

sometimes wandering, apt to be lengthy, emotional, and even what might be called rhapsodical, but heretical never. I have attended twelve meetings for worship of this body and have read papers, followed by discussion, usually at joint meetings of the two bodies, ten times, and I have not heard at any of these, with one doubtful exception in a discussion, and that not by a minister, a single word or thought which would be counted unorthodox by the most rigid school, either Wilburite or Evangelical, that I know; and I am fairly acquainted with both these standards. I made a somewhat analogous remark last month about the fourteen sittings I attended of the Swarthmore Conference.

But I have heard, from certain Hicksite ministers, the characteristic "Evangelical" doctrines in a more extreme form than has ever been my lot in England. I have heard a fierce sermon on the uselessness and pride of righteousness without conversion, based on such glaring Biblical misinterpretation as I hoped we had got past; and I have heard that hated intellect confused with luxury and with popularity, and labelled in thunder an enemy of the truth. All this is tolerated, patiently borne with, in the "Hicksite" fold, though it is not sympathised with. There is, however, a more gentle and reasonable form of "evangelical" theology, which has quite a place, the place of a minority, among their ministers.

And this brings us to the belief of the body as a whole, after making all the above qualifications. They are generally said to differ from the "orthodox" in relation to two subjects.

(i.) *The Divinity of Christ*.—The metaphysical position of Elias Hicks still remains that of most of the body. It is, that the Christ, the everlasting co-eternal Spirit, was incarnated in the man Jesus of Nazareth, who was thus the highest possible manifestation of God in man and to men. This is, in

my own view, rather unsatisfactory metaphysics; but as theology, it escapes the errors of Trinitarianism, so wisely avoided from the beginning by Friends, whilst it comes very close to "orthodoxy." It may, however, be so treated as to offend devout souls, and may be grossly misinterpreted in quotation apart from context. Now Elias Hicks was unfortunately an iconoclast; his methods of controversy were, perhaps, no gentler than those of his opponents, and so this doctrine of the mystical Christ, which need not really be objectionable to any, and shades easily into what appears quite "sound," became a battledore and shuttlecock quarrel, in which disputants threw words about which they did not understand, and ended by crucifying the Lord afresh in mutual hatred. I do not care to state the Divinity of Christ in precisely this way myself; but it appears to me that practically, metaphysics apart, there is little real difference of purpose or meaning on this point between the two bodies. Elias Hicks believed that Jesus was not the son of Joseph, but was of miraculous birth.* This last question is not a live one among his followers, it is hardly ever mentioned even in private, and opinions would differ upon it.

(ii.) *The Atonement*.—This is where the real difference lies; and it is the difference which exists the world over in every denomination between the Evangelical School and the Broad Church. The majority of the body of Liberal or Race Street or Hicksite Friends do not believe that the shedding of the physical blood of Christ bought (in the strictly commercial sense), from God's justice the forgiveness of human sin and release from He'll. They believe that Christ's life in man is the reconciliation of man to God—that hearts are purified by spiritual, not material, blood; in fact that "we are saved by the washing of regen-

* See "Autobiography of Edward Hicks," Phil., 1851, p. 93; and Letter from Elias Hicks to Thos. Leggett, printed in his Letters, 1861, p. 226, for explicit statements of this.