

**Demonstration of Errors in the New Teaching
as affording opportunity for presenting the Truth.**

**13. HEAD OF THE BODY HELD ONLY IN
THE SENSE OF CHIEF**

It is with profound regret that one reflects on how disastrous a year, as far as slipping away from the truth was concerned, 1895 was. The sudden leap from sound teaching in 1894 to the crop of errors propounded in the next year, was just as if the late author of this System had fallen over a precipice. It was in 1895 that :

1. *Scripture* lost its true place, it being characterised as "legality" to want "It is written," or chapter and verse, for "doctrine" and "conduct."
2. The "title to die" *deliverance* was introduced.
3. The denial of *two natures* in the believer was declared.
4. *Union* was eliminated from the body, and
5. Head of the body was reduced to *Chief*.

Nor was this all, for in the following year 1896, there were quite as many, if not more. Is it serving any right or godly purpose for people to deliberately shut their eyes to facts like these? It is a very serious thing for those, who have to do with Him before whom all things are naked and open, to affect to ignore such an influx of unsoundness. God will have reality, so that treating it thus cannot be done with impunity. He will not be mocked by indifference to error that has so manifestly come to light. They will persist in denying what the late chief of the New Teaching *has* taught, thereby showing their own ignorance of his writings, while professing to be his followers, on the one hand, or, on the other, they try to defend the *error*, and do their utmost to make others believe it is truth!

What, however, more immediately concerns us, is the deplorable manner in which the Headships of Scripture are confused and mixed together, for this System as signally fails to discriminate between these, as it has done between the various Kingdoms, the different aspects of Eternal Life, the distinct phases of the Calling, or the seven stand-points of Justification. It has acquired for itself the strange peculiarity of lumping everything in a single indefinite—neither one thing nor another—kind of generalization, no matter what the subject, with little or no regard for rightly dividing the Word of Truth, or distinguishing things that differ, which is just a relapse into the confusion and obscurity of which we had more than enough elsewhere, and *out of* which we were thankful to be delivered.

Of Headships there are not a few in the Word of God, such as :

Headship of every Man, Headship of all principality and power,
Headship of race, Headship over all things,
Headship of New creation, Headship of the Corner,
Headship of wife like husband, Headship of the body, and
Headship or the heading up of all things in heaven and earth.

Christ is, of course, pre-eminent in all these (except the first, for in that connection, it is said, "The head of Christ is God"), that pre-

eminence, nevertheless, in no wise interferes with each Headship having its own specific character and dimensions. It is impossible to go into all these in this Paper. Readers will have to follow them out for themselves with open Bibles. At present we must confine ourselves to exposing the mixing up of three of these, namely, Head over all, Head of the body, and Head of every man.

No one disputes that there is a Headship in the sense of Chief. "Head over all things" means that. But to make such the same kind of Headship as "Head of the body" is to destroy the proper force of both. When Scripture means Head *of* the body, it says Head of the body, and when it means "Chief," it says Chief, or uses a word that means Chief; just as when it means "Head of every man," it says Head of every man. There is no excuse, therefore, for trying to make all these different Headships alike, and endeavouring to obliterate their distinctiveness, as this System has set itself to do. Listen to the following:—

"The next point is—the body having been formed by the Spirit—Christ is given the place of Head of the body, that is, Head in the sense of Chief. Suppose we take the figure of the human body in connection with the head, the moral idea connected with the head is direction, and Christ in taking the place of Head of the body, takes the place of Chief, &c. He gave Him Head over all, as Head or supreme." (Christ the Head and His body — the Assembly, pp. 8, 9.) 1895.

Head of the Body in the Sense of Chief

is repeated twice over in this quotation, and expressed in words that admit of no-equivocation. Head correlative with body is made to mean nothing more than *at the head of*, or Chief. Yet, "the figure of the human body is coolly brought in, when "Chief" was the only thought he had of a man's head, the sum of whose functions is pared down to the one single thing, "direction," which is misapplied to Christ's Headship of His *body*, the Church. In other words, when Scripture explicitly says "The Head from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered and knit together increaseth with the increase of God," that means, neither more nor less than Head in the sense of Director-General! Is there any "joint and band" relation in mere directorship? The very hinting at such a construction of Head (of a man's body) as to reduce it to Chief, when applied to Christ's Headship of His body, the Church, is to mock the intelligence of every sober Christian. Imagine the conception of the human body which the man can have, who sees nothing more in its "head" than the commander-in-chief over his troops, directing their movements or evolutions, the principal of a college over his students, or the chief of a system over his partizans! Is it gravely and purposely contended that this is the relation between Christ and the Church as the Head of His body contained in the mystery that had been hid in God, made known to Paul by revelation, and through him communicated by the Spirit to us in the Word? Is not a man's head of a piece with his body—indissolubly one with it? Does "Chief" convey any such close bond as that? No. It annuls the very thought of it. There is a vital organic connection between every part of the human body and its head which, taken merely in the sense of "Chief," would destroy the very existence

of, in short, could not be a man's body at all. You have only to move your little finger to demonstrate this to yourself. It is no good trying to evade the truth of this, by saying it is too material, for the *spiritual* bond is verily even closer and more real than the natural. Is there anything approaching such a tie as *that*, subsisting between a commander-in-chief and the soldiers over whom he is set? Is there a single soldier, much less his army, *united to the general*? This would be to overthrow, not to teach, the mystery. The Spirit of God uses the figure of a man's body to show that between Christ and His body, the Church, there exists as close a spiritual union as the bond that unites every part of the human frame, head, body, and limbs. If there is a difference, that formed by the Spirit is the more real, and do not allow the morbid dread of a false charge of materialism to cheat your soul out of the spiritual reality made known in the Word. How could it possibly be material, when the One *Spirit* is the bond of the union that makes the body of Christ what it is? The whole Christ (Head, body, and members) is as much a fact spiritually, as the unity of a man is naturally.

Though he speaks of it in words, does the author of this System "take the figure of the human body," or use that language for the purpose of inculcating and enforcing the blessed truth conveyed by the metaphor? By no means. The only use he makes of it is to explain it away, and tell you that "Christ, in taking the place of Head of the body, takes the place of Chief," that is to say, neither head nor body in any true sense, according to the figure, is held at all, and you find a deception has been practised on you. Another figure altogether, namely, that of a chief and his clan, is insinuated under cover of the human body, which empties it of its real meaning, and deprives you of the substance, leaving only the shadow. Thus the wondrous truth of the Head in its relative to body acceptation "is morally idealised" out of existence, slyly substituting in its place that of a Director-in-chief, whose sole office, according to the citation made, is "direction." Unquestionably, one of the things a man's head does is to *direct*, but is that all his head is for? Besides, the head of a man's body when it exercises the function of "direction," is in living union with every part of that which it directs. Is that the sort of direction which a head in the sense of chief gives?

Then, is it fair to try and make J.N.D. a party to their own disgraceful reduction of Head of the body to Chief in defiance of all he has written to the contrary? No one moderately acquainted with his teaching, oral or written, could dare to entertain a thought so unworthy, in face, too, of the well-known fact, that it was seeing the Head of the body, not as Chief, but as Head relative to body, and his own union with that Head on high, which first led him to the apprehension of that great truth. None knew better than he that no one is united to Christ as Chief, and that there is no real present union to Him at all except in the same sense as my head is related to my body. For the sake of those who have not access to his writings, we will let him speak for himself. This is what he said:—

"So also is Christ—Christ, for the church is Himself, His body. The identification of the body with its HEAD is expressed in a remark.

able manner by the use of this word." "Christ is the *Head* of a body, the members of which are the members of Christ." "The Colossians were in danger of losing sight of the close union with the *HEAD* of the body, Christ." (Coll. Writings, J.N.D., Vol. i. Doct. pp. 573, 580, 584.)

"The church is not solely composed of men. It has for its *HEAD*, Christ and the Holy Spirit is there and He it is, who makes its unity." "Take the unity of a man, in what does it consist? I speak of the unity of the body. Your unity consists only in good feelings in individuals. It is not that of which the Word tells us. And for empty words I will not consent to give up the Word of my God, and the the body of which Christ is the *Head*." (Eccl. Vol. ii., pp. 224-6).

Again, in connection with the confounding of *Head* with *Representative* just as this New Teaching does with *Chief*, he asked :

"Which? *Head* or *Representative*? The two ideas are totally distinct. As *HEAD*, we are one with Him, members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones—part of Himself. There is no representation, we are part of Himself. If He *REPRESENTS* us, He is there instead of us, for us. Thus, in Hebrews, he appears in the presence of God *for* us, because *union* and *Headship* are not contemplated. And this is confusion as to the whole point in question." (Doct. Vol. iv., p. 343).

Then, in an article entitled "Scriptural Unity and Union," he said : "Those in whom the Spirit of God dwells are really united to Christ by the Holy Ghost, are members of His body, who, as Man, is exalted to the right hand of God." "Church union is union of members to Christ the *Head* in heaven." "If He went not away the Comforter would not come, showing clearly the place Christ must come into, as Man, before we could be united to Him, He the *HEAD*, and we His body." "True *union* is with Christ the *HEAD* formed by the Holy Ghost come down from heaven consequent on His being glorified as Man." (Doct Vol. VII., pp. 468, 472, 485, 489.)

Further, "the whole ground work of the New Testament, and the truth taught in it, is that Christ, though a true man, was alone until He accomplished redemption; and that then, when He was glorified, we are in Him, united to Him, by the Holy Ghost, He the *HEAD* and we the members. John gives us our being in Him individually; Paul also our *corporate union* with Him the *HEAD*, as living members of His body, He, the *HEAD*, being glorified on high." (Doct. Vol. VIII., p. 302.)

Again, "Till Christ ascended, there was no *HEAD* in heaven for the body to be united to. You would have had a body without a head."

"Thus it is distinctly the raised and ascended Man that is made *HEAD* of the body, and set over all things. There was no such man till the ascension, and thus union loses all its reality, the church all true existence, where it is set up by man's imagination before Pentecost. We are members of His body." (Doct. Vol. ix., p. 528).

This is ample from the Collected Writings; we will give a quotation from the Synopsis :

"Thus the Assembly, His body is His fulness. It is, indeed, He who fills all in all, but the body forms the complement of the *HEAD*. It is He who fills the universe with His glory, but the *HEAD* is not isolated, left, so to speak, incomplete as such, without its body. It is the body that completes it in that glory, as a natural body completes

the head : but not to be the head, or to direct, but to be the body of the head, and that the head should be the head of *its body*. (Synopsis, Vol. IV., p. 434).

One citation from the Letters :

“The great truth I find in Scripture on this point is that the coming down of the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost formed believers into one body, members of Christ, the HEAD in heaven. The vital truth is the personal presence of the Holy Ghost, baptising into one body united to the HEAD.” (Letters, Vol. II., p. 245).

Plain statements like these make foolish the attempt to say J.N.D. did not hold and teach Christ as Head relative to body in the sense of a man’s head indissolubly in union with his body. There is nothing approaching to Head in the sense of Chief in any of these explicit declarations.

But, this is not all, for nothing could more distinctly show how hard pressed this System is for some plausible excuse to justify such a wholesale departure from the truth of the church as the body of which Christ is the Head, than the fact that they are obliged to catch at the straw of

J.N.D.’s French Translation,

which has not only been misapprehended but misrepresented on the point at issue. Because, in making a French Translation of the New Testament from the original Greek, J.N.D. rightly used for Christ’s Headship of His body, the Church, the word in the French language which is derived from the Greek for “head,” namely, *Chef*, in preference to the other French word, *tête*, some person or persons, deceived apparently by the similarity of the letters, actually sought to make out that (like F.E.R.!) J.N.D. meant Head in the sense of Chief, in the teeth of all his published writings. Whoever may be responsible for setting the notion afloat, it has been eagerly seized upon here, and capital made out of it all over Australia to delude simple souls. Picture to yourself the spectacle of, not brothers only, but sisters, who know neither French nor Greek, zealously plying this French Translation argument and, with the assurance of expert linguists, too—playing off on the simple in substance the following syllogism (yea, from premise even to conclusion), namely :—“There are two words in the French for “head,” J.N.D. used *chef* in his French translation ; if he had meant “head” proper, he would have chosen the other word *tête*, therefore, he must have held “head” only in the sense of Chief.” No wonder the innocent listeners are awe-struck in the presence of such logic, and fall easy victims to the special pleading, not knowing that the deduction is a fallacy as far as J.N.D. is concerned, and the “therefore” a false one, as the many quotations already given from his writings amply prove. Indeed, the history and contents of the Synopsis ought to have prevented the currency of such a mistaken notion, for it was originally written in French, and had to be translated into English. Do you find “chief” given there as the translation for *chef*? No. It is “head.” You have only to read the last two volumes of it to see.

That there are two words for “head” in French is undisputed. It is the misuse of them we deplore. The word *têt* was the French anatomical term for the skull, and *tête* is the skull with the brain

inside it, hence a man's head, with a host of adapted meanings. But, where Christ as Head of His body, the Church, is in question, a careful translator from the Greek would choose, not the feminine noun *tête*, but the masculine noun *chef*, of Greek derivation, and that is precisely what J.N.D. did, because (however now modified in modern French) *chef* did mean "head" like a man's *originally*, and does so now *etymologically*, in which latter sense Mr. D. has told us himself he used it. Guided, no doubt, of God, he has actually left on record that which demolishes this groundless figment of somebody's imagination, and makes what he *did* mean indisputable.

Replying, in French, to an attack in Geneva, J.N.D. said:—

"What says the Word on this subject? Ephesians i. 22. This passage gives us the idea of the grand result in the counsels of God; namely, *all things* subject to Christ who had created them, and the church united to Him, as a body of which He is the HEAD; the body being thus the accomplishment of the HEAD, who could not remain without the body."

This was written in French, and the word used for "Head" here was *chef*, just as in the French Translation of the New Testament, but there was no thought of rendering it "Chief" when translating it into English, but emphatically "HEAD." Nor is this all, for, in order to guard against the very misunderstanding and misapprehension now being palmed off on the credulous, J.N.D. took the precaution to explain:

"The French, the modern French at least, hardly gives this idea, because the word *chef* in the acceptance of *head* is grown obsolete. Taking *chef* in the etymological meaning of *head*, the sense is clear: head (*chef*) over all things to His body which completes the HEAD to form a whole." (Eccl. Vol. II., p. 154).

This sets the matter entirely at rest, for there is no mistake as to the kind of Head he meant by *chef* in its etymological signification, and the sense in which he used it, *viz.*, "HEAD, which body completes to form a whole."

"He is the Head of the Body, the Church."

No question about *chef* and *tête* or any French Translation whatever can decide this matter. The Spirit of God did not write in French but in Greek, so the appeal must be made to that as final, and when this is done, there is not the slightest doubt that the Greek word for "head" means head, and that "head of the body" means head like the head of a man. Though we have its equivalent in Corinthians, and especially in Ephesians over and over, yet the exact expression "the Head of the body" occurs only in Col. i., where it means that and only that, "Head" not being used for anything else in the Chapter. So careful is the Spirit to preserve its true meaning and prevent its being mistaken for any other kind of head, that even when He has to speak of "Chief" He employs another word altogether, namely, "Firstborn," reserving the term "head" entirely for "the Head of the body, the church." He will not so much as give occasion for the spoiling of its Divine force by using it for any other thing in that first of Colossians. The Spirit will not have it confounded with aught else. It is, there-

fore, a culpable violation of the God-breathed language of Scripture to say that Head of the body is in the sense of *Chief*. Head relative to *body* never means that anywhere in God's Word.

One of the Headships in Scripture undoubtedly is Head in the sense of Chief, such as in the expression "Head over all things," but *things* are not united to anyone as we are to Christ, and "over" defines the *character* of the Headship. Christ is not Head *over* the Church, as His body, which would be the nullification of the whole truth of the mystery as this System really does by presuming to alter Head *of* the Body to Chief, which is Head *over*, not the church, but "all things." The two are perfectly distinct, and there is no excuse for misconceiving the one Headship for the other. Mark, too, the care taken by the Spirit to avoid any pretext for this. Once He has used the word "head" for Headship *over*, as in Eph. 1., he refrains from repeating it again in the verse, lest it should be misused, but, instead, speaks in such emphatic terms of the *body*, and of *its* being *His* fulness or *complement*, as to render mistake impossible respecting the *kind* of Headship that body is relative to, or what character of *Head* it is that needs a *body* for its complement.

Head of every Man correlated with Body.

This came in the following year 1896, among other things :

"I think the Apostle is coming on to the ground of devotional exercises, and takes up that point in connection with Christ the Head of every man."

"I venture to say one word with regard to (1 Cor.) Chapter xi., that it brings in the Head, the real bond of unity."

'Chapter xi. gives us the Head, and Chapter xii. the body, that which is here in the power of the Spirit.' (Weston Notes, pp. 89, 92.)

Is it possible that anyone, alive to the force of words, could take such a meaning out of it? There is no Headship of Christ in 1 Cor. xi. except "the Head of every man is Christ," which has nothing whatever to do with the "real bond of unity" as alleged. There is no unity about it. Nobody is united to Christ as Head of every man, and to say that "Chapter xi. gives us the Head, and Chapter xii. the body," is an outrageous perversion of Scripture as to both Chapters, the "Head" of Chapter xi. having no connection whatever with the "body" of Chapter xii. You have only to read 1 Cor. xi. 3, to perceive the utter groundlessness of such a supposition, which no man of sober intelligence could entertain for an instant. In fact, it does sorely tax one's patience to be obliged even to expose so palpable a distortion of the plain terms of God's Word. What does it say? "But I would have you know that the head of every man is Christ, and the head of the woman is the man, and the head of Christ is God." "The head of every man is Christ" is as true of the most wicked *man* as it is of the most godly, and does not include any *woman*, for "the head of the woman is the *woman*," not Christ, in this connection. It is not a Headship relative to body at all, nor does it apply to women but exclusively to men. The headship of woman in this sense is the *man*. She does not come under the Headship of every *man* spoken of here. Hence, to misapply it in the manner shown in these quotations would shut woman out from the privileges of Chapter xii. altogether, no less than destroy the very meaning of "body."

The founder of this System's definition of Headship is "The idea of Headship is pre-eminence," and thus the distinctive features of all the Headships in the Word are lost in the general vagueness of one single common "pre-eminence idea," regardless of what specifically characterises each several kind. But, in the Headship referred to here, that theory is upset, because Christ is not looked at as pre-eminent in the upward steps of this ladder, the top of which is God. It is the order of *representative power* ascending to God as supreme, so that the head of the woman is the *man*, the head of every *man* is *Christ*, and the head of Christ is *God, i.e.*, as to the relative place He took as man, for, as God, Christ is *coequal*.

It is not, however, only that a wrong meaning is given to "Head of every man," and that it is taken out of its context and coupled with the "body" of Chap. XII., but it has, besides, been

Confounded with Headship of Race.

and read into the latter portion of Rom. v., where the two federal Heads, Adam and Christ, are treated of. Now, though Christ is pre-eminent, being the *First-born*, Headship of race does not consist in pre-eminence. The essential thing in Head of a race is *derivation*, hence the importance of assigning to each its proper place. We do not cite the examples, because that is not the subject of this Paper, but readers will have no difficulty in finding it in the *New Teaching* writings.

J.N.D. was very severe on this unfair and misleading way of treating God's Word, what he called "employing the expression of a Scriptural truth to turn aside a soul from the true force of that truth," and denounced it thus:—

"I do not hesitate to say that it is immoral to employ such expressions in order to delude others on subjects of which the Word of God speaks, by the apparent use of the terms it employs. What I call immoral is to make use of gracious and sentimental words to lead the heart of Christians to attach a meaning to words which are used to express Christian truths, for the very purpose of excluding these truths, by letting the deluded soul think that it is in possession of all that Scripture teaches by these words." "If the words of men take from me the truth of God, the sweeter they are, they are the worse, and more deceitful." "The effect of this is to draw persons away, without the soul perceiving it, from the thought of God on the subject of unity, whilst it supposes that it possesses that truth, because, in speaking to them of it, use has been made of the very terms meant to communicate it." (Eccl. Vol. II., p. 216-8).

These words are as seasonable as they are weighty, and as suitable for this present moment as when written more than fifty years ago; for in this *New Teaching* not anything stands now for what it used to do. The words are still employed, but completely emptied of the force given them in Scripture. "Head" does not mean Head, "body" does not mean body, and "members" do not mean members. "Christ" does not mean Christ, and a meaning has to be invented for that, so as to make it square with the system, a something with Christ abstracted from it. The fact is, you would not know your own "head" or your own "body," or that your body was *joined* to your head, or that you had any "members" in the sense of *limbs*, after reading what this System teaches if you believed what it says! How can sober *Christian men* be taken in by the like of this?

W.S.F.