

cils of Nice and Constantinople were directed, and the fact that this view had its advocates then accounts for some peculiarities of phraseology in the Nicene and in later creeds. Mr. Beecher corruscates poetically around his theory, and irradiates it with the bright glow of his genius, but condescends to furnish hardly any proof of its correctness. To him it is well nigh self-evident, presenting as no other theory does, or can, "the beauty and preciousness of Christ's earthly life." On the other hand, the commonly-received doctrine is, in his view, "that extraordinary theory of the Incarnation, which, without a single express scriptural statement in its support, works out a compound divine nature, without analogue or parallel in human mental philosophy." This last brief quotation induces a momentary sense of bewilderment, for you can scarce help asking, is it not his own theory that "works out a compound Divine nature," rather than the theory which preserves the two natures pure and simple? When two chemical agents are brought together and blended, they form a third and compound substance differing from both those concerned in its production; and if Christ's one nature be the product of Deity as to spirit and humanity as to body blended together, how can the result be other than a compound quite different from the elements out of which it is constituted? Can you conceive of such a commingling of the two natures without disparagement and loss to Deity,—the pure wine of Deity becoming dilute as it were with the water of humanity. According to this view, the Divine nature occupied a body in the place of a human soul, and this union formed the Christ. Such a compound is, however, quite inconceivable in the nature of things. It is most explicitly taught in Scripture, that the eternal Son of God was incarnate, or assumed human nature, or became man. Of course he could not cease to be God. The Divine nature must have continued unchanged, because it is essentially unchangeable. Only the entireness and completeness of the human nature could therefore have been affected by the union! Mr. Beecher denies that the union left two whole, perfect and distinct natures joined together in Christ; and says, that the Divine nature became subject to limitations, restrictions, physical laws, and all conditions attendant on humanity. But *can* Deity be limited and restricted? "God is a Spirit," how can he be made subject to physical law? The essential conditions of humanity are such as imperfection, weakness, liability to temptation, a narrow range of knowledge, ignorance of the future, and the like. How could Deity be reduced so low, and still be Deity? On Mr. Beecher's theory, what becomes of Christ's sympathy with us arising out of identity of nature? As God, he knows our trials, but Deity cannot be touched with the feelings of our infirmities, as the Scripture declares our Saviour can be and is. Where is Christ's experience of temptation on this theory? "*God cannot be tempted of evil*," but our Saviour was "tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin." Mr. Beecher seeks to annihilate the distance between the human and the divine, and says, "manhood is nearer Godhood, than we are wont to believe." But the Bible chart of being puts all the distance of infinitude between the two natures. It teaches us that for Christ to have taken the nature of angels, would have left him sympathetically out of reach of the human sinners he had undertaken to save, and asserts that "in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren." He must therefore have had a human soul as well as a human body. The immutable perfection of Deity assures us that the Godhead continued perfect and intact, and those exigencies of redemption which demanded a true humanity, leave us in no doubt as to the completeness of the manhood. To sum up in brief the considerations which settle this question: there is nothing whatever in Scripture to suggest or imply the disappearance, absorption or extinction of the human nature in the divine; the natural meaning of those declarations which set forth the incarnation is, that humanity, though taken into union with Deity, continued to be humanity retaining all its essential properties; and finally, that Christ is always represented to us as having been, during the whole period of his abode on earth, a true man, "a full partaker of human nature in all its completeness." There is no evidence in Scripture, that Christ lacked anything whatever to make him an