

TRUTH FOR THE TIME.

No. 3.

A REFUTATION OF
FALSE DOCTRINES

AMONGST A SECTION OF THE CHRISTIANS COMMONLY KNOWN AS
BRETHREN.

BY E. J. THOMAS.

" Truth is fallen in the street . . . Yea, truth faileth ; and he that departeth from evil maketh himself a prey : and the Lord saw it, and IT DISPLEASED HIM THAT THERE WAS NO JUDGMENT." Isaiah 59 : 14,15.

MELBOURNE :

ROBERT BELL, 15 ERICA STREET, PRAHRAN.

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Notes on the Breaking of Bread, by T. Willey. London: G. Morrish.

Food for the Faithful. Dates and Pages as quoted.

Synopsis of the Books of the Bible, by J. N. Darby.

Letters of J.N.D.

Six Lectures on Fundamental Truths connected with the Church of God, by W. Kelly. London, W. H. Broom, 1865.

The Assembly of God; or the All-sufficiency of the Name of Jesus, by C.H.M. London, G. Morrish.

Paul's Doctrine, by F. G. Patterson.

The Numerical Bible. A Revised Translation and Commentary. By F. W. Grant. New York, Loizeaux Brothers.

NOTE—In giving quotations large type not in the original, is occasionally used to draw the reader's attention to special parts.

Scriptural quotations are sometimes taken, partly or wholly, from the New Translations.

PREFACE TO FIRST EDITION.

EDIFICATION MORE THAN CONTROVERSY is the object of this pamphlet ; and the writer is encouraged by recollecting how large a part of the New Testament is occupied with confuting errors. Some of the most precious revelations which we possess, have come to us through the occasion of controverting evil doctrine or practice. Instances of this are :—

The interesting details of the Resurrection in 1 Corinthians 15 ;

The doctrine of the Lord's Supper in 1 Corinthians 11 ;

The order of events at the Lord's coming in 1 Thessalonians ; and

The prophetic instruction about the Antichrist in 2 Thessalonians.

Paul's epistles to the Galatians, Colossians, and Timothy ; the epistles of John and Jude ; and the second epistle of Peter, are all illustrations of the same thing. Even thus, does God graciously turn evil into good for His children, and make all things work together for good, to those who love Him.

It is with a view to profit, therefore, that in the following pages, the writer, while seeking to expose a few of the insidious errors which are abroad, has not hesitated to enter, at some length, upon the positive side of truth, not stopping at the mere negation of error. It will be a matter for thankfulness if the result should be, that some of the Lord's beloved ones who desire to be faithful to Him, are confirmed in the truth or delivered from false doctrine.

SEPTEMBER, 1900.

PREFACE TO SECOND EDITION.

The first edition of "TRUTH FOR THE TIME" being exhausted, another is now issued with thankfulness to God for the blessing that has attended the first, and prayer that He will similarly use His own truth in the second.

There is so much new matter in the present publication that it is really more than a new edition of Nos. 1 and 2, and is therefore named "Truth for the Time No. 3,"—so as to both connect with, as well as distinguish from, the previous issues.

It was never anticipated that "Truth for the Time" would have had such wide circulation as it has, and hence the first edition included some personal matters, which, being of only local interest, are now omitted, and the title of the work is modified accordingly.

Opportunity is also taken to strengthen and elaborate several parts of the pamphlet: particularly is this the case with the chapter on the "One body" as the "ground of gathering;" and with that relating to the Lord's Supper. A lengthy note is also added as an appendix to Chapter III., which it is hoped may aid some in acquiring a clearer understanding of "THE WORD" as a name or title of our Lord. To the last chapter also,—*"Duty of Christians as to False Doctrine,"*—several new pages are added.

There is not however, in the present issue the smallest alteration of the position or view, as to the doctrines discussed: in other words, the only altera-

tions now made are in the direction of strengthening the original edition.

CHRISTIANS AMONGST "BRETHREN" are earnestly asked to give serious and godly consideration to the representations of the last chapter, on the duty of Christians as to False Doctrine.

Some may desire to see what can be said against "Truth for the Time." In an appendix to the present edition, therefore, will be found the only answer which has been attempted; and also the rejoinder of the writer of the pamphlet. This was originally issued as "Truth for the Time, No. 2." The omissions from this, marked by asterisks, are merely of the local and personal matters already referred to.

CAULFIELD, MELBOURNE,

AUSTRALIA,

DECEMBER, 1901.

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INTRODUCTION.

This paper does not attempt to deal with a title of the errors of the new school of doctrine which has arisen amongst so-called "Brethren." That would require a volume. It is here sought however, to warn beloved saints against the spurious doctrines that are abroad, by exposing a few specimens under the search-light of Holy Scripture.

"BRETHREN" ORIGINALLY AND "BRETHREN"
TO-DAY.

Besides refuting from Scripture the errors in question, it is also sought to shew, by ample quotations, that the teachings of early "Brethren" are not the doctrines of these Brethren to-day. This is important; for there are many Christians not with so-called Brethren, who yet frankly acknowledge indebtedness to their writings. Such should be notified that those associated in fellowship with Mr. Raven are quite changed from what the early "Brethren" were; for the latter were distinguished, not alone by devotedness of life and walk, but also by the rigorous fidelity to Scripture, of their teachings. It is the object of this pamphlet to demonstrate two points, *viz.*:—That the doctrines in question are:—

1. Opposed to Holy Scripture: dangerous and corrupt.
2. Entirely different from the original teachings of "Brethren."

This latter point indeed is now boldly avowed. At first, the idea of changing the doctrines held by "Brethren," was concealed or denied; but in Mr. Raven's American "Notes," is found the following:—

"Ecclesiasticism, standing, ground, AND SUCH IDEAS *have almost ruined us.*"*

PAGE 34.

* See "Notes of Readings and Addresses" in America, "Revised by F.E.R." Any one desiring to see these teachings faithfully compared with the Word of God should read "A Few Remarks on Recent Doctrines" by Mr. F. G. Burkitt of Dublin (2d. by post) and "Retracings of Truth" by Mr. F. W. Grant of New York (11d. by post)—both are to be had of Mr. R. Bell, 15 Erica Street, Prahran. They are of sterling value.

This, is the language of contempt, in which the holy and scriptural doctrines recovered for the Church of God are rejected. To my mind, it is definite apostasy from the Truth,—open abandonment of the doctrines and ground hitherto held by “Brethren.” Let it be well understood by our friends of the surrounding denominations, who have profited by the pure teachings of early “Brethren,” that “SUCH IDEAS” are now retracted by the section which follows Mr. Raven.

RESPONSIBILITY OF ENGLISH “BRETHREN.”

Though the errors here dealt with, are prevalent amongst the largest section of “Brethren” in England and the Colonies, it should be known that they have scarcely any existence amongst the meetings of continental Europe. With Brethren in foreign parts, it is proverbial that all the divisions amongst “Brethren” have had their birth in England: and the “Brethren” in France, Switzerland, Germany, Spain, etc., have not swerved from the faithful Word as they had received it.

Thus, while those Anglican “Brethren” who follow Mr. Raven, rely on a numerical majority amongst themselves, it should not be overlooked that, outside English countries, the position is reversed. In foreign parts the preponderance is, I believe, the other way—not that numbers should weigh with the Christian: the question is, who have the Word of God with them, not who have a majority. This therefore is mentioned, only because it seems apparent that the Brethren in question are encouraging themselves, not “in the Lord,” but in the number of their host.

THE GREAT ASIAN DEFECTION: A TYPE.

Referring to the parallel drawn in Chapter VI, between the work of Mr. Darby, and that of the great Apostle Paul, another point of analogy is observable which has an important bearing on the responsibility of English “Brethren.” It is, between Asia then, of which Ephesus was the capital, and England now.

Asia (the Roman province) is in Scripture, the

most characteristic scene of Paul's labours. For three years he dwelt in Ephesus, and it was from there that all Asia heard the word of the Lord (Acts 19: 10; 20: 31). Church truth in its highest aspect is found in the Epistle to the Ephesians; and the seven Churches of Asia are selected to give, in the Apocalypse, the prophetic outline of the Church's history. Ephesus comes first, as being foremost in privilege, original condition, and responsibility. Thus Asia has in Scripture, special prominence in the Testimony of the Lord, and special identification with Paul and his doctrines.

But it was there also,—where high truth had been *par excellence* brought out—that departure was pre-eminently manifested. It was to the Elders of Ephesus that that prophetic warning, which we have in the 20th of Acts, was given, in which the Apostle says that grievous wolves would enter in, not sparing the flock; and also that of their own selves should men arise speaking perverse things. The Asian tendency to tamper with doctrine was perceptible to the Apostle's eye, when, as he says in the First Epistle to Timothy:—

“I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus . . . that thou mightest charge some that they teach no other doctrine” (1 TIM. 1: 3)

From this expression—“charge some” it is clear that the Apostle had his mind on the dangerous ones already. But, alas! the flock was carried away by those mischievous active leaders; and so we find Paul, in the Second Epistle to Timothy, declaring, out of the grief of his heart:—

“This thou knowest, that ALL THEY WHICH ARE IN ASIA be turned away from me; of whom are Phygellus and Hermogenes” (2 TIM 1: 15).

Now, the analogy is this. Granting that God in His grace has given a special revival of His truth in these last days—has not England been the favoured centre of this?—the pre-eminent scene of its exhibition, even as Asia was of the Pauline labours? Being contemporary history, this scarcely requires proof: one need only mention that it is in England that the ponderous “Collected Writings” of Mr. Darby have been published; next, and only second, come those of Mr. Kelly, then of Bellett, Mackintosh, Stanley, Trotter

and many more. It was from England, that the valuable recovered truths spread to other lands, through the labours of Mr. Darby, Mr. Wm. J. Lowe, and others too numerous to mention.*

So far, the analogy between Asia and England is one to rejoice in; but it does not end here. That which has been the scene of the greatest display of light, has become, like Asia of old, first to swerve from the Testimony—foremost in departure from the truth delivered. As Paul had his Phygellus and Hermogenes,—his Hymenæus and Philetus also,—so there were prominent men whom Mr. Darby had frequently to check and correct. Mr. Stoney's magazine, called "A Voice to the Faithful," while claiming to be something superior and extra spiritual, was repeatedly the vehicle of error, served up in a seductive form, but which the penetration of Mr. Darby was able to detect, and his spiritual vigour to oppose—as witness his tract "On the Misuse of Philadelphia, and the Delusion of Death to Nature," &c., &c. See also "Voice to the Faithful," vol. 13, pp. 154-160, where, Mr. Darby, after taking to pieces some high-flown teaching in an article entitled "The Heart of the Bride," printed in a previous number, concludes as follows:—

"I would only add that pretending to be Philadelphia is quite another thing from being Philadelphian, and tends directly to Laodiceanism of heart. *May the saints be kept in the simplicity that is in Christ.*

"Assuredly I can have no wish to weaken true devotedness to Christ, . . . but I have not found this the effect of this teaching, but rather *filling people with the thoughts of themselves and the wonderful new things they had got*, not a self-judging knowledge of Christ Himself . . . notice that in the summing up and guarding of the system found in the article I comment on, what is true is old, and what is new is wrong." (J.N.D.)

Thus there were those who, puffed up by intellectualism, were continually causing anxiety not only to Mr. Darby,

*Of course it will be understood that I do not wish to ignore the work in France, French-speaking countries, Germany, America, *et cætera*, with the missionary labour issuing thence. There has been blessed work there, precious devotedness and faithfulness too,—as there was also, elsewhere, than in Asia. What I would submit is that there is analogy between Asia and England,—both in reception and giving up truth, as shown above.

but to many a faithful watchman who stood with him.

Since his decease however, intellectualism has taken licence—clever talkers pose before large audiences, which swallow wholesale, as wonderful wisdom, that which is part nonsense and part poison, with just sufficient truth mixed in, to enable it to pass with persons whose senses are not exercised to discern good and evil. The result is that the whole face of the testimony of “Brethren” in this sphere has been changed. Purity of doctrine is gone. A good deal of love may prevail, but it is not “love *in the truth*” (2 John 1). The transformation which has taken place is scarcely credible. It is as by magic—the Egyptian magic of Jannes and Jambres!

Thus then, if in Mr. Darby’s labours, I trace, however faint, a very blessed reflection of those of Paul, I see also in the large Ravenite Association, the mournful antitype of that immense concourse of Asia, all of whom had turned away from the great witness for God in their day.

Perhaps this view is questioned? Then let me say that in considering the application of some passages of Scripture a great mistake is often made in the opinion we form of the persons there mentioned. When reading of Phygellus and Hermogenes, we perhaps picture grossly bad men, whom no proper-minded Christian would have anything to say to. But it is probable that they were well-spoken and very acceptable Christian gentlemen, whom all God’s people in Asia stood by and supported. They must have had piety, or they could not have influenced Christians; probably also, charming facility of speech, and a great range of scriptural knowledge, with the Pauline phraseology flowing glibly from their lips: they may have had real gift, and probably been sincere too, for Scripture speaks of such as deceiving and *being* deceived: all this they may have been, and yet the instruments of Satan—the well chosen instruments of Satan!

Think not either, that the Christians of Asia had given up Christianity. Not at all! That was, with them, flowing in spring-tide. True, they did not quite

go with all that Paul said. New teachers had arisen; and Phygellus and Hermogenes had shown them many things that they had not seen before! Phygellus was "a wonderful teacher," and such "a bright Christian." Paul, now, was not there to trouble them about doctrine: and though Timothy might be charging people to "teach no other doctrine," he was easily brushed aside—no one heeded him. Really they were never so happy as now—such harmony prevailed: why all Asia was united! Of course they praised Paul (they did not dare to do otherwise) but they had turned away from him all the same. That, at least, is their dark record on the inspired page—no matter how happy and self-satisfied amongst themselves!

Reader, what think you of this outline of the great Asian defection? Does it strike you as very like something in England just now? It does me! It appears to me that the Asian defection of 2nd Timothy is a solemn type of deepest significance, made luminous by the light of to-day's history. The 2nd Epistle to Timothy makes a definite prophecy, that in the last days there would be difficult times—clearly, something special, just ere the closing of the Church period. (2 Tim 3: 1) Have we not fallen upon those times?—the new and peculiar difficulty being, the corruption of that especial testimony for our time, which God had raised up?

However, side by side with the prophetic utterance in question, the Spirit of God places the record of the swerving of the whole province of Asia, from that bright testimony so faithfully sustained by Paul. If the one Scripture has a special application to the present day, then surely the other has also. It is for the spiritual mind to discern the voice of God to ourselves in such Scriptures. "He that hath an ear let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches."

READER, ARE YOU WITH THE ASIAN MULTITUDE OR WITH PAUL? Are you ensnared by the deceits of Phygellus and Hermogenes, or holding fast the faithful Word as you have been taught?

CLASSES OF LABOURERS.

Pursuing a little further, the analogy between the Pauline Mission, and that of Mr. Darby, it is very solemn to notice the caution which the Apostle gives, as to building upon his foundation. He says :—

“As a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. BUT LET EVERY MAN TAKE HEED HOW HE BUILDETH THEREUPON. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble ; every man's work shall be made manifest : for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire ; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is.

If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward.

If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss : but he himself shall be saved ; yet so as by fire.”

(1 COR. 3 : 10-15)

Here we have two classes :—1. The man whose work will abide. 2. The man whose work will be burned, but who will himself be saved. The passage however gives another class whose fate is more awful ; and the Apostle introduces this with the preface :—“Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you ?” (verse 16.) Of the third class, he says :—

“If any man corrupt (N. Transl.) the temple of God HIM SHALL GOD DESTROY.” (verse 17)

Serious words ! when we consider that each of these three classes has probably its representatives in the Christian workers around us to-day.

We may notice also,—that Scripture recognises a distinction between the historical characters of 2nd Timothy,—a scripture which glows with new light as the day grows darker :

PHYGELLUS AND HERMOGENES appear there, simply as having prominence,—presumably leaders—in the Asian host which deserted Paul :—but,

HYMENÆUS AND PHILETUS have the additional character of corrupting by false doctrine.

And it is in connection with the latter two—the teachers of false doctrine—that the Apostle makes the significant

statement—"the Lord knoweth them that are His." He will not say that they were not the Lord's : neither does He say that they were : the Lord knew.

What a solemn warning off of those who would build in their trash upon the Pauline foundation, and lead the people of God astray by false doctrine! Should it not make every teacher tremble as to the character of his workmanship? There were the Hymenæus and Philetus of that day, the Diotrefes too,—with many others, named and unnamed, who were counterworking the Apostles. And if, in the close of the Church-period, God has unearthed for us, truth which had been buried for centuries : if He has given it to His people once again, in beauteous simplicity and purity, will He lightly regard the impious work of now defacing it? If the heretics and corrupters of early Asia stand condemned on the page of inspiration, how shall fare their successors of our own day? Our most sacred doctrines are being corrupted and destroyed ; they are broken in pieces as with axes and hammers—so that we may indeed adopt the prophetic lament :—

"Thine adversaries roar in the midst of Thy place of assembly ;
 . . . And now THEY BREAK DOWN ITS CARVED WORK
 ALTOGETHER, WITH HATCHETS AND HAMMERS."
 (Ps. 74 : 4. 6. N.Transl.)

CHRISTIAN ! ARE YOU TAKING PART IN THIS WORK OF DEMOLITION ? or are you looking on in apathy while others destroy the beautiful carved work ? Or are you in another case :—Knowing right well truth from error, but, shivering from cowardice, afraid to take a stand or speak a word for Christ ? Remember the Master's words :—

"Behold I come quickly ; and My reward is with Me, to give every man ACCORDING AS HIS WORK SHALL BE."
 Rev. 22 : 12.

POSTSCRIPT.

MR. RAVEN'S AMERICAN TOUR.

"Notes of Readings and Addresses at Meetings held in the United States and Canada, October 1898. Revised by F.E.R."
 Title, on cover—"Readings and Addresses in the United

States and Canada. F.E.R.", and on back "Readings and Addresses F.E.R."

This publication I have just seen for the first time, having in vain applied for it at the local Tract Depot of these Brethren. It has been ably criticised by Mr. F. W. Grant and Mr. F. G. Burkitt; but a few points may be added here for the consideration of the thoughtful Christian.

I.

Mr Raven states in the book:—

"It used to be commonly said, I know that I have got eternal life. Why? Because the scripture says 'He that believeth hath everlasting life.' I say you have thus the faith of eternal life, but that does not prove that you have the thing itself." Page 54.

We have here a man, a mere created being, actually contradicting the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. To be detected in opposition to Scripture is serious enough; but this is more, for the particular scripture so lightly set aside, is nothing less than a personal statement of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Lord Jesus says:

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life."

John 5: 24.

and Mr. Raven declares:—

"I say you have thus the faith of eternal life, but that does not prove that you have the thing itself." (p. 54.)

The very form of the sentence is remarkable. The Lord says "I say" and Mr. Raven gives us *his* "I say." It would be too awful to suppose that this antithesis was designed; but it is there nevertheless. Designed or undesigned, the speaker has been led into it, certainly not by the Holy Spirit, and is thus found directly traversing an averment of the Lord Himself.

Further: the statement which is thus denied is one of the most emphatic in scripture. Notice, first, that the Lord begins with "VERILY, VERILY." Is it not almost incredible that a mortal man should dare to trifle with what follows,—to make variations on its meaning? Observe, secondly, that the Lord imposes the majesty of

His own personage upon what He is about to utter :—

“Verily, verily, I SAY unto you,”—

Who is the “I” who here speaks? Jehovah Himself! The same who could say “Before Abraham was, I AM,” here declares :—“I SAY unto you;” and elsewhere states :—

“Heaven and earth shall pass away : but MY WORDS SHALL NOT PASS AWAY.” (Mark 13 : 31)

What a situation we have arrived at !—the Lord saying, with all this solemnity, that the believer has eternal life, and one coolly contradicting Him !

II.

The next thing to be noticed is that the new doctrine is a denial of the Gospel. We have a blessed statement of the Gospel in the well-known words :—

“God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” John 3 : 16.

But that is now denied, as we have seen. Let those who dare to touch the sacred doctrine of the Gospel listen to this anathema :—

“Though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. (Gal. 1 : 8.)

The blow now aimed at the Gospel seems peculiarly diabolical. There is perhaps no text of Scripture that has been so much used to convey peace to anxious souls, as the 24th verse of the 5th chapter of John. It may safely be said that hundreds of thousands, have in recent times found peace, in believing the simple literal truth of that verse. They were overflowing with joy because they knew that they had eternal life. But according to Mr. Raven, they were quite under a delusion—and it follows that their “faith is vain!” In contrast with this teaching, take the following from Mr. Stanley’s well-known Gospel tract :—

“TWO THINGS WHICH GOD HATH JOINED TOGETHER.”

“Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from

death unto life.' (John 5: 24.)

"There are two things joined together in this verse. These two things man tries to put very far asunder. Read the verse again. Now what are those things? They are *believing* and *having*. As we have it in another place: 'He that *believeth* on Me *hath* everlasting life.'

"Sometimes a person will say, with great anxiety, 'I do believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. I am sure I trust in none else. I feel I am a lost sinner. I fully believe that the death of Jesus was the atonement for sin. I have no doubt that God raised Him from the dead. I know that it is only through the shedding of His precious blood that sins can be forgiven. But I cannot get to know that *I have everlasting life*'

"If this really is my reader's condition, if you have heard the words of Jesus—if you do really trust in Him alone then there is no question—there can, in that case, be no question whether you have everlasting life or not. I only ask, do you really trust alone in the finished work of the Lord Jesus? If so, I have no need to ask, have you everlasting life? If one of these things is true in you—namely, real faith in Christ,—I know the other is. You have everlasting life; for Jesus says, "It is most certain, it is most certain, I say unto you, he that believeth on Me hath everlasting life.' Yes, in one breath, Jesus joins these *two blessed things together*—BELIEVETH—HATH!

"BREAD CAST UPON THE WATERS, No. 5." BY C.S.

Which is the true? this blessed evangel of Eternal life, or its dark denial in Mr. Raven's teachings?

For further contrast with those poisonous teachings the reader is invited to peruse the following by Mr. A. C. Ord:—

"The testimony that distinguished brethren in early days is now being given up. The positive and distinct possession of eternal life, as the certain and conscious portion of the believer, was formerly known and held amongst us, and was the subject of public testimony, whilst other Christians were in doubt and uncertainty, and sought to find this certainty in their state or feelings or enjoyment—all of which are unable to give it, not being the sure word of God.

"Not only so, but the distinct presentation of Eternal Life to be received through the Son, as the result of the gift of God's Son (John 3: 16), or of believing in the Son of God (John 6: 40), or receiving the Word of the Son of God (John 5: 24), with *the immediate certainty of its possession* as the consequence of the reception of the Son of God (John 3: 36), has for fifty years marked the testimony which has been given and owned of God. This, moreover, was understood to be the divine object for which the Gospel of John was written. 'These things are written, that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that

believing ye might *have life* through His name.' (John 20: 31.) Whilst the Epistle was expressly written to believers to establish them in the certainty of what they had received, not as a matter of evidence within themselves, but as a divine testimony: 'If we receive the witness of men the witness of God is greater;' 'These things,' says the apostle, 'I have written to you that ye *may know* that ye *have* eternal life who believe on the name of the Son of God.' " (1 John 5: 13.)

FROM "THE GLORY OF THE PERSON OF THE SON OF GOD: HIS TITLE AS THE ETERNAL LIFE, AND THE CONNECTION OF THE BELIEVER WITH HIM AS SUCH." BY A. C. ORD.

And of these doctrines it is said that "Such ideas have almost ruined us!" But, in spite of Mr. Raven and his destructive band, let us retain our sweet stanza:

"Though the world's destruction low'rs,—
We are safe,—to Christ confided,
EVERLASTING LIFE IS OURS." (HYMN 16.)

III.

Notice the levity with which Scripture is treated. One of the chief points in the testimony of early "Brethren" was their jealous regard for the authority of Holy Scripture. But how are times changed when one reads the following:—

"It used to be commonly said, I know that I have got eternal life. Why? BECAUSE THE SCRIPTURE SAYS "He that believeth hath everlasting life." I SAY you have thus the faith of eternal life, but that does not prove that you have the thing itself." (p. 54.)

So that with Mr. Raven, Scripture has not much weight: what *he* says is to override what the Scripture says. Again:—

"Another brother asked me, 'Have you got eternal life?' I did not know how to answer it exactly, because HE SIMPLY MEANT *resting on a statement of scripture.*" (p. 107.)

No wonder that the speaker was baffled when met by the Word of God, for it is the sword of the Spirit. Has he never read that when Jesus met the Devil in conflict and overcame him, He did so, simply with "statements of Scripture?" And is then "a statement of Scripture," not enough to rest upon? What have we for the forgiveness of sins, but a "statement of Scripture?" What have we for the atonement; what for our

place in the glory, but "statements of Scripture?" What have we for Christ's resurrection, for His coming again,—yea for the entire faith of God's elect, but "statements of Scripture?" Alas! for the company that can tolerate such teachings. Alas! for those leaders who disrespect God's Word.

"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for *doctrine*, for reproof, for *correction*, for instruction in righteousness." (2 Tim., 3 : 16)

IV.

It would be a mistake to suppose that Mr. Raven is solely responsible for his own teachings, though it may seem strange to say so. The responsibility rests, in proportion, upon the audience which suffers such falsities without rebuking them. Large imposing meetings are a great snare. With such a host,—countenancing, encouraging, even flattering the speaker,—how strong he feels—the approval of such numbers seems to dispense with any need of testing the position by the word of God. But all is going to be tried before the Judgment-seat of Christ; *the word* will be the criterion there; and many that are first shall be last, and the last first. The teacher in question has not only been convicted of frequent clashing with Holy Scripture, but is now exhibited in direct antagonism with the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. Meanwhile let all who contribute to the flood of applause on which these errors float, have a care for their responsibility to Christ.

"Take heed *what* ye hear" - - - - Mark 4: 24
 "Take heed therefore *how* ye hear" - - - Luke 8: 18

V.

As to the subject-matter: Mr. Raven knows very little about Eternal life: he cannot speak upon it without blundering: he thinks it is something to be "*touched*," and appears to be in the condition of Nicodemus, a "Teacher in Israel," yet knowing not these things: his ignorance is extreme! That he has not eternal life himself, we know from his own

doctrine ; and if that is really so, experimentally, in his own case, it is not surprising that he thinks no one else has it. He *now* teaches that no believer has eternal life, but a pamphlet written in his defence, by Mr. Champney, contains the following :—

“I will here insert some questions put to Mr. Raven at a large meeting of Brethren at Ealing, and his answers as then given and afterwards approved by him.

Q. Have you said all believers have not eternal life ?

A. Every believer has. All babes, young men, and fathers have eternal life, as the gift of God.”

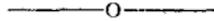
We thus have Mr. Raven at opposite poles of doctrine. At Ealing all believers have eternal life. In America the believer *has not* eternal life, and there is nothing but “a statement of Scripture,” forsooth ! to show that he has.

Finally, if this teacher is not, himself, instructed in the christian doctrine of eternal life, it follows that he must necessarily put forth his own notions,—the weavings of his own mind,—instead of God's revealed truth, and this indeed is what we find.

“The hungry sheep look up, and are not fed,
But, swol'n with wind, and the rank mist they draw,
Rot inwardly, and foul contagion spread :
Besides what the grim wolf with privy paw
Daily devours apace, and nothing said !”

The book under notice is, on many vital points,
A WICKED CONTRADICTION OF GOD'S BLESSED REVELATION
TO MAN.

CHAPTER I.

ERROR AS TO THE GROUND OF
GATHERING.

If any one should inquire what is the special distinction of the Christians commonly known as "BRETHREN," the proper answer would be that they were gathered on the ground of the Body of Christ.

That true Christians were, really, one in Christ, nearly all admitted before the rise of so-called "Brethren," but at the same time they remained attached to ecclesiastical institutions which, being national or sectarian in character, virtually denied the unity. What, however, distinguished the so-called "Brethren," what won and attracted Christians of every denomination from their sectarian enclosures, was the then new idea, that Christians should meet solely on the ground of the Body of Christ, owning only the name of the Lord Jesus to which they were gathered.

The controlling principle was that laid down by the Apostle Paul in Ephesians :—

"There is one Body and one Spirit." (Eph. 4 : 4.)

and, by ignoring any other ground than that "One Body," they felt that they were at least endeavouring, as exhorted in Eph. 4 : 3, to keep the unity of the Spirit.

THE ONE BODY THEN, AS THE GROUND OF GATHERING, was the grand distinguishing feature of the calling out of "Brethren" from the Denominations of Christendom : their speciality was not that they held liberty of ministry according to 1 Corinthians ; it was not that they aroused attention to the Lord's coming, deeply important though that work was ; it was not their development of the clear Gospel ; nor their restoring Prophecy to its proper and neglected place : it was neither one nor all

of these ; but it was, that for the first time since Apostolic days, Christians met together on the ground of the Church of God. The like was not to be found in Christendom : we need not refer to Popery, or the Greek Church ; but in Anglicanism, the basis was the Parish ; and in every form of Dissent it was some fragment of doctrine or some leader's name ; here however, it was the breadth of the Church of God,—the One Body of Christ : every member of the Body was received, his title was recognised : and reception then, was not "joining the Brethren," but simply the recognition that the individual received was a brother, and that those already gathered, rejoiced to give him his place, that which was his by right, at the Table of the Lord.* Thus they were—not the Body—but, locally, they represented it ; or, as it has been very happily phrased—they were an expression of the One Body.

* It should be well borne in mind, that those commonly called "Brethren," no more arrogate to themselves, the title of "THE BRETHREN," than they do that of "The Church." Jesus says One is your Master, and all ye are brethren (Matt. 23 : 8). The Brethren are to be found in every sect of Christendom, for everyone united to Christ is a Brother in Christ, however little he may acknowledge it. "*Brethren*" we are, but only a very small part of "The Brethren."

It is interesting to observe the different names by which the followers of Christ are designated in Scripture.

Amongst the Jews they were apparently known as the "sect of the NAZARENES." This term is used by Tertullus, speaking on behalf of the High Priest, as a known and recognised name, and apparently one of contempt (Acts 24 : 5).

Secondly. They were first called CHRISTIANS in Antioch,—which was the Gentile centre of Christianity, as Jerusalem was the Jewish. King Agrippa uses it familiarly when Paul is before him. "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian." "Christians," then, would seem to be a name conferred by the world (Acts 11 : 26, and 26 : 28), accepted and adopted, however, by the Spirit of God in 1 Peter 4 : 16, though in connection with outward testimony,— "If any man suffer as a Christian." It is a name of outward profession,—a profession which may be genuine or otherwise. A man is a Christian by baptism, or because he adopts Christianity as his religion : he is not a pagan, he is not a Jew, he is not a Mahomadan : he is outwardly a Christian, whether born again or not.

Thirdly. Amongst themselves it was—by far most generally—BRETHREN. For example :—

"the unbelieving Jews stirred up the Gentiles and made their minds evil-affected against *the brethren*" Acts 14 : 2.

This formed the originating principle of the so-called "Brethren." "It was this more than fifty years ago, brought me out of the Establishment," wrote Mr. Darby. (Letters, vol. III, p. 62 ; see extract appended to this chapter, page 29)

But this principle is now boldly denied ; and it is sought to place in opposition to it, the equally undoubted truth that believers are, or should be, gathered to the name of the Lord Jesus. This latter, no one disputes. As the Lord says in Matt. 18 : 20.

"Where two or three are gathered together unto My Name, there am I in the midst of them."

But there is scarcely a petty denomination in Christendom which does not claim the authority of that scripture. "Brethren" however, were distinguished from every sect, were defined as not being a sect themselves, by their being gathered ON THE GROUND OF THE CHURCH OF GOD : not that they assumed to be the

"certain men which came down from Judea taught <i>the brethren</i> , and said"	-	-	Acts 15 : 1.
"we came to Ptolemais, and saluted <i>the brethren</i> and abode with them one day"	-	-	Acts 21 : 7
"Erastus, the chamberlain of the city, saluteth you and Quartus, a <i>brother</i> "	-	-	Rom. 16 : 23.
"All <i>the brethren</i> greet you"	-	-	1 Cor. 16 : 20.
"Salute <i>the brethren</i> which are in Laodicea"	-	-	Col. 4 : 16.
"put <i>the brethren</i> in remembrance of these things"	-	-	1 Tim. 4-6.
"know ye that our <i>brother</i> Timothy is set at liberty"	-	-	Heb. 13 : 23.

This, be it observed, was not the brotherhood of man. In one sense,—a sense, however, of but feeble influence, all men are brethren, as descendants of Adam—this is merely relationship in the flesh ; and is practically abrogated by the division of men into nations at Babel.

Neither is the term "Brethren" a conventional one, of respect or affection within a private or semi-private association, such as the Freemasons. It is a far higher thing than this. "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God" (John 3 : 3). All—so born again—are partakers of a new nature. The brotherhood of such is a reality—they are born of God. It is not a social agreement to regard and treat one another as brethren : they *are* brethren as born of the Spirit. With all true believers, there is, no doubt, a practical, though, alas, but a faint acknowledgment of this—"for every one that loveth Him that begat, loveth him also that is begotten of Him" (1 John 5 : 1).

This love to all believers, is an evidence of the new birth : First. To ourselves :—"We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." (1 John 3 : 14). Secondly. To the world :—"By this shall all men know that ye

Church ; but that they were on that ground ; their fellowship was the fellowship of the One Body, according to 1 Corinthians :—

“The bread which we break, is it not the communion (fellowship) of the body of Christ? For we being many are one bread, and one body : for we are all partakers of that one bread.” (1 Cor. 10. 16-17.)

If the breaking of bread is the fellowship of the One Body, then obviously, the One Body is the ground of gathering. Some have taken the petty objection, that the literal expression “ground of gathering” is not found in Scripture. Such persons might equally well object that the word “Trinity” is not in Scripture,—though, of the glorious truth which it expresses, the Scriptures are full. But Ephesians tells us that “there is one body and one Spirit;” and 1 Corinthians tells us that christian fellowship is the fellowship of that Body.

are My disciples, if ye have love one to another.” (John 13 : 35.)

One of the points, in respect of which the so-called Brethren went back to the elemental form of Christianity, was the positive and formal recognition of the brotherhood of all possessing divine life,—of all, that is, born of God. It is to be feared that many have dropped down from this, to a mere party or sectarian sentiment which is not divine love at all. Neither is that divine love, which surrenders divine truth. Christian love is love “*in the truth; . . . for the truth's sake* which dwelleth in us, and shall be with us for ever.” (2 John 1.2.) It is, however, beautiful to recollect that it is *natural*, normal to the new nature, for the believer to love ALL OTHER BELIEVERS—NO MATTER HOW NAMED OR CALLED : it is against his nature not so to love ; he is then dominated by his old nature, not by the new.

Fourthly. Another term in use amongst Christians in Apostolic times was SAINTS. The confining of this term to persons of exceptional devotedness is one of the corruptions of Popery, and has resulted in the almost total disuse of the name in its proper sense. In Scripture it is a generic name for all God's people : thus :—

“As Peter passed throughout all quarters, he came down also to the <i>saints</i> which dwelt at Lydda”	- Acts 9 : 32.
“many of the <i>saints</i> did I shut up in prison”	- Acts 26 : 10.
“salute Philologus and Julia, . . . and all the <i>saints</i> which are with them”	- Rom. 16 : 15.
“as in all churches of the <i>saints</i> ”	- 1 Cor. 14 : 23.
“All the <i>saints</i> salute you, chiefly they that are of Caesar's household”	- Phil. 4 : 22.
“Salute all them that have the rule over you, and all the <i>saints</i> ”	- Heb. 13 : 24.

Fifthly. DISCIPLES is another name used in the Gospels and the Acts—but not nearly so frequently—it is not found in the Epistles.

Those however, who have adopted the new doctrinal fashion, seem unable to discern the distinction between the GROUND of gathering, and the CENTRE to which we are gathered. The centre of gathering we get in Matthew 18,—but the full doctrine of the Church, as the body of Christ, could not be developed until brought out by Paul, who was the special vessel of testimony concerning it. Hence, it is unintelligent to look for it in Matthew 18; and it is equally so, to take that scripture as the whole truth of the position of gathered saints to-day: for the latter, we must go to the full light of Paul's Epistles, where we find that the bread which we break is the communion of THE BODY. If therefore, the communion be less wide than the Body of Christ, it is the communion of a sect.

The breaking of bread in the midst of, say, the Wesleyan Methodists, is obviously not the communion of the body of Christ: I name them with Christian love and respect, and only *exempli gratiâ*: their fellowship, however, is that of the Wesleyan Denomination, not of the Church of God: and so as to any other denomination. But I must repeat,—what "Brethren" did, was to leave all sectarian cries and badges, and to come out to the name of Christ alone, on the broad ground of the One Body. That is what is meant by the One Body being the ground of gathering. And it was this holy revival of true christian unity *in practice* that proved so winning to spiritually-minded persons of all classes and parties. As against the true ground of gathering therefore, it avails nothing to say that the centre of gathering is the Lord Himself. That is not only admitted, it is earnestly maintained: but we must not reject the complement of that truth, derived from the fuller revelations of the Apostle Paul, that christian fellowship is the fellowship of the Body. (1 Cor. 10: 16-17.)

With much subtlety, it is urged as against the true ground of gathering, that we are not in Apostolic times; and that instead of the ground of the One Body, we have to take our place "with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart," according to 2 Timothy, 2: 22; those who do so, virtually forming a Christian remnant

amidst the corruptions of Christendom. That we are practically in the place of such a Remnant may be true. But all Remnants of God's People, all true Revival movements of which we have history in scripture, have been distinguished by fidelity to revealed truth—searching scripture and carefully carrying out its directions—and, as a paramount characteristic, by reverting to the original status of God's people. Thus, in a dark day of Israel's history, notwithstanding that the kingdom had been rent in twain, and that eight hundred false prophets were prophesying in Israel, Elijah yet built his altar of twelve stones : that is, he took the ground of all Israel before God. (1 Kings, 18 : 31). Similarly as regards the revival under Hezekiah : the king commanded that the burnt-offering and sin-offering should be offered, not merely for Judah, over which he was king, but "for all Israel." (2 Chronicles, 29 : 24). Illustrations might be multiplied.

It is always so. ' However dark the day ; however disheartened and oppressed may be God's people ; faith rises above all, and never abates one jot or tittle of the truth. It was so with the remarkable work of God, by which a company was gathered, mainly through His servant, Mr. Darby. The entire Body of Christ was recognised. They gathered indeed, to the name of the Lord Jesus—not however, as believers merely, but as members of the Body of Christ : they did not assume to be the Body, but were on that ground. If ever so devoted (and indeed they were) they did not meet as the devoted, but on the ground of the One Body. They might be intelligent and advanced Christians, yet did not meet as such, but on the ground of the Body, where there might be all degrees of attainment, all stages of growth or knowledge ; indeed, faults and failings ; the bright and the dull ; but, if members of Christ, and not denying it in their walk, they had a title to be there, and who dare refuse them ? This is the ground of the One Body ; anything else is sectarianism ; and they who say they are not on the ground of the One Body, simply proclaim themselves a sect. Yes ! we are indeed to "follow with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart ;" but purity of heart is not

manifested in corrupting God's truth, or in undermining those precious principles of His Word, which He has so blessedly recovered for the Church in these last days.

An important point involved in this doctrine is, that the ground of the One Body commands the obedience of every Christian. Not only is every Christian admissible there, but it is where every Christian ought to be: a sect has claims only upon its members; and only those who possess the qualifications which that sect has instituted as its standard, can claim admission. Such a standard may have been instituted with, really, a good intention—but if unauthorised by God's word—it is merely an offspring of human wisdom—which, in the things of God, acts only for mischief, no matter how well intended.

It has been said in answer to all this: "Oh! we hold the 'One Body' as much as ever." I reply, "In what way? All denominations hold the unity of Christians theoretically; but the point is, do you carry it out practically? Is that the foundation and principle of your meeting? Because if not, the company is a sect as much as any other."

As showing the doctrine until recently held on this subject, I quote the following from Mr Darby:—

"But the principle of scripture is as plain as possible. There was one body *on earth*, of which all are members. They do not heal in heaven, nor preach, nor use any of the gifts spoken of in I Corinthians 12. 'If one member suffer, all the members suffer with it': that is not in heaven. The body will be perfected in heaven (Eph. 1: 23), but is practically always considered as on earth, and formed there: 'by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body.' And this was clearly down here (Acts 2). The Lord's Supper is the external sign of this unity: 'one body for we are all partakers of that one loaf.' IT WAS THIS, MORE THAN FIFTY YEARS AGO, BROUGHT ME OUT OF THE ESTABLISHMENT: NOR HAVE I ANY OTHER PRINCIPLE NOW. THIS OBLIGED ME TO OWN EVERY ONE BAPTISED WITH THE HOLY GHOST AS A MEMBER OF THE BODY. Only in the last days we are called on to distinguish those who 'call on the name of the Lord *out of a pure heart*,' which at the first was not called for: '*the Lord added daily*.'

This makes the Brethren (so-called) not the Church of God, but those who alone meet on the principle of its unity. The line between narrowness and fidelity is a very narrow one. But the Spirit of Christ can guide and keep us on it. The unity of the body cannot be touched, for the Holy Ghost unites to Christ: all those who have been baptized by the Holy Ghost (that is, received Him) are members of the body. It is 'the unity of the Spirit' we have to keep; that is, to walk in that power of the Spirit which keeps us in unity on the earth, and that needs endeavouring. I dread a gathering in any place being called the Church of God. They are the only assembly that meets on scriptural principles: did I not think so I should not go there, but it tends to narrow and sectarianise them.

All this seems to me very simple, but it is not so easy to keep the spirits of all here to it, both in fidelity and love, for we are poor creatures. I know those who tend too much to looseness, others too much to narrowness. The Spirit of God alone can lead us in both, and that requires us to walk near Christ. But as to principles I have no difficulty; but without holiness and Christ being all, being emptied of self, we shall not practically succeed. God is light and love, but He alone can unite both and thus give a right and true unity."

November 1879.

LETTERS, VOL. III, p. 62-63.

"The meeting for breaking of bread is, *in principle* the meeting together of all Christians in the unity of the Body of Christ. Every Christian, then, has a right to share in it. But at the same time, in the present state of Christianity, we are called to maintain scrupulously, faithfully, and with zeal, the holiness of the Lord's Table (2 Tim. 2: 22). Now the assembly is in no way a voluntary meeting of Christians who have chosen the assembly, for in that case it would be a sect. It is, *so far as such a thing is possible now, the meeting of all the members of the body of Christ.* We must have sufficient evidence that those who desire to take part in it are true Christians, and that their walk is moral, Christian."

LETTERS, VOL. III, p. 164.

"I do not meet on the ground of churches, but of the unity of the Body of Christ, and membership of that body."

"We have the promise which first led me to meet, that where two or three are gathered together in Christ's name, He is in the midst, only it must be in the unity of the Body. The meeting for breaking bread is, in principle, the meeting together of all Christians in the unity of the Body of Christ. THE PRINCIPLE OF MEETING IS THE UNITY OF THE BODY. The body of Christ—the only principle of meeting I know at all. RECEIVING ALL MEMBERS OF CHRIST'S BODY IS NOT A SECT CLEARLY—AND THAT IS THE PRINCIPLE ON WHICH I

UNITE—but they must walk orderly and be under discipline.”

I next give some extracts from a book as precious and profound, as it is, simple and clear, —Mr. Kelly’s lectures on the Church of God.

“I am to be diligent in keeping the unity of the Spirit. In other words, God the Holy Ghost has made a unity; and the business of the believer is to observe that unity—to keep it. What an amazing relief for a humble soul, that feels his liability to mistake, in danger of being either too lax, on the one hand or too narrow on the other!

“What is the unity of the Spirit? Where does it begin and end? What is its nature and character? Scripture tells us that He has established a unity among men, yet apart from and above them. What is it? The answer is, It is in the Church, which God has made the Body of Christ. . . . I search and see that He is gathering together the children of God into one; He gathers them unto the name of Christ, assuring them that where they are thus, He is in their midst. I never get the key to any spiritual difficulty without Christ. Do I merely look for the unity of Christians? It is a delusion and a danger without Christ. Christians—where shall I *not* find them? In what pit of error may I not discover some stray child of God? If I go in quest of the children of God, I may easily see them in this form of worldliness or in that; I may know them unattached here, close and bigoted there; I may find them gathered together according to human rules, and for entirely minor objects; I may hear them setting up the names of men, certain special doctrines, favourite views, as their centres of union. Is *this* the unity of the Spirit? What, then, is His unity, and how is it to be kept? It is that which He forms for the glory of Christ.

“Christians of course are those that compose the unity: yet keeping it consists not in the bare fact that they are Christians, but that they are gathered unto Christ—gathered not to His bodily presence, but unto His name, now that He is in heaven; none the less, however, for that, but the more, counting on His presence with them, though unseen, faithful to His own word. If I isolate myself where I may thus meet, I am indifferent to that which was an object of the death of Christ (John 11: 52) and I am setting at naught the unity of the Spirit; if I value the one, and am diligent to keep the other, I shall meet on that ground and on none other.”

PAGES 30-31.

“There may be only two or three; but yet if they contemplate the body of Christ, shutting out none save according to His will, not for any feelings of their own, it is the only

thing that is, or ever was, divinely large in this selfish world, as far as men are concerned." PAGE 35.

SIX LECTURES ON FUNDAMENTAL TRUTHS CONNECTED WITH THE CHURCH OF GOD. BY W. KELLY. 1865.

And this, forsooth, is what is contemptuously styled "ecclesiasticism!"

Mr. Raven says :—

"I do not understand our being an expression of the One Body."

READINGS AND ADDRESSES AT NEWCASTLE, PAGE 146.

Now, the late Mr. Mackintosh ("C.H.M.") wrote a pamphlet many years ago entitled "THE ASSEMBLY OF GOD ; OR THE ALL-SUFFICIENCY OF THE NAME OF JESUS," and the burden of this pamphlet—repeated over and over again—is that two or three gathered in the Name of Jesus are "an Expression of the Assembly."

A few extracts from that admirable treatise are here appended : time could not be more profitably spent than in reading, and re-reading its lucid pages.

"Let the reader be assured of this, that it is his privilege to possess as divine certainty as to what is A TRUE EXPRESSION of the assembly of God as in reference to the truth of his own salvation. I should not be content to go on for an hour without the assurance that I am, in spirit and principle, associated with those who gather ON THE GROUND OF THE ASSEMBLY OF GOD.

"If I cannot have a true expression of God's Assembly, I shall have nothing. It will not do to point me to a religious community, with some Christians therein, the Gospel preached, and the ordinances administered. I must be convinced by the authority of the word and Spirit of God that it is in very truth gathered on the ground and marked by the characteristics of God's Assembly, else I cannot own it.

PAGES 7-8.

"The only true ground on which believers can gather is set forth in that grand statement, "There is one body, and one Spirit." And, again, "We being many are one loaf and one body." (Eph. 4 : 4 ; 1 Cor. 10 : 17.) If God declares that there is but "one body," it must be contrary to His mind to have many bodies, sects, or denominations.

"Now, while it is quite true that no given number of believers in any given place can be called "the body of Christ," or "the assembly of God;" yet they should be gathered ON THE GROUND OF THAT BODY and that assembly, and on no other ground. We call the reader's special attention to

this principle. It holds good at all times, in all places, and under all circumstances. The fact of the ruin of the professing church does not touch it. It has been true since the day of Pentecost; is true at this moment; and shall be true until the church is taken to meet her Head and Lord in the clouds, that "*there is one body.*" ALL BELIEVERS BELONG TO THAT BODY; AND THEY SHOULD MEET ON THAT GROUND, AND ON NO OTHER.

PAGE 10.

"The Gospel prophetically intimates the assembly; the Acts historically presents the assembly; and the Epistles formally address the assembly. All this is plain. And if it be broken into fragments now, it is for us to be gathered on the ground of the *one* assembly of God, and to be a true expression of it.

PAGE 12.

"In good truth, there is not a hair's breadth of consistent standing ground between the church of Rome and a true expression of the assembly of God. We believe that an honest seeker after truth, setting out from amid the dark shadows of popery, cannot possibly halt until he finds himself in the clear and blessed light of that which is a true expression of the assembly of God. He may take years to travel over the intervening space. His steps may be slow and measured; but if only he follows the light, in simplicity and godly sincerity, he will find no rest between these two extremes. The ground of the assembly of God is the true position for all the children of God.

PAGE 25.

"As to the *ground* of God's assembly, we should hold it with jealous tenacity, and never consent for an hour to occupy any other."

PAGE 36.

Here we have a very serious position: two important teachers diametrically opposed to each other. Mr. Mackintosh teaches that the ground of meeting is the Body or Assembly, and that two or three gathered in the name of Jesus are an expression of the Assembly. He teaches this, not merely as an incidental or subordinate point, but lays the strongest emphasis upon it, and sets it forth as a vital point of our testimony. Mr. Raven, on the contrary, says:—"I do not understand our being an expression of the One Body."

One of the clearest teachers amongst "Brethren" was the late MR. F. G. PATTERSON. In his pamphlet entitled "PAUL'S DOCTRINE" he says:—

"The body of Christ was outwardly scattered; never would its outward unity be seen as a whole again. But the Spirit of God maintained it still unbroken. Its outward ruin would not deprive the saints and faithful of its

unchanging truth. Never would a moment come when the truth of the "One Body" can fail, as **THE DIVINE AND POSITIVE GROUND OF GATHERING** for those who were using all diligence to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, till Christ comes again." PAGE 8.

I conclude these extracts with some from "H.C.A."—initials well known as those of a prominent teacher of the modernized doctrines of these Brethren. It will be seen that whatever "H.C.A." may hold at the present moment, he once held and taught as clearly as anyone, the truth as to *the Assembly* being the ground of gathering. He says in an excellent tract entitled "SCHISM IN THE ASSEMBLY" :—

"It is clear to those who study these Epistles, that every assembly of believers which is **NOT ON THE GROUND OF THE ASSEMBLY** . . . is in itself a schism."

Again :—

"I ask two questions here, important to us as believers :—

I.—**ARE WE ON THE GROUND OF THE ASSEMBLY OF GOD** in the locality where we dwell?"

Again :—

"The especial object of Satan's attack is the true ground . . . **ARE WE THEN ON THE TRUE GROUND OF THE ASSEMBLY TO-DAY?**" PAGES 8,9,27.

What the doctrine and testimony of early "Brethren" on the subject were is plain enough. And why are they altered now? Were **MR. DARBY, MR. KELLY, MR. MACKINTOSH, MR. PATTERSON** and others, blundering on such a cardinal doctrine? Was "H.C.A." deluded when he published his tract just quoted? One may indeed ask: **WHICH IS THE DELUSION:** the lucid and positive instruction of the foregoing extracts, or the sciolisms which are to-day brought forward instead?

CHAPTER II.

ERROR AS TO THE LORDSHIP OF CHRIST.

Notes of Readings and Addresses at Newcastle, September, 1895.
London, G. Morrish.

Readings and Addresses at Weston-super-Mare, January 3rd to
10th, 1897. Revised by F.E.R. and T.H.R. London, 15 and
16 Paternoster Square.

If the books whose titles are given above, had been issued some years back, by any of the denominations around, or by a Christian Convention such as meets at Keswick, "Brethren" would have lifted up their hands in pious horror at their being sent abroad as Christian ministry. So valuable however, so precious are they considered, that one of them is marked as "sold under cost price." This is also declared, prominently on the title page, to have been revised by the authors. The books are, however, thick with sophisms, subtleties and errors—though not unmixed with Christian truth; for it would not answer Satan's purpose to put forth unmingled error—at least amongst God's people; for them, there must be the necessary bait of a certain amount of scriptural truth, and the countenance of earnest but misguided Christian people.

However, I will give in this and subsequent chapters a selection of choice specimens from these writings.

FIRST.—THE TRUE LORDSHIP OF CHRIST IS DENIED.

This is very solemn. The unsophisticated believer is accustomed to think of Jesus as Lord, and never raises a question about it. Since in wondrous condescension the Son of God has become man, must He not necessarily by divine title ever be Lord? It is His inherent essential title as Son of God; the Father's will is, "that all should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father which hath sent Him;"

and it seems to me an awful thing to lay a finger upon His title of Lord. "Ye call Me Master and Lord," He says, "and ye say well; for so I am." That is not heaven, it will be replied. Granted that it is not; He is however Lord, thus, before resurrection, before ascension, by divine title. If so, how can He ever cease to be such to us? How can His subsequent death, His glorious resurrection and ascension, lessen one iota of His dignities?

But there is an added reason. Not only is He divinely Lord, and ever must be; but He has an acquired title as Man. Philippians is precise as to this, teaching that on the very ground of this condescension—

"God hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of heavenly, and earthly, and infernal beings, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." (Phil. 2 : 9-11, New Transl.)

This should be enough; but what says this new school? In the Newcastle teachings, p. 144, "F.E.R." says:—

"You will not have Christ in the relation of Lord to us there" (*i.e.*, in heaven).

Two years later—see the Weston-super-Mare book, p. 82—Mr. Raven is questioned on the subject, and adheres to his error thus:—

"I think you once said we shall not have the Lord in heaven?"

"Well, that is true; we shall not know Him as Lord in heaven, we shall know Him as Head."

Observe that there is here no attempt to show the thing from Scripture. It is simple assertion by "F.E.R."; Mr. Raven says it, that is enough; and WORST OF ALL, IS ACCEPTED AS ENOUGH BY THE COMPANY AROUND HIM.

Let us examine it: "We shall not know Him as Lord in heaven, we shall know Him as Head." Now, there is no sense in the latter part of this remark, unless knowing Him as Head and as Lord are inconsistent. But there is nothing inconsistent in our knowing him as both, for we know Him as both now.

As a Christian I demand the Scripture for our ever ceasing to know Jesus as Lord. If such there be, it will be easy to produce it. If there be no Scripture for this new doctrine, then it is a mere production of the human mind—the “mind of the flesh”—transgressing the bounds of revelation, and “intruding into those things he hath not seen.” (Col. 2 : 18). Scripture indeed tells us that in the éternal state, Christ gives up the Kingdom to the Father, that God may be all in all (1 Cor. 15 : 28), but not, of course, His humanity ; and it is as man that He is exalted. Philippians shows this. He could not be exalted as God. But because He has stooped to become man, and then gone lower still—into death—therefore God has highly exalted Him, and decreed that every tongue (heavenly is expressly stated) shall confess that He is Lord to the glory of God the Father.

The true position is—which Mr. Raven does not seem to grasp—that the title of “Head” relates to the Body collectively ; that of “Lord” to the individual (and if used in the plural, it still only relates to a number of individuals taken together). Every instructed Christian knows that the Church—marvellous grace!—will have in heaven a unique place as the Body and Bride of Christ. Christ to her, is Head of the Body and Bridegroom of the Bride ; but these relationships are to the Church collectively : He is Head and Bridegroom to the Church in her Unity : to the individual He is Lord, and blessed be His name ! we shall always be with Him as such : there is nothing incompatible in these relationships ; and Mr. Raven’s statement “we shall not know Him as Lord in heaven, we shall know Him as Head,” is simply a *non sequitur*.

Now, I should like to ask, as a simple Christian, why it is that Paul, when referring to a Christian’s dying, speaks of it as being “absent from the body” and “PRESENT WITH THE LORD” ? Mr. Raven says :—

“ . . . we shall be with Him whom we know and OWN HERE AS LORD.” (Newcastle, p. 143).

He thus tampers with Scripture to meet the exigencies of his theology : but Paul says, without any limit of

locality, either earth or heaven,—

“Absent from the body . . . present with the Lord.”
(2 Cor. 5 : 8).

Perhaps it will be said that this refers to the separate or unclothed state, which is very true ; still, it is heaven.

However, we will come to the perfect state of the Christian when he gets his glorified body. Does Scripture here give any hint of the Lordship of Christ being laid aside? No. It says that “the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout” (notice that He is LORD in heaven), “and the dead in Christ shall rise first ; then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet”—whom? Christ? No. Our Head? No—“to meet **THE LORD** in the air.” Perhaps it may be said that F.E.R. was referring to the eternal state. Very well. God has devised the Scriptures so as to meet and foil every form of error, and hence we find that the Apostle does not leave the matter there, but adds, which I submit is conclusive, “**SO SHALL WE ALWAYS BE WITH THE LORD.**” (1 Thess. 4 : 17, New Transl.)

Finally, the Apostle Paul says that—

“To us there is one God the Father . . . and one Lord Jesus Christ.” (1 Cor. 8 : 6).

It would be desirable to know the scriptural authority for putting a term to this relationship of the Lord Jesus Christ with us.

I need not prolong these testimonies ; they are enough ; and if any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him bow to the authority of Holy Scripture. If the Lordship of Christ, as shown by these Scriptures, is true, then Mr. Raven’s teaching is false. The believer delights in the Lordship of Christ ; rejoices to think that he will be “for ever with the Lord.” “Amen ! so let it be !”

“No place too high for Him is found—
No place too high in heaven.”

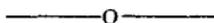
Believer ! Do you consent to the smallest diminution of His glories and His dignities ?

Two things here strike me with amazement. One—that a Christian teacher could launch such a dogma without the most irrefragable proof from Scripture; two—that the audience had been so schooled into subservience that they could hear it without being shocked, and receive it without a protest? WHERE WERE THE WATCHMEN OF ZION WHEN THIS DOGMA WAS ANNOUNCED AT NEWCASTLE, AND RE-DECLARED AT WESTON?



CHAPTER III.

ERROR AS TO THE GODHEAD OF CHRIST.



The doctrine of the Trinity is a rock on which many have gone down. Man can know nothing of God, but what He is pleased to reveal. Confessedly the mystery is great, as we are taught in 1 Timothy 3 : 16. The proper attitude then, when God deigns to tell us about Himself, is to listen to the blessed statements in a submissive, yea, in a worshipping spirit. It is no wonder that man falls into error, if upon such high mysteries he employs the activities of the natural mind without the guidance of the Holy Spirit. The higher the subject, the worse is error in regard to it, and whether what is taught is error or not, can be settled by only one standard—namely, Scripture.

Mr. Raven teaches of the blessed Lord, that "becoming a man He becomes the Logos" (p. 127 Weston). The Greek word "Logos," which Mr. Raven imports, can convey no idea except to Greek students; and "Word" is a fair rendering generally adopted by translators.*

* It is not intended by this that the term "Word" is co-extensive with "Logos," but only that in the difference, there is nothing to support Mr. Raven's peculiar view: what difference there is, tends all the other way. "Word" in English—speaking generally—means the vehicle of a thought. The Greek "Logos" means not only that, but the thought itself as well: so it is defined in a standard Lexicon, viz. :—

"Logos. The word by which the inward thought is expressed. Also, the inward thought or reason itself."
LIDDELL AND SCOTT.

While on this subject, it may be well to mention that the Greek word "Logos" is never used, either in Scripture or the Classics, for the Reason or Mind, as a faculty, either in God Himself or a creature. Entirely different words are employed for that,—as *νοῦς*, or *πνεῦμα*, or *καρδία*.

However, from the preceding definition, it will be seen that

Mr. Raven's doctrine is exactly the contrary of Holy Scripture, for there we are taught the eternal being of the Word before any created thing—that IN THE BEGINNING the Word WAS, and the Word was God. (John I : 1-3.) Later—in John I : 14—we are told that the WORD BECAME FLESH. There is here scarcely room for comment, explanation or reasoning—the two statements are so plain and so contrary to one another, that it is simply the word of Mr. Raven against Scripture. Scripture tells us that in eternity, before any created thing, the Word WAS ; and that at a point of time HE BECAME MAN. Mr. Raven teaches that “becoming a man, He becomes the Word.”

It would be sufficiently serious, if this were mere inadvertence ; for that would be evidence of the natural mind, unsubject to the Holy Spirit, being allowed to operate upon such an august theme as the nature of the Godhead.

But later, in “Food for the Faithful,” 1899, p. 31, there is a further article by Mr. Raven entitled “THE

“Logos” is of wider signification than “Word.” But it is to support a narrower sense, not a wider one, that the Greek word is employed by our author. “Word” as used in the English version of the 1st of John is there accurately defined to mean the Second Person in the Trinity from all Eternity ; while with Mr. Raven, it is narrowed down to the incarnation. The fact is that the English term “Word” suits Mr. Raven's theology better than Logos : but the employment of the Greek word obviously implies that there is in it some occult sense, which supports his view. There is none. And this I take exception to—imposing on people by a misuse of Greek, just as subsequent pages shew delusive citations of Scripture.

The term however, is peculiarly appropriate as a title of our Lord, for He not only expressed what God was, but Himself was what He expressed. So Mr. Darby, with his customary accuracy, as well as insight, says :—

“He is, and He is the expression of the whole mind that subsists in God,
the Logos.” (SYNOPSIS)

And this is the true sense of that misunderstood verse—John 8 : 25 :—

“Then they said unto Him, Who art, Thou? And Jesus said unto them,
Even the same that I said unto you from the beginning.”

The proper translation (J.N.D.) of the Lord's reply is :—

“Altogether that which I also say unto you.”

That is,—“His speech presented Himself, being the truth.”

LOGOS," from which it would seem that the utterance in question was no inadvertence, for the article contains no retraction of the dogma just referred to, but really defends and maintains it. It is painful to have controversy where there should be reverence and worship—but as these things are put forth for the acceptance of Christians, we ought to know whether they are true or false.

First, however, a few words on John I : 1-3 :—

Scripture uses several times, in different senses, according to the relation in which we find it, the term "the beginning." In the Epistles of John, and in the preface to Luke's Gospel, it is "the beginning" of Christianity that is referred to. In the 1st chapter of Genesis we have "the beginning" of creation ; but in the first verse of John's Gospel we have Eternity—prior to any created thing ; that, to man, incomprehensible Eternity of the past—and there we find, that "the Word was" even then :—

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made."

The language is remarkably precise and accurate ; and those who read the original know that that is, if possible, more so : it is *εν αρχη* in the beginning ; not *εξ αρχης* nor *απο αρχης*, from the beginning—as from a date or commencement—but BEFORE THE BEGINNING of anything, He already WAS. Again : He was not merely eternal and possibly subordinate—but He was GOD. In addition there is His distinct personality—"the same was in the beginning WITH GOD." Not merely with the Father, for the Holy Ghost was there as well, but "with God"—even so accurate are the words of inspiration. Thus we have affirmed of the Word :—

1. His eternal being
2. His distinct personality
3. His true deity
4. That He is the Creator.

And this is THE ONE of whom Mr. Raven ventures to say that "becoming a man, He becomes the Word !" Elsewhere he told the flock he was instructing that if he "had to live over again he would study Scripture

less and pray more." Would it not be better if for the future, he read Scripture more carefully, and taught from it more correctly ?

One further point on the passage we have been considering. The Gospels of Matthew and Luke give genealogies of the Lord. Mark gives us none, because the scope and design of his Gospel is to present the Divine Servant—consistently with which a genealogy is not requisite. John also gives no genealogy because it is the Divinity of the blessed Lord that distinguishes his Gospel, and hence it opens with the sublime statement, "IN THE BEGINNING WAS THE WORD."

Now for the Article, which, it may be remarked, is an apt illustration of the ways of heterodoxy in all times. When those who introduce false doctrine are challenged, they try to appear orthodox by wrapping their errors in circuitous and cloudy phraseology, in which however the error still abides. So, history records of Arius, that when recalled to Constantinople, he attempted to satisfy his opponents "by a confession of faith so vaguely worded, that without abjuring his own opinions, he seemed to consent to the orthodox faith."

The Article being short, may be given in full : but I divide it into clauses for the convenience of dealing with it, viz. :—

"THE LOGOS.

AN EXTRACT.

1. From Luke I : 2, it appears to me that "the Word" was what Christ was in the apprehension of the Apostles ;
2. And John speaks from this standpoint.
3. The Word was to them the substance and expression of all that was divinely blessed for man (the intelligent and the intelligible)
4. And thus the soul and limit so to speak, of that vast system in which the blessed God is displayed.
5. But all this hangs on incarnation.
6. The introduction to John's Gospel gives the real genealogy of "the Word." He was with God, and truly God ; and being such He became flesh and dwelt among us full of grace and truth.

F.E.R."

Doubtless this will be taken for wonderful wisdom by

many, whether they understand it or not. But we will apply it to the sharp point of that sword of the Spirit—the Scriptures—and see how it stands the test.

In the first place, clause 1 presumes to supply a definition of THE WORD. But we have already seen that the Word was GOD : and it is not surprising, that if a man has the rashness to attempt to define his Maker, he falls into error, and shows his folly. However, if the Word is God, it is impossible but that He must be infinitely more than can be contained within the limits of the apprehension of MEN, even though Apostles ; otherwise He would not be God.

But Mr. Raven tries to give his views the colour of scriptural authority by a reference to Luke 1 : 2. He does not quote the verse, nor show how it supports his proposition. As a matter of fact there is nothing whatever in Luke 1 : 2 to give it even colourable authority. To put the matter beyond doubt, I will here quote the verse with context. The reader will thus be able to see how much support it gives to Mr. Raven's theology :—

1. Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us,
2. Even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were eye-witnesses, and ministers of the Word ;
3. It seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus . . .

The verse simply refers to some who, from the beginning of the Gospel history, had been eye-witnesses of and attendants upon the Word (N. transl.)—but there is not a syllable to support Mr. Raven's dogma as his citation implies. This is a misuse of Scripture—leading those who do not examine the verse, to suppose that it supports a certain view, while only the few who do examine it, find out how their trustfulness is imposed upon.

Clause 2. "John speaks from this standpoint."

This remark is too trivial to notice, except to point out that it is an error. The initial error having to be defended, further error is introduced ; thus error on

error is built. The fact is, that John speaks from the standpoint of the absolute Godhead of the Word, not from that of the Apostles' measure of apprehension of what Christ was. The Word was God : surely this is more than any creature can apprehend. And this is John's standpoint, not only in the remarkable words which constitute the introduction of his gospel—but it characterises John's gospel throughout : his is pre-eminently, the gospel of our Lord's divinity. I do not attempt to prove this, as it is so well known to all acquainted with the characteristic differences of the four gospels.

Clause 3. "The Word was to them the substance and expression of all that was divinely blessed for man (the intelligent and intelligible)"

How facile is our author at definitions, even of things which are beyond the creature's ken ! Unfortunately however, his definitions are not correct. He has already told us what the Word was : that is, simply what Christ was in the apprehension of the Apostles : and now he will even tell us what that apprehension was.

But when we get this latter definition of the Word, we find it is something which begins and ends with man—"the Word was to them, the substance and expression of all that was divinely blessed FOR MAN. The chain of reasoning, so far seems to be this :—

1. The Word was, what Christ was, in the apprehension of the Apostles.
2. That apprehension was,—what was blessed for man.

Hence the Word is limited to, and measured by, blessing FOR MAN. Now the Apostle tells us that He was GOD quite irrelatively to man, or to any created being, before indeed any created thing existed.

Clause 4. "And thus the soul and limit so to speak of that vast system in which the blessed God is displayed."

By those with whom grandiloquence passes in lieu of sense, this will no doubt be admired. But it will not bear examination ; for it involves this, viz :—that the system in which God is displayed, and the Word,—are

co-extensive : He is Himself the limit of the system ; then He and the system coincide ; and thus God Himself is not greater than a finite system which He has created ! These are the tangles that man gets into, when he would be wise above what is written.

As however the ideas of men are not food for the soul, nor ground for faith to rest her foot upon, it would be desirable to know whence Mr. Raven gets his notion that Christ is the soul and limit of a system. Christ indeed created everything that has been created, and upholds "all things by the word of His power" Further, as risen from the dead, He fills all things.* But as to His being either the soul, or the limit, of a system, I do not know what it means, nor where it is in Scripture. It is not difficult however to trace it outside of Scripture, for it is recorded of an Apocryphal Author—about 100 B.C. ("Wisdom of Solomon"), that his views were :

"Confused by the admixture of Platonism, and that he regarded Wisdom as a kind of *soul of the world*. He occasionally puts her for God, occasionally for an attribute of God."
ALFORD, GR. TEST., vol. I, p. 480,

The reader will probably think with me, that we have lighted here, upon the source of Mr. Raven's philosophy. And this semi-Platonism is foisted upon believers as Christian teaching, and considered worthy of a page in what is called "Food for the Faithful" !

Clause 5. "But all this hangs on incarnation."

Having led us through a maze of sentences including an illusive citation of a scripture which does not apply, Mr. Raven comes back to his primal error. Amongst it all, he has told us what "the Word" was—and now he says ALL THIS HANGS ON INCARNATION. I will tell Mr. Raven of one thing included in his "all," but which does not hang upon incarnation, namely, the being of THE WORD ! because it is the Word Himself who became incarnate ; and therefore, so far from what the Word was, "hanging" as he implies upon incarnation, the

* John 1 : 3 ; Col. 1 : 17 ; Heb. 1 : 3. Eph. 1 : 23.

truth is exactly the converse—that incarnation hangs* upon the Word.

Clause 6. "The introduction to John's Gospel gives the real genealogy of "the Word." He was with God, and truly God, and being such He became flesh, &c."

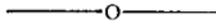
Here we find a little truth thrown in to give a semblance of soundness to the error—but the error is there all the same. He speaks of the "GENEALOGY OF THE WORD"—and then he tells us of the incarnation—that is, through a cloud of verbiage he leads us back to the one strong and unmistakable point of error that "becoming a man, He becomes the Word." As to a genealogy of the Word—there is none: can be none; because He was God, and to speak of the genealogy of God would be blasphemy. When Scripture gives us the genealogy of the Lord, it gives plainly and really the genealogy of His humanity: there is no such thing as a genealogy of THE WORD except in the category of Mr. Raven's errors.

On the whole, the reverent and godly Christian, will probably find it best to dispense with Mr. Raven's definings, and fall back upon the simple yet sublime statements of inspiration: "IN THE BEGINNING WAS THE WORD, AND THE WORD WAS WITH GOD, AND THE WORD WAS GOD."

*I use this expression because it is Mr. Raven's—but it appears to me to be an undignified, if not an irreverent term, considering the subject in hand.

“THE WORD.”

APPENDIX TO CHAPTER III.



Probably many have been perplexed at the title of “The Word” in John I. In such circumstances, the spirit of reverence and humility would preserve the devout Christian from falling into error. Humility can wait for light, and acknowledge ignorance, while self-confidence will *make* a theory, rather than admit to others that there is any subject which it cannot understand.

In considering this matter, the first thing is to own anything properly deducible from “The Word,” as a term of human language ; but it is just here that there has been a tendency to stray, so many having taken the English term “word” as a starting-point for inferences, instead of inquiring the true value of that which is so translated into our language. What, then, in the language of that day, was the meaning of “Logos,” which is given us in the Gospel of John, as a name of the Son of God ?

There is one element in the true force of the term which has been largely overlooked. “THE WORD” was, to the Jews, one of the names of God. That people abstained from pronouncing the name Jehovah for fear of its irreverent use—a superstitious sentiment arising from an erroneous interpretation of Lev. 24 : 16.* In reading the Scriptures, they avoided it by various substitutes : one which they used was Adonai

*The Reader who may desire to check the accuracy of the statements in the text, will find them amply verified by reference to :—

Alford, Greek Testament, vol. 1, pp. 478 *et. seq.* Ed. 1849.

Smith, Dict. of the Bible, vol. 1, p. 952 ; vol. 2, p. 851 ;
vol. 3, pp. 1646-8.

Smith, “Smaller Dict.,” p. 195.

Cruden, Art. “Word.”

(Lord), translated in the Septuagint by *κυριος*, and thus giving rise to the title "Lord" instead of Jehovah in our version of the Old Testament. Other substitutes were "Glory" and "Majesty." Possibly it is a condescension to this current phraseology of the Jews, that, in writing to them, leads the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews to speak of the right hand of "the Majesty" on high, and again: the throne of "the Majesty" in the heavens. (Heb. 1: 3 and 8: 1). Other substitute-names were "the Separate name"; "the Great and terrible name."

But prominent among them was "THE WORD." The Targums are ample evidence of this. Thus, in Gen. 3: 8, where we have "The voice of the Lord God was heard," the Targum of Onkelos reads: "The voice of the Word." Cruden says, referring to the Targums, that they:—

"generally make use of the word MEMRA, which signifies the WORD in those places where Moses puts the name Jehovah.

They say that it was MEMRA or the WORD which created the world; which appeared to Moses on Mount Sinai, which gave him the law; which spoke to him face to face; which brought Israel out of Egypt; that appeared to Abraham in the plain of Mamre; that was seen of Jacob at Bethel, to whom Jacob made his vow, and acknowledged as God."

"The Word," then, amongst the Jews, meant Jehovah. But it will be said, John wrote in Greek, not in Hebrew. True: but Logos in Greek was, virtually, the equivalent of Memra in Hebrew (*i.e.*, Syro-Chaldaic) and was in current use as a theological name amongst the Hellenist Jews and Gnostics, in Alexandria and Asia.

It is interesting and instructive to trace thus the force, as a term of human language, of "Logos"—important, too, because our English term "word" is of so much narrower signification, occasioning a difficulty, particularly with those who read English only. But when we see that, with the Jews, "the Word," or Memra, really meant "God," and that "Logos" was the equivalent of this amongst the Grecian Jews, and with the Gnostic and other religio-philosophic sects, we get a

more correct idea of the force of that expression amongst men, at the time when John, under inspiration, took up and used it as a name of the Second Person in the Godhead.

We need not further pursue the meaning of "Logos:" for the moment that the Holy Spirit condescends to use the term as a title of our Lord, it acquires a new significance—a profundity of meaning, which it never had before. The Spirit of God makes, as it were, His own dictionary for the occasion, rendering us independent of human tradition or learning, for, in the 1st of John, we are told with a definiteness and perspicuity truly divine, what, now, in the vocabulary of the Holy Spirit, we are to understand by "the Word." If people would be satisfied with the inspired definition of the LOGOS, instead of forming their own theories, there would be no difficulty; but error has arisen from an attempt to make a Divine Personality coincide with a human term, and specifically an English one, instead of rising up to the level of the new force and meaning which that term acquires under the control and employment of the Spirit of God.

Now the English term "word" means, speaking generally, the vehicle of a thought, just as a thought, though in the mind, is unknown until embodied in a word,—and it has been assumed that this was the sense in which "Word" was employed as a title of our Lord. No wonder, if such is the idea, that we have it stated, "Becoming a man, He becomes the Word," for, certainly, what God is, never was expressed to man until the incarnation. But the view referred to is rather the result of reasoning than of inquiry at the oracles of God, and that it is wrong seems clear from Scripture. To begin with that cardinal passage,—the introduction to John's Gospel: the title there, is employed only with respect to the Word *before incarnation*. When once it is said that the Word became flesh,—from that moment the title is never again used in the Gospel. Further, it is under the title, and in the character, of Son that He makes known—declares God—not by that of "The Word," viz. :—

"No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten

Son, which is in the bosom of the Father He hath declared Him.”—(John I : 18.)

This is the more remarkable, because only four verses previously, the Evangelist announced that the Word had become flesh. Now he comes to speak of making known or declaring God. If, therefore, the title of “Word” carried the import and significance attributed to it, now, and here, would be, if ever, the time and place to so employ it. He does not, however, do so. He does not say :—“No man hath seen God at any time, the Word hath declared Him.” No : he says, “the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him.” Again, in Colossians and Hebrews :—

“the SON of His love : who is the image of the invisible God.”—(Colossians I : 13, 15).

“hath in these last days spoken unto us by His SON who being the brightness of His glory, and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power,” &c.—(Hebrews I : 2, 3).

And the Apostle John, follows in his Epistles, somewhat similar lines to those of his Gospel. Thus, in the first verse of the first Epistle, he speaks of the Lord as the Word of life—

“which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, which our hands have handled”—

but; two points being established,—the reality of the incarnation ; and that it is the Eternal Life, which was with the Father that was thus manifested—he thenceforward speaks of Him as the Son—never again in the Epistles by the title of “The Word.”*

The latter title is, indeed, used in Rev. 19 :—

“He was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood : and His name is called The Word of God.”—(Revelation 19 : 13).

I presume it will scarcely be propounded that we have Him *here*, as the Revealer of God to man. It is quite the contrary. At this juncture in the Revelation,

* Though known to many, it may be well to state here, that the subsequent mention of the Word in 1 John 5 : 7 is in a passage which is not genuine Scripture. The words from “in heaven,” verse 7, to “in earth,” verse 8, inclusive, are not found in any Greek manuscript until the 15th century.

there is no question of making God known. All that is over. God *had been* manifest in the flesh upon Earth; He had been made known in the Gospel by the Holy Ghost sent down from Heaven. Further, men had been summoned by "the everlasting Gospel" (Rev. 14 : 6); but all in vain. It terminates in man's blasphemous wickedness. And now the Rider on the white horse comes forth,—in the most awful, unsparing judgment. He has a vesture dipped in blood, and His name is called "The Word of God." God, as it were, retires to a moral distance, and falls back upon a title, which, in itself, involves no relationship with men.

In the familiar passage in Heb. 4 : 12, 13; the "Word of God" is mentioned; but there, it is the spoken or written word,—though the identification of the word with God Himself, in the passage, is admittedly remarkable; but even if here, the Lord be intended under the term "Word of God," it would still be, as judge of the evil of the flesh, not as revealer of the Father.

Something is attempted to be built upon Luke 1 : 2; but it is almost more than questionable, whether the Lord is there referred to at all; whether the spoken or preached word is not what is meant: it reads as follows:—

"those things which are most surely believed among us, even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were eye witnesses and *ministers of the Word.*"
(Luke 1 : 1. 2.)

The Authorised Version, the Revised Version, Dean Alford (both in his translation, and his notes on the Greek text), all take it as above,—"*Ministers of the Word;*" but the New Translation (J.N.D.) renders it:—

"Eye-witnesses of and attendants on the Word."

Here we find two well-authenticated renderings to choose between, and it would seem under these circumstances, that the casting voice should rest with the general analogy of Scriptural usage. Now, if it be the Second Person in the Trinity that is meant, the passage would then stand as almost the solitary instance in Scripture, where the Lord,—incarnate, and in grace amongst men—is spoken of by the title of "the Word;"

while, on the contrary, the use of "the Word" for the Gospel in a general sense, is habitual with Luke—who was the writer of the Acts. Thus:—

"It is not reason that we should leave the *word of God* and serve tables" (Acts 6 : 2)

"We will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the *ministry of the word*" (Acts 6 : 4)

The analogy of Scripture, then, appears to decide for the view that Luke 1 : 2 refers to the ministry of the preached word, that is, the general testimony of the Christ, including facts of which Apostles were eye-witnesses,—as well as doctrine. So much, then, for Scriptural usage.*

But, if "the Word" were a title signifying the expression to man of what God is, it would be no more than logically developing that idea, to say that—"becoming a man, He becomes the Word," for certainly what God is, had not been declared until that time. It was then, and not before, that God was manifest in the flesh (1 Tim. 3 : 16), so that the idea has its refutation in the fact that when followed out, it leads naturally and logically into what has already been proved to be false doctrine.

It seems then from the uniform tenor of Scripture that the idea of the Lord being the expression of God to man, is not that attached by Scripture to the title of "the Word." The blessed Lord was "the Word" in Eternity, before ever there was a creature in existence. Further, it was not until four thousand years after man's creation, that He became the expression to man of what God is ; and then by incarnation. There must be something deeper, then, in the title of "the Word" which these teachings have altogether missed. Is He the "Word" only with regard to man, as Mr. Raven would teach? Nay ; He was the Word *with God*.

It is part of the egotism of fallen man, that he is

* If this be so, it follows as a corollary,—that there is thus swept away, the only semblance of Scriptural support, which Mr. Raven has managed to find for his view as to the title of The Word : not that I admit for a moment, that the other translation, any more than this, supplies the slightest foundation for his error.

apt to suppose that even God himself can have no object or occupation, past or to come, excepting with *him*, man. Hence, when God admits us to some slight knowledge of Himself before Creation, and tells us of the eternal being of the Word,—that, “in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God”—immediately we have the vain thought of the human mind, reducing this and limiting it to man: “the Word,” we are told, was “the substance and expression of all that was divinely blessed *for man*” (“F.E.R.”): indeed, *never was* the Word until He became man. This we have seen to be absolutely unsupported by Scripture.

But who shall say what profound meaning may lie in the title of “THE WORD,” as between the Persons of the Trinity—meaning beyond the creature’s power to grasp? He was with God, and He was God,—what unfathomable depths may there not be in this? The mind of man, indeed, cannot compass the being of God: great and beautiful as are its capabilities, it is finite, and cannot grasp the Infinite—but God has been pleased to let us know something of Himself before the world was, and of the intercommunications of the Godhead then. Thus we read of the,

“hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began.” (TITUS 1 : 2.)

To whom was this promise, if not to the Son, or Word, on whose Person its accomplishment would devolve? Again :—

“His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began” (literally—“before the ages of time.”). (2 TIM. 1 : 9.)

In passing, we may reflect,—how it strengthens and confirms our peace to know, that our blessing rests, not on the will of man, but on God’s purposes for His own glory, formed before the foundation of the world.

The instructed Christian knows that the Epistle to the Ephesians takes us back into the Eternity of the Past and God’s vast counsels there—revealing to us that God had a purpose “which He purposed *in Himself*,” that He had a mystery (or secret) which was “hid in God, who created all things” (Eph. 1 : 9 and 3 : 9).

It will be said that this relates to man, which is true; and blessed it is for us to find that so much of God's counsels in Eternity *do* relate to man, in regard to whom His highest counsels are developed, in whom, since the incarnation, He is able to find His "good pleasure." It is not an angel but a man—in the person of the Lord Jesus—who has ascended up, "far above all heavens." It is not an angel, but a man, under whose feet all things are placed, who is chief of all creation, and to whom in that place of exaltation, the Church is united as being His fulness, or complement. (Luke 2: 15; Eph. 1: 22.23; 4: 10).

But we are told of more than what merely relates to man. In the 17th of John we are permitted to overhear the breathings of the Son in communion with the Father: and there He makes mention of a glory which He had with the Father before the world was, and we are allowed to listen to Him addressing the Father in the wondrous words:—"Thou lovedst Me before the foundation of the World." (John 17: 5.24.)

And it can scarcely admit of doubt that in that remarkable passage in the 8th of Proverbs, the Second Person in the Trinity is mystically referred to under the title of Wisdom; and that there we are given to perceive somewhat of the intercommunion of the Trinity, in counsel and in felicity,—veiled, no doubt,—conformably with the partial character of all Old Testament revelation—but now shining clearly in the light of the New: I quote from the Revised Version:—

"While as yet he had not made the earth nor the fields,
Nor the beginning of the dust of the world.
When he established the heavens, I was there:
When he set a circle upon the face of the deep:
When he made firm the skies above:
When the fountains of the deep became strong:
When he gave to the sea its bound,
That the waters should not transgress his commandment:
When he marked out the foundations of the earth:
THEN WAS I BY HIM, as a master workman:
AND I WAS DAILY HIS DELIGHT,
REJOICING ALWAYS BEFORE HIM;
REJOICING IN HIS HABITABLE EARTH,
AND MY DELIGHT WAS WITH THE SONS OF MEN."

(PROVERBS 8: 26-31).

I feel that I shall be doing my reader a service and further elucidating this blessed subject by placing before him the following extract from "Notes on the Gospel of John," by Mr. F. W. Grant, of Plainfield, U.S., America* :—

"John begins 'in the beginning.' There is no article; and the indefinite form, as the whole connection shows, here carries us back to the most remote that can be imagined. Whenever anything else began, then the 'Word' *was*,—not 'began.' The Word had no beginning.

"By the fact of this eternity of existence He is necessarily God: God only is the 'Eternal'; but the Apostle will not leave us to such an inference: 'the Word was with God,' he says, 'and the Word was God'—a distinct person in the unity of the Godhead.

"'With God' here is literally 'toward God'; and this affirms, along with distinctness of Person, the adherence of regard and affection to Him of this Being whose designation as 'the Word' points Him out as giving expression to the mind of God. And this Personality and relationship are eternal likewise: the Word is not a development from God, even though a pre-creation one: for 'He was in the beginning *with* God.'

"Thus a glimpse is permitted us into what is involved in a plurality of Persons in the Godhead. 'God is love': and are we to think of Him before creation as dwelling in a blank and utter solitude, alone, with no outflow for His love?—no object towards which it *could* flow out?—even now with no sufficient object worthy of Himself? And He, the Father, was He no Father then? and have His creatures alone given Him the reality of such a title? Nay, there was in the Godhead as such, as this passage already shows, an activity, a reception, an intercommunion of love: 'the Word was *with* God,' *toward* God. The only-begotten Son, was then in the bosom of the Father. That 'bosom of the Father' is not a development, but a glorious everlasting reality."

Here it is obvious that we are indeed treading on holy ground, where it becomes us to take off the shoes from our feet. The fleshly mind which would pry into things not revealed, needs to be curbed. Let us re-

* From a work by Mr. F. W. Grant (Loizeaux Brothers, New York), entitled "The Numerical Bible,"—a title which, I venture to think, only meagrely represents what the work really is,—for apart altogether from the numerical feature, it is an invaluable aid to the study of Holy Scripture. (To be had of Mr. R. Bell, 15 Erica Street, Prahran, Melbourne.)

member the awful judgment upon the men of Bethshemesh, whom God smote for their profane curiosity in looking into the Ark. (1 Samuel 6 : 19). Our only safety is genuine subjection to the written Word, and dependence on the teaching of the Holy Spirit, receiving in simplicity everything that Scripture reveals, but trembling lest we advance a step beyond its limits.

In this, all may well take instruction from the example of one who has passed on before us—J.N.D.—one of extraordinary intellectual powers, and of marvellous insight into the revelation of God, but whose accuracy and great freedom from error, were equally remarkable. The secret of this comes out in a letter to a friend :—

“IT IS MY HABIT SCARCELY TO PUT ONE FOOT BEFORE ANOTHER IN THE STUDY OF THE WORD, and to give forth nothing until I am able, in measure, to say (while still liable to make mistakes, of course) —This is *the* mind of God. This makes me go on very slowly, but I seldom have to retrace my steps.”

LETTERS OF J.N.D., VOL. 3, P. 372.

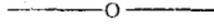
If this patient, self-controlled, laborious method, had been that of all who have had to speak and write much, from what strife and division, bitterness and sorrow, would the Church of God have been saved! Would that this “habit” might be likewise the “habit” of all who are now rising up to teach and to feed the flock of God!

“ Oh what a home ! The Son who knows,
 He only—all His love ;
 And brings us as His well-beloved,
 To that bright rest above,
 Dwells in His bosom —knoweth all
 That in that bosom lies,
 And came to earth to make it known,
 That we might share His joys.”

MRS. J. A. TRENCH.

CHAPTER IV.

ERROR AS TO THE LORD'S SUPPER.



It is impossible to deal with all the errors now passing current amongst the Brethren in question, but there are some relating to the Lord's Supper—so serious, and of such practical influence upon the soul, that it is imperative to expose them, for the warning of any who may read these pages.

But some few remarks as to the true nature of this blessed ordinance seem requisite. It formed the subject of a revelation to the Apostle Paul personally. He did not receive it from the Twelve Apostles. “*I have received of the Lord,” he says, and then goes on to state the ordinance (1 Cor. 11 : 23). This feast is the moral centre of all Christian worship and service ; and, indeed, the light in which it is regarded, and the degree in which it is appreciated, form an index of the spiritual state of Christians. Whether, therefore, we hold the truth about it, or are deluded by error, must be of deep concern to the individual Christian, or to Assemblies.

The extreme of false doctrine is found, where the ordinance becomes a matter of idolatrous superstition—in Popery ; but it was more or less misunderstood amongst all Christians, until that renaissance of scriptural truth which God has given to His people in these last days. The various items of recovered truth have, however, only just been re-established, when the enemy's work of overthrowing them commences ; and amongst the things now being changed is the true doctrine of the Lord's Supper.

The main point in the Supper of the Lord is that it is a REMEMBRANCE of Him. It is not a contemplation

* The “I” in the original is emphatic, *εγω παρελαβον*.

of Him as He is now. That we have, by the Holy Spirit's power, without the Lord's Supper ; and, indeed, wherever two or three are gathered together unto His name, there is He in their midst—corporeally absent, He is divinely present with the assembled saints, which the Holy Spirit gives them to know and to enjoy. But it is essential to grasp that the Supper is not a calling to mind the risen and glorified Christ ; it is a remembrance of Him as He once was, and never will be again—in death.

The word translated "remembrance," in 1 Cor. 11 : 24, is used in the New Testament, only in connection with the Supper—except once, but this exception bears out the meaning ; it is in Heb. 10 : 3—

"There is a remembrance again made of sins every year."
Heb. 10 : 3.

The word is derived, however, from one which signifies to remember, *i.e.*, to call to mind *something past*. Its New Testament use will be made amply clear by the following passages :—

"Peter calling to remembrance saith"	-	Mark 11 : 21.
"Peter called to mind the word"	-	Mark 17 : 72.
"Bring you into remembrance of my ways"	1 Cor. 4 : 17.	
"He remembereth the obedience of you all"	2 Cor. 7 : 15.	
"I put thee in remembrance that"	-	2 Tim. 1 : 6.
"Call to remembrance the former days"	-	Heb. 10 : 32.

What the Lord desired was that we should remember Him in His death, and this is proved, not only by the express words used, but by the emblems appointed. If it had been the calling to mind a Living One that was intended, He would not have chosen emblems of His dead body—the bread, representing the body ; the wine, the separated blood.

The moral difference is immense. It was the Lord's design that ever and again, by this feast, our minds and hearts should be called back to the Cross, and to Himself as dead. This is the solemn, yet blessed purport of the ordinance. It reminds us that such was the scene in which He was, that it could only furnish Him with a platform for His death. Such was man, such were we, that He must die—if man was to be reached in blessing, "The Son of Man must be lifted

up." This and many more are the lines of thought which radiate from that precious memorial, so simple in itself, so boundless in the thoughts to which it leads.

But this, the true import of the ordinance, is expressly denied by Mr. Raven. At page 90 of the Weston book, some one says :—

"Does 'Remember Me' connect itself with the sufferings at all?"

"It is calling Him to mind."

"You call Him to mind being absent; He is absent, and you remember Him."

"Yes" (replies Mr. Raven), "but the instant you call Him to mind, you call Him to mind as a Living One."

Here, then, we have the distinct denial that the Supper is a remembrance of Christ in His death; it is asserted to be a calling to mind the living One, and as a living One. But this we have in every meeting, without the ordinance at all! The aim of the Supper is to bring Him before us as in death. We may indeed realise now, by the power of the Holy Spirit, a living Christ; but once He was dead, and it is the dead Christ that we remember in the Supper. However, Mr. Raven proceeds :—

"It is the Person. The bread and the wine set before us death accomplished—not accomplishing. One would be slow to make limitations to prevent the heart travelling over all His sorrows, but we must have the heart set in the right direction."

The "right direction" being, according to Mr. Raven, not towards the death, but to the living One—a real perversion of the intention of the ordinance.

But setting aside its doctrinal unsoundness, what wretched reasoning this is. The contention is, that the living One is before us in the Supper, and this is supported by pointing out that the bread and the wine set forth "death accomplished, not accomplishing." That is: We have the living One before us, and it must be so because the symbols are symbols of death!

Then some one asks, referring to Christ's being given for us :—

"Is it not in the sense of His love for us, not as giving Himself for sin?"

Why was not this ingenuous inquirer set right from Scripture, and shown the evil of his thought? In the 26th of Matthew the Lord expressly connects with the Supper, His giving Himself for our sins, viz.:—

“This is My blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many *for the remission of sins.*” (Mat. 26 : 28.)

Whence this desire to dissociate the notion of sin from the Lord's Supper? That it was not from God is shewn by its contrariety to God's word just quoted. Whence, then, was it? A straw on the surface may shew the current of a stream beneath, and this seemingly simple inquiry is to me very suggestive! I believe it to be from the same Satanic spirit, which we shall see later on, dares to depreciate the worship of the saints *as redeemed sinners.* (See page 72 *post.*)

But the reply given shews that disciple and master are on the same plane. F.E.R.'s answer is:—

“It is Himself pre-eminent, but pre-eminent in love. I think anyone can take up His death in the symbols, but I do not want it as a mere fact; I want to get behind the fact, and when I do I find love, and that is Himself.”

Thus he not only fails to correct the interrogator, but himself goes a step further. The querist would eliminate from the Supper the idea of the Lord's death being *for sin.* The teacher is prepared to dispense with the death altogether! So the death of the Lord is not wanted in the Lord's Supper. It is just tolerated. “One would be slow to make limitations to prevent”—its being referred to, “but we must have the heart set in the right direction”—and this direction is, not towards the death. Similarly again—“I think any one can take up His death in the symbols, but I do not want it as a mere fact,” &c.—that is, a reference to the death is just permissible. So, the Lord's intention in the ordinance is set aside, under colour of giving prominence to love. The essential object of the rite—the DEATH of the LORD—is airily waved to a subordinate place, if not abolished altogether. And these teachings are allowed to pass into circulation—no one apparently discerning their deadly drift!

But such is, now, accepted teaching in the Association. A little book has been published, entitled

“NOTES ON THE BREAKING OF BREAD, by T. WILLEY,” which is tainted with the same errors.

The work is unreliable from a scriptural point of view. Thus, the author says :—

“It is an immense relief to see that Judas, the traitor, had gone out during the eating of the Passover meal, before the Lord’s Supper as such was instituted. ‘He then, having received the sop, went immediately out, and it was night.’” (John 13 : 30).

There is an appearance of scriptural proof here, but no reality. If the author shewed from Scripture that the sop was given BEFORE the institution of the Supper, then the fact that Judas went out IMMEDIATELY AFTER the sop would prove that he was not present at the institution of the Supper. But he does not shew this, neither can it be shewn ; for the Lord expressly says the contrary in Luke 22 : 21. Here, the very NEXT WORDS AFTER the institution of the Supper, are :—

“But, behold the hand of him that betrayeth Me is with Me on the table.”

This is on a par with Mr. Raven’s citation of Luke 1 : 2, referred to at page 44. Ostensibly a scriptural proof is given, but those who examine it find that it is nothing of the kind. I mention it merely to shew the unreliability, as Biblical teaching, of what now issues from the press of these Brethren. It is a great change. Formerly—whatever else might be said of the writings of “Brethren”—in their scriptural accuracy no flaw could be found.

I am afraid, therefore, that the “immense relief” to which Mr. Willey gives expression, is merely a human sentimentalism, which must be discarded. Alas ! the case was not as our author supposes. On the contrary, it furnished an element in the sufferings of that blessed heart, that He had to exclaim, even in the midst of the restricted circle which surrounded Him—

“But, behold the hand of him that betrayeth Me is with Me on the table.”

But to the point. Our author says, at page 26 of his book :—

“It has been said, and the thought is very beautiful, that here in Luke we have the Lord Himself shewing His disciples in

what way He could still be with them after His departure ; that is, that in the Supper they would call HIM to mind. It was not to be a mere memorial, as of some historical event, but that, in the act of partaking of the bread and wine, they would 'call to mind' (this is the real force of the Scripture term translated 'remember') Himself in a personal way. The deep reality of His death would necessarily occupy the heart at such a moment, but there would, at the same time, be the full recognition of Himself as the Living One, 'alive for evermore,' the 'first-born among many brethren.' We shall see a little more of the bearing of this later on—but what a wonderful moment it is for the believer when he reaches this point, that as belonging to Christ's company, we can sit before Him as thus 'called to mind,' and enjoy unhinderedly the contemplation of His love."

Mr. Willey's teaching is both better and worse than F.E.R's. It is better in that it gives somewhat more room to THE LORD'S DEATH. With Mr. Raven, this is not wanted, though just tolerated. With our author, it "would necessarily occupy the heart at such a moment." But even with him it is only incidental. With him, as with F.E.R., the remembrance is not of the Lord in death—but is a "calling to mind" the Living One—and he says it is a wonderful moment "for the believer when he reaches this point—that as belonging to Christ's company, we can sit before Him as thus called to mind, and enjoy unhinderedly the contemplation of His love."

We need not here, travel again over the true doctrine of the Lord's Supper as a remembrance, not a mere contemplation. But it is imposing on English readers, to represent as a basis for the new doctrine, that the word "remember" in our version is a mis-translation. Any one by referring to the word as shown at page 59 *ante*, can judge for himself whether this is so or not. Mr. Willey says that "call to mind" is the real force of the term. I venture to say that "call to mind" does *not* give the full force of the word—it is, indeed, to call to mind a thing past, or a thing forgotten, which is the exact equivalent of the English word "remember."

But Mr. Willey has a further error in addition to Mr. Raven's :—

"It has been said, and the thought is very beautiful, that here in Luke, we have the Lord Himself showing His disciples in

what way He could still be with them after His departure ; that is, that in the Supper they would call Him to mind."

Marvellous ! Why here we have the first step towards the heterodoxy of the Real presence ! Rome did not spring by one bound into all her errors—many of them grew up gradually from the germ of what some one considered a "beautiful thought." Beautiful or not beautiful, the thought referred to is not in Scripture. The way in which the Lord could be with His disciples after His departure is, as He told them—"Where two or three are gathered together unto My Name, there am I in the midst of them." And Mr. Willey reduces the reality of His majestic presence to a mental action on the part of the saints—an inverted mysticism, which is not beautiful, but false. We gather to the Lord's presence, not to a group of mental activities.*

At the Supper, it is as already enjoying His presence, being gathered to His name, that we proceed to break the bread in remembrance of Him—it is NOT by our calling Him to mind in the Supper that He is present with us. He is present as the Risen One, and in the full realisation and enjoyment of this, we look back and REMEMBER HIM in His death. To suppose that there is any especial presence of the Lord in the breaking of bread, or that that is THE WAY in which He could be present with us, is serious error, enfolding the germ of Rome's worst idolatry.†

* Mysticism is defined as "a form of error which mistakes for a divine manifestation, the operations of a merely human faculty." It will be apparent that Mr. Willey's idea is exactly the converse of this : a mistaking the presence of the Lord for the action of our minds in remembering Him.

† C.H.M. says, referring to the Lord's Supper :—

"How did it fare with that ordinance for over a thousand years ? It was stripped of one of its grand elements, wrapped in a dead language, buried in a sepulchre of superstition, and bore this inscription, "A bloodless sacrifice for the sins of the living and the dead." And even when, at the time of the Reformation, the Bible was once more permitted to speak to man's conscience, and pour its living light upon the sepulchre in which the Eucharist lay buried, what was produced ? Under what form does the Lord's supper appear before us in the Lutheran church ? Under the form of consubstantiation. Luther denied that there was any change of the bread and wine *into* the body and blood of

This semi-Romish idea about the Supper appears to be another of the now recognised, tenets of the Association. Mr. Willey quotes it from some one whose name is not stated, endorses and passes it on—but, gathering strength as it goes, it is enunciated more plainly, I had almost said more grossly, in the “Food for the Faithful” for February, 1900. Mr. Willey’s view was that the Lord was present by “our calling Him to mind.” “H.C.A.” states baldly :—

“In the Supper THE LORD IS PRESENT, and He presents Himself afresh to us week by week IN THE BREAD AND THE WINE.” (H.C.A., in “Food for the Faithful,” p. 45.)

which is, I take it, getting pretty near to consubstantiation—if not identical. One can easily see how ecclesiastical corruptions grew up in the absence of care and watchfulness—“WHILE MEN SLEPT his enemy came and sowed tares.”

We have seen the Lord’s Supper perverted ; but in what follows it is degraded ; for it is turned into a sort of spiritual medicine for souls, when not in tone for worship. This is found in a quotation from “F.E.R.,” in page 53 of Mr. Willey’s book. Mr. Willey, when introducing the passage, says:—

“When Paul sets himself to unfold these valuable teachings as to the assembly, he is careful to commence with the Lord’s Supper. This not only gives the Lord’s Supper the prominence which it deserves, but seems to indicate, as has been so forcibly pointed out by others, that the Lord’s Supper is the introduction or stepping-stone into the enjoyments of the assembly. So evident is this that in one passage (Acts 20 : 7) the brethren are described as coming together “to break bread.” It was their first object, and whatever there was to be, in ministry or worship, would follow upon this. We venture to quote a few words just here which will make this plain :” (p.p. 52, 53.)

Then follows the quotation from “F.E.R.,” viz. :—

“The Lord’s Supper properly apprehended and carried out, has the effect of putting saints in touch with Christ and with one another. In assembling together, each coming from his engagements and home, saints are not for the moment free in spirit to enter into what is proper to the assembly, but they sit down for awhile, and partake of the Lord’s Supper, and so get in touch with Christ and with one another ; they

Christ ; but he maintained, and, that, too, in fierce and unbending opposition to the Swiss divines, that there was a mysterious presence of Christ *with* the bread and wine.

are thus brought into the spirit and tone of the assembly, and are as different as possible in mind and spirit to what they were at first.—(F.E.R.)”

How fast are Brethren travelling back into darkness when such things can be taught! READER, do not mistake. This is NOT A SPECIMEN of ecclesiastical errors from which Brethren have come out : it is actually taught in their midst to-day !

But first let us look a little at Mr. Willey's introductory teaching. That Paul gives due prominence to the Lord's Supper, goes without saying : but that because it is first in Paul's category of topics, it is therefore the “introduction or stepping-stone to the enjoyments of the assembly,” is simply a *non sequitur*. Better proof than this is certainly required, which our author purports to give. Let us see then what it is : he says :—

“So evident is this that in one passage (Acts 20 : 7) the brethren are described as coming together ‘to break bread.’ It was their first object, and whatever there was to be in ministry or worship would follow upon this.”

Now, the passage shows that the breaking of bread was *the object* of the meeting. And, in passing, let us note well, that notwithstanding the presence on this occasion of the great Apostle ; notwithstanding the extended discourses which he had to deliver to the Brethren, still the Holy Spirit guards the point, that the object of the meeting was to break bread.

But when Mr. Willey says “it was their first object,” he uses a phrase which has two meanings—it *was* first object in the sense of chief, but he uses the expression as meaning first in order of time—saying that, “whatever there was to be in ministry or worship would follow.” Well, the passage proves the exact contrary. It shows that Paul discoursed to the Brethren until midnight ; and that a lad named Eutychus, overpowered by sleep as Paul was discoursing at such length, fell from the third story to the ground, and was taken up for dead ; but Paul went down, found his life was yet in him, and restored him to them ; then the Scripture account says (verse 11) :—

“When he therefore was come up again, and had broken the bread . . . so he departed.” (N.Transl.)

So that instead of the breaking of bread being the first thing, and whatever there was to be of worship and ministry following upon this, it was exactly the contrary. And as before remarked, the teaching now put about, is unreliable from a scriptural point of view ; *it is not to be trusted* ; chapter and verse of Scripture are cited ; but when examined, it is found that the Scripture is misrepresented.

Mr. Raven is quoted again by Mr. Willey as follows :—

“It is Christ taking His place with us, and taking us into the light of the Father’s love. . . . That is why the breaking of bread should be the first thing in the meeting. It is then that Christ is realised on our side, and he conducts us, as we are attached to Him, into the Father’s love.” (Page 54.)

It is quite remarkable in contrast to this, that there is really no mention of the Father’s love in connection with the Lord’s Supper. That Christ does take, or rather has taken us, into the light of the Father’s love, is most true ; but that is not the subject of the Supper. The peculiar love before us in the Supper is Christ’s own love : and it is Christ Himself that we remember there : it is not Christ conducting into the Father’s love, but Christ giving Himself for us. But even were it otherwise, that does not appear to be any reason why the Breaking of Bread should be the first thing in the meeting. The assertion that it is, is a form of demonstration much affected by Mr. Raven, and commonly called a “*non sequitur*.” As to the statement that “It is then” (*i.e.*, in the breaking of bread) “that Christ is realised on our side”—the truth is, that if Christ is not realised on our side before the breaking of bread, we are not fit subjects to surround the Lord’s Table !

However, the point of time at which the breaking of bread should take place in the meeting is an interesting and important question. The Scriptural position is this : The only note of time we have, is the mere allusion in Acts 20 ; and this, as we have seen, is entirely against the view of Mr. Raven and Mr. Willey. We have positively no preceptive instruction as to when

it should be ; whether at the beginning of the meeting according to Mr. Raven ; or in the middle, or towards the end. And why this silence ? Obviously, because the Blessed Spirit of God is Himself in the Assembly to guide : and where the rule of the Holy Spirit is acknowledged, the fit moment will be taken. Indeed, the time when, on individual occasions, the bread should be broken is a matter of the nicest spiritual judgment, of the keenest apprehension of the Spirit's guidance. It depends greatly on the condition of souls present. To hurry it, would be as injudicious on some occasions, as to defer it on others. No doubt it is wisely, and in sympathy for our weakness and spiritual exigencies, that Holy Scripture has given no positive injunction as to the time. Probably it may be taken as a sign of spiritual debility that the breaking of bread should be left until late in the meeting ; as, if all hearts are attuned to the object of the meeting, we should not be dilatory to fulfil Christ's desire. Sometimes, however, the Spirit of God has to occupy souls with matters that should have been dealt with prior to the meeting—and this, alas ! by moral necessity, delays the breaking of bread.*

But where the Spirit in His wisdom has observed silence, Mr. Raven steps in and decides. "The breaking of bread," he says, "should be the first thing in the meeting." There are two objections to this : First, it is without authority. Second, it removes the hearts of the saints from the position of blessed dependence upon the Spirit's guidance, substituting a mechanical rule, for the most delicate spiritual considerations.

More serious, however, than the question of time, is what has already been referred to, a degrading of the Lord's Supper. That is to say, it is displaced from its pre-eminence as THE object of the meeting of Saints on

* In passing let us admonish ourselves, that in this way, one or two persons whose souls are in spiritual disorder, may throw back, damp and hinder the worship of a whole meeting, and this even without uttering a word ; but still more when the restless activity of one out of communion induces him to speak, or attempt to lead in worship.

the Lord's Day. We have seen how carefully this position of the Supper is preserved by the inspired historian in Acts 20. But in the new teaching, the Lord's Supper is made ancillary and subordinate to something else. It is—if you please—"the introduction or stepping-stone to the enjoyments of the Assembly." Now, it cannot be both the introduction to the main object and the main object itself. Which is it? For my part, I choose the teaching of Scripture—that it is the paramount object of the Saints on the Lord's Day—and refuse, as a human invention, that it is the "introduction" to anything at all.

A yet deeper lowering—a positive debasement of this holy feast, is the idea expressed in the preceding extracts of turning it into a spiritual tonic for the saints on assembling. The case is supposed, as we have seen, that,

"In assembling together, each coming from his engagements and home, saints are not for the moment free in spirit to enter into what is proper to the assembly."

But in this condition, in this state of mind, they may partake of the Lord's Supper though not fit for "what is proper to the assembly!" (whatever that may mean).

Now, it is too true that in assembling together, Christians are often not in condition for worship. But if so, much less are they in condition for that central and highest act of worship, commemorating the Lord's death in the bread and wine. The Lord's Supper is the remembrance of HIMSELF, and if one's thoughts on arriving at the meeting are upon one's engagements and home, or upon aught but Himself, how can one have a true remembrance of Christ? The truth is, that this condition of soul, is what leads to so much postponement of the breaking of bread in the meeting: saints are not really prepared for it. But, when they are not in a proper condition of soul—partaking of the Lord's Supper to make them so, is profaning holy things; it is eating and drinking unworthily, and he who partakes in such a way is "guilty concerning the body and blood of the Lord" (1 Cor. 11: 27). So that Mr. Raven's and Mr. Willey's teachings would actually subject saints to the solemn chastisement of the Lord according to

I Cor. 11 : 30-32. Beware Christian, how you imbibe these false doctrines, lest you bring the Lord's hand heavily upon yourself. If one is not fit to enter upon "what is proper to the Assembly," he is certainly not fit to partake of the Lord's Supper. More complete inversion, misplacement, and confusion in spiritual things, could scarcely be, than that here proffered for the guidance and instruction of Christians. Indeed, for souls in the condition projected by Mr. Raven, instead of the Lord's Supper being a preparation to fit them for something else, THEY require a preparation to fit them for the Lord's Supper : and the preparation, I need scarcely say, is that which the Scripture directs, "Let a man examine (prove) himself and so let him eat." (I Cor. 11 : 28.)

But this does not close the list of errors and misconceptions with which it is sought to becloud the simple feast of the Supper. Digging for novelties—which seem to be the grand quest of these *fin de siecle* Brethren—"H.C.A." has thrown up a treasure, namely, that the Lord's Supper is not a "part of the worship of the Assembly." We have seen this institution perverted, and degraded. Now it is to be bowed out of the Church.

I refer to an article in "Food for the Faithful" for February 1900 (page 37). This article commences by setting forth at length, and with much elaboration, that we are—at the Lord's Supper—on the ground of the New Covenant. So far, the author is right. It is what every Christian knows. The Lord expressed it, when he said "This cup is the new testament (covenant) in My blood." But in what the author builds upon this, he is teaching error. He says :—

"I do not see that the Lord's Supper is a 'new creation' act, nor part of the 'worship' of the Assembly. Both new creation and worship, so far as I see, can only be known as consistently following on from those who are in the good of the new covenant. Both are further unfoldings of God to the soul. . . . when I come to worship, and the assembly as a new creation in the company of Christ, we are not on but beyond new covenant ground."

Now what does all this mean? "New creation . . .

following on from those who are in the good of the new covenant!" What does it mean? If any one is in the new covenant at all, of course he is in "the good of" it—for bad of it, there is none. But let that pass. "New creation following on from those who are in," &c., &c. New creation cannot follow on from any body! It is the act of God. Creation, old or new, "follows on" from a Creator,—from no one else.

However, let us be clear about the new covenant. The first covenant we know was based upon man's obedience, and simply demonstrated that he was a lost creature. But God spoke of a new covenant in which the element of man's obedience as a condition should find no place. Its language was expressive only, of what GOD would do—not what HE required MAN TO DO. It was based upon the blood-shedding of Christ. Hence the Lord says, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood." Primarily the new covenant relates to the two houses of Israel, as we see in Jeremiah 31 : 31, "The days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah." And we must remember that it was with a remnant solely of that nation, that the Lord was surrounded, when He spoke of the new covenant in His blood. But the PRINCIPLE of this new covenant, being sovereign grace, independent of man's works or law keeping—we, Gentiles, are virtually under it—in short it is simply the ground of redemption by the blood of Christ—the only ground for any poor sinner, of any calling or dispensation—either the Church, or Israel, or the saved Gentiles after the Church. Hence the Apostle Paul, even when writing to the Gentiles (2 Cor. 3), speaks of being "able ministers of the new covenant; not of the letter, but of the spirit." Had it been of the letter only, it would not have embraced the Gentiles—but now it does; and, in fuller senses still, is not of the letter, but of the spirit.

So far, we and H.C.A. travel in company : but when he says that it is as a new covenant company and NOT as the Church, that we surround the table of the Lord, we at once part. "New Covenant Company" is

a phrase, not found in Scripture, and though it may seem harmless, yet when coined to support an unscriptural view, is objectionable. The preceding extract differentiates between our character as "new covenant company" and the Assembly. It says that we surround the Table as the former, not as the latter : and the joy, and praise, and adoration, uttered by believers (we must not say the Assembly !) on the ground of the new covenant (that is, on the ground of redemption) is not worship ! The Assembly and worship are something higher ! Accordingly we find our author almost apologizing for the blessed outbursts of worship (no : we must not call it worship !) at the Lord's Table. This is what he says :—

"It is important, I think, to see the ground we are set upon at the Lord's Supper. IT EXPLAINS TO ME the language that is often heard there, the relief and joy and praise of this "new covenant company." (Page 43).

As if indeed it required explanation—that souls gathered together with Jesus in the midst and the emblems of accomplished redemption—His dead body—before them, should be filled with joy and praise and adoration !

There is a subtle underlying thought in all this, which I believe to be very evil—a lowering, a disparagement of redemption—presenting the church as on more exalted ground than redemption, and worship as something more elevated than the praises of a mere "new covenant company."* However, in the view of H.C.A., we celebrate the Supper as a "new covenant company," and—THAT over and done with, we pass into the character of the Assembly and enter upon worship—as he says, "We advance from one to the other." (Page 48.)

Now, is this very pretty theory to be accepted as doctrine ? "What saith the Scripture ?" One word of Scripture disposes of it—for, as to the capacity or character in which we surround the Lord's Table, the

* See also the desire detected and exposed at page 61 *ante* to exclude from the Lord's Supper all connection with the idea of sin.

Apostle Paul tells us that it is AS THE BODY OF CHRIST :—

“The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the Body of Christ? For we being many are one bread, and one body : for we are all partakers of that one bread.” (1 Cor. 10 : 16-17.)

(I suppose I need not prove that the Assembly is the Body.) And thus the theory falls to the ground. I prefer Paul to Mr. Anstey. The truth, is the exact opposite of what Mr. Anstey teaches. The meeting for the Lord's Supper—is THE grand characteristic MEETING OF THE ASSEMBLY. If there is any one meeting which is, more than any other, an Assembly meeting, it is that around the Table of the Lord.

As to the question of worship, there could not be greater evidence of darkening of mind than is afforded by the necessity of proving to “BRETHREN,” and at this time of day, that the joy and praise expressed at the Supper of the Lord, are worship ! But what saith the Scripture ? It describes the cup as one of “blessing.” “The cup of blessing which we bless” (1 Cor. 10). It is with thanksgiving that we surround the Table of the Lord. Are thanksgiving and blessing not worship ? Do we not praise and bless and adore Him, as we take the bread and the wine ? And is that not worship ? Why it is the very worship of heaven, and differs only in degree. The praise that we utter at this blessed feast, is identical in nature and character with the new song with which the redeemed worship the Lamb in heaven. (Rev. 5.)

But this article by H.C.A. sheds light on the previous teaching of F.E.R. The latter speaks of saints not being in a state “to enter upon WHAT IS PROPER TO THE ASSEMBLY,” and partaking of the Supper to make them so. And Mr. Anstey says :—(I re-quote in part.)

“But when I come to worship, and the assembly as a new creation in the company of Christ, we are not on but beyond new covenant ground. All, I think, then is on another platform. Not new covenant, but new creation. Here, as I understand it, all that is material has disappeared for faith. The Lord's Supper evidently has to do with material things

—with time and place, bread and wine, and persons ; while worship is in spirit and in truth, and material things have no place." (Page 46.)

It appears then that in this system, worship is not on the ground of redemption, but of new creation : redemption is quite left behind, and one can understand from this, why it is that the death of the Lord is sought to be banished from His own Supper, that the fact of His bloodshedding being for sins is not to be mentioned ; and worship, based on the blood of the Lamb, is something "not proper to the Assembly"—indeed, it is not worship at all ! There is traceable in this teaching a transcendentalism which soars away on the wings of imagination, scorning the restraints of Scripture. Here, let us notice, it is first assumed as a postulate, that there is for faith, nothing material in new creation. Having got this "foot of earth for a fulcrum," the deduction is easy that, therefore, the Lord's Supper cannot be connected with the new creation.

But what if the postulate be wrong : what becomes then of the conclusion built upon it ? Where is the authority for there being "for faith nothing material in new creation" ? I read of a new earth (Rev. 21 and 2 Peter 3). Is that not material ? Again : Did not the Lord newly risen from the dead, Head of the new creation, eat part of a broiled fish in the presence of the disciples ? (Luke 24 : 43). Will anyone dare to tell me that that was not "a new-creation act" ? Yet it had to do with material things.

But it is time to start the inquiry—What is the drift and tendency of this teaching ? Is not a Satanic mind perceptible ? moving behind this superfine, "systematised error," and injecting spiritual poison underneath "good words and fair speeches" ? Can the people of God not discern between truth and error ? Have they not—even the babes—"an unction from the Holy One" by which they "know all things" (1 John 2 : 20). And do they not know "that no lie is of the truth" ?

Let us now summarize the principal points which we have had before us as regards the Lord's Supper, in what is termed "THE PRESENT MINISTRY" of these Brethren.

SUMMARY.

1. And principally : the Lord's death is not the subject of the Lord's Supper.
2. Christ's bloodshedding for our sins is removed from the purview. Love is claimed to be the subject, but it follows that it must be love severed from the Cross.
3. The Lord's presence in the meeting is—our calling Him to mind in the Supper.
4. The Lord's Supper is not THE OBJECT or central fact of the meeting. It becomes :—
 - (a) A spiritual tonic for sick souls ; OR
 - (b) An "introduction to the enjoyments of the Assembly."
5. It is to be, therefore, the first thing in the meeting.
6. It is no part of the worship of the Assembly, nor, indeed, is it worship at all.
7. An utterly false use of the truth of New Creation : this being set on a higher level than Redemption, to the lowering and disparagement of the latter, —in effect, belittling that mighty work of love !

It is with a genuine feeling of sadness that I conclude this chapter. The Lord instituted a sweet and simple memorial for the express purpose of shewing His death "until He come." The chief point, the DEATH of the Lord, we have seen to be, under this pernicious teaching, all but eliminated. How must that blessed One Himself regard this setting on one side His most precious death ?

May the reader peruse with profit, the following extracts on the subject, from Mr. Darby's Synopsis of the Books of the Bible, and I would point out that AGAIN THE QUESTION ARISES : HAVE BRETHREN BEEN UNDER A DELUSION HERETOFORE—OR ARE THEY BEING DELUDED NOW ? One or the other must be true.

“ . . . it is a Saviour slain, who is to be remembered. It is no longer a question of the living Messiah : all that was over. It was no longer the remembrance of Israel's deliverance from the slavery of Egypt. Christ, and Christ slain, began an entirely new order of things. Of Him they were now to think—of Him slain on earth. He then draws their attention to the blood of the new covenant ; adding that which extends it to others besides the Jews, without naming them. “It is shed for *many*.” Moreover, this blood is not, as at Sinai, only to confirm the covenant, for fidelity to which they were responsible. It was shed for the remission of sins. So that the Lord's Supper presents the remembrance of Jesus slain, who, by dying, has broken with the past, has laid the foundation of the New covenant, obtained the remission of sins, and opened the door to the Gentiles. IT IS ONLY IN HIS DEATH THAT THE SUPPER PRESENTS HIM TO US. His blood is apart from His body. He is dead. It is neither Christ living on the earth, nor Christ glorified in heaven.

SYNOPSIS OF THE BOOKS OF THE BIBLE,
VOL. III (on MATTHEW 26).

Let us remark some of the thoughts of the Spirit in connection with this ordinance.

1st. He links the affections with it in the strongest way. It was the same night on which Jesus was betrayed that He left this memorial of His sufferings and of His love. As the paschal lamb brought to mind the deliverance which the sacrifice offered in Egypt, had procured for Israel, thus the Lord's Supper called to mind the sacrifice of Christ. He is in the glory, the Spirit is given ; but they were to remember Him. His offered body was the object before their hearts in this memorial. TAKE NOTICE OF THIS WORD “REMEMBER.” IT IS NOT A CHRIST AS HE NOW EXISTS, IT IS NOT THE REALISATION OF WHAT HE IS : THAT IS NOT A REMEMBRANCE—HIS BODY IS NOW GLORIFIED. IT IS A REMEMBRANCE OF WHAT HE WAS ON THE CROSS. It is a body slain, and blood shed, not a glorified body. It is remembered though, by those who are now united to Him, in the glory into which He is entered. As risen and associated with Him in glory, they look back to that blessed work of love and His love in it which gave them a place there. They drink also the cup IN REMEMBRANCE OF HIM. IN A WORD IT IS CHRIST LOOKED ON AS DEAD : there is not such a Christ now.

It is the remembrance of Christ Himself. It is that which attaches to Himself, it is not only the value of His sacrifice,

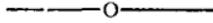
but attachment to Himself, the remembrance of Himself. The Apostle then shows us, if it is a dead Christ, who it is that died. Impossible to find two words, the bringing together of which has so important a meaning. The DEATH of the LORD. How many things are comprised in that. He who is called the Lord had died! What love! what purposes! what efficacy! what results! The Lord Himself gave Himself up for us. We celebrate His death. At the same time it is the end of God's relation with the world, on the ground of man's responsibility, except the judgment. This death has broken every link—has proved the impossibility of any. We shew forth this death until the rejected Lord shall return to establish new bonds of association by receiving us to Himself to have part in them. It is this which we proclaim in the ordinance when we keep it. Besides this it is in itself a declaration that the blood on which the new covenant is founded, has been already shed; it was established in this blood. I do not go beyond that which the passage presents; the object of the Spirit of God here is to set before us, not the efficacy of the death of Christ, but that which attaches the heart to Him in remembering His death, and the meaning of the ordinance itself. **IT IS A DEAD, BETRAYED CHRIST WHOM WE REMEMBER.** The offered body was as it were before their eyes at this supper.

SYNOPSIS, VOL. IV, p. 235-6 (1 COR. 11).



CHAPTER V.

ERROR AS TO CHRISTIAN PRIVILEGE : FELLOWSHIP WITH THE FATHER AND THE SON DENIED.



In the list of truths long known and accepted amongst those called "Brethren," but now assailed by Mr. Raven, is that of the believer's privilege to have fellowship with the Father and the Son. This is something so precious, so elevated, that it seems sad to have to bring it down to the arena of discussion. But he teaches at Newcastle :—

"It is, I think, taking too exalted a position for us to say we have fellowship with the Father and with His Son. It was apostolic." (p. 141).

Then again (p. 147) :—

"QUES.—As to the subject of fellowship with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ in John's Epistle, is that in no sense ours?"

"F.E.R.—Chap. I : 3 says :—'That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you.' The Apostles were anxious that believers should have part in all they could communicate. But they had a full sense of what was theirs specially, and I should not like to invade upon that."

To show what the truth is, as hitherto accepted, the following extracts from Mr. Darby's excellent writings on the subject may be taken. They will repay the reading. May those who peruse them here, find themselves brought nearer to God by these precious unfoldings of divine truth :—

"The Epistle of John has a peculiar character. It is eternal life manifested in Jesus, and imparted to us - the life which was with the Father, and which is in the Son. It is in this life that BELIEVERS enjoy the communion of the Father, that they are in relationship with the Father by the Spirit of adoption, and that THEY HAVE FELLOWSHIP WITH THE FATHER AND THE SON. God's own character is that which tests it ; because it proceeds from Himself."

"The first chapter establishes these two latter points : namely, communion with the Father and the Son, and that this communion must be according to the essential

character of God.”

“ Oh how precious is the truth that this life, such as it was with the Father, such as it was with Jesus, is that given to us ! In what relationships it sets us, by the power of the Holy Ghost, with the Father and with the Son Himself ! And this is what the Spirit here first sets before us. And observe, how it is all grace here. Farther on, indeed, He tests all pretensions to the possession of fellowship with God, by displaying God’s own character : a character from which He can never deviate. But, before entering on this, He presents the Saviour Himself, and communion with the Father and Son by this means, without question and without modification. THIS IS OUR POSITION AND OUR ETERNAL JOY.”

“ But we cannot have the Son without having the Father. He who had seen Him had seen the Father ; and consequently he who had communion with the Son had communion with the Father ; for their thoughts and feelings were all one. He is in the Father, and the Father in Him. We have fellowship therefore with the Father. And this is true also, when we look at it in another aspect. We know that the Father has entire delight in the Son. Now, He has given us, by revealing the Son, to take our delight in Him also, feeble as we are. I know, when I am delighting in Jesus—in His obedience, His love to His Father, to us, His single eye and purely devoted heart—I have the same feelings, the same thoughts, as the Father Himself. In that the Father delights, cannot but delight, in Him in whom I now delight, I have communion with the Father. So with the Son in the knowledge of the Father. All this flows, whether in the one or other point of view, from the Person of the Son. Herein our joy is full. What can we have more than the Father and Son ? What more perfect happiness than community of thoughts, feelings, joys and communion with the Father and Son, deriving all our joy from themselves ? And if it seem difficult to believe, let us remember that, in truth, it cannot be otherwise : for, in the life of Christ, the Holy Ghost is the source of my thoughts, feelings, communion, and He cannot give thoughts different from those of the Father and the Son.”

“ To say they are adoring thoughts is in the very nature of things, and only makes them more precious. To say that they are feeble and often hindered, while the Father and the Son are divine and perfect, is, if true, to say the Father and the Son are God, are divine, and we feeble creatures. That surely none will deny. But if the blessed Spirit be the source, they must be the same as to nature and fact.”

‘ THIS IS OUR CHRISTIAN POSITION THEN HERE BELOW IN TIME, through the knowledge of the Son of God. As the Apostle says, ‘ These things write we unto you, that your joy may be full.’ ”

Synopsis of the Books of the Bible, Vol. v., p. 442 et seq.

To say which of these two opposed lines of teaching is of God might be left to the spiritual instincts of the believer. But it is well to bring the matter to the never failing test of the Word.

It is then denied, that believers have fellowship with the Father and the Son. The question is surely a serious one—as to whether what is thus put before Christians for light, is truth, or is the darkness of error.

THE FIRST DISPROOF of Mr. Raven's position is the obvious sense of the 1st chapter of 1 John: the Apostle declared the person of Christ for the very purpose that believers might have fellowship with the Apostles, and "truly," he says, "our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ." Then he adds: "These things write we unto you, that your joy may be full." Now if the Apostles' fellowship was with the Father and the Son, how could believers have fellowship with the Apostles, excepting by sharing it? And, further, it may be asked—How could it make the believers' joy full, to know that there was a blessed fellowship from which they were shut out? But the clear intention of the passage is to make known to them this wondrous fellowship, in order that they might share it, enter into it with the Apostles, and through this be filled with joy—a necessary result of such a privilege when made known to faith.

SECONDLY, the 6th verse makes it clear:—

"If we say that we have fellowship with Him and walk in darkness we lie and do not the truth."

Here he evidently contemplates that the fellowship was so wide as that some might profess it falsely, and hence he provides a test. What is that test? A moral one: to wit, walking in darkness. According to Mr. Raven's teaching, only Apostles have this fellowship: if, then, any one professed to have it, the question would be, "Is he an Apostle?" and the test would be, NOT—

"If we say that we have fellowship with Him and walk in darkness we lie and do not the truth."

But—

If we say that we have fellowship with Him, *and are not Apostles*, we lie and do not the truth!

And the test which *is* given would be useless and

unmeaning, unless indeed Mr. Raven would actually suppose that Apostles might say that they had fellowship with Him, and yet walk in darkness. But this is absurd. The real meaning is quite simple. Apostles first had this fellowship: John teaches that it was the wondrous privilege of all believers to share it—and he does so to augment—nay, to complete—their joy. But the very fact that the wider circle is brought into view necessitates a caution, because some might say that they had fellowship with God and walk in darkness.

THIRDLY. There is the simple word of Scripture—“fellowship.” which, in the original (*κοινωνία*), necessarily involves the idea of having something in common. The meaning is that the Apostles had fellowship with the Father and the Son; and it was the privilege of all believers to share it. They were admitted to this fellowship, or partnership, with the Apostles.

BUT, FOURTHLY. Scripture is sufficient to meet every error; and accordingly we have the positive, explicit statement of the Apostle Paul, that all Christians are “called unto the fellowship of His Son Jesus Christ our Lord” (1 Cor. 1 : 9). This ought to be enough—but so anxious is Mr. Raven to take from believers their precious portion, that he cannot let us have the support of this verse. How does he get rid of this obstacle to his doctrine? He triumphantly points out that in this Scripture, “It is not fellowship *with Him* but *of Him* !” (Newcastle, p. 140). What the difference is, he does not explain.

Now, what is the difference? Simply that where this blessed fellowship is dealt with *in extenso*, in John’s Epistle, it is fully described as “Fellowship with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ”—but where the Apostle Paul merely recapitulates in a list, privileges enjoyed by the Corinthians, he briefly mentions it as “the fellowship of His Son Jesus Christ our Lord.”

There is a precisely similar difference in the use of language with reference to Baptism: where the formula is fully given, it is stated, at length, as “Baptising in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost” (Matt. 28 : 19); but where the fact is briefly

mentioned—it is simply said “Baptised in the name of the Lord Jesus” (Acts 8 : 16), or “Baptised unto Jesus Christ” (Rom. 6 : 3). Not that there was any difference in the thing itself, but that it was mentioned either in brief terms, or more lengthily, according to the occasion

What, however, is “the fellowship of Him,” but His fellowship? And what is that? Why it is sharing with that blessed One, His knowledge and enjoyment of the Father, as He says: “I have declared unto them Thy name, and will declare it.” And fellowship with the Father; what is that? Why, knowing in our measure, and enjoying with the Father the preciousness of His Son our Lord Jesus Christ. This is obviously “fellowship with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ.” It is indeed an exalted thing—but blessed be God, it is not confined to the Apostles, according to the narrow conceptions of the new teaching; it belongs to the humblest believer in the Lord Jesus Christ.

This, it will be observed, is not fellowship in respect of things outside of and contrary to us, which would at best be of a negative character. It is sharing the enjoyment of what is good, positive, and eternal—but such is not Mr. Raven’s idea. Thus he declares:—

“I understand fellowship to be our bond of association in a scene where all is contrary to God” (p. 142).

A brother very appositely enquires:—

“How do you arrive at that thought of fellowship from the Scriptures?”

But he receives no answer—Scripture could not be found for such a notion. Lower down on the same page, Mr. Raven repeats it more absolutely:—

“Association is my idea of fellowship—we own Him as Lord.”

It should be well observed here that, as in a previous case, there is no attempt to deduce the dogma from Scripture: it is, “I understand,” “My idea is,” “I think,” or “I do not think.” The interrogator may ask for Scripture, but none is produced, and F.E.R. completely evades the point. (p. 142.)

However, having evolved from his understanding, not from Scripture, the baseless idea that fellowship is

merely a bond of association in a scene of contrariety ; that, now becomes a postulate, and he builds upon it, that we shall not have fellowship in heaven.

“I do not think there will be any fellowship in heaven ; the word to me implies a special bond in a scene of contrariety, that is, I believe, the force of it in Scripture, and there will be nothing in heaven to call for fellowship.”

(Weston book, p. 82).

Here again it is what he “thinks” and what he “believes,” and though Scripture is mentioned in a way implying that the views are based upon profound scriptural knowledge, not a word of Scripture is quoted in support.

In fine, Mr. Raven seems to have no idea of fellowship beyond what is called church fellowship. Of course we shall not, in heaven, have the breaking of bread, nor any of that discipline or those trials, arising from our now having the flesh in us or the world around us. But fellowship with the Father and the Son appears to be a blank to him. Apostles may have had it once, but no one has it now, nor shall we enjoy it in heaven. MR. DARBY once wrote :—

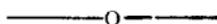
Close to Thy trusted side
IN FELLOWSHIP DIVINE ;
No cloud no distance, e'er shall hide
Glories that then shall shine.

(Hymn No. 270).

But *he* did not live to read these Newcastle and Weston teachings. Had he done so, two courses would have been open to him : ONE, to go laboriously and mournfully over the teachings of his life, and correct them according to these latest modes in Christianity ; OR—SECOND—to take these books, and with the keen knife of his criticism, CUT THEM INTO RIBBONS ! READER, *which do you think it would have been ?*

CHAPTER VI.

SCRIPTURAL ESTEEM FOR GOD'S SERVANTS—
 MR. DARBY'S PLACE AND WORK IN THE
 CHURCH.



One of the melancholy features of the Association of Brethren identified with Mr. Raven, is depreciation of a departed servant of God, Mr. J. N. Darby. I would willingly avoid introducing his name if I could—but the minds of the saints need to be recalled to his work ; and though it is of the latter that I would treat, to do so is scarcely possible without referring to himself.

There is however, a proper appreciation of the Lord's Servants, which the Holy Spirit sanctions. Indeed, one who values the truth of God, cannot but feel deeply indebted to a servant of His, who is used to bring that truth home to the soul. Paul reminds the Galatians of what their sentiment towards him had been—nor does he in the least check or reprove it :—

“Ye received me” (he says) “as an angel of God, even as Christ Jesus, . . . for I bear you record, that if it had been possible, ye would have plucked out your own eyes, and have given them to me.” (Gal. 4 : 14-15.)

A high, a loving regard therefore, for those who bring the truth in power, is quite according to God. “How beautiful are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings ! that publisheth peace ; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation !”

And when such are gone, are they to be forgotten directly, and their teachings revolutionized? Are strange and novel doctrines to be introduced, even about the Person of the Christ who was the end and

object of their ministry? No. Scripture tells us :—

“REMEMBER THEM which have” (should be—had) “the rule over you who have spoken unto you the Word of God : whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation. Jesus Christ the same yesterday and to-day, and for ever.”

And significant indeed is the juxtaposition of the warning which immediately follows :—

“Be not carried about with DIVERS AND STRANGE DOCTRINES.”
(Hebrews 13 : 7-8.)

Now the great instrument in recovering for the Church the vast body of truth, which had for centuries lain buried, was the honoured servant of the Lord before mentioned. What the Church of God is ; the office of the Holy Ghost in the Church ; the true character of the Lord's Supper ; the Lord's coming as a present hope ; the proper and neglected place of Prophecy ; these, and many other truths, were elicited from the Scriptures, by one whom God had called and specially fitted, and above all, graciously kept through a long life for the purpose. Not only was he eminently godly—though by grace he was—but he was manifestly raised up for a unique and remarkable work. God chose for the purpose, a man of profoundest learning, knowledge, and mental capacity. He, therefore, who esteems him simply as a man of great piety, or even principally as such, is either ignorant of his special work in the Church, or else is depreciating that work for his own purposes ; just as one who spoke of Paul as merely a very eminent Christian, would be showing simple ignorance as to Paul's place in the divine economy.

A remarkable analogy is discernible between the work of Paul and that entrusted to Mr. Darby—not of course equality, but certainly analogy. Paul received a special revelation of the truth as to the Church ; and when that truth was absolutely lost—to Mr. Darby it was given, to discover it in the Scriptures. Further—and this, not the least—to act upon it and to shew Christians how it could still be practically acted upon, notwithstanding the wrecked condition of the Church as an outward testimony.

What shall we then think of one who speaks of Mr. Darby as—ah—really a most spiritual man, who prayed

beautifully, and wrote twenty nice hymns? And yet that is, in brief, Mr. Raven's estimate of this departed leader of God's people! But we must not be unjust to "F.E.R.," so let us have his very words. This is what he says:—

"It was J.N.D.'s great spiritual power, not his learning and knowledge, that gave him the place he had; the thing that affected me most was to hear him pray, and now it is his hymns that I enjoy most."

Then some one naively and sympathetically asks:—

"Was it found in the way that his doctrine and life corresponded?"

"Yes," replies F.E.R., "the Kingdom of God is not in word, but in power." (WESTON, p. 61.)

This might nearly all be said of any obscure Christian, if but spiritually-minded and pious. It is a FALSE ESTIMATE; subtly calculated to depreciate the special work of J.N.D.; to detract from the influence of his teachings; but at the same time to patronize him, and to *appreciate* the speaker. However, there is now furnished to us, the proper measure to take of this departed servant of the Lord—it was not his teachings, not his singular work in the Church, that gave him the place he had, it was his spirituality, his Christian consistency!

Let no one think that it is a zeal for the name of Mr. Darby that inspires these comments. Not at all. No one need trouble about Mr. Darby. What I refer to is part of a system. Item by item the truth which had been recovered, is being put back into the darkness in which it was before. Thus, it will be seen, there is a deeper underlying question than Mr. Darby's name—it is, the rejection of the ministry, of which he was the vessel to the Church.

But withal, it is desired to sail under the prestige of Mr. Darby's name. Selected portions of his writings are published, but none such as would contradict the new theology. Further, the periodicals teem with articles under the initials "J.N.D."; though, for years before his death, it was known that he had no fellowship with them. They "are too pretentious, and then they have as periodicals run into a worldly form"—is what he said (LETTERS, Vol. III., p. 9). And again, "I do not write any articles now for Brethren's journals"

(IDEM, p. 530). This being so, is it not a little disingenuous to be claiming the weight of his name, by continually inserting, after his death, articles under his initials? Surely a nice sense of what is due to the known sentiments of one who is gone should prevent this!

A striking instance of this mode of handling Mr. Darby's name is found in the "Notes on the Breaking of Bread," by Mr. Willey. At page 54 occurs the following quotation:—

"In the Lord's Supper, man is nothing, but Christ and His love everything.—(J.N.D.)"

This is the only quotation from Mr. Darby in the work; but by means of this mere moral remark, his name is tacked on to a book, which, as I have shewn in Chapter IV., is in the teeth of his teaching upon the subject. *I have taken care* to give a *more lengthy* extract from J.N.D. The reader will see from that extract what his real views were, and whether it is likely, that he would have allowed the smallest identification of himself with such teaching as that in Mr. Willey's book.

I should not speak further of Mr. Darby, but for the conviction that much, as to the blessing of Christians, lies in the question of how his work and place in the Church are regarded; and the further conviction, that the divisions amongst Brethren of late years, have largely arisen from misapprehension on this subject.

If the reader has followed me in the analogy (comparing greater things with less) between the work of the Apostle Paul and Mr. Darby, he will be able to see that the gift in either case attached to the person. The gift and work of each was unique. There could not be a second Paul: there could not be a second J.N.D.: and a great source of mischief amongst Brethren has been—a sort of Apostolical-succession-notion—that someone must succeed to J.N.D. That this was so in the Division of 1890, is notorious: it was stated explicitly at the time. A beloved brother, Dr. W.T.P.W. (whom, for his writings and work in the Gospel, none can esteem more than I do), said:—

"At the bottom I believe it is a question of leadership—on whom the mantle of dear J.N.D. should fall."

Now had the work and place of Mr. Darby been rightly

apprehended, there would have been nothing of this, for there was *no* "mantle of J.N.D." to fall—there could be no successor to him, because his gift was personal and *sui generis*.

But misapprehension as to this, has led to the almost idolatrous exaltation of, first, J.B.S., and now F.E.R. There must be a successor to J.N.D. Hence it follows that there must be a display of originality : it must be shown that Mr. Darby did not know everything—and not only so, but F.E.R. will put Mr. Darby right. Then ensues the search for novelties, with which to startle Brethren, and set shallow minds a-wondering at the teaching they hear. So Mr. Stoney and Mr. Raven are found at the Witney Conference, introducing a coinage of their own minds, namely that Babes in Christ have not Eternal Life. Unhallowed mental activity operating upon Divine things, proceeds apace, until it culminates in the Division of 1890, followed by the further false doctrines referred to in the present paper.

The reclamation of lost truth however, having been accomplished, the work thenceforward should have been to utilize that truth for the building up of the Church. Here was a blessed occupation ! While waiting for the Son from Heaven, to be giving to the "Household" the "portion of meat in due season" (Matt. 24 : 45-47) : no danger of material running short, in that blessed range of divine truth laid open to us—so rich and so extensive : no need of novelties ! That which we "had from the beginning" (1 John 2 : 7), were indeed enough. Divine skill and craftsmanship would be shewn in distributing according to the need of souls, the abundant supply which our God had given us. Had certain Brethren been content with this precious but humbler task, instead of striving after originality and leadership, and fancied "new truth," the Divisions would not then have occurred, which their errors and sophisms have alas entailed !

It has been falsely circulated that Mr. Darby before his death acknowledged that he had got beyond his published views. The contrary is the truth. He left

behind him, written on his dying bed, a brief letter addressed to Brethren : and in that he said :—

“I am not aware of anything to recall, little now to add.”
(LETTERS, Vol. III.. p. 345.)

A ministering brother has asserted that Mr. Darby had in some sort disowned his Synopsis. This is equally untrue. A year before his departure he wrote :—

“I know of no such change as you speak of in my views. I have looked it (Synopsis) over at some, if not all, of the new editions, and am doing the same now for another. . . . But AS TO MY SYNOPSIS, I GO AND LEARN FROM IT MYSELF SOMETIMES. Nor am I aware of any changes. You may be quite at ease then.”

January 14th (1881). (LETTERS, Vol III, p. 161.)

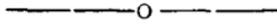
And again :—

“In general it is a mistake about fresh truth. . . . There is nothing so fresh as THE TRUTH which comes from God, and is always fresh. I do not trust notions. There is a large linking of truth in Scripture ; and if people get out of this for notions, these only mislead and hinder, and give importance to our ideas and so to ourselves : whereas in receiving the truth one is subject to God, and nothing oneself. I write these few lines because an important principle is involved in it.”

January 21st (1881). (IBID.)



CHAPTER VII.—DUTY OF CHRISTIANS AS TO FALSE DOCTRINE.



Almost as sad as the lapse from truth which has been shewn, is the gross subserviency to this teacher (F.E.R.) of the audience which he has before him. Thus, when F.E.R. is bringing out his errors as to Fellowship, one, who is apparently a little staggered, asks :—

“How do you arrive at that thought of fellowship from the Scriptures?” (Newcastle p. 142.)

But he gets no true answer ; no proof from Scripture ; and the subject is quietly dropped, while F.E.R. is allowed to ramble on, scattering his errors as he goes ; and, either the whole company swallow the error ; or, if not, no one has the courage to withstand it.

To judge from these books, these “Brethren” have quite lost tone as to the place and authority of Holy Scripture. Time was, when “the Word” was to “Brethren” everything. Challenged on any point of doctrine or conduct, the most humble and illiterate would furnish on the instant, chapter and verse as his authority. “To the law and to the testimony,” and “What saith the Scripture?”—these were Brethren’s watchwords in old time. No man’s *dictum* was taken without Scripture as a basis. It was fully recognised that God had given gracious helps in Ministry, men who however, never came between the individual soul and the Scriptures, but rather helped the individual to a better understanding of the Word, and took care to prove everything by it. The question never was what Mr. A. or Mr. B. said—but “WHAT SAITH THE SCRIPTURE.”

Now however, we find “F.E.R.” put almost into the place of an inspired person : he is addressed thus, and so accepts it :

“Will you say something about the Building now ?”
—why it is as if “the Spirit of God spake by him, and

His word was in his tongue!" Again (page 54, Weston) :—

"Will you say a word with regard to the meaning of the temple?"

Once again, (p. 148, Newcastle) :—

"Would you say a word as to fellowship in the Spirit?"

If further proof is requisite, refer to pages 81-82 (Weston) —where, when a question is raised as to serious false doctrine—it is all settled, simply on Mr. Raven's authority, thus :—

"I think you said once we shall not have the Lord in heaven ?

Well, that is true, we shall not know Him as Lord in heaven, we shall know Him as Head."

The very form of these questions shows where these Brethren have got to, in their sense of the authority of Scripture. It is not "what saith the Scripture?" but,—*"Will you say a word?"* And, to know what there will be in heaven, Mr. Raven is appealed to, as if, like Paul, he had been in the third heaven, or at least, were an inspired person. He, too, on his part, makes answer quite complacently, without the smallest reference to God's revealed truth in Scripture. There the matter ends : Mr. Raven says it, and his questioner, and the audience, are at rest.

But is this subserviency—one may almost say servility—a godly attitude towards a teacher? Certainly not. The generality of God's people are to judge the doctrines laid before them. We are definitely instructed in 1 Thess. 5 (N. transl.)—

"Despise not prophesyings ; but PROVE ALL THINGS, hold fast the right."

Here, there is a distinct responsibility cast upon the body of ordinary Christians, to judge the teaching which they hear. With this agrees 1 Cor. 14 : 29 :—

"Let the prophets speak two or three, and let the others judge." the "others" in this passage, not referring to the other prophets, but others than the prophets.

There is however a still more solemn direction to the saints. We are instructed in the Epistles of John to "TRY THE SPIRITS." This goes deeper than examination of doctrine. It lets us know, and it is an important thing for Christians to understand, that other spirits act

upon the mind of man besides the Holy Spirit ; so there may be a spirit behind false doctrine. Let us look at the passage. In the 1st Epistle at end of ch. iii, the Apostle had been speaking of God having given us *His Spirit*. Then he says (ch. 4.) :—

“ Beloved, *believe not every spirit*, but try the spirits whether they are of God ; because *many false prophets* are gone out into the world. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God : every spirit which confesses Jesus Christ come in flesh is of God ; and every spirit which does not confess Jesus Christ come in flesh is not of God.”

We are not necessarily to assume then, that a man is under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, because he appears to be teaching the things of God ; but *we are to try the spirits*. It is a positive command.

And what is the test ? Christ ! A true confession of the Person of Christ. Not as the Authorised Version has it, the mere fact of coming in flesh ; but a true confession of Him who has so come. It is remarkable that the Apostle Paul also, when introducing the subject of the Spirit of God, and His manifestations in the Assembly, commences with a similar warning :—

“ I give you to understand that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed ; and no man can say that Jesus is Lord (or no man can say,—Lord Jesus. New transl.) but by the Holy Ghost.” (1 Cor. 12 : 3.)

Here we have the two antipodes ; the extreme at one end of the scale,—calling Jesus accursed ; and at the other end, a true owning of Jesus as LORD. Now place in apposition with these two scriptures, the significant fact, that Mr. Raven’s principal errors converge upon the Person of Christ : that he is unsound on the Godhead of Christ, and does not give a true confession of Christ’s lordship ;—the two specific tests of a false spirit, according to 1 John 4 and 1 Cor. 12. Christians are responsible to judge whether there is not, in this teaching, a distinct work of Satan.

But there is a further point which claims serious consideration. Was it, or was it not, a work of God’s Spirit, which about sixty years ago, recovered for the Church of God, so many blessed truths which had lain buried since Apostolic times ? If it was, whose is the work of now rubbing out the clear lines of doctrine which had been gained ? The present paper does not,

by a long way, exhaust the list of doctrinal errors brought in by Mr. Raven, and it is not alone departure from truth, that I point out, but the fact of fundamental CHANGES. The Association of Brethren, to which I refer, is ESSENTIALLY DIFFERENT FROM THE BRETHREN WITH WHOM THEY ASSUME TO BE IDENTICAL. The true ground of gathering is denied : the central ordinance of Christianity is corrupted : the very Person of our Lord is assailed : His eternal Lordship is called in question—thus, man is exalted and Christ dishonored. As for Christians having fellowship with God, we are told that there is no such thing on the earth,—that Apostles had it once, but they being gone, it is gone too ! Moreover they have not carried it to heaven with them : for “there will be no fellowship in heaven,” so that according to this doctrine, it is lost altogether ! And so on, through the long list of these unhappy vagaries. Brethren who can tolerate such false teachings in their midst, cannot be recognised as identical with the original calling out of “Brethren.” IT IS A DIFFERENT THING : an imitation it may be, and with the likeness of all imitations ; but it is not the same thing at all. Whose then is this work of undermining and demolishing, what God’s Spirit had been building up ? I ask beloved Brethren, can we not see an invisible hand in it all ? Can we not discern the signs of the times ? Is it not a startling circumstance, that the truths which God had been imparting to “Brethren,” and of which He had made them THE STEWARDS,—are being darkened and corrupted : “darkness is put for light, and light for darkness : bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter ?”

If the thesis be proved, namely, that there exists the evil of serious false doctrine in the section of “Brethren” referred to, then arises the question : WHAT IS THE PROPER COURSE FOR THE GODLY UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES ?

Let us look this in the face. Is the proper course to separate from the evil ? or to remain in connection with it, striving, in the midst, to bear testimony against it ?

The foundation principle is that God is holy, and cannot be brought into connection with evil. “Holiness becometh thine house O Lord, for ever” (Ps. 93: 5).

Hence, when evil arises amongst the people of God, it is to be put away. "Purge out therefore the old leaven that ye may be a new lump." "Put away from among yourselves that wicked person" (1 Cor. 5 : 7. 13). The preceding pages show that God's people are required to judge doctrines submitted to them ; and the Epistles to the Seven Churches shew that Assemblies are held responsible for having false doctrines,—and the teachers of false doctrines,—in their midst. Thus as to the Church in Pergamos :—

"Thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam. . .
(Revelation 2 : 14.)

"So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes." (Rev. 2 : 15.)

And to Thyatira :—

"Thou *sufferest* that woman Jezebel to teach" &c.; &c.
(Rev. 2 : 20.)

Jezebel here, being of course, a prophetic figure.

What then, if the Assembly fails to judge evil in its midst ? It is just here that the 2nd. Epistle to Timothy supplies us with guidance : that Epistle was written when the tide of failure had set in upon the Church ; and it is well, that through it, we have Apostolic guidance for such circumstances. Hymenæus and Philetus were teaching error about the Resurrection and overthrew the faith of some. "Nevertheless," says the Apostle :—

"The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are His. And Let everyone that nameth the name of the Lord withdraw from iniquity."

But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth ; and some to honour, and some to dishonour.

If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the Master's use, and prepared unto every good work.

Flee also youthful lusts : but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart." (2 Tim. 2 : 19—22.)

I entreat the reader's perusal of the following exposition of this passage :—

"The outward assembly assumes, in the eyes of the Apostle, the character of a great house. All kinds of things are found in it, vessels of honour and vessels of dishonour, precious and vile. The man of God was to purge *himself*

from the latter, to stand apart and not defile himself with that which was false and corrupt. This is a principle of all-importance, which the Lord has given us in His word. He allowed the evil to display itself in apostolic times, so far as to give occasion for the establishment of this principle by revelation, as that which was to govern the Christian. The unity of the assembly is so precious, it has such authority over the heart of man, that THERE WAS DANGER, WHEN FAILURE HAD SET IN, LEST THE DESIRE FOR OUTWARD UNITY SHOULD INDUCE EVEN THE FAITHFUL TO ACCEPT EVIL AND WALK IN FELLOWSHIP WITH IT RATHER THAN BREAK THIS UNITY. The principle therefore of individual faithfulness, of individual responsibility to God, is established, and set above all other considerations; for it has to do with the nature of God Himself, and His own authority over the conscience of the individual. God knoweth them that are His: here is the ground of confidence. I do not say who are. And let those that name the name of Jesus separate themselves from all evil. Here I get what I can recognise. To maintain in practice the possibility of union between that name and evil is to blaspheme it.

The whole of that which calls itself christian is looked at here as a great house. The Christian is of it outwardly, in spite of himself; for he calls himself a Christian, and the great house is all that calls itself Christian. But he cleanses himself personally from every vessel which is not to the Lord's honour. This is the rule of christian faithfulness: and thus personally cleansed from fellowship with evil, he shall be a vessel unto honour fit for the Master's use. Whatsoever is contrary to the honour of Christ, in those who bear His name, is that from which he is to separate himself." (SYNOPSIS. On 2nd. Timothy.)

The scriptural argument may be thus summed up:—

1. The fundamental principle that God, being holy, requires holiness in those about Him.
2. Consequently, evil amongst God's people is to be purged out.
3. The Seven Churches are held responsible for evil in their midst; and emphatically for false doctrine.
4. Evil having invaded the Church, *the individual* (2 Tim., 2: 21) is to *purge himself* from everything dishonouring to Christ.

The answer to our question then, seems to be clear that the course of the godly in present circumstances is certainly to separate from error, not to remain with it.

The teaching that we should remain with error

is another reversal of fundamental truth,—for, sin having entered the world, “Separation from evil” is God’s irreversible “principle of Unity.” Abraham was called to leave his country, and his kindred, and his father’s house. Israel, nationally, was called out into separation from the idolatrous world. When Christ came, He separated His own from the corrupt people, leading them, as the Good Shepherd, *out* of the Jewish fold. In the corruption of the Church, Luther separated a remnant from Romanism; and the midnight voice still sounds,—“Behold the Bridegroom! *go ye out* to meet Him.” And now in our day, when the latest-formed Remnant has itself become corrupted, is the holy principle no longer to be acted upon, and are we to remain to God’s dishonour, in identification with evil? No! We are:—

1. To purge ourselves from vessels to dishonour; and
2. To follow . . . with those who call upon the Lord out of a pure heart.

The thought of remaining with evil to bear testimony against it is a delusion. In addition to what has been said, it is, as a practical measure, simply futile; and Christianity is eminently practical. Let those who have tried that way, say whether they have not found it to be in practice, a failure. The only way to bear testimony against evil is to separate from it. Two people who separate from evil, become a felt testimony for Christ, while two hundred who remain identified with error, are both despised, and are really without weight, no matter what their private views may be. Whatever they may *say*, they are identified with false doctrine, and spiritual evil. That, is their public status and testimony, and a practical denial of all they say to the contrary.

There is a considerable number who professedly reject the current false doctrines, while yet, remaining in fellowship with them,—saying: “What can we do? Where else can we go?” But those who thus stay in evil, link the name of Christ with falsehood. They cannot leave a defiled Association to go out to Christ! Is it not plain that such are gathered to a Christian company, not to Christ? It is the meeting they have before their minds, not the Lord. What dominates their conscience, what guides their

conduct, is the Assembly. Would they stay where drunkenness or adultery were allowed? Surely not. It comes to this then, that moral evil, which a man of the world can judge, they can judge too. But spiritual evil they cannot discern, and have no conscience about! If saints cannot perceive when Satan is moving, they have got away from Christ without knowing it. They would be indignant if a man stole a piece of silver, but the licentious intellect may ransack the name and honour of Christ, and nothing said! His holy institution for shewing His death may be corrupted, Apostolic doctrines denied, and they can be complacent! To such, the influential Raven party is, in prestige and influence, exactly what the Church or Chapel used to be formerly,—something large enough to lean upon, affording by its numbers,—shelter and protection, and social influence—and Christians shudder to leave it. That so few can venture forth TO CHRIST, shews where, in spiritual state, the majority of so-called Brethren are: the Church is their centre, instead of Christ, which is the principle of Romanism. Thus they have glided back “into system” unconsciously; and that, notwithstanding all the knowledge and doctrine that has been abundantly ministered to them the last sixty years.

Says Mr. Darby :—

“I cannot stay in evil to preserve unity. I do not want unity in evil, but separation from it. God’s unity is always founded on separation, since sin came into the world. “Get thee out” is the first word of God’s call: it is to *Himself*. If one get out alone it may require more faith, but that is all; one will be with Him, and that, dear brother, is what I care most about, though overjoyed to be with my brethren on that ground. . . . but at all cost I must walk with God myself.”

(“A LETTER ON SEPARATION” published in the “BIBLE TREASURY”; also in “LETTERS OF J.N.D.” Vol. I : p. 105.)

And again—

“I must depart from iniquity wherever I find it. Whatever the leaving it involves, I must cease all iniquity,—depart from it. *If it be bound up with an ocean of good*, I am not master but slave in my responsibility of conscience, I must depart from iniquity.” J.N.D.

Yet another writer says :—

“Where bad doctrine is accepted by an assembly, there is no

course for the godly in that company but to purge themselves from the vessels to dishonour. I may always hope to arouse the saints to moral evil, because the conscience must be dead indeed, when it is insensible to bad conduct. But when an assembly accepts bad doctrine—"gangrene"—there is really no conscience before God. They feed on ashes, a deceived heart has led them astray, there is no hope for that company; so much so that the godly have no option but to separate from them."

VOICE TO THE FAITHFUL. 1886 p. 64.

THE SCRIPTURAL PRINCIPLE, vital for our path in the present day, is that *the individual* must withdraw from iniquity: and how can a man withdraw from iniquity if he is to accept everything amongst a company of Christians, simply because they claim to be gathered in the Lord's name? This would be making the name of Christ a shelter for, and a cloak of, evil. The christian is called upon to hear, not what the Church says, but what the Spirit says to the Churches: this is emphatically *individual*. (Rev. 2 and 3.) *The individual is to withdraw from iniquity.* The *individual* is to purge himself from vessels to dishonour: from a form of godliness but denying its power,—the *individual* is to turn away. (2 Tim. 2: 21; 3: 5) Even a lady and her children are told to judge false teachers (2 John). It is the BABES IN CHRIST, who are warned about the anti-christs, and to whom it is said—"ye have an unction from the Holy One and know all things." This makes the youngest in Christ, competent, authorised, and responsible to judge of what is contrary to Him. (1 John, 2: 18. 20.)

However, THIS ASSOCIATION OF BRETHREN BEING NO LONGER CHARACTERISED BY MAINTENANCE OF THE TRUTH—has now no claim upon the godly. Further,—it allows and defends flagrant evil. In such a case, Scripture gives the believer no choice: if he names the Name of the Lord, he must at all costs,—"Withdraw from iniquity."

In concluding, I submit to beloved Brethren, with

all affection, Mr. Darby's warning published in "Food for the Flock" of July, 1875:—

"WHAT IS IMPORTANT is NOT THE BRETHREN BUT THE TRUTH THEY HAVE. God could set them aside, and spread His truth by others : would, I believe, though full of gracious patience, if they be not faithful ; . . . Truth and holiness, love IN THE TRUTH AND FOR THE TRUTH'S SAKE, characterise Christ's revelation of Himself and His influence in the last days. God has no need of us, but He has need of a people who walk in the truth in love and holiness."

THERE IS A FINGERPOST FOR THE TRAVELLER OF THESE DARK DAYS, in the Second Epistle to Timothy—put up as a safe guide amidst the confusions of present Christianity. It stands as it were, at the junction of two roads—from one it warns, to the other it directs us. On one arm is inscribed :—

"WITHDRAW FROM INIQUITY" (2 Tim. 2: 19.)

on the other :—

"FOLLOW RIGHTEOUSNESS, FAITH, CHARITY, PEACE, WITH THEM THAT CALL ON THE LORD OUT OF A PURE HEART."
(2 Tim. 2: 22.)

and, THERE STILL SHINES, AS A BEACON LIGHT TO THE END OF THE DISPENSATION, THE BLESSED RESOURCE OF FAITH :—

"Where two or three are gathered together unto My Name there am I in the midst of them." (Matt. 18: 20.)



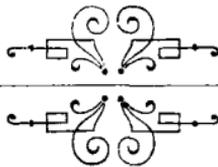
APPENDIX

TRUTH FOR THE TIME

No. II.

BEING CRITICISM UPON "TRUTH FOR THE TIME,"

NO. I, AND AUTHOR'S REPLY.



PREFACE.

Readers of the Pamphlet "Truth for the Time" will probably wish to see what may be urged against it. An answer is therefore printed here, together with a reply thereto.

Letters have been received bearing abundant testimony to profit through the little work in question. God is undoubtedly using His truth contained in it, and many hearts are exercised as to what their path should be in the perplexing circumstances of the moment.

The flesh ever loves ease, and hence chooses the path of least exercise, the place which needs the smallest measure of faith: it can go on easily when supported by the strange and mysterious influence of numbers. This influence gives confidence in a doubtful course, and courage even against the voice of conscience. The support of one another afforded by a large companionship is one of the greatest snares for man, while to desert the company of an influential majority exposes at once to contempt and reproach. The voice of Sanballat is heard:—

"What do these feeble Jews? Will they fortify themselves?
Will they sacrifice? Will they make an end in a day?
Will they revive the stones out of the heaps of the rubbish
which are burned?" (Nehemiah 4: 2.)

Should however, but a few stones be revived out of the heaps of rubbish the pamphlet will not have been printed in vain. But Faith gains by leaning upon God, that confidence which the Flesh derives from numbers: hence Faith can stand with only "two or three," or even alone,—IF WITH GOD. It is blessed to have the support and cheer of brotherly company—but that should not be accepted if, to have it, even a tittle of truth must be sacrificed,—for the word is:—"BUY THE TRUTH AND SELL IT NOT."

A large number are "with Brethren" simply because they are there: having really no exercise of conscience to be right with God as to church position:

they are at ease in Zion and resent as unnecessary disturbance, any comparison with the only divine standard, the Scriptures. The command to "prove all things" is with them a dead letter.

But a vast change to which they are indifferent, has come over the testimony of "Brethren." Since the decease of Mr. Darby, spirits that were held in check, have broken loose and now range at large over the doctrinal area, launching their notions and novelties unchallenged. The pamphlet referred to shews this fairly, though giving only a sample of the new views; for a volume would be required in order to deal with anything like all the heresies. The following is the testimony of a man of "deep moral weight," Mr. F. W. Grant, of America, a name well-known amongst "Brethren,"—once a clergyman, but who gave up his position with all its worldly advantages, for the Truth's sake. He says:—

"I have been in no hurry in speaking, nor in judging either. I believe that, for all with Mr. Raven, the outlook is a most serious one. Those who do not believe in his teaching support him by their silence; the young and shallow are caught by the novelty of it all; the timid are awed by its rapid spread, and by its amazing assumption. It is that in the current of which everyone must be to be counted spiritual. The dead leaders are honoured by their sepulchres, but they made many mistakes, and the present movement is largely an undoing of their work. There have been changes inaugurated as to the most fundamental doctrines,—The Person of CHRIST; The Word made flesh; The Work of CHRIST in its burnt offering aspect; His LORDSHIP in the eternal state; The purpose and value of Scripture; Eternal Life; New birth; Standing and State; The entering into the holiest; In CHRIST; Sonship; The need of priesthood; Deliverance,—and still the tide rolls on. Surely, as I have said before, if this be truth, we should greet it with enthusiasm; if it be error it is proportionately dangerous. I hold it as the last, and have no thought of neutrality in the matter. May God grant his people eyes to see."

Thus there is a complete metamorphosis, and the Brethren of the Association are no more the "Brethren" of twenty years ago, than is any other sect or denomination of christians.

It is instructive too to observe the changed tactics of the Enemy towards the testimony. Formerly there

was opposition and detraction from without : now, it is corruption from within. The former was perhaps less dangerous,—opposition often nourishing a healthier and more sturdy piety : but the present-day snare of corrupting and undermining within, is more enervating to the soul, more blinding to the spiritual senses. The evident design is however achieved, that the Association should pass as identical with early “Brethren,” carrying all the prestige of the wonderful truth held by them, while in reality, that truth is held no longer. The subtlety of the work, and the vastness of the change, are marvellous. So accustomed to these things have the Brethren in question become, that nothing now would create surprise or cause a shock. The only thing that now is shocking is, anyone daring to stand up for the truth : and this loss of moral sense is a striking mark of the movement. Manly independence (by which I mean the individual acting before God without fear of man) is destroyed. Individual conscience is oppressed and stifled, and ecclesiastical authority brought in between the soul and God.

But the mere negation of error is a powerless thing. The clue to the position to-day is simply,—FAITH. There stands the guarantee of our Lord :—

“Where two or three are gathered together in My name there am I in the midst of them.”

Those who have faith, will act upon this, and find the richest blessing. Mere correctness of doctrine will not do—there must be the positive energy of “faith which worketh by love.”

The day is a “dark and cloudy” one. But that need not stumble us, for we have been warned of it.

“This know that in the last days difficult times shall be there.”
(2 Timothy 3 : 1. New Translation.)

It is not so much “perilous” (authorised version) as difficult. What we find to-day therefore, is only what we have to expect—not a feature of it unforeseen by the Lord,—the thing is, to know the path to take, and the part to act, in the circumstances in which we find ourselves. There is no cause for discouragement, for the Lord who designedly appoints us our

trials, assures us that His "grace is sufficient" for us; that His "strength is made perfect in weakness."

Our lot is cast in these "difficult times"; and a new and extraordinary phase of difficulty now is, THE CORRUPTION OF THAT ESPECIAL TESTIMONY FOR THE DAY, WHICH GOD HAD RAISED UP. But that is the very trial allotted to us by the Lord—and anything sent by Him, brings with it, when taken from His hand, its own peculiar joy, its own special blessedness. "Let us go forth therefore unto Him without the camp, bearing His reproach." When the blind man (John 9) was cast out by the Jews, the Lord found Him and came to him. Then he got further light, and knew the Lord in a new character—*and HE WORSHIPPED*. It was a great blessing to receive physical sight, but that was nothing to what the Lord conferred upon him when cast out of the Synagogue, and suffering for His Name, in consequence of the boldness, and withal simplicity, of his testimony for Jesus.

E. J. T.

November, 1900.



NOVEMBER, 1900.

MY DEAR MR. THOMAS—

Copies of your pamphlet, sent, I suppose, by yourself, have reached me, so it seems right that I should send a line in acknowledgment.

By far the most serious of these alleged errors is that in the chapter on page 19, headed, (1) "Errors as to the Godhead of Christ." Grave enough surely if only true! Then there are (2) "Errors as to the Lordship of Christ;" (3) "Denial of Christian Privilege, Fellowship with the Father and the Son;" and (4) "Errors as to the Lord's Supper."

Let us see on what ground the first and gravest charge is based. Mr. Raven, employing "the activities of the natural mind without the guidance of the Holy Spirit" teaches of Christ, that "becoming a man He becomes the LOGOS." That he did make and defend this statement is of course not denied. Although you do not seem to have understood his "Extract," nor why he refers to Luke 1: 2, one would have thought that the meaning and reference were obvious. He looks upon "the Word" as the blessed Person whom John knew, and of whom, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, he was writing: and is so led by the Spirit of God to trace back "His genealogy" to what He was in His Person and in His own eternal glory, "He was with God and He was God." As to Mr. Raven's "defining His Maker" do you apply the same remark to the passage "He is, and He is the expression of the whole mind that subsists in God; the LOGOS," which I have quoted from the Synopsis?

Is there a word in any way denying "His existence before the beginning of everything that had a beginning," or that He was "in His existence eternal—in His nature divine—He was with God, and He was God." Creator of all things, "in short, the glory of the Person of Jesus, the Son of God above all dispensation? Your charge says there is, but without the slightest shadow of proof. Every scripture statement as to the eternal glory of His Person is strongly affirmed by Mr.

Raven ; and no one has written more clearly, or urged more powerfully, His glories as the Eternal Son. But he attaches the thought of His being the "*expression—the revealer*"—of God, to what He was in connection with men ; as is stated of Him, as Light, in v. 4 "and the Light was the Light of *men*." This he looks at as the "standpoint" from which the Spirit of God leads the apostle's mind back into eternity, and from which He caused him to write. Whether this interpretation be just or not, the accusation you have made, as to His Godhead glory being attacked, and tarnished, cannot be sustained : and must be held therefore as a false accusation against a servant of the Lord ; and evidence of your moral condition in making it.

2. "As to the Lordship of Christ." There surely has never been one word denying the lines you quote :—

"No place too high for Him is found
No place too high in heaven."

The words "servant" and "Lord" seem to be scriptural correlatives—"the servant is not above His Lord," etc., etc., and though the blessed Lord Jesus ever is, and ever will be, Lord and Supreme, it is as individuals that we now have that place with Him ; and when our perfect state has come, and we have met the Lord, and we are ever with Him, our individual blessing and relationship seem to be merged in the corporate blessing and relationship of the Church ; or if individual still, rather as members of His Body, than as servants with a Lord, and the thought of the Head is more prominent. Is the honour of the Lord at all touched ? All that He is in connection with the various circles of blessing, stand secure, though our knowledge of Him may be in a different character of relationship. Can all the severe strictures based upon this remark, be held to be any better sustained than the first ?

3. "Denial of Christian Privilege." This seems to be a question of the interpretation and application of the third verse of 1 John 1. It is held to show that the Apostles there have a special place, and we are called to fellowship with them. But that our being led by the Holy Ghost into common thoughts with the Father about the Son, and with the Son about the Father, is

denied, is certainly not true, however that particular SS. may be expounded:—for the knowledge of Divine Persons, and entrance into divine relationships by the power of the Holy Ghost, forms a very distinct part of what has been called special attention to in the important questions as to eternal life. Your reference to the remark about ‘babes’ at Witney would seem to show that you have not got the help you might from the discussion that that remark opened up. An early paper on the knowledge of the Father and the Son occurs to me in connection with this subject of fellowship.

4. “In remarks as to the Lord’s Supper” (page 24) I think you will find Mr. Willey and others, are not so far wrong as you suppose, and that you have misunderstood what they desire to impress. As to Judas’ presence, notwithstanding the cavalier way in which you bow Mr. Willey aside, Mr. Willey is I think, right, and you wrong. Surely you ought to know that the “Sop” was a custom connected with the Paschal Feast, and could have no meaning at the Lord’s Supper. And “having received the Sop” Judas “went immediately out, and it was night.” The apparent link with the supper in Luke is because the order in Luke is rather moral than natural. Then the calling to mind,—or into presence,—sneer as you may, is a real thing if the soul is truly in the sense of the Lord’s death; and no such thought was in any mind as to substitute this for the actual objective presence promised to the two or three gathered to His name. It is the entrance of the soul into the conscious sense of His presence, with all the depths of His love that the symbols of His death tell us of. And there *is* a deepening of worship when the actual eating and drinking are over, if souls are really, consciously, in company with the Lord, and in the favor in which He is with the Father; and something of what the Assembly is in God’s eternal thought of it may be realized, as lifted out of ourselves, we enter as a worshipping company into the Father’s joy in the Son, His complacency and delight in Him, as the full expression of all His own glories; and in us as His companions, and in His life, before the Father. Of course we meet *as* members of the Body. How else

could we meet, as consciously children with the Father? but it is no more a mere ecclesiastical expression that had become very much the badge of a party,—useful and right enough though the expression was when first it was made use of.

Now I think I have shown, that even if Mr. Raven were wrong on the points referred to, in your various charges, which I do not admit, the deductions you have made, and the accusations you have based upon his remarks, are in no wise supported.

The Godhead glory of Christ is not touched. His glory as Lord, though He may not be eternally in that relationship with us, is not infringed, and the other matters as to the 'Real Presence' and all that sort of innuendo, are entirely baseless, and only go to show that you have yourself much more to learn than you suppose.

.
Your brother in Christ.

* * *



OAKLEIGH, MELBOURNE,
26th NOVEMBER, 1900.

MY DEAR MR. ———

I am glad to see that you reply to my Pamphlet. Though sure that it must have many imperfections, I have a deep feeling that I was graciously aided by the Holy Spirit, in putting forth this testimony ; but I now purpose to look carefully, in the fear of God, at all you say. I am sorry to see however, that you commence by referring to the heresies in question, as “ these alleged errors,” and that you end by stating that you “ do not admit ” that Mr. Raven is wrong on the points referred to.

THE GODHEAD OF CHRIST.

What you describe as “ by far the most serious,” is what I have put forward as error, with reference to the Godhead of Christ : and you add “ Grave enough surely, if only true ! ” Then you virtually concede the whole question, by saying that it is not denied that Mr. Raven did make, and defend, the statement which is challenged, namely : “ Becoming a man He becomes the Word.” Very well ; then it is simply a question of comparing Mr. Raven’s statement with Scripture ; a matter on which even a child can decide. Here then it is, in a nutshell :—

SCRIPTURE :	MR. RAVEN :
<p>“ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” —JOHN I : 1.</p> <p>“ The Word became flesh and dwelt among us.” —JOHN I : 14.</p>	<p>“ Becoming a man He be- comes the Word.” READINGS AT WESTON p. 127.</p>

On this I have nothing to say. It is simply the word of Mr. Raven against Scripture ; only, you and all those with you have an added responsibility after the issue of my Pamphlet.

The next point in your letter is, that I have charged Mr. Raven with “ employing the activities of the natural mind, on the things of God, without the guidance of the

Holy Spirit." Well : if a man makes a statement, it is assumed that he employs his mind ; and if his statement is contrary to that of the Holy Spirit, it is quite certain that he is, in that particular, without the guidance of the Holy Spirit. *Quod erat demonstrandum.* I will only add, that in the present case, the mis-statement is as to the holy mysteries of the Godhead, which form the foundation of our Faith.

Now as to this question, (Error as to the Godhead) the whole case is within the foregoing lines, because—in the Article from "Food for the Faithful," treated at page 21 of my pamphlet, Mr. Raven does not take back one word of what he had said. The simple christian therefore, has the matter very clearly before him, for his decision.

The article from "Food for the Faithful" is really only supplementary—a mystifying re-statement of the false doctrine. Still, I will examine what you say upon that subject. The first point is, Mr. Raven's referring to a scripture, with an implication that it supports a certain view, when, in reality, it is colourless one way or the other, on the question. You say :—

"Although you do not seem to have understood his 'Extract,' nor why he refers to Luke 1 : 2, one would have thought that the meaning and reference were obvious."

I fully expected on reading this, to find it followed by a crushing demonstration of the fitness of the quotation. But what follows? Not another word on the subject! So that on *this point* my objection is, so far, absolutely unanswered. I have read the verse with its context very carefully, and abide by what I have said—that the citation of Luke 1 : 2 is illusive. "The beginning" referred to in that scripture, is the beginning of Christianity. The passage does not touch, in the faintest way, the doctrine of John 1 : 1. 14; that "in the beginning was the Word;" and that at a certain point of time, "the Word became flesh."

You say that I do not seem to have understood Mr. Raven's "Extract;" but what my Pamphlet shews, is not so much that I did not understand it, as that I rejected it as false doctrine. It is *not* christian teaching,

because it is contrary to the Scripture. It is "philosophy and vain deceit."

However, in elucidation and defence of the Article, you say, referring to Mr. Raven :—

"He looks upon 'the Word' as the blessed Person whom John knew, and of whom under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, he was writing; and is so led by the Spirit of God to trace back His genealogy to what He was in His person and in His own eternal glory, 'He was with God and He was God.'"

Now this, like the Article itself, is simply a paraphrastic re-statement of the heresy; and to re-assert it fifty times, in fifty different ways, and with ever so many pious expressions thrown in, will not make it a bit more true. That John traces the genealogy of the Word at all, is an untruth: for He declares the glorious being of the Word before all worlds—and that He *then* was THE WORD, and was God, and was with God. Mr. Raven asserts on the contrary, "becoming a man, He becomes the Word." Had this statement been made by a Presbyterian Minister, or an Anglican Bishop, how it would have been pounded into dust by Brethren!

You enquire as to Mr. Raven's "defining his Maker"—whether I apply the same expression to Mr. Darby's statement :—

"He is, and He is the expression of the whole mind that subsists in God, the *Λογος*."

My reply is: Most certainly not. The two are not analogous. Mr. Raven made a statement, limiting and contracting one of the titles of the Blessed Lord: and following upon that, and to support it, he gives a statement of what the Word was. The latter is a definition, Mr. Darby's was not. Mr. Darby's statement is logically different from Mr. Raven's: it is not an *exclusive proposition*, while Mr. Raven's is. Mr. Darby's merely says that the Word is what he states; but does not exclude His being all else that He is, and so is *not a definition*. Mr. Raven's proposition is an exclusive definition, obviously framed for the very purpose of excluding the idea of His being the Word before

incarnation. I am sure you will see the logical difference.

You next say :—

“Is there a word in any way denying ‘His existence before the beginning of everything that had a beginning or that He was ‘in His existence eternal,—in His nature divine,—He was with God, and He was God.’ Creator of all things, in short, the glory of the Person of Jesus, the Son of God above all dispensation? Your charge says there is, but without the slightest shadow of proof.”

Allow me to ask where I said all this? I charged Mr. Raven with nothing more than what he said. You copy out of the Synopsis, a number of sentences, and say that I charged Mr. Raven with denying them! I DID NOTHING OF THE KIND. I charged Mr. Raven with DENYING HOLY SCRIPTURE. If you can disprove *that* by all means do so. But do not put into my book what is not there. I am responsible for my pamphlet, but not for what you put into it!

You claim in defence of Mr. Raven, that :—

- (a) “Every scripture statement as to the eternal glory of His Person is strongly affirmed by Mr. Raven; and
- (b) no one has written more clearly, or urged more powerfully His glories as the Eternal Son.”

As to the first part of this, (a) I have simply to repeat what you try hard to get away from, but cannot,—that Scripture says “In the beginning was the Word”; MR. RAVEN SAYS, He became the Word, when He became a man. I do not exaggerate this, nor diminish it. I simply say it is false doctrine; and that, with reference to such a blessed and profound mystery as the Person of the Christ.

As to the latter part (b) that Mr. Raven has written most powerfully on the glories of Christ as Eternal Son—all I need to say is, that it is irrelevant matter. Mr. Raven may be ever so correct on one point of “the doctrine of the Christ,” but that will not undo heresy as to another. Your line of defence betrays the weakness of your case: when I have proved that Mr. Raven taught error on one point, you triumphantly claim that no one has been more correct on another!—which is just like saying, on behalf of a man charged with

forgery, that no one has more entirely refrained from committing murder !

After claiming that Mr. Raven is correct as to the Eternal Sonship, you say, in defence of his doctrine as to the Word :—

“but he attaches the thought of His being the *expression - the revealer* of God, to what He was in connection with man ; as is stated of Him, as Light, in v. 4 ‘and the Light was the Light of *men.*’”

My reply is that Scripture in contradiction to Mr. Raven, attaches the thought of His being the *expression, the revealer* of God, to His title of Son NOT to that of the Word.

“No man hath seen God at any time ; the only begotten SON, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him.” JOHN I : 18.

Again, in Hebrews, it is the SON, who is the express image of His person, and the brightness of His glory.

So that your exposition or explanation of Mr. Raven, is as wrong as his own teaching. The plain fact is, that both you, and he, teach what is the exact contrary of Scripture on the subject. The evangelist describes the blessed One as the Word *in Eternity*; and so far from His becoming the Word when He becomes man, the fact is, that from the moment of the incarnation to the end of the Gospel, He is never once again mentioned by the title of the Word ; and further, when it is a question of declaring, making known God, it is as the Son He does so. Thus teacher and disciple are both astray on the A.B.C. of Christian doctrine ! Scripture attaches the title of “the Word” to what Christ was in Eternity, before the existence of men, or of the world on which men walk ; Mr. Raven limits the title to the incarnation. I say that this is not “the doctrine of the Christ,” and that Mr. Raven was here, allowed to display himself, as teaching what is contrary to Apostolic doctrine.

Then you make a mis-quotation ; you say :—

“As is stated of Him as Light in v. 4—‘and the Light was the Light of *men.*’”

Now it is not stated of Him as Light, but as *Life*, viz :—

“In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.”

You wind up this section of your letter by pronouncing sentence on me, quite in the style of a judge. You say :—

“The accusation you have made, as to His Godhead glory being attacked, and tarnished, cannot be sustained : and must be held therefore as a false accusation against a servant of the Lord ; and evidence of your moral condition in making it.”

What majesty there is in this pronouncement ! What finality too ! Only unfortunately, it is like a magnificent façade without a foundation ; for the accusation, which you refer to as having been made by me, I DIDN'T MAKE ! The words are your words not mine, and I decline to be responsible for what I did not say. What I said was that Mr. Raven taught false doctrine respecting the Godhead of Christ. This can be sustained ; it cannot be upset. So instead of me having made a false accusation against a servant of the Lord ; it is you who have made a false accusation against me ! The judge and the prisoner have to change places ! But never mind, my dear Mr. ———, I will not be so hard upon you, as *you thought to be* upon me. I will not say it is evidence of YOUR moral condition.

THE LORDSHIP OF CHRIST.

And now we will pass to your second heading “as to The Lordship of Christ.” You say :—

“The words ‘servant’ and ‘Lord’ seem to be scriptural correlatives, ‘the servant is not above his Lord’ etc. etc., and though the blessed Jesus ever is, and ever will be Lord and Supreme, it is as individuals that we now have that place with Him ; and when our perfect state has come ; and we have met the Lord, and are ever with Him, our individual blessing and relationship seem to be merged in the corporate blessing and relationship of the Church, or if individual still, rather as members of His body than as servants with a Lord, and the thought of the Head is more prominent.”

What my pamphlet shews, it shews by scripture, but I look through all this for a single word of scripture in answer. There is not one ! All you say, per contra, is, that when we are ever with the Lord “our individual

blessing and relationship SEEM to be merged in the corporate etc. "Seem!" Is this all you have to say? Am I to rest my belief on what *seems*? And where does it seem? "I know not 'seems'!" Scripture, is what the christian is to go by, not semblances!

As to the individual blessing and relationship being merged in the corporate blessing and relationship of the Church, Scripture shews the contrary; for it tells us that the overcomer in the present period, will receive a white stone, and in the stone, a new name written, which no man knoweth, saving he that receiveth it. (Rev. 2 : 17.) We have here, a beautiful and charming intimation, not only that we shall each enjoy the rare, the ineffable privilege, of personal acquaintance with the Lord Jesus Christ, but, that individuality and identity, so far from being merged in the corporate blessing and relationship, are carefully preserved in the glory! Blessed be God that it is so, and that your teaching is wrong!

However, you put an alternative :

"if individual still, rather as members of His body than as servants with a Lord, and the thought of the Head is more prominent."

Your "if" indicates that you yourself are not certain about your own teaching. Thus, then,—to the positive scriptures which I have exhibited, you oppose something which at best "seems"—but which even to yourself is not certain! With reference to our blessing and relationship being as members of His body rather than as servants with a Lord,—it is not clear what you intend by the word "rather": whether you mean that it *is* as Members of the body, and NOT AT ALL as servants to a Lord; or whether you merely mean that our Membership of the Body is *more prominent* than our servant-character. I must assume that it is not the latter: because if you mean we are with Christ "as servants with a Lord," in any degree, however un-prominent, you cease to support Mr. Raven—for he teaches that in heaven we shall not know Jesus as Lord *at all*: that membership of the Body excludes it. If on the other hand, you mean that we are in heaven as Members of the Body,

and *not at all* as servants, then you contradict Scripture, for Scripture gives it as part of our eternal blessedness, that :

“His servants shall serve Him : and they shall see His face ;
and His name shall be in their foreheads.” Rev. 22 : 3, 4

which I need not tell you relates to eternity, not to the millenium.*

As to “the thought of the Head” being “more prominent”—it is not a question as to the relative prominence of the two relationships—but of their existence, which Mr. Raven denies : he teaches that we do not own Jesus as Lord in heaven ! You take a terrible responsibility, in supporting or even apologising for such a Teacher.

But “Lord” and “servant,” though frequently correlative, are not exclusively so. Lord is a title of dignity as well as of authority :

“God hath highly exalted Him and given Him a name which
is above every name . . . that every tongue should confess
that Jesus Christ is Lord.” Philippians 2.

that is dignity, as well as authority : and here I reply to your claim that “there surely has never been one word denying the lines :

‘No place too high for Him is found
No place too high in heaven.’”

Yes,—there has. By so much as you deny the lordship of Jesus, within whatever sphere in the universe,—by so much you deny the dignity in which God the Father has set Him. It is a solemn thing—but so it is ; and to my mind only some blinding influence can account for those, who once would have shuddered at this, being now found to apologise for it. You ask—Is the honour of the Lord at all touched ? Certainly ! It is the very error which the voice of the Father rebuked on the Holy Mount. Peter was for putting the heavenly saints on a level with the blessed Lord, which is precisely what this doctrine does. “Let us make three

**Note to Second Edition.* The description of the heavenly Jerusalem in Rev. 22 is not exclusively millennial : the millennial aspect is given, but attributes which are *eternal* are given as well ; *e.g.*, the reign is for ever and ever, not merely for the thousand years.

tabernacles ; one for Thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias." But the voice of the Father, in His jealousy for the Son, cuts him short—

"WHILE HE THUS SPAKE there came a cloud and overshadowed them : . . . and there came a voice out of the cloud saying 'THIS IS MY BELOVED SON : HEAR HIM.'"

Luke 9 : 33, 35.

The vision vanishes then !

There is importance in the point that while the Lord may condescend to us, it is unbecoming for us to presume upon that condescension. He may indeed say in grace—

"Henceforth I call you not servants but friends,"

but it would be shocking for us to reciprocate this. As Mr. Darby has so well pointed out—in respect of a similar error :—

"True saints among the Moravians have called Jesus "brother" and others have borrowed their hymns, or the expression. The Word never says so. *He is not ashamed* to call us brethren, but it is quite another thing for us to call Him so. The personal dignity of Christ is never lost in the intensity and tenderness of His love."

So too, Jesus may give us ever so near a place to Himself in the glory—but the moment you say that in heaven we shall not own Jesus as Lord, you touch His glory and His dignity. I do not say that Mr. Raven means to do so—but the very fact that his doctrine has this effect, shews WHO IT IS THAT IS USING HIM. It is not from heaven that this notion hails : there, they do not discuss whether Jesus is Lord to them, but fall down before Him and worship. (Rev. 5 : 8.)

You say :—

"Can all the severe strictures based upon this remark be held to be any better sustained than the first ?"

No : I do not want them to be ; because the first are thoroughly sustained by scripture, and so are these. As to the severity of stricture—there is not a word too much or too strong. Neutrality when Christ is attacked is nauseous. It is the badge of Laodicea,—lukewarmness. "I would thou wert cold or hot."

FELLOWSHIP WITH THE FATHER AND THE SON.

Skipping the article on the Lord's Supper you go to that on "Denial of Christian Privilege." But here there is nothing but assertion. You say it is "certainly not true,"—

"that our being led by the Holy Ghost into common thoughts with the Father about the Son, and with the Son about the Father is denied."

Well: is not *that* fellowship with the Father and the Son? If it be, then it *is* denied, notwithstanding your assertion—for Mr. Raven teaches that we do not possess fellowship with the Father and the Son; that it is too exalted for ordinary believers. That Mr. Raven denies the believer's fellowship with God is *a fact* which is proved in my pamphlet; but I rejoice to think that—as was said to Thyatira, there are some amongst you "who have not this doctrine," and who indeed, "have more understanding than their teachers."

THE LORD'S SUPPER AND WORSHIP.

Now we come to your defence of the new views about the Lord's Supper.

As to Judas' presence—my remarks on this, are, after all, only incidental—for Judas' presence has no effect, for or against the views I opposed. I am aware that the order of events in Luke is often moral, rather than chronological—but that conceded, you must admit that where there *is* a note of time, it must stand: and the Lord says *in connection with* the institution of the Supper,—

"But behold the hand of him that betrayeth Me is with Me on the table."

I do not see how you can get over that connecting adverb "*But*"—*πλην* in the original; rendered by Mr. Darby, still more emphatically, by the word "Moreover."

You say that I ought to know that the Sop was a custom of the Paschal Feast and could have no meaning at the Lord's Supper. Well: I do not hold myself responsible to know much outside of Scripture; but if

you say that I ought to know that : then I reply,—You ought to know that there is very great doubt over the whole subject of the Paschal customs in the time of our Lord. About the best authority is Smith's Dictionary of the Bible and that gives the Ritual which it represents as "gathered" forsooth, from Rabbinical writers—then, next comes an *assumption*, that that,

"represents *substantially* the common practice at our Lord's time."

This assumption may be wrong. But if right, it is only that the practice was "substantially" so and so. Granting the assumption, the practice may not have been so, *in detail*, and it may have been different just in the very detail in question. Then there are further assumptions and suppositions—and these with all their probability, (and the learning and excellent judgment of the writer, which I fully respect)—may be wrong. So, though you say I "surely ought to know,"—I do *not* know : I may suppose : but so uncertain are the uninspired records, that one word of Scripture, even that word "πλην" weighs more with me than all the writings of the Talmudists.

You speak of the "Sop" having no meaning at the Lord's Supper. But with great deference to you, we have not the Lord's Supper in Luke 22. And a great deal of this talk about Judas' presence, is based upon a blunder. It is *not* the Lord's Supper in the Gospels ; but the Paschal Feast at which the Lord's Supper was instituted. The Supper itself, as yet, was future, and could not be commenced till after the Lord's death ! So there might be that, at the instituting of the Supper, which there would not be at the Supper itself—as for instance the giving of a sop. The giving of a sop to Judas might, for ought I know, have been as you contend, the enaction of a Paschal custom : or it might on the contrary, have been a special means adopted by the Lord to indicate the traitor. But even taking the human knowledge which we have—I have not found, so far as my reading goes, that there was at the Paschal Feast any custom *to give a sop*. According to the Rabbinical writers :—

"All took portions of the bread and dipped them."
Nothing about dipping a sop and giving it.

However, enough on that point, except that the adjective "cavalier" which you apply to my remarks is distinctly inappropriate. Had I brushed aside Mr. Willey's view without consideration, *that* would have been cavalier—but when I give Mr. Willey's view in full, quoting at length all he says on the subject, and then elaborately shew from Scripture, reasons for differing, winding up with the explanation of the moral significance of the opposite view to his,—well, I may be right or I may be wrong, but I am *not* cavalier. It is a wrong word.

But now we come to the main question. You say :—

"The calling to mind,—or into presence,—sneer as you may—is a real thing if the soul is truly in the sense of the Lord's death; and no such thought was in any mind as to substitute this for the actual objective presence promised to the two or three gathered to His Name."

I do not know what you mean by "calling . . . into presence"—*Christ* calling *us*, I could understand, but *us* calling *Christ*,—"into presence" or anywhere else,—is either irreverence or nonsense. From you, I am sure it is not the former.

As to the rest, you may call my criticism sneering, if you please: I do not complain at all: for I meant to be as emphatic as I could. What I sought to do, and believe that with God's gracious help was done, was to expose a subtle error, namely confusing the Lord's presence in the Assembly, with the remembrance of Him in the Supper. And you cannot get over this, by saying that the "calling to mind *is* a real thing if the soul is truly in the sense of the Lord's death." The true "remembrance" of the Lord as explained in my pamphlet, *is* a real thing, blessed be God! But the "calling to mind" as now taught by your school, is an *unreal* thing and, as a part of Christianity—a falsity.

On the question whether it is a mere "calling to mind," or a TRUE REMEMBRANCE there is no use in saying anything more, for the two views are plainly shewn in my pamphlet; and it is simply for people to choose which they will have. One is truth, and one is error. God may mercifully use that pamphlet for the deliverance of many. But if you and those with you

choose error and defend it, then God will spread His truth by others.

You say, referring to the "calling to mind," that :—
 "No such thought was in any mind as to substitute this for the actual objective presence promised to the two or three gathered to His Name."

Now when people teach error, we have not to do with what is in their minds, but with what is in their words, and in grappling with false doctrine it is most important to see this. "*By thy words* thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned." False teachers always try to wriggle away from what they have said. But Hymenæus and Philetus were dealt with for what *they said* (2 Tim. 2 : 18) and in my small book I have been careful, to charge no one with anything for which I did not produce his own words. In the present case I gave Mr. Willey's words, at page 28, to the effect that *the way* in which the Lord could be present with His disciples after His departure, was their calling Him to mind in the Supper. I say that THIS IS FALSE DOCTRINE.

Now you give us your definition of what the "calling to mind" is. You say :—

"It is the entrance of the soul into the conscious sense of His presence, with all the depths of His love that the symbols of His death tell us of."

This is confusion of things that differ. The conscious sense of the Lord's presence is one thing; the remembrance of the Lord is another. We have the Lord's presence as gathered together in His Name: the *remembrance* of Him is the action of our minds under the guidance and power of the Spirit of God, in calling to mind the Lord Jesus as HE ONCE WAS. The blessed Lord is with us by virtue of our gathering together to His Name, not by the celebration of the Eucharist; and if we are already in His presence on assembling, we do not afresh enter it at the breaking of bread.

You next say :—

"And there *is* a deepening of worship when the actual eating and drinking are over, if souls are really, consciously, in company with the Lord" etc. etc.

and what follows is a collection of high-sounding

unctuous phrases covering over error. You speak of :—

“Souls being consciously in company with the Lord and in the favour in which He is with the Father
 Realizing something of what the Assembly is in God’s eternal thought
 Being lifted out of ourselves and entering as a worshipping company into the Father’s joy in the Son.”
 &c. &c. &c.

All this is beside the question : who denies it ? It is the staple of our worship at all times. But it has nothing to do with the question of the eating and drinking of the Lord’s Supper being over. It may all be *before* as much as after : and so far from there being a deepening of worship after the sacred rite, *that* is really the culmination ; the highest point is reached then : the very object of the meeting has been attained ; and in due interval after that, instruction and exhortation from the word, if given, appropriately follow.

But even your defence that there is a “*deepening* of worship” after the Supper,—is really a surrender of the position taken up by “H.C.A.” for he teaches that the Lord’s Supper is,—not merely not part of the worship of the Assembly—but that it is not worship at all. So you do not agree amongst yourselves. When people get off the ground of divine truth, they are not consistent even in their errors.

You say :—

“Of course we meet as Members of the One Body—how else could we meet ?”

Ask Mr. Anstey ! He tells you, that you do not meet as the Assembly, for the Breaking of Bread, but as a “New-covenant Company.” See “Food for the Faithful” Feb. 1900, page 37. One would think from the question, that you had not read the pamphlet which you are answering.

And now—this is all you say under the heading of THE LORD’S SUPPER. The most solemn point of all remains untouched ! You have not said one word as to the true import of this blessed ordinance being destroyed,—the “calling to mind” as you term it, of the glorified Lord, being substituted for a true remembrance of a dead, betrayed, Christ. This is a point

which, to my mind discloses the source of all this altered system of doctrine.

CHARACTER OF FALSE TEACHERS.

You speak of the moral weight of those whose errors are in question. "BUT WHATSOEVER THEY ARE IT MAKETH NO MATTER TO ME. GOD ACCEPTETH NO MAN'S PERSON." (Gal. 2.) How many times have you not explained to people, that personal piety could never be allowed to accredit false doctrine? You ought to know,—and you do, if you have not forgotten it, that *Scripture is the test of doctrine.*

Besides, there are two kinds of morality, the world's morality and christian morality : and I do not acknowledge as moral in a christian sense, one who attacks the doctrine of the Christ and His lordship ; the Believer's privilege to have fellowship with God, and the sacred Supper of the Lord. The early christians held that to persist in teaching evil doctrine, was as evil as to persist in drunkenness or theft,—and they were right. Most eminent heretics have been men of piety ! Of the author of Arianism—the greatest heresy that ever afflicted the Church, it is recorded —

"Understanding and capacity were possessed by Arius in a great degree. In his behaviour and manner of life, he was severe and grave ; in his person tall and venerable ; and in his dress almost monastic. He was agreeable and captivating in conversation." &c. &c.

Had they not possessed such a character they could not have successfully disseminated error amongst the people of God.

SUMMARY.

Having now gone through your letter point by point, the conclusion I come to is, that **THE PAMPHLET REMAINS UNANSWERED.**

1. Mr. Raven's heresy as to **THE WORD** is not withdrawn nor proved to be not heresy.
2. The Lordship of Christ towards us in heaven, which I proved by Scripture, is unrefuted by a single scripture—your only defence is "Seems."
3. The believer's fellowship with God—you assert Mr. Raven does not deny. But he says he does : and

must be allowed to be his own best exponent of his views.

4. The Lord's Supper. (a) The principal, the substantial matter, you say nothing about : it stands unanswered.
- (b) On the minor point of Judas' presence, if we go by Scripture, I am correct. You in reply make a vague allusion to uninspired information—but even of this you do not give one definite proof.
- (c) As to the remembrance of the Lord, you simply deepen the confusion by adding your own view to the other two already furnished by Mr. Willey and Mr. Anstey respectively. The three views are :—
1. Mr. Willey. Our "calling to mind" is the Lord's presence.
 2. Mr. Anstey. The Lord *is* present and presents himself to us *in the bread and the wine*.
 3. The present letter. The "calling to mind" is the entrance of the soul into the conscious sense of the Lord's presence.
- (d) On the other points,—Worship, and whether it is as the Church that we meet around the Lord's Table—you and Mr. Anstey are not agreed amongst yourselves—you virtually abandon him.

I cannot see that you have given *one solid answer to one of my allegations*.

Do not despise the pamphlet, my dear Mr. ———. I believe it contains A MESSAGE FOR YOU AND THOSE WITH YOU, which it will be for your and their blessing to listen to. At all events you are responsible to God for having received it.

I remain,

My dear Mr. ———,

Yours truly in Christ our Lord,

E. J. THOMAS.