

[THE INCARNATION.]

A LETTER

TO

REV. JOHN FISKE, D. D.

BY

WILLIAM B. GREENE

"And the Word was made Flesh."

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PUBLISHED BY THE AUTHOR  
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LETTER.

REVEREND AND DEAR SIR:

My apology for addressing you, must be found in the fact that I am a young man, just commencing my labors in the ministry, and that I naturally feel the want of counsel from some person of age and experience. And to whom should I look for counsel, if not to my brethren in the ministry, the watchmen upon the walls of Zion? And to whom among these watchmen should I look, if not to him who stands preeminent in their midst, by reason of his prolonged and faithful labors in the service of our common Master? I address you, Sir, with some confidence; for your kindness and courtesy are well known: yet, my confidence is not founded solely on my knowledge of the excellency of your heart, for I address you, not in your private character as a gentleman and a christian, but in your public character as a Minister of Christ. Nay, further, I address you in your public character as a Father in Israel, one who has spent more than fifty years in teaching the mysteries of the Everlasting Gospel, one for whom it is my fervent prayer, as his head is weighed down by an increasing weight of years, that it may be still more weighed down by an increasing weight of the Eternal Glory. And how, under these circumstances, should I address you otherwise than with confidence? You cannot be indifferent to the course I am to pursue in the ministry; for I must, of necessity, do one or the other of these things, there is no middle way: either, I must preach truth and holiness, or, I must spread ruin and error. But I will not trespass upon your patience by lengthening this preface. I will proceed at once to state the doctrines which commend themselves to my mind as conformed to the pure doctrine of the Scriptures, submitting the statement to your judgment, that you may pass your opinion upon it.

EXPOSITION.

There is, before the mental vision of every man who has not lost the ability to distinguish between right and wrong, an idea, an image, a picture if you will, of what he ought to be, but is not. This idea is before him, and, if he strive to attain to *conformity* (my reasons for italicising this syllable will be seen hereafter) with it, it enlarges, and removes further; he that follows it finds his being increased in intensity, but the ideal remains still above time, prompting him always to new exertions. What is Conscience but a comparison of ourselves as we are, mean, pitiful, weak, with ourselves as we ought to be, wise, powerful, and holy? What is Conscience but a comparison of the actions we perform with our idea of what these actions ought to have been? What is Conscience but a comparison of the *actual* with the *ideal*? If we strive after *conformity* with the ideal, that ideal removes from us, and enlarges itself. If we make renewed efforts, the ideal grows larger and larger, making higher and higher claims, until its requisitions become infinite, and we find ourselves struggling after *conformity* to the glory of the reflected splendor of the Most High God: for this ideal is the sum of the knowledge we possess of human perfection, and it is written that man was originally created in the image of God: it is written also, "Be ye perfect even as your Father in heaven, is perfect."

But we have, through the energy of Sin, lost, to a great extent, the original image of God in which we were created. We have darkened our understandings, we have depraved our consciences, we have suffered ourselves to be blinded by the god of this world: and now the ideal shines darkly upon our hearts, and our consciences comprehend it not; for now the law written upon our hearts, is no longer sufficient for our guidance. But, guilty as we are, we have not been abandoned by our Heavenly Father, we have not been left as orphans in the

world. A clearer law is revealed, and a higher ideal is set forth before us; the Sun of Righteousness is held up to us as the perfect pattern of holiness, and we must look upon Christ as the children of Israel looked upon the brazen serpent in the wilderness; for, by that fixed and earnest look, we may be cured of the evil that is in our hearts, we may receive our Lord's spirit, and be changed into his *likeness*. For we know that by steadfastly contemplating his countenance, we shall insensibly be *transformed* into his image. But Christ is the image of the glory of the eternal Father; if, therefore, we are like Christ, we are like the Father, for Christ is the express image of the Father's perfections. If we are *transformed* into the image of Christ, we shall be in the *form* of Christ, and, as he is in the *form* of the Father, we also shall be in the *form* of the Father. Thus Christ is a Mediator between God and men, that is, he is a middle term through whom the perfections of God may descend upon the children of Adam. He is a Mediator sent into the world to restore that original image in which man was created, but which we have lost because of Sin. "To them that received him, to them gave he power to become Sons of God."

"No man (says the Evangelist) has seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him:" and our Lord himself bears testimony to the same fact: "Not that any man hath seen the Father, save he which is of God, he hath seen the Father :"—and, again, "No man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." If, indeed, man could contemplate the Divine Perfections immediately, he would have no necessity for a Mediator, but could come directly into *conformity* with the Divine image; for he could attain to be in the *form* of God by virtue of that contemplation. But this immediate communion with our Heavenly Father is denied to all the children of men. The apostle Paul says of the Father, that he is "The blessed and only Potentate, the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords; who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto: whom no eye hath seen, nor can see; to him be honor and power everlasting. Amen."

"No man knoweth the Father (says our Lord) SAVE THE SON, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." Our Lord was admitted to the full contemplation of the Divine Glory, and thus he was enabled to become *transformed* till he was in the *form* of God. By this likeness to God which he possessed, he was enabled to partake of the Spirit of God, as is evident from the explanation which the apostle gives of the manner in which the participation of the Spirit takes place. And here, Sir, with your permission, I will leave for a moment the subject on which we are at present engaged, to say a few words in relation to *Spiritual Discernment*; For it will be impossible for me to make a clear statement of my views, so long as this very important point of doctrine remains unexplained.

There are two different meanings attached to the word Spirit, by the New Testament writers: (1) The word is used to denote the Divine Influence which operates upon the hearts of men, to turn them from their sins, and to effect their sanctification: It is used also (2) to denote a particular *frame of mind*; thus the apostle asks, "Shall I come unto you with a rod, or in love," and in the *spirit* of meekness." We often use the same word in the same manner at the present day; thus we say that a man comes in the spirit of peace, meaning that he comes in a peaceable spirit, that is, in a conciliatory, or peaceful *frame of mind*—but we will not multiply examples. I propose to confine my remarks, at this time, to the second meaning of the term, Spirit:—of the first meaning, I shall have occasion to speak hereafter. And here, Sir, permit me to apologize for the dogmatic tone of this exposition. I noticed, a few lines above, that I did not speak with the deference that ought to characterize a letter from me to you; but you will excuse me for falling into apparent improprieties of this nature, for you must recognize that the effort to make my exposition clear, necessitates a certain strength of affirmation. I do not make this apology, Sir, to satisfy your mind that no offence is intended; for I know you are well aware that I am altogether incapable of consciously offending against the respect which is due to you on account of your position and character,

or, indeed, of offending against the modesty which is becoming in me because of my relative age and standing in the church. But, that no reader may suppose I forget the bounds of propriety, I will state that the positive and dogmatic tone comes from the nature of the subject, and from the necessity in which I find myself of using simple and direct language, in order to express my views with that clearness which will enable you to pass judgment upon them, in the whole and in detail, giving me that candid opinion in relation to their merits which I am so desirous to obtain.—

The apostle says, "For what man knoweth the things of a man, *save the Spirit of man which is in him?* Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but *the Spirit of God.*" Now we have received, not the Spirit of the world, but the Spirit of God; that we might know the things that are freely given us of God." How does one man know the thoughts, feelings, sympathies, and affections of another man? It is in this way: Because both are men, each knows his own nature; and each, knowing how he himself would feel and think under certain circumstances, knows how his neighbor would feel and think under like circumstances. It is in this way that we are enabled to understand history; for we put ourselves mentally in the position and situation of the personages of whom we read, and assume, for the time, their states of mind; thus we are enabled to understand the *spirit* in which they acted, thus we are able to sympathize with them, to feel and think with them; in short, in Scripture language, it is thus that we are enabled to understand *the things* of them. "Who knoweth the things of a man, *save the Spirit of man that is in him?*" The personal existences of men, their souls, are distinct, and cannot be possessed in common by two or more men; but the same frame of mind, may be possessed, at the same time, by multitudes. Who knoweth the things of a man then, except he have the power to sympathize with a man, to come into the same frame of mind with him, to become *conformed* to him, to come into his *form*, or, in short, to be of the same spirit with him? We say the Roman Catholic Spirit, when we wish to speak of the Roman Catholic frame of mind, and the Protestant Spirit when we wish to speak of the Protestant frame of mind: now, is it not evident that the Catholic knows the things of the Catholic, and the Protestant the things of the Protestant, much better than the Catholic knows the things of the Protestant, or the Protestant the things of the Catholic? And is not this so because there is a communion of Spirit between Catholic and Catholic, and Protestant and Protestant, while there is a diversity of Spirit between Catholic and Protestant? Who knoweth the things of a Catholic or a Protestant, except he have the spirit of a Catholic or a Protestant?

Now it is written that "without holiness no man shall see the Lord." But holiness is that likeness to the Divine nature which makes one to be similar to God, to be in the *form* of God, to possess that *conformity* to God which is *godliness*; for God is a Being infinitely holy. But if we have the frame of mind which is able to bring us into the *form* of God, that *form* will be the Spirit of God, and by partaking of that Spirit, we shall become enabled to know the things of God. "What man knoweth the things of a man, *save the spirit of man that is in him?*" *Even so* the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God." In this same connection, the apostle says, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive, the things which God hath laid up for them that love him." But mark how the apostle continues! mark the connection of his discourse! "But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit, for the *spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.*"

This, then, is Spiritual Discernment, viz: the obtaining of Spiritual Knowledge, by *conforming* the temper of our minds to the Divine Likeness.

But to return to our subject.—Man has alienated himself from God by his sins, and has obscured that image, or *form*, of the Father in which he was created; and he can, therefore, no longer discern the things of the Father; because he has not the Spirit of God. "The

natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." But our Lord has seen the Father, he has become *transformed* into the image of the Father, he is in the *form* of God;" and for that reason he discerns the things of God. And Christ is set before us so clearly, that the knowledge of his glory comes to us almost through our very senses. Thus we can come into the *form*, drink in of the *Spirit*, and discern the *things* of Christ. And, because of the near communion in which Christ stood with the Father—yea, and stands now, since his ascension above all height—the things of Christ were the things of the Father, the Spirit of Christ was the Spirit of the Father, and the form of Christ was the very form of the Father. Thus the man Christ Jesus is the true and only Mediator; and there is an immeasurable distance between his dignity, and the dignity of the highest of the children of Adam. For none of us can attain unto God directly, but he attained directly; we must attain, if we attain at all, *through him*, for he is, as it were, the ladder reaching from earth to heaven, whereon the heavenly powers ascend and descend. Our Lord saw the Father directly, there were no veils for him, he partook of the Spirit directly, and of the form by immediate contemplation; but the christian who shines the brightest in the constellation of the saints, receives his glory, not directly from God, but indirectly through the great Mediator whom God has raised up, the man Christ Jesus.

There is a remarkable passage in the epistle of Paul to the Phillipians, which I will quote as illustrative of my views of the Mediatorship of Christ. But, because in our common translation, the meaning of the original is totally perverted—"who being in the *form* of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God"—I will give a new translation, without wasting time in verbal criticism, a translation to which I think, Sir, that you will not bring forward any serious objection. "Let this mind be in you (says the apostle) which was also in Christ Jesus: who being [literally, *beginning to be*] " in the *form* of God, thought that the being like unto God was a thing not eagerly to be retained: but he emptied himself, taking the *form* of a servant, becoming in the likeness of men; and, being found in condition as a man, he humbled himself, becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." How does this passage commence? Does it commence by saying, Let this mind be in you which was also in the second Person of the Holy Trinity, who beginning to be in the *form* of God &c.? Not at all. The passage teaches (1) That our Lord, the man Christ Jesus, was not the infinite God, but in the *form*, or image, of God. Can one substance, divine or human, that is in the form or image of another, be that other in whose form or image it is? Evidently not. The passage teaches (2) That he emptied himself of the glory he might have retained, taking the *form* of a servant, and the *likeness* of men who have not direct access like him to the Father; and this that he might be in the *form* at once of God and man:—in the *form* of men that he might have in all things a common nature and sympathy with them, thus giving all men a hold upon him, enabling them to come into *conformity* with him, and through him with God:—in the form of God, that he might himself be pervaded by the Divine Spirit, and thus be enabled to transmit the Divine Form, through himself to men. (3) That being thus found in condition as a man, he humbled himself—to what? from God to become man? Not at all; the text teaches nothing of the kind. "He humbled himself unto death, even the death of the cross: Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, &c."

In all these circumstances, our Lord is set forth as a pattern and example to his disciples; for they, through him, are like him, in the *form* of God: they also, like him, must empty themselves, taking that likeness which will best enable them to transmit to the world, the Spirit and Form they receive from Christ; our Lord says, "as the Father sent *me* into the world, *even so* send I *you* into the world." The disciples also, now and always, must be ready, if need be to humble themselves even to the death of the cross: if they do this, they also will be highly exalted by the Father, who will make them to reign as kings and priests, seated upon thrones of holiness. In the book of the Revelation, our Lord spoke to his servant John in a vision, sending this message to the church in Thyatira: "He that

overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: *even as I received of my Father.*" He sent also this message to the church in Laodicea: " To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, *even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.* He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches!"

All this may be made much clearer by an explanation of the fifty seventh verse of the sixth chapter of the gospel according to John, where our Lord says:

"AS THE LIVING FATHER HATH SENT ME, AND I LIVE BY THE FATHER: SO HE THAT EATETH ME, EVEN HE SHALL LIVE BY ME.

That my interpretation of this passage may be worthy of your especial attention, I will at once propose for solution the two great philosophical questions which it so clearly indicates: What is LIFE? What is the *Law of the communication of LIFE?*—"LIFE (says Bichat) is the collection of functions that resist death." This definition has been criticised by the docteur Cerise as follows: "(1) The notion of the Vital Force expressed in these terms, is not exact; for the most general act of Life is not a *resistance*, a reaction, an opposition. (2) The Vital Force acts on external powers less in resisting *than in causing them to subserve* the ends for which it was itself created. (3) If, as the geologists affirm, the inorganic world preceded the appearance of organized beings, if the inorganic world has been disposed in a way to offer to organized beings a medium in which they may accomplish the phenomena of Life, we must be very careful not to confound this *harmony* so marvellously preestablished, with an *antagonism* which would be its negation. (4) Life is not in a state of permanent struggling against external nature; *for it is in a state of continuous formation—for it assimilates unceasingly, by regular and special operations, the diverse elements of the inorganic world.*" You will permit me, Sir, to call your attention to the last sentence of this quotation, where it is stated (as seems indeed somewhat evident of itself) that the phenomena of Life manifest themselves more especially in the phenomena of assimilation and nutrition. I would ask—if so simple a question may be permitted—*Why does a man eat?* Is it not evident that he eats that he may thereby *sustain his bodily life?* A man will starve who refrains from eating; for, without food, it is impossible that any one should live according to his bodily life. All this appears too simple to insist upon, but you will excuse me for continuing for a moment, in the same strain; for it is upon these simple, and, as it were, self-evident propositions, that I am to erect the whole superstructure of my exposition of one of the profoundest mysteries of the Christian faith. The facts referred to, produced a profound impression on the mind of Cuvier, and we may see indications of the results of that impression, in the following quotation from his writings: "If (says Cuvier) to obtain for ourselves a just idea of the essence of *Life*, we consider it in those beings where its effects are most simple, we shall perceive promptly that it consists in the faculty which certain corporeal combinations possess of enduring through a determinate time, and under a determinate form, *in drawing unceasingly into their composition a part of the surrounding substances, and in rendering back to the elements a part of their own substance.*" If time permitted, I might fill a volume with parallel passages from modern writers on physiology, from the philosophers of ancient Greece, and from the sacred books of India. But let these suffice for the present: indeed these quotations, might well have been spared; for we have far higher authority in favor of the correctness of the theory of Life here noticed, than that of either of these names, illustrious as they are in the annals of science. I refer to the testimony of our Lord himself. But before we come to a direct examination of the express words of our Savior, you will permit me to give some further development to the principle—*That a man eats to sustain his life.* For man has not only a bodily life, he has also an intellectual and a spiritual life. But no man can exercise his intellectual nature, except some truth, or some object to be perceived, be presented to his intelligence. No man can perceive truth

except that truth be presented to the mind: for the truth thus presented, is the *food of the mind*, and the mind *lives by* the assimilation of this *food*. A similar remark might be made in relation to man's moral, or spiritual nature. When we hear an instructive discourse, or read a sensible book, we say that our minds are *fed*, and this is a very appropriate expression. We *live by* what we *eat*—understanding the term, *to eat*, literally when we speak of our bodily life, and figuratively when we speak of our intellectual and spiritual life. If you will excuse Sir, the extreme evidence of the distinction I am about to draw, I will make no further remarks here I commence again upon the main subject of my exposition.—When we hear a discourse, or read a book, we are *fed* intellectually and morally by the discourse, or look, and *live by* our reading: but—because the discourse, or book, is not alive, but dead—our action has no reflex influence on the discourse or book, to cause it to *live by* us. Very different is the case when a conversation takes place between two living and intelligent beings, where each speaks in turn, and each instructs the other; for, in this last case, each *feeds* and *lives by* the other.

Let us now apply these principles to the interpretation of our text. Our Lord says:—

I. "AS THE LIVING FATHER HATH SENT ME—." This sentence implies that the Father is ALIVE; and, because it is the first principle of religion that God is absolute and self-sufficient, the sentence implies that the Father is SELF-LIVING. But we have already seen that life is sustained by *food*, and that to all life, there is necessary (1) a living agent, and (2) the food which that living agent *lives by*. If now (as the text evidently implies, or affirms) God is *Self-living*, He must, of necessity, contain *in himself* that eternal food which is requisite for the sustenance of his eternal Life; and this fact enables us to discern the three following distinctions in the Divine Existence, (1) The *Principle* of the Divine Life, the Living Agent: (2) The *Food* by the assimilation of which that Principle *lives*: (3) The *Divine Life* itself. But—because God is a Spirit, a Supreme Intelligence,—it is evident that *the Food whereby he lives* must be spiritual and intellectual—and, for the same reason, that his *Eternal Life* must be spiritual and intellectual. But what is the proper *food* of intellectual and spiritual life? Is it not Truth, Wisdom, Science? Infinite Truth, Wisdom and Science, must, therefore, be the Food of the Life of the Infinite God. And, because God is *essentially* the Self-Living God, he must include in his *essence* all the elements of his Self-Sufficient Life; and must, therefore, subsist eternally in *Trinity*; being, at once (1) The Infinite Principle of Life—the unrevealed or hidden God: (2) Infinite Wisdom, Science, and Truth: (3) The Infinite Life that proceeds from, and is dependent upon, the concurrence of the two first. This is that TRINITY which has been recognised by the higher metaphysics of India, Persia, Egypt, Chaldea, and Greece; for the philosophers of all these nations acknowledged a TRI-UNE GOD—but they abandoned the doctrine of a tri-personal Deity to the religion of the ignorant populace, who worshiped idols of wood and stone.

But what is this second element in the Divine Existence, viz.: Wisdom, Science, or Truth? Is it not that eternal *Logos*, or Word of God, which was celebrated by the higher philosophy throughout all antiquity? Does not the evangelist borrow the technical language of the Greek and Egyptian Philosophies, when he expresses his own view of the Trinity in the following words: "In the beginning was the WORD, and the WORD was *with* God, and the WORD was God. . . . In him was LIFE, and the LIFE was the light of men." If it be not asking too great a favor, I would request you, Sir, to compare the beginning of the Gospel of John, with the seventh chapter of the twelfth book of the Metaphysics of Aristotle.

II. Our Lord continues, "as the Living Father hath sent me, AND I LIVE BY THE FATHER—." How did our Lord *live by* the Father, if not by *eating him* after a spiritual manner? How did he *live by* the Father, if not by making the Father the *food* of his spiritual nature? God as unrevealed, as hidden in the infinite abyss of his own essence, is the first element of the Trinity; but as revealed, as manifesting himself, he is the second element, viz. the Eternal

WORD . Now God himself *lives by* this Eternal WORD, for it is the *food* of his Eternal Life. But our Lord also, lived by this same Word, for it is written that he "saw" the Father, "lived by" the Father; and yet it is evident that he saw, and lived by, not the unmanifested or hidden Father, which is essentially imperceptible by its very nature, but by the Father as manifested, that is, by the Eternal Word. Our Lord was raised up by the Father to differ altogether, from the rest of the children of men; for he was raised up to live a peculiar Life, being admitted to a distinct contemplation of that Word which is the effulgence of the Divine Splendor. Thus Christ *lived by* that which the Father himself *lived by*: thus his life, on one side, became identical with the life of the Father. By incessant contemplation of the Divine Word, which is the form, the image, or revealing manifestation of God, our Lord became transformed till he was in the image, or form of God; and thus he became *the Word made Flesh*. In other words, we may discern in our Lord, so much of the Divine Word as can possibly be embodied under human conditions; for which reason we call our Lord the *incarnation*, or *embodiment*, of the Word. He is not the Word essentially, for he is a person, while the Word has evidently no personal existence: but he is a man transformed into the image, or form, of God.

III. Our Lord continues still further: "as the Living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so HE THAT EATETH ME, EVEN HE SHALL LIVE BY ME." As our Lord contemplated the Father, *fed* spiritually upon the Father, so we, who profess to be disciples of Christ, should contemplate Christ, making him the ever present *food* of our spiritual natures. For as Christ by direct contemplation became *one* with the Father, and received *the life of God*, so we, by eating Christ spiritually, may become *one* with him, and receive his life: and—because his life is the life of the Father—we also may become, by thus *feeding* upon him, *one* with the Father.

I think I may now, with propriety, sum up the conclusions to be drawn from the foregoing interpretation of the words of our Lord, in the following points of doctrine:

I. Christians are made to be *one* with Christ in a common life, by reason of their feeding upon him after a spiritual manner. Our Lord says, "He that *eateth* my flesh, and *drinketh* my blood, *dwelleth* in me, and I *in* him. . . . Verily, verily, I say unto you, except ye *eat* the flesh of the Son of Man, and *drink* his blood ye have no *life* in you." The apostle John says, "He that keepeth Christ's commandments, *dwelleth* in him, and he *in* him; and hereby we know that he *abideth in us*, by the *Spirit* he hath given us."

II. Christ is made to be *one* with the Father in identically the same way, or manner, that his disciples are made to be *one* with him—that is by the communion of a common life. Our Lord, in his prayer in the garden, when he was about to be betrayed, poured out his heart to God in favor of his disciples: he prayed, "That they all may be *one* . . . as thou Father art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be *one* in us . . . neither pray I for them alone; but for those also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be *one* . . . *And the glory which thou gavest me, I have given them; that they may be one, EVEN AS WE ARE ONE.*" The union which subsists between our Lord and the Father, is precisely the same with that which makes all the disciples to be one in Christ; it is a moral union, a union in conformity of character. Our Lord is a person in the one substance of the Father, in the same sense that the disciples are distinct persons in the one substance of their Master, and in that sense only.

III. Through Christ, as a middle Term, or Mediator, Christians are made to be *one* with the Eternal Father. "Whoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, *God dwelleth in him, and he in God.*"—"Ye are dead, and *your lives are hid with Christ in God.*"—"Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises; that by these ye might be made *partakers of the Divine Nature.*"

IV. The Divine Life which our Lord receives from the Father, and which he transmits to the disciples, is the HOLY GHOST. "In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, if any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the Scriptures have said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of Living Water.—But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive, for the Holy Ghost was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified." John VII, 37-59. Is it not evident that this living water, or water of life, is that divine influence which operated upon Christ, making him to be the Son of God, and which flowed through Christ upon the early disciples, making them to be Sons of God, and which flows through them to us, making us—if we receive it—Sons of God also? Is there any propriety in comparing a personality, which by its nature must be one and steadfast, to streams of flowing water? Permit me, to illustrate the doctrine of the transmission of the spirit, by a figure taken from the natural sciences. When several persons are in communication by holding each others hands, and a shock of electricity is given to one, the fluid is transmitted from that one to all the others, passing from the first even to the last. Now our Lord was *charged*, as it were, with the Divine Life, and this life is transmitted to all who are in *communion* with him. But this figure is inadequate:—I know but little of the truth or falsehood of mesmerism; yet this pretended science will enable me to carry out my illustration. As one man by a prolonged and earnest gaze, can obtain control over another, transmitting his thoughts and feelings into the mind of the other, bringing the will of the other into complete subjection to his own, so the Father, by the might of the overpowering effulgence of his glory, magnetized our Lord, bringing him into conformity with the perfect image of his own infinite holiness. Our Lord, in his turn, *magnetized* the holy apostles, transmitting to them the magnetic power he received from the Father: these last *magnetized* others, and these others still others, transmitting always the same magnetic power; so that the succession has come down to' the present day, and the disciples of Christ, at this present hour, are able to transform the unconverted into the form and image of Christ, through the *magnetism* of a holy life.

Our Lord—as we have seen—prays in his last prayer that his disciples may be *one*, even as he and his Father are *one*; and the accomplishment of this prayer seems to be the main result that will finally be brought about by the Divine Life which has proceeded through Christ into the World. And this ought, on philosophical principles, so to be; for the great visible effect of a common life in diverse substances, is always the production of a *living organism*, which, from its nature, must be *one*. Thus the Church is compared, by the apostle Paul to a living body. He speaks of it as "a perfect man," and, again, as "growing up in all things into him which is the head, from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body, &c." Peter speaks of the Church as a living temple.— "Coming to the Lord, as unto a *living stone*, disallowed of men, but chosen of God, and precious, ye also as *living stones*, are built up into a spiritual house," &c. In these passages, and in many others, is taught the great doctrine of the mutual *solidarity* of the members of the Christian Church; and, by implication, the *solidarity* of the whole human race. By solidarity, I mean that connection of things with each other which makes it impossible that one should be influenced without the influence being transmitted, through that *one*, to *all*.

CONCLUSION.

It is, to me, no matter of astonishment that so many theologians should believe in, and teach, the doctrine of a tri-personal Trinity; nor that they should affirm such a Trinity to be revealed in the Christian Scriptures: for I also have been a Trinitarian, I also have believed the truth of the doctrine to be evident. Permit me, Sir, to refer a moment to my own

experience. I was once far from entertaining the interest in religious matters that I now do. I was alienated from the life of God, and my thoughts, were concentrated upon things that have little relation to the kingdom of heaven. But when I was nineteen years of age, the Spirit of God (as I trust), that divine influence and power which operates through the life and death of our Lord, took hold upon me, while I was in an enemy's country, engaged in a war which I knew to be unjust. At once, I felt all earthly things to be of little value when compared with the new thoughts and new Spirit, I had received. I, at once, lost all interest in the service in which I was engaged, and determined to change my course of life, and to devote myself wholly to those new interests, which now seemed to be the only ones worthy the attention of a man. From this moment, my determination to prepare myself to enter the christian ministry, if Providence permitted, was unalterably fixed. But a feeling of military honor held me back; for the duties which devolved upon me, were exceedingly laborious; and I was afraid I might give occasion to remarks injurious to the cause of my new Master, if I should suddenly exchange my privations and fatigue, for the quiet of a student's life. Without doubt I was wrong in this, but I would that I could have, at the present time, that feeling of devotedness, that singleness of purpose, and that enjoyment of the Divine Presence, which I possessed while I retained my commission, and continued to wear my sword at my side. After eighteen months, I was brought almost to the brink of the grave by a fever that prevailed among the troops; and the commanding general gave me permission to leave the country, and go to the north, for the benefit of my health. From this time I felt myself to be a free man. I joined a Trinitarian Church, and entered a Trinitarian Theological Seminary; for early impressions still hung around me, and I had been educated in the Calvinistic faith. If I had not entered a Trinitarian Theological School, I believe I should have remained a Trinitarian to this day, for all my prejudices were in favor of the doctrine. At the Seminary, I was led to examine some of the proof texts in favor of the doctrine of a tri-personal Godhead: I found scores of passages in our common version of the Scriptures, any one of which would have been sufficient by itself to have established it: but when I came to examine these same passages in their connections, and in the light of the original language in which the New Testament is written, I found that the trinitarianism they contained, vanished like the morning mist before the rising sun. But, on the contrary, the texts which seemed to have a unitarian tendency (as those quoted in the foregoing exposition,) gathered increased force and splendor, the more narrowly I examined them, till the evidence was (to my mind) irresistible, and I went to the president of the institution, and told him I was a Unitarian. You will excuse me, Sir, if, under these circumstances I affirm throughout the remainder of this letter, that the doctrine of a *tri*-personal Godhead is not revealed in Scripture: for I assure you that I have searched carefully, and have nowhere been able to find it.

We are forced to confess that the pure truth of Christianity was adulterated, even from the times of the apostles, by an admixture of heathen error. Will it be necessary for me to speak, in this connection, of the various forms of gnosticism, several of which date back undoubtedly to the times of the apostles? We all of us are very willing to acknowledge that the theology of the Roman Catholic Church is perverted by a mixture of paganism. Now, are we not ourselves in danger, at the present time, of receiving and teaching as Bible truth, doctrines which have been derived to us, not from the Bible, but from the impure source of heathen error? Let us examine the doctrine of a *tri-personal* Godhead in the light of history.

I. Is the doctrine revealed in the Christian Scriptures? I think we must answer this question in the negative; for, if the doctrine is revealed in the Bible, it is revealed so vaguely, and under so many shadows, that many (and I must count myself among the number) have been altogether unable to find it. And it is reasonable to suppose that a doctrine of this importance, the capital doctrine of the church theology, if revealed at all, would have been revealed so plainly that those who have eyes to see, and understanding to interpret, might run, and read it.

II. Is the doctrine taught in those ancient idolatrous theologies which, from the beginning, came in contact with the Christian church, and which, from the beginning, corrupted its pure doctrine, giving rise to gnosticism, the heresy of the Manichaeans, and all forms of error? How different is the answer to this question! Egypt rises from her gigantic tomb, and points her finger to monuments carved all over with trinities. Egypt believed in trinities—tri-personal trinities in the upper, and tri-personal trinities in the lower world. Every province of Egypt had its peculiar tri-personal trinity, as the object of its especial worship—there is Kneph, with Neith, and the young god Ha-ke; there is Amoun with Mouth, and Ptha; there is Sevek Ra, with Hathor, and Chons-Hor; there is Monthou, with Rithro and Harphre; there is Har Hat, or the thrice great Hermes, with Hathor, and Har-Sont-Tho; there is Osiris with Isis and Horus: all tri-personal trinities, and all of them three Persons co-ordinated into one Godhead: yea, these are but a part of her trinities, for the host of them is innumerable, yet they are all of them, multitudes of tri-personal trinities, but emanations of a single godhead, into which they are again resumed. The London Tract Society, an evangelical body, have published a work on the "Antiquities of Egypt," in which the author proves, and satisfactorily too, that the doctrine of a tri-personal Trinity, and that of the incarnation of Divine Persons were received in Egypt before our Lord appeared in the world—yea, before the time of Abraham. India believed in the doctrine of a tri-personal trinity for ages before the Christian era. Persia also acceded to the same doctrines.—Will any one deny these facts? Will any one deny that these religions even in the times of the apostles came in contact with Christianity? No one will deny these things—at least no scholar with a reputation to lose, will deny them. And where was the birthplace of the trinitarian controversy? Where was the doctrine of a tri-personal trinity exalted to be the distinguishing characteristic of the Christian religion? It was in Egypt where the doctrine had been held from a time so far back in antiquity that her wise men had forgotten the history of its origin—it was in Alexandria of Egypt, the city in which all the science and theology of paganism were concentrated.

What evidently follows from these considerations? The facts in the case are these;—We find a doctrine in the Church which is the result of the concurrence of Scripture truth with the theologies of the heathen religions: we look into the Scriptures, and find no trace of the doctrine; we look into the heathen theologies and find them saturated with it, we find it ploughed into them, ground into their very structure—and who can resist the evident conclusion? For my part I must confess that it is impossible for me with my present light, to believe that the doctrine of a tri-personal God, has any other than a heathen origin.

But Sir the doctrine of a tri-personal trinity, (though it appears to my mind perfectly heathenish) seems pure and almost Scriptural when I compare it with that of the INCARNATION, as I have heard this last doctrine preached in our Churches and taught in our Sunday-Schools. We must always remember that the doctrine of the Incarnation of the Second Person of a Trinity of three co-equal Persons in one God is not original with the Christian Church; for the Hindus have held from the beginning of history that the second person of their Trimourti or Trinity (Vischnou the Preserver or Redeemer) takes upon himself a finite form whenever occasion requires making himself visible, and purging the world of evil. In the Bhagavat Geeta Krishna (who is Vischnou) is brought in speaking as follows: "Although I am not in my nature subject to birth or decay, and am the Lord of all created being yet having command over my own nature, I am made evident by my own power; and, as often as there is a decline of virtue and an insurrection of vice and injustice in the world, *I make myself evident*; and thus I appear from age to age for the preservation of the just, for the destruction of the wicked, and for the establishment of virtue." Nine incarnations of Vischnou have already taken place, and the Hindus are, at this hour, impatiently expecting the tenth. Now I have heard the Christian doctrine of the Incarnation of the Word, set forth by theologians, as though this incarnation took place after the manner

of the incarnations of the Indian Vischnou. I have heard it stated that the Word was God personally—the Second Person of the Trinity, equal to the two other Persons, and *identical* in substance with them, this Second Person being not *a* God, but *the* God, infinite in every perfection and attribute. "There are not (says the Athenasian creed) three Gods, and three Lords, but one God, and one Lord." I have heard it stated that this second Person in the Trinity, vacated his throne in heaven, and left the bosom of the tri-personal Godhead, appearing on earth as a man, still, however, retaining his Godhead: that he suffered the punishment of man's sins, presenting himself as a substitute for man, on the principle of a vicarious atonement: that this inexplicable sacrifice became the occasion of the descent of the third Person, who came down subsequently, and took up his abode in the hearts of those to whom the blood of this atonement was applicable, through virtue of an election to grace from the foundation of the world: that this sacrifice was pleasing to the first Person, who, during all these transactions, remained on his throne in heaven; and that the accumulated wrath of this first Person was rolled away, so that he could again have mercy upon the children of men.—It is hard to state this Doctrine, but I think I have done it no injustice.

Is it not evident that the Indian form of the doctrine, immeasurably idolatrous as it is, is infinitely superior to the form taught in our Churches, and Sunday-Schools? Vischnou, in his finite form, still remains a God, his acts are the acts of a God; he triumphs over his enemies, destroying the evil that is in the earth, being finite only in appearance: but the Personal Logos weeps tears of blood in the garden—can the second Person in the Holy Trinity, a God equal to the Eternal Father, weep tears of blood? The Personal Logos is crucified, and calls out in his agony, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me"—can a God suffer pain? The Personal Logos gives up the ghost—can a God die? Nay, rather, if our Lord was the infinite God, was he not, for the very reason that he was the infinite God, even while hanging on the cross, the happiest being in the universe? If our Lord was the personal God, and he pretended to suffer pain, that suffering was a deception practised in the view of men and angels, yea, according to the doctrine itself, a deception practised before the eye of the first Person of the Trinity who remained in Heaven. If he pretended to weep tears, and to suffer the pains incident to human nature, he being all the time the infinite God, that pretence was an insult to the human race, a bitter and infinite mockery of the misery which man feels in its intense reality. If he pretended to live as a man, to suffer, and to die on the cross, his whole life and death presented the spectacle of a falsehood, exhibited by infinite Power, in a theatrical show, before the holy angels of heaven, who were outraged by the infamy of the deception—but words are weak! It is answered sometimes, that all the suffering was borne by the human nature; but this answer is inadmissible, for where, then, was the *infinite atonement for sin*, if the Divine Nature had no part in the suffering? And is not this infinite atonement for sin, an essential part of the theory? If the human nature only suffered, then the whole work rests "on an arm of flesh," and the world, according to the doctrine itself, *is not saved!* But this answer is inadmissible for a still stronger reason: when any person weeps, it is *he* that weeps, when he suffers, it is *he* that suffers, when he dies, it is *he* that gives up the ghost. The nature does not suffer, or weep, or die, it is *he*, the living *person*, that does all these things. I possess a physical, a moral, and an intellectual nature, but what do I care if my intellectual, moral, and physical natures, suffer intense pain, if *I*, the living *person*, enjoy infinite happiness throughout the whole, and receive no real detriment? Can that be called *human* suffering, which permits the sufferer, even while suffering, to enjoy in his soul, in his mind, in that which constitutes him a *person*, infinite joy? Was our Lord *afflicted in all points like as we are*, if he suffered only in outward form, being inwardly infinitely happy throughout the whole?

Is there, Sir, a man in the world who does not recognize the falsity of the statement that an infinite God can suffer pain?

If the Scriptures teach that an infinite God suffered pain and death, are they not evidently the most immoral of all books? If they teach that the pardon of our sins is bought by the sufferings of an infinite God on the cross, if they teach this to be the corner-stone of the only religion whereby a sinner can possibly be saved, do they not teach A SCHEME OF SALVATION THAT IS COMMENCED IN FRAUD ON THE PART OF THE MOST HIGH GOD, AND CONSUMMATED BY AN IMPOSITION ON THE UNIVERSE?

The doctrine of the Trinity that leads to these disastrous conclusions, is not to be found in the Christian Scriptures, but it may be found in the creeds of almost all our churches: and we know that the doctrine of the Church has been, from the beginning, a mixture of truth and error, of Scripture teaching and of heathen superstition,—from which of these two sources did this doctrine spring? From Scripture? Not at all—from heathenism then? This much we know certainly from history—*that the doctrine of the Incarnation of Divine Persons, was taught and believed in Egypt and India for ages before our Lord appeared in the world.*

The Sabellian theory is worse yet; for it teaches that God, the eternal Father, himself became incarnate, and, consequently, that the Father himself died upon the cross. According to the Sabellians (who seem to have reproduced the doctrines of the incarnation, not of Vischnou, but of Brahma, the first person of the Indian Trinity) there is but one person in the Godhead: the Word, and the Holy Spirit, are virtues, emanations, functions, or *offices* and *modes*, of the Deity: he who is in heaven, the Father of all things, descended into the Virgin, became a child, and was born of her as a son: the Father, having accomplished the mystery of our salvation, diffused himself upon the apostles in tongues of fire, and was then denominated the Holy Ghost: the Son of God who redeemed us, and the Holy Spirit which exerts upon us its sanctifying influence, are the same one God, one personality, manifesting himself in distinct, but harmonious, offices. I will not waste words upon a hypothesis that teaches by evident consequence, the sufferings and death of Almighty God. You will excuse me, Sir, for the plainness of my speech, but the subject is of unspeakable importance, and demands explicit treatment.

Altogether false, in my estimation, are all these theories of the Atonement, based as they are on the principle of vicarious, or substituted punishment. The doctrine of the Vicarious Atonement is barbarous, and was originally derived from principles of law that obtained in the courts of ignorant oriental despots—from principles of law that are now indignantly repudiated by every civilized people. Are not the ways of God above our ways? And is it lawful for us to represent his justice as immeasurably inferior to ours? If the law of God requires that the sinner should die, the sinner must certainly die, unless he receives a free pardon. No innocent person can be substituted in his place, to receive his punishment for him; for the law requires not a certain amount of suffering borne by some one, but a certain amount of punishment inflicted on the guilty: and if indicted on any but the guilty, the whole value and propriety of the punishment is taken away. Nay, the punishment of the innocent in the stead of the guilty, so far from satisfying the claims of the law, is an outrage on the Divine Justice. And what matters it that the substitute offers himself voluntarily? If the criminal be permitted to go free, and that constitutes a violation of the law, the punishment of an innocent person, under any circumstances whatever, whether in the stead of another, or without any reason, whether the punishment be voluntarily assumed, or inflicted without the sufferer's consent—the punishment of an innocent person, would but add another and more heinous violation of the law to the violation already existing. The analogy so often drawn from the payment of a debt by one person for another, is not in point; for the payment of a debt cannot be looked upon in the light of a punishment. Besides, according to the doctrine, we are not to consider ourselves in the light of mere debtors, who have received and cannot pay, but in the light of criminals. I know, indeed, that when this doctrine first arose, no distinction was made in the civil courts between a debtor and a criminal—and oftentimes

there is none; but when a debtor is a criminal, it is not because he is a debtor, but because he is so fraudulently. But let us take an illustration from our own criminal courts: suppose a father or a brother should offer himself to bear the punishment to be inflicted in consequence of a regular sentence passed upon a guilty son or brother, would the judge, and the executive, accept the substitution, and permit the condemned criminal to go forth free and justified? Could the laws of this Commonwealth be satisfied by any similar expedient? These questions require no answer. Why, then, did our Lord die? What *end* did he propose to bring about by his death?

I will endeavor to give an answer (though necessarily an inadequate one) to these questions. When the desires of sensitive beings are in the course of gratification, and their affections have opportunity to expand themselves, they experience pleasure; and legitimate pleasure consists in the appropriate operation of the active powers going out towards their natural objects. The brute creation seek its objects, and experiences pleasure in finding them; and this pleasure is legitimate, because it is in accordance with the will of God, being in accordance with the nature originally bestowed by the Creator. But no animal has a distinct knowledge of what pleasure is; for, though he feels pleasurable sensations, he is altogether taken up with the pursuit of his object, and cannot reflect upon his sensations. Man, however, through the action of self-consciousness, knows pleasure to be a certain activity of the soul, and thus knowing *pleasure*, as well as the outward object in which he finds it, he may cease to pursue the outward object, and make pleasure itself the end he desires to obtain. The animal cannot do this, for he has no distinct knowledge of pleasure in itself, and is unable to look upon it as an end to be obtained. Thus man may find pleasure in the pursuit of pleasure, that is in endeavoring to attain to a certain state of private and individual pleasurable existence. But what is this pursuit of pleasure for itself? It is *selfishness*; for it is the pursuing of a certain desirable state of individual existence, entirely independently of any consideration of that which is extraneous to the individual, the *self*.

Now, when man was first created, all his passions, feelings, sentiments and aspirations, were in harmony with the course of universal nature; for man and nature were parts of the same plan, and they came from the same creative hand. So long as man lived naturally, according to his primitive instincts and impulses, there was no disorder in the world: but when he began to be selfish, to seek pleasure for pleasure's sake, and not as an incident of his normal life, he endeavored to defeat the purpose for the accomplishment of which the Creator had originally established the universal harmony. For God implanted the susceptibility to pleasure in the human constitution, that man might be induced to live in true relations with that which is not himself; and we find pleasure so long as we act in accordance with nature, and pain so soon as we violate the natural laws. Man, by his knowledge, discovered this beautiful arrangement, and immediately strove to obtain the desirable reward, without accomplishing the things which were to be a prior condition of his obtaining it. What was the immediate consequence? Men became divided among themselves, they received the punishment naturally attached to the violation of the law. As long as they lived according to nature, they found pleasure in doing the things that were agreeable and useful to all; but as soon as each made his own private enjoyment the main end of his life, the harmony of the universe was broken, the unity of the human race was shattered into as many fragments as there were individual men, and these fragments repelled each other, for each was intensely selfish, and each cared for his own, and not for the common good. Thus the dumb animals remained obedient to the law impressed on their natures; but man, BY HIS KNOWLEDGE OF GOOD AND EVIL, was enabled to carry disorder into his own bosom, to violate the law written upon his heart, and to effect his own misery. Was not this the work of the first Adam? In fact what was, according to the Scriptures, the work of the first Adam? The apostle Paul says the first Adam was "a figure of the him who was to come;" but he says that this figure is to be interpreted in the order of contraries—"As was the offence, *not so* is the free gift . . . And as it was by one that sinned, *not so* is the gift: for the judgment was by

one to condemnation, but the free gift is of many offences unto justification," &c. Thus it is evident, that if we can discover the nature of the work of the second Adam, we can discover the nature of the work of the first Adam by the process of oppositions. But the nature of the work of the second Adam is evident; for it was to make men *to be one in the bond of charity*—it was to make men *to be one in the unity of a common Life*. Our Lord prays that his disciples "may be *one*, even as he and his Father are *one*:" he said to his disciples, "I am come that ye might have Life, and that ye might have it more abundantly:" he sent also this message, by his servant John, to the church in Ephesus, "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches: To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the TREE OF LIFE which is in the midst of the paradise of God." If the second Adam came to bring *unity of Life in Charity*, and his work is the direct contrary of the work that was wrought in the first Adam, it follows by evident consequence, that the first Adam brought *death in dissociation through selfishness*. If the second Adam gives access to the symbolical tree of Life, it is evident that the work of the first Adam tended to the exclusion of the human family from this symbolical tree. If the second Adam brought "the truth that makes free," the first Adam invented that selfish wisdom, which is cunning, and which always turns against and enslaves him that uses it. The first Adam fell, and the whole human race with him, by eating the symbolical fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Permit me to endeavor to explain this, for it is not without a profound reason that the Christian Church has always discovered the beginning of the preaching of the gospel in the opening chapters of the book of Genesis.

I will not stop to inquire whether Adam is a mythical or a historical personage, for the answer to this question would have no bearing on what I am about to say. When I say Adam, I mean the ancestor, or ancestors, of the human race, I mean the primitive humanity.—Adam sinned: through his knowledge of good and evil, he exalted himself to himself, and forgot all but himself: the unity of the race was lost; for every man's hand was raised against the hand of every other man. Now this evil that Adam brought into the world, descended necessarily, as it were, from generation to generation, *by solidarity*. For Adam's intellectual teaching, and moral conduct, were the *food* (here is another application of the doctrine of Life, above explained) of the intellectual and moral natures, of his children. Thus death spread from Adam to his children, not by physical generation, but by the influence of an evil example. But the daily lives and conduct of these children, became the intellectual, moral, and social food of their children; and these last children produced a like influence on their children by the power of the same evil example; and these last transmitted the same death in selfishness, till it has descended even to us. Thus Adam is a type of Christ, but on a system of direct opposition: for whereas Christ transmits *life* in charity throughout his body which is the Church, Adam transmits death through selfishness to all the members of his body which is the world.

Our Lord came into the world to destroy, to overturn, the work of Adam—to annihilate it root and branch. Why did he die? He died that he might effect this *end*. He operated upon man according to the laws of man's nature. He knew (though man is fallen) that there is nothing so false in the world as the doctrine of innate total depravity. He knew that the Tree of Life was the natural food of the human soul, and that every sinner feels his heart hollow and faint within him, because the flaming sword of the cherubim interposes between him and the fruit of this symbolical tree. He knew that if he could once obtain access to the heart of the masses, that his doctrine would run like fire throughout the world. And, to obtain the heart of the masses, he pursued the policy which has always been found effectual in winning men. We all know how one man gains the affections of another; we all know how love begets love; we all know that when we do a favor to another at an immense self-sacrifice, we are sure of the love of the other in return; we all know that human nature cannot hold out against unmerited and reiterated kindness. Now our Lord acted on these simple and natural principles, he came into the world, and his whole work was characterized by love

to man. When the progress of his work brought him into certain peril, and made it necessary that he should lay down his life if he proposed to continue his course, the love he bore to men was so great that he did continue, that he did lay down his life; and he knew very well that this sacrifice of himself would fix the affections and gratitude of men upon him, and would draw their attention to the truth, which was able to make them free. It is not the death of Christ which saves, hut the truth, and the life that is in the truth; nevertheless it was necessary that Christ should die, to draw men to the truth, and to persuade them to receive the Divine Life. Our Lord died to bring man back from his state of alienation from God; and his death operates, not on God, but on man. Christ did not reconcile God to the world; "all things are of *God* (says the Apostle) who *hath reconciled us to himself*, by Jesus Christ."

And did not our Lord adopt appropriate means for the accomplishment of the end he had in view? Would he have been wise if he had acted as though man were totally depraved, and incapable of generous impulses? Although we became selfish in Adam, yet our state is one contrary to nature, for there is nothing in the world so unnatural as sin. We hunger and thirst after holiness, even those of us who are plunged the deepest in the gulf of sin. If evil habits have conquered us, so that we can do nothing good ourselves, yet we rejoice in good that is accomplished by others. The most degraded bear a willing testimony to the beauty of virtue; and the worst criminals in society rejoice, when they read in a tale of fiction, of the success of the pure virgin, the prosperity of the upright man, and the downfall of the villain of the plot. How much more are their sympathies moved in favor of the right and the truth, by the great historical examples of virtue and self-sacrifice, which appear in the world from age to age.

When indeed, have the leaders of the race produced the greatest effect upon their fellow men? Was it when they made their appeal to selfish interests? Was it when these leaders proceeded according to the processes of mere cunning? By no means. If you would produce a strong impression upon men, you must show them, even the lowest, how they may sacrifice themselves for the good of others; for an appeal to the unselfish passions creates ENTHUSIASM; and, without enthusiasm, no great work is ever effected on the heart of the individual, or among the masses. All enthusiasm is, by its very nature, social and enterprising. A man under the influence of enthusiasm, is like one under the influence of a stimulating drug—he sees no difficulty in his way, he sees no danger. He is willing to devote himself, body and soul, to the cause which lies near his heart; and, without self-devotion, nothing great can be accomplished. There is a vein of generosity hidden at the bottom of the heart, but running through the whole human race, which is stronger than any influence of selfish interest. Men are far from being totally depraved. If any nation becomes enslaved, how many men present themselves at once, willing to devote themselves to death, if they may, by that means, obtain liberty for their countrymen! When it has been necessary, in the course of the history of the world, that one man should devote himself for the good of all, that one man always came forward, ready and willing to lay down his life for the good of others. Is not history full of examples in point?—Whenever any great work is to be effected among men, an appeal to the generous elements of man's nature must be made; and our Lord made this appeal when he died on the cross, for the circumstances of his death tell upon every noble impulse in the heart of man.

When the news of some heroic action of self-denial performed by a man for the good of his country, becomes known, the blood begins to tingle in the veins of those that hear it, and the hearts of the multitude are moved within them, as the leaves of the forest are moved by the rushing wind. Without doubt, the tidings of the death of Regulus caused enthusiasm to run like electric fire, from heart to heart, through all Rome. Nothing is intoxicating, nothing appeals to the heart of man, like high and noble conduct. Nothing is so contagious as

heroism. But what are all examples taken from profane history, when put in parallel with the death of Christ?

The death of the great heroes of liberty, fills our mind with admiration; but the death of Christ produces a stronger effect than this, for it tells at once upon our hearts, and leads our affections captive. Our Lord expressed the effect his death would have upon the world, when he said, " AND I, IF I BE LIFTED UP FROM THE EARTH, WILL DRAW ALL MEN UNTO ME." Has he not done it? When the doctrine of the cross has been preached in the world, men have listened impatiently to the theories of the theologians, for they required no reasoning, they were convinced from the first moment they beheld the image of their suffering Redeemer. And this is now, the power of the cross even upon us; for our hearts are melted, and our affections led captive, by the same spectacle of outflowing love. Our Lord was in the *form* of the Father, and by his obedience unto death, he obtained his magnetic power, whereby he *transforms* the nations. He is *one* with the Father, and, by the attractive power of his cross, he brings his disciples to be *one* with himself, and through himself he brings them to be *one* with the Father. Thus he effects the Reconciliation—the atonement, or rather the *at-one-ment*. Thus he reverses the work of the first Adam.

But I will not enter further upon the great ocean of theology, for it is without shore, and infinite: yet I would desire to speak more at length of the Atonement.—But this letter is already too long, and I fear I have trespassed on your patience. With your permission, I will, therefore, sum up what I have said in relation to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, submitting the whole to your judgment, hoping you will not find my views altogether opposed to the doctrines you hold to be true.—

[I believe in Him who remaineth ALONE from eternity to eternity, dwelling in the glory of which light is but the shadow, sharing the might of his incommunicable name with no being in the Universe, knowing no equal in the vast regions of existence, but transcending in majesty the comprehension of the highest intelligence that serves in splendor before his invisible throne: I believe in Him who is sufficient to Himself, having in Himself all the elements of his self-sufficient Life; who alone, in infinite joy, is able to support the intolerable solitude and monotony of absolute existence: I believe in the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords, THE ETERNAL FATHER,—to Him be glory forever and ever. Amen.

I believe also in the Lord JESUS CHRIST, the Son of the Most High God, who, through the power of the Divine Life, was one with the Father, and yet less than the Father; and, who through the might of the Father, is raised to be seated at the right hand of the majesty on high, having received all power in heaven and on earth.

I believe in the HOLY GHOST, that Divine Life and Influence, which streams in rays of infinite might and blessing from the cross of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ: and in that fellowship of the Spirit, which makes the whole church of Christ, to be one in the unity of the Living Temple which is the body of our Lord.]

Very respectfully

Your Friend and Brother,
W. B. GREENE.

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