

The Saviour explains man's enmity to God by the introduction of another element. Will the reader be so good as to turn to John iii. 16-20? And what do we gather here? The Son of God is in the world. He has visited it on an errand of love. He makes the announcement in explicit and affecting terms, "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." And yet, in the face of this announcement, "men love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil." Nay, they will not "come to the light," though that light be the light of love, because they are too well pleased with their sins to part with them. It needs then, before a sinner be weaned from his sins, that he should learn their true character—that he should learn to look within, and study the nature of sin as it exists in his own bosom—that he should thus arrive at the conviction that it is "exceeding sinful." Otherwise you have but a sadly superficial experience. A man may fancy himself to be reconciled to God, while yet he is in love with his sins; and may revel in a Unitarian or Antinomian salvation—a salvation from hell rather than a salvation from sin, while all the time he knows not "the plague of his own heart."

Thus, then, we detect Mr. Crawford's error here. Surely his theology is only skin-deep. It is in contradiction to the teachings of the Saviour on this point. "Because I tell you the truth ye believe not," says Christ to the Jews; though that truth was placed in full evidence before them. Nor can the love of sin be destroyed in any bosom, without a mingling of the sentiment of self-abhorrence, like that of Job and David, with one of tender confidence in Him who "commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." But,

II. I charge Mr. Crawford with a serious omission.

He will have it that, under the Gospel, we have no right to employ the law of God for the purposes of conviction. And yet we find the Saviour, in his sermon on the mount, pressing that law, in its deep and searching spirituality, upon the consciences of men, and so in several other instances in the course of his ministry. And what are we to say of Paul's experience, as detailed by himself in Romans vii? "I had not known sin," says he, "but by the Law. For I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet." And again;—"Sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful." Verily thus, Mr. Crawford's protest notwithstanding, "the law is our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith." And so far from the chapter (Gal. iii.) in which this expression occurs, teaching Mr. Crawford's doctrine, as he contends, the apostle therein refers expressly to the moral law as that which "concludes all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe." Oh no! the New Testament goes not about to make salvation easy after Mr. Crawford's fashion. Upon the conscience of every one who is saved it imposes, with more or less weight, a sense of guilt, and depravity, and ruin, making salvation a solemn necessity, and preparing the spirit to welcome the tidings of mercy through a crucified and risen Saviour. And indeed where such a sense is not found, salvation has not been experienced. For "they that are whole need not a physician, but they that are sick"; and the Son of man "came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." Surely that beautiful exhortation in Isaiah distinctly recognizes this course of experience:—"Let the wicked forsake his ways, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon." Most strikingly is it illustrated likewise in the parable of the Prodigal Son. While such passages as these remain on record, the advocates of a Scriptural style of religious experience are not likely to be driven from their ground, by all the argument, or reproach—not to say ridicule—which Mr. Crawford and those who think with him may see fit to direct against them.

III. I pass on to a false definition on which Mr. Crawford ventures.

He is telling us how men are "made free from the practice of sin, by repentance." He here teaches, that repentance means "a heartfelt determination to turn from sin to God." He expressly argues, that it does not include "sorrow for sin," nor yet "a reformation, or a new life." No! it is "a heartfelt determination to turn from sin to God," and nothing more.

This, to say the least, is singular. It derives

no sanction from the Greek words (*metanoeo* and *metamelomai*, alike translated in our common version by the word *repent*; the one meaning, according to Groves, *to change the opinion or mind*, and the other *to be sorry for, regret*. Nor should it seem to be supported by the highly suggestive use of the word *repent* in Genesis vi. 6. "And the Lord said I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; for *it repenteth me* that I have made them." Doubtless we have here an expression of infinite sorrow; and though we cannot understand such language as applied to God in its strict sense, yet it is wonderfully illustrative of the scriptural idea of repentance. I can hardly conceive indeed of a better account of that idea than is contained in the old-fashioned definition, "repentance is a change of mind leading to a change of conduct." Why should I stay to establish a point so plain as this? A "determination to turn from sin to God!" Alas! how often have we heard of such determinations, formed on sick beds, and repented of on recovery! Why the road to hell is paved with determinations like these. Multitudes there are who persuade themselves to sin on to-day by the promise of doing better to-morrow; and, Felix like, work their way to perdition. Surely, then, that is a most inadequate definition of repentance which speaks of it as a "determination to turn from sin to God," even though that determination be qualified as "heartfelt."

But there is more, and worse behind. Yea, IV. Grievous heresy. Suggested in connection with Mr. Crawford's farther statements on repentance; distinctly brought out when he comes to tell us how a sinner is "made free from the state of sin by baptism."

And when I use the word *heresy*, I mean not a disagreement with any human creed. I have no more respect for human creeds, not the most scriptural that can be constituted, than Mr. Crawford. That is, I utterly refuse to be bound by them. But he and I are both amenable to the decisions of the Word of God. And he who in any capital article is found to contradict or undermine those decisions, has fallen into heresy. I fear that I have to do with such a case in the present instance: and will now endeavour to set forth the grounds of my fear.

And first, of Mr. Crawford's farther remarks in regard to repentance. I transcribe some of these. "It is unscriptural and absurd to ask persons to bring forth fruits of righteousness, or walk in newness of life, before they are baptized into Jesus Christ." Again, he denounces what he calls "the absurd dogma, that a man must be in Christ, bearing the fruits of righteousness, before he has put on Christ, or before he is a fit subject for baptism." Nay, he tells us that "inspired men . . . required no outward obedience before baptism." And yet again he says, "As soon as [a man] with his whole heart breaks off from sin, he is made free from its practice. He ceases to do evil, and learns and resolves to do well. The very first time this new resolution is carried out is, when he, body, soul and spirit, obeys the first commandment of the gospel, whatever that command may be."

Now what are we to make of all this? Is there no contradiction here to John's discriminating appeal to the Pharisees and Sadducees who came to his baptism, as given in Matt. iii. 7-10? Did John baptize these people notwithstanding his apparent protest to the contrary? Mr. Crawford seems to think he did. I will not argue the point. But certain it is, that John's idea of repentance was thoroughly practical; and it is surely remarkable that, in the face of the passage above referred to, Mr. Crawford should attempt to shew, that the Baptist demanded from such as came to his baptism no more than "a heart-felt determination to turn from sin to God." Why, in New Testament times, the very willingness to receive the ordinance of baptism, whether John's or Christ's, was in itself no small proof of repentance. It was one of those "fruits meet for repentance," and it often constituted the first of them, demanded by the law of the New Testament dispensation. But in our days, the days of easy profession, it seems to me that it were anti-Scriptural, and out of harmony with the spirit of John's remonstrance, to baptize any because they say they repent, while no opportunity even could be afforded to test the sincerity of their words. Mr. Crawford quotes the case of Zaccheus here, and remarks upon it thus:—"Zaccheus stood, and said unto the Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken anything from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold." And Jesus said unto him, "This day is salvation come to this house, forasmuch as he also is a Son of Abraham." Jesus did not wait until he had carried out the resolution, but forgave and saved him as soon as he repented." If Christ did accept

the profession which Zaccheus made, could he not search the heart of the penitent, and read his repentance there? Besides, such a profession, from such a man, surrounded by such circumstances, did it not carry with it a self-evidencing power, which might well commend it to those who could only judge of the tree by its fruits? Mr. Crawford's whole argument here goes to substitute baptism for repentance, and to give to the former a significance and value which the New Testament nowhere assigns to any outward observance.

But I pass on to what is less equivocal, more undisguised. A sinner is "made free," we are told, "from the state of sin by baptism." The sense which Mr. Crawford attaches to this statement is evident from the following questions:—"Are those who believe and repent thereby brought into a state of pardon? or has Christ commanded an act of obedience before the promise of salvation?" Then we have the naked announcement, "to expect to pass into Christ without a bodily act, as well as the act of the mind, is contrary to reason and all analogy." Farther on we have this question, with its answer:—"Can persons be saved without baptism? To say that God cannot save in any way he pleases is proud presumption. And it is still worse for those who can, and will not be baptized, to expect salvation without it; as there is neither a promise nor a case in God's Word, since Christian baptism was instituted, to encourage such an expectation." Then, again,—"The apostles, so far as the New Testament records their acts, told none that they were saved without baptism." And, again,—"Wherever baptism is mentioned there is allusion to pardon, or a change of state. To deny in the face of all this evidence that baptism is for the remission of sins, is to oppose God's Word." And, once more,—"Some of Christ's commands are addressed exclusively to saints. Baptism is the only one addressed to aliens. None who had submitted to the government of Christ was commanded to be baptized. It is not among the 'all things' Jesus commanded his apostles to teach the disciples, but named as necessary to make disciples. The commission does not say, 'He that believeth, and eateth the Lord's Supper,' or, 'He that believeth and prayeth shall be saved.' These were Christian duties: but, 'He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.'" Thus we are brought to the conclusion of the whole matter: that "as sure as Jesus Christ was the Son of God, he would save all that came unto him by faith, repentance, and baptism."

Now is this, or is it not, heresy? It may be objected, perhaps, that my extracts are only extracts—that they do not really mean what they seem to teach—that they are susceptible of explanations which shall place them in agreement with the doctrine of salvation without works of any kind. But if so, why should Mr. Crawford present his statements in an aspect at once so bald and so bold? No! he clearly means, salvation "by faith, repentance, and baptism;" and that the faith and the repentance go for nothing without the baptism. If he does not mean this, what does he mean? He must either retract his language, or lie under the imputation here urged against him;—namely, that of teaching, that there is no salvation without baptism.

But I must add yet a few words as to New Testament teaching in regard to the topics here brought before me; lest any should imagine that I oppose Mr. Crawford with declamation rather than argument—that I appeal to prejudice rather than to the Scriptures of truth.

"Wherever baptism is mentioned," says Mr. Crawford, as already cited, "there is allusion to pardon, or change of state." Granted; the baptism of believers necessarily involves that idea. But is that pardon obtained, that change of state realized by means of baptism? Is it true, that men "are made free from the state of sin by baptism?" Is baptismal water any thing more than an emblem of the "fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness"—the fountain of a Saviour's blood? And the "washing away of sins" in baptism, is it anything more than an emblematic washing away of sin? even as in emblem we are "buried with Christ in baptism." Does not this emblematic interpretation go far to exhaust the force of these, and similar scriptural expressions? If more be really intended by them, it is certainly capable of proof; and until proof is supplied Mr. Crawford's interpretation is destitute of all support.

But farther,—need I state it?—the New Testament does most distinctly teach, that men are saved without baptism—before baptism—and never by it. Does any here refer to I Pet. iii. 21?—"The like figure whereunto baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away

of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience towards God,)—by the resurrection of Jesus Christ." Who does not see here, no matter how the text is rendered, that the salvation obtained is by "the answer of a good conscience" rather than by the baptismal waters? that "good conscience" being obtained "by the resurrection of Jesus Christ." Which last expression may carry us into the epistle of Paul to the Romans: where he tells us, that Christ was "delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification." And what have we in this epistle? An express treatise on God's way of saving sinners—remitting sin—justifying the ungodly. And how is the argument managed? Strange to say, if Mr. Crawford's doctrine be true, without so much as one reference to baptism. Not one, that is, until we arrive at the sixth chapter: where it is used as a plea for holiness of life, and by no means exhibited as though it bore a direct relation to the way of justification. No! when the apostle wants to tell us how a sinner is justified—his sins remitted—the blessing of salvation conferred, he proceeds, as in that great fundamental passage, ch. iii. 19-26. Let not the reader pass onward without turning to it. And what will he find? Not one word of baptism—not the slightest hint, where salvation in its deep laid basis is the direct subject, of Mr. Crawford's scheme, "by faith, repentance, and baptism. Baptism, as we have seen, has its place indeed in Paul's system; but by no means such a place as Mr. Crawford chooses to claim for it. Is the contrary to this for one moment conceivable?

The argument of the epistle to the Galatians is amply confirmatory of the position here taken. There again we have Paul dealing expressly with the grand question of a sinner's justification before God. Certain Jewish teachers had been among the Galatians, insisting, like their brethren at Antioch, "Except ye be circumcised, after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved." These men had drawn away the hearts of the Galatians at once from Paul's doctrine, and from Paul himself. It is the design of his epistle, therefore, to reverse this state of things. And how does he enter upon it? "Though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed." Lofty challenge! It invokes a curse upon the Apostle's own head, or upon the head of Gabriel, or of any other, on earth or in heaven, who should dare to announce a way of salvation different from that which had already been preached to the Galatians, and received by them. What high assurance! what glowing fervour! what blazing indignation! Well, but what had these Judaizing teachers done to justify an anathema like this? *Simply what Campbellite teachers are doing in our day:—they had interposed an outward rite between Christ and the souls of men.* They had put circumcision precisely where Mr. Crawford places baptism. So that perhaps it were not too much to say, that by the mere change of one word in this epistle to the Galatians, reading *baptism*,—not New Testament baptism, but Campbellite baptism,—reading *baptism for circumcision*, the argument of the apostle is as good against modern Campbellism as it was against ancient Judaizing Christianity. What, indeed, is Campbellism as developed by Mr. Crawford, but the doctrine of BAPTISMAL JUSTIFICATION? and how far off is this doctrine from that of baptismal regeneration? And now, in direct contrast with such doctrine, let these four things be observed in regard to the epistle before us. 1. That the apostle conducts his whole argument with but one allusion to baptism; which we have ch. iii. 26, 27. 2. That here, he not only puts faith before baptism, but ascribes to it a saving efficacy apart from baptism:—"Ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus." 3. That he holds language of similar import in other parts of this same epistle, ch. ii. 16, 20: iii. 9, 11, 22. And 4. That it is clearly with reference to the functions of faith, apart from all beside, in whatever guise it come, that he pours forth that sublime exclamation,—"But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ; by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world!"

This may suffice as to the teachings of the New Testament, especially of Paul, on the capital article of justification. But does any imagine, that the passages to which I have referred are liable to be modified by such as here follow? at which I have before glanced, without quoting them:—"Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.—And now why tarriest thou? Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins,