged* as before.

You will thus see that your remarks in p. 4 were founded in misapprehension. You say, "Matters were in fact, so arranged at Plymouth, where Mr. Newton's influence was paramount, that liberty of ministry as seen in the other gatherings of the Brethren, was not really tolerated. It was a liberty of ministration conceded to those in whom Mr. Newton had confidence, and this confidence was confined within narrow limits." On this remark, I add for your information, that liberty of ministration was *not* confined to those who might accord in sentiment with Mr. Newton; and that the limit, if narrow, was at least as wide as manifested gift extended. There were certain who did teach here, and they were known, and their ministry was expected: exactly in accordance with what Mr. G. V. Wigram says in the above extract, "in every

"assembly those who are gifted of God to speak to edification will be both limited in number and known to the rest;" but liberty was *not* here confined to "only a certain few," for there was both in theory and in *practice* an open door for the manifestation of gift.

I may be allowed to suggest that those of "the Brethren" with whom you have mostly had intercourse, must have been themselves but little acquainted with what had been held and acted on in former years, elsewhere as well as here; your informants must have misled you as to certain points.

The additional information which I have now given, will, I believe, shew you—

I.—That Mr. Newton's views of Ministry were not in any way different from those of the Brethren originally in other places.

II.—That they were not at all concealed, and thus he was in no way deficient in sincerity with regard to them.

III.—That the "loose and democratic" views of ministry were contradictory to Liberty of Ministry as *originally understood*.

IV.—That Mr. Newton's chief opponents used to hold "stated ministry but not exclusive ministry" as strongly as he himself did.

V.—And that ministry was not a ground on which Mr. Newton could have been fairly attacked when

the opposition was raised against him by Mr. J. N. Darby in 1845.

I fully feel that the more important question is, What does the word of God teach relative to ministry? And I do not doubt myself that the principles on which we have acted here are in accordance with scripture:—the question however, now is What are the *facts* of the case before us? On these facts I have sought to give you information as to particulars with which you had but a partial acquaintance. I have no desire to bring charges or to make remarks which may pain any Christian mind; but it was impossible to speak of the facts without mentioning the names of some who have put themselves into a place of prominence. An accurate knowledge of facts will often be the best vindication of Christians whose characters are aspersed.

I hope shortly to write to you further on some other points which are imperfectly stated in the "Retrospect,"

And remain, Sir,

Yours, &c.,

S. P. T.

Plymouth, March 12, 1849.

LETTER II.

Facts connected with the Divisions effected at Plymouth, &c.

SIR,

I continue to mention to you particular points, on which you were but partially informed when you wrote the "Retrospect." I propose in this letter to speak of *various* facts, in the order (or nearly so) in which allusion is made to them in your pamphlet.

I speak then in the first place of *Discipline in the Church*.

Your remarks relative to the ground assumed by "the Brethren" as to the ruin of the Church, will in no way apply to the place which was taken at Plymouth with regard to the exercise of discipline. We have all along held that the Lord Jesus Christ gives to His people met in His name the competent authority to act in cases of discipline, as obedience to the written word may require. The eighteenth of Matthew is so explicit on this point, that, what-

ever thoughts may be in the minds of Christians as to the ruin of the Church, we have there the divine warrant on which two or three assembled in the name of Jesus, may act. And this does not imply any assumption of *authority* on the part of those who so act; it is simply their recognition of the authority of Christ their Lord: they *obey* His word.

And as to Church order, we have held that it is for us, according to any power of spiritual discernment which we may have, to recognise those who are fitted of God for any place of teaching or rule, and to give them as free a scope for the exercise of their more ostensible gifts, as those possess whose gifts, though not less real, are less ostensible, and do not depend in the same way on the gathered assembly as their place of exercise.

The household of Stephanas "had addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints;" God, no doubt, had commended them in their service to those who had spiritual apprehensions; and the Spirit of God by the Apostle Paul (1 Cor. xvi. 16) directs the Christians at Corinth, "*that ye submit yourselves unto such, and to every one that helpeth with us and laboureth.*"

On this principle we have sought and do seek to act as to Church order. If "the Brethren" in other places, with whom you have had any intercourse, have not so acted, or if they have rejected obvious

scripture principles on Church order and godly discipline, then I can only say that I think they have gone wrong, and that they have introduced some new principles different to those on which we acted here before such assemblies of "Brethren" came into existence.

We wish to acknowledge the order required by the word of God as to ministry, rule, and discipline: an order which does not necessarily depend on official appointment; and which is equally removed from anarchy on the one hand, and official *assumption* on the other.

I now proceed to make remarks on what you say on the subject of the division which Mr. J. N. Darby effected at Plymouth in 1845.

You state (p. 8), "It was not long, moreover, before the two sections mutually excommunicated one another, and extended that excommunication to any visiting brother who might happen to break bread with the interdicted party." This is not a correct statement: the Christians in Ebrington Street did never either by formal act or by practice, in any way excommunicate those who had seceded from them under Mr. J. N. Darby's influence: and no visiting brother was refused communion in Ebrington Street because of his having broken bread with those who left us.

In speaking of the "spirit that still animates this "unholy strife," I think that you could have drawn a distinction between those assailed and their assailants. We have been attacked; how bitterly and fiercely you have shewn. We have sought that the Lord might hinder us from using such weapons as were wielded by our opponents; I humbly trust that we have been enabled to avoid this, and that we may still be kept from retaliation. We have no desire to war with our brethren.

You quote Mr. Newton's words, "There have been "falsehood and misrepresentation to an extent I "could not have believed before the late events":— but do you think that *this* simple statement supports the expression, "The worst motives were imputed"? I think not. I think that it was simply speaking of misrepresentations in a more gentle manner than you have done in some parts of the "Retrospect."

As to the anecdote of a poor man who would not dine with his wife if she did not come to Ebrington Street, which you give as a specimen of "merciless "intolerance, and incurable antipathy," I may inform you that the poor man and his wife *both* say that Mr. Darby has greatly misrepresented them; *and they informed Mr. J. N. Darby, in the presence of another brother, that the true state of the case was WHOLLY different to the account which he had given.* I need say no more on this point, especially as you do not give

much heed to the story, and you appear to estimate "*The Narrative of Facts (??)*" at about its true value. That contention *might* easily lead to such scenes, we must both of us know and deplore.

You refer to the separation of Mr. J. L. Harris from Mr. Newton after Mr. J. N. Darby's attacks (pp. 15, 16). You characterise this as having been a formidable blow to Mr. Newton. I was myself at Plymouth for the first nine or ten weeks of 1845; during this time I was in frequent intercourse with Mr. J. L. Harris, and he appeared to be particularly happy in his fellowship of labour in the service of the Lord with Mr. Newton. He shewed then no feeling of opposition on Ministry. But the arrival of Mr. J. N. Darby in March of that year, and his assaults on Mr. Newton wrought a great difference on Mr. Harris as well as on others. Mr. J. N. Darby possessed a paramount influence over many minds in this place, and of this he was himself perfectly conscious. The change in Mr. Harris's thoughts and feelings led to his withdrawal. He had previously expressed his intention of leaving Plymouth; and he himself informed me on Sunday, October 19, 1845 (a day which I well recollect, as I quitted England for Italy the following morning), that his reason for leaving Plymouth was, *that he would not take any part with Newton against Darby or with Darby against*

Newton. On the following Sunday, October 26, Mr. J. N. Darby withdrew from the communion in Ebrington Street, and this led to Mr. Harris taking the step, which you mention, of withdrawing also on November 14—a step, let me say, deeply deplored by the many who knew and valued him.

After you have spoken of the division which Mr. J. N. Darby thus effected at Plymouth, you state that the most prominent event was the publication of his “Narrative of Facts;” of this book, you form, I think, a very suitable estimate.

You state that the next event of importance was the attempt made by the Brethren in Rawstorne Street, London, to induce Mr. Newton to appear before them. On this I may make a few remarks.

I was in London, on business of my own, at the time when the first communications were made to Mr. Newton relative to his meeting these Brethren. Now, I can assure you that neither he nor I supposed the request to be other than what it professed to be, and Mr. Newton answered the invitations in the *full belief* that a brotherly conference was all that was intended. We did not then know how the individuals, who gave the invitation, sanctioned the proceedings carried on here under Mr. Darby’s influence; and thus Mr. Newton was far from declining to meet those who invited him: he was greatly surprised that it was thought fit to use such a

meeting as a solemn act of judicial authority: we hoped that the Lord might have granted it to be a means of restoring something of brotherly love. The case was quite altered when the real character of the invitation became manifest.

As to the “Remonstrance and Protest” from this place at the end of 1846, I can assure you that it was anything rather than “artificial and insincere.” The Christians assembling in Ebrington Street, felt *deep sorrow* at the position in which they appeared to be placed by the acts in Rawstorne Street, London. Whatever advantage might have been gained, this was not thought of, when deep and widening division was the prominent object at which we looked.

You then speak of the painful circumstances connected with the separation of Mr. Soltau and others from Ebrington Street, in December, 1847. You will say of those acting against Mr. Newton, that “in their anxiety to bring Mr. Newton into condemnation, they disregarded the courtesies and proprieties which are usually respected in society.”

Mr. Newton retracted certain statements to which, and to the consequences which *might have* been deduced from them, his attention had been directed in the course of the controversy. It is not that such consequences *had been* drawn by Mr. Newton: for if that had been the case, or if he had seen

that such deductions could have been made, it would at once have shewn him that the terms of which he had made use were incorrect. He would have rejected them as thoroughly as he did when he saw what might be deduced from them.

The publication of a paper on the subject by Mr. Newton was in consequence of a promise which he had given to that effect: he has spoken of what the error was, as to certain *relations** of the Lord Jesus,—not as to His *person*; and he has declared his sorrow for having unintentionally made statements which were incorrect as to the terms employed, and from which dangerous deductions might have been made.

I think with you that those who for years (ever since 1835) had circulated the paper on the Doctrines of the Church in Newman Street, in which the erroneous statements were contained, have to bear their share of blame, and that it is not right that they should triumph over Mr. Newton's acknowledgment of error which they themselves were so slow to detect.†

* Observe that the misstatements had been in connection with the *relations* in which the Lord Jesus stood—not in connection with His *person*: you say (p. 17) "in some important statements relating to the person of Christ;" I suppose this to have been an inadvertence on your part as to the use of a word: you will see at once how important the difference is.

† The Appendix to Mr. Newton's paper, signed by me, was an account which I had previously written as to how the additions were made to the Tract on the Newman Street Doctrines, and how

Other questions were then introduced; if the Lord Jesus did not stand in *federal* relation to Adam so as to be under federal imputation, what (it was asked) was His relation to Israel? And some who had been associated with Mr. Newton went so far as to say, "Away with dispensational, relative and personal distinctions altogether."

On December 8, 1847, Mr. Newton quitted Plymouth; ‡ and very shortly after things were brought to a crisis here. Mr. Newton had thought that Mr. Soltau would have continued his place of oversight and labour in Ebrington Street: he did not believe

the paper with those additions had been inserted in the "Christian Witness" when reprinted.

I had a distinct recollection of these facts; and I wrote them down in consequence of a report which was spread far and wide, and which was afterwards printed, that Mr. Newton had in some underhand manner caused the paper with the additions to be so inserted; a thing with which he himself had nothing to do; this number of the "Christian Witness" was re-printed in *London*.

I am glad to have this opportunity of mentioning a circumstance which I could not state in that Appendix, because I was ignorant of it, from its having occurred before I was staying at Plymouth: this circumstance is that some copies of the paper on the Newman Street Doctrines had been worked off as a Tract when the type was originally set up for the "Christian Witness": these copies are therefore without the additions. For this information I am indebted to the kindness of Mr. J. L. Harris.

‡ You state, "He withdrew himself from Plymouth, to which he has not since returned;" this in the literal meaning of the words is not correct, for he has paid this place several visits and ministered amongst us; perhaps, however, you meant that he has not since resided here.

that there was *essential* difference between them; and I, as well as others, supposed that this would be the case. I saw that Mr. Soltau was tending in his mind to disconnect the Lord Jesus from the relation in which I believe that He stood to Israel, His own nation; but this I regarded as a difference of judgment and opinion, and not of *essential doctrine*.

On Saturday, December 11, 1847, Mr. Soltau had an interview with me; there was, I believe, on both sides a real desire to understand one another. To find out *where* we differed as to our Lord's relation to that nation of which He was one, I asked whether he did not agree with me, "*That Christ was born into the nation of Israel while that nation was under curse*" (these are the exact words as I wrote them down); I was surprised that he said that this statement (in which I thought he would have fully agreed with me) contained error on both sides: for he denied first, that Christ was born into the nation of Israel, and second, that when Christ was born, curse had come upon Israel. I neither thought nor said that Christ was under the curse of His nation, but that He was one of the nation, and shared *consequences* resulting from their condition, such as His being subject to the rule of Gentiles and not sitting as king on the throne of His father David. Mr. Soltau's statement was that Christ was born into *the elect* of Israel—a new distinction to me—and that curse

had not come on them, for the Lord came seeking fruit.

Mr. Soltau informed me that he should ask those who were so disposed to meet for confession and humiliation in the ensuing week: I entreated him that there might be a meeting for prayer that the Lord might lead us into oneness of judgment as to *what* ought to be confessed, and what ought to be repudiated as to doctrine:—this he *refused*; he said that he could not pray when sin was in question.

It was quickly manifest how much Mr. Soltau felt that there was something very unsound in my statement (though I believe it to be borne out by all the Scriptures which speak of the Lord as being of the seed of David and of Israel as concerning the flesh), and he showed that he did not think that fellowship could continue.

The following day (the Lord's Day), after we had unitedly partaken of the Lord's supper, that precious symbol of Christian fellowship, Mr. Soltau gave notice of a meeting to be held the following evening, in which statements were to be made, as preparatory to united confession and humiliation: he said that differences existed—not of *judgment* but of *doctrine*; a declaration which took many by surprise, and filled most hearts with sorrow.

On the next evening—Monday, December 13, 1847—we met in Ebrington Street, several hundreds in

number ; and then after Mr. Batten had prayed that our eyes might be opened, Mr. Soltau made a statement, in which he spoke strongly of his apprehension of the differences of doctrine as to our Lord's relations to man and to Israel ; our minds were painfully affected by the picture which he drew of the Christ that (he said) he had preached for ten years.* He called on us all to join in rejecting points of doctrine which most of us did not see in the same light as he did.

Mr. Batten addressed us in a somewhat similar strain.

I then stated what I believe to be true in the relations of the Lord to man and to Israel as well as

* How overcharged a picture Mr. Soltau drew on that evening of what he had held and preached, may be judged from the following conversation which took place on the next morning in my presence. One of his auditors who was pained by what he had said, addressed him, " Oh ! Mr. Soltau, if I had known that you had held such views as you expressed last night, I could not have remained in communion with you." To this he replied, " I never held these things *in my conscience*." To this was rejoined, " But surely you gave us that idea last night ! " To this he said, " I held what *might have led* to them."

Surely it would be strange if any one were to say " I walked from London to York," when he really had walked a mile on the York road—the road which *would lead* to York if one went far enough.

I cheerfully bear my testimony to the difference between the actual teaching and preaching of Mr. Soltau, and what, *under great excitement*, he represented it at the meeting in question as having been ; all those whom he left can unite with me fully in this testimony.

to God :—standing in many relations at once because of His mysterious person, and His divine power. I endeavoured to vindicate (from scripture) the soundness of what I had said as to the Lord having been as *really* the son of man sprung from Adam, and an Israelite of the seed of David, as He was the eternal Son of the Father, begotten before all worlds. I then repeated, in public, before some hundreds of Christians, the earnest request that I had made before in private, that we might assemble for prayer in order to seek that our God might vouchsafe to us oneness of judgment as to these things : but as before in private, so now in the presence of many witnesses—my entreaty was REFUSED and REJECTED.

Two other brethren—Mr. W. G. Haydon, and Capt. Johnson,—supported what I had said.

Mr. Soltau then said that he had determined to withdraw from ministering amongst us if he failed in carrying all minds with him ; and he did so withdraw. Mr. Batten (who had virtually separated himself before) informed us that he followed the same course.

At the conclusion of the meeting I *requested* all who felt disposed, to meet for united prayer on the following evening. I had no desire to put myself into a place of prominence ; I could not confess as false what I believed to be true, and I should have

violated my conscience before God, if I had *acquiesced* in the course proposed.

Mr. Soltau did not professedly withdraw from *communion* with us, but he never came again; he said that having been accustomed to minister amongst us, he could not come in a different position.

Shortly after this the "Confessions"* of different

* You appear to have seen only some of the "Confessions," unless indeed, you thought that the others required neither notice nor extract; however, the following sentences from Mr. T. P. Haffner's "Confession," are worthy of some observation, as shewing *what* he considered to be a sin as to the Doctrines on Ministry held in Ebrington Street. He says, "The other point which he [Mr. J. N. Darby] contested, viz., 'The *practical* denial of the presence of the Holy Ghost in the Church,' existed at Ebrington Street, I am also fully assured of; and with sorrow, and deep abasement, confess my sin for having been unwilling to speak of it heretofore.

"My assurance of this arises from a conversation I had with Mr. Newton, just before leaving Plymouth, on the subject of the *preparation for ministry*; when he said, that before coming to the Lord's table, he did not see it at all wrong to be prepared with what he had to say to the saints; that if they were in a right state, he believed *that* was the way that God by His Spirit (the saints waiting on Him, and the teachers waiting on Him also, before coming) would teach, though he would always be subject to having his thoughts turned into another channel when at the Lord's table, if the Spirit so ordered it. This, beloved friends, shocked me much, very much, at the time, and shook my confidence: but oh! with what humiliation do I now appear in the presence of God, for having so long retained in my bosom the knowledge that our poor brother [he means Mr. Newton] did thus *practically* deny the *present* leadings and guidance of the Spirit of God, (however much it might have been held theoretically) without having ever called on others to join with me in prayer for him—without having, to this day, spoken to him about it; and I fear, above all, without having taken him much into

brethren appeared: in so far as they might seem to affect us, their statements were met in the paper from Christians assembling in the name of the Lord in Ebrington Street, dated January 10, 1848. This paper was drawn up with much prayerful deliberation; it was read to the assembled Christians; it was considered sentence by sentence; and I believe that it does contain a true exposition of Christian doctrine as to the points on which it treats. With pain and surprise have I heard it said, that "it puts the Lord Jesus into such a place as we ought not even to regard a Christian as standing in."

But a few months passed, and Mr. J. N. Darby found Mr. Soltau in fellowship with himself!

I have entered into these particulars, that you may know that the Christians in Ebrington Street did not put themselves into any new position. We were perfectly willing to repudiate whatever might be shewn us from the word of God to be incorrect; but we could not assent to what we believed to be untrue, and flee from our position because of a false alarm. We had nothing new to uphold or maintain:

my closet before the Lord about it." pp. 5, 6. If the sentiment which Mr. Newton is here stated to have expressed be condemned, what can be held as true on the subject of gift or qualification for ministry? What would remain but supposed *impulse*? Do "the Brethren" at large *now* hold *impulsive* ministry? *once* they did not. Would not Mr. Haffner condemn Mr. Wigram's Tract on Ministry in the word?

but we could not admit either that the Lord Jesus was not really and truly born into the nation of Israel, or that He did not consciously partake of many consequences of their condition.

The early controversies on the person of our Lord, the opinions of Marcion, Apelles and Valentinus, in the second century, as opposed to His *real* manhood, and the Eutychian heresy in which the reality of His two natures was set aside (as well as the Nestorian which opposed the unity of His Person), were no new subjects to me; and I soon found that, in opposing us who remained in Ebrington Street, expression was given to almost every shade of thought, which in the same way opposes the full belief of Christians on these cardinal points.

The real and full relation of Christ to man and to Israel was questioned by some and denied by others. I will give you a few instances—expressions which I know to have been used: it was said that “the Lord was *man* but not the son of Adam, and that the name ‘*Son of Man*’ was simply a title:” that “His humanity was *something divine*,” that “it was a *spiritual humanity* ;” that “He did not become man *by birth*, but in some other way ;” that “*made of a woman* (Gal. iv.) does not mean born of a woman ;” that “He was not man of the substance of His mother, but that He was of the substance of God

His Father ;” that “the expression in Heb. vii., *without father, without mother, without descent*, related to our Lord as man, and that the genealogies BOTH in Matthew and Luke were those of Joseph His reputed father, and not of Mary ; so that the Scripture has designedly cut him off from the family of man, and from that of Israel!!” It has been *repeatedly* denied that our Lord was *mortal*, and when this word was explained as meaning *capable of dying* (not *compelled to die*), it has been said that He had no more capacity for dying than He had for sin. Recently the question has been triumphantly asked, “What Scripture says that the Lord had *two natures* ?”

All these statements (and many more), have been made, and several of them by those *reputed* to be *teachers*. With all intelligent Christians these things refute themselves; the evil has lain, not in the *force* of such objections, but in the *mischief*. (I refer to your concluding remarks on Leeds and Otley: Appendix, p. 12).

It has been in vain for us to refer to such writers as Bishop Pearson, Goodwin, Flavel, Dr. Hawker, Bengel, &c. (not as authorities, but as godly writers); they too have been sweepingly condemned as well as we. Would not any bondage to orthodox creeds—to the doctrines laid down at Nice or

Chalcedon—be better than this wild latitude of assertion? *

We have still continued to meet together,† desiring to humble ourselves under the hand of God: we trust that He has cared for us and that He will care. We acknowledge the name of Jesus as our bond of union, and the Holy Ghost as the one who can bestow gifts for edification. If we be maligned as to the Person of the Lord, I can only say that we hold with all orthodox Christians, that He is very God and very man; God of the substance of the Father, begotten before all worlds, man of the substance of His mother, born in the world; One Christ, not by confusion of substance, but by unity of person: as to His manhood, like unto His brethren in all things, sin only excepted.

I had supposed that no occasion could have arisen for discussing *such* points: they might be taken as undoubted and foundation truths; on them we hold *no* peculiar sentiments; and truly thankful shall we be to have no need to make further reference to

* You are mistaken *if* you suppose that Mr. Newton ever professed "his readiness to abide by the decisions of the Fathers and Doctors of the Church;" he has referred to the Creeds, and to godly writers, as expressing what orthodox Christians do in fact believe.

† The chapel in *Ebrington Street* in which we used to meet, is the joint property of Messrs. J. L. Harris, B. W. Newton, and H. W. Soltau; we vacated this for a place of meeting in *Compton Street* in this town, Midsummer, 1848.

them. Meanwhile this does not hinder us from preaching the Gospel to the unconverted, and worshipping together as believers in the name of Jesus, and extending the right hand of fellowship to our fellow believers; although we do find hindrances from evil report, as to fellowship with many of those whom we know and love in the Lord.

Your remarks as to what has occurred at Bristol are a proof how hindrances to fellowship are thrown in our way. As to the "friends of Mr. Newton" who came to Bristol, I have simply to inform you that they came not as "active and unceasing agents of Mr. Newton," (as said by Mr. Darby) but as quiet individuals whose presence in Bristol was wholly unconnected with any Ecclesiastical movement. Hard indeed is it if a Christian residing in one place, may not invite friends residing in another to come on a visit.

Your observations on more recent events call (I think) for no remark from me.

I remain, Sir,

Yours, &c.,

S. P. T.

Plymouth, March 15, 1849.

POSTSCRIPT.

Examples have been already given in different publications, of the language in which Mr. J. N. Darby and others have expressed themselves relative to our Lord: and it has been made abundantly clear that the question is not *what* is said, but, *who* has said it? Had the expressions been those of Mr. Newton, or of any one connected with Compton Street, they would have been *condemned*; but when known to have been written by others, they were supposed to mean something different.

Some of these things have been pointed out in the "Retrospect," and others are given in "Shibboleth,"* and in "An Admonition to Mr. J. N. Darby."†

* Shibboleth, or the new test of communion amongst certain "Brethren;" a counter appeal to the Christians at Bethesda, Bristol, in answer to G. V. Wigram's attack on Henry Craik, with Reflections. Houlston and Stoneman, London.

Had the author of "Shibboleth" been acquainted with Mr. Wigram's "Lessons from Scripture, or Recollections of Statements once heard with enjoyment," No. 1, January, 1842, he would, I think, have shewn how fully Mr. Wigram once applied Isa. liii. in the same way he has condemned Mr. Craik for doing.

† An Admonition to Mr. J. N. Darby on his charge of "horrible" doctrine against Mr. J. L. Harris, of Plymstock, with a prefatory letter to Mr. G. V. Wigram. London: Published by J. Watson.

In this "Admonition," the writer clearly shews, that in order to condemn Mr. Newton, statements of Mr. J. L. Harris have been denounced by Mr. J. N. Darby. It might be asked, Whether

Besides the passages which other writers have already brought forward, I wish to point out some of the statements relative to our Lord, which some of the "Brethren" used to make, in which they *fully* owned our Lord as man, and as Israelite, as suffering in life, as having a *title* to enter into life by keeping the commandments. I perfectly admit that the writers are *fully entitled* to explain what they meant themselves: Mr. Newton is entitled to the same liberty. Some of the extracts shew that the "Brethren" often wrote without much exactness of theological expression: those from whom I cite *ought* not, therefore, to be severe censors of others in this particular.

Mr. Percy F. Hall: "The Lord Jesus is not the "second Adam in humiliation, but the seed of the first; "and, as becoming the seed of the first, stood in that "condition that made it wonderful that God should visit "it, or be mindful of it. Not that it was wonderful that "He should visit Him, and crown Him with glory and "honour; but that He should be so mindful of us, as that "the blessed and everlasting Son should become the "*enosh*, or weak man, lower than the angels for the "suffering of death, and for the sake of His lowliness "unto death, so visit us as to crown us with glory and "honour with Him. Jesus was the descendant of the "world's outcast, because sinning, lord, and as such "inherited all but His sin, which He put away in His "death."—*Christian Witness*, ii. 256.

". . . And though as Jesus, the brother of the

Mr. J. N. Darby should not, for the sake of consistency, condemn *his own* writings in the same severe manner in which he has attacked those of Mr. Newton and Mr. J. L. Harris?

“Cain world, yet the world slew Him because His deeds were righteous, and contrary to theirs.”—*Christian Witness*, iii. 95.

Mr. J. L. Harris: “He had right and title to have entered into life because He had kept the commandments.”—Vol. ii. 39, 40.

Mr. J. G. Bellett: “Not only is all this *moral perfection* expressed by the title ‘Son of Man,’ applied to Jesus, but all His *suffering* and all His dignities are connected with Him as such. As Son of Man He was humbled so as to wonder that God should have any respect to Him (Ps. viii.); but as such He is also exalted to the right hand on high (Ps. lxxx.)”—Vol. vii., p. 2.

Mr. J. N. Darby: “His incarnation, which associates Him with David, and Abraham and Adam;” “Hence in the Gospels we have all that He was traced to Adam, David, Abraham, the Word of God.”—Vol. i. 142.

On Psalm vi.: “The expression of Christ in the days of His humiliation.” [Let it be remembered how severely Mr. Newton was censured for applying this Psalm to Christ. Some old Christians term this Psalm, “*Christus pro membris.*”]

On Psalm xvi.: “His condition in consequence of identification with the nation.”—Vol. iv., p. 338.

On Psalm xxv.: “Christ is pleading here in them, and, therefore, prays for no remembrance of the sins of His youth (confessing them), and asserts His integrity too.”—Vol. iv., p. 346.

On Psalm lxii.: “The identity of Christ with the nation is strongly marked, v. 8.”—Vol. v., p. 276.

On Psalm lxxxviii.: “This Psalm is the expression of the sympathy of Christ with the remnant as under

“the law in the latter day; hence, while it recognises their condition under it, even from Mount Sinai as in v. 15, it recognises His subjection to death and all its penalty, discovers the identity of Christ (wondrous truth!) with them in this position of the bondage and curse of the broken law resting on the spirit—yet by His Spirit, their plea, in their perfect desolateness in this state. Christ seems to have entered into the spirit of this Psalm, to have drawn it forth rather, when He describes the elect, God’s elect, as those who cry day and night unto God, Luke xviii.; and I suppose (connect with this the close of previous chapter, Luke xvii.) the Lord alludes in that passage to the circumstances to which this Psalm refers—His Spirit in the Psalm enters into the circumstances in full sympathy because in full affection, in which Israel the elect, and the elect heart-widowed Israel righteous in affection, yet feeling all the effects of wickedness, and for others (Christ’s true character and state), found themselves in protracted sorrow in that long, yet through mercy, shortened day. (Compare the confession in Daniel’s prayer.) He enters into the long course of righteous judgment due to the people, terrible and awful thought! for the soul of Christ felt it the judgment of a law broken from the outset, the array of terror which it brought against the soul which understood its curse, and the weight of it in holiness—which understood the effect of the law, ‘the terror of God,’ ‘wrath lying hard upon Him.’ Outward mercies are nothing, in such a case, but mockeries, as the light air or what passes vainly through it. Though every trouble and sin has its darkness from it; still a call daily on the *Lord*, for the

“law is the law of the *Lord*; therefore its terror—a
 “God with whom we are in relation, who has shut us
 “up in this terror, forgotten seemingly of God, but only
 “in the darkness of His anger, when we cannot find
 “Him: the more we know what He is, the more terrible
 “to find nothing but darkness—still the cry is main-
 “tained, yea day and night. It is a matter of the
 “grave and destruction—enemies there were withal,
 “lovers and friends none—such is the estimate of the
 “Spirit of Christ, the just estimate it forms, and forms
 “therefore in the people in the latter day under the law
 “—shut up into terror, and alone there with the Lord,
 “their Lord against whom they had transgressed—so
 “much the more joyful and blessed their deliverance.
 “Still, being the Spirit of Christ, which alone can feel
 “this, it cries day and night; what a picture, and how
 “the truth, &c., &c.”—Vol. vi., pp. 163, 164.

There are in some of these quotations distinct recog-
 nitions of many points which have been recently
 doubted or denied: The points may not be stated with
 exactness of terms; but still the Lord Jesus is fully
 recognised as really *man*, as obedient to the law, as
 having a title to enter into life by obedience. The
 active righteousness and obedience of our Lord must
 be remembered for our blessing, while we rely for re-
 mission of sin upon the shedding of His blood.

I leave the extracts from Mr. J. N. Darby with the
 reader: I only ask, What would he have said if Mr.
 Newton had written these sentiments? The expressions
 in what Mr. J. N. Darby has said on Psalm lxxxviii.,
 sound to me *strange* in their literal acceptance.

As the Appendix to the “Retrospect” contains
 citations from Mr. Newton’s Statement and Acknowledg-

ment as to what he had erroneously held, it is but fair
 to give the two following passages from the same state-
 ment:—

“I have invariably used the truth of His being the Son
 “and the fact of His Divine conception, as the reason
 “of His necessary immunity from all taint, even though
 “born of a woman,—and also as the reason of His free-
 “dom from all penalties that would, if they attached,
 “imply personal sin,—and of His personal title (when-
 “soever He might, according to the will of the Father,
 “please to assert it) to immunity from all penalties of
 “any kind whatsoever; but I ought never to have
 “connected Him with Adam as a federal Head. He,
 “being what He essentially was, was free from this,
 “though partaking of all the common properties and
 “infirmities of man’s nature, sin only excepted.”—p. 4.

“I trust that I can appeal to any of my writings in
 “which the person and sacrifice of the Lord Jesus are
 “spoken of, as well as to persons who have known me
 “as a Christian or a teacher, for proof that deductions
 “which go to involve the fitness of the Lord for His
 “blessed work of atonement, could never have been
 “contemplated by me; and that they are entirely
 “opposed to, and contrasted with, the whole current of
 “my teaching and aim and thoughts.

“I wish to state distinctly that I hold the perfectness
 “of Christ’s person and the completeness of His one
 “sacrifice, to be truths so solemnly unquestionable, that
 “every doctrine or opinion must be subordinated to, and
 “guided by, these leading and foundation truths; and
 “every statement of mine on the relations of Christ,
 “whether in my recent tracts which I have now with-
 “drawn [i.e., ‘For Reconsideration:’ the results of this

“reconsideration are given in ‘A Letter on subjects connected with the Lord’s humanity’] or in any other place, I wish to subject entirely to these primary truths: I desire that every statement with respect to such subordinate truth should be strictly guarded with the limitations which the afore-mentioned foundation truths supply.”—pp. 6, 7.

LETTER III.

The Sufferings of our Lord—the Application of the Psalms to Christ —Liberty of Teaching on Prophetic Subjects.

SIR,

In speaking of the attacks made on Mr. Newton, you have referred to the views attributed to him in connection with the sufferings of our Lord, and to the principles which he has deduced from the Psalms.

In this Letter, then, I request your attention to a few remarks,—

I.—On the different doctrines or opinions held by orthodox Christians as to the sufferings of Christ;

II.—The application of the Psalms to our Lord; and

III.—Besides these points, to the liberty to which Mr. Newton was clearly entitled to teach what he believed to be the truth of Scripture on Prophetic subjects.

May any observations of mine tend not to excite

dissentation and division, but rather that brotherly love and unity in the Spirit to which we are called, be our judgments what they may.

I believe that as to the sufferings of our Lord, the opinions of Christians may be classed under three heads.

I.—It has been supposed that the Lord from His birth to the cross stood in a vicarious relation to His people always; so that He always had pressing on Him that wrath of God which was due to our sins, in order to put away which by the shedding of His blood, He had become man. This I consider to be the ordinary doctrine in works of systematic divinity. It presents the Lord as *always* standing in a sacrificial aspect as the one bearing judgment from the hand of God *vicariously* for His people.

II.—Others have regarded the Lord Jesus as standing in the light and full favour of the Father's countenance up to the cross; they have thought that *then* for the first time He stood as the substitute for His people and received on His soul the wrath of God; suffering from God not meeting Him till then. They have seen that there are difficulties in the way of what may be called the *systematic* view; because it is certain that the favour of God was *manifested* repeatedly towards Christ during His earthly service.

III.—It has been believed by others that the sufferings which our Lord received from God, may be divided into two classes; those which He had to bear in the full sense of substitution, as having voluntarily come to redeem His people; and those which came on Him during His living service; and a distinction has been drawn between His holding a place of *substitution*, and His actings and sufferings *for* or on behalf of His people in a more general sense during His life on earth.

The full idea of vicariousness or substitution, implies that the Lord suffered for His people, bearing wrath *instead* of them, *penally*; so that nothing of a similar kind can come upon them; the more general sense of the Lord acting on behalf of His people, implies that all that He did when so acting was because of the condition in which they were, and that all was for their benefit and advantage; but the Lord did not *obey* for His people in the same sense in which He bore judgment for them. He obeyed that His living obedience might be counted to those who believe; but not in order that they might have nothing to do with being obedient themselves; but He bore judgment on the cross for them, that no such penal judgment might fall on them at all.

This third way of regarding the sufferings of our Lord, is that on which alone I have now to remark.

The subject appears to me to be illustrated by the

suretyship of Christ: the different characters of experience seem to be brought into a clear light, when this office which He sustained is considered.

It was to be the surety of His elect people that He who was eternal and very God, condescended to become man; He voluntarily, in accordance with the counsels of the Godhead, came into this world as having in wondrous grace taken on Himself the responsibility of delivering from curse and condemnation His whole chosen Church.

He was born as the surety of His people; He lived and served the Father as the surety,—paying on the cross that debt which had been written against us, and from which nothing except the shedding of His blood could have freed us.

But He was not the surety without *knowing* and appreciating the responsibilities which He had taken on Himself. Every thing therefore which brought before His soul the true circumstances of those whom He came to redeem, caused Him to feel what was before Him at the Cross, and to estimate what the wrath of God was against that sin, which He had come to put away by His own sacrifice.

Man had departed from God: every thing which brought this thought before the heart of Jesus, every thing which told of sin being in the world—sorrow, want, sickness, death—was to Him fresh declaration of *what* He had undertaken. And as

Israel was that people of which He was born the King, and as they had been the most highly favoured of God of all nations, and had shewn (in contrast) the deepest picture of human depravity,—every thing which manifested Israel's condition must have told with peculiar force upon the heart of Jesus. All the unbelief with which Christ was met in return for His holiness and love, had to Him an aspect which spoke of what He was to endure, as bearing upon the cross the judgment due to all the evil and enmity against God, which had thus been displayed.

The cross was the full payment of the debt for which Christ was the surety: *then* every suffering was known in all its full bitterness, and the judgment due to sin was poured upon Him (ever the holy and spotless one) in all its terrible power.

Had I to choose between that view which represents no suffering from the hand of God reaching Jesus until the cross, and that which regards Him as standing in a vicarious place all His days, I should hold to the latter thought, as far more in accordance with Scripture; because I believe it to be so certain that His was a *life* of discipline and suffering. He was “a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.”

Some, in their desire to remove such a thought as that of the Lord having His soul exercised from the hand of God during His course of service, have said

that He might know *external* trial, but not exercise of soul from God. But if the Lord felt external trial and realized the *circumstances* in which He was, He must have felt exercise of soul; He must have had experience of sorrow: otherwise, how could He have had a real manhood? Where would have been *His human soul*? Would not such thoughts come very near to a denial of His having been man in *soul* as well as in body, just like the Apollinarian doctrine?

But can it be said that He was not exercised from the hand of *God*? Can His experiences be regarded as *mere* spontaneous actings of His own mind? To answer these questions aright, let it be remembered that He had come into the world not to do His own will but the Father's that sent Him; His thoughts, apprehensions and experiences were appointed of God; and in all things He traced and felt the hand of God. Every thing that spoke of loving-kindness, was to Him an experience of mercy from the hand of God; every thing that told of man's sin and God's consequent displeasure against sin, was to Him an experience of a contrary character—an appreciation of the righteous wrath of God; a wrath which was not opposed to Jesus *personally*, but which He (ever standing in Himself in the favour of God) was to meet on the Cross on behalf of His elect people.

Thus (as it appears to me) was our Lord tried and exercised—He was tried by man, tried by Satan with all his devices and assaults (“tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin”), tried by God, so that God could again and again *attest* Him as one in whom, in His actings as well as in His Person, He was *well pleased*. This is “the *tried* stone,” the sure foundation on which the saints rely; “he that believeth in Him shall never be confounded.”

The spotless holiness of Christ would cause Him to appreciate all the more deeply the displeasure of God against sin: He was not as we, sinful by origin, in nature and in practice: He was a contrast to us in all these things; and this contrast He must have *felt*: His perfect holiness enabled Him to apprehend the real evil of man—of those *then* “children of wrath even as others,” whose surety He had become, and for whom He had taken on Himself the covenant-engagement to pay the penalty and to receive all the consequences of His suretyship.

These considerations will, I think, lead to right thoughts as to *what* “God has been pleased to reveal “by His Spirit in the word, that it was proper for “Christ to feel, or not to feel,” and “how the “Father might have been pleased to exercise the “soul of His dear Son, whilst He in living obedience “was working out that one righteousness in which

“we stand as believers in His name.” (Statement from Christians in Ebrington Street, January 10, 1848.)

II.—I now proceed to remark on the application of the Psalms to Christ.

You will observe that I have not referred to the Psalms while speaking of the living experiences of Christ: I have done this, not as considering the Psalms to be improperly applied to the subject, but because I think that the Scripture doctrine that such sufferings and experiences were real (and not an imagination of any teachers whatsoever), is proved wholly irrespective of the Psalms; at least godly writers have commonly considered that the Lord’s life was a time of suffering from the hand of God; though they mostly introduce the idea of *vicariousness*, which, in its strict sense, seems to me to be too strong a term to be applied except to the Cross.

But the Psalms certainly illustrate to us many truths which we learn from other Scriptures as to the detail of facts. We know from the New Testament how our Lord suffered on the Cross; we also find the very utterance of His heart in connection with such suffering in the penal Psalms. Who would regard it as visionary, if in speaking of the love of Christ in laying down His life for the sheep, I were to dwell on the words of the 22nd Psalm as the

utterances of His heart when bearing wrath for us?

If then, there be Psalms which treat of the Lord as suffering in *life*, if they give the utterances of His soul in other parts of His service *besides* the Cross, why may we not use them as giving us a deeper insight into what God has revealed concerning the sensibilities and sympathies of His blessed Son?—sensibilities and sympathies, be it remembered, which are full of preciousness for us.

The first point to bear in mind for the right understanding of the Psalms, is to attend to the use which the Holy Ghost has made of them in the New Testament. More than *forty* are there quoted and applied: we thus see that most of these *must* belong to Christ.

Next, if there be any description of perfect righteousness and holiness, we may be sure that our Lord is the only one to whom any *such* Psalm *can* apply.

Also, if there be language which implies penal suffering falling on one who is righteous, or suffering beyond the endurance of a mere man, then we may be sure again that Christ is brought before us.

And we may further know that Psalms which are parallel to others of which we learn the meaning from the New Testament, must be similar in subject.

Other Psalms speak of an historical detail of

mercies, or are ascriptions of praise, or have such a character as to explain themselves.

These considerations will leave *comparatively few* Psalms without our having a clue to their meaning.

If, then, there be Psalms which certainly belong to Christ in suffering, and if they must from their statements belong to Him in *life* and *service*, and cannot be applied or *confined* to the Cross—then we have Psalms, which, without imagination or arbitrary conjecture, we may use to gain a deeper apprehension of our Lord's living sufferings.

It is natural enough for our minds to be deterred by difficulties—a turn of an expression or the like: but in such cases it will be well to wait for light, until we see how the difficulty can be met: we should learn *nothing* from Scripture if we were to leave those things which are clear and certain until all the difficulties are taken out of the way. It is remarkable that the passages which seem at first to be the most difficult to apply to Christ, are found in some of the very Psalms which the New Testament authoritatively interprets of Him.

In the Psalms we have, I think, Christ as speaking—sometimes for *Himself*—sometimes for His members penally, confessing *our* sin as *His*, and bearing *our* judgment as *His*—sometimes for His members as the *surety*, appreciating fully their condition—and

sometimes as the surety who has wrought the pledged deliverance—sometimes as an Israelite, recognising to the full His people's relation to God.

I cannot here enter into a notice of the particular Psalms, but I may mention one, the 119th.

I was formerly instructed that this Psalm was the language of one desiring peace and righteousness, seeing the holiness of the law, but finding that as to himself he is only a lost sheep.

But in studying this Psalm I felt difficulties; for again and again there are expressions of thorough righteousness, and the holy profession of having fully obeyed the will of God. Who could say, "I erred not from thy precepts,"—"my soul hath kept thy testimonies,"—"I have kept thy precepts and thy testimonies; *for all my ways are before thee,*" except the Lord Jesus Himself? I then thought, Can Christ be the speaker in this Psalm? I mentioned my difficulty to one who has taken *nearly the foremost* part in opposing Mr. Newton and his teaching; his reply was, "Don't you know that it is *Christ* that you ought to look for in the Psalms?" At the same time he put Bishop Horsley on the Psalms into my hand as a book containing many correct thoughts, but some also to which he objected.

This was in 1836; it certainly helped my mind as to some difficulties: I read the 119th Psalm again and again to see whether it could all be the utterance

of the Lord when on earth. Two verses caused me to ponder the subject *for years*; the 67th and the last: "Before I was afflicted *I went astray*; but now have I kept thy word;" "I have *gone astray* like a lost sheep; seek thy servant; for I do not forget thy commandments." I thought, whatever the Psalm may mean, Christ never went astray; and yet, do not other parts of the Psalm speak the language of full and entire obedience? Can it be that in one part Christ speaks of, and for His members, identifying them with Himself, and in other parts, of His own personal standing?

I waited for light; I observed at length, that in Gen. xx. 13, when Abraham says, "God caused me to *wander* from my father's house," the *same verb* is used as "I have *gone astray*" in verse 176. This word, then, does not *necessarily* mean *wandering* sinfully: this thought was afterwards confirmed by seeing how Dathe points out that verse 176 *cannot* be taken in a *moral* sense, because in verse 110 the speaker says (using the same word) "I *erred not* from thy precepts." Is not then the thought of this verse the condition of Jesus down here upon this earth, as having come to seek and to save the lost? * The expression "a *lost* sheep" is simply in itself a "perishing sheep," and it is introduced here only as

* One of "the Brethren" has beautifully used the thought which

illustrative comparison. *We* have turned every one to *his own way*; this makes all the difference when *we* are compared to lost or perishing sheep.

As to verse 67, the difficulty was removed when I saw how *Ferome* had rendered the passage 1,400 years ago: his knowledge of Hebrew was respectable, and he did not differ from the old Latin version of the Psalms (still retained in the Vulgate) without having a reason for so doing. He renders the verse, "*Antequam audirem ego ignoravi: nunc autem eloquium tuum custodivi.*" "I was ignorant" or "*uninstructed*" instead of "I went astray." † No one who believes in the humanity of our Lord can feel difficulty in this: He had "a finite mind and directed will"

this verse conveys as a ground on which praise may be truly ascribed to our blessed Redeemer:

"Lamb of God! when we behold thee
 Lowly in the manger laid;
Wandering as a homeless stranger
In the world thy hands had made:
 When we see thee in the garden
 In thine agony of blood,
 At thy grace we are confounded—
 Holy, spotless Lamb of God!"

J. G. DECK,

† This appears philologically to be the meaning of the verb: all thought of *wandering* seems to be secondary. It has of late been said, that this is the same as *sinning through ignorance*, Lev. v. 15. A mere inspection of the Hebrew Text would have prevented so inaccurate an assertion: this root is there used as to *ignorance* not as to *sinning*.

(Bishop Pearson); He was instructed by God. *How* He could be the omniscient God, and at the same time the one who could say, "Of that hour knoweth not the Son," I neither wish nor attempt to explain: I only bow to the testimony of the Spirit concerning Him who is very God, equal with the Father, and very man even as we are men. He was instructed: He prayed to the Father, and He was guided; "*He grew in wisdom:*" the New Testament reveals all this and much more to us.

An entirely *new* sentiment *may* be true; it is *possible* that there are scripture truths which all minds have overlooked; but in such a case it behoves those who bring forward such new thoughts to *prove* them to be *true*. Such a long series of godly expositors have applied the book of Psalms to the Lord Jesus, that I think, Sir, that I might call on any who do not so apply them, to *demonstrate* that this opinion of holy men for ages was an error. If an error, it would be one on the side of which are arrayed Christian holiness and evangelic truth; while in opposition to it stands the school of the (so-called) *grammatico-historical exegesis* with all its withering coldness so deadening to spiritual life.

If I err in applying the Psalms to our blessed Lord, it is an error not of *doctrine* but of exposition: if I am right in this, then my thoughts on the subject are in accordance with many of the saints of God in

every age which has been enlightened by the rays of Evangelic Truth.

III.—I have now to speak of the liberty which Mr. Newton possessed to teach what he believed to be the Truth with regard to Prophecy.

Whatever, Sir, may be your own sentiments on Prophecy, whether you are a Millenarian or an Anti-millenarian,—whether you expect the "secret rapture of the saints," or think that the Scripture reveals intervening events to occur prior to the coming of the Lord—still I cannot suppose that you think that Mr. Newton was bound to abstain from teaching what he himself believed to be the truth on this subject. To whom were his tongue and conscience to be in bondage? Mr. Newton has himself definitely stated what he claimed as to liberty for himself and for others. His words were in 1845, prior to Mr. Darby's division, of whom he is speaking, "I should object to his being denied any one "privilege that I might myself have—I only claim "co-equal right to write and to teach as and how I "please, subject only to the judgment of the Church, "if I do it in an evil manner."

Some of those who of late years opposed Mr. Newton on Prophetic subjects, formerly agreed with him as to the main point of difference: *at that time* they did not think it their duty to abstain from

mentioning to others what views they considered to be true; and indeed I know of none amongst the opposers of Mr. Newton's views who have thought that *they* did not possess an entire liberty to bring forward *their* sentiments. It is not their place, then, to find fault with their brother for speaking according to *his* conscience.

The leading point of difference is this:—Have the believers to expect that the Lord may at any moment come to take them to Himself in body and spirit in glory—together with the dead saints raised? or, Are there events predicted in the Scripture which will take place before the Lord comes, and ought we to consider such events as having a moral bearing upon us?

Formerly, there was a great diversity of opinion amongst “the Brethren” on these subjects: at length, however, by the removal of some by death and the change of mind of others, the expectation of intervening events was regarded as peculiarly Mr. Newton's sentiment.

The thought of the secret and mystic rapture of the saints was supposed to be to the glory of the Church; and whether this theory be correct or not, it is certain that various hypotheses were advanced to explain difficulties which seemed to be in its way. Passages which spoke of any seeing signs of the Lord's coming, or which called for godly action in

the period of Apostasy, immediately preceding His manifestation, were supposed to belong to Israel, or at least to some who are not “the Church.”

Some years ago it was painful to hear suggestions that various points of Christian verity were “Jewish;” questions were raised as to whether the Church be connected with Covenant,* Priesthood

* It was said, “Is not the new Covenant with the house of Israel and Judah? Has not the Church some higher place?” What was this but overlooking the wide extent of preciousness in the new Covenant made in the blood of Christ? He said, “This is the new testament in my blood, shed for many for the remission of sins;” and the Apostle Paul was made “an able minister of the new testament.” Some may have forgotten that in the Bible, “Covenant” and “Testament” are the same word.

Formerly “the Brethren” could speak of *Covenant* as fully as any; it was recognised in teaching, prayer and *praise*, as in the following Hymn which stood in the collection which we used in Exeter in 1836.

Come, Saints, and sing in sweet accord,
With solemn pleasure tell
The Covenant made with David's Lord,
In all things ordered well.

This Covenant stood ere time began,
That God with man might dwell;
Eternal wisdom drew the plan,
In all things ordered well.

This Covenant, O believer! stands
Thy rising fears to quell,
Sealed by thy surety's bleeding hands,
In all things ordered well.

'Twas made with Jesus, for His bride
Before the sinner fell,
'Tis signed, and sealed, and ratified,
In all things ordered well.

and Mediation: doubts were hinted as to the imputed righteousness of Christ being a truth. However insignificant the individuals may be who could suggest such questionings, yet this does not hinder

In glory soon, with Christ their king
His Saints shall surely dwell;
And this blest Covenant ever sing,
In all things ordered well.

A Selection of Psalms and Hymns for Public Worship, Limerick, 1835.
Hymn 55. (Edited by Mr. Thomas Maunsell).

A few years later, Hymns were often so altered as to exclude the term Covenant, of which some disapproved: for instance, in "Hymns for the Poor of the Flock," (46), Toplady's Hymn stands:

"As debtors to mercy alone,
Of heavenly mercy we sing;"

instead of

"A debtor to mercy alone,
Of Covenant mercy I sing."

In the same book (in Hymn 273, beginning "Now may the God of peace and love"), "To make the *Eternal Covenant* sure;" is changed into "To make the *gracious work* secure,"—so as to destroy entirely the reference to Heb. xiii. 20. In Hymn 337 (beginning "O gracious Father, God of love"), however, the allusion fully remains, and in other places the word Covenant is not excluded, although there is a manifest endeavour to avoid the thought of Covenant being that on which *we* rest: *our* connection with Covenant is affirmed when we say,

"To make the Eternal Covenant sure
On which our hopes are built:"

But this does not so *necessarily* follow from—

"Confirmed and sealed for evermore,
The Eternal Covenant stood."

Other Hymns were altered, such as that of Dr. Hawker's, "Abba Father, Lord we call thee." The *reasons* of some of the changes I did not see for years.

the tendency from being very evil: the Church was looked on as in some sense *above dispensation*.

Meanwhile any who might believe that the Scripture does teach that events will occur prior to our meeting the Lord in the air, were *made to feel* that their sentiments were looked on with suspicion. Repeatedly have I been charged with a want of personal love to the Lord Jesus on this account: when I have asked for Scripture *proofs*, the answer has often been, "It is not your *head* that is in fault, but your *heart*; *love* will not bear any thing to intervene between itself and the object loved." I felt this much; and I have now lying by me part of a paper which I wrote in May, 1839, simply as an apologetic statement for holding that a belief in intervening events is quite as consistent with Christian watchfulness *now*, as it was when the Apostles instructed the early Churches as to definite things (e.g. Peter's death) which should certainly take place. I did not finish this paper, because I found that it would only lead to more of what was painful.

Statements continued to be made from time to time by those who sought to disconnect the Church from all circumstances, and these statements were (to say the least) of a very *novel* character.

The term "*Church*" was sometimes applied to all saints from Pentecost to the First Resurrection; sometimes it was confined to those who lived *after*

the stoning of Stephen; St. Paul being taken as a kind of introducer of a new Gospel: * the Pentecostal Church being designated as something Jewish; and it was even said in print that the Church after the stoning of Stephen "received" the Apostles. As if it could then *receive* those whom God had constituted the twelve foundations of the heavenly city!

The attempt was made by various individuals to draw as great a contrast as possible between "the Church" and all things *Jewish*: thus the Gospel of Matthew was said to present a *Jewish* aspect (though the only one of the four Gospels in which the name of *Church* occurs); then the three first Gospels were spoken of as Jewish; then all that our Lord did on earth was so spoken of; the precepts and principles in the four Gospels were thus lightly regarded by some; I have heard it affirmed (and on another

* The Apostle Paul distinctly declares in several places that the Gospel which *he* preached was *identical* with that preached by the twelve. Thus in 1 Cor. xv., he says, "I declare unto you the Gospel which I preached unto you," verse 11, "whether it were I or they [the twelve], *so we preach*, and so ye believed." How utterly subversive of simple elements of Christian doctrine is it then to turn the expression "My Gospel," which Paul uses, into some particular Gospel which *he* first preached.

It has been recently said *that the Church possesses the righteousness of God*, and that the imputed righteousness of Christ is something *lower* than this. Well did the Reformers call "the righteousness of God," when used as in Rom. i 17, "not the righteousness in which God Himself is righteous, but the righteousness in which He accepts us as righteous."

occasion it was publicly taught) that the command in the Gospels is not our warrant to observe the Lord's supper (for that would be only *Jewish*), but that the revelation to St. Paul, 1 Cor. xi., is alone addressed to us.

Distinctions were drawn also as to circumstances not merely present but future and eternal: it was said that the Church includes (even in its *heavenly* aspect) the saints of this dispensation *only*: it was said that they alone are properly "sons of God," "members of Christ," "the bride of the Lamb," that they only are united to Christ,—and that the rest of the saved—Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and the rest of the Old Testament saints, as well as those of the Millennium, would have a lower glory above and an inferior blessing. This idea has spread widely: and many have adopted it, who think scarcely anything of some of the distinctions and assertions to which I have previously directed your attention.

I do not *affirm* that these novel doctrines, so opposed to the communion of saints, are *necessary* consequences of the Prophetic scheme of Mr. Newton's opposers; but I do state distinctly that they sprang out of the *manner* in which those views were held and advocated.

Against these *results* Mr. Newton thought it needful to bear testimony.

The following statement was written by Mr. Newton in April, 1845: each point is placed in *opposition* to some assertion or teaching which some (whether individuals of importance or not) had made on the subjects.

“ It is my desire to maintain,—

“ I.—That the twelve Apostles of our Lord and Saviour do represent *believers* standing in acknowledged acceptance before God, through the name of Jesus, and that they represent such only.

“ II.—That the Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke are Christian Scripture, in the same sense in which the Gospel of John is Christian Scripture.

“ III.—That the Pentecostal Church was not in a semi-Jewish or semi-Christian condition, or in any sense ‘earthly,’ or ‘formed for citizenship in the earth;’ but in a true Church position, as ‘partakers of the heavenly calling.’

“ IV.—That the Epistles of Peter, and the Epistle to the Hebrews or Galatians, are not to be regarded as having a lower character than the Epistles to the Ephesians or Colossians.

“ V.—That the introduction or presence of Jewish circumstances or characteristics into any particular passage, does not necessarily make the subject-matter Jewish.

“ VI.—That Peter and the Pentecostal Church testified to the ascension and heavenly glory of Jesus, equally with St. Paul.

“ VII.—That there is no salvation and no life apart

from union with the person of the Son of God, and that all who so rise in Him are sons of God.

“ VIII.—That the Church is under covenant promise and dispensation, as much as Israel will be; and is in no sense above dispensation, except in the sense in which all the redeemed receive their calling to blessing in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, and therefore independent of circumstances here.

“ IX.—That the resurrection of Christ, and resurrection in Christ, is never regarded in the Scripture, save as abolishing all personal distinctions such as that of Jew and Gentile, among the partakers thereof.

“ X.—That heavenly blessings, as well as earthly, were included in the promise to Abraham, and that God never purposed or proposed to accomplish one branch of these promises, without also adding the other.

“ XI.—That ‘the household of faith’ is an equivalent expression to ‘Church.’

“ XII.—That the various expressions, &c., applied in Scripture to the Church, afford various aspects or positions of the same body, but do not imply that the Church is correspondingly divided into distinct and separating compartments.

“ XIII.—That Abraham and the Old Testament saints are equally with ourselves included under such passages as the following:

“ ‘The dead in Christ shall rise first,’ ‘As in Adam all have died, even so in Christ shall all be quickened.’

“ ‘All onewise’ (ἐξ ἑνός).

“‘Shall reign in life through one, Jesus Christ.’ ‘He that hath the Son hath life,’ connected with, ‘in Him that is true, even the true God.’ &c.

“‘Fellow citizens with the saints,’ connected with, ‘may comprehend with all saints,’ ‘children of the resurrection, therefore children of God.’

“XIV.—That our admission to the Father’s house is not dependant on that which we are in the Spirit here, for that would set aside the work of Christ as the alone ground of heavenly blessing.

“XV.—That all believers have equally and in the same sense the mind of Christ—but this implies no independence of the word of God.

“XVI.—That all the dead saints are raised, and all the living saints changed, at the coming of the Lord into the air: and that the word of prophecy is said to be our guide till then.”

This was the condition of things when Mr. J. N. Darby was carrying on that course of opposition which led to the division here at the end of 1845. If the novel sentiments, opposed in this statement, were *not* fraught with danger, then what must be all the common belief of the Church as to its standing, unity and hopes?

Mr. Newton was not contemplating an *imaginary danger*; sentiments which might seem as nothing when advanced by some obscure individual became important when they were *not checked*,—when any

check was *discountenanced*, and when they were repeated by others more influential.

I do not charge one of the things which I have mentioned upon any one who repudiates them; but those who really repudiate such sentiments cannot do other than think it an important service that such dogmas should be opposed with the Truth of God’s word.

Mr. Newton and some besides saw to what point minds were tending as to yet further error: the distinctions which had been drawn between various classes of the saved were such as implied some *essential* diversities. And this in some measure *has* come to pass. You are aware that Capt. Johnson has already (*Point at Issue*, pp. 15—20), called attention to statements which appeared in “*The Prospect*,” a journal in the hands of those opposed to Mr. Newton. The doctrines of the writer of “*The Testimony to the End*” in the *Prospect*, are thus stated simply by Capt. Johnson (p. 16). “According to this, there are three ways of salvation—1st, By “righteousness and self-denial in things present:—“2nd, Effort and violence, or self-compelling into “the kingdom:—3rd, Pure grace, or compelled to “come in by grace.” I must refer you to Capt. Johnson’s tract* or to the “*Prospect*” itself, as I

* I wish to call particular attention to this Tract, which is worthy of serious study and examination. *The Point at Issue; or Observations*

should have otherwise to quote passages at great length:—take, however, one sentence from the “Prospect,”—“The ‘violent’ have an activity peculiar to themselves, which distinguishes them from the “Bride of Jesus: for they themselves wash and make “their robes white in the blood of the Lamb; ‘but “*we have been washed, but we have been sanctified* “ . . . by Him who hath loved us, and *who has*

by R. C. Johnson, on “Remarks by J. N. Darby,” on a “Letter on subjects connected with our Lord’s humanity.” Published by Jenkin Thomas, Plymouth.—Sold by Calder, 199, Oxford Street, London.

The paper in the “Prospect,” entitled “The Testimony of the End,” appears to be by Mons. Rosier, one of Mr. J. N. Darby’s disciples. Its statements are such that it might be asked, who *could* uphold them?—and yet the editor of the Prospect has inserted this paper, and others *recommend* it.

In Part I. of “THE PRESENT TESTIMONY,” a publication in the hands of Mr. J. N. Darby and others who are his fellow-labourers, the Editor has on the cover, given a notice of “The Prospect.” He *particularly* draws attention to this paper; he says that it and others “were written clearly by persons occupied by God and truth more “than with the events passing in the world.” . . . “The “Testimony of the End’ (Rosier) is most deeply interesting: and “well worthy of a perusal and of a re-perusal. It sets some truths “connected with the *statement* of the Gospel in a clear light.”

Immediately below, the Editor notices “The Quarterly Journal of Prophecy.” He says that “some statements as to *foundation truth* “are very crude, and some dangerously unsound.”

I cannot but think that the correctness of this charge of *dangerous unsoundness on foundation truth* looks doubtful when found on the same page as the commendation of Mons. Rosier’s paper. What does the Editor of “The Present Testimony” consider to be *sound doctrine* as to these points? and *what* unsoundness is it that he *suggests* against the Journal of Prophecy?

“*washed us from our sins in His own blood*” (p. 23).*

These are the kind of results against which Mr. Newton thought it needful to testify: what opposition was raised in consequence, you appear to know full well.

You have, plainly, no sympathy with Mr. Newton’s Prophetic† views, you will, however, I trust, have

* To this in the “Prospect” there is subjoined the following note: “The writer does not here speak of the power or efficacy of redemption, but of the circumstances and manner of the application “of its results. (Tr.)” If I understand this sentence at all, it means that they do not redeem themselves, but they apply the efficacy of redemption to themselves! Do the writer and his translator mean that the result of Christ’s redemption is applied to souls in some other way besides *faith*?

† You appear to think that the belief that the predictions of the destruction of Babylon are yet future, is a peculiar thought of Mr. Newton; however, it is (or was) quite as fully held by Mr. J. N. Darby.

That Mr. Newton should, in 1832, have written differently on the subject can occasion no surprise; three years after this, the evidence was placed before him, which showed that the ancient prophecies against Babylon have not met with their literal accomplishment; this point being proved, other details of prophetic interpretation would of course be affected. Surely you must have known persons whose opinions have changed when evidence has been presented to their attention. When the paper in the Investigator was mentioned a few years ago to Mr. Newton, it had entirely passed from his memory.

I gave a brief outline of what I then knew of the present state of the site and plain of Babylon, and of the non-fulfilment of the predictions of Isaiah and Jeremiah, in the “Christian Witness” for July, 1836. Mr. Newton has just published a very full statement

sympathy with testimony and labour connected with checking the spread of such strange sentiments which have already in some measure produced their fruits.

The gospel of the *grace* of God is of too much importance to be treated as a subject for mental theories ; it is no wonder that where differences were laid down as to the eternal relation to God in which the saved should stand (the saints of this dispensation having been located above all others as solely the sons of God), that differences should be also stated as to the *mode* in which salvation reaches them. If I understand at all what *washing their own robes* can mean, it must be applying to *themselves* in some way, the efficacy of Christ's redemption. "It is of *faith*, that it might be by *grace* ; to the end the

on the whole subject ; " *Aids to Prophetic Enquiry. Second Series.*" Nisbet and Co.

Whoever wishes to know Mr. Newton's Prophetic views, should read *his own* writings, especially *Thoughts on the Apocalypse*, published by Hamilton, Adams and Co. No correct idea of this book *could* be gained from the writings of some who have professedly examined it.

See also his *Five Letters on events predicted in Scripture, as antecedent to the coming of the Lord*, and *Aids to Prophetic Enquiry*, published by Nisbet and Co.

Of course Mr. Newton is in no way responsible for the manner in which *any* may connect his name with *their* speculations.

* * * N.B.—The above named works are now (1894) published as advertised at the end of this reprint.

promise might be sure to all the seed." "Not of works lest *any man* should boast."

You appear to be so perfectly aware that the opposition to Mr. Newton arose entirely from his prophetic views being disliked by Mr. Darby, that I need not insist on the point. Out of this sprang all the charges against Mr. Newton, and the endeavour to condemn him on *every possible* ground. Had he accorded with Mr. Darby on Prophecy, we should never have heard *his* voice raised against him as to Ministry or Church Order ; his writings would not then have been scrutinised with severity, in order to glean matter of accusation. I might ask whether the writings of his opponents would stand *such* an ordeal ?

Your testimony to Mr. Newton's conduct and spirit in this painful opposition of years, is all the more valuable from your not being of one opinion with him in several points : you say—

"In the meanwhile we gladly give our testimony to Mr. Newton's calm and dignified demeanour under the unusual trials that have come upon him. The provocations he has received have been exceeding great, the accusations unscrupulous and of the worst description, the insults unlimited ; and all this has been going on for years without pity or abatement, without the slightest recognition that he ever has been esteemed a Christian, a gentleman, and a friend, or one who for several years

was highly esteemed amongst the Brethren. His opponents have forgotten all that he once was to themselves and to others, nay they have almost ceased to remember that he is of the human species; and yet amidst all this indescribable violence, and these multiplied vexations and distresses, no angry word has ever escaped him, no tart reply or expression of irritation ever for a moment disturbed the unruffled placidity of his most courteous pamphlets. His enemies have, on several occasions, laid themselves open to severe thrusts, but he has withheld his arm; and when the sword had fallen from the hands of his antagonists, he has disregarded the advantage, and honourably sustained the lofty dignities of the gentleman and the philosopher. As we have rarely seen the like of the animosity of his enemies, so we have rarely seen the like of his personal possession, and imperturbable serenity. In this respect he is a pattern to controversialists; and if the names of the Plymouth Brethren shall endure long enough to secure a page in history, then in this quarrel, which is, unhappily, the most prominent part of their existence, Mr. Newton's conduct, as seen in his writings, will form a striking and noble contrast with the vulgar warfare of his intemperate adversaries." pp. 18, 19.

I think that with a more exact knowledge of the facts, you will not regret having spoken thus of a brother whom some have deeply tried and grieved, and that you would have this feeling only confirmed if you were personally acquainted with him. Meanwhile, I believe that the Lord does uphold him in his work as a minister of Christ, whether in this

place (where he now is) or in other spheres of labour.

Whatever may be your position in the Church of Christ, whatever be the communion to which you belong, you appear, Sir, to desire that love, uprightness and holiness should abound amongst those who profess the name of Christ as the bond of union. Surely, labour bestowed with this object must be well-pleasing to God, and thankfully accepted by all who are right-minded. May the Lord bless any effort of yours to this end, and may He graciously put far from us all that would hinder these graces of the Spirit from having full power!

There can be no happy *fellowship of service*, unless individuals are allowed to feel their own personal responsibility to God, and to act on it. There *may* be differences of judgment such as would hinder fellowship of service; but even then, why should not *love* be maintained? If I find something which prevents my walking altogether with my brother, at least let me not speak evil of him or malign his motives.

If our paths of *service* must be different, still "let brotherly love continue;" even if in some things I find it needful to oppose and discountenance what some may hold, let it be in a right spirit. Mr. Newton has thus spoken (in April, 1845) of the manner in

which he thought it needful to oppose the system which he considered to be producing evil results. "It is this system which I feel bound in conscience "to oppose in every legitimate way. If in my speaking or writing, I make use of any harsh or ungracious expression, I am willing to ask the pardon "of any Brother whom I may have offended, and to "strive to avoid needless severity of expression: but "beyond this I cannot go. I desire to produce in the "minds of the dear Brethren everywhere, the same "strong sense that pervades my own, of the evil of "this system—and this is one object of my labour "everywhere. At the same time, my hostility is "against a system, not against individuals. Doctrinal truth, dispensational truth, and truth connected with the order of the Church on earth, are "three divisions which I am accustomed to make in "treating of these subjects; and though I believe it "is impossible for our minds to go wrong very "widely on dispensational truth without doctrinal "truths in secondary minds being ultimately affected "—yet I regard no one as a heretic, or unworthy of "having his ministry received with all honour, "who adheres to the doctrinal truth in which we find "the primary ground of united labour."

In concluding these letters, let me state distinctly on behalf of my brethren in Compton Street, as well

as myself, that we desire peace and unity, as well as that we may grow in the Truth of God. Highly shall we value the service of any Christian who may seek to allay irritation and to lead hearts to confidence and brotherly love. I trust that these letters may be no hindrance to these objects. I hope that I have spoken of no one in such a way as to give pain; at least, I have not intended it. I desire that we may show that we are the servants of Christ by loving one another.

We shall be thankful if our God and Father should cause that our brethren who have condemned us, may regard us differently: we believe that their judgment has been based on misapprehension; we hope that many will, in time at least, see this. We have, in the meanwhile, to act far more with reference to the Church at large, than as connected with some individual Christians, who have been guided by influences which we deplore: we believe that intelligent Christians neither can, nor will, join in condemning us and charging us wrongfully. But *even if the Church* should be misinformed, and thus arrive at a wrong judgment, we remember that we have to do with the Church's Lord far more than even with the Church: His eyes are as a flame of fire; He searcheth the hearts and trieth the reins to give to every man according as his work is. To His righteous judgment we desire to commit ourselves,—

to remember the *grace* in which we have been met,
—to humble ourselves under His hand,—to seek to
grow in love to Him and all His people,—remember-
ing the hopes given us of that day when we shall
meet before the throne with *all* saints, and when the
present trials and oppositions will be amongst the
former things which have passed away.

I remain, Sir,

Your servant for Christ's sake,

S. P. T.

Plymouth, March 17, 1849.

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