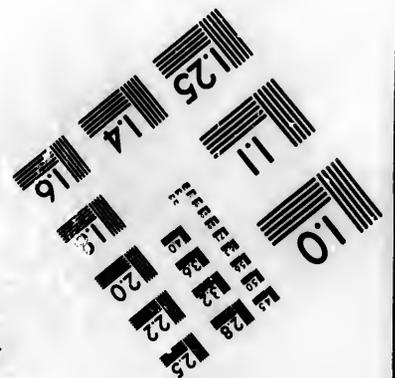
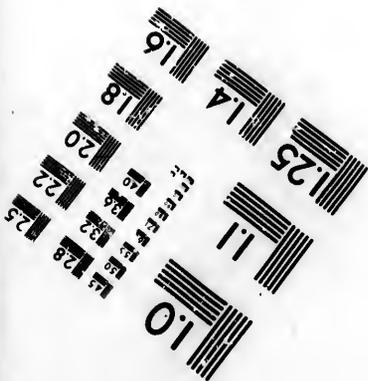
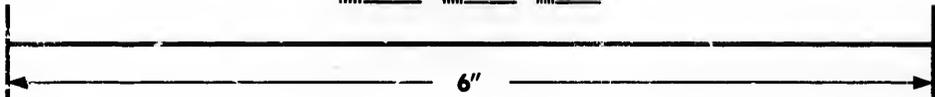
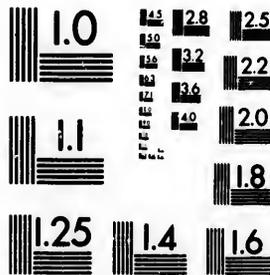


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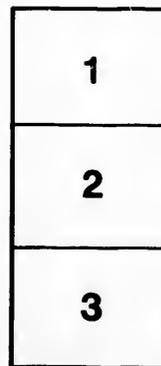
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A REPLY

TO THE

STATEMENT OF THE REV. MR. WIGGINS, A. M.,

SHOWING

THE CAUSES WHICH HAVE LED TO HIS RETIREMENT FROM
THE CURACY OF SAINT JOHN.

BY

THE REV. I. W. D. GRAY, D. D.,

RECTOR OF SAINT JOHN, N. B.

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SAINT JOHN, N. B.

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1851.

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P R E F A C E .

' THE Statement of Mr. Wiggins which has recently issued from the press, is calculated to convey very erroneous impressions as to the causes which have led to his retirement from the Curacy of St. John. One prominent fact, at the very outset, which stamps upon it the character of unfairness, is—*the suppression, on his part, of a large part of the correspondence which has passed between us.* Out of eighteen letters and notes which have been exchanged on the occasion, he has published only seven. Those from myself which he has suppressed, are the very letters which explain the cause of my procedure, and show the necessity for it. The excluded ones on his own side, exhibit the tone and spirit in which he has met my efforts; and at the same time contain some developments of his doctrines which have an important bearing on the question. And why has he suppressed these letters? At page 10, he says, "As this correspondence was somewhat prolonged, I do not deem it necessary to transcribe it for the public, till towards the close, when it speaks for itself." Why not deem it necessary to transcribe it? Was it not right that the public should have the full account of the matter, if they had any? If the latter part "speaks for itself," what was to speak for the former part? Why should its voice be silenced? Does not *this fact*, I ask,—the suppression of the greater part of the correspondence, and that by far the most important part, in its bearing upon the question at issue,—"*speaks for itself?*" And more especially so, when we find that the part suppressed is commented upon by Mr. Wiggins in a manner calculated to convey a very unjust view of its contents. Under these circumstances, I feel it to be due to the cause of truth, to my parishioners, and to myself, to place at once before the public, a full account of the matter. With this view, I commit to the press the entire correspondence that has passed between us, and such other documents as are necessary to throw light upon the subject. Conscious that I have acted from a sense of duty, I fear no investigation of the facts. Bold assertions, unsupported by proof, have, with some minds, a *transient* influence; but, in the end, plain matters of fact outweigh declamation, and make the *lasting* impression. Had Mr. Wiggins consulted prudence rather than feeling, he would have abstained, I conceive, from committing his "Statement" to the press; but since he has not done so, I have no alternative but to meet his attack as publicly as he has made it. In doing this, I shall abstain, as far as the case admits, from recrimination, and the use of expressions which would be inconsistent with Christian principle. What is necessary for elucidation, and to guard others from the adoption of his views, I shall state with freedom, leaving the issue to a Higher Power.

St. John, 25th February, 1851.

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REPLY.

For some time past, complaints had been made to me that the sermons preached by Mr. Wiggins contained attacks upon the doctrines of our Church. As these complaints came, in many instances, from persons upon whose judgment I could rely, and who, I well knew, were not actuated by hostile feelings against Mr. Wiggins, I felt it to be a plain matter of duty to inquire into the case.

The necessity for doing so was the more obvious from the fact, that the tenets complained of struck at the great fundamentals of Christian truth. It was no mere shade of opinion upon questions that distinguish the high and low portions of our Church, but points which comprised the very essentials of Christianity; such as the Holy Trinity, the Atonement, the Judgment, the Resurrection, the second coming of our Lord, and the inspiration of certain parts of the New Testament.

As it was only occasionally I could hear Mr. Wiggins deliver his sentiments in public, and when I had done so, the peculiar topics in question did not happen to be touched upon, I requested an interview with him, and plainly stated to him that exceptions were taken to his public teaching. A conversation of some length ensued, in which nothing very explicit was elicited; but the impression left upon my mind was, that the complaints had not been without foundation. I therefore expressed to Mr. Wiggins, when parting, the wish to renew the conversation at another time, to which he assented.

Before this proposal was carried into effect, Mr. Wiggins

sent me a volume written by Mr. Clowes,* a well known advocate of Swedenborgian opinions in England. A note from Mr. Wiggins, expressing his assent to the views of Mr. Clowes, accompanied this volume, and was the commencement of a correspondence between Mr. Wiggins and myself, which I shall lay, "in extenso," before my readers.

Those who take the pains to examine that correspondence will find that, from the beginning to the end of it, I have carefully abstained from all personal matters. All insinuations, on the part of Mr. Wiggins, all invectives and attempts to divert attention from the subject in hand, I have passed by in silence. I had an official duty to perform, and that, without excitement or recrimination, or being deterred by the apprehension of consequences, I have steadily pursued.

My object, at first, was to show Mr. Wiggins that the doctrines advocated by Mr. Clowes, and to which he declared his assent, were directly opposed to those of the Church of England. When this did not appear to be denied, I urged the inconsistency of promulgating such tenets while holding office

* The Rev. John Clowes was born at Manchester in 1743. He was ordained by the Bishop of London 1767. Two years after, he accepted the Rectorship of Saint John's Church, Manchester, which he held for sixty two years. Four years after he accepted this living, he became acquainted with Richard Houghton, Esquire, of Liverpool, who urged him to procure and study the writings of Emanuel Swedenborg. He, in consequence, obtained a copy of the Work, "Vera Christiana Religio." For some time after, he neglected it; but one evening he opened it and happened to cast his eye upon the words "Divinum Humanum." He closed the book, and forgot it. The next morning he went to visit an old college pupil at York. A few days after his arrival, he awoke one morning, and found his mind suddenly drawn into a state of inward recollection, attended with heavenly joy. Then was manifested, in the recesses of his spirit, a Divine Glory. At the same time, he was impressed by an internal dictate that the glory was connected with the "Divinum Humanum." The next morning the same thing occurred again. He then felt an irresistible desire to return home and study the neglected volume. Accordingly, he made some excuse for leaving his friend's house, hastened back to Manchester, rather, as he says, with the impetuosity of a lover than the sedateness of a man who was going to consult a neglected book. He read the writings of Swedenborg—became a convert to his opinions, and ever after a zealous propagator of them. Such is the account of his conversion to Swedenborgianism, given by Mr. Clowes himself!

in the Church. This attempt was repelled by the intimation that it was his business, not mine. I then felt it necessary to state explicitly, that it was *mine*, so far as my own pulpits were concerned, and that if he persisted in the course he had adopted, I should supercede his occupation of those pulpits. As no satisfaction was afforded me upon these points, but precisely the reverse, I, on two occasions, took the pulpits myself which Mr. Wiggins would have occupied. After the second occasion, he informed me that he considered his connexion with the Curacy dissolved, and had acted accordingly. The propriety of this dissolution, I do not for a moment question. I am quite satisfied that, with his views, it should be a severance not merely from the Curacy of St. John, but from the Church of England altogether. He has added, in his last letter to myself, and in his appeal to the public, sundry charges of a personal nature, which, after presenting the correspondence to my readers, shall be duly attended to. The following letters constitute that correspondence, precisely as it passed. The notes are now added for the sake of elucidation.

(No. 1.)

Thursday Evening.

To the Rev. I. W. D. GRAY.

My dear Sir,—I send you herewith a book on “Mediums,”* which, under an humble title, contains a great deal. I send it in consequence of the reference it has to the subjects that were alluded to in our conversation lately. I have turned down the leaf where “Justification by faith alone,” and the kindred subjects, are discussed; and I think you will admit, on reading the remarks there made, that our theological “definitions” are not always strictly *definite* and exact. There can be no doubt that some of our “dogmatic” theology needs to be reviewed, and brought more strictly into accordance with

* The author's classification of what he terms “Mediums” is indeed a strange combination. The “Spiritual Mediums” which are treated of in distinct chapters, are—“the Revealed Word,” “the Divino Humanity of Christ,” “the Angelic Heavens,” “the Infernals, or Powers of Darkness,” “the Freedom of the Will,” “Rationality,” “Science;” all of which he appears to have deemed essential to salvation. He also treats of “Derivative Mediums,” by which he means the graces and virtues of a holy life.

the Word; and that many of our interpretations of the Word are not consistent with the spirit of the Word itself! The Word is of *plenary* inspiration, and there is therefore unity, or oneness in it; and when fully known, it can teach but *one* doctrine on each subject.

Yours sincerely,

R. B. WIGGINS.

(No. 2.)

St. John, January 7th, 1851.

To Rev. R. B. WIGGINS.

My dear Sir,—I have read, attentively, the volume on "Mediums" which you sent for my perusal a week or two since, and am bound to say, that the author's sentiments appear to me to comprise very serious errors. Passing by several points, which are by no means matters of indifference, I remark that

1. He denied the holy Trinity, as we hold it, that is, of three Divine Persons in the Godhead.*

2. He denied the doctrine of the *Atonement*, i. e. of pardon and forgiveness being obtained for man, by the shedding of Christ's blood upon the cross.†

3. He denied the Mediation and *Intercession* of Christ.‡

4. He denied the doctrine of *Justification by faith*.§

5. To carry out his view in regard to the Atonement, he rejected the plain import of the terms in which the holy sacra-

* The view of Mr. Clowes, and of all Swedenborgians is—that there is one Divine Person in the Godhead, not three; that the Lord Jesus is that Divine Person; that He is the Father as to His Deity, the Son as to His humanity, the Holy Ghost as to His influence. This scheme flatly contradicts the Creeds, Articles and Liturgy of our Church.

† Mr. Clowes denies that we are cleansed from sin and restored to God's favour by the blood of Christ shed upon the cross: he regards that as merely the concluding act by which Christ subjugated the Powers of Darkness. The Atonement, according to his system, is the reconciling, not God to men, but men to God; and the remission of sins means the *removal* of them by the cleansing power of the Word.

‡ Mr. Clowes denies that the mediation of Christ is a mediation between two other persons, with a view to their reconciliation.

§ To be justified, according to Mr. Clowes, does not mean, as our Article states, *to be accounted righteous*; but to be *made just*, partaker of a holy nature, or born again. To be justified by faith alone, is, in his view, contrary to Scripture and common sense. He says, it is much to be regretted that any doctrine should have been expressed so unguardedly in a Christian church.

ment of the Lord's Supper was instituted, and subverted, as it appears to me, the great design of the Institution.* From other writings of Mr. Clowes, I am led to believe that he embraced in general, the peculiar tenets of Swedenborg, among which were

1. The exclusion of several of the canonical books of the New Testament.†
2. The denial of the *last judgment*.‡
3. The denial of the *future personal advent of Christ*.§
4. The denial of the *future resurrection of the body*.||

If the author held, as I believe him to have done, any of the above opinions, and I think the volume you sent clearly recognizes the first five, he certainly cannot be a safe guide for us upon religious doctrines. I will retain the volume, with your permission, for a day or two more, to examine some parts of it again, but in the mean time, have thought it right to express to you my opinion in regard to it.

I am, my dear Sir, yours very truly,

I. W. D. GRAY.

(No. 3.)

January 7th, 1850. [1851.]

Rev. I. W. D. GRAY.

Dear Sir,—It is now nearly six weeks since I sent you the volume on "Mediums," which I sent in consequence of some previous remarks by yourself, on subjects of religious doctrines: I was surprised that you had not, in any way, alluded to the subject before.

With regard to the volume on Mediums, I am persuaded

* The body and blood of Christ, according to Mr. Clowes, mean Divine love and wisdom. He says, Christ's blood and His Word are the same thing; that in the words "this is my blood of the New Testament," we see the identity of His blood with His Word, or with the Eternal Truth, for His Word is Truth.

† "The books of the Word," according to Swedenborg, were those alone of which the *internal sense* was disclosed to him, viz.: twenty-nine of the Old Testament, and of the New, only the four Gospels and Revelation.

‡ The last Judgment is called by Swedenborgians, "Simply the voluntary development of the ruling love of every man."

§ They consider the second Advent of our Lord, as a coming *not in person*, but in the *power of the spiritual sense of His Word*, commenced by Swedenborg, and now constantly going on.

|| Our material bodies, they maintain, are dissolved at death, and will never be resumed.

that the doctrines contained in it are to be proved from Holy Scripture. I am aware that Mr. Clowes was *accused* before Bishop Porteus, his Diocesan, of denying the Trinity, and of holding peculiar views on some other subjects involved in that doctrine: but I also know that he was defended by the Bishop against his accusers, and even made aware of their deceitful machinations against him, and advised to be upon his guard against them. From this friendly caution, we are to infer that he was, by no means, offended with his opinions.* Mr. Clowes, I believe, lived many years afterwards, and died the Rector of his first and last parish, which I think he held for sixty years.

With reference however to the opinions of Mr. Clowes, in themselves considered, or to the opinions of any other writer, I have nothing to do. I approve of the doctrines generally in the work on "*Mediums*," because I think them to be in strict accordance with the *Word of God*, and to the law and the testimony, if they speak not according to this word. Truth is a sacred thing, and it is all important to yield to its awful sanctions, however much it may conflict with our preconceived notions, or interfere with our worldly interests.

I am, very sincerely,

R. B. WIGGINS.

P. S.—I am writing this in haste, and indeed amid interruptions. I did not wish to leave your note unanswered till the morrow.

(No. 4.)

Tuesday Evening, January 7th, 1851.

To Rev. R. B. WIGGINS.

My dear Sir,—When you sent me the work of Mr. Clowes, I immediately acknowledged the receipt of it by note; but have not till now alluded to it again, because I preferred to read and understand it first. I was aware that you sent it, in consequence of my previous remarks to you, and was the more anxious to peruse it with care, as I understood your prior note

* That Bishop Porteus should have listened patiently to Mr. Clowes, and at the close, given him a friendly caution, is quite possible. That he approved of his doctrines, or became a partizan in the case, and kept Mr. Clowes apprised of the designs and stratagems of his opponents, as Mr. Wiggins asserts in his Statement, just given to the public, requires further *proof*.

to imply what your present one expresses more explicitly,—that you were persuaded the doctrines contained in it were true.

How far they accord with Scripture, is a question, which, as opportunity is afforded, I should feel most happy to consider with you. At present, my firm persuasion is, they do not. But there is another question to which I referred in my conversation with you, and with which, as Clergymen, we are immediately concerned, and that is, *whether they are in harmony with, or opposed to the tenets of our Church?*

Whatever points our Church may have left unsettled, she has clearly defined her views upon the *Trinity*, the *Atonement*, and the other points I named. We have declared, upon oath, our assent to her definitions, and pledged ourselves to conform to them, in our teaching. Having given this pledge we are bound by it;—nothing can absolve us from it, while we retain the office which we received on this condition.

How far Bishop Porteus understood or sanctioned the peculiar opinions of Mr. Clowes does not *fully* appear; but if a hundred Bishops neglected to censure or prohibit unsound opinions, it could not make them sound, or render it proper for a Clergyman of the Church of England, to promulgate tenets subversive of her Creeds and Articles.

The simple question to be settled in the present instance is, whether the opinions of Mr. Clowes are, or are not, contrary to the explicitly declared tenets of our Church?

With a perfect willingness to consider and weigh attentively anything that can be shown to the contrary, I express my full conviction, that his views as declared upon the points enumerated, are directly opposed to them, and therefore I say, that neither you nor I, while we continue Clergymen of the Church of England, are at liberty to teach them.

I express to you my persuasion upon this point, in the clearest terms I can command, under the solemn impression that I am bound to do so, And am, my dear sir,

Yours very truly,

I. W. D. GRAY.

(No. 5.)

Wednesday, January 5th, 1851.

Rev. I. W. D. GRAY.

Dear Sir,—My surprise that you had not referred to the work on *Mediums* before, arose from the fact that you had stated about six weeks ago, that it was your intention, in a few

days, to discuss the subjects therein treated. I concluded that the doctrines alluded to were in accordance with Holy Scripture; and that the revival of the subject was an after-thought.

I beg very distinctly to declare that I approve of the doctrines alluded to, simply because they are derived, as I think, from Holy Scripture: and I acknowledge *no other* authority in matters of faith, whether of the Fathers, the Reformers, or the leading men of the age: "Be ye not called Rabbi, Rabbi, for one is your master even Christ." Upon any other principle, I see no hope for the Church; no dawn of any brighter or better day.*

Your argument would go to prove that the Reformation was a *final* measure; in short, that the Church is infallible.† I have certainly assented to the definitions of the Church, and do still in general,‡ but I believe that there is more truth in the Bible than the Church *professes* to hold; while, as you well know, her "definitions," when not in the very words of Scripture, are not infallible.§ Whether I choose to remain in the Church, as she is, is a matter for *me* to consider; and whether you and others think it expedient to take any action in the matter, is a thing for you to consider. In alluding to the sanction of *man*, as to certain opinions, I merely gave it as *his* opinion: and it is merely saying, with reference to the present

* The supreme authority of Scripture, in matters of faith, is perfectly compatible with the intermediate authority of a particular Church over its ministers. If, by asserting the former authority, Mr. Wiggins means to discard the latter, he casts off all allegiance to his Church. If he does not mean to discard the latter, then the assertion of the former is quite irrelevant: it has no reference to the subject in debate, and is merely thrown in, "ad captandum," to catch the attention of the superficial reader.

† The argument was simply this,—A Clergyman's oath of subscription is binding upon him, while he continues in that capacity. How does this go to prove the Church to be infallible? Where is the connection between the premises and the conclusion?

‡ What is the value of assenting to them "in general," if such particulars as the "Holy Trinity," "the Atonement," "Justification," "the Judgment," and "the Resurrection," are the exceptions? Would an assent "in general," with such exceptions, have been deemed sufficient for his admission into the ministry of the Church of England?

§ The definitions of a Church may be perfectly *true*, though not expressed "in the words of Scripture." A Clergyman of the Church of England is supposed to have compared the definitions of his Church with Scripture, before he entered her ministry, and found them to be so. To regard them in this light, is not to consider the Church infallible, or to supercede the authority of the Bible. Had Mr. Wiggins attended to this distinction, it would have prevented much confusion in his statements.

subject, that differences of opinion exist in the Church. The Church is to be sifted, and judgment is to *begin* at the house of God; and it becomes us all, in this dying world, to inquire most solemnly whether we are preaching the full doctrines of the Bible; and especially whether *that* awful authority is the *sole* basis on which our opinions rest. It is not naturally so agreeable to resort to the decisions of God as to the opinions of men, and at times it is most difficult; but it is the only safe way, and that way which will bring peace at the last.

I am, very sincerely, yours,

R. B. WIGGINS.

(No. 6.)

January 10th, 1851.

To Rev. R. B. WIGGINS.

My dear Sir,—I return the volume upon “Mediums,” my mind being fully satisfied in regard to it.

Upon the *third* paragraph of your note, received on Wednesday afternoon, I remark—

That it is *one* thing to admit there is *more truth* in the Bible than the Church professes; *another*, to maintain that what the Church does profess, is *contrary to that truth*. Your assent to the definitions of the Church may be in harmony with the *former*, but is in direct opposition to the *latter*. It is the latter point, exclusively, that our present correspondence is concerned with, viz., whether you hold that the definitions of our Church upon the subject of the holy Trinity, the Atonement, and others enumerated in my former communications, are *contrary* to the truth of Scripture.

To go no further than the doctrine of the *Atonement*, I believe that the doctrine, as denied by Mr. Clowes, is the very central truth of Christianity, exhibited in every part of the Bible, embraced by our Church in all its scriptural integrity, enumerated in her ritual, reiterated in her Articles, and subscribed to as one of those Articles, upon oath, by *all her* Clergy. Regarding it in this light, I feel it to be my duty, to the utmost extent of my ability, to maintain it; and sooner would I sacrifice the object that is dearest to me in this life, than suffer any pulpit over which I have the control, to be employed for the purpose of undermining it.

I cannot persuade myself, though the inference from your notes would seem to imply it, that you do not hold that doctrine, as the Church of England defines it, but I tell you plainly, that if you do *not*, (and the same remark applies to

the other points named before,) it is your duty candidly to make me acquainted with the fact, and then I shall be prepared to execute *mine*.

I think it right to state to you that, since Sunday last, I have received intimations from various sources, that your sermon on Sunday evening last contained a denial of the doctrine of the Atonement, as held by our Church, and of other doctrines commonly deemed fundamental. If this impression be *incorrect*, you have it in your power to show that such is the case by furnishing me with that sermon for perusal; if, on the other hand, it be correct, a simple declaration to that effect, would save further trouble.

I am, my dear Sir, yours, very truly,
I. W. D. GRAY.

(No. 7.)

St. John, January 11th, 1851.

Rev. I. W. D. GRAY.

Dear Sir,—I am glad that you have given up the claim to dictate to me what I should believe, and the course I should take if differing from yourself, and have fallen back upon the ground that you are responsible merely for *your own* belief, and authorised to act upon it. To this there cannot be the least possible objection; and I am only surprised that you should not have seen this before.*

But upon this ground I can see no necessity for prolonging the correspondence. I have already distinctly stated to you that the volume on Mediums expresses, in general, my own sentiments; and you have as distinctly declared that you are directly opposed to them. Why should I go into an exposition of doctrines, when they are already declared in full; or contend about terms and definitions, when the whole system, which they are intended to express is laid before you? This was my design in sending you the volume in the first place,—knowing the difficulty of expressing views briefly:† and if it embraces

* That no Clergyman, continuing such, has a right to deny the doctrines of his Church, is really so obvious a truth, that it is difficult to understand how the assertion of it can be regarded as a claim to dictate. Yet this appears to be what Mr. Wiggins refers to as such, in the above paragraph.

† The proposal to cut short the correspondence, by expressing "a general" assent to the book on Mediums, was not very satisfactory; nor was the reason assigned for it, a very solid one. Our Church in her definitions, had saved all the trouble of expressing views briefly. A simple yes, or no, in regard to certain particulars contained in these definitions, would have sufficed.

such erroneous doctrines, as you declare it does, why allow so many weeks to elapse, before denouncing them. It would be better to study that volume without reference to any preconceived opinions, or without conferring with flesh and blood, than to declare that the author held doctrines subversive of the Word of God, merely because they differ from your own.* I have no hesitation in saying, that the author's view of the Atonement and the kindred doctrines, is the only scriptural view; and that to deny this view is to deny the Divine Humanity of the Lord.† Did ye never read in the Scriptures, The stone which the builders refused, the same is become the head of the corner? This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes. Matt. xxi. 42.

You ask me to make you acquainted with the fact, whether I hold the doctrines of the Bible, as the Church defines them. There is some difference of opinion as to what the doctrines of the Church are; but, I am willing to reply to your questions, as clearly as may be done in a brief note like this.

With regard to the holy Trinity, there can be no difficulty in abiding by the definitions of the Church, because the *terms* are definite and exact.‡ I have no hesitation in saying that

* This certainly is strange advice;—to study the book of Mr. Clowes “without conferring with flesh and blood,”—as if he were something more than human! And more strange still, “without reference to any preconceived opinions;” not even those derived from Scripture! And stranger than all, that this advice should come from one who acknowledges no other authority in matters of faith than the holy Scriptures! Surely the proper course would be first to have our minds well stored with Scriptural truth, and then bring Mr. Clowes and his book on Mediums to that test. Mr. Wiggins claims this right for himself. Why is no other to have the same privilege?

† What the author's view of the Atonement and other doctrines was, has been shown at page 8. The phrase “Divine Humanity” is of frequent occurrence in the writings of Swedenborgians. They believe that the human nature of Christ has become Divine; that during the temptations which he suffered, Divine principles flowed in, and the human forms yielded to the Divinity; and that, after the resurrection, the Divinity and humanity were one. This is what they term the “Divine Humanity.” This is what Mr. Wiggins means to convey in his Statement, at page 5, when he says, “the Human of the Lord was conceived from the Infinite Esse or Being, (Isai. ix. 6,) and it was glorified successively on earth, till by the passion of the cross, it became one with that Esse.”

‡ On pages 4 and 5 of his published Statement, Mr. Wiggins offers some account of his views of the holy Trinity. The statement is somewhat mystified; but the sum and substance of it is just this—that in Jesus Christ there is a soul which is the Almighty God, a human nature which is now become Divine, and an influence pro-

the doctrine is stated clearly in the Athanasian Creed; and that the character of God is there brought down to our comprehension in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ, both God and man. The Church, in the Litany, proves the exact meaning of the terms used, by considering the Lord Jesus Christ as the sole object of worship, by addressing the prayers to Him as the Lord; and concludes by a reference to Him as "Almighty God," in whose name we meet together, and whose promise we plead.* The same view is given by the Lord to Philip; and again to the Apostles in Matthew xxviii. 18, 19, 20. In the 18th and 20th, He speaks of Himself as the alone manifested form of the Divine Being; and in the intermediate verse, He includes the Trinity in this manifestation of the Godhead—baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; in the name, implying *one* person, and not in the names, implying more than one.† Accordingly, they

ceeding, and that *these* are the Trinity; that there is, and ever has been, but **ONE DIVINE PERSON**, and that to maintain that there are **THREE** is to maintain that there are **THREE GODS**. The same view is asserted in the above letter; it is, in every particular, the Swedenborgian view of the case, and is flatly contradictory to the Athanasian Creed, and all the definitions of the Church of England, upon the subject. Whoever will be at the pains to examine carefully the Athanasian and Nicene Creeds, will see that the Church maintains clearly, decidedly, unequivocally, that there are three Divine Persons, coequal, coeternal; that Jesus is termed "the Son of God," not merely in reference to His human conception, but as to His Divine nature; and that the distinction between the Persons of the Holy Trinity is not a distinction between the Godhead, Humanity, and influence of Christ, but a distinction in the Godhead itself, which existed from all eternity. She maintains also in regard to Christ, not that the "ALMIGHTY" was his SOUL, but that He was perfect man, as well as perfect God, "of a reasonable soul, and human flesh subsisting." This is the view of the Church of England: it is written as with a sunbeam, upon her Creeds and Formularies; and to talk of adhering to her definitions, while *this* is denied, is absurd.

* The attempt, on the part of Mr. Wiggins, to prove from "the Litany" that the **ONE PERSON OF CHRIST** is the sole object of worship, is most extraordinary. The three Divine Persons are distinctly invoked in the first three petitions, as God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost; and in the *fourth* they are expressly styled "three Persons in one God."

† The proofs from Scripture, which Mr. Wiggins adduces, are as fallacious as those from the Liturgy. In Mat. xxviii. 19, for example, the plurality of persons is clearly seen by the distinct mention of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. The word "name," which is expressed before the first, and understood before each of the other two, does not refer to *personality*, but *authority*; its being in the singular does not imply unity

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baptized in His name at the day of Pentecost, and on all other occasions. *This doctrine of the Trinity, many in the Church deny, because, and only because it subverts some of their pre-conceived notions on the subject.**

With regard to the *Atonement*, I am not aware that this *word itself* is defined by the Church. And in the absence of such a definition, the Church itself, I suppose, must refer to the Word of God for the meaning of it. To that blessed Word I am willing to refer; and the doctrine itself is the deep solace of my soul. Rather than surrender this doctrine, as the holy Word teaches it, I am willing to surrender every thing on earth; for without it I can neither live nor die.† May it be falsified no longer in the Church, and be thus rendered, as it now is, the occasion of encouraging men in carelessness and sin! The word "atonement" is mentioned but once in the New Testament, and then it is said that *we* have received the atonement.‡ God was in Christ (one with Him) *aton*ing the world unto Himself; and in what sense He *bore our griefs and carried our sorrows*, is seen in Matt. viii. 16, 17, where these very words are quoted by the Evangelist. He bore them not by becoming sick and infirm Himself, but by removing them from others. This is the reconciliation.§ To understand the doctrine of the Atonement, we must go to the Old Testament, and study well the nature and design of sacrifices.|| It is the nature and design of sacrifices that has been the subject

of *person*, but of *power*; and the use of similar phrases in Acts ii. and elsewhere, furnishes no disproof of the plurality of persons in the Godhead.

* It is *the Church itself*, in its Creeds and Articles, that denies this doctrine, and not merely "*many in the Church*," as Mr. Wiggins expresses it.

† All this sounds well; but the important point is, that what *Mr. Wiggins* means by the *atonement*, is not what *the Church of England* means by it. The Church means by it a *propitiation* to the Divine Being, by the meritorious death of Christ; *Mr. Wiggins* means by it the *reconciliation of the sinner's heart* to God.

‡ Though the word ATONEMENT is not used in our *version* of the New Testament, except in the above instance, yet the *Greek word* which is here used in the original is; and *other terms* which signify "to appease" or "make propitious," are used as expressing the effects of the death of Christ.

§ This is the old Socinian argument employed by Taylor, Dodson and others, who opposed the doctrine of Christ's vicarious sufferings. A critical examination of the original passage, as it stands in the language of the Prophet, shows it to be utterly unsound.

|| The advice is good; if *Mr. Wiggins* had carried it fully into effect, his views of the Atonement would have been more just than they are.

of the two last sermons preached by myself in Trinity in the evening; and they were preached in order that there might be no mistake about my views on the subject. No doubt these views *differed* from the views of some of your people: but, it is just possible, that they may *never* have understood the subject.* I am perfectly willing to discuss this subject, or any other, and to read the sermons to you, as they were then delivered.† I stated to you before, and I reiterate it, that I do not believe any Church to be the standard of doctrine; and I believe that many persons in the Church constantly falsify the Word of God by their strict adherence to *tradition*. There are deep reasons for this in the love of gain, power, honour and influence among men; and as a consequence of *error*, the Church is full of every earthly, selfish, and malignant passion. I know "evangelical" people, so called, who are *at times*, full of the evil spirit, for they can live and act in opposition to the Gospel rules; and believing this to be incompatible with the *real* knowledge of the truth, I conceive it just possible that they *may* have embraced falsehood, or what is still worse, falsified the Truth.‡

With regard to bringing the holy Word of God to the test of the Church of England, I abjure the idea as impious and heretical.§ On the contrary, I see no hope for the Church of

* The persons, to whom Mr. Wiggins points, appear to have understood enough of the subject to discern that the sermon in question contained strange and startling doctrines; such as neither their Bibles, their Prayer-Books, nor their Pastors, had hitherto taught them. They were quite right, under these circumstances, to suspect that it was not the true, but "another Gospel" that was now brought to their ears.

† The proposal to Mr. Wiggins was "to furnish me with his sermon for *perusal*;" to this he does not assent, but offers to *read* it to me. Subsequently he was requested to bring it with him for that purpose. (See my letter, January 31.) Then he declines an interview altogether; and upon what plea? Why, that I claim for the *Church* higher authority than the *Bible*. The plain English of this is, that he knew the doctrines of his sermon were not the doctrines of his Church, and could not stand the test of them.

‡ By "Tradition," in the above paragraph, Mr. Wiggins appears to mean the *doctrine of the Church of England*. To adhere to this, in his view, is "to falsify the Word of God;" the motive that leads men to do so, he intimates, is the love of gain, power, &c., and the effect is to fill the Church with every earthly, and malignant passion. Really, whether we bring this paragraph to the test of charity or churchmanship, we are constrained to admit that it emanates from neither.

§ The object aimed at has been to bring *the doctrine of Mr. Wiggins* to the test of the Church of England. Surely there is neither impiety nor heresy in this!

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England but in bringing her doctrines to the test of holy Scripture, and purging them from the traditions of men.* Nor is there any way in which this can be done so effectually as by not, voluntarily, departing from her pale. She is a Catholic Church; and so long as the Decalogue is read from the chancel—the whole Word from the desk, so long she is worthy of defence and protection, and calls loudly for a correction of her abuses. Rather than pervert the truth to suit any body, I am willing to surrender every thing. With regard to the Hierarchy, I have nothing to ask from it; and as a *system*, it is false and corrupt. I consider that the lust of rule from the self-love of the mere natural man, is the cleaving curse of the Church; that this lust, of course, is not confined to Tractarians; and that where it *does* exist, the Bible is a *sealed* volume, and the Lord Himself is the UNKNOWN God!

I am, very sincerely, yours,

R. B. WIGGINS.

(No. 8.)

Tuesday, January 14th, 1851.

To Rev. R. B. WIGGINS.

My dear Sir,—While I regret the tone and spirit of your last communication, and many of the sentiments expressed in it, I am desirous of treating the subject dispassionately, and of impressing upon your mind, once more, the real question at issue between us.

Upon the first paragraph in your late letter, allow me to remark, that I have neither given up, nor do I purpose to give up, one single position, which, in my present correspondence with you, I have advanced.

You may rest assured that, in this particular, you have misconstrued my language. What I have written has been with consideration, and I have not the slightest idea of retracting one particle of it.

* Here, at last, we have in plain terms, what Mr. Wiggins thinks of the doctrines of his Church. They require "to be purged from the traditions of men!" Her doctrines of the Holy Trinity, the Atonement, and Justification by Faith, are obviously among the number. How many more is not clearly defined; but it is evident that her polity, as well as her doctrines is to share the same fate; for, a few sentences after, he tells us that "her Hierarchy, as a *system*, is false and corrupt." After weighing these statements, it must be obvious, that it was full time to inquire into the views of Mr. Wiggins, and to decline ministrations that aimed at a revolution of this description.

There is no uncertainty that I am aware of, as to the definitions of our Church, upon the points I have named to you. They are written down with a clearness and precision, which leaves no room for hesitation or speculation about her meaning.

Upon the subject of the Holy Trinity she asserts, that "in the Unity of the Godhead, *there be three persons* of one substance, power, and eternity, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost." (Art 1.) "*There is one person of the Father, another of the Son, and another of the Holy Ghost.*" (Athan. Creed.) Again. "We are compelled by the Christian verity, to acknowledge *every person by himself to be God and Lord.*" (Ibid.)

These are her definitions. The direct contrary of these is, that there is but *one person* in the Godhead.

Upon the *doctrine* of the *Atonement*, she asserts that, "the offering of Christ, once made, is that perfect redemption, *propitiation and satisfaction* for all the sins of the whole world, both original and actual, and there is *none other satisfaction* for sin but that alone." (Art. 31.) "That Christ made there (upon the cross) by his one oblation of himself, a full, perfect and sufficient sacrifice, oblation *and satisfaction*, for the sins of the whole world." (Communion Office.)

Again. "*By the merits and death of thy Son Jesus Christ, and through faith in his blood, we and all thy whole Church may obtain remission of our sins, and all other benefits of his passion.*" (Ibid.)

Again. "God sent his only Son, our Saviour Christ, into the world, to fulfil the law for us, and by shedding of His most precious blood, *to make a sacrifice and satisfaction*, or as it may be called, *amends* to his Father for our sins, &c." (Homily on Salvation.)

These are the definitions of our Church, upon the doctrine of the Atonement. The direct contrary of these is, that Christ did not by his sacrifice upon the cross make a *propitiation* or *satisfaction* for our sins, and thereby procure the *remission* of them.

Upon the subject of *Justification*, our Church defines "that we are *accounted righteous* before God, only for the merit of our Lord and Saviour *Jesus Christ, by faith*, and not for our own works and deservings, wherefore that we are justified by faith only is a most wholesome doctrine." (Art. 11.)

Again. "Therefore can no man by his own acts, works and deeds, seem they never so good, be justified and made righteous before God; but every man of necessity is constrained to seek for another righteousness, or justification to be received

at God's hands, that is to say, the forgiveness of his sins and trespasses in such things as he has offended. And this justification or righteousness which we so receive, of God's mercy and Christ's merits, embraced by faith, is taken, accepted and allowed of God, for our perfect and full justification." (Homily on Salvation.)

This is the doctrine of our Church upon the subject of Justification. The direct contrary of her doctrine is—that we are not accounted righteous before God only for the merits of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, through faith, &c.

The above are the plain unequivocal doctrines of our Church upon the particular subjects to which they refer; they are the doctrines to which every Clergyman within her pale has to subscribe upon oath, before he can be admitted to Holy Orders; and which, as her accredited agent, he is presumed, in his subsequent ministrations, both to hold and maintain. Believing these doctrines to be in full accordance with holy Scripture, I freely and "ex animo" subscribed to them. Upon that tenure I retain my office, as a Minister in her communion; and whenever I come to the conclusion that these doctrines are contrary to the revealed will of God, I shall feel myself bound, by the sacred pledge that I have given, to lay that office down.

In the mean time, it is my duty, not only to teach these doctrines myself, but in no way whatever to sanction the denial of them. It is under the full sense of my duty in this respect, that I now explicitly inform you; that if you purpose in your ministrations, directly or indirectly to deny these doctrines, or others that are clearly defined by our Church, I shall immediately feel myself called upon, however painful it may be to me to do so, to make such an arrangement as will supercede your preaching from the pulpits of my Churches.

When I read in your letter, that "there was no difficulty in abiding by the definitions of the Church in the Athanasian Creed," I really hoped that you meant to include her definitions in regard to *that very point* which was under discussion, and from which your views had been supposed to differ, viz., "the *three Divine persons in the Godhead*," or as it is definitely stated in her own language, "not one only person, but *three persons* in one substance:" but upon reading further, it appears that you believe the direct contrary of this, viz., that there is but *one* person, and into this view of the case, you endeavour by a strange process to force the language of our Litany, in defiance of the broad fact, that the first three petitions in that Litany are addressed *distinctly* and *separately* to each of the three *Divine persons*.

So again, you speak of the Atonement, as a doctrine that you value; but immediately afterwards you speak of that doctrine as being *falsified* in the *Church*; and when you explain your views, as far as you *do* explain them, they appear to be that "the forgiveness of sins" means the removing of them, as *disease* is removed from a man when he is made *well*; in other words, that it consists in restoring man to a *holy state*, and that, as to the idea of a satisfaction for sin by means of a propitiatory sacrifice, which is the very essence of the doctrine as held by the Church, it does not enter into your view of the case.

If, in any essential point, I misapprehend the views you intend to convey, it will give me the greatest pleasure to be informed of it; my only anxiety has been, to find from your statements precisely what those views are; and I am constrained to say, that as far as I have been able to extract them from your statements, they go to prove that the general impression in regard to your views is correct, that you do *not* hold the tenets of your Church upon the subjects enumerated above; indeed it would seem, from some of your expressions, that, with the exception of her retaining the Decalogue in her chancel and the Bible upon her desk, she is as to her hierarchy, her doctrines, and her practice, one mass of corruption.

The question of Church authority may be very briefly disposed of. No Church has a right to impose her creed upon *you*; but if you impose her creed upon *yourself*, and thereby become her minister, you cannot in your ministrations get rid of her creed, until you get rid of her *ministry*.

I am, my dear Sir, yours very truly,

I. W. D. GRAY.

(No. 9.)

St. John, January 16th, 1851.

REV. I. W. D. GRAY.

Dear Sir,—I was wrong, it appears, in supposing that you had given up the idea of dictating to me in the matter before us. Your claim to dictate, however, by a reference to what *you* would do in such a case, does not alter my determination to abide by the dictates of my own conscience.

The ground which I have taken is clear and definite: nor am I either to be drawn or to be driven from it. I thought there could be no doubt of this; and when I entered upon a slight explanation of my views, beyond the expression of them in the book on Mediums, I meant to infer that there might be more said on those subjects than was always understood. I

was confirmed in this conclusion by the remarks in your last note on my view of the holy Trinity, especially as my view on the subject was confirmed by a reference to the apostolic practice in baptism. I was also led to the same conclusion by a remark in your sermon on Sunday last, that the soul of the blessed Saviour was human! You, no doubt, expressed this inadvertently, though the doctrine is no less unscriptural on that account.* (Luke i. 55.)

You regret the "tone and spirit" of my last note, but in doing so, you merely regret what is open and straightforward. If you felt these remarks to be true, it would be better to remove the cause of such feelings than to complain of my expressions. They were involuntary expressions, referring to evils known and felt by all to exist in the Church; and they were not uncalled for. But while you profess to be "dispassionate," you charge me violently with denying the doctrines, 'the truth of which I am willing to maintain at any sacrifice. What right have you to deny my belief in the doctrines of the holy Trinity and the Atonement, on which I rest all my hopes of salvation, merely because that belief embraces *more* than you are willing to adopt, and involves the idea of a life, as well as a set of opinions?† These doctrines have been my deep and abiding solace in the path opened before me in this parish; and *you* know very well that there must have been a reality in them. The truth is, that the real objection to these doctrines is, that they are too close, and too searching, upon the heart, to suit the present state of things. Some, I know, approve of them; and they are among the truth-seeking and the well-disposed.

* Mr. Wiggins speaks more fully upon this point in his published Statement. He there tells us (p. 5,) that "the soul of the Lord Jesus was the Almighty." This monstrous idea is another of the Swedenborgian errors; and is point-blank opposed to the teaching of his Bible and his Church. The former tells him that, with the single exception of sin, Christ was in all things made like unto his brethren (Heb. ii. 17); and the latter, that he was "perfect man, of a reasonable soul, and human flesh subsisting." (Athan. Creed.) But all this, in his estimation, is only Socinian heresy!

† It is Mr. Wiggins himself who gives the denial to his orthodoxy. He has shown in his previous letters, and now in his published Statement, that he does *not* hold these doctrines. Very true, he holds *what Swedenborg called* the Trinity, and the Atonement; but this is not holding the doctrines, as the Bible and his Church hold them; and so far from embracing *more*, his belief embraces *less* than theirs; for while they teach that there are *three* Divine Persons, he maintains that there is but *one*; and while *they* hold that God must be reconciled to man, as well as man to God, *he* only holds the *latter*, excluding the idea of a *propitiation* for sin.

I am not to be led aside from the question before us, by a resort to any controversy that refers to the Church of England alone, and not to the holy Scripture, as the standard of doctrine. To avoid the necessity for *such* a controversy, I sent you the volume which embraces the general views which I hold on these subjects. I believe indeed that there should be articles of faith,* though they are all necessarily fallible; and to prove my adherence to the Church of England, as a Catholic Church, I am not only willing, but anxious to use her Service Book, under whatever circumstances I may be placed; nor am I yet aware that *such* a privilege can be denied me.

Though you have boldly dictated the course that I should take, I do not pretend to dictate yours. You are at perfect liberty to act according to the dictates of your own conscience; nor do I think, for an instant, that you are disposed to relinquish the ground you have taken; for you would not have taken it, I am well assured, unless you had previously confirmed your own opinion, by a reference to the opinion and counsel of *others*, with regard to the measures to be taken in this case. The inferences in your note, you will remember, are your own.

I have now closed, and the results are with the Lord; and I know that He will dispose and arrange all things in His good providence, in accordance with which, though there are "many devices in a man's heart, nevertheless the counsel of the Lord that shall stand."

I am yours, very sincerely, R. B. WIGGINS.

(No. 10.)

Saturday morning, January 18th, 1851.

To Rev. R. B. WIGGINS.

My dear Sir,—I purpose myself to occupy the pulpit at St. John's Church to-morrow morning.†

I am, yours very truly, I. W. D. GRAY.

* For what purpose? Of what possible use are Articles of Faith, upon the principle which Mr. Wiggins advocates?

† This note Mr. Wiggins misrepresents in his "Statement," as "commencing a system of annoyance." It was written, however, with no such intention. The simple object of it was, to prevent the repetition of attacks upon the doctrines of his Church, from her own pulpits. In a long correspondence, as will now be evident, I had endeavoured to show him the inconsistency of his course. This was repelled on his part, as "dictation." There seemed no hope of his desisting from it, even during the inquiry we were conducting. I adopted, therefore, what seemed the most patient course I could devise, that of preaching in his place. This, for the present, prevented the evil, without closing the door for his reconsideration of the subject.

(No. 11.)

St. John, January 18th, 1851.

Rev. I. W. D. GRAY.

Dear Sir,—I conclude from your note of this morning, coupled with the preceding notes, that you dispense with my services any longer. If not so, please let me know what your meaning is.

I am, yours sincerely,

R. B. WIGGINS.

(No. 12.)

Saturday, January 18th, 1851.

To Rev. R. B. WIGGINS.

My dear Sir,—My note of this morning has reference, as the terms of it express, exclusively to *to-morrow*.*

I am, yours very truly,

I. W. D. GRAY.

(No. 13.)

Saturday, January 25th, 1851.

To Rev. R. B. WIGGINS.

My dear Sir,—It is the intention of his Lordship the Bishop to preach at Trinity Church to-morrow afternoon.

I am, yours very truly,

I. W. D. GRAY.

(No. 14.)

St. John, January 31st, 1851.

To the Rev. R. B. WIGGINS.

Your brother, Mr. Stephen Wiggins, called upon me this morning, and recommended that I should have a personal interview with you, upon the subjects involved in our late correspondence.

To this proposal I am perfectly willing to accede, and I would name Tuesday next, at 12 o'clock, which is the earliest time I can fix upon for that purpose.

* This answer, as appears from his "Statement," Mr. Wiggins viewed as indicating that "I was afraid he should take me at my word." The wish in this case was the father to the thought. He was in hopes I *would* be afraid, and therefore anxious so to construe the act. He says my answer "quite confounded him." He could not tell what to make of it. He could see, it appears, no medium between rashness and fear, and was unprepared to comprehend a course with which he had no feelings in common.

With regard to the duties of Sunday next, I have no wish to interfere with your preaching in your regular course, provided you give me your word, that the doctrines which have been matter of correspondence between us, shall be abstained from, and all allusion to the subject be avoided on your part, on that occasion. Upon no other terms could I be justified, as the Rector of this Parish, in giving my sanction to your preaching.

I shall hope for a line from you, this evening, to intimate your acceding or otherwise, to this proposition.

If you call upon me on Tuesday next at 12, I would suggest the desirableness of your bringing with you the sermon preached at Trinity Church, and to which allusion is made in your letter of the 11th inst.

I am, my dear Sir, yours very truly,

I. W. D. GRAY.

(No. 15.)

St. John, January 31, 1851.

To the Rev. I. W. D. GRAY.

Dear Sir,—The object of my brother's visit was merely to ascertain why you had circulated the rumour, that you had precluded me from preaching in the pulpits, when no information of the fact had been given to me. We were utterly indignant at hearing this rumour, and no less so after you had declined to give my brother any explanation of the cause of *such* rumour.* Common honesty demanded from you that I should have been made acquainted with the fact, instead of purposely concealing it from me while you made it known to the public.

The allusion in your present note to an interview, with the intention of discussing the subjects between us, is out of the question, on the ground you take. You claim virtually that

* This "rumour" appears to have been a perfect "Proteus." It was first a rumour that Mr. Wiggins was "precluded from preaching;" then, that he was "charged with all kinds of heresy;" then, that he was "suspended," which was a thing "a hundred Bishops could not do," yet "Dr. Gray did it." (Statement, p. 11.) After all, what I *did* do, had been signified to Mr. Wiggins himself, in my note of the 18th January; and, as to the "rumour," in all its diversified shapes, I had nothing to do with it. As to the object of his brother's visit, which he complains, only "confused" the matter, it would seem that the straightforward object of Mr. S. Wiggins's visit, was not the "intended" object on the part of Mr. R. B. Wiggins, and therefore, as to *his* intentions, it proved a failure. I can only say, that nothing more "honest" and civil could be desired than Mr. Stephen Wiggins's conduct on that occasion.

the Church is higher authority than the Bible; and I cannot contend for matters of Christian faith on that principle. I am willing to discuss any doctrine on scriptural authority, as I suggested to you before, and to read any sermons of my own, with that view, as a test of the doctrines which I hold to be scriptural.

With reference to preaching in the pulpits to-morrow, I have no intention of alluding to the subject of controversy between us, as that subject will be presented to the public, if necessary, through the Press. As to the truths to be preached at that, or any other time, I can yield to no dictation. The subjects that I have preached are eminently practical,—being reverence toward God, and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ; and these subjects will always, I hope, be the general theme of my discourse. The objections to my doctrines generally is that they are too practical, or what some call “legal” sermons.

You will have the goodness to remember that I am not *asking* to preach in your pulpits; but merely wish to claim the *right* of not being debarred from preaching, till I receive a definite assurance, in writing, from yourself, that my services are no longer required as Curate in this parish.

I am, yours sincerely,

R. B. WIGGINS.

(No. 16.)

Saturday, March 1, [Feb. 1,] 1851.

To the Rev. R. B. WIGGINS.

My dear Sir,—You misstate the object of your brother's visit to me: it was not to ask *why I had circulated* any rumour whatever; but whether some report which he had heard as to your being suspended was true or otherwise; and to inquire whether any kind offices, on his part, could be of use in the matter.

You further misstate the case in saying that I declined to give your brother an explanation of the cause of such rumour. I declined nothing. All the information your brother asked, I freely gave.

Whatever “common honesty” and the utmost stretch of courtesy have demanded of me, I have strictly attended to from the first. Your intimation that I have not done so, is as unbecoming in you to make, as it is unfounded and unwarranted in itself.

As you decline giving me the assurance in regard to your preaching which I have solicited, I shall preach myself at St. John Church in the morning, and at Trinity in the evening.

As to your intimation that the subject of controversy between us will be presented to the public through the medium of the Press, I can only say that whenever you, or others, are so unwise as to place it there, I shall know how to meet it.

I am, my dear Sir, yours very truly,

I. W. D. GRAY.

(No. 17.)

St. John, 3d March, [3d Feb.] 1851.

Rev. I. W. D. GRAY.

Dear Sir,—The course taken by you on Sunday, coupled with the claim that I made at the conclusion of my last note, necessarily involved the assurance on your part, that my services as Curate were no longer required. I acted accordingly; and considered the connexion thenceforth to be at an end.

I proceed now to reply to your note, and to add some remarks at the close.

I did *not* mistake* the object of my brother's visit, which was merely as I stated it to be—something definite from yourself as to your intentions in my case. This you eluded in your notes to me, and it was hoped that you might give him some information on the subject. It appears that you took the occasion of his visit to support your own cause, at my expense, for he could have had no idea of the doctrines in controversy, when he proposed a personal interview between us. His object therefore *was* definite, though it appears he was diverted from it. "Sed hæc hactenus."

Your claim to honesty and courtesy towards me from the first, must be resisted, not only in the present case, but in your general course of conduct. When I "first" came to this parish, you wished to enforce upon me the condition, that if I disagreed with Mr. Stewart, who had differed with the Clergymen who had been associated with him before, that for the sake of peace, which was all important, I must resign quietly without assigning any cause; and this I was to do, even if he were wrong. There was but one answer to this question, and

* What Mr. Wiggins was charged with doing was, not *mistaking*, but *misstating* the object of his brother's visit. That he did *this* is apparent from the account of it which he here gives, which differs essentially from his former account. It is remarkable also, that in his published "Statement," Mr. Wiggins says, (p. 12,) that he requested his brother to call upon me, "to know, in so many words, whether I had dispensed with his services as Curate, or not;" but adds on the next page, "I knew nothing *definite* could be obtained by any *visit* or letter."

that answer was given. I had no idea of voluntarily submitting to injustice, and of affording him the opportunity, as I remarked to you, of bringing about a consummation to suit himself. At the same time I added, that I was perfectly willing to leave the Curacy, at any time, if I were allowed to state publicly the reason for so doing. What honesty or courtesy did you evince in this transaction?

Again. With regard to the Bishop's license for me, (which was never obtained,) your course of conduct was just the reverse of honest and courteous. I came to Saint John at the Bishop's request, (having been previously acting under his license at Saint Andrews,) at your own request, and at the request of the Vestry here, by their vote or resolution to that effect, and in each case as it happened, without any solicitation on my own part.* It is usual, I think, to have the Bishop's license in every parish where you officiate, and therefore the license was considered essential by yourself. The application for it you proposed to make at once, which you neglected to do; and on the Bishop's return from England, you again alluded, in the presence of Mrs. Gray, to the license, and proposed sending for it. It was, it appears, never asked for; and the result is, of course, that I never received it. I felt no concern in the matter myself; they might, if they chose, waive a claim in my favour, and grant to me a privilege granted to no others. But I have reason to think that *you* always looked

* Here is an example of the inaccurate manner in which Mr. Wiggins's statements are put forth. He says he came to St. John without any solicitation on his own part; whereas he expressed the most earnest desire to do so, both *verbally* and by *letter*. He says he came at the request of the Vestry. The Vestry never made any such request. Mr. Wiggins had moved to St. John, with his family, and entered upon his ministerial duties, before they took any cognizance of his case. Then, at my own request, they approved of the attempt to secure his services for one year, if the community thought proper to support him; but refused to pledge their corporate funds for a single farthing. The minute of the Vestry bears date 9th October, 1847, and is as follows:—"The Rector having stated to the Vestry that the services of the Rev. R. Wiggins might be secured to this parish, if an adequate salary can be obtained, *Resolved*, That this Board approve of the attempt to secure Mr. Wiggins's services for the period of a twelvemonth, and that they will give their sanction to a new subscription being set on foot, to be presented to those parishioners who are not subscribers to the other Clergy-fund, admitting at the same time any additional subscriptions from others; and that the said subscription, to the amount of £200, if so much should be raised, shall be paid in the usual way to Mr. Wiggins, as an additional Curate in this Parish; it being understood that the funds of this Corporation are to be in no way pledged to provide any part of such salary."

upon it as a detriment to me, in case of any contingency. Was your conduct here either honest or courteous? Was your pledged word kept, or broken?

I might state other cases to illustrate the subject, but they would involve names which I have no right to introduce here. Suffice it to say, that your whole conduct towards me has been that of indirectness and circumlocution, instead of being marked by what was honest and straightforward. The remarks you have alluded to, therefore, in your last note, are not "unbecoming in me to make, nor are they unfounded and unwarranted in themselves."

The very *last* act of your course of conduct to me, confirms the *first*. You then wished me to retire quietly, in case of any disturbance with Mr. Stewart, and now you ask me to retire "quietly" after the misunderstanding with yourself. You deny me the pulpit, except to preach doctrines at your dictation; and if I resort to the press, either to explain the nature of the controversy, or to defend my position, a sort of *threat* is breathed against me; while, in the mean time, I am subject to any imputations which those interested may choose to make. Upon these terms, and no other, am I dealt with by the "Rector of St. John."

These terms are not quite consistent with my ideas of civil and *religious* liberty, and therefore I beg to decline them, as I declined the terms proposed by you, on the occasion to which I have already alluded. The former quarrel never happened, as anticipated, not from any unwillingness on the part of the person in question to bring it on (*very far from it*); but simply from my abiding by the principle I advocated from the first, with reference to that case, which I stated to you at the time, —that if Mr. Stewart, or any one else, sought to wrong or injure me, I was not willing to injure them in return, though I might think it necessary to provide against it; and this course alone has saved me from any altercation. It has indeed imposed upon me, as you have been long aware,* the necessity of avoiding anything but the most distant terms of intercourse, and I can therefore easily understand the difficulties with those who have preceded me.

* I most emphatically deny that I have been aware of any such "necessity" as that to which Mr. Wiggins alludes; or of the fact that *he thought* there was such a necessity. Since the publication of his "Statement," I have received a letter from Mr. Stewart, respecting the charges here brought against him, which I shall annex to this pamphlet, (see Appendix,) deeming it an act of justice to circulate his reply as widely as the charges themselves.

I beg again, in this closing note, not to question your right, abstractedly, as to the course you have taken in the matter of controversy, but only your mode of acting. You have a right to your own opinions, but you must be quite sure that others are wrong before you condemn them, in a Church so Catholic as ours. There is, and has been, something deeper however than the mere question of doctrines; for these general truths have been preached by me from the first.* Doctrines will do as a source of difference; and these doctrines are then objected to, not so much because they are honestly thought to be wrong, as because they afford a plausible ground of action, when held up to view in distorted forms.† There has been a feeling of enmity sought to be excited against me for a long time past, by those of your party, for whatever cause; and I have no reason to think that it will be diminished now. It is not enough to get rid of a person, but it is necessary to injure him afterwards. To all *such* persons, I would briefly say,—that feelings of that kind, evinced towards one who has taken an upright and undeviating course among them, as you all admit, will bring them no peace at the last. A man may be wronged, and *live*; but he who does the wrong—who sleeps and wakes upon the deliberate purpose of thinking and wishing evil to his neighbour, and especially of doing evil to him directly or *indirectly*—he dies; and *his* death is both the first and the second death.

With regard to the doctrines I have always preached in this place, after all you can say against them, they will prevail; not perhaps in a week, or a year, but ultimately they will prevail. They are based upon God's holy Word, without reference to the false glosses and interpretations of man;‡ and they

* If they have been preached from the first, it has been with so much obscurity that they have escaped detection. That there has been a special development of them within the last few months, seems to be a matter of notoriety. The attempt to insinuate that there has been some other cause of "enmity, and that doctrines are the mere pretence," is a most ungenerous suggestion. I am convinced, that but for the full conviction that Mr. Wiggins was endeavouring to subvert the doctrines of his Church, and that his preaching was injurious to the cause of religion, no opposition whatever would have been raised against him.

† Mr. Wiggins complains that his doctrines are "held up to view" in "distorted forms." Take the "forms" as they appear in his published "Statement," pp. 3-6. Let *these* be the criterion. Are these distorted, or are they not? If they are, why did he distort them? If not, can any opponent exhibit them in "forms" more decidedly adverse to the teaching of Scripture and his Church?

‡ What are the doctrines of Mr. Clowes but the "interpretations of man?" What

have found a response, I am sure, in truthful and intelligent minds; and when they have not been recognized, by truthful minds, as the Word of God, they have been seen by such minds only in a partial and disjointed view. It is not a sermon here and there that proves a system to be wrong; but, it is the whole course of preaching. *All* persons are not qualified to say that a thing is *wrong*, merely because it differs from their view. If *any* thing that I have preached is true, *all* that I have preached is true: for these truths embrace, as a system, one consistent whole; and they appeal not to the fancy, but to the wisdom and intelligence of man. It is easy to give false *names* to persons, or to their opinions; but these *names* cannot change truth into falsehood. Any decided opposition to these truths, by any one, is not an opposition to me, but an opposition to Him who is Judge of all, and who has authority to execute judgment. In *such* a controversy, those who *see* are made blind; then comes a blight upon them and a desolation from which there is no escape. Isa. xlix. 25, 26.

As you have now declined the use of my services any longer, allow me to say, in conclusion, that I have humbly sought, in my ministry here, to approve myself to God and not to man. No one can accuse me of favouring any party, as such, or of being self-seeking. On the contrary, I have sacrificed much for the sake of the truth, and have merged my own interests in the general good of the Church here; and this is my solace. It is easy to *talk* about giving up all, and quite another thing to *do* it. I do it with the consciousness that I shall be misrepresented; and, as far as *certain* persons can do it, made perhaps even to suffer want. But I am thoroughly in earnest in contending for what I know and feel to be the truth; and am

are the doctrines or Swedenborg but the "interpretations of man?" What are the doctrines of Mr. Wiggins but the "interpretations of man?" And who is it that, in the above paragraph, so confidently pronounces them to be "based upon God's holy Word," and, in the following passages, declares, that opposition to these, from any one, is opposition to the Judge of all, and will bring a blight and desolation from which there is no escape, but a mere fallible man, who ought certainly to *prove* that his doctrines are based upon the "holy Word of God," before he assumes the lofty tone of denunciation apparent in the above passages? Mr. Wiggins says, "If *anything* he has preached is true, *all* that he has preached is true." I do not think the link which connects the antecedent and consequent a very *strong* one; but, if we assume it to be *inseparable*, I fear it will lead to another consequent which Mr. Wiggins did not intend to establish, namely, that *nothing* which he has preached is true; which, however, I am far from thinking.

willing to declare it, and prepared to abide by it, at all times, and at any sacrifice.

I am, yours sincerely,

R. B. WIGGINS.

(No. 18.)

St. John, February 6th, 1851.

To Rev. R. B. WIGGINS.

Rev. Sir,—The course taken by yourself previous to Sunday last, determined mine on that day; as you were fully apprized it would do.

You now inform me that you consider the connexion to be thenceforth at an end, and have acted accordingly.

This notice on your part is quite sufficient. I therefore take an early opportunity of enclosing to you a cheque for £50, being the amount of salary due to you up to 1st January, 1851, and shall call upon my Vestry to make arrangements for meeting, in due course, any further claims you may have.

I am, your obed't serv't,

I. W. D. GRAY.

In the above correspondence, I have confined myself to an official duty. Personalities I have passed by in silence. They were not relevant to the point at issue, and were obviously introduced by Mr. Wiggins to divert attention from that point. His own position was not an honest one. The readiest way to obscure this fact was to hurl the charges of dishonesty against the person who had brought it to light, and to call for public sympathy as a persecuted man. As these charges are before the public, the time has come for meeting them, and this I shall briefly do.

His *first* goes back to 1847. It antedates his removal to St. John. I attempted, he says, to enforce upon him the condition, that if he disagreed with Mr. Stewart, he was to resign quietly, without assigning the cause, even if Mr. Stewart were wrong,—a proposal which he regarded as dishonest, and indignantly repelled.

To this assertion I give the most unequivocal denial. The proposition made to Mr. Wiggins was fair, honourable, Christian. Whatever is mixed up with it of a contrary nature, is *his* addition to it, not *mine*. What I expressed to him in my

preliminary conversations, I committed to paper, and sent to him in the following letter, where the proposition in question will be found :

St. John, September —, 1847.

To Rev. R. B. WIGGINS.

My dear Sir,—I avail myself of the first leisure moment I have been able to command, to commit to writing what I verbally expressed to you a few days since, in regard to your affording us assistance at St. John.

The provision for your support appeared to me a primary difficulty. My Church Corporation have given me formal notice that they consider the Corporation Funds pledged only for three hundred pounds per annum towards the support of their Clergy. The salaries of myself and my present assistant are, consequently, contingent, in a great measure, upon a voluntary subscription. You expressed your willingness to rely upon the good feeling of the people to make the necessary provision. My belief is, that you would meet that freely from many. *Yet it would hardly be prudent to involve yourself in any expenses with a view to residing here, until that feeling was tested, and some definite arrangement made, through the medium of the Church Corporation, who must be the agents in this case.*

Another point that seemed to involve some difficulty was, *the pending question as to the division of this Parish.* A memorial for that object was drawn up, and sent to the Bishop in my absence. I deem it consequently right to visit all my parishioners, and ascertain their wishes upon the subject. If a division of the Parish takes place, the services of a second assistant will be unnecessary, and until this matter be decided, an application to the Vestry to provide for one would be premature.

I named to you also, that *the duty of an assistant here would be somewhat laborious.* The multitude of Public Boards which I am compelled to attend, consumes a great part of my time. What is left of it I feel ought to be devoted to seeing my parishioners, and I must consequently transfer to my assistants the greater part of the surplice duties. There will also be a considerable amount of visiting of the sick to be attended to.

The only remaining difficulty is *the possibility of any collision with brother Clergymen.* This you, as well as myself, feel to be a very delicate point, requiring much care. I do not anticipate such a result. It is well, however, to be

guarded. I shall therefore trust that, should it appear that any want of harmony is likely to occur, your own Christian feeling will lead you to prefer some separate sphere, that the Church may not receive injury through the want of unity among its pastors.

These difficulties seem to indicate that you should come, in the first instance, *merely as a temporary measure*, and that mature consideration should precede a permanent arrangement. If, in my previous conversation with you, I have made these points intelligible, as I think from your own observations was the case, and if your mind, after giving them consideration, still approves the plan proposed, I can then only repeat what I have already said to you, that I shall feel most happy in seeing you here, and having your valuable assistance.

I have wished to keep the above remarks distinct from other matters, but must not close without acknowledging the receipt of your letter of the 2d inst., which I was much gratified to receive, as it expressed your earnest desire to place yourself under the guidance of Providence in this matter, and intimated also what Mrs. Wiggins's feelings are upon the subject.

With best regards to Mrs. Wiggins,
Believe me, my dear Sir, &c. &c.,

I. W. D. GRAY.

P. S. Since I commenced this letter, your brother, Mr. Stephen Wiggins has called upon me to inquire whether any arrangement has been made for your coming to this parish, and if so, what provision has been made for your support. I explained to him precisely how the case stood. He expressed his opinion very strongly, *that you ought not to move your family here until the question as to salary was settled; and urged me to convey to you his opinion to that effect.* I feel it right to put you in possession of his sentiments.

I. W. D. G.

It is obvious from the above letter that Mr. Wiggins was recommended to come to St. John merely as *a temporary measure at first.* The difficulties that might interfere with a permanent arrangement were candidly placed before him. Among these, the possibility of a want of harmony with brother Clergymen was named. If that seemed *likely* to occur, a separate sphere was preferable to collision. This was the proposition. What man of Christian feeling must not see that it was a highly proper one? As to suggesting that he was to submit to injus-

tice from Mr. Stewart, or any other man; or, if oppressed, be refused the right of vindicating his reputation: the idea never entered my mind. It is purely the work of his own fancy. If Mr. Wiggins viewed it so at the time, he should never have come to this parish; for how could he expect to go on in harmony with a Rector who made a dishonest proposal to him at the outset? But let us test this charge a little further.

Here is a letter from Mr. Wiggins, written almost simultaneously with the above. He alludes in it *to the very conversation* in which the proposal in question was made to him. Let the reader mark how he speaks of it.

St. Andrews, September 2, 1847.

To Rev. I. W. D. GRAY, D. D., Rector, St. John.

My dear Sir,—I left Saint John on Wednesday, thinking it necessary to be here as soon as possible, as I anticipated leaving the people here so soon.

Under the circumstances, I *find it* desirable to make my stay here as short as possible; and propose taking leave of them in my sermon on Sunday, 12th inst. As soon after that day as is convenient, I shall go to St. John, on Tuesday or Wednesday perhaps; and I shall be in readiness, at once, to enter upon my duties under your charge.

From the first moment of knowing the late decision here, I have sought to place myself under the Divine guidance in this matter, and with *renewed earnestness* and submission to that guidance, *after the opening prospect of labouring with you in St. John*. I must say that all my predilections were in that direction, as affording me the prospect not only of a desirable field of labour, but also of sympathy and encouragement, *in being associated with yourself*. THESE PREDILECTIONS HAVE BEEN SO FULLY CONFIRMED BY THE CONVERSATIONS WE HAVE HAD TOGETHER, THAT I FEEL IT WOULD BE A MANIFEST DISTRUST OF THE LEADINGS OF PROVIDENCE IN THIS INSTANCE, TO DOUBT FOR A MOMENT WHERE THE PRESENT SCENE OF MY LABOUR IS APPOINTED. Every thing seems to have been directed so clearly to that end, that I have gained renewed confidence in the deep impression I have felt for some time past that God is guiding me by His gracious influences, and making even the wanderings and deep experience of the past instrumental to His own glory and my own spiritual benefit. I know indeed, what perhaps in *my* case I could not have fully known without the severe trials I have endured,—that

God "is gracious and merciful, long suffering and of great kindness;" "that He hath done all things well, that He maketh both the deaf to hear and the dumb to speak."

Mrs. Wiggins enters into my feelings with deep sincerity; and is more than pleased—is really happy, at the prospect of going to St. John. We have found but little sympathy here, where we ought to have found most; and, though the attachment of the people generally is strong in our favour, we cannot but feel that we are called to go elsewhere; that our work here is done; and that we are going out under the visible signs of the Divine Providence; placing ourselves, I humbly trust, in an attitude of submission to His will, and seeking only to hear His voice, saying, "This is the way, walk ye in it."

With our kind regards, believe me to be, my dear Sir,

Very sincerely, yours,

R. B. WIGGINS.

Now, in the above letters we have the proposition made to Mr. Wiggins, and what is more important, his own *estimate* of the conversation that contained it, stated upon paper, while the facts were fresh in his memory. Can any man of common understanding believe, that if Mr. Wiggins really regarded that conversation as containing a dishonest proposal, which he repelled, as such, at the time, he would have written, in the terms he did, in reference to it? What! a dishonest proposal attract him to the person who made it? An attempt to induce him to submit to injustice, lead him to expect sympathy from its author! An act of meanness and discourtesy confirm his predilections to labour with him who performed it! Incredible! Impossible! Mr. Wiggins, under his own hand and seal, has attested the refutation of his charge.

A second charge advanced by Mr. Wiggins is, that I neglected to get him a license from the Bishop. But here, as in the former case, he misinterprets the whole transaction, and shows that his imagination outstrips his judgment. The question of a license is one between the Bishop and the Curate. As a matter of order, the Bishop has a right to require that every Clergyman officiating in his Diocese shall be duly licensed thereto; and, in this view of the case, I have alluded to the subject in conversation with Mr. Wiggins. But a Bishop may

waive that claim where he sees reason to do so, and this is a case of no uncommon occurrence, both in this and other parishes. In the case of Mr. Wiggins, there was a plain reason why such a license could not be regularly applied for. A license to a Curacy supposes a nomination from the incumbent; and that nomination contains a pledge as to the salary the Curate is to be allowed. But Mr. Wiggins came to this parish upon no such offer or pledge whatever, either from the Rector or Vestry. He came, at his own suggestion, to cast himself upon the voluntary contributions of the parishioners. That experiment was tried, and failed. From October, 1847, to the latter part of August, 1848, Mr. Wiggins remained without salary. At that time the Vestry voted him one hundred pounds for past services, and agreed *conditionally* to pay his salary for the latter half of that year. They gave no pledge of any permanent salary; nor have they done so at any subsequent time. His salary has always been a matter of *contingency*, and would not have warranted a nomination for a longer time than the vote extended to. If Mr. Wiggins had requested a nomination for that specific term, he should have had it. It would then have been his business to ask the Bishop for a license, not mine. But the real truth of the case is, that Mr. Wiggins never cared a fraction about the matter, whether he had a license or not. And of one thing I can assure him, that if he had had a hundred licenses, instead of none, it would not have availed him in the present case; for I should still have claimed and exercised the right of occupying my own pulpits, to the exclusion of him, or any other Curate, who wished to propound false doctrines to my parishioners.

The final charge of Mr. Wiggins is, that "I now ask him to retire quietly." Another pure fiction of the imagination! I ask nothing of the kind. He is at liberty to retire "quietly," or unquietly, as he thinks proper. His civil liberty I do not interfere with. All I claim is the right of meeting his charges as publicly as he advances them. To call this asking him to retire quietly, is one of those poetic licenses that do not suit plain prose compositions. It is of use, however, in showing the mental process by which his charges are framed. This

last, it may be fairly said, in terms not dissimilar to his own, confirms the character of the first, and of the second too; it shows that they are engendered in the fancy, nurtured in dark suspicion, and presented to the public gaze through the coloured medium of excited feelings.

The sum and substance of the matter is this,—Mr. Wiggins came to St. John, holding the opinions of Swedenborg, but not divulging the fact. At first, they were not unfolded. After being fixed here for a time, they began to be developed. Apprehensions were then awakened. Indications of dissatisfaction became apparent. These, Mr. Wiggins attributed to party feeling. Subsequently he opened his views more fully; and, in the estimation of many of the parishioners, directly assailed, from the pulpit, the tenets of his Church. When inquiry into the matter was instituted, he sent the work of *Mr. Clowes* “on Mediums,” declaring that he agreed “in general” with that author. When the opinions of Mr. Clowes were examined, and shown to be at variance with the Creeds and Articles of our Church, he replied, The Church is not infallible; she is corrupt in doctrine and hierarchy; I appeal to the Bible. When reminded of his oath of subscription, he answered, That’s for me to consider; I shall follow my own conscience. When invited to send his sermon for *perusal*, he said, I’ll come and *read* it to you. When requested to come and read it, he exclaimed, You put the Church above the Bible; I’ll enter into no discussion. When requested to desist from preaching his peculiar opinions, even for a single Sunday, he replied, That’s a temptation, I shall not submit to it. When told, then, on a particular Sunday, You must not preach, he affirmed, This is dismissal from the Curacy; I’m a persecuted man; I’ll appeal to the public: I’ll tell them you are “dishonest,” “discourteous;” that you were so from the first; have been so ever since, and are so now. You exclude me from your pulpits; but my doctrines are based upon God’s word; they must prevail; opposition to them is opposition to the Judge of all; a blight, a desolation will come upon you; there is no escape.

After such a prophetic announcement on the part of Mr. Wiggins, in regard to the Divine authority of his teaching, it

may be well to take a brief survey of that teaching,—to mark what that system is which he *discards*, and what the *new* one is which he would substitute in its place.

The *old* one which he discards is that of his Church, in regard to the holy Trinity, the atonement, and justification.

As to the “holy Trinity,” his Church teaches that there are *three Divine persons in the Godhead*; and in teaching this, she grounds her belief upon the most certain warrant of holy Scripture. Now turn to his published “Statement,” p. 4, and observe what he says of this system: “Men have invented, he says, the doctrine of three Gods; that is, of three separate Beings, each of which differs in character from the others.” In his letter of the 11th January, (No. 7 of the series given above,) he affirms, as you have seen, there is but *one* Divine Person. Here, he tells you, that to say there are three, is to “invent three Gods.” It is “the scheme of modern Idolatry,” which vanishes when you “open the Gospel pages.” Let not the reader be deceived; it is the system which his Church teaches that Mr. Wiggins here attacks. It is the doctrine of the Athanasian Creed, and the Nicene Creed, and the “Litany,” and the communion office of the Church of England, all of which unequivocally assert the doctrine of *three Divine persons*, that he here stigmatizes as the “scheme of modern Idolatry.” And most *rashly* indeed does he advance the charge; for there is no one point upon which the formularies of the Church of England are more explicit than in the assertion of the “unity of the Godhead,” and in guarding her doctrine of three Divine Persons against any imaginary interference with that unity. She asserts a threefold distinction in the Godhead, because the Scripture does so. She does not attempt to explain that distinction, because an explanation of it is not given in Scripture: she applies the term “Person” to indicate it, because that term comes nearest, in her estimation, to what the Scriptures disclose in regard to it; but as to attempts to bring down a distinction, which relates to the incomprehensible nature of the Deity, to the level of human apprehensions, by what Mr. Wiggins calls a “rational exegesis,” his Church knows too well what is *really* “rational” to propose such a

Utopian scheme. Just as vague and unjustifiable are his attempts to prove that the system taught by his Church assigns different *characters* to the Divine Persons of the holy Trinity; that it represents the Father as *severe*, the Son *placable*, and the Holy Ghost with *no attributes at all*. His Church teaches the direct contrary of this, viz., that their attributes are one and the same; that the "whole three Persons are co-eternal together, and co-equal." Such as the Father is, such is the Son, and such is the Holy Ghost; all equally holy, equally just, equally gracious. To infer, because the everlasting Son took the nature of man into union with the Deity, in order that an atonement for sin might be made, that the Father is severe, and the Son placable, is one of those random conclusions which shows that the mind of the writer does not comprehend the subject he is treating of. It is he himself, and not his Church, that is answerable for this confusion.

The next part of the system of his Church which Mr. Wiggins discards, is her doctrine of the *Atonement*. This too, in his estimation, belongs to "the system which man has made." By turning to page 6 of his "Statement," you will find the word "Atonement" retained, and some plausible things said about what Christ "did upon the cross," and is *now* doing, to cheer man's heart and win him to obedience. But here, beneath the surface of a plausible exterior, lies concealed from general readers, the fatal scheme of the Unitarian; of an atonement *without a propitiation*; a sacrifice not *vicarious*; a God invested with *mercy*, robbed of His *justice*, incapable of displeasure at sin, or of the determination to punish it; atoning others, *not atoned himself*. You will trace the proofs of this scheme in his objection to "the dreadful feature of wrath," p. 5; to the sufferings of Christ being looked upon as "appeasing another Being," or as paying a "*debt*" to that Being, p. 6: and at p. 5, where he denounces more strongly the idea that Christ should be made the "victim to pay the debt." And you will find the same fact developed still more plainly in his letter of January 11, (No. 7 in the above series,) where he defines the Atonement to be "the removing sin from others."

The *fact* that Mr. Wiggins denies the Atonement *as his*

Church holds it, is what I would mainly call attention to. But as to the solidity of his objections to it, I can only say of them, they are like the "gossamer of the morning, shining with a few dew-drops, but a little more light, or a passing breeze, is sufficient to make them vanish." He does not like the figure of "paying a *debt*;" but the Scriptures like and employ that image.* They use it with especial reference to the work of Christ in atoning for our sins; by the very employment of the words "redeem and redemption," they convey this idea.† As to the fancy that this view of the case leads men to sin, it arises only from profound ignorance of the subject.‡ As to the conceit that it supposes sin committed against the Father alone, this too is the work of imagination. The doctrine of Scripture, and of his Church is, that sin is the transgression of the Divine Law; that it is in contrariety to the perfections of the glorious Godhead, which are common to Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. And as to his objection to what he terms "the dreadful feature of wrath," in the Divine Being, this is just as superficial as the rest. It is either an objection to the *figure* employed, or to the idea designed to be conveyed by it. As to the figure, he has no right to object to that, for it is perfectly *scriptural*.§ As to the idea conveyed by it, the only question is, *what that is?* If Mr. Wiggins supposes it to attribute *human passions* to the Deity, and objects to it on that ground, let him know that the advocates of the true doctrine of the Atonement object to it as strongly as he does. No intelligent Christian so understands the figure. If he supposes it to imply that the holiness of God is contrary to sin, and as a consequence, that sin and punishment are coupled together by the laws of His moral government; then he grants what, in its very essence, the Bible means by the wrath of God, and what forms the basis of the true doctrine of the Atonement.

* See Mat. vi. 12; Ibid xviii. 27-32; Gal. v. 3.

† See Rev. v. 9, and 1 Pet. i. 18; Rom. iii. 24; 1 Cor. i. 30; Ephes. i. 7; Heb. ix. 12; Gal. iii. 13.

‡ See 1 Cor. vi. 20; Ibid vii. 23.

§ See Rom. i. 18; John iii. 36; Ephes. v. 6.

ment, as the Bible and the Church of England maintain it. His objections then to the *true* doctrine of the Atonement, are all superficial. As I said before, they are mere "gossamers," that vanish as the sun ascends. He might have passed on quietly without disturbing the public mind upon the subject. He might have allowed those simple images of wrath excited and appeased, of debts incurred and paid for, which have conveyed with sufficient distinctness the mind of God to the soul of man, in past ages, to remain for the instruction of the present. He may depend upon it they will stem the tide of Infidelity as well as any "rational exegesis" he can invent.

The denial of the Atonement, leads to the denial of *Justification by faith*. The two doctrines must stand or fall together; the two denials are part and parcel of the same system. What does the Church of England teach as to *Justification by faith*? She affirms the doctrine in the most clear and scriptural manner (Art 11). She shows what she means by Justification, viz., "*accounting* a person righteous:" She points out the *meritorious cause* of it, viz., *Christ's merits*: She defines the means through which we attain it, viz., "*faith alone*." Now does Mr. Wiggins hold or teach this doctrine? Precisely the reverse. He takes, as appears from his first note to me, the views of Mr. Clowes, which are—that *Justification* means making a man *holy*; a gradual process carried on through life, and that as to the idea of being justified by faith alone, it is contrary to Scripture and common sense. This is what, in his "Statement," p. 4, Mr. Wiggins calls going to heaven by a *mental* process; and charges, with leading men to live on in sin. His observations betray a sad misapprehension of the real nature and effects of Christian faith, and of the blessed fruits of that doctrine which teaches the inquiring penitent to seek for pardon through faith in the blood of Christ. It is this very doctrine which adapts the Gospel to the requirements of a feeble, fallen creature; this doctrine which calls into exercise the energies of the renewed soul; this which enkindles within it the love of God, awakens the desire to obey him, deepens the sensations of gratitude, humbles the heart, and leads to the highest acts of Christian devotedness. Let it be

granted, as it freely is, that some whose hearts are devoid of this faith, whose only knowledge of it is through that "mental process" of which Mr. Wiggins speaks, abuse it,—it is just what such persons do in regard to Divine truth in general; precisely what they did in St. Paul's day, and what St. Paul treated, not as a disproof of the doctrine, but as a proof that their condemnation was just. Let us not then be induced by any bold or confident assertion to surrender this sacred and long-tried verity, at all events until we receive upon competent authority, a substitute for it, which is better adapted to promote the great ends of religion.

What is *the substitute proposed by Mr. Wiggins?* It is, in the first place, *a new Trinity*; new to us, new to our *Bibles*, new to our *Prayer-books*, but *not* new in the list of *heresies* that have disfigured, in past years, the history of Christianity. The Trinity he proposes is this:—1st, the *Deity himself* dwelling in Jesus as his soul; 2dly, a "*Human*," as he terms it, now made Divine, or become Deity; and 3dly, an *influence* proceeding. Now this was the system of Swedenborg;* but borrowed by him, as to its leading features, from the various systems of Arians, Apollinarians,† Sabellians, Patripassians and others, that were more or less closely connected with the old Gnostic heresy. ‡

* The following extracts from the publication of the Swedenborgian, or "New Jerusalem Church," show the truth of the above assertion:

"The fundamental doctrine of the New Church is, that God is one, that the Lord Jesus Christ is this God, and that in Him there is a Divine Trinity. The Lord Jesus is the only God of heaven and earth, and in Him is the Trinity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The Father is the Infinite Divinity; the Son is the Divine Humanity; the Holy Spirit is the Divine Life proceeding from the Lord. It is known in the New Church that the Lord exists in One Divine Person, and not in Three.—He is known as the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, in One Divine Person, as soul, body, and operation, make one man.

† Arius taught that Christ had nothing of man but the flesh, and with that the Word was joined. Apollinarians distinguished between the soul and the mind, and acknowledged that the Word assumed the body and the soul of man, but not the mind or spirit, but the Word itself was in the place.—See Pearson on Creed, Art. 3.

‡ This Sect is an amalgamation of Sabellianism, the errors of the Patripassians, many of the anti-scriptural notions of the Socinians, and some of the most extravagant vagaries of Mysticism. Their mode of interpreting Scripture is totally at variance with

The very first proposition in the system, viz., that the man, Christ Jesus, had God Almighty for his soul, instead of a human soul. is one of those extravagant fancies that ought to condemn the whole theory. "Certainly," as Bishop Pearson justly remarks, "if the Son of God would vouchsafe to take the frailty of our flesh, he would not omit the nobler part, our soul, without which he could not be man. 'For Jesus increased in wisdom and stature' (Luke ii. 52); one in respect of his body, the other of his soul. Wisdom belongeth not to the flesh, nor can the knowledge of God, which is infinite, increase: he then whose knowledge did improve together with his years, must have a subject proper for it, which was no other than a human soul. This was the seat of his finite understanding and directed will, distinct from the will of his Father, and consequently of his Divine nature; as appeareth by that known submission, 'Not my will but thine be done' (Luke xxii. 42). This was the subject of those affections and passions which so manifestly appeared in him: nor spake he any other than a proper language when, before his suffering he said, 'My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death' (Matt. xxvi. 38). This was it which, on the cross, before the departure from the body, he recommended to the Father, teaching us in whose hands the souls of the departed are (Luke xxiii. 46). And as his death was nothing else but the separation of the soul from his body, so the life of Christ, as man, did consist in the conjunction and vital union of that soul with the body. So that he who was perfect God, was also perfect man, of a reasonable soul and human flesh subsisting."

The second proposition in the system is marked by no less extravagance than the first, viz., that the human nature of Christ has become Divine. Suppose it to mean that He has become Divine, in the highest sense of the term,—that His humanity has become Deity; then, as the Deity and humanity are now one in essence; in short, as humanity no longer remains,

every principle of sound philosophy and exegesis, and necessarily tends to unsettle the mind, and leave it a prey to the wildest whimsies that it is possible for the human imagination to create or entertain.—Encyc. R. K.

but there is perfect *oneness*, there can be no duality between the Divine and human natures, and consequently, the idea of a Trinity of any kind is at an end. Suppose it to mean that the humanity has become Deity in *an inferior sense*; then, let Swedenborgians profess what they may, their system embraces the belief of two Deities—a greater and a lesser one; and as to their boasted unity, it is at an end.

Throughout his letters and “Statement,” Mr. Wiggins has laid great stress upon his appeal to Scripture, in preference to the definitions of his Church. But that very appeal must prove fatal to his system; for anything more thoroughly adverse to the genuine testimony of Scripture, it would be difficult to conceive. So far from standing before Infidelity, it is Infidelity itself. The so called “rational exegesis” upon which it rests, is nothing more or less than a system of interpretation which excludes from the Bible the distinctive doctrines of Christianity, and substitutes the conceits of man for the verities of revelation.* Nor is even the professed object of this appeal admissible. At p. 20 of his “Statement,” Mr. Wiggins says that the ground he has taken has been “the authority of Scripture alone;” and he refers to the sixth Article of his Church as his warrant for so doing. The Article is good; but his application of it is bad. For, how does he apply it? Why as a warrant for setting himself free from the terms and definitions of his Church, upon fundamental points; as a warrant for introducing Arianism, Sabellianism and Swedenborgianism, upon the plea of their being *scriptural*. He should remember that the sixth Article was not the *only* one to which he subscribed when he entered the ministry. His Church then said to him indeed, “I maintain the supremacy of Scripture;” but she also said, “I maintain that certain doctrines are in

* The science of Correspondencies, as Swedenborgians call it, affixes a spiritual meaning to every portion of the Sacred Writings, whether historical or prophetic, metaphorical or literal. By this process, the creation, the fall of man, the deluge, the resurrection, the judgment, and the second advent of Christ, are treated as mere apparent truths, and made to yield to conceptions more adapted, it is thought, to the rational faculties of man.

accordance with Scripture ; and I admit you to the ministry in my communion upon your pledge of adhesion to these doctrines." If upon the plea that she grants the supremacy of Scripture, he afterwards turns round and says, I have a right to deny your doctrines—to pronounce them the traditions of men—a system of idolatry, he certainly violates his compact with his Church. No plea drawn from the sixth Article can justify this proceeding. If one Article of the Church is binding, all are binding : the authority of all is equal : the obligation to each and all of them is the same.

The substance of the entire matter is now before the public. The correspondence with Mr. Wiggins is placed in their hands not *partially*, but in *full*. They have it now in their power to judge what the tenets of Mr. Wiggins are ; how far they accord with that sacred standard to which he appeals, the Holy Scripture ; and with that further standard to which he has been unwilling to appeal, the Creeds, Articles, and Formularies of his Church. They can now form some better estimate of what he means by "persecution," and how far there has been a "sacrifice" of anything to which he had justly a *claim*. They can now see by whose "overt act" it has been, that Mr. Wiggins has been severed from his Curacy ; and at whose door, in reality, lie the charges of "discourtesy" and "dishonesty." For my own part, I feel the deepest consciousness that I have never, in the course of my life, taken—with regard to any individual, lay or clerical,—more unwearied pains to avoid the slightest infringement upon either, than in the case of Mr. Wiggins. Nor did I ever feel a more thorough persuasion, in any line of conduct I have adopted, that the call of duty rendered it imperative upon me. Were I to meet a similar case again, I should feel myself constrained by a sense of duty to my office, my parishioners, and my Church, to pursue the same course, and by essentially the same means. Those, who from their official connexion with me in this Parish, have had the best opportunity of knowing the state of the case, have expressed their unqualified approbation of the course I have pursued. [See Appendix.] Nevertheless, I have had reference throughout, to the approval of a higher tribunal, and to

the welfare of those for whose spiritual interests I am bound to watch. For my parishioners my prayer is, that they may be established in the truth of Christ's holy Gospel, "not being carried away with every blast of vain doctrine;" and for Mr. Wiggins himself, that he may be led to appreciate more justly that *better* system, which his Bible teaches and his Church approves, that he may see its lovely proportions, share its holy influences, enjoy its elevated hopes, and reach their consummation in that happier scene, where differences will cease and the voice of controversy be unheard.

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APPENDIX.

St. John, February 24, 1851.

My dear Sir,—I am very much surprised to find that Mr. Wiggins has gone out of his way to attack me in his Pamphlet. Upon his own showing, the attack is wholly unwarranted, as he admits that there has been no collision between us. I deny, however, that this has been prevented by the line of conduct which, he says, he has pursued; or that there has been any exercise of forbearance on his part. I have never shown a disposition to quarrel with him, as he asserts, or given him any just cause of offence. On the contrary, I have uniformly treated him with courtesy, and that too when latterly he has been any thing but courteous in return.

I have observed his coolness towards me for several months past, but I am entirely ignorant of what has given rise to it. The vague statement which he himself gives on the point, affords no clue whatever to the cause, and seems, therefore, unworthy of any particular notice.

He refers to his predecessors in the parish in support of the attack he has made upon me. In making an allusion of this kind, he should bear in his recollection that he has found it difficult to work with others besides those with whom he has been associated in St. John.

I am, yours very sincerely,

A. STEWART.

Rev. I. W. D. GRAY, D. D.

Extract from the Minutes of the Vestry.

February 24, 1851.

“Read a letter addressed to the Rector of this parish by several members of this Board, objecting to the doctrines preached by the Rev. R. B. Wiggins, one of the Curates of this parish, and requesting the Rector to inquire into them, and subsequently to call a meeting of this Board, and to make known to its members the result of such inquiry.

Read, also, a correspondence between the Rector and Mr. Wiggins, upon this subject, from which it appears that from and after the 1st day of the present month, Mr. Wiggins signified to the Rector that he considered his connexion with the Curacy of this Parish dissolved, and has acted accordingly:—Whereupon

Resolved, That the salary of the Rev. R. B. Wiggins be immediately paid, up to the end of January, 1851, at which time, as appears from his letter above referred to, he relinquished his duties as Curate:—And further

Resolved, That in the unanimous opinion of the Board, under the circumstances of the case, the Rector of this Parish has acted strictly in accordance with his duty, in instituting the inquiry which he has done: That he has pursued that inquiry with much patience and forbearance, and been fully justified in his conduct throughout the entire proceedings.”

