

For these new preachers declared that this death was not only sacrificial in its nature ; but that it superseded all the other sacrifices which in fact were merely types of this one.

That this Jesus of Nazareth was Himself the Great High Priest to which the Jewish ; or Aaronic priesthood must give place. And not only so : but that by the cross was broken down the partition wall between Jew and Gentile : and that henceforth all distinctions of nation, race and family should cease. That henceforth there should be neither Jew nor Gentile : bond nor free : male nor female : but that they all should be one in Christ Jesus. And this was more than the Jew could willingly accept. Of course he expected all nations of the earth to be blessed through Abraham's seed : but it was to be by submitting to the Jewish law, and receiving the sign and seal of Abraham's faith—circumcision. But according to this doctrine the rite itself was to be abolished ; and the Jew, without any distinguishing mark whatever, to be placed on the same level as the hitherto despised Gentile.

Such, in brief, was the distinctively Jewish phase of the offence of the cross, at the time when the gospel was first preached.

But although changed, as to its outward form, and mode of expression, the offence of the cross, in all that constitutes its essence still exists, and though the opponents of the cross are perhaps less demonstrative than formerly they are still as unwilling to accept its humbling doctrines as ever they were.

How many there are who tell you, almost in so many words, that to carry out the principles of christianity would be to put insuperable difficulties in their way to worldly advancement. Talk to the ambitious, aspiring worldling about the humility, self-denial and consideration for others taught by the cross ; and he will treat it with disdain. Tell the selfish, grasping money hunter of the riches laid aside and the poverty assumed by Christ in order that we might be made rich. And ask him to seek first the Kingdom of God—the true riches which the cross purchased for him. And you will get as your answer, a contemptuous shrug of the shoulder if nothing worse.

These men, like the Jews of old, want *present, material* advantages ; and because the cross offers them spiritual ones they are offended.

Then again, *one* of the offensive features of the cross is its levelling principles. It makes no distinction between the respectable worldling who moves in " good society " and the less favoured sinner who has to make himself content with the more