

F. E. Raven's *Evil Doctrines*

on

THE PERSON OF CHRIST

and

THEIR PRESENT BEARING

—R.A. Huebner

PTP

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INTRODUCTION

Some may question the wisdom or necessity of publishing, at this late date, an examination of doctrines which over 90 years ago, divided saints who until that time had been gathered together to the name of the Lord Jesus on the ground that there is one body.

There are two reasons for such an examination: First, the relatively recent upheavals among those who comprise the Raven-Taylor sect, and their strange notions and practices (which have attracted attention even in the secular press), have resulted in a large number of individuals finding themselves outside the sect. Some of these have subsequently sought fellowship with other Christian groups. A few have come into contact with believers gathered together to the Lord's name, and some have desired to take their place at the table of the Lord. Faithfulness to the Lord and care for their souls, as well as care for the assembly, require that we be satisfied with regard to their position as to the Raven-Taylor system of false doctrine. We trust this paper will help those with the responsibility of making inquiry of such souls.

A second, though equally important, reason for this paper is the merger in 1974 of the so-called Glanton offshoot of the Raven sect into the amalgamated company of Christians sometimes referred to as the "Kelly - Lowe - Continental - Grant - Stuart" fellowship. We desire to alert our brethren in that company to the leaven at work among them, and to warn those with whom we walk in happy fellowship as gathered together to the Lord's name of the need for care when dealing with souls coming among us from that company.

"Behold his couch, Solomon's own:
Threescore mighty men are about it,
Of the mighty of Israel
They all hold the sword,
Experts in war;
Each hath his sword upon his thigh
Because of alarm in the nights."
Song of Songs 3:7,8

R. K. GORGAS, 1980

AND (IT IS) NOT WONDERFUL, FOR SATAN
HIMSELF TRANSFORMS HIMSELF INTO AN
ANGEL OF LIGHT. IT IS NO GREAT THING
THEREFORE IF HIS MINISTERS ALSO
TRANSFORM THEMSELVES AS MINISTERS OF
RIGHTEOUSNESS; WHOSE END SHALL BE
ACCORDING TO THEIR WORKS.

2 Corinthians 11:14,15

... THAT TEACHING (WHICH IS) IN THE
SLEIGHT OF MEN, IN UNPRINCIPLED CUNNING
WITH A VIEW TO SYSTEMATIZED ERROR ...

EPHESIANS 4:14

AND IF YE WILL NOT HEAR IT, MY SOUL
SHALL WEEP IN SECRET PLACES FOR (YOUR)
PRIDE; AND MY EYE SHALL WEEP SORE, AND
RUN DOWN WITH TEARS, BECAUSE JEHOVAH'S
FLOCK IS GONE INTO CAPTIVITY.

Jeremiah 13:17

1

SYNOPSIS OF SOME DIVISIONS AND MERGERS

During the years 1888-1890, F.E. Raven of Greenwich, England, a teacher among the saints gathered together to the Lord's name, introduced a system of fundamentally evil doctrine which will be examined in this paper. These doctrines have been imbibed by many and have leavened many. In order to provide the background and setting of these doctrines, the following synopsis of events has been prepared to enable the reader to locate, in time, events referred to in the body of this paper. Also, the next section presents a survey that will help the reader to see the nature of F.E. Raven's doctrines and the effect they have had.

1848

The Open-Brethren division occurred over receiving some who came from B.W. Newton's congregation, from which saints had separated (first J.N. Darby and some 60 saints) for clerisy and then because of a system of doctrine derogatory to the Person of Christ. The second cause of the division was because of the denial that association with evil defiles. This denial is expressed in what is known as "The Letter of the Ten", a statement signed by 10 principal brethren at Bethesda Chapel, Bristol, England, where the trouble over receiving centered. Details are available in W. Trotter's "The Origin of Open-Brethrenism" and also in J.N. Darby's writings. Divisions are a chastening from God (1 Kings 12:24). This division has as its base independency and toleration of association with leaven.

1881

A division difficult to explain in a few words occurred in 1881 when an assembly action was refused by Wm. Kelly (1820-1906) and others. Mr. Kelly, a very learned scholar and able teacher, remained sound in the faith and produced many valuable expositions of scripture. He was the editor of J.N. Darby's writings. He denounced (and refuted) C.E.

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Stuart's doctrine on propitiation made in heaven as fundamental evil [see Note 3]. His strictures against the Satanic system of F.E. Raven are also valued. Alas, we must class the origin of the Kelly group as independency.

1884

The chastening hand of God felt in 1881 struck another blow through Frederick W. Grant [1834-1902]. Mr. Grant was a scholarly writer and teacher and produced some valuable books. While always sound in the fundamentals of the faith, he introduced a system of doctrine regarding life in the Son, life in Christ, sealing, and new creation that was refused. Pressing it, he was judged by the assembly at Natural History Hall (NHH), Montreal, with being a heretic (a party-maker). His home assembly, Plainfield, N.J., and others, refused the excommunication by NHH. H.A. Ironside (who became 'pastor' at Moody Church, Chicago), S. Ridout, B.C. Greenman, and A.E. Booth are well-known names of some Grants.

1885

Humbling having not been secured by the faithful rod (Micah 6:9), another division occurred through the scholar (particularly a Hebraist) and teacher, Clarence E. Stuart (1823-1903) who developed views on Christian standing which led to a division. It came out also that he held that Christ made propitiation in heaven during the disembodied state - a fundamentally evil doctrine [see Note 3]. Walter Scott was a well-known supporter of C.E.S. and imbibed this evil doctrine. We must consider that the evil doctrine really underlay this division; evil known by God just as in the case of B.W. Newton, though the separation in B.W.N.'s case occurred first because of clerisy. C.E.S. was supported by most in his home assembly, Reading. London took action against him.

1890

F.E. Raven [died 1903], the principle subject of this paper, is mainly known for the doctrines to be examined in this paper, at least by those who reject and oppose him. Many think he propounded wonderful, heavenly, new light. Wm. Kelly's judgment was that F.E.R. had a "mission...from an opposing and evil spirit" [F.E.R. Heterodox, p.43]. He

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was rejected by the faithful assembly at Bexhill, England on June 29, 1890; and his home assembly, Greenwich, was disowned for supporting him. His evil teachings began on the subject of eternal life and were first put out in public ministry at a conference in Witney, April 1888. The evil affected the Person of Christ and developed into a system in astonishing rapidity. He was publically both opposed and supported. Some of his supporters became directly infected with the blasphemies (see Appendix 4).

This company became known as the Raven company and subsequently as the Taylorites. Mr. Raven developed a complete system of blasphemy regarding the Person of Christ and brought essentially the whole scope of superstructure truth into conformity with it.

J.S. Oliphant, who had previously stood for the truth, the honored C.H.M., George Cutting, W.P.T. Wolston, Ed. Dennett and George Morrish were among those who went with F.E. Raven. W.J. Lowe, however, withstood Mr. Raven by word and pen, bowed to Bexhill's action, and regarded F.E.R.'s doctrine as a system of evil. A.H. Rule also opposed him. A.C. Ord wrote three most weighty papers of exposure. The gathered saints in Europe refused F.E.R. and his supporters.

The 1963 Taylorite edition of F.E.R.'s Letters... says, "The Lord took His beloved servant, Frederick Edward Raven to Himself on Lord's day, August 16th, 1903, in his sixty-sixth year. The burial was at Nunhead Cemetery on August 21st, and was attended by nearly 1500 brethren." How leaven works. James Taylor, Sr., rapidly rose to prominence after F.E.R.'s death and the company is now known as Taylorites—more properly Raven—Taylorites. Mr. Taylor's name is especially associated with the denial of the eternal Sonship of Christ, as is C.A. Coates'. However, they ought to be known for all of Mr. Raven's evil doctrines. Appendix 3 is devoted to C.A.C.'s evil. J. Taylor, Jr., became the principal leader after his father's death. A division has recently occurred, and J.T., Jr., has died; an alcoholic.

1908

Through an ecclesiastical matter (and not because of separation from F.E. Raven's evil) a division occurred in

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the Raven sect and those who then were separated from the Raven company became known as Glantons after the name of the town where a meeting was located which became the focal point of trouble. Many of those who were alarmed at F.E.R.'s teaching went with Glanton. The Glanton company as such never repudiated F.E.R. as a teacher of fundamentally evil doctrine, nor has that company confessed their leavened association with him. Separation, and restoration to divine ground is the only remedy. (F.B. Hole, Hamilton Smith, J.A. Trench, W.P.T. Wolston and A.J. Pollock were in fellowship with Glanton).

1909

In 1909, numbers in England and many in Europe, with W.J. Lowe (1839-1927) (of great ability and an able teacher, who replied to F.W. Grant and F.E. Raven very ably and faithfully), refused the action of the assembly at Tunbridge Wells, England, against a Mr. C. Strange. W.J. Lowe and those with him became known as Lowe - Continental brethren (Continental = European). Shortly after, the L-C's put away Mr. Strange. Before this division occurred, there was agitation to unite with the Kelly party (which was consummated in 1926). It appears that what underlay this division was this fresh attack on the meaning of "there is one body". Those that bowed to the Tunbridge Wells assembly action do not believe that saints in denominations and parties of "brethren" are gathered (together?) to Christ's name; nor do they believe all Christians are at the Lord's table. At one time W.J. Lowe, F.W. Grant, and W. Kelly agreed with this, as did, of course, J.N. Darby and others.

1923

While a few Glanton and Grant meetings had merged as early as about 1912, "Matters Relating to Present Exercises" signed by 11 brethren states, "It appears, therefore, that both groups recognized the full organic fellowship has existed between us (Grants and Glantons) since 1923."

1926

Kelly, Lowe-Continental merger. See under 1940.

1927

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James Boyd, a Raven-Glanton, taught the Apollinarian teaching that F.E.R. held and taught in a subtle manner; namely that a divine Person was the spirit of the physical body of Christ.

1928

J. Boyd's doctrine (i.e., F.E.R.'s doctrine) coupled with what is called the Grant-Mory matter, resulted in a division. There resulted a group called the Booth-Glanton. Mr. A.E. Booth was a leader among the Grants. Another group of Grants, who refused Mr. Boyd and this group, merged with the Kelly, Lowe-Continental group (formed by a merger of the Lowe-Continental and the Kelly group in 1926) in 1953.

1933

There was a merger of the Grants, who refused the Booth-Glanton company that had fellowship with J. Boyd, with Stuarts. This Grant-Stuart company was leavened by indifference to the fundamentally evil nature of C.E. Stuart's doctrine of propitiation made in heaven.

1940

In 1940, some of those who had bowed to the assembly action of 1908 (T.W.), merged with the K, L-C formed in 1926 by a merger of the Kellys and the L-C's.

1953

Another merger of the company formed by the 1926 K, L-C merger and the 1940 K, L-C and ex-Tunbridge Wells (ex-TW) took place. The Grant-Stuarts [formed in 1933] united with them. All mergers have taken place on the basis that these divided companies were all gathered (together?) to Christ's name, while in division, a teaching which those that bow to the assembly actions of 1881, 1884, 1885, 1890, and 1909 (Tunbridge Wells) refuse.

1974

The above company and the Booth-Glanton company, which company never owned the evil and leaven of the association with F.E. Raven and the wickedness of refusing the action

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of Bexhill in June 1890, merged with the above company. Separation from evil unto the Lord and restoration is the only remedy for those in this merged company. A few have done this (2 Chron. 30:11).

2

BACKGROUND TO THE RAVEN DIVISION

There is always a need among God's saints for objective ministry; i.e., the setting forth of the revealed truths of Christianity, such as the doctrine of Christ, the work of Christ, the believer's perfect standing, his place in the new creation, etc. There is always an accompanying need for corrective ministry, and exhortation also, because we tend to abuse the grace of God wherein we stand. Thus, the epistles contain so much correction and exhortation; founded, of course, upon the objective truths. There is even a gift of exhortation (Rom. 12:8) and prophesying often takes the character of dealing with the state.

Worldliness is a snare to which many may succumb. J.N. Darby remarked,

"It is important that the testimony borne against (not the world only, but) worldly Christians should be distinct and positive. With a worldly person, not bearing Christ's name, one thinks at least of speaking to him of grace. But to a Christian who, knowing his privileges, walks with the world, it is hard to speak of grace, because he abuses it. Love does not consist in walking with such, but in warning them. It is not possible to walk in (according to) the light and in worldliness. One must shew oneself more decided with the Christian who is worldly than with the worldly man...."

Collected Writings of J.N. Darby, vol. 30, p.314, Morrish ed.

The scriptures warn us about worldliness. And in ministry, the "sense" (Neh. 8:8) of scripture might be pressed upon us by faithful ministers of Christ (including what is due to Christ) who "preach the Word" (2 Tim. 4:1) and do not omit parts of it in order to maintain popularity and spare themselves.

J.B. Stoney (1814 – 1897) had a characteristic ministry of exhortation and correction and there is written and recorded ministry of his which is of much profit. In his later years, however, from just before the death of J.N. Darby (1882) until his own death, his ministry began to have the additional feature of mysticism. F.E. Raven came under its influence, elaborated the mysticism, introduced fundamentally evil doctrine, and affected J.B. Stoney in such a way that he not only defended F.E. Raven, but absorbed some, if not all, of F.E.R.'s fundamentally evil doctrines, as will be shown in Appendix 4.

A division occurred in 1890, wherein F.E. Raven and his supporters were refused by those who separated from evil unto the Lord; because he held and taught evil doctrines.

By hindsight it was seen that the first hint of F.E.R.'s doctrinal aberrations concerning the present possession of eternal life came out in 1886 in a magazine edited by J.B. Stoney, A Voice to the Faithful. From 1888, when F.E.R. began to publicly voice his evil teachings on eternal life and on the Person of the Son in Godhead, and in His manhood, until the assembly at Bexhill took action (June 29, 1890) against him, he was admonished in public meetings, private meetings and in correspondence, all to no avail. It is alleged by Glantons (an off-shoot of the Ravenites, 1908) that no adequate case was made out against him by June, 1890 and that the "system" of the Taylorites was only in embryo between 1890 and 1908, in which year the Glanton body was formed over an ecclesiastical matter. This division resulted in two groups, the Glantons and those subsequently known as Taylorites.

One of the theses of this paper is that by June 29, 1890, F.E.R.'s mystical mind had already formed an integrated system of evil doctrines, and by his death in 1903 he had fully refined it.

By June 29, 1890, F.E.R. already was involved in the following fundamentally evil teachings, from which we must be separate:

1. The denial of eternal life as a present possession

of the believer (because he said it was a sphere to be entered into). This led on to adjustment concerning the doctrine of the Son because it involved Him as that eternal life which was with the Father. This is the true God and eternal life.

2. And so he denied that the Son of God was eternal life in His own Person (because, he said, eternal life is communicated and deity cannot be communicated). Having thus blasphemed the Son in His holy habitation, he put forth his unsubject and mystical thoughts to touch Him in His humanity.

3. He denied that Christ is God and man united in one Person (because, he said, that would involve two persons). He substituted for the orthodox statement his own formula: In Person He is God, in condition He is man. The evil doctrine enunciated here in his own mode of language (known classically as Apollinarianism) means that the spirit of Christ's humanity was the divine Person. Mr. Raven did not believe Christ had a human soul and spirit and generated a new, subtle mode of language concerning the Christ and gave the old words new meanings.

4. Collaterally with this (possibly first enunciated after Bexhill's action) he asserted that the manhood of Christ was ever essentially in the Son (in eternity).

5. During 1890, or by then, he said that the Son became the Word (the Logos) in incarnation. This was repeated later.

Finally, subsequent to 1890, he denied the eternal Sonship of Christ. It was only consistency with the rest of the evil to do so.

The above lists only the worst of his doctrinal departures.

After Bexhill refused F.E.R. in June 1890, he was, of course, emboldened by the support he received to state his subtly worded blasphemies with more impunity, though the record shows that some of his more extreme utterances were revised by his supporters before being printed.

J.N. Darby wrote,

It never was, nor I trust ever will be the notion of brethren, that the truth of Christ's Person...was to be sacrificed to outward unity: it is making Brethren of more importance than Christ.... I must have a true Christ.

In the Synopsis on II John, p.357 (Stow Hill ed.), J.N. Darby wrote,

The semblance of love which does not maintain the truth, but accommodates itself to that which is not the truth, is not love according to God; it is taking advantage of the name of love in order to help on the seductions of Satan. In the last days the test of true love is the maintenance of the truth. God would have us love one another; but the Holy Ghost, by Whose power we receive the divine nature and Who pours the love of God into our hearts, is the Spirit of Truth, and His office is to glorify Christ. Therefore it is impossible that a love which can put up with a doctrine that falsifies Christ, or which is indifferent to anything that concerns His glory, can be of the Holy Ghost - still less so, if such indifference be set up as the proof of the love. Compare also 1 John v. 2,3 and 2 John 6.

Mr. Raven's words were, "I must be judged according to what I have written" (Letter to J. Dunlop, 10th June, 1890). Cited in N. Noel, History... Vol. 2, p.539.

On June 29, 1890 a letter went from the saints gathered together to the name of our Lord Jesus Christ at Bexhill, England, to the christians at Greenwich, England (meeting with, and supporting, F.E. Raven), refusing to any longer recognize them as likewise gathered (the letter is cited in Appendix 1). Mr. Raven was refused because he held and taught evil doctrines.

The object of this paper is manifold; namely, to:

1. Show what evil F.E.R. taught and that it was a system of evil that should be abhorred by all.
2. Show that this system of evil concerning Christ's Person was essentially complete by June 1890 and certainly before his death (1903).
3. Show that C.A. Coates (of the Raven-Taylor sect) taught these blasphemies (Appendix 3).
4. Show that J.B. Stoney not only supported F.E.R., but himself imbibed some of the fundamentally evil teachings (Appendix 3).
5. Show that the European brethren denounced F.E.R.'s teachings as evil. (Appendix 2).
6. Show how Bexhill acted in a godly and righteous way; and that Mr. Raven had more than adequate warning (Appendix 2).
7. There is one other important purpose. That is to explain why the Raven-Glanton company is a leavened lump and that the group they merged with in 1974 is also a leavened lump. J.B. Stoney has rightly pointed out (as have others) that everything derives its character from its starting point. Principles that bear on this matter are:

A little leaven leavens the whole lump.

Association with evil leavens.

A moral stream does not rise above its source.

The passage of time does not change the character of a moral action.

The point of departure is the point of restoration.

In 1908 a division occurred in the Raven sect which resulted in another sect known as Glanton (the name of a place). It is certain that the separation was not on the ground of the evil doctrine of F.E.R. The right course for those known as Glantons would have been to awaken to the

leaven of the doctrines, judge it, and seek restoration to fellowship among those who remained on the ground of gathering and at the Lord's table; and acknowledging that they were leavened by an evil association. This they have not done. They have not acknowledged the leavened association or the real wickedness of F.E.R. They pretend to have been on the ground of gathering while in fellowship with F.E.R. and his supporters from 1890-1908, and ever since.

Glantons subsequently united with the Grants on the basis of mutual recognition [1923]. In 1927 trouble arose in this merged company over J. Boyd's [a Glantonite] Apollinarian doctrine, that a divine Person was the spirit of Christ's body, i.e., that Christ had not a human spirit. This, combined with another matter, led to a number of splits, resulting in one Grant group who refused Mr. Boyd and in 1953 merged with the Kelly, Lowe-Continental group. Another group in this split is known as Booth-Glanton. The Booth [name of a man] group is an off-shoot of the Grants that maintained fellowship with Glanton and Mr. Boyd (whose teaching was not rejected by excommunication from this group). Mr. Boyd was never excommunicated! We hear the old plea that he became senile!

In 1974 this Booth-Glanton group merged with the Kelly-Lowe-Continental, Grant-Stuart group (by another merger).

A little leaven leavens the whole lump. This group is also really associated with indifference to the true character of C.E. Stuart's doctrine that Christ took His blood to heaven and made propitiation there, and indifference to the true character and evil of F.E.R.'s doctrines and association therewith. A few individuals in this merged group may have misgivings and a little sense of the evil [why do they not value separation from the evil unto Christ?]; but the meaning of the public mergers effected on the basis of mutual recognition that these various companies [sects or heresies, as 1 Cor. 11:19 calls them] were all along gathered [together?] to the name of Christ while in division, in effect gives up the truth:

1. That there can be but one expression of the one body.

2. Of the Lord's table and its expression.

3. That the point of departure is the point of restoration.

4. That the passage of time does not change the character of a moral action.

5. That a moral stream never rises above its source.

6. That association with leaven leavens.

No doubt brethren among them preach point 6. It is shallow however when viewed against the public actions and principles governing and characterizing the mergers. The same may be said regarding preaching on points 3, 4, and 5. If preached, it is likely only applied now to individuals. Their change in what was once held regarding 2 above is notorious: some, perhaps by now many, hold that all Christians are at the Lord's table.

It is likely that F.W. Grant, W.J. Lowe and W. Kelly never realized where the merger-slide leads. The bottom of the slide has not yet been reached. Besides the leavened association already there, it remains to be publicly repudiated that association with evil defiles and all that implies. As in Rev. 2:6 and 2:15, deeds have already preceded doctrine.

3

DENIAL OF ETERNAL LIFE AS THE PRESENT POSSESSION OF THE BELIEVER

THE EARLIEST HINT

I suppose it was by hindsight that it was noted by A.C. Ord that the seeds of the poisonous fruit first appeared in a magazine edited by J.B. Stoney, A Voice to the Faithful, Jan. 1886, pp. 10-19, article, "Life as Presented in Scripture", by F.E. Raven. In this article, he said:

I have doubted sometimes if it be sufficiently seen that, when life is spoken of in scripture, it is presented to us as a moral state into which one is brought through faith (the just shall live by faith), to which the nature begotten in the believer of the Spirit by the word necessarily answers....

In psalm 133:3 life for evermore is the explanation of "the blessing" and it is identified with Zion....

I think the passages cited above shew that the idea of life, in the first revelation of it in scripture, is a moral order of things into which the believer enters through grace....

And, in chapter 5., the apostle reverts to the fact of the eternal life being in the Son, and ends with the expression "He is the true God and eternal life;"....

... that is, that eternal life means a new order of things, so far as man is concerned, true only in the Son, and in believers as abiding in Him....

My impression is that it is in this way life is presented in scripture; not so much as a deposit in

the believer, though indeed Christ lives in him in the power of the Spirit, but as a state of blessing, whether in Christ in glory, or under Christ on the earth....

These notions continued to develop in his mind and then were increasingly given out in public.

THE FIRST PUBLIC MINISTRY OF F.E.R.'s DOCTRINE CONCERNING ETERNAL LIFE

N. Noel said:

The first intimation the writer hereof had of the threatened trouble was during a quiet walk after a prayer meeting with a brother "beloved in the Lord," who told him that certain incidents at a recent Conference at Witney, near Oxford, England, (18th, 19th, 20th April, 1888), had led up to its being elicited from Mr. Raven that he did not know if he had eternal life, though he might have "touched" it. It seems that Mr. Christopher McAdam, the aged brother whose name appears in Mr. W. Trotter's "Whole case of Plymouth and Bethesda" (Morrish, London), was, more or less, Mr. Raven's questioner.

The History of the Brethren, vol.2, p.500.

F.E.R. said, concerning this,

At the Witney (1888) meeting I was a learner rather than a teacher, though I cannot say there were many from whom I got help. It was becoming clear to me that the term 'eternal life' meant for us a wholly new order of relationship, object, knowledge, and blessing, as well as a new being suited to it, outside this scene of sight and sense, and that this has been brought to light in the Son having become Man; and further, that it had its full revelation as an actual condition in and for man in Him as the risen and glorified Man.

Letters of F.E. Raven, p.32 (Nov. 21, 1890).

Regarding the above comment by F.E.R., N. Noel remarked,

It will readily be seen from the above that Mr. Pinkerton and others were right in the conclusion, that what was in question was "really a new doctrine;" or, as Mr. Wm. Kelly spoke of it, a "new development."

The History of the Brethren, vol.2, p.501.

This does indeed define eternal life as a new sphere that a believer enters into and amounts to a denial that (whatever may be its expression and associations) it is something communicated to the believer, all believers, as a present possession.

In regard to eternal life, it seems to me that it is a kind of technical expression indicating an order and state of blessing proposed and prepared of God for man.

Letters of F.E. Raven, p.1 Stow Hill, 1963 (May 1, 1888).

...it is a sphere or condition of blessing...

Ibid., p.3 (June 6, 1888).

...a new sphere and order of blessing...

Ibid., p.13 (Dec. 24, 1888).

HIS DOCTRINE OF ETERNAL LIFE

Mr. Raven defined eternal life as a condition or sphere, as the above citations show. The following extracts repeat this and trace briefly how the evil teaching concerning the denial of eternal life in every believer led on to evil concerning eternal life and Christ's Person.

F.E.R...It used to be commonly said, I know that I have got eternal life. Why? Because the scripture says, "He that believeth hath everlasting life." I say you have thus the faith of eternal life, but that does not prove that you have the thing itself."

Readings and Addresses in U.S.A. and Canada with F.E.R. 1898, p.54 (G. Morrish).

G.F. Would you say a believer then had eternal life in a certain sense?

F.E.R. I answer it in a very simple way, he has eternal life if he has it.

R.S.S. It is not a very bad way to ask those people who say they have eternal life, what they have got.

F.E.R. If I came across any one who asserted it at the present time, I would be disposed to say, 'If you have got it, let us have some account of it.' Our difficulty in England was that nobody could give any account of eternal life. If there had been anybody who could have given an account of it, the difficulty would have been much less. One person said it was one thing, and another said it was another. One old brother who affected a good many people, said that eternal life was obedience. He took up a verse in John 12 (sic), 'And I know that His commandment is life everlasting,' and argued from that that it was obedience. It shows you in what a muddle the whole thing was. Everybody claimed to have it, but nobody could give an account of it. Another brother asked me, 'Have you got eternal life?' I did not know how to answer it exactly because he simply meant resting on a statement of scripture. ("Yes, this is what F.E.R.'s followers must avoid!", said W. Kelly.)

G.F. Would you not define eternal life?

F.E.R. I do not think that we have any definition of it. You can speak of what is characteristic of it, and scripture gives you that, but surely if you claim to have eternal life you can give some account of it. If a man has a possession he can give me some account of what he possesses. Otherwise I doubt if he has it. I don't say he has not title to it.

R.S.S. Or the enjoyment of it.

F.E.R. I think thousands have title to it who are

not in the good of it. Eternal life is God's purpose for you; God gave his Son to that end. I have the light of this, and hence it is mine in title, but to say that I have it is another matter. Ibid., pp.107,108.

Commenting on this, W. Kelly remarked,

Could the unbelief of a professing Christian go farther? Over and over again is the present possession of life eternal denied. According to F.E.R. it is "God's purpose"; and the believer has a "title to it," but in no way has he that life himself. "To say that I have it is another matter." Yet he knows as well as anyone, that the Lord with most marked solemnity ruled that He gives, not will give, life eternal, and that the believer "has" it, not merely is to have it. Christ's meaning is made the more definite and indubitable (except to will under Satan's power), because He also says that the believer has passed from death into life. F.E.R. stands here in open antagonism to the word of the Lord on this vital matter. To quibble away His plain authority for it is to sap divine truth.

Again, how sad is the levity of the oracular platitude in answer to "G.F.! Would you say a believer then had eternal life in a certain sense? F.E.R. I answer it in a very simple way, he has eternal life if he has it."

Any upright mind must feel that such a come-off is, if not Jesuitical evasion, anything but "simple," being just incredulous banter and a cheat.

All but the most ignorant know that life in itself, and of every form in nature, is difficult to explain, especially to a caviler. Yet who questions its reality but a materialist? With such F.E.R. here "lands himself" as to life eternal, however clearly revealed. On the highest authority the simplest Christian is divinely assured that he has this life eternal, not its mere title or promise. He expects indeed its certain completion in his body when Christ comes again; but he has no less certainty of possessing it now in his inner man. This F.E.R. denies emphatically,

unequivocally, and constantly. Yet the scheme defrauds every Christian of his primary blessedness, dishonours the Lord in His grace and truth, and perverts His words of spirit and life into a willy-nilly of dark unbelief.

F.E.R. Heterodox, pp.32-33.

Let us continue:

J.T. Is the expression "heavenly" included in the idea of eternal life?

F.E.R. No, I don't think so. I think eternal life refers to earth. I don't think we should talk about eternal life in heaven.

J.T. Only we have it there.

F.E.R. I don't think the term will have much force there.

Ibid., p.116.

F.E.R. I don't see any meaning in its application to heaven. You could not touch eternal life otherwise than by resurrection, or by setting aside of death. If you are come to the apprehension of resurrection and are on that ground, there it is you touch eternal life, but not short of that.

H.F. I don't understand; do you mean that when we go from this earth eternal life will cease?

F.E.R. I don't think the term has any longer force.

H.F. Is it only the term then?

F.E.R. What the term expresses has not any more force.

J.T. You would say it was a relative term?

F.E.R. Quite so.

Ibid., pp.362-363.

Denial of Eternal Life

20

Eternal life, he claims, is a sphere, confined to earth, that Christians who "apprehend resurrection" touch. Eternal life is not a life communicated from God to all believers. And so we should not be the least surprised to find F.E.R. attack John 3:16 to align it with his denial of eternal life as the present possession of every believer, now and in heaven.

F.C. In John 3:16, is it perishing eternally?

F.E.R. Would there be any advantage to have it mean not to perish eternally?

F.C. We have always supposed it was.

F.E.R. That is not any comfort to me; the comfort to me is that I shall be kept here.

Ibid., p.186.

F.E.R. wrote on June 17, 1900,

He maintained that Eternal life was communicated, and I said I could not see any such thing as the communication of life....

Letters of F.E. Raven, Stow Hill, 1963, p. 159.

The Raven-Taylorite, A.J. Gardiner, cited from a letter by F.E.R., dated June 1902:

These passages shew conclusively that the work of God in us is not spoken of as eternal life, but as leading to or ending in it.

The Recovery and Maintenance of the Truth, p.133.

J. Taylor, Sr. wrote:

We all know how he used to speak of eternal life not going beyond the earth.... He distinguished the heavenly position from this....

Letters of James Taylor, vol.1, p.105.

Mr. Raven really denied eternal life as the present possession of the believer and was disowned in June 1890 because of it and other evil. Those who did not bow to the action of Bexhill were a leavened lump, since they thus

formed a sect based on support of a teacher of fundamentally evil doctrine.

The paper by W. Potter, "A Letter on the Teachings of F.E. Raven" (Bible Truth Publishers) examines F.E.R. on this subject as does W. Kelly's F.E.R. Heterodox (also found in The Bible Treasury, New Series, vol 3, p. 360ff, 365ff. See also A.H. Rule, Selected Ministry, vol.2 (Bible Truth Publishers).

F.E.R. WAS REPEATEDLY ADMONISHED.

W.J. Lowe was among those who opposed Mr. Raven, who "earnestly appealed" to him (July 17, 1888), "publicly withstood" him at a large meeting of brothers at Brixton (Oct. 15, 1889), "beseeching him to withdraw his teaching as 'involving consequences directly antagonistic to fundamental truth'" (Nov. 12, 1889), etc. F.E.R.'s evil doctrine concerning the denial of eternal life as the present possession of every believer had to, and did, involve him in denying that the Son was the eternal life, essentially and eternally. This also was one of the teachings for which he was disowned by Bexhill. In a letter on "Life and its Manifestation," second ed., Jan 15, 1890, W.J. Lowe wrote, regarding F.E.R.,

Never once, all through this paper, in spite of remonstrances extending over eighteen months, is Christ admitted to be 'that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us,' according to the simple statement of scripture.

It is not my intention here to go over all the remonstrances with F.E.R., the meetings with brethren over his doctrines, and the correspondence on these things that preceded the Bexhill action. [See Appendix 1 for some of these admonishments]. Of course, phrases were changed, explanations were given and the seriousness palliated by his defenders. The record of this is given in N. Noel's History....

H.H. Snell remarked upon the defence of F.E.R.:

Somewhat akin to this, is another attempt of Mr.

O's (J.S. Oliphant) to justify Mr. R. by bringing forward one of his good sentences to meet a bad one. The error of this was pointed out by Mr. (Charles) Stanley in the beginning of this painful and humiliating controversy. It is an old device of Satan, almost always found associated with false doctrine, and dates as far back as the garden of Eden. It is the plea one constantly hears. When a sentence is brought before Mr. R.'s supporters which they cannot defend, they bring one of his true sentences to meet it. But it is a corrupting principle; and it is clear that no amount of truth added to it can neutralize or justify one unscriptural sentence about our adorable Lord. On the same corrupting principle Mr. O. speaks of some taking a sentence out of Mr. R.'s letters, and speaking of it as bad doctrine; as if a thousand additions of the truth could correct one false statement. If this mode of proceeding be admitted, then there will be no end to the propagation of false doctrine. An inspired apostle said, "We are not as many which corrupt the word of God, but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God speak we in Christ." And another apostle plainly declared that "No lie is of the truth" (2 Cor. 2:17; 1 John 2:21).

"A Few Observations on Mr. Oliphant's Remarks on a Letter to Him by H.H.Snell."

There are persons today who need to support their ecclesiastical position by saying that Bexhill acted hastily and F.E.R. was misunderstood.

4

THE WORD BECAME FLESH

Wm. Kelly said,

A warning I did give in 1890, and a brief leaflet, when the Weston-super-mare Notes disclosed the impious libel against the Lord, that "becoming a man, He becomes the Logos." Many hoped that it was a slip; but if so, why was it not confessed in sackcloth and ashes?

F.E.R. Heterodox, p.127; also, The Bible Treasury, New Series, vol.4, p.80 and vol.2, p.160.

Note well the date, 1890. This blasphemy was repeated.

He taught in 1897 that in Christ "becoming a man, He becomes the Logos...."

W. Kelly, F.E.R. Heterodox, p.99.

N. Noel said this (second statement) was published in the "Readings and Addresses at Weston-Super-Mare," Jan. 3 to 10, 1897 (The History of the Brethren, vol 2., p. 603).

In 1898, F.E.R. said,

In the opening of the 1st chapter of John's gospel the apostle is, I judge, speaking from his standpoint, not from God's standpoint. "The Word" was a designation of Christ common among the apostles (see Luke 1,2), and the apostle is speaking of Him from that standpoint, and identifying the One they had known as "the Word" with God.

Readings and Addresses in U.S.A. and Canada with F.E.R. 1898, pp. 108, 109. Cp. pp. 54,55.

F.W. Grant heard F.E.R. utter this blasphemy.

F.W.G. in an Open Letter to a brother, April 29, 1899, says:

I send you a few copies of my open letter. If I were writing it again, I should only make it stronger. ...I have heard him for myself also ... from all that I learned at his meetings here (of which we have now his revised account), there is no doubt left that his printed statements give his doctrine fairly....

Another statement as to the Lord, which I heard him make, and which, having caused offense, seems to have been dropped (the mention of it, not the thing), was only a fuller statement of what was said at Weston, that when He became flesh He became the Word. He was not the Word before he took humanity. This was contended for strongly. When it is said "In the beginning was the Word," He was only called so by anticipation! How sadly it reminds one of that other assertion that we, who are to be "ever with the Lord" in glory, will yet not call Him Lord. Thus His glory is shortened at both ends.

Cited in Our Present Sin, p.25.

A Glantonite, W.R. Dronsfield (who will not admit that F.E.R. taught fundamentally evil doctrine) in a letter to C. Hendricks, dated July 22, 1965, said:

He also argued that the "Word" denoted "expression of God" and therefore the Lord could not have been the Word until there was somebody He could express Himself to. This was rubbish or worse, but the slight influence he had as to this aberration can be judged by the 1903 edition of the Little Flock Hymn Book, in which, the hymn, "Thou art the Everlasting Word" appears twice! once unaltered and the second time with the refrain replaced by a different rhyming couplet each verse.

Rubbish or worse, indeed! It is as evil as a denial of the eternal Sonship, as evil as a denial that Christ is God and man in One Person, as evil as the denial that the Son was ever personally the Eternal Life.

And notice further palliation of this evil by claiming how little effect this had (but this does mean he admits F.E.R. held this evil!) by citing no effect on the hymn book

revision in 1903 (by T.H. Reynolds). We shall have occasion in the section on "God and man in One Person" to cite the purging of a precious stanza from that hymn book, which Mr. Dronsfield did not mention.

J.Taylor,Sr. learned not only to deny the "eternal Word" from F.E.R., but he seems to have learned from Him to do it 'piously'! Listen.

What I fear is the danger of undertaking to define the Lord's relationship before he became Man....
Letters of James Taylor, vol.1, p.186 (Dec. 20, 1920).

But from the time Mr. Raven spoke of the matter in America I have shrunk from applying such relationships to divine Persons as in absolute Diety (i.e. before incarnation).... I said little or nothing as to this important matter for many years, but the more I weighed it the more assured I was of the truth F.E.R. advanced. It can be seen as to the "Word" in his Readings on John, and as to the Son in his printed Letters.
Ibid., p.343, Cp. pp.266,321,261.

5

THE ETERNAL SONSHIP

We have just seen that by , or during, 1890 F.E.R. had denied that "the Word" is a name of the Son of God that applies to His Person from eternity. Some years later he also denied that "the Son of God" is a name of the Son that applies to Himself from eternity. He reached this full denial in two steps. However, on Dec. 29, 1894, F.E.R. wrote:

...I should say that if a man intended to deny the Eternal Sonship of Christ I certainly should not care to remain in fellowship with him....

Letters of F.E. Raven, p.101, Stow Hill, 1963.

Here is the first step he took in the denial.

Now, "Son of God" I understand to be the title of Christ incarnate; I should hardly use "Son of God" as referring to His eternal Person, for which "the Son" is usually employed....

Ministry by F.E. Raven, New Series, vol.1, p.52, 1970 ed. (stated in 1895).

This evil concerning the Son and the Son of God is also found in the Ravenite Truth For the Times, part 9, pp. 209, 211 (June 1896), by an F.H.B.

W. Kelly denounced the notion in F.E.R. Heterodox, p.36.

The above distinction between Son and Son of God was an intermediate step. An extract of a letter was inserted in Letters of F.E. Raven, p.146,147 Stow Hill, 1963, from "Mr. Broomhead, of Greenwich, who accompanied Mr. Raven on his 1898 visit to the U.S.A."

In the latter part of the meeting there was a very interesting digression as to the way in which divine Persons have been revealed. F.E.R. thought that 'the Son' is used in a special reference to

the Father and the name 'Son of God' in reference to man, but that none of these titles are applied to Him in Scripture until incarnation, and therefore we are not authorised to carry these titles back into eternity. The reading was exceedingly free and greatly enjoyed.

The point about "titles" was apparently revised out of the reading (a copy of which I have); revised by F.E.R.

Next we have this:

...As to what you refer to, my point was that it was permitted to us to know divine Persons AS and WHEN revealed and only so. In view of that revelation the Son has taken a new place relatively, that is, of inferiority to the Father, coming to do the will of God, though of course there would be no change morally or in affection. The names under which we know divine Persons, that is, Father, Son and Holy Spirit are, I judge, connected with this position, and I doubt if we are allowed to enter into the eternal relation of divine Persons apart from this revelation. No one knows the Son but the Father. What I think led me to it was fear lest in our minds we should almost insensibly give to the Son a place of inferiority (save as regards revelation) in our thoughts of the Godhead, which could not be right. The point is to be within the limits of scripture and not trading on what is merely orthodox.

Ibid., pp. 147, 148 (Nov. 23, 1898). Cited also in N. Noel, History..., vol.2, p.616.

F.E.R.'s blasphemy was put forth under the 'pious' guise of "Fear lest in our minds we should almost insensibly give to the Son a place of inferiority," since in his perverted thoughts Sonship means inferiority. Thus leaven is 'piously' put forth as honoring the Son.

Mr. J.Taylor, Sr. was taught by his spiritual mentor, the heresiarch, F.E.R. From him he learned to deny the eternal Sonship. The History of the Brethren, vol.2, pp. 605, 606, cites a reading at Barnet, 1929, in which J. Taylor, Sr. denied the eternal Sonship; and then on p. 607 cites the

following:

Concerning the subject of the above extracts, Mr. James Taylor said afterwards: "It is a most weighty subject and I have no doubt the spiritual intelligence of the (Barnet, 1929) meeting warranted attention being called to it. What I expressed has been on my mind for at least twenty-five years; it came to me through Mr. Raven, when he was in America in 1902. It came out in a Reading, but it was not included in the printed notes." (It was omitted through the influence of Mr. T.H. Reynolds, who was screening Mr. Raven, as a numbers of others had done before him).

The attentive reader will note references to revising what F.E.R. said, in view of printing. Thus does leaven work subtly. The statements by J.T. are also found in Letters of James Taylor, vol.1, p.263, Stow Hill, 1956. See also pp. 260, 342, 390, 394; vol.2, p.181.

Mentioning the Athanasian creed and blasphemy together, J.T., Sr. denounced the truth of the eternal Sonship and the union of God and man in one person. (Ibid., p.325). Mr. Darby said "Athanasius was the great and able champion of the truth." Collected Writings, vol.22, p.125. (Morrish ed.).

J.T.,Sr. said of his spiritual mentor, F.E.R., regarding the eternal Sonship, "...in his later ministry he refused it" (Letters of James Taylor, vol.1, p.392). "Besides myself, there are many witnesses to his refusal of it, say from 1898 to the end of his service (ibid., p.394). So vol.2, p.14. J.T.,Sr. really held it from 1898 on. See quotation above and ibid., vol.1, pp.260.

Now, notice how some evil teachers operate. J.T.,Sr. wrote:

"As to myself, the excerpts furnished in page 5 of the Ayr pamphlet to show that I held earlier as to the sonship the opposite of what I hold now fails of the object intended. In using the designation "Son" in the older ones I simply meant to convey the Person.... It is over thirty years since the

scriptural untenableness of the term "eternal Sonship" became fixed in my mind.... Ibid., p.394 (March 25, 1933).

It is commonly (but erroneously) believed he first taught the temporal Sonship about 1928. On Dec. 20, 1920, he wrote, "...the title 'only begotten Son.' 'Begotten' implies his manhood, I apprehend. Note - it is 'is in the bosom of the Father,' not 'was.'" Ibid., p.187; See also p.190.

We quite agree with C.H.M. that the denial of the eternal Sonship is fundamental evil. (This applies to the denial of the eternal Word, too).

If a man denies Christ we cannot own him; nay, to salute him or wish him God speed, would make us partakers of his evil deeds. What is the difference between a teacher of fundamental error and one who knowingly received him or wished him God speed? ...A scandalous liver is justly rejected; but a man may deny the diety, or the eternal Sonship of Christ, and be received and honoured...fundamental truth...

C.H. MacIntosh, Things New and Old, vol.19, p.83 (1876). See also vol.18. p.83; vol.25, p.110.

J.N. Darby believed this:

Note though what is called 'The eternal Sonship' be a vital truth, or we lose the Father sending the Son, and the Son creating, and we have no Father if we have no Son, so that it lies at the basis of all truth, yet in the historical presentation of Christianity the Son is always presented as down here in servant and manhood estate, as all through John, though in heaven and One with the Father. 'This' — this Person — 'is my beloved Son' — He who was as Man here, yet there. In Matthew 3 the whole Trinity is revealed, and we may say for the first time fully. Wonderful grace it is! Hence 'No! not the Son,' has no difficulty. (Mark 13:32).

"The Son of Man," in Notes and Comments, vol.II, p. 423, (James Carter; London, 1922); p. 300, Stow Hill ed.

The reader will find help on the subject of eternal Sonship of Christ and on the Word, in:

Selected Ministry of A.H. Rule, vol.2, pp. 38-41.

The Son of His Love, by W.J. Hocking.

The Crowned Christ, by F.W. Grant

The Son of God, by J.G. Bellet.

"I Hold It Vital To Hold The Sonship Before The Worlds", by J.N. Darby (available from Present Truth Publishers).

W.R. Dronsfield, a Glanton negotiator in the 1974 reunion, who will be frequently cited in this paper as an example of a palliator of evil, wrote a paper, The "Brethren" Since 1870. We shall see many reasons not to credit him with a spiritual judgment. Regarding doctrinal evil concerning the eternal Sonship, he wrote.

In 1929 Mr. James Taylor brought out his most serious doctrinal error in a reading at Barnet, Herts, when he denied that the Lord's Sonship was eternal....

...this fundamental error produced little opposition from within....

The "Brethren" Since 1870, p.21.

Appendix 3 will also show, as the above shows, that Glantons were in fellowship with "this fundamental evil" from 1898 to 1908. And, what does he mean by saying that was "the most serious doctrinal error"? We shall consider several more fundamentally evil doctrines of F.E.R.

6

THE SON IS THAT ETERNAL LIFE

A scriptural teaching is that the Son is Eternal Life in His own Person. 1 John 1:2 reads, "...the eternal life, which was with the Father...." J.N.D.'s translation has a footnote to the word "which". It reads: "Hostis: as Matt. 7:24. The character, not merely the statement of the fact, 'which was such a one as that.'" It is clear that he understood that the Son is eternal life, called here the Word of life, for He is the revealer and manifestation of eternal life. I cite the following that further shows J.N.D.'s view.

Now, inasmuch as that life was the Son....

J.N. Darby, Synopsis on 1 John, p.319, Stow Hill ed. See also Collected Writings, vol. 1, p. 109; vol. 3, p. 388; vol. 4, p. 78 ("The life of God").

That "was with the Father and was manifested unto us." It is Christ the Son. And as to us, it is something in us which springs up as a well of water.

Letters of J.N. Darby, vol.3, p.16, Stow Hill ed.

...Christ is eternal life come down from heaven.

Collected Writings, vol.33, p.315, Morrish ed.

See also W. Kelly's Exposition of the Epistles of John, on 1 John 1:2.

F.E. Raven denied this as did some of his supporters. The following question was answered in The Bible Treasury, New Series, vol.5, p.112 (Sept. 1904) and addresses itself to this leaven that was at work.

Q. 1 John v.20. The article before "eternal life" in this verse is said not to have authority sufficient to retain it in the Greek. What difference does the presence or absence of the article make for this passage? In the controversy during recent years on "Life eternal" I have seen

it stated, that the absence of the article here renders this passage to mean that "life eternal" is "characteristic" of Christ, not that He is personally "the life eternal."

INQUIRER.

A. In 1 John 5:20 the oldest and best authority excludes the article before "life eternal." But it is only a novice in zeal for his notion that could thence infer that the phrase is characteristic and not objective. For the article before "the true God" is passed on by the connective particle to "life eternal" also according to a well-known principle of its usage. "The true God and life eternal" are thus bound up with our Lord Jesus Christ in the striking way peculiar to this Epistle, which combines God with Him, or as here with life eternal. The case therefore is not only an oversight, but a cogent proof against those who would separate them. Had the article been repeated before "life," it would have made them distinct objects, the very thing which the apostle avoided. The opening chapter 1. (ver. 2) is most emphatic in predicating objective reality of "the life eternal," both with the Father before He became flesh, and when He was thus manifested. "A little knowledge is a dangerous thing," especially for such as hastily seize a superficial appearance in questions so grave and momentous, where truth and safety are found only in entire subjection to the written word.

The remainder of this chapter will give the reader an idea of how the error on eternal life attacked the Person of Christ.

I turn now to some of those fearful expressions, from which I believe every child of God (unless under the blinding power of the enemy) must instinctively shrink. "Think of a helpless babe being the exhibition of eternal life". . . When I read the account of the five hundred brothers in Park Street (with reference to this) I hardly knew how to restrain my indignation. He condescends to withdraw one word because 'it appeared to be irreverent,' and they express—thankfulness! When

he said he would rather go out of fellowship than withdraw the remainder of the sentence—why did they not rise as one man, and refuse to be connected with such blasphemy, connected too, as it had been, with such deceit and falsehood? . . . Can you be aware of the statements recently made (which a Thomasonian or Unitarian would readily accept) 'Did God die?' 'When His humanity was in the grave, where was His divinity?' 'I don't for a moment suppose that the Lord Jesus rose from the dead with the same body that went in?' I make no comment on these dreadful expressions, and more might be named. It is nearly 60 years since I was first acquainted with brethren, and more than 50 years since I first broke bread with them, but I have never known such widespread profaneness and blasphemy among them, as has been brought to light recently. (J.C.B., Brantford, Ont. Feb.2nd, 1891.) Cited in B.M., Brief History of Ravenism, p. 3: and N. Noel, The History of the Brethren, Vol. 2, pp.541,542. Cp. p. 537.

On October 4, 1890, F.E.R. merely withdrew the word "helpless". The citation shows that F.E.R. denied that the Son was Eternal Life in His eternal Person. This denial is fundamental evil. A.C. Ord in his The Manifestation of the Divine Nature in the Person of Christ, refers to correspondence between W. Barker and F.E. Raven during March 1890 about this expression. See N. Noel, The History of the Brethren, vol. 2, p. 511. On December 24, 1889, F.E.R. wrote to C. Stanley objecting to the doctrine that the Son is eternal life in his eternal Person.

Eternal life is said to be the eternal Person of the ever blessed Son of God....

...I do not accept your method of reasoning as to eternal life and Christ....;

Letters of F.E.Raven, Stow Hill, 1963, pp. 12,13

N. Noel said,

On January 15, 1889, the readings of the London brothers were resumed, the subject being John's Gospel; Messrs. J.B. Stoney and F.E. Raven taking a prominent part. Teaching of an alarming character

as to the Person of the Lord, was resisted by several; but their remonstrances were unheeded, so that some brothers, if not several, went no more to those readings.

History..., vol.2, p.506.

W.J. Lowe wrote,

Is it not significant that never once, all through this paper, in spite of remonstrance extending over eighteen months, is Christ admitted to be "that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us," according to the simple statement of Scripture? He could not be it, if a theory is to be maintained which explains it as "the blessedness in which, as Man, He was with the Father."

"Life and Its Manifestation," second edition, Jan. 15, 1890.

A.C. Ord cited the following from F.E.R.

To W. Barker.

How you can say that my interpretation of 1 John 1:2 sweeps away Christ as being Himself the Eternal Life I am at a loss to understand. I admit Eternal life to be a state, as it has been said, a condition of being and relationship, and this was at least in essence in the Son in eternity. (February 10, 1890.)

The Glory of the Person of the Son of God...., p. 80.

It is clear from these statements that F.E.R. denied that the Son is in His eternal Person that Eternal Life. Thus the Son could not be that Eternal Life with the Father before the world was.

In a letter to Mr. B. dated March 6th, 1890.

But Scripture does not speak of Christ having been the Eternal Life which was with the Father before the world was.

Ibid, p.76.

His persistent denial that Eternal Life is commensurate

with the Person of the Son preceded the June 29, 1890 action of Bexhill. Shortly after this action we hear more of the same from F.E.R.

It is as the risen and glorified Man He is said to be "the true God and eternal life."

"Eternal Life," July 3, 1890, cited by N. Noel, History of the Brethren, vol. 2, p. 528.

That, of course, connects eternal life in one way with heaven. In a letter dated June, 1902, he coolly said,

There is another point as to which objection has been raised, namely, the application of the thought of eternal life to earth. I certainly am unable to find any Scripture that connects it with heaven. It may be said that Christ is it, but this is in its application towards earth, and the principles of which I have spoken as making up eternal life properly apply to earth, such as rule, or kingdom, the bearing of which is towards earth. If Scripture anywhere speaks of eternal life in connection with heaven, I shall certainly receive it....

Cited by A.J. Gardiner (a Raven-Taylorite), The Recovery and Maintenance of the Truth, p. 135.

Such is the shifty man whom brethren had to face, who spoke in what is commonly called today "weasel words".

To return to our tracing of a few of his many available statements:

To J.D., July 18, 1890.

I should have no hesitation in saying, 'I believe that the Eternal Son was Himself that eternal life which was with the Father before ever He became a man,' - with one proviso. And that is, that the proper glory of the Person of the Eternal Son be reserved. 'In Him all the fulness was pleased to dwell,' and that is more than eternal life, in which we have part.

"Two Letters," Perth, Nov, 1890, p. 6.

Look at the blasphemy of that statement. He will allow

that the Son was that eternal life with the Father in eternity as long as you don't mean that the Son was eternal life in his own Person. Note, too, his shiftiness. Compare that with his July 3, 1890 letter, above. Fifteen days separate these letters. It appears it doesn't matter so much what "the eternal life" is so long as the Son is not the Eternal Life in His own Person, essentially and eternally.

To Mr. Ed'ds...(Edwards), July 24, 1890.

I strongly object to the talk about the Personality of Eternal Life, because (as the reference is to Christ) it makes Eternal Life commensurate with the Person of the Eternal Son, and this I believe to be very wrong.

A.C.Ord, The Glory of the Person of the Son of God

I do not accept the assertion of some that eternal life is an essential title of the Son of God. I am sure it cannot be maintained. I believe it to be a term indicating a condition.... (Letter of August 25th, 1890, published by Mr. Boyt, p. 4).

Ibid., pp, 3,76. Found also in Letters of F.E.Raven, p. 22.

I should not quite like to say that Eternal Life is the life of God. (Letter, Oct. 17, 1890, to J.W., Dublin).

Ibid., p. 80.

...while Eternal Life would cover all that Christ is morally, it does not include attributes which are properly divine and which belong to the eternal Son. (Oct. 30, 1890).

Ibid., p. 81.

(Later he denied the eternal Sonship, as we noted elsewhere).

(To F.L.).

His (Mr. A.H.Rule's) object is to identify eternal life with the life of the eternal Son as a divine Person (in Him was life). . . The statements as to the Son in the gospel are not all to be merged and lost in the truth of eternal life. Mr. R— in his

zeal for eternal life seems to me to be fast letting go the true diety of Christ. He says the eternal Son 'Ever was, is, and ever will be in His own glorious Person and eternal being the eternal life.' The phrase is high—sounding, but where does he find it in Scripture? (Greenwich, January 29, 1891).

Ibid., p. 82. Found also in Letters of F.E.Raven, p. 49.

Mr. R. now says, "I would not apply to the eternal Son, as descriptive of His existence as a divine Person, a term connected in scripture with blessing for man and consequently with Christ viewed mediatorially as man." (Letter of September, 1891.)

Ibid., p. 4.

C.A. Coates liked this mode of expression very much (i.e. "mediatorially"). See Appendix 3.

A.C. Ord, who most ably withstood F.E.R., stated this:

We must however add that the expression, the "personality of Eternal Life," is not strictly accurate, for personality is an abstraction, and Eternal Life is in many instances in scripture used as a general term, and is applicable to spiritual life in earthly saints and their portion (Matt 25:46; Isaiah 4:3), as well as in its fuller and higher sense, to heavenly saints. But to make use of this to deny its application to Christ personally, is the enemy's artifice to cloud the Person and to deceive souls. It is when Christ is spoken of distinctly as "the Life," or "that Eternal Life," or in other similar ways, that the term is especially applied to Him, or used to express what He is personally.

Ibid., p.54

The denial that the Son is that Eternal Life is found in Voice to the Faithful, edited by J.B. Stoney (who supported F.E.R.), Jan. 1891, article, "Remarks on John's Writings," pp.14 and 15. It is claimed that those who say that the Son is Eternal Life in His Person, in effect are teaching

that if we receive eternal life, deity is communicated to us:

These are elementary truths, I admit, but it seems necessary that saints should be reminded of them, as there is a tendency on the part of some at present to connect believers directly with Deity, by affirming that "Deity and Life are inseparable," and other similar statements, and this mainly on the ground of 1 John 5:20. I do not doubt it is a subtle effect of the enemy to obscure the glory of the ever blessed Son of God, by limiting Him to that in which we can be united to Him, for we could not have association with Him in His divine character and glory. Such a thought is abhorrent to every right-minded Christian, and would not be entertained by any for a moment but for the blinding influence of Satan. Yet this is the fair inference from many papers that are now being spread abroad. It is no use covering it by saying "we do not state or imply that in communicating life to us He communicates Deity," and similar remarks; or retiring behind the oft-repeated phrase, "No man knoweth the Son but the Father;" the natural result of the teaching is what I have stated above.

It is clear, then, that this article denies that the Son is Eternal Life in His Person. The "blinding influence of Satan" lay quite elsewhere than the author thought. J.B. Stoney allowed this blasphemy to be printed in his magazine. Such an article shows its source and how the leaven was working.

A.C. Ord wrote,

If this limit is rightly assigned to one of our blessings in Christ, it is applicable to all; for the principle is stated by Mr. Anstey in a general and absolute way, "We may distinguish between Eternal Life and true Godhead in the person of the Son of God; and we must separate them when we think and speak of what has been communicated to us." "If Eternal Life cannot be separated from the Godhead of the Son, then we have it not." The fact is, Mr. R. and all who accept his doctrine,

including Mr. A. and his co-signatories, have shut themselves up to this conclusion. They admit, and it is impossible to deny, that Scripture speaks of Eternal Life as existing before incarnation. It must be, they say, something distinct from His Godhead, because it is communicated to us. So they affirm there was something in Him before He took flesh that was not Godhead at all, and has to be separated or distinguished from it, and which had also to be distinguished afterwards in His life. This is where their theory had landed them--the result of denying that "the Eternal Life" is a proper and essential attribute of the Person of the Son....

Mr. Anstey has placed, not his opponents, but himself and his friends, who "have full fellowship" in his statements, "upon the horns of the dilemma," as he expresses it. "If Eternal Life cannot be separated from the Godhead of the Son, then we have it not." Will he tell us when and how this Eternal Life which is not Godhead was created, and how that which is not Godhead came to exist in Godhead? His attempt to separate it from Godhead renders it an unscriptural and delusive fable. And when he declares if it cannot be separated from Godhead he "has it not," we trust that many eyes will be opened to the consequences of his doctrines.

The Glory of the Person of the Son of God..., pp. 43,44.

J. Dunlop remarked, regarding F.E.R.,

I know his argument is, because eternal life is communicable and Deity is not. But he might just as well argue that we cannot be born of the Spirit, i.e., have spiritual life communicated by the Spirit, because the Spirit is God!!

The Spirit is a Divine Person as well as the Son. Yet he can and does communicate "Spirit", not "the Spirit," not "Godhead," to those born of Him, though He is God; John 3:6.

"Two Letters", November, 1890. See also Selected Ministry of A.H. Rule, vol. 2, article on Ravenism.

In a 406 page book, Readings and Addresses in the U.S.A. with F.E.R. 1898, published by G. Morrish, we read,

He "is the true God and eternal life." It refers to what is now (p.48).

It is that eternal life which had that character, was with the Father...(p.55).

F.E.R....To talk of people having eternal life before the Son came is not right.

J.T. Some have thought that it was the life of Divine Persons as such.

F.E.R. The life of Divine persons is themselves (p.108).

I must pause to remark that O.T. saints had life and essentially that life is eternal life. There is no other life communicated, though life for the believer now has associations it did not have in O.T. times. Thus it is characterized now as "life in the Son" and "life in Christ", statements which do not apply to O.T. saints. And, can you picture that company swallowing that answer regarding the denial that eternal life is the life of divine Persons? Surely leaven works its way, as well as characterizing the lump. Let us continue:

H.F. Then you don't understand that "was with the Father" related to something that was past?

F.E.R. No, it is a moral statement, not a question of time...(p.365).

The first published letter with J.Taylor, Sr's name on it is dated Dec. 1890. It is signed by seven others also, rejecting Bexhill. I quote the first of three points they oppose.

1st. Confounding Eternal Life with Deity.
Letters of James Taylor, vol.1, p.5 (N.Y., Dec. 1890).

The Leaven spread to New York, J.T., Sr's home assembly, very quickly, i.e. in 1890. This Leaven is the moral origin of his "ministry".

There are persons who need to support their ecclesiastical position by saying Bexhill acted hastily and F.E.R. was misunderstood.

I add some wholesome teaching here concerning the manifestation of eternal life in the Son of God. A.C. Ord wrote,

Now we have to face the fact that these determined and persistent attempts to discover something new and distinguishing have found their natural issue in dividing the Person of Christ; so much so that at last we have two lives, not merely the life of the body which could be surrendered on the Cross, nor the varied display of life which every Christian believes, but the upper and lower, different relationships in different spheres, distinct and independent of each other...."Great is the mystery of godliness. God was manifest in flesh." All that is essentially and properly divine, and all that is truly and perfectly human, were found combined in the unity of His Person apart from the taint of sin and its inevitable consequences, corruption and subjection to death. And though we cannot tell how, yet scripture shows us that He was always at the same moment, and at times evidently in the same acts, dependent Man as well as manifest God (Mark 4:41; 8:6,7; 7:35,37; John 9:41,41), the Infant of days as well as the Ancient of days....Again, we say, it was a question of what faith always saw in that wondrous Babe....Even in speaking of the divinity and humanity of Christ, we have to be most guarded, for "God and Man are one Christ." Hence some have unwittingly erred in saying that this was divinity, and that was humanity, this was eternal life, and that was not eternal life; for, though we may speak of one nature predominating, or being more expressed than the other, in certain acts, the moment we speak of them separately, we divide them, and the Person is virtually falsified or lost. In

Him the divine and human are never abstract, but always in their mutual relation to each other as combined. Scripture never speaks of Him but in the unity of His Person....It is because of what He is in the unity of His Person, that all His sufferings, and all His love to us in them, have their value to the heart....His words therefore, and all that He did were the expression of this perfect unity, and were spoken in the infinite communion which flowed from it....Hence to say "Eternal Life never wept," is to partition His Person—revolting to a Christian heart, and destructive of all that affection and adoration which the tender, loving manifestation of divine sympathy, in its human form, awakens....Yet we are told, "eternal life never ate and drank," or "commended His mother to the care of His beloved disciple," and thus the beauty of this touching act is lost and it is reduced to a mere human level, by these unhallowed reasonings....

Where is there any warrant in scripture for the distinction between life, and the expression of life? Only conceive a teacher in the Church of God, asking if the Babe in the manger was an expression of eternal life! Was it an expression of eternal life, to be hungry, weary, and thirsty? to eat, drink, and sleep on a pillow? We reply with reverence and adoring worship, He who was the eternal life, the eternal Son, the Creator of the universe, God over all blessed forever, was the babe in the manger, was hungry, thirsty, weary, sat on the well, slept on a pillow, because He was "God manifest in the flesh." Well might the inspired apostle exclaim: "Great is the mystery of godliness." Far too great indeed to be made the subject of irreverent discussion. What authority has any one to assert that some things were the expression of eternal life, and some not? If there ever was a moment, ever a scene, ever a circumstance, in the life of our adorable Lord and Savior, in which He was not the expression of eternal life, then what was He? What becomes of His divine Person? This blessed and glorious truth is, that in His every thought, His every look, His every word, His every movement, He was the Eternal

Life and the expression of it. He expressed what He was, and He was what He expressed....

Cited in N. Noel, History..., vol.2, pp.512,513.

In his paper The Brethren Since 1870, the Glantonite, W.R.Dronsfield, stated that one of F.E.R.'s opposers leaned to Eutychianism. In answer to an enquiry of mine he wrote to me that he meant the above writer, A.C.Ord. Eutychianism is named after Eutyches who confounded the two natures of Christ. The reader will judge who 'leans' which way. For myself, I regard the writings of A.C.Ord as among the most Christ-exalting that there are; and F.E.R.'s writings as among the most blasphemous and defiling that any professed Christian has written.

7

GOD AND MAN ONE PERSON

We are thankful for the following clear expressions of truth:

Christ's humanity was united to Godhead, which no one else's humanity ever was.

Collected Writings of J.N. Darby, vol.15, p.229, Morrish ed.

...The Son's taking humanity into union with His Deity

W. Kelly, The Bible Treasury, vol.18, p.75.

...took manhood into divine Glory.

J.N. Darby, Notes and Comments on Scripture, vol.2, p.399, Carter ed.

F.E.R.'s outrage against our Lord's Person also included the denial of the union of God and man in one Person; that is, F.E.R.'s doctrine was that the divine Son was the spirit of Christ's body. It was a denial that Christ had a human soul and a human spirit. W. Kelly was one of those that called F.E.R.'s doctrine "Apollinarian". A recent Glanton palliator said W.K.'s condemnation was hasty. There is no telling what folly a palliator of evil will utter. "It is abomination to the foolish to depart from evil" (Prov. 13:19).

F.E. Raven wrote on July 3, 1890,

I absolutely accept the teachings of our deceased brother, Mr. Darby.

Cited in, "An Answer to What is Ravenism", p.30.

To me, the statement shows the blinding of his mind by Satan.

The Raven-Taylorite, A.J. Gardiner, had no difficulty with the fact that concurrently with the issue of eternal life concerning the believer, "new light" was allegedly given concerning the manhood of Christ. He said,

Concurrently with the conflict as to eternal life, considerable controversy took place on the subject of the Person of Christ and His true manhood. The following five letters, written at that time by Mr. J.B. Stoney, and a paper written by Mr. F.E. Raven, shew that great spiritual gain resulted as the truth was brought out in greater clarity than it had previously had in the minds of many.

The Recovery and Maintenance of the Truth, p.139.

"Greater clarity" is false. It was new, was not of God, but of the Enemy of Christ.

The fact is that Mr. Raven refused to believe that manhood [human body, human soul, and human spirit] was united to Deity. His statements show this; and when asked directly he either flatly refused to answer; or said it was unreasonable to answer such a question directly.

A.C. Ord wrote,

But perhaps it may be doubted by some whether Mr. R. really holds such sentiments or means what his words appear to convey. Alas! there can be no question on this head: for the system of doctrine elaborated by Mr. Raven is painfully complete in its character, and is carried out in all points in which it could be applied to the Person, the Work, the Titles of Christ as well as the relations in which He stands to us, or before God on our behalf. Moreover, this is not only stated and developed, but passages are quoted from his opponents, in which the common faith of Christians is expressed, in order to condemn and repudiate them. Quoting Mr. Hunt, he says:

"The phraseology in which Mr. Hunt couches His own belief, such as God and Man one Christ, and God becoming the woman's seed, is not the language of Scripture, nor, in my judgement, conveys at all accurately the truth of Scripture." . . . "The fact

is that those who have left us have no sense of the reality of the incarnation of the Son, and are fast travelling in the direction of the profane thought of M. Favez, their leader in France, that the Son of Man is man united to the divinity." (A Correspondence, page 10.)

Yet Mr. Darby says in Collected Writings:

"Christs humanity was united to Godhead, which no one else's humanity ever was." (Vol. 15, p.229.)

It may be thought that because Mr. Raven does not deny either the divinity or the humanity of Christ, his views are less serious on that account. But such is not the case, inasmuch as the separation of the natures involves the dissolution and ultimate loss of His Person, and all the blessed results for faith which flow from it, in all that He had undertaken for us. This will be shown in the sequel.

The Blessedness of the Person of Christ in its Unity as Presented in Scripture, pp. 8,9.

J.N.D. remarked,

...He was a true man, body, and soul, and, one may add, spirit. This was called in question by heresy as soon as His deity was.

Collected Writings, vol.23, p.478, Morrish ed.

Thus, if one denies Christ had a human soul and spirit, J.N.D. would regard that as heresy. The fact is that those who went with F.E.R. (and this includes the Glantonites) formed an heretical party.

W. Kelly wrote,

Apollinarius...made the Logos (the Word) simply form Christ's Person...and was therefore justly branded as an antichrist.

F.E.R. should justly be branded an antichrist. (See 1 John 4:3 here)

True it is that F.E.R. did not say "Christ was not man." I trust to show that none but the willful can plead such a thing in his defense; for in fact his doctrine means that Christ was not true man and that Christ did not have a human spirit and that humanity was not united to Godhead. F.E.R.'s teaching is essentially the same as what is called, historically, Apollinarianism.

First, let us see what Apollinarianism is so that we understand what is meant in charging F.E.R. with it. A creed called the Chalcedonian creed was issued in 451 A.D. by the Council of Chalcedon in response to a number of attacks on the Person of Christ. Apart from the use of the phrase "Mother of God" it is sound.

With the followers of Apollinarius of Laodicea, called Apollinarians, in view, this creed stated:

Perfect in Deity and perfect in Humanity, Truly God
and truly Man,
Of a rational soul and body,
Consubstantial with the Father according to His
Deity,
Consubstantial with us according to his Humanity,
Like us in all respects, apart from sin....

The expression, "Of a rational soul" [those who consider man to be tri-partite, and rightly so, will find the rational faculty in the spirit, 1 Cor. 2:11] was aimed at the Apollinarians. Their doctrine may be summarized as follows:

Apollinaris at first asserted that the Logos united with a human body only. Afterwards he modified this, by asserting that He united with a body and an irrational soul.... Apollinaris, from the account given of him by Gregory of Nyssa (Adv. Apollinarem) seems to have blended and confused the human and divine natures even in the Godhead; for he asserted a human element in the divine essence itself.

W.G.T. Shedd, Dogmatic Theology, Minneapolis: Klock and Klock, vol. 2A, p. 312.

In addition to F.E.R.'s denial that Christ had a Human

spirit, he also had some such doctrine concerning manhood and deity, as Ch.8 and Appendix 2 show.

F.E.R.'s Apollinarian doctrine was enunciated in a paper titled, "The Person of the Christ," printed in June 1889, one year before Bexhill acted in June 1890. In this paper he said,

The second error maintains that the truth of Christ's Person consists in the union in Him of God and man. ...The idea of the unity of the Person in the sense asserted is not found. It is a Person in a condition in which He was not previously.

He is here arguing against the orthodox statement that Christ is God and man united in one Person. The "union in Him of God and man" means that man as human body, human soul, and human spirit was united to the deity. This is the truth F.E.R. here denies. His teaching, the "Person in a condition", means the Deity clothed Itself, as it were, in a human body, and the Deity was the spirit of the body. That body, this means, had no human spirit.

On another occasion he said,

If any one dares to speak of these things abstractly he is charged with dividing the unity of the Person of the Son. By such a notion all is shrouded in mystery, utterly and hopelessly obscured. Where the idea of unity of a person is got from, I know not. It seems to me perfect nonsense.

Cited by A.C. Ord, The Blessedness of the Person of Christ in its Unity, p. 6. Dated Dec. 7, 1893 in Letters of F.E. Raven, Stow Hill, 1963, p.85.

He also said,

Christ "is not a man in the sense that He is God...In Person He is God, in condition He is Man."
"Gal. 4:4. The same Person abides, though the condition be changed, in His coming of a woman."
"Every Scripture which definitely refers to the incarnation speaks of it as the assumption by Christ of a form or condition." "In the

expression, 'Father into Thy hands I commend my spirit' I judge that the Lord takes up an expression suited to the position in which He was. But it is the Person who left the condition, which He had assumed, to take it again..." (Quemerford Notes, pp. 145-6).

Cited in B.M., "A Brief History of Ravenism", p.5.

Look at the wickedness of the last statement. "The Person who left the condition" means the Lord did not dismiss a human spirit. According to F.E.R., what He dismissed as the spirit of the body was the Deity. Later on we shall see that he said that the Deity gave a "spirit of manhood" to the body. Appendix 3 shows that C.A.Coates and J.Taylor, Sr. taught this also.

What was our Lord's soul according to F.E.R.?

He seems unable or unwilling in his mind to distinguish, in regard to the second Man, between the form and habit (Phil. 2:7,8) of manhood—and what gives character morally to the manhood. The first (the form and habit—the real human soul) Christ took of a woman and it was 'perfected' in resurrection, the second (what gives character to the manhood) He brought into it—

Letters of F.E. Raven, p.55, Stow Hill, 1963 (May 25, 1891).

So "the real human soul" is after all, the body. Evil clothes the old words with new meanings. So when he wrote,

Deity and humanity were and are united in the Person of Christ, the union of the two is of course inscrutable...,

Ibid., p.53 (April 10, 1891).

we can see that he had new meaning for the old words. Evil is dishonest.

His idea was that if Christ had a human spirit Christ would have been two Persons instead of being one Person. His mind could not understand the union of the human and divine in one person (which none can understand) and he would not bow his mind before the truth.

Query - Why is He not personally Man?

Mr. Raven—He is personally the Son. You cannot have two personalities in one. He is the Son, but in the condition of a Man.

Truth for the Time, Part 7, May, 1895.

Cited in N. Noel, The History of the Brethren, vol.2, p.547.

J.N.D. wrote,

I am quite aware of and accept the ordinary orthodox statement of two natures in one person....And this last statement, that Christ had no human personality, no ego, which is really heresy (though God and man were united in one person), and the mere folly of man attempting to fathom the mystery of His person, when He had said, "No man knoweth the Son but the Father,"....

Collected Writings, vol.29, p.322, Morrish ed.

Let us hear W. Kelly's charge against F.E.R.

It is to the unity of the two natures in His Person that he objects, and in very revolting and contemptuous terms, where reverence and self-distrust were preeminently called for. Yet he knew that he was not only opposing but striving to put shame on the confession of every saint who had written on it, as far as is known through all the church of God, to say nothing of every teacher esteemed among Brethren. Here are his words (7 Dec. 1893): — "Where the idea of unity of a person is got from I know not. It seems to me perfect nonsense. The idea of person does not bring in the thought of either parts or unity. A person is that person in every variety of relations he may enter. No one would accuse me of dividing the person of the Queen because I said that in her home life she was seen distinct and apart from what she is as Queen. It is two totally distinct ideas coalesced in one person, but which can be separately presented and apprehended.

(F.E.R. used a similar line about the Queen in his "The Person of the Christ", June 1889—R.A.H.)

Now who does not know that a person among men consists of both parts and unity? There are spirit and soul and body; and yet they constitute the person. There may be temporary dissolution of the outer tie by death; there will surely be their unity in one person for eternity. But for the true believer Christ's Person is distinguished from every other by the infinite fact of God and man united thus. These are in Him for ever indissoluble, though no saint doubts that He is Son of God and Son of man. Whatever His profound emotion in spirit, whatever the conflict when He prayed more earnestly, and His sweat beads became as great drops of blood, that Man was inseparably God; and as from His conception, so fully in His death and resurrection. Thus had His every word, work, thought, and suffering divine value. It is not the Son alone, but "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever." The man Christ Jesus is not only the one Mediator, but the true God and eternal life; the sent Servant and the "I AM"; Christ of the fathers as according to flesh, yet He that is ever all, God blessed for evermore. Amen

Deny the unity of His Person, of the Word become flesh; and all the truth of His life and death dissolves. His atoning work is thus utterly subverted; on which depends not only man's salvation, the reconciling of the creature, and the new heavens and earth, but the moral glory of God in view of sin, His counsels of grace as to Christ and the church, and His triumphant rest in men for all eternity. Think of the Queen or any other human being adduced to solve the great mystery of godliness! What have various relations or differing conditions to do with the divine and the human united in one sole Person, the Christ of God, the knot which man's wicked wit and will dare to judge, and essay to untie to his own destruction? Truly "Fools rush in where angels fear to tread," where saints love to believe, prostrate themselves and adore. To F.E.R. IT SEEMS PERFECT NONSENSE!

Brethren, have you ever heard of a true Christian who did not thus confess Christ? Here is one called a brother, and claiming to teach, who utters his scornful belief of Christ's Person in terms which must have insured his expulsion with horror from all fellowship of saints in former days. Who has a doubt that it would have raised an impassable barrier? Only of the Lord Jesus could such a unity be predicated, for in Him alone were the two natures for ever united. F.E.R. talks of the Queen! and "two totally different ideas coalesced in one person!" Yes, it is not truth, but "ideas" for F.E.R. Is this to "abide in the doctrine of Christ"?

It is to join Apollinarius of Antioch (the son). He too made the Logos simply form Christ's Person, as F.E.R. does, and was therefore justly branded as an antichrist; so Nestorius was for dividing the Person, and Eutyches for confusing it: all of them, strict Trinitarians. For if the Logos had not been united to the soul as to spirit and body in the Christ, Christ was not and is not very Man as well as very God. Without that union there must have been two distinct personalities, the divine and the human. It is the union of both in one Person which alone secures the truth according to scripture. F.E.R. with shameless self-confidence vaunts his idea, which is plain heterodoxy. He does not "bring the doctrine" of Christ. The Son did not change His Person, but took up manhood into unity, and this in soul as in body.

In some such way deadly false doctrine befalls such a venture to pry into what is only known to the Father and immeasurably above man's ken. The Apollinarian heterodoxy prevails largely at present; as the error which led to it is a relic of heathen philosophy, accepted by early Fathers such as Clement of Alexandria, and exceedingly common among "thinkers" now as at all times. It pervades Franz Delitzsch's Psychology and its English analogue, The Tripartite Nature of Man. They (and F.E.R. follows them) make the self-conscious "I" or individuality to reside in man's spirit. But scripture abundantly proves its seat to be in the soul. The spirit is inner capacity as to which man

is responsible to God; but the soul is that in which he is so; and the body is the outer vessel which displays the result, whether by grace for God's will or by self-will in Satan's service. To the soul belongs the working of the will, and now also since the fall the instinctive knowledge of good and evil; so that one is enticed into fleshly lusts which degrade man, as well as into reasonings of the spirit and every high thing that lifts itself up against the knowledge of God. Hence we read of soul-salvation or "salvation of souls" as in 1 Pet. 1:9. Hence Ezek. 18:4, "Behold, all souls are Mine," and the regular use of "soul" for persons in both O. & N. Testaments. For the self-conscious individual, the responsible person, is in the "I." It is the "I" in self-will without God; the "I" when converted to God, but in bondage of spirit; and the "I" when Christ's deliverance is known in peace and liberty; as for the latter we see in Rom. 7,8. Read also Gal. 2:20.

The error falsifies the truth in human things and yet more in divine. F.E.R. has fallen into Satan's trap in the most solemn of truths through morbid self-confidence, and the mania of correcting every body by the standard of his fanciful ideas. He has imagined for the Christ a being, Who, if God, is certainly not complete man. For in his theory the soul does not enter Christ's personality which is exclusively the Logos. Thus he bans the unity of the two natures which every saint hitherto confesses to be in Christ's Person. He was already wrong as to man's person; for like most philosophers he follows the error of the heathen, and ignores the teaching of scripture which points to "the soul" by many plain and irrefragable proofs. But the awful weight of the falsehood lies in his audacious rising up against faith's mystery of Him Who was manifested in flesh (the body prepared for God's Son), not taken up as a mere condition but united with Himself indivisibly to all eternity for God's counsels, work, and ways. If we can rightly say condition, it is that of humanity sustained by Deity in the Person of the Christ.

Beyond doubt the union of God and man in one Person is the wondrous and unfathomable One revealed, not for our comprehension, but for unquestioning faith, love, and honour as we honour the Father. He is thus at once the weary man and the only-begotten Son that is (not "was" merely) in the Father's bosom; the Son of man here below that is in heaven, and the "I am" on earth threatened by the Jews with stoning because He told them the truth. He must have been the Logos to have been what He was here as man. His soul was united to the Logos: else the Person had been doubled or severed, and He could not be true and complete man. He cried, Let this cup pass from me; nevertheless not as I will, but as Thou wilt. There was His holy will; and it was right to lay it before the Father, but in entire submissiveness to His will and glory; of which none but a divine Person was capable. It was not therefore the Logos superseding the spirit (still less the soul), but perfectly associated with the soul in His one Person. He was true man and true God in the same indivisible Person. In Him dwelt and dwells the fulness of the Godhead bodily.
F.E.R. Heterodox, pp.121-127. The Bible Treasury, New Series, vol.4, p.78-79.

Thus F.E.R. would not confess the union of God and man in one Person, which all fundamentally sound Christians confess.

I believe the old notion of the union of God and man to be wrong. I do not think it was meant wrongly, but, in the light of what has come out now, it was incorrect.
 ("American Notes", 1902, p.314.) Cited in, B.M., "A Brief History of Ravenism," p.5.

His doctrine, he here states, is light that has come out now. W. Kelly called F.E.R.'s doctrines the "light of death". Indeed, it was the old Apollinarian darkness.

Didn't anyone ask F.E.R. point-blank if Christ had a human spirit? Of course they did. Do we think those who rejected F.E.R.'s doctrines were senseless?

Mr. Grant has asked, "Will F.E. Raven satisfy us as to whether he believes that our Lord had, in the humanity He assumed, a true human spirit and soul? Mr. Raven's only answer was, 'I decline controversy with Mr. Grant'".....

B.C. Greenman, "An Appeal to our Brethren in Fellowship with Mr. F.E. Raven," p.3.

Dorchester, England

12 June 1895

Dear Mr. Raven:

For the sake of the truth and of the Lord's people will you kindly assure me "yes" or "nay" to the following?

Did Christ become as really man in nature and being as He is God in nature and being? I do not ask for a letter, but only a simple reply ("yes" or "no") to the query.

Apologizing for troubling you and assuring you that only the momentous issues involved would lead me so to do,

Yours faithfully, (Signed), Wm. G. Hewlett.

Dear Mr. Hewlett:

It appears to me to be quite unreasonable to ask me to give a bold "yes" or "no" to a human statement of doctrine, especially concerning the person of Christ.

I conceive a matter of importance at this moment is the maintenance of the truth of the unchanged and unchangeable Person of "the Son"—though He has become man and subsists as man for ever, yet when all dispensations are over, it is "the Son" who is said to be subject to Him that put all things under Him that God may be all in all.

Yours faithfully, (Signed), F.E. Raven.

The simplest Christian can recognize the evil of Mr. Raven's replies. All Mr. Raven needed to say was 'yes, I believe Christ had a true human soul and human spirit.' For F.E.R. this is "quite unreasonable". No controversy was needed. What was needed was the true common confession

of faith and that is what he was asked for and refused to give. Why? Because F.E.R. refused the truth that CHRIST IS GOD AND MAN UNITED IN ONE PERSON and substituted a formula consonant with his "new light" (the old Apollinarianism) that Christ did not have a human spirit: his view that the Deity was the spirit of the body. His formula was, IN PERSON HE IS GOD, IN CONDITION HE IS MAN. See N. Noel, The History of the Brethren, vol.2, p.500.

Consider his blasphemy concerning the Son's emptying Himself (May 2, 1896):

...the Son emptied Himself—in mind took a place lower than that of God in which He could say, "My Father is greater than I"....
Letters of F.E. Raven, Stow Hill, 1963, p.117.

Since He had, according to F.E.R.'s teaching, no human mind, these words really say that in the divine mind He took a lower place than God. What revolting blasphemies. He continued,

I hardly care for the expression 'He took human nature into union with Himself.' I do not like the term 'union' in this connection. It is hardly the scriptural way of speaking of the incarnation. There it is "become flesh," "took upon him the form of a servant," etc., etc., none of these passages convey the thought of union, but rather identification of a Person with a state or form assumed.
Ibid., p.117.

This is "pious" leaven, very concerned about being scriptural in expression.

F.E.R. offers no proof from Scripture for an impersonal human nature in Christ. The proof he advances is based on an assumed incapacity in the human mind to unite singly apprehended thoughts in one complex one, and, as a consequence, the inability to think of Christ as God and Man, in union, "one Christ."...
He writes:

"The two thoughts (of God and man) are wholly distinct conceptions which cannot be grasped at one and the same time by any finite mind."

"Now these two thoughts, though realized in one person, must be separately and distinctly apprehended—the one presents God, the other man."

While the last statement is true, the former one is not, for if the human mind cannot unite two thoughts, when separately and distinctly apprehended, in one, it can only have at any given time Christ as God, and at another given time Christ as Man, and, if it cannot unite the two in one complex one, it follows of necessity that it must at one time think of Him as a Deist may, and at another as a Unitarian may, for if the two thoughts are realized in one Person they must be united to be realized at one and the same time. Successive thoughts, unless united in one simultaneous one, do not, and cannot give a thought of Christ as He now subsists (since He became man), if He is in any sense God and Man. Christ asleep in the hinder part of the ship on a pillow is a man; Christ rebuking the wind and saying to the sea, "Peace be still," is God (Mark 4.). He is one Christ, God and Man, and the fact is realized in one person by the finite mind. "What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey Him?"

He is truly the God-Man—a term refused by F.E.R. and T.H.R. on his behalf. If F.E.R.'s mind is constituted as he asserts, it would follow that no one would be a Christian, because God is one God but revealed in three Persons—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. And when the finite mind receives in faith the revelation of God, apprehending separately and distinctly the personality of each, it unites the three thoughts in one complex one, under one denominative term "God"; if not, it could not have a true thought of God as He subsists, and is now revealed in Scripture—Father, Son and Holy Ghost, one God. The incapacity of mind, alleged by F.E.R., would result in Tritheism. The term "man" is a complex conception. We think of his constitution, first of

his body, then of his soul; we unite them under one term, "man," otherwise we could not think of him as a complete being as he exists on earth. In fact, what is denied, with a doctrinal object, to the finite mind is a constant exercise of it, viz., uniting single thoughts and conceptions in one complex one. For example, Flock, Church, Congregation, Army, Navy, Parliament, and such like, are complex conceptions made up of single ones united by the mind. A flock is not one sheep, but a number which the finite mind finds no difficulty in uniting under one term. So of the term "church" when used as a congregation, etc. It is an ordinary operation of the human mind, so constant that it is not observed till attention is directed to it.

"An Answer to...What is Ravenism?" pp.13 ff.

F.W.G. in an Open Letter to F.E.R., September 28, 1897, says:

First of all, you distinctly assert that Christ "is not man in the sense that He is God. J.N.D. said many times, He could not change His Person. In Person He is God; in condition He is man" (pp. 145,146).

Now here it seems plain that you will not have the Lord to be personally man. This has been denied for you, but I cannot learn or suppose that you have ever denied it. Your very illustration of how He was not Man in the sense that He was God is that he was personally God, but man in condition.

You had said this also before, and the question had been thereupon put, "Why is He not personally man?" and you reply, "He is personally the Son. You cannot have two personalities in one" (p.132). (See Notes of Lectures, vol.14, pp.126f).

This makes it plain also what you mean by "He could not change His person." We all believe that in the sense in which, no doubt, J.N.D. said it. When the Word became flesh, He was still the Word; the eternal Son in manhood was still the Son. But that is not your meaning evidently: your meaning is that manhood never became part of His Person—is not, therefore, part. His humanity is impersonal.

...But what about spirit and soul, then? Had He not these? and had He not these as man? That is a question I have been putting for some time, and can get no proper—I may say, no answer. Something like it is asked on p.135, and here is what we find.

"We say of man he is a tri-partite creature, body, soul, and spirit. The Lord was ... you do not contend against His manhood?

You answer with a "no" and a "but:"

"No; but you might be near error there. You get on dangerous ground in applying such things to the Lord. He is a divine Person in manhood." (Notes of Lectures, vol.14, p.129.)

True, surely: and therefore we affirm "manhood" of Him. Is there such a thing as manhood, apart from spirit and soul? Manhood without spirit and soul would not be any manhood such as we know from Scripture. . . . How could we find "The Man Christ Jesus" here? But you go on:

"In the thought of Spirit I believe you get the idea of personality. 'Father into Thy hands I commend my spirit.' It was the spirit of a man; but that Man was the Son of God. He committed to the Father that which was immaterial, what referred to the Father, beneath flesh and blood."

"It was the spirit of a man:" those words have, no doubt, comforted very many. They have said, "Mr. Raven means after all much the same with all of us." . . .but where, then, the "danger" in applying soul and spirit to the humanity of the Lord? "But does he not say, 'It is the spirit of a man?'" He does; but he takes care to let us know that "spirit" here is personality; and that for him is divine, not human. And though "it is the spirit of a man," that is very far from saying "a human spirit." For He is only to be called a "man by identifying Him with His body!...

Now, if this is your real view—if you have not simply got overbalanced (as we so easily may in things too high for us)—then I say, with conviction of the solemnity of such an affirmation, the Christ that Christians have known and loved and followed all through the centuries is not the Christ that you present to us. The glorious "Man"

that Scripture presents to us has disappeared. Divine-human personality you must own is not in your mind; and what this means every Christian heart should be able to say.

Cited in 'Our Present Sin,' pp.24,25.

Sad to say, some of the followers of Mr. Grant united with the Glantons who were in fellowship with F.E.R. for 18 years. Glanton is a leavened communion. Then in 1974, the Booth (off-shoot of Grants)—Glanton company united with the Kelly—Lowe, Continental—Grant—Stuart amalgamated group. This, too, is a leavened communion. A little leaven leavens the whole lump; and, association with evil leavens.

The notion that a divine Person was the spirit of the body of our Lord would in effect mean that when He advanced in wisdom (Luke 2:40), the divine Person advanced in wisdom. That is absurd. The notion means, furthermore, that when He delivered up His spirit (John 19:30), he dismissed "Himself" (See Appendix 3). Thus, since in F.E.R.'s scheme the Lord only had a body (no human soul and spirit), when He died, the divine Person was no longer connected with manhood in any way. It follows that in death He was no longer man. Furthermore, the resurrection then amounted to another incarnation, i.e., He came into 'the condition of manhood' once again. These two scriptures alone would be sufficient to show the evil of his views. The truth is that while Christ was dead, the human soul and human spirit were united to the Deity. However, this would not fit the system, as the following quotation shows.

...and vitally affect not alone His Person, but also His atoning death. His living priesthood. Christ as our Manna, and Christ as Head of the Church, which is His body. God's oath to David, the resurrection of Christ, the existence of the Gospel, as well as the doctrine of eternal life. The doctrinal basis of Mr. R.'s doctrine is that Christ, at incarnation, took the first man's condition of humanity—but an impersonal one, which was "not commensurate with the spiritual being" ("Some Letters," pp.7,8,12). Therefore its inadequacy and incompetency to exhibit eternal life, and consequently the necessity that that

condition should be laid aside, and moreover, that from that condition of humanity.

"Christ was wholly separated by death, in order to be eternal life"—"a new man"—and to accomplish reconciliation, it had to be "terminated judicially in the cross, in the Man Christ Jesus" ("The Person," page 2).

What follows this ending of Christ's incarnate impersonal humanity? Mr. R. teaches that a risen and glorified Christ is as to His humanity a new creation, a new man, which he affirms equally of Christ and of us ("Some Letters," page 5; "Eternal Life," by F.E.R. page 7). In His incarnate humanity Christ was the "old" in contrast to the "new" which He now is ("Eternal Life," page 3; "The Person," page 2).

"An Answer to ... What is Ravenism?, p.10.

The reader will comprehend these remarks by observing that the resurrection of Christ really amounts to another incarnation, as I pointed out above. The fundamental evils opened a totally new sphere of doctrine for the instrument of Satan to mystically apprehend, and propound as new light and advanced truth among those who refused to bow to the Bexhill action of June 1890. When was there ever put forth a more evil system? Surely he had, as W. Kelly said, a "mission ... from an opposing and evil spirit...". F.E.R. Heterodox, p.43.

In palliating the evil of F.E.R. regarding the Word becoming flesh, the Glantonite, W.R. Dronsfield, had said it didn't affect the 1903 Little Flock Hymn Book revision (by the Ravenites). N. Noel said,

In 1903, in a purported revision with the object of bringing the "Little Flock Hymn Book" into agreement with Mr. Raven's denial of the unity of the Person of Christ, his followers omitted therefrom hymn 61, containing the verse:

His glory not only God's Son -
In Manhood He had His full part -
And the union of both joined in one
Form the fountain of Love in His heart.

The History of the Brethren, vol.2, p.513.

The denial of the true humanity of the Lord did in this case affect the hymn book and adds further proof, not that it is needed, that F.E.R. was an Apollinarian. The hymn book was changed in deference to his Apollinarian evil.

In 1927, a Glanton, James Boyd, wrote a paper denying that the Lord had a human spirit. Here is W.R. Dronsfield's palliative account.

At this time a "Glanton" brother, named J. Boyd, was staying in Philadelphia. He was a teacher of the Word who was highly respected and greatly beloved in Great Britain for a long life-time of ministry, and he had reached 77 years of age. This brother took up the cudgels against F. Allaban on behalf of Andrew Westwood (whom he knew personally) and wrote a tractate in which he said the Lord had no human spirit but was "Himself the Spirit of His Own Body". When this caused an immediate reaction and was obviously leading to division, J.B. withdrew the tract as he said it had "opened a door for Satan to come in", but he did not withdraw the doctrine....

When J.B. returned to England, correspondence began to flow between American and English leading brethren. The leading Glanton brethren in England were shocked that this beloved and esteemed brother should, in his old age, have fallen into such a serious error as, until then, he had always been sound in the faith and much used as a teacher. A meeting was arranged between J.B. and other leading brethren in F.B.Hole's house at Bath. J.B. made a half-retraction and promised not to speak publicly of the error again. A conference of brethren was called at Weston-super-Mare and J.B.'s doctrine was unanimously repudiated. J.B. was not excommunicated as he did not press the doctrine and many felt he would be persuaded to withdraw it completely. They desired to give time for repentance, especially in view of his past record, but he wavered for two years and appeared to withdraw the doctrine at times and then reaffirm it

when challenged in correspondence from America. This wavering was not typical of the man, and it was probably due to extreme old age. About 1930 J.B. became obviously senile.

The "Brethren" Since 1870, pp.29,30.

Many features of palliation of evil are here.

1. Highly respected and greatly loved brother.
2. Seventy-seven years of age.
3. Withdrew the tract (but did not repudiate the evil).
4. Everyone condemned the doctrine anyway.
5. He did not press the doctrine.
6. Give him time for repentance.
7. Old age accounts for his uncharacteristic wavering.
8. And, of course, senility played its part.

"But I have a few things against thee: that thou hast there those who hold the doctrine of Balaam....So thou also hast those who hold the doctrine of Nicolaitanes...." (Rev. 2:14,15). It is abomination to the foolish to depart from evil (Prov. 13:19).

Apparently Glantons cannot recognize the doctrine in F.E.R. because that would be an admission of an evil association for some 18 years. It would amount to an admission that Bexhill was right and that those who refused Bexhill's action are in division and not gathered (together?) to Christ's name. It would admit that there were those who recognized the true nature of F.E.R.'s system and separated from it. It would be an admission that Glantonites are a leavened lump.

K.P. Frampton, a Glantonite, I believe, in his "Doctrine and Division," p.2, wrote,

But very few, if any, issues of fundamental doctrine have been disputed by brethren during the last hundred years.

And to crown all the Glantonite palliations of evil, W.R. Dronsfield wrote in a letter to C. Hendricks, dated July 22, 1965,

The reason why I myself do not believe Raven was sound is that he wrote in a personal letter which was not published or divulged until after his death the following: "X accuses me of not holding the real humanity of Christ because I will not accept his idea of a complete man 'spirit soul and body' distinct from Deity. He seems to me to have no idea of the Son becoming Man and giving a spirit to manhood, in fact of the incarnation." So it seems that somebody accused him probably privately, and this sentence establishes his guilt to me, but it was not brought to public light until after his death, and therefore cannot be used to condemn his associates.

This letter of F.E.R. is contained in Letters of F.E. Raven, New Series, p.107, 7/1/95. And, the fact is, the letter merely states his teaching which he had already held and taught long before. The doctrine, not the verbal mode of statement, is the issue. In the face of all the evidence presented thus far concerning F.E.R.'s Apollinarianism, we must say that the above conclusion by W.R.D. is either willful blindness or a judicial blindness on F.E.R.'s palliators of evil. This is a real model for palliators of evil to follow. Such are they with whom the Kelly-Lowe, Grant-Stuarts, etc. have united on the basis that all were gathered (together?) to Christ's name during the time of division. Of course, the leaders on both sides of the Glanton-K-LC, G-S negotiations agreed that Bexhill acted hastily and all remained gathered to Christ's name. Some opposed reunion on that basis and withdrew from fellowship with this evil association and iniquity. Some must have adjusted their consciences. At any rate, the fathers of the Glantons were associated with this fundamentally evil doctrine for many years. They will manage to find a way to palliate the evil that will satisfy the 'conscience' of those who put numbers before Christ, and who refuse to own that they are off the ground of gathering.

Already in Jan. 1890, W.J. Lowe wrote,

But does it not look as if the will of the flesh was now thrown into the scale of evil doctrine...?
 "Life and Its Manifestation," second ed., Jan. 15,

1890.

W.J. Lowe also wrote,

There is no dependence to be placed on any statement where false doctrine is held—its working is stamped by the character of Satan, from whom it really proceeds. When the doctrine is exposed, the first effort is always to deny it is held, and the excuse of misrepresentation is eagerly clutched at.

When shown to have been stated and maintained, it is explained away and covered up with statements of truth; then it is gradually adopted, and finally gloried in; and at length this is accompanied with contempt for those who do not hold it ... With spiritual delusion, the person under the power of evil is unconscious of it, and becomes unable to detect the difference between truth and falsehood

....

As to Mr. R. himself, I am not conscious of any feeling but that of deepest sorrow ... But I believe him to be thoroughly deceived; the Lord knows who may have been instrumental in landing him where he now is, and who may be more guilty than he in the sight of God.

Into these things it is not our province to enter. There is One who judges, and will judge. Our duty is to see that hidden evil is duly and faithfully exposed, in order that we may keep clear of it, and in true brokenness and self-judgment, learn the lessons that the Lord would teach us through all this sorrow."

(W.J.L. June 1891.)

Cited by B.M., "A Brief History of Ravenism," p.14.

Note that W.J.Lowe said that "the excuse of misrepresentation is eagerly clutched at." I anticipate that this will be the reaction against this paper by those whose evil association and leavened condition are herein exposed. (They will also likely try to deflect attention from the condemning facts by objecting to what they will construe as "harsh" words).

W.J. Lowe's followers, as the followers of W. Kelly and some of the followers of F.W. Grant, are in fellowship with

the evil association these men had rejected. The amalgamated lump is a leavened lump.

In Appendix 3 we will compare the doctrine of C.A. Coates, J. Taylor, Sr., and F.E. Raven. Here, I want to show the subtlety of leaven. J.T. wrote,

It is a question of a Person said to be God (John 1) and so in the "form" or condition of God, taking another form or condition, becoming flesh. "The Word became flesh". He was really Man—spirit, soul, body.
Letters of James Taylor, vol.1, p.271 (Sept. 20, 1929).

Sounds good. The fact is, he didn't believe the Lord had a human soul and spirit (See Appendix 3). In rejecting the "Creed of St. Athanasius", J.T., Sr., wrote,

...the unity was not" confusion of substance," but of Person. Thus Christ was a union of God and man, a dual Person, not a divine Person become flesh; the latter is the truth Scripture presents. There is no change in the Lord's Person, but in His condition.
 Letters..., vol.1, p.325.

We need to learn from these things that anyone coming from the Raven-Taylor group, or from offspring of the group, including now the KLC-GS,ex-TW,BG group, must be diligently examined by those who are able to properly probe them to see that they are clear of these evils and judge them as evil. I meet persons who for one reason or another leave the Raven-Taylor company and they are indifferent to the true character of the evil with which they were connected.

F.E.R.'s doctrine destroys the incarnation and destroys the atonement. We are left with no Christ and no salvation. There was no Kinsman-Redeemer. Christianity in its foundation is swept away. And yet there are souls not prepared to label this evil as leaven. What then is that state of soul of such? Faithful brethren recognize it as indifference to the glory of Christ. Some persons need to say that Bexhill acted hastily and F.E.R. was misunderstood, in order to support their ecclesiastical position.

THE SECOND MAN

J.N.Darby wrote,

...He took human nature from a fallen mother but without sin, miraculously....
Collected Writings of J.N. Darby, vol.29, p.322, Morrish ed.

...it was...really and fully that of Mary (surely it was)....
Letters of J.N. Darby, vol.1, p.281, Stow Hill ed.

Wm. Kelly remarked,

On the other hand Jesus had no sin. Although perfectly man, every thought, feeling and inward motion was holy in Jesus: not only not a flaw in His ways was ever seen but not a stain in His nature. Whatever men reason or dream, He was as pure humanly as divinely; and this may serve to shew us the all-importance of holding fast what men call orthodoxy as to His person. I shall yield to none in jealousy for it, and loyally maintain that it is of the substance and essence of the faith of God's elect that we should confess the immaculate purity of His humanity, just as much as the reality of His assumption of our nature. Assuredly He did take the proper manhood of His mother, but He never took manhood in the state of His mother, but as the body prepared for Him by the Holy Ghost, who expelled every taint of otherwise transmitted evil.

In His mother that nature was under the taint of sin: she was fallen, as were all others naturally begotten and born in Adam's line. In Him it was not so; and, in order that it should not be so, we learn in God's word that He was not begotten in a merely natural generation, which would have perpetuated the corruption of the nature and have linked Jesus with the fall; but by the power of the

Holy Ghost He and He alone was born of woman without a human father. Consequently, as the Son was necessarily pure, as pure as the Father, in His own proper divine nature, so also in the human nature which He thus received from His mother: both the divine and the human were found for ever afterwards joined in that one and the same person—the Word made flesh.

Lectures Introductory to the Study of The Minor Prophets, pp.214,215 (1874).

In no sense whatsoever did our Lord's humanity come from heaven, nor was His humanity ever essentially in the Son. "The second man out of heaven" refers to what characterized Him; He was a heavenly man.

A.C. Ord remarked about F.E.R.,

He adds that Mr. Rule "does not understand or evades the force of the scripture, 'the Second Man is out of heaven,'" being apparently unaware that all orthodox writers from the earliest ages have used these passages as we have cited them; so that they have been spoken of as "the transference of predicates," that is, that the union of the divine and human in the Person of Christ was so perfect, that what was properly predicated as distinctive or descriptive of one nature, when spoken of either as God, or as Man, could be applied to His Person. Here is where the division of the Person of the Lord (the result of these theories as to eternal life) becomes painfully evident. For in the letter of August 25th, 1890, to Mr. M., given in full in "Some Letters" of F.E.R., we read:

"That which was to characterize man was what had been in the Son eternally with the Father, and was in due time revealed in the Second Man, the One out of heaven. But what characterized the Second Man could not include all that was true of a divine Person, as self-existent, having life in Himself, omnipotence, omniscience, and many other attributes of a divine Person; and yet it does include what He was morally in righteousness, love, holiness,

truth and nearness to the Father."

Yet it is as Man that Scripture constantly and specially applies to Him, the attributes of omniscience and omnipotence; and to detach them from what He is as the Second Man, because of His connection with us, as such, is to destroy the unity of His Person, and to deprive us of all the blessing that flows from what He is. He says, "No man hath ascended up to heaven, but He that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven." Certainly this applies self-existence, and what is illimitable, to Him as man, as distinctly as when it is said of Him as the Son using the same term of expression, "The only begotten Son which is" ... "in the bosom of the Father."

The Glory of the Person of the Son of God...
pp.42,43.

We will not pursue this lengthy matter further, since this extract shows how these evils hang together in a system and other comments on F.E.R.'s teaching on the Second Man are found in Appendix 2.

Recall that in Ch.7 it was pointed out that Apollinarius held some such doctrine also.

9

THE PRESENT BEARING

What a sad and humbling history we have traced. What shame has been brought on the name of the Lord. Our faithful God has seen the need of this discipline and we must own that the words of Ahijah are applicable to us: "THIS THING IS FROM ME" (1 Kings 12). Sadder yet is the action taken in 1974 by the spiritual heirs of some who bowed to the action of Bexhill and were once clear regarding the true character of F.E.R.'s doctrine. They have now publicly taken the ground that Bexhill's action was hasty, by uniting with the Booth-Glanton party; on the basis, too, that Glantons were always gathered (together?) to Christ's name. What dreadful repudiation of the teaching that association with evil leavens! Wait, you say, they have not repudiated that doctrine. But the alternative is, then, that they believe that company was not leavened between 1890 and 1908. With the previous material in your hand, you are put in the responsible position: "judge righteous judgment" (John 7:24).

Mergers, accompanied with negotiations, of those allegedly gathered together to Christ's name no more express the truth that there is one body than do the mergers, accompanied with negotiations, of groups labeled denominations. Not even tears of those in these denominations change it. The divine order is restoration and we learn much about it in 2 Chron. 30.

The merger of the Kelly and Lowe, Continental group in 1926 was a denial of the truth of the one body and the Lord's table. The merger of the Kelly-Lowe, Continental and Grant-Stuart groups was additionally an evil association of indifference to the fundamentally evil doctrine of C.E. Stuart concerning propitiation (See note 3 in Notes).

The merger of the Kelly-Lowe, Continental, Grant-Stuart group with the Booth-Glanton group declares publicly that they value numbers above faithfulness to Christ. No doubt W.J.Lowe, F.W.Grant and W.Kelly never realized how slippery

the merger slide was and where it leads. Let us remind ourselves of W.J.Lowe's judgment that F.E.R. was a heretic.

None but a heretic would insist on the implied force of a conjunction wrongly emphasized to convey a covert denial of a fundamental truth of Scripture. The thing itself is of Satan, quite apart from any doctrinal consideration, and ought to be treated as such. It is a shameless piece of deceit which will not bear the light. Will any of them venture to state boldly that their so-called "adherence to Scripture" shuts them up to the use of a conjunction in one passage in order to find color for their blasphemy? It must be a bad cause, which is reduced to ring the changes ad nauseam on this verse. Thank God, we have no need to shift our ground, or seek to get "even" substituted for "and" (in I John 5:20). It would be like yielding an outwork to the enemy.

Letter from W.J. Lowe to N. Noel, Feb. 20, 1894, cited in the History of the Brethren, vol.2, p.562.

In Dec. 1890, F.C. Blount said, "...once more beseeching you to refuse these new teachings; which I can but regard as the introduction of leaven into the 'meat offering'...." He called it "refined iniquity." "A Letter", pp.3,7.

From W. Kelly's F.E.R. Heterodox (also appearing in The Bible Treasury, New Series, vol. 3 and 4) I extract the following characterizations of F.E.R.'s teachings.

light of death, p.43
mission ... from an opposing and evil spirit, p.43
from Satan, p.112
evil spirit at work, p.85
idea inbreathed by Satan, p.91
blasphemy, p.99
pernicious system, p.99
fundamental error, p.66, 91, 99, 103
the wrecker, p.44
unholy fellowship, p.99

On p. 28 W.K. said,

...who but those in evil or bent on compromise can

hesitate to pronounce it "devilish," not "divine"?

Scripture says,

Wickedness proceedeth from the wicked...(1 Sam 24:13).

...and every spirit which does not confess Jesus Christ come in flesh is not of God: and this is that [power] of the antichrist, (of) which ye have heard that it comes, and now is already in the world (1 John 4:3).

The power of the Antichrist was the power that worked in F.E.R.

Should Mr. Raven be more gently dealt with than we read of in 2 Cor. 7:11? Nay. His wickedness is greater than that of the man of 1 Cor. 5. Doctrinal leaven is the worst because it pretends that God is the source of it; and it destroys the foundation.

How can you think that W. Kelly's language is too strong? The result of Mr. Raven's system is that we have no Christ at all. We have no Kinsman-Redeemer. A "condition" died for us, and hence redemption is swept away. There is no real connection of this "condition" when on earth with the "condition" now in glory. The axe of F.E.R. has struck at root and branch. Christianity is swept away under pious sounding formulations. I never heard of a more vile and blasphemous system; made more heinous by his having had the privilege of hearing so much truth. And, on what basis should I believe that he was a real Christian? At any rate, God knows, but I would not treat him as a Christian; and I share W.K.'s conviction that such characterizations of this wickedness are warranted and called for. Where is the indignation we see in the Galatians? Where is the rising of Phinehas to strike through with the javelin (Num. 25:6-8)? Where is the priestly guarding and defense of the truth? Where is the guard around Solomon's couch because of alarms in the night (S. of S. 3:7,8)? Where is your sword, my brother, my sister? Oh, where are the tears and confusion of face because of God's hand upon us because of our worldliness, self-seeking and self-pleasing? "This thing is from me."

Let us now consider the palliation of the evil. R.W. Nelson cited the Glanton, W.R. Dronsfield, thus:

Feb. 17, 1964, W.R. Dronsfield:

"...if you make it a condition of fellowship that all of us must agree that Raven taught serious error and was not misunderstood at all, it will be useless to continue. We will all renounce the errors that Raven is alleged to have taught. Some of us will not admit that he taught them."

"Union With What?", Nov. 1971.

I doubt the omniscient statement "We will all renounce the errors that Raven is alleged to have taught." At any rate, the reunion negotiations went forward and union was consummated on the basis that F.E.R. had not taught fundamentally evil doctrine that put the Glantons in an evil association, off the ground of being gathered together to Christ's name. Ravenism is the father of Glantonism. The father would not confess the evil and neither does the offspring.

Eight negotiators of the 1974 Kelly-Lowe, Continental, Grant-Stuart, Booth-Glanton merger (Mr. Dronsfield being one of them) stated the following in a "Memorandum to be Submitted to Gatherings of the So-called Kelly and Glanton Groups of Brethren" (covering letter dated Nov. 14, 1964):

In facing the question of healing (not restoration, of course, R.A.H.) of the division which unhappily has gone on for so long we are not so concerned to apportion blame or responsibility....

What this means is that true confession will not be made. The point of departure will not be owned; rather it will be evaded. The evil association with leaven will be denied. However, a little more was asked of Glanton. Here is the little more.

...'our excision (rejection of Glanton in 1908 R.A.H.) was our deliverance from a system of which we were not part.' By this we do not say our forefathers were not in fellowship with 'F.E.R.'

during those years of controversy — they were! — but that in the course of those sorrowful years of exercise some developed a resistance to certain teachings of 'F.E.R.' and especially toward the 'system' then in embryo [which in our day we have seen full-grown.] The Alnwick-Glanton dispute which arose in the north of England at the beginning of the century ultimately gave occasion to the leaders of the 'London' party (now better known as 'Taylor') to cut off and get rid of those not in line (or spirit) with themselves. In this way our clearance of connection with F.E.R. and his partisans is to be understood. It was thus a practical and genuine deliverance.

From p. 6 of "Resume of Negotiations and Progress in Exercises for Reunion with 'Booth-Grant Glanton Brethren,' cover letter dated Jan. 30, 1973, signed by R.K. Campbell and W.J. Missen.

The plain fact is that THERE WAS NO "CLEARANCE" AND NO JUDGMENT OF THE EVIL ASSOCIATION. Notice, too, the palliation of the evil by asserting that the system was in embryo. We have seen otherwise concerning fundamental truth. Appendix 5 shows an example of how F.E.R. handled other subjects in the development of his system.

And finally just one more palliating pacifier was needed. Here it is.

14 April, 1973

To brethren in America and elsewhere
who are gathered together unto the
Name of our Lord Jesus Christ the
Son of God.

As to unscriptural and defective teaching in the past, we confess it, and profoundly regret our association with it, but desire to state that there is no trace of these erroneous teachings amongst us today. In investigating some of the divisions, we are struck at the confusion that existed at the actual time of the teachings in question. This is unfortunately true of most of the troubles amongst the people of God. We did not in 1964, and do not now, feel it righteous before God to ask our

brethren, old and young, to deliberate themselves on matters that were obscure many years ago and ask them to give a decision now. Forgive us where we erred, and if there are past events we feel are not clear, and on which we hesitate to pass judgment, be assured to our desire to be governed by the Word of God to-day.

(Letter signed by Glanton brothers,
F. Wallace, D.W. Patterson, W.R. Dronsfield).
Cited in a letter by R.W. Nelson.

Note the plain palliation of the evil: "on which we hesitate to pass judgment." There is nothing to hesitate about where there is integrity to confess the sin and shame of sect and association with evil, with leaven — never confessed by Glanton. Note the palliation of evil by calling these matters "obscure". "Unscriptural and defective"? yes; "hesitate to pass judgment"? yes; "obscure"? yes; leaven? No! Such is the Glanton sect's position, now embraced by those who merged with them, adding shame upon shame and compounding indifference to what is due to Christ. Was Bethesda worse than this?

The degree to which F.E. Raven's doctrines are held (besides the leaven of the association) among the Glantons is not known, though surely it must be there. Indeed, just as I am writing this I am seeking to help one, who has recently separated himself from this association, who holds some of F.E.R.'s teachings. The above statement, "there is no trace of these erroneous teachings amongst us today" is a ludicrous statement of pretended omniscience. Furthermore, some of F.E. Ravens's fundamentally evil teachings are in books advertised by the English KLC-Glanton book depot (See Appendix 3) and we are coolly told there is "no trace" of these things "among us", i.e., not even of the palliated version of F.E.R.'s teachings. My brethren, I beseech you to mark well the effect of toleration of evil.

We have already seen that by F.E.R.'s death in 1903 he elaborated a system. Actually, the system was essentially complete much earlier. Earlier A.C. Ord wrote,

...the system of doctrine elaborated by Mr. Raven is painfully complete in its character, and is

carried out in all points in which it could be applied to the Person, the Work, the Titles of Christ, as well as the relations in which He stands to us, or before God on our behalf.

The Blessedness of the Person of Christ in its Unity as Presented in Scripture, p.9.

J.Taylor, Sr. added relatively little to that. The above palliations are not only excusing themselves, it is a denial that Glanton was part of a leavened lump, leavened, and off the ground of gathering. It tramples on the truth that THE POINT OF DEPARTURE IS THE POINT OF RECOVERY and thus doing what Scripture requires; namely, repudiating the evil and seeking restoration to fellowship with those continuing in the truth.

Trampling on divine principles is inherent in mergers and ecumenical type movements. You will find, too, that those who go on in the truth are mocked and regarded with contempt as making high claims, being Pharisaical, and perhaps even Laodecean in their self-complacency. This was the mocking spirit of those who refused to return to Jerusalem in Hezekiah's day (2 Chron. 30), refusing restoration to the divinely appointed center.

J.G. Deck wrote many years ago what happens to palliators of evil.

"In a work of Satan NEUTRALITY is impossible: if there is an attempt to shun the responsibilities and sorrows of a path of entire decision for Christ, the spiritual senses become deaden, the heart hardened, the conscience torpid, the judgment perverted, and soon hostility to the witnesses against the evil succeeds indifference to the truth."

Cited in N. Noel, History of the Brethren, vol.2, p. 567.

Palliators of evil will not own the truth. Listen:

"Now I submit that Glanton could not possibly do this honestly."

Do what?

"Admit they are a schismatic body."

Words of W.R. Dronsfield (with the Raven-Glanton company), letter dated May 12, 1965, to C. Hendricks.

Mr. Dronsfield was a principal actor in the KLC-GS-Glanton, Booth merger.

Why not admit the plain facts? He says,

"...no adequate case was made out against Raven in 1890." Ibid.

May God grant us to mourn for our brethren; to have a contrite spirit and tremble at His Word.

IT IS ABOMINATION TO THE FOOLISH TO DEPART FROM EVIL (Proverbs 13:19).

And judgment is turned away backward, and righteousness standeth afar off; for truth stumbleth in the street, and uprightness cannot enter. And truth faileth; and he that departeth from evil maketh himself a prey. And Jehovah saw (it), and it was evil in his sight that there was no judgment. (Isaiah 59:14,15, J.N.D. translation).

* * * * *

There is another important matter. Those who leave the Raven-Taylorites, the Raven-Glantonites, and the Raven-Glanton merged group may have never judged these doctrines as leaven. Indeed, some of such are really indifferent about it and even if personally believing the truth concerning Christ's person will not admit that these things are leaven. Thus, in a test, they would not be prepared to judge such evil should it arise in the assembly. Ravenism and/or mergers have numbed the discernment of such. Reception of persons coming from any link with Ravenism must be attended by very careful examination, not only for personal views on Christ's Person

but for their views on the leaven of Ravenism, on their association with leaven, and on the very spirit of Ravenism, as illustrated herein concerning the Lord's supper (Appendix 5). Many hold that the supper should take place early in the meeting and then you are led on to the worship of the Father. Beware of such psuedo-spirituality. And perhaps you will find other things. Let us beware. Holiness becomes God's house forever.

THE GODLY ACTION OF BEXHILL

The following is cited from B.M., "Brief History of Ravenism".

...known gifted brothers (quite sound themselves personally) lent the whole weight of their influence to something that was false, thus carrying large numbers with them in a wrong direction. In the mercy of God however this was only allowed to go so far. There were many, many meetings both at home and abroad preserved in the truth, where this school of doctrine has never been allowed to rear its head.

The matter was brought to a climax through a "letter of commendation" signed by F.E.R., and presented to the assembly at Bexhill, Sussex. Those who brought the letter were asked to "sit behind," and as one was a 'leading brother' from Greenwich, it resulted in important correspondence between these two assemblies. Now as an "open letter" written by H. C. A., [Anstey] addressed to certain German brethren, "sent out in all directions," and countersigned by "two aged and highly esteemed brothers," J. B. S. and C. H. M., stated that "The accusers never brought their complaint before the local assembly in Greenwich, where the accused is responsible, nor sought to prove it to them," also "the seceders have settled the matter in their own way, and their way was to leave fellowship," it is therefore of importance to quote the actual letters between these two assemblies, which [it would appear from this] were kept from many. The following are the letters in full:—

Bexhill, 8th June, 1890

To the saints gathered to the Name
of the Lord Jesus Christ at Greenwich.

Dear Brethren,

The letter from brothers in your assembly to
brothers here has been laid before us and
considered upon two evenings, and the following is

our reply as an assembly here, to the assembly at Greenwich.

The question asked is, our "reasons for refusing a letter of commendation given to a brother and sister on behalf of the gathering here, and signed by a brother in whom the meeting has the fullest confidence."

The ground we take is this:—that you have in your assembly a brother, Mr. F.E. Raven, whose teaching is, we judge, derogatory to the glory and person of our Lord Jesus Christ, and contrary to Scripture.

The effect of his teaching has been to cause sorrow and contention far and wide, amongst those gathered to the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to raise questions leading to discussions concerning the person of our Lord, which are to us irreverent and profane.

Secondly, from a printed letter written by one of your brethren, Mr. Corbett, we find some of your number have separated from you in consequence of these doctrines and that your assembly is thus in a divided state.

We believe it is according to the exercise of godly care with those gathered upon the ground of the One Body, when grave charges are brought against a teacher who is sheltered and supported by the meeting with which he is connected—or where a meeting is in a divided state—to request those coming from it to sit back at other meetings, until matters are investigated or settled.

We have thus acted, and deeply regret, beloved brethren, the necessity for it.

If you ask for proof of the unsoundness of Mr. Raven's teaching we refer you to his own printed letters of 6th December, 1889, and March 21st, 1890; also the protests and refutations of it, in tracts written by well-known brethren amongst us, viz. McCarthy, Humphrey, Lowe, the late Chas. Stanley, Maynard and others.

Signed on behalf of the saints gathered to the Name of the

Lord Jesus Christ at Bexhill,

We remain, dear brethen,

Yours faithfully in Christ,

ALBERT WHICKHAM, ROBERT KENT, HENRY JECKELL.

Greenwich, 23rd June, 1890.

Dear Brethren,

The communication from the Saints gathered to the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ at Bexhill to the Saints gathered to the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ at Greenwich, dated 8th June, 1890 has been read before the Assembly here, and the following is the reply of the Assembly.

We observe that you do not furnish the reasons which were asked for, in the letter of 30th May last, for refusing a letter of commendation given to a brother and sister on behalf of the gathering here, but that you inform us of the "ground you take."

Any subsequent consideration of the matter is not a justification of a step previously taken.

The question of the teaching of any particular brother is scarcely a matter to be discussed between Assemblies, and we are surprised at your reference to the various pamphlets which have been abroad, and which are hardly of a character to be endorsed by an Assembly.

The pleas put forward in justification of your action, however right they may be in principle, are inadmissible in the present case.

The first supposes "grave charges" being brought against a teacher who is sheltered and supported by the meeting with which he is connected.

In answer to this we have to say that no charge against our brother, Mr. R. has been preferred before the Assembly here by any person whatever, within, or without the meeting. The case supposed of a teacher under grave charges falls therefore to the ground.

The second plea supposed the meeting in a divided state. The only ground on which you could have assumed this as regards Greenwich is an unsupported statement by one person who avowedly left the meeting in a disorderly way, and whose letter does not bear the semblance of truth.

Though we are not disposed to question the right of a meeting to protect itself from fellowship with

another meeting where evil is deliberately sheltered, still we do not consider that such a course should be adopted except in the presence of distinct and unquestionable evidence.

In the present case no such evidence was before you and therefore we consider your course unjustifiable and a grave breach of fellowship.

Yours faithfully in the Lord,

GEO. BROOMHEAD, G. CHESTERFIELD

(Signed on behalf of the Assembly at
Greenwich)

To the Assembly at Bexhill.

Bexhill, June 29th, 1890

To the Saints meeting at Thornton House,
South Street, Greenwich, Kent.

Dear Brethren,

The consideration of your letter of the 23rd inst., is a source of unfeigned grief of spirit to us: where is the simplicity which is in Christ, and godly transparency, which would surely be apparent in your letter were you really before God in your consciences at the present time as to all this solemn and grievous matter? We say it with grief, we fail to trace any guidance or expression in your letter to us, of the Spirit of Christ, or desire to clear yourselves.

You carefully avoid answering the question that is really at issue between us, viz:—your identification with Mr. Raven and his teaching and seek to escape by raising quibbles that are unworthy the consideration, much less the practice, of saints, and would scarcely be admissible in a court of law, or amongst men of the world.

We have given our reasons clearly and simply in the fear of the Lord, why we refused your letter of commendation: it was your identification with Mr. Raven and his teachings; this you have never attempted to deny.

The principles that come out in your letter are those of Bethesda, which we repudiate, and are not those of holiness and truth, or agreeable to the unity of the Body of Christ, and are practically a

denial of our corporate responsibility.

From the tenor of your letter we gather that you are determined to identify yourselves with Mr. F.E. Raven and his teachings.

Our earnest prayer is that our gracious God and Father may work in consciences and hearts for the deliverance of many amongst you from these Christ-dishonouring and defiling doctrines.

It is with the deepest sorrow and with a sense of the solemnity of our act that we feel before the Lord our responsibility to clear ourselves from association with manifest evil, in refusing any further fellowship with you, and in rejecting you as an Assembly.

Signed on behalf of the Assembly at Bexhill,
gathered to the Name of the Lord Jesus
Christ,

HENRY JECKELL, ALBERT WHICKHAM, ROBERT KENT
(Taken from "A RECORD OF SOME CORRESPONDENCE WITH
DOCUMENTS AND FACTS, 1888-91.")

The honest reader of the foregoing should have no difficulty in seeing that the term "seceder" had no application whatsoever to Bexhill or to those who owned their disciplinary action. The assembly at Bexhill and those in fellowship with them remained on the same ground as before—the ground of separation from evil, taken by brethren at the first. Where then was the change? Surely with those who had embraced the doctrines of this false teacher, forming a party around them, and thereby departing from the ground of truth, occupied formerly.

* * * * *

I add to the above the following from N. Noel's History..., vol.2, pp.505-507, which will give the reader some idea of the protests that were made.

Public Protests Against Mr. Raven's New Doctrines
On Tuesday evening, July 17, 1888, six brothers (J.S.

Oliphant, Bradstock, Hooton, Anstey, Lowe, Henderson) met Mr. Raven at Mr. Oliphant's house, to look into his doctrines, especially that of Righteousness, and life as a "sphere." Mr. Bradstock, and also Mr. Lowe, earnestly appealed to Mr. Raven, seeking to bring home to him the erroneous nature of his views.

The following letter was written a few days after, by Mr. Bradstock, a brother who was considerably senior to the others present, to one of those who had thus met.

23rd July, 1888.

Beloved Brother:

I have been considering the meeting last Tuesday night. There was a little yielding on the part of Raven, and he evidently modified his doctrine; but the tendency to go wrong appeared to be still there, and the past, I fear, left unjudged.

I was thankful for the meeting, because one had a better opportunity of seeing where Raven is. I dread his activity of mind; and the want of subjection to the word was most apparent.

I find, too, some are inviting him to teach and preach, as though nothing had occurred. It is incumbent upon us, in view of all this lack of discernment, to be firm in the maintenance of the truth. I feel sad.

Yours affectionately in the Lord,

(Signed) W. BRADSTOCK.

Dec. 31, 1888 to Jan. 4, 1889. Prayer and humiliation in London gatherings for a week (result of a circular by C.H. M.).

On January 15, 1889, the readings of the London brothers were resumed, the subject being John's Gospel; Messrs. J.B. Stoney and F.E. Raven taking a prominent part. Teaching of an alarming character as to the Person of the Lord, was resisted by several; but their remonstrances were unheeded, so that some brothers, if not several, went no more to those readings.

On January 29th, at the next fortnightly meeting at Brixton, a protest was entered by Dr. Cotton against what Mr. Raven had taught, as to the Lord, on January 15th, over 100 being present. ("Everyone can watch the spirit of heresy.")

February 6, 1889. Brothers' meeting at 57 Park

Street considering the question of eternal life as propounded by Mr. Raven and Mr. Stoney,—the remark being emphasized that Christ was eternal life, "but He was more, He was God." One of Mr. Raven's questioners said, "Then He was God, but He was less?"

Early in Oct., 1889, after a long and close conversation with Mr. W.J. Lowe, Mr. Raven maintained that he saw nothing of an objectionable character in the "notes" of the Witney Conference. These "notes" of what had been said at Witney in relation to the First Epistle of John, after having been revised by Mr. J.B. Stoney, Mr. T.H. Reynolds, and Mr. F.E. Raven, were circulated privately, and drew forth a searching criticism from Mr. J.S. Oliphant (who raised no less than twenty-seven points of objection). Being a manifest departure from the truth, they led to so much anxiety, that their appearance in print, which had been at first decided on, was afterwards abandoned!!

Oct. 15, 1889, Mr. Raven, after being publicly withstood in a large meeting of brothers at Brixton, especially by Dr. C.D. Maynard and Mr. W.J. Lowe, declared in a letter to Dr. Cotton, on Oct 28th, that "the matter had become public;" and on this ground, refused to see Dr. Cotton alone, as Dr. C. had asked him to do, in intended compliance with Matt. xviii. 5 (though it was "no question of personal trespass between" them).

On Nov. 12, Mr. W.J. Lowe wrote Mr. Raven a long letter, setting many points before him, gathered from his own writings, and beseeching him to withdraw his teaching, as "involving consequences directly antagonistic to fundamental truth." To this, Mr. Raven answered on the 25th, adhering to his errors.

Nov. 15, 1889. Questions by a Brother as printed by J.S. Oliphant. Mr. Raven's answers....

These were not the only protests before Bexhill acted. It is not lack of information that caused the merger group to take the Glanton position that Bexhill acted hastily; it is lack of eye-salve.

W.J. Lowe's statement is this:

Is it not significant that never once, all through this paper, in spite of remonstrance extending over

eighteen months, is Christ admitted to be "that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us," according to the simple statement of Scripture?

"Life and Its Manifestation," second ed., Jan. 15, 1890 (six months before Bexhill acted).

Mr Lowe and other opposers of F.E.R. were "clear" and understood Mr. Raven's doctrines, though palliators of evil may say brethren were not clear. W. Bradstock wrote to W.J. Lowe this:

It is no easy thing to find a way, as you seem to have done, through this intricate maze....

The matter has been before me nearly two years, and after correspondence and interviews with the author....

God keeping me, I shall hold to the things which I have "learned" and enjoyed above forty years....

I am said to be "clear." Thank God, I am clear, and trust He will keep me so....

It is a great sorrow to me to find myself opposed to those I love, on such fundamental points. I am unfit for controversy, but I owe it to God and to my brethren to express my convictions.

London, Feb. 12, 1890

On Nov. 25, 1889, F.E.R. wrote to W.J. Lowe,

Your putting "formally" before me proofs of the systematic character of evil teaching with which I am charged necessitates some reply....

...I must first remark on the slender premises on which the charge of an evil system of doctrine is based....

...if a charge of heresy is to be based on such premises as these, no teacher would be safe.

Letters of F.E. Raven, Stow Hill, 1963, p.6.

On pp. 11-14, *ibid.*, is a letter (Dec. 24, 1889) from F.E.R. to C.Stanley, who also withstood his teachings.

There was every reason for Bexhill to deal with the matter

just as they did. The present characterizing their action as hasty, without warrant, etc., is not merely the most baseless cavil: it is the fruit of wilfulness to merge and it is unholiness in support of an association that was, and is, leavened.

Compare the weighty letter of Des Moines, U.S.A., (Cited in Selected Ministry of A.H. Rule, vol.2, p.109), bowing to the action of Bexhill, with F.E.R.'s preposterous criticism of the action of Bexhill in a letter dated Oct. 23, 1891.

...Now I need hardly say that no one can rightly call in question the decision of a meeting on any matter properly within its jurisdiction. We do not 'deny' the decision of the meeting—but we recognize the authority of our Lord—and, further, any meeting is justified in protecting itself by declining to receive into its fellowship a person coming from a meeting lying under strong suspicion of sheltering evil—but one meeting has no sort of authority to pronounce an authoritative judgment on another meeting—and call on others to obey—for the Lord is equally in both meetings, and it is an invasion of His rights. It may become manifest that the Lord has left a particular meeting and no one should then receive from or commend to it, but even then no one would venture to pronounce authoritative judgment though it is true we virtually refuse it by declining to receive from or commend to it.

Bexhill presumed authoritatively to reject Greenwich and they expect every other meeting to bow to what they have done. They had nothing before them but what was before everyone else. If this principle were to be admitted, any unsatisfactory meeting which chose to be first in the field might pronounce on the most momentous questions and issue a decision which is to bind every assembly on earth. It would be worse than popery.

To which we reply:

1. "They had nothing before them but what was before everyone else" also means that they had before them what was before everyone else. And this means that:
a. Bexhill had F.E.R.'s blasphemies before them.
b. Greenwich had F.E.R.'s blasphemies before them.

2. The talk about being first in the field is just dust for the eyes. Bexhill was laid under direct responsibility because of the letter of commendation from Greenwich to Bexhill.

3. His principle enunciated in the first paragraph is not in accord with the truth that there is one body. The action of the assembly was bound in heaven (Matt. 18:18) and the Lord in the midst of other assemblies will act accordingly.

4. Bexhill was quite "justified in protecting itself by declining to receive into its fellowship a person coming from a meeting" where, in the true case, an evil teacher was being supported. Bexhill had authority from the Word to reject evil and to reject those who support evil - for association with evil leavens those in fellowship with it.

5. Where evil is sheltered as at Greenwich, such a gathering is no longer owned as gathered together to Christ's name. He is not there. They are gathered in support of evil. "...authoritatively to reject..." is empty talk for the consumption of minds supporting, or blinded to, evil.

6. Appendix 2 contains a letter by a Bexhill brother that states Bexhill's knowledge of the case.

7. If the Lord is in the midst of both meetings, and all are subject, the action of the Lord in one will be owned by the other.

James Taylor, Sr. was one of a number who signed the following letter.

When that meeting refused a letter of commendation from Greenwich, they gave as one reason for so doing that there was division amongst them. This was untrue, and besides was based upon the testimony of one witness who had left the meeting in a disorderly manner and was subsequently put away as a wicked person. There could not be a plainer violation of the word of God than this (see 2 Cor. 13:1.) "In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established."

Their second reason was that the Greenwich assembly sheltered a teacher of evil doctrine.

When asked to furnish proof for this charge, they refused to give any particulars, as is proved by the following extract from a letter from Greenwich: "We have to say that no charge against our brother, Mr. R. has been preferred before the assembly here by any person whatever within or without the meeting."

If there were charges against Mr. Raven why were they not brought before the assembly whose responsibility it was to clear itself from evil if such existed, according to 1 Corinthians 5: "Therefore put away from amongst yourselves that wicked person"? So far from any charge being preferred before the Greenwich assembly, its righteous demand for particulars was termed evasion, and then was consummated the ecclesiastical assumption of Bexhill by cutting off Greenwich Assembly and all in fellowship with it. We therefore reject the action of Bexhill which has placed them outside the ground of God's Assembly, and we refuse to follow them there, as many of our beloved brethren have done, preferring to follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart (2 Tim. 2:22). The seceders are not unanimous as to their reasons for going out from us—some basing their action upon the Bexhill judgment, others upon what Mr. Raven teaches, and we desire to add a few words as to the latter. We have carefully examined the printed statements issued by Mr. Raven, and can discern nothing contrary to sound doctrine. We see that his accusers have themselves overstepped the bounds of Scripture in their zeal to prove him a

heretic and are bitterly opposing blessed truth of the last importance for the saints to hold fast. We enumerate a few of the errors into which they have fallen:

- 1st. Confounding Eternal Life with Deity.
- 2nd. Affirming that Eternal Life was manifested to the world.
- 3rd. Affirming that responsibility attaches to our position as in Christ before God.

As to the first error, 1 John 5:20, is explicit: "This is the true God and Eternal Life."

Letters of James Taylor, pp.4,5, dated Dec., 1890.

Notice that he already held in 1890 the denial that the Son of God was the eternal life in His own Person. It once again confirms the nature of the doctrines that F.E.R. held and taught and shows how leaven works. James Taylor, Sr. sanctions blasphemy in one sentence and in another sentence objects to violation of what he considers proper procedures. Such is ever the way of supporters of evil.

Bexhill did not excommunicate Greenwich as a person is excommunicated. Such a charge is a palliative smoke-screen (used by the supporters of Bethesda also). Bexhill said, "We feel our responsibility to the Lord to clear ourselves...by breaking off all further fellowship with you and disowning you as an assembly." To thus disown meetings where evil is tolerated had ever been the scriptural procedure.

For those who wish to read another report of the points raised in this letter, the following is taken from N. Noel, History ... vol.2, pp.511,517.

March, 1890. Mr. James Corbett, an esteemed brother (who had relinquished a lucrative position for conscience sake) breaking bread as attached to the Greenwich meeting (Thornton House), having specifically challenged Mr. F.E. Raven as to his teaching on February 16th, after the "breaking of bread" (i.e., the Lord's supper), and having written to him, refusing him as a teacher in the things of God, and otherwise; ceased, on February

26, further attendance at the Greenwich meeting.

March 14, Friday. Greenwich informed neighboring gatherings, that Mr. James Corbett, having refused visitation, cannot be allowed to break bread again without question.

March 1890. Some letters passed between Mr. William Barker and Mr. F.E. Raven, concerning the doctrine of the latter on the manifestation of eternal life in Christ....

Some Withdraw From Mr. Raven and His Meeting

May 8. Thursday. Mr. James Corbett's circular letter was issued, in which he coupled "another brother and sister," with himself and his daughter, as having come out from the Greenwich meeting.

May 19. Monday. Mr. J. Corbett's letter came before the brothers at Greenwich.

May 25. Sunday. A letter signed by Mr. Raven commending Mr. G. Boddy (a restless partisan of Mr. Raven's as he had been opponent of Mr. Kelly) to the Bexhill, England, meeting, was refused by that meeting. (Note the diplomacy for hastening the forcing of trouble; for it was an open secret at the time that Bexhill, England, was opposed to Mr. Raven's new views.)

May 26. Monday. Mr. James Corbett's letter was again before the brothers at Greenwich.

May 30. Friday. Letter from Greenwich meeting dated this day, signed by Messrs. Geo. Broomhead and George Chesterfield, asking "reasons for refusing a letter of commendation ... signed by a brother in whom the meeting has the fullest confidence."

2 Gloucester Place, Greenwich, May 30. 1890.

Dear Brother:

I enclose a letter from and on behalf of the brothers in our meeting. Will you kindly lay the same before the brethren at Bexhill?

Yours is the Lord,
(Signed) GEO. BROOMHEAD

To Mr. Kent, Trescoe House,

The Godly Action of Bexhill

93

St. James Road, Bexhill on Sea.

At this point, recall that in Bexhill's letter of June 8, 1890, they said,

If you ask for proof of the unsoundness of Mr. Raven's teaching, we refer you to his own printed letters of 6th December, 1889, and 21st of March, 1890, also to the protests and refutations of it, in tracts written by well-known brethren amongst us, viz.: Messrs. H.H. McCarthy, B.F. Pinkerton, Humphrey, W.J. Lowe, the late Charles Stanley, C.D. Maynard, and others.

Greenwich replied,

60 London Street, Greenwich, S.E.,
10th June, 1890.

Dear Brethren:

Your letter of the 8th instant has been duly received, and was laid before the Assembly last evening, and with a view to its consideration, we are requested to ask you to be good enough to state the evidence on which you assumed that a teacher against whom grave charges are brought, was sheltered and supported by the Assembly here, at the time the letter of commendation was presented; at the same time we send for your information a copy of the judgment of the Assembly in regard to James Corbett. We are, dear Brethren,

Yours faithfully in Christ,
(Signed on behalf of the Brothers)
(Signed) G. CHESTERFIELD
JAMES HEPHER

To Mr. Albert Wickham
Mr. Robert Kent
Mr. Henry Jeckell

COPY

James Corbett having printed for general distribution a false and slanderous paper

purporting to give an account of things which he saw and heard in the Greenwich meeting, and having subsequently confirmed the same by his own hand, while at the same time he had not attempted to adopt any step to which godly exercise as to the existence of real evil in a meeting would lead, is put away from amongst us as a wicked person.

Greenwich, 2d June, 1890.

Milton House, Bexhill,
12th June, 1890.

Dear Brethren:

I am requested by the saints here to reply to your letter of the 10th instant and to say that the communication from here of the 8th inst. was to the Assembly at Greenwich, and was from us collectively as was plainly stated, it having been before us upon two evenings, and finally read at the Lord's Table.

Until that letter has been read to the Assembly at Greenwich, and a reply sent to us from that Assembly, we cannot enter into any further correspondence. I remain,

Yours faithfully in Christ,
[Signed] HENRY JECKELL

[Signed on behalf of Saints gathered to the name of the Lord Jesus at Bexhill.]

To Mr. Geo. Chesterfield and Mr. James Hepher, Greenwich.

Greenwich then replied with the June 23, 1890 letter, cited in full above. N. Noel made the following comments on this letter [photo-offset from his book].

(d) "In answer to this we have to say that no charge against our brother, Mr. Raven, has been preferred before the Assembly here by any person whatever, within or without the meeting."

N. B. This is true in the letter, but not in the spirit: this having been written on *June 23rd*, when a *distinct charge*, contained in Mr. J. Corbett's "printed paper, purporting to give an account of things which he saw and heard at the Greenwich meeting," *had been already taken under the formal consideration of, and thus had been "before" the Greenwich*

Assembly (so as to lead up to the exercise of discipline on Mr. J. Corbett), if not actually "*preferred before*" it. Note "*before*."—Though, thus, *actually* "*before*" *them*, it was authoritatively stated at 145 Cheapside, *July 26, 1890*, that the Greenwich gathering, in judging Mr. J. Corbett, *did not go into the doctrines*.

(e) "The case supposed of a teacher under grave charges being sheltered and supported by the Assembly, falls, therefore, to the ground."

N. B. This is not so. For the fact that after the refusal of the letter of commendation, discipline was exercised on Mr. J. Corbett, while at the same time they took no action whatever against Mr. Raven, as to the charges brought against him in Mr. J. Corbett's letter, was proof conclusive, that the Assembly *did* "shelter and support" the teacher, against whom J. Corbett had raised grave charges.

(f) "The second plea supposes the meeting to be in a divided state. The only ground upon which you can have assumed this as regards Greenwich, is an unsupported statement, by one person, who avowedly left the meeting in a disorderly way, and whose letter does not bear the semblance of truth."

N. B. It is true that Mr. J. Corbett's circular letter of March 8th, 1890, in which he said, "And my own daughter, and another brother and sister *who also came out*, are of the same mind," bore only J. Corbett's signature. But, though the correctness of his assertion has been questioned, this statement of Mr. J. Corbett's was essentially confirmed on June 1st by a letter from W. T. Wadson (the "*brother*" mentioned), to Mr. G. Chesterfield to the following effect:

"Mr. Raven's teaching is condemned by seven influential brethren and many assemblies in London, and various parts of the country. Therefore, I wish you to *read me out, and my wife, from the Assembly*."

Though Mr. J. Corbett's account was unsupported by any other documentary evidence, when Bexhill refused the letter of recommendation from Greenwich, yet a week before Bexhill gave its reason for so doing, W. T. Wadson had written, as already stated, to withdraw himself and his wife from the Greenwich Assembly; which letter, whether it was, or was not, known at Bexhill, was in evidence at Greenwich, and practically substantiated what Mr. J. Corbett had previously reported.

(g) "Though we are not disposed to question the right of a meeting to protect itself from fellowship with another meeting where evil is deliberately sheltered, still, we do not consider that such a course should be adopted, except in the presence of distinct and unquestionable evidence."

N. B. What was refused *before*, was the discussion between Assemblies of "the teaching of any particular

brother."

Here, the question is raised as to the circumstances under which a meeting has a "right to protect itself from fellowship with another meeting where evil is deliberately sheltered." As to this, the letter of commendation to Bexhill, written and signed by Mr. Raven himself, and carried to Bexhill by a leading brother at Greenwich, was, of itself, *prima facie* evidence that the Greenwich gathering had "deliberately sheltered" Mr. Raven's alleged "evil" doctrine; since, up to that time, the Greenwich Assembly had taken *no notice* whatever, as regarded Mr. Raven, of Mr. J. Corbett's "grave charges" against him, though they had been "before" the brethren. This "evidence," then, was, and is, "distinct and unquestionable."

The reader will judge whether, in view of the foregoing remarks, the closing letter from Bexhill was justified; and in order to do this, he will not fail to notice especially, the two *FOLLOWING POINTS*, by which Greenwich *AVOIDS TAKING UP THE MATTER OF MR. RAVEN'S TEACHING*, as called in question by the Bexhill letter of 8th of June, 1890.

1st. Greenwich objects to one Assembly "discussing" the question of unsound doctrine with another Assembly, in which it is alleged to exist.

2nd. They *made no application to Bexhill for more definite charges* against the alleged unsound teacher; and instead of doing so, demand evidence to be shown on *another* point.—viz: whether Bexhill can prove that Greenwich had "sheltered" the alleged evil teaching, at the particular time when their letter of commendation was refused.

Thus, the main matter at issue is set aside, and a secondary point insisted on; and yet the plea is, to this day urged, that no charge of false doctrine has ever been preferred against Mr. Raven before the Assembly at Greenwich!

As Greenwich objects to the reception of Mr. J. Corbett's testimony as unsupported, the fact of Mr. W. T. Wadson's subsequent documental withdrawal *will be seen by a reference to the dates given* (viz. June 1, Sunday).

The dates also show that in presence of the *prior* challenge of Greenwich by Bexhill (which formed the *ground of the contention* at Ealing), those who left Sunnyside room, Ealing, waited a month *after* Bexhill's *final* decision, before breaking bread.

It will be further evident by a comparison of the events of *May 25, June 1 and June 15*, that the unity of the Spirit (re-G. Boddy) was deliberately broken by Mr. Raven's sup-

porters at Folkestone and Tunbridge Wells; and that the division was, in consequence, *PRACTICALLY INITIATED BY THEM*.

The statement of the New York Circular, *Dec., 1890* (G. C., 54 Berwick St., Oxford St. W.), that Greenwich had made "its righteous demand for particulars," and that this demand "was termed evasion," is, as is shown, misleading. The same paper denies "that there was division amongst them." But two others, besides the four mentioned by Mr. James Corbett, had also left the meeting because of this teaching.

The fact is that it was of common report; indeed, verified report, that F.E.R. held, and was propagating, fundamentally evil doctrine. His supporters were imbibing these teachings and trying to justify their (unholy) course by every means. Commenting on common report, F.C. Blount wrote in "A Letter", Dec. 1890,

What are we to think of the pleas made by G. "No charge against our Brother Mr. R. has been preferred before the Assembly here," etc. Was there no charge in Mr. Corbett's testimony? Was there no charge in the letter of the 8th of June, from the Assembly at B- to the Assembly at G-? And more, was it not for 18 months "reported commonly" and heard and know by them? Does the Apostle, who was always ready to act in grace, to admit and recognize all that he could, relieve the Corinthian Assembly of their responsibility, upon the ground that "no charges" had "been preferred before the Assembly"? Does he not rather assume their responsibility in view of the common report, and apply it to their consciences? See 1 Cor. 5:1,2.

So the merged Kelly-Lowe, Continental, ex-Tunbridge Wells, Grant-Stuart, Booth-Glanton company has taken the position of James Taylor, Sr., F.E. Raven, Greenwich, and other supporters, against Bexhill. Surely it is a leavened lump. A little leaven leavens the whole lump.

The wicked way in which Greenwich dealt with Mr. Corbett declared publicly where they were morally. This was known to Bexhill. The moral character of Greenwich is:

excommunicate Mr. Corbett and shelter Mr. Raven. Bexhill's proper reply to Greenwich's sophistry was:

You carefully avoid answering the question that is really at issue between us, viz: - your identification with Mr. Raven and his teachings and seek to escape by raising quibbles that are unworthy the consideration, much less the practice, of saints, and would scarcely be admissible in a court of law, or amongst men of the world.

THE SECOND CIRCULAR OF THE CONTINENTAL BRETHREN

The following circular letter is a reply to three of F.E.R.'s supporters and is signed by a number of European brethren. The spiritual 'heirs' of these brethren are now in fellowship with the Raven-Glanton.

The circular is photo-offset from N. Noel's, A History of the Brethren, vol.2, pp. 550-562. While this letter is both sound and instructive, and letters may be written to help brethren, I should call attention to the fact that there is no Scripture warrant for laborers settling matters for others. They, as any others, may come to correct conclusions, but the idea of laborers deciding matters is presumptuous and unscriptural, usurping the Lord's place in dealing directly with the conscience and with the assemblies (Matt. 18:18) (though one taught in the Word may help an assembly and a brother may be used of God as was J.N.D. in the issuance of the Bethesda Circular). For a wholesome example, see the letter of Des Moines, U.S.A. (cited in Selected Ministry of A.H. Rule, vol.2, p.109) bowing to the action of Bexhill.

The way of recovery for the brethren in Europe who are the spiritual 'heirs' of those who refused the Tunbridge Wells action in 1909 is separation from evil unto the Lord and individual restoration to the ground of gathering together to Christ's name from which they departed in 1909.

I add that I do not agree with their criticism concerning harsh words, at least on the part of the papers opposing F.E.R.

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THE SECOND CIRCULAR OF THE CONTINENTAL BRETHREN

Elberfield, March, 1891.

To the Brothers H. C. Anstey, J. B. Stoney, and C. H. Mackintosh.

Beloved Brethren :

Many of those brethren, who were together in Elberfield in November last year and made the declaration sent to you as to their position with regard to the deplorable division among the brethren in England, are now again assembled, as usual, to consider the word. They have taken this opportunity of examining carefully Mr. Anstey's open letter, which you have thought well to write to these brothers, as an answer to the above mentioned declaration, and, we regret to say, to send it out in all directions.

They were, for a moment, undecided whether they ought at all to answer a letter which contains so many unjustified assertions, and, in several cases, directly contradicts itself.

As it has, however, (which is to them incomprehensible) been acknowledged and confirmed by two aged and highly esteemed brothers, to one of whom they are so much indebted, they feel it their duty before God to answer as follows :

We said, in our declaration of November, 1890, "That the *cause* of these sad occurrences and divisions is to be found in the teachings of Mr. Raven, which, in spite of repeated exhortations, he holds to, and which are, in greater or lesser degree, contrary to Scripture, lead souls astray, and are dishonoring to the blessed Person of our Lord and Savior."

You answer that, if this were so, the Holy Scriptures give us distinct injunctions how to deal with such a man.

We agree fully with you on this point, but are at the same time persuaded, that we have acted precisely according to these injunctions, in acknowledging the decision of the Assembly in Bexhill.

This Assembly has *not separated*, as asserted, from the Assembly of God in general; has not, as you say *gone out of fellowship*; has not dealt with the matter *in their own way*; but has, in a Scriptural way, "decently and in order," protected itself against evil, by refusing, under stress of circumstances, fellowship with the gathering in Greenwich, which expressed as a gathering its fullest confidence in Mr. Raven, and declined to examine into the doctrines, by which, for a long time, the consciences of their brethren had been disturbed and distressed.

This is clearly to be seen in the correspondence between

Bexhill and Greenwich.

That there was a cause for the disturbance of consciences you will not deny. Mr. Raven teaches, for example:

"Next, as to eternal life. It was God's purpose in Christ from eternity; it was, in essence, with the Father in eternity, but has now been manifested in the only begotten Son of God, who came here, declaring the Father, in such wise as the Apostles could see it, and afterwards declare it by the Spirit—but I regard it of all importance to maintain, clear and distinct from any purpose of blessing for man, the true deity, the *eternal Sonship* of the Word. Eternal life is given to us of God, and, it is in God's Son—for us it is the heavenly relationship and blessedness in which, in the Son, man is now placed and lives before the Father."

(Letter to J. S. O., 21 March, 1890.)

"Talking about Christ manifesting to the unbelieving world eternal life—the blessedness in which, as man, He was with the Father—are, to my mind, not only erroneous, but repulsive."

(Letter to J. S. O., 6th Dec., 1889.)

"In regard to eternal life; it seems to me that it is a kind of technical expression, indicating an order and state of blessing, purposed and prepared of God for man. With Paul it is viewed as a reward, or end, or hope—though the believer being called to it, is to grasp it while on the road to it. With John it is present and moral (not in display), formed for us by the incarnation of the Son of God—and we having entrance into it through death. The Son, where his voice is heard, gives us the privilege and entry and freedom of this sphere of blessing which is expressed in Himself as man—the privilege of blessed nearness to the Father, and of being the object of the Father's joy and love and delight. Hence, the Eternal life is in the Son, He is it. So that Eternal Life is objective and practical rather than subjective, a sphere and order of blessing."

(Letter, 1 May, 1888.)

Mr. Raven separates thus Eternal Life from the true Godhead of the Son, and makes it for us to be simply *relationship* and a *state of blessing*, which was purposed and prepared by God for man beforehand, but now, in the Word become flesh, has been *made or formed*; with regard to Christ, he calls it the *blessedness*, in which he was as Man with the Father.

"Eternal life was ever an integral part of the Person of the Eternal Son, but such as could, according to the divine counsels, be connected with manhood, and be imparted to man."

(Eternal Life, page 6.)

Mr. Raven says that Eternal Life is a part of Christ, and that this part is imparted to us; while, according to Scripture, not a part of Christ, but Christ Himself is our life.

"Now when we consider the application of this to the believer, we must bear in mind that the new and heavenly man, with which eternal life is connected, is distinct and apart from the life and circumstances of men down here.

"This is clearly seen in Christ, whose life is taken from the earth. It is as the risen glorified Man He is said to be the true

God and Eternal life."

(Eternal Life, page 3.)

"As the risen and glorified man He is the Eternal Life."

(Letter, 2 July, 1890.)

Mr. Raven teaches, that, *not as living on earth* the Lord was the Eternal Life; but only after He, having been separated by death from all circumstances of human life down here, was risen and glorified.

"What I thought, and I think maintained, at WITNEY, was that, though the "fathers" had not received anything from God that the "babes" had not received, yet that no one could, as to his Christianity, go beyond the testimony he had received, and hence there might be Christians who, in this sense, had not Eternal life. The early Christians had forgiveness of sins, and the Spirit, and were waiting for the Kingdom. The truth of Eternal Life came out with Paul's testimony. As to the other point, I should still hesitate to say, that Eternal life is presented as a principle of living, for the reason that, for us, Eternal life means a new man, and not simply a new vitality. Hence, it is 'He that has the Son has life,' and 'He that eateth me shall live by me.' I think Eternal life describes generally, the blessing in which we are placed before the Father. The principle of living is Christ assimilated, and effective in us by the power of the Spirit, so that we are formed in the new man." (Letter, 16 July, 1890.)

"But what is born of the Spirit is Spirit, and Eternal life is Christ, and that (as J. N. D. has said) revealed as man, in glory—He has to be digested into the life of our new being, and that is more than new birth." (Letter, 5th August, 1890.)

Here, the conclusion must be drawn, that believers *before* the calling of the Apostle Paul did not possess Eternal life, *nor even after they had received the Holy Ghost!*

Further, Mr. Raven here asserts, that even at the present day, there may be believers, who, in a sense, have not eternal life. Lastly, not to mention his irreverent manner of expression, *wounding every Christian sensibility*, he teaches the fatal error, that Christ is made *one with us*, while, according to Scripture, we have been made one with Christ, and become changed into His image.

"The effort of many is to make out, that Eternal Life is a Person, and I am not prepared to accept this. Scripture does not say that Eternal Life is Christ, but that Christ is Eternal life, i.e., that the heavenly condition of relationship and being in which Eternal life consists, exists, and is embodied and expressed in Him; and we, in having the Son, have Eternal life."

(Letter to a brother at Ealing.)

Thus, according to Mr. Raven, *not Christ personally* is the Eternal Life, but a heavenly condition of relationship and being,—a *something*, which has found its expression in Christ, and is imparted to us through Him.

"In the Epistle of John the Apostle is not, as I understand it, unfolding the Person of the Son; but declaring something that came to light, and is now perfectly expressed in Him, and in which, in having Him, we, too, have part."

(Letter to Mr. Edwards, 24 July, 1890.)

Although he admits that Christ is the Eternal Life, yet the explanation he adds makes this admission wholly powerless and worthless.

"In writing to a brother at Ealing I pointed out the monstrosity of an assertion of the Major's, that the Lord never ceased to be the *exhibition* of Eternal life from a babe in the manger to the throne of the Father. It was no question of what was there in the babe; God manifest in the flesh, eternal life, and all else, but of what He was the exhibition, for Major McCarthy meant in detail. He was as a babe the exhibition of infancy in its helplessness; for all else, though there, was for the moment veiled."

(Letter, 20 March, 1890.)

"Think of a helpless infant being the exhibition of Eternal Life, whatever might be there."

(Letter, 2 July, 1890.)

"The true God was in the babe in the manger, but those who worshipped Him there had been enlightened as to who He was. What they saw was 'the sign'— the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes lying in the manger."

(Letter, 14th August, 1890.)

Here we meet again with the same irreverent way of speaking of the Person of our blessed Lord. It is true, that Mr. Raven withdrew subsequently, at the wish of others, the expression 'helpless,' but the meaning of the sentence is not changed by this: he himself declared on the occasion of the withdrawal of that expression, that according to his conviction the remainder of the sentence contained the truth, and *that he would rather go out of fellowship than withdraw it*. As regards the doctrine, Mr. Raven separates the true God-head from the manhood. He says, *God was in the babe*, whilst Scripture teaches us, that even the babe in the manger was: GOD MANIFESTED IN FLESH; IMMANUEL (God with us).

"The key to almost all I have said lies in my objection to apply in an absolute way to the believer in his mixed condition down here, statements in Scripture which refer to what He is, or what is true of Him, viewed as in Christ."

(Letter, 6th Dec., 1889.)

According to this the believer, because sin and the flesh are still in him, cannot apply to himself in an absolute way texts such as the following: "In whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins" (Col. i. 14), "Who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenlies in Christ" (Eph. i. 3), "There is now no condemnation to those in Christ Jesus" (Romans viii. 1), and many others.

We could make many more quotations, but believe that the above extracts suffice for justifying our decision of November last year: "that such doctrines are contrary to Scripture, lead souls astray, and are dishonoring to the blessed Person of our 'Lord and Savior.'" We would not suffer a man, who taught such things, to remain in our midst, and we thank the Lord, that He has given the assembly in

Bexhill light and grace, to purge itself from this leaven.

It is true that the friends of Mr. Raven take pains to prove from other letters and writings of his, that he, as regards the points of doctrine objected to, is not only thoroughly sound, but even teaches precious truths: they bring extracts which appear to state exactly the contrary of the above citations. As long, however, as these latter and the doctrines contained in them, have not been clearly and distinctly acknowledged as evil and withdrawn, we consider these efforts but a clever attempt of the enemy, to *cover up* the evil and to blind the eyes of the saints.

You assert, in your letter, that "the Lord has exercised the souls of brethren, and is still exercising them, to confess to Him and to His own all wrong expressions;" but we must refuse this assertion as being thoroughly delusive. For, although some few very evil expressions made use of by other brothers have, we are glad to say, been withdrawn—expressions, however, which, in no wise, determined us in judging of the doctrine, still, Mr. Raven has given up no single point of his doctrinal system. On the contrary, the contents of the many letters and pamphlets written lately by Mr. Raven and by several of his defenders, prove how dreadfully the leaven has worked and is still working. In order to show how far he has already strayed from the truth, and where he is leading souls to, we append the following extracts:

"I believe eternal life was ever in the Son, both in purpose and essentially, just as I believe the Son of Man, the Second Man (though not yet revealed) was ever essentially and in purpose in the Son. He has become it, but as to all that gives it its character, it is of the Son. Jesus says, 'No one has ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, the Son of Man which is in heaven;' and again; 'What and if ye shall see the Son of Man ascend up where He was before?' And Paul says, 'The Second Man is out of heaven.' Now that the 'Son of Man,' 'the second Man,' and 'Eternal life' have, so to say, taken form, Scripture shows that they are from heaven, but He in whom they are revealed, is also the ETERNAL SON.

"Morally, there is no difference between life as eternally in Him and Eternal life, but it is evident that divine life must be in a way affected by coming into manhood, must connect itself with qualities (obedience, subjection, dependence, etc.) which have no part in the proper life of God."

(Letter, 21 November, 1890.)

We do not consider it necessary to add any comment to these words; they are nothing but gnosticism. Scripture says "Thou art my Son; *this day* have I begotten thee" (Heb. i. 5), while by Mr. Raven, *an eternal humanity* is taught, not only in *purpose*, but also in *essential being*.

Our object is not controversy, but we cannot refrain from

expressing our conviction that these teachings, in connection with many similar writings of Mr. Raven's friends, which we have received, present a systematic attack of the enemy on the whole framework of the truth of God.

That *heaven is actually present*, which must be purged out, you admit in your letter. Also the meeting in Westland Row, Dublin, acknowledges this, in saying:

"Nevertheless, we feel bound to place on record our condemnation of the one-sided, defective, and unguarded manner in which Mr. Raven has presented the truths he desired to unfold; and also the irreverent form (however unintentional) of his statement relative to the infancy of our blessed Lord, and we regret that brethren did not accept his offer made at an early stage of this trouble to cease from ministering;* and we consider that our brother should cease to minister until confidence be restored. We desire to express our utter abhorrence of the attempts of some to divide the life of the Lord Jesus, whom 'no man knoweth' (Matt. xi. 27), leading to the unholy expressions, which have been uttered, though thankful that, so far as we know, these expressions have been judged and withdrawn."

Further, on 27th September, 1890, Mr. Mackintosh wrote to one in our midst. . . . "not that I endorse all Mr. Raven's statements, far from it, I consider many of them involved, obscure, ambiguous, and one-sided. In fact, I quite agree with what you say on the subject.** And further, I believe that many of the questions that have been raised are, at once, irrelevant and irreverent. They should have been rebuked and rejected at the outset."

*We have made diligent inquiries as to this point, and fear our brethren in Dublin have been misinformed. The only offer made was, as we understand it, to abstain from visiting certain places and meetings where open and strong objections to his teachings had been made.

**The writer had, among other things called Mr. Raven's doctrines, an error, the consequence of which would be that the Christian becomes occupied with his own growth in grace instead of with Christ and His work; which would lead to pride in the one, and doubts as to one's safety in Christ in another; he also wrote that Mr. Raven used very bad expressions on eternal life, and as to the Person of the Lord Jesus.

We cannot refrain from expressing our great astonishment that you, while holding such a judgment as to the doctrines of Mr. Raven, will not assume a decided attitude against them. You admit that heaven is present, and remain, nevertheless, in connection with it, and judge those who have purged themselves from it.

Again, the charge of despising the presence of the Lord in the midst of the two or three gathered to His Name, recoils with full force upon yourselves, on account of your paying no attention to the decision of Bexhill.

We know well what accusations were subsequently raised against this assembly, as if they had been influenced by others, etc. But the following letter of a brother in that gathering, shows how groundless and unjust these accusations are.

Trescoe House, Bexhill, Sussex,
27th January, 1891.

My dear Brother:

Your letter arrived yesterday, and I hasten to answer your inquiries, though it be truly sorrowful work to have to say the things asserted and circulated far and wide as facts, are without the slightest foundation and devoid of a particle of truth; how terrible that brethren dearly beloved in Christ, and for their works' sake, should lend themselves thus to the enemy. Is it not striking that, when the blessed Lord is speaking to His disciples of the coming of the Holy Ghost, He speaks of Him in each instance as "the Spirit of Truth?" (John xiv.; xv.; xvi.). Thus we have no difficulty in tracing the hand of the enemy, and the power under which those have fallen who have accepted and are exponents and defenders of doctrines derogatory to the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ, and subversive of the truth of God.

My own earnest desire is that, in refusing to be identified with such teaching, or with those who promulgate it, one's heart might be kept in all the tenderness of Christ's own love for His own, so that, without ceasing, one might earnestly plead with God our Father for them, and no bitter feelings find any lodgment in our hearts, or harsh and unchristlike words find expression in our converse as to them, thus the Holy Spirit may not be grieved, or the feet of the simple stumbled, and our own souls damaged.

Surely, we find the danger and tendency of controversy is to create place for the flesh, and unless we are in reality with the Lord, the flesh comes in, and all is at an end as to Christ's glory, and, surely, this is all we have to care for, or be mindful about; is it not?

But, to turn to your questions, *first*, as to Mr. Boddy's visit to Bexhill; he did not call upon any brother that I am aware of, either *before* or *after* the Lord's day, when he presented himself with his wife at the meeting; that is, he never visited any of us during his stay at Bexhill. I know not how many days he was in the place, probably about

a week; but as to the exact time, I do not know. So, you see, the first thing is without a shadow of truth. The only word I spoke to Mr. Boddy was previous to the meeting when I asked him if he would respect the consciences of the saints here by sitting back, and in not presenting his letter. This, as you know, he refused; and made a public refusal of it necessary.

Secondly, as to our consulting Mr. C. D. Maynard prior to our action, and his advising us what to do, the fact is, he did not know Mr. Boddy was in Bexhill; the first thing he heard was, what the Bexhill Assembly had done.

The dear brethren mentioned by you as managing things here had no more to do with our action than you had. It is a statement made in letters of Mr. Oliphant, which, I trust, in the Lord's goodness, he may, one day ere long, judge and confess as sin; to stigmatize the action of a company gathered to the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ as a "party move," etc., and that, too, without the slightest vestige of proof for the statement, is, to me, very dreadful. But through His grace, we have never attempted to vindicate ourselves; we leave the matter with the Lord; but, when asked, as in the present case, we simply state the facts and leave it with the saints to judge before the Lord as to it.

We were all conversant with the facts of what had transpired in London and Greenwich and the doctrines taught by Mr. Raven and his supporters. It had been going on over two years; and several brethren had visited us, who had imbibed these teachings; and sought to get our acceptance of them. So, here again, what is said as to our ignorance of facts is entirely without foundation. The gathering numbered about 24 (seven brothers), besides visitors at the time; four sisters after the decision as to Greenwich, left us, and went with Mr. Raven. Two other sisters have gone from brethren altogether. Otherwise we remain together, though we have had to find another meeting room, as the old one belonged to our brother Mr. Oliphant, and he, as was to be expected, gave us notice to quit.

The last point in your letter as to Mr. Maynard writing our letters is as untrue as all the other statements: together we waited upon the Lord, came together for prayer again and again, and laid all our exercises before Him, and sought His gracious guidance, which we have never, for one moment, doubted He afforded us, and drew up our replies, and amended them as we judged any alteration in the wording required, though in truth we felt it was a matter that required but few words: and there was no attempt or pretense to write anything but our simple convictions before

God as to the character and effect of the teaching dividing and scattering the beloved sheep of Christ.

I trust, dear brother, this is a sufficient reply to your questions. If you need anything further, I will endeavor to write you more fully, but it is really all summed up in a word; all the statements so diligently circulated are without a particle of truth, and the work of Satan to blind the eyes of the saints as to what is really in question—the Person of our ever blessed Lord Jesus Christ, and the truth of God.

May the Lord graciously strengthen your hands, and those of the dear brethren with you, for His service, and the comfort and building up of the dear saints, in these evil and sorrowful days, and while judging what is evil, have our hearts set upon what is good, pure, and holy; yea, upon Christ. If the enemy can fill our minds with questions, he has gained his advantage; but our God and Father would, by His holy Spirit and Word engage our heart's affections with His Beloved, with Christ; is it not so? (Phil. iii. 13, 14, 15; iv. 8, 9).

With warmest love in Christ,

Your affectionate brother in Him,

(Signed) ROBERT KENT.

Your further remarks have justly excited our astonishment. How is it possible to assert "that the accused was never visited (according to Matt. xviii. 15-17) by one (or several) of his accusers, in order to prove that 'heaven' was present, and to arouse his conscience as to it?" You know, as well as we do, that (not to mention the writings directed against Mr. Raven, which you term "biting and devouring"), for a long period, *numerous* efforts have been made, orally and in writing, privately and publicly, singly and by several, to convince Mr. Raven of the unscriptural and corrupt character of his teachings, and to prevail upon him to withdraw them. But all efforts were in vain, he *would not* give them up—can it be called "following righteousness" (whereunto you exhort us in your letter) to circulate such untrue accusations?

Your reference to Matt. xviii. 15-17 appears also very strange, to us. Must we remind you that these verses treat of the way one has to behave, when a brother sins against me *personally*, but not of the conduct of a gathering, when heaven becomes manifest as regards walk and doctrine? If a brother sins against me personally, I ought to go to him, and seek to convince him, etc.; but if anybody in an ungodly way raises "babblings" and "questions," speaks perverse things, and thus falsifies the truth of God, causes "divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which you

have learned," we should *avoid* him, *reject* and *turn away* from him; a man that is a heretic, we should, after the first and second admonition, *reject*. If anyone come unto me and bring not the doctrine of Christ, I am not to *receive* him, nor even to *greet* him—(Comp. 2 Tim. ii. 16, 23, 25; Acts xx. 30; Rom. xvi. 17; Titus iii. 10; 2 John 9 and 10).

You add that "the accusers have never brought their charges before the local assembly (Greenwich) where the accused was responsible, nor tried to prove them to the same. To this, we answer: Not only were the consciences of many brethren, both in England and other countries, for two years, disturbed and distressed by Mr. Raven's teachings; not only had several pamphlets appeared, in which these doctrines had been proved unscriptural and pernicious;—but, also, the Assembly in Bexhill had written to the Assembly at Greenwich; . . . "The ground we take is this: that you have, in your Assembly a brother, Mr. F. E. Raven, whose teaching is, we judge, derogatory to the glory of the Person of our Lord Jesus Christ, and contrary to the Scripture. The effect of his teaching has been to cause sorrow and contention far and wide, amongst those gathered to the Name of our Lord Jesus, and to raise questions leading to discussions concerning the Person of our Lord, which are, to us, irreverent and profane."

In the light of these well-known facts your assertion appears thoroughly groundless and unjustified, and must fill every upright heart with deep sorrow.

Again, where is it written, as you assert, that the accused must be confronted with their accusers, and in this way their guilt proved; above all, when it is a question of evil doctrine? We can find nothing of this in Scripture. Before what Court Justice should the charge be raised, and the proofs required, produced? We infer, from your letter, that you consider the gathering in Greenwich as the Court before which this matter should have been settled. But this very gathering had, in advance, expressed their fullest confidence in Mr. Raven, and declined to examine into the doctrine! What were the brothers, whose consciences were disturbed, now to do? Should they lay the matter before another gathering, or call a conference of brothers? Would these have been a Court capable of definitely deciding the question, so that this decision would have been binding for all other saints?

Beloved brethren, if such a mode of bringing proofs as you require were enjoined and necessary, all discipline with regard to the doctrine and all separation from those who do not abide in the truth would be impossible. For, if I may not

separate from an unscriptural system, or, as in the present case, from a teacher of error and his Supporters, until I have proved to *them* that they hold evil doctrine, I cannot separate at all. A teacher of error will never admit that he is teaching evil, unless his eyes are opened by the grace of God; but then he ceases to teach evil.

Besides, what further proof is needed when the evil doctrines have long been accessible to all, in "black and white"?

Many now ask, "How is it possible, that unjudged leaven can exist in Greenwich, when so many aged and excellent brothers are unable to discern it?"

To this, we should like only to answer with the following words of our dear brother, J. N. Darby, which he wrote more than 40 years ago, on the occasion of the separation from Newton:

"This may be always remarked, that where there is a work of the enemy, even saints may fall into it, if they do not treat it as such. It has power over the human heart, and where there is not in the soul the power of the Spirit to judge it as the positive mischief of the enemy (and so, it will be judged, where that power is), there the soul will fall into it as if it were more perfect truth than what the Spirit teaches.

"Nor is it to be thought for a moment that true saints of God are not liable to fall into these snares. On the contrary, what makes it important to consider them, is, that they affect the saints of God. Did they not, it might be sorrowful instruction, but no more; just as the awful darkness of heathenism . . .

"But there is a further point which it is right to notice. Truly godly people may be the instruments of helping on a system which is truly Satan's.

"Now many may be quite unable to detect Satan working in this way, but there will be always enough, through the faithfulness of God, to guard souls really waiting on Him from falling in; or if listened to, through grace to bring them out. But then, it will be, and must be, judged as evil, not dealt with as a mere measure of better and worse."

But, even if we were to suppose, that those aged and esteemed brothers were right, and that the expressions of Mr. Raven, although blundering and obscure, were really harmless, yet the conduct of this brother and the local assembly, to which he belongs, would still have been thoroughly contrary to Scripture. For, when tried and faithful brothers express (and this after repeated interviews and full correspondence) their deep and sincere conviction, that a teacher is guilty of having raised "foolish questions," it is the duty of such an one to cease ministering, and to cast the matter upon God, until either his innocence is proved, or his doctrine judged, and publicly withdrawn by him. A humble-minded, godfearing teacher could, surely, at such times not do otherwise, than keep silence, and wait upon God. On the other hand, the continued activ-

ity of such a brother, supported by others, is a sure proof that the enemy has his hand in the work.

Finally, we read in your letter, "I believe, my dear brother, that you have tried to regulate a matter, that can only be regulated by the Lord Himself, and in His holy presence."*

It certainly did not enter into our minds, to *regulate* a matter in England, or, as some have accused us of doing,—to make a resolution in the names of the assemblies of Germany, Holland, etc. We have simply, as brothers laboring in the Lord's work, and who have the maintaining of the truth and the welfare of the Assembly of God at heart, examined Mr. Raven's teachings, and the occurrences in England, and declared, that the decision of the Assembly at Bexhill, which has regulated the matter in a Scriptural way, is decidedly to be recognized. We considered it our duty, matters in England having gone so far, to bear a simple and decided testimony against the evil.

From all that we have said, it is clear that we, no more than Bexhill, have left the fellowship of Saints: but we have rather *acknowledged that separation, from those who will not judge evil, was necessary.*

Separation from evil is not going out of fellowship, but is on the contrary the divine principle of unity. Neutrality towards evil is not of God, and is, indeed, untenable.

At the same time, we wish again to repeat, that it is not our intention, to commence a controversy with our brethren. We only wish, in consequence of your unjustified accusations, to make known once again our position in this painful matter, and to raise a warning cry against the wily attack of the enemy.

With heartfelt love, and thankful recognition, of the rich blessing, which we, especially through you, dear Mr. Mackintosh, have enjoyed for many years, but with deep pain at the undecided attitude of so many dear brethren, and with fervent supplication that we may soon again, on the ground of truth, separated from evil, hand in hand, heart to heart, in testimony and service, be able to continue our pilgrimage together. We remain,

*The Raven-Taylor company still harps on this, for in the "Notes of a Conference at Barnet," June, 1929 (p. 23), James Taylor said: "It should be kept in view that church economy is entered upon and worked out in localities, and the Lord has His place if we recognize that. There was disregard of this entirely on the Continent." So they still ignore and close their eyes to the fact that "Bexhill has regulated the matter in a scriptural way." (Ed.)

Your brothers in the Lord's bonds,
(Signed) C. BROCKHAUS EMIL DÖENGES
 PHIL. THIELMAN H. C. VOORHOEVE

(On behalf of all the brothers present.)

The above letter, having been sent to us, we wish, hereby
to express our concurrence with its contents, as well as our
full fellowship with our German brethren in this matter.

(Signed) H. J. LEMKER CH. VODOZ
 ED. OKOLSKI JOSHUE GORET
 CARL MURI

C.A. COATES, A THOROUGH RAVENITE

Recall that J.Taylor, Sr. had referred to "...the form in which the truth has been currently expressed in England." Letters..., vol.1, p.29 (Nov. 25, 1905). This "form" and "line of teaching" introduced by F.E.R., with its new phraseology and new meanings for the old words, propagating ancient fundamentally evil doctrine, was absorbed by J.T. and C.A.Coates. These men were true moral successors of F.E.R.

I have devoted a separate appendix to C.A.C. because his books have been and are being spread far beyond the Raven-Taylorites. His books are advertised by the KLC-Glanton book publisher in England, the Central Hammond Bible Depot (a merger of C.A.Hammond [KLC] and the Central Bible Depot [Glanton]). As we shall see, numbers of these books contain fundamentally evil doctrines. C.A.C. often expressed these doctrines in "the form" of words introduced by F.E.R.

Two pamphlets (that this publisher does not sell, happily) by C.A.Coates attack the truth of the eternal Sonship. One of them states,

The Names Father and Son are ever presented in Scripture in relation to the divine mediatorial system. They belong to the sphere of revelation, and not to that of God's essential Being which no creature mind can ever know.

"Remarks on a pamphlet by A.J.Pollock, entitled, 'The Eternal Son,'" p.21.

In his currently advertised book on Luke, he wrote,

...but now we see what He would be in relation to God - the Son of God.

An Outline of Luke's Gospel, p.12.

C.A.Coates' denial of the eternal Sonship is also expressed

in the book, Outline of Hebrews, Thessalonians, Titus and Philemon, pp.4-8, sold by that publisher. His use of "mediatorially" comports with his use of it in the two pamphlets written to deny the eternal Sonship.

In this book on Hebrews..., he wrote,

As soon as He was born He inherited every title that belongs to the Messiah; and among those titles was the glorious name of Son (p.4).

"The Son" is a mediatorial title (p. 6).

The idea of one person acting on behalf of others is mediatorial (p.7).

The relations which subsist between divine Persons as such are not revealed, but there are some that are (p.8).

It had been understood that the Burnt-offering presented the highest aspect of the work of Christ. As an illustration of how evil teaching affects other points, consider this:

Ques. Is not the burnt-offering greater than the sin offering?

C.A.C. No....There is nothing so great as the sin-offering.... Ibid. p.26.

In this book not only F.E.R. is approvingly mentioned (pp.53,194), so is J.Taylor,Sr. (p.203).

In his book, An Outline of Mark's Gospel and Other Ministry, Stow Hill, 1964, we read:

...Christ as having come into the condition of flesh and blood...(p.182).

...a divine Person come into manhood...(p.185).

He was the Son come into manhood (p.276).

In An Outline of Luke's Gospel we read:

A divine Person has come into manhood....(p.293).

...the Son of God, a divine Person in

manhood....pp.283,286).

The Lord's spirit went to paradise the moment He died.... (p.291).

It shows, too, how entirely He has taken the place of man, because His spirit was Himself (p.292).

That is a sample of the new form of language - it clothes the Apollinarian doctrine.

J. Taylor, Sr. wrote,

Our Lord Jesus, though really man, begotten of the Holy Ghost, born of the divinely-overshadowed vessel, was uncreate, though He entered His own creation, and His holy humanity had no link with that of fallen man. As to His spirit, it was Himself—the Son.... And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man. The omission of 'in spirit' in verse 40 is important as confirming that His spirit was Himself personally and could not be spoken of as in our case.

Cited by F.B.Hole in "Modern Mystical Teachings and the Word of God", p.38, from "Mutual Comfort", pp.172,199, (1920). Found also in N.Noel, The History of the Brethren, vol.2, p.588. See also p.599 for another citation. "His spirit was Himself", Letters of James Taylor, vol.1, p.272.

The shifty way in which teachers of evil doctrine often express themselves is illustrated in the following quotation from J.Taylor, Sr.

On page 279 of "Mutual Comfort," 1920 volume, is the following:

"Every soul that loves Him and bows to scripture would surely admit that while becoming flesh He changed His estate He could not and did not change in any way His personality, and still more would reject any suggestion that henceforth there became embodied in Him two personalities. The thought is abhorrent! Nor would any reverent soul assert that He received, as we, a created spirit. Yet HE HIMSELF, THE SON, became and abides forever

really, actually Man, in all that holy manhood involves. Having become Man, how could His spirit be other than human though never ceasing to be divine? for He brought into manhood all that was perfect in manhood according to God. It was surely as was said, Himself, for passing into death, in Luke, He commends His spirit to His Father. His death was in reality, as His burial attests." (p.279).

"At the same time, to speak of Him having a human spirit savors of dividing up what scripture does not, and might seem to imply something added to Him." (Note to page 279.) [The italics are ours.] N.Noel, The History of the Brethren, vol.2, p.599. F.E.R. used similar shifty language.

C.A. Coates wrote:

BELOVED BROTHER...It seems to be quite certain that the development in the Child Jesus could only be in relation to the condition into which He had come... Letters of C.A.Coates, p.300.

He was ever God, and never less than God as to His Person, but as born in time He came into a condition which was marked by the features which rightly mark man as in relation to God. I think it is right to connect His advancing in wisdom entirely with this side of things. F.E.R. said long ago, "The two thoughts are wholly distinct conceptions, which cannot be grasped at one and the same time by any finite mind...Now these two thoughts, though realised in one Person, must of necessity be separately and distinctly apprehended. The one presents God, the other man."

As to waxing strong in spirit, you have no doubt noticed that the Editors omit "in spirit," which leaves the expression as to waxing strong a general one, which is quite easy to understand as going along with advancing in stature, and belonging, of course, to the condition into which He had come.... Ibid, p.301.

F.E.R. was wrong in what is cited by C.A.C. But notice

C.A.C. makes the same point about "in spirit" being omitted as J.T.,Sr. did, as cited by F.B. Hole, above.

C.A.Coates said, "because His spirit was Himself." J.Taylor,Sr. said, "As to His Spirit, it was Himself." Regarding the Lord's dismissal of His spirit, F.E.Raven said, "But it is the Person who left the condition". All three agree; the spirit that left the body was only a divine Person and did not involve a human spirit. All three were Apollinarians. The doctrine is Satanic.

It seems incredible that a man who believes the spirit of Christ was "the divine Person" could explain Luke 2:46 thus: Christ's answers "were not what He knew as God, but what He had learned from God in the place of an instructed One" (Letters of C.A.Coates, p.300). Since his view is that the immaterial part of Christ was only the divine Person, this involves a divine Person learning. We might think it is difficult to know whether the stupidity of these notions exceeds the blasphemy or not; but see what heaven does to the mind.

But if one can speak so approvingly of F.E.Raven ("...particularly since we were so much helped by F.E.R.'s ministry...", Letters of C.A.Coates, p.108), we can understand this perverted view of Christ, which leaves us with no Christ, no Kinsman-Redeemer, no salvation, no Man in the glory; leaves us yet in our sins.

Mr. Coates also held F.E.R.'s doctrine that separates Eternal Life from the Godhead of the Person of the Son. How could he not do so if He denied the eternal Sonship? He also denied the eternal Word.

Mr. P. says that "the eternal life, which was with the Father, and has been manifested to us" was before time began. (Page 17.) How does Mr. P. know this? Certainly John did not tell him so. I have no doubt that eternal life was with the Father in the Person of the Son in Manhood, and as being there was manifested to the apostles. The scripture quoted does not prove what Mr. P. says it does. And where did Mr. P. learn that eternal life was a Divine Person? That God's Son as a glorified Man "is the true God and eternal life" is the truth of

Scripture. But to say that eternal life is a Divine Person is so unscriptural and untrue that one wonders how he ever came to write it.

On page 18 there are some remarks on our Lord's precious designation, "the Word." Mr. P. says that John 1:1 says "that the Lord was the Word in eternity." Mr. P. may be assured that if John 1:1 did say so, the brethren whom he criticises would fully believe and assert it.

"Remarks...", p.26.

We need not cite how he deals with John 1:1. It smacks of the same caliber of reasoning as a J.W. uses to neutralize John 1:1's assertion of Christ's deity. It is a Satanic delusion. In another wicked paper, "The Personal and Mediatorial Glory of the Son of God," p.30, he wrote, "to say that He was the Word in eternity only raises questions...."

His books have a Ravenite mode of expression and language. Their advertisement, mentioned above, reflects the Raven-Glanton influence at work. Whither drifts the already leavened lump, the KLC, GS, BG?

Here is a word from J.B. Stoney, a supporter of F.E.R.

ON CIRCULATING WRITINGS OF THOSE WHO HAVE TURNED ASIDE.

As to using and circulating the writings of "those who have not gone on in the separate path" I see grave moral objections to it; I do not think that everything depends on the words used, but on the intent with which they are used. I believe the Lord judges, and therefore blesses according to the intent of the heart. The words used might not be objectionable, and yet the intent might be evil.... I very much fear that often with perfectly unobjectionable statements, there may be underneath an evil intent—an intent to propagate the doctrine which sways oneself. The words may not betray the bias of one's mind, and yet the bias, like the atom of infection, is in the words, and will, unless counteracted by the truth which is the specific or

antidote for it, surely be the scorpion's egg, and become at length a poisoned sting.

It is impossible for a person either to write or to speak without imparting in intent that which has weight with himself. Be he as guarded as he may, he imparts it, and thus, in my mind, he is the agent for good or for evil.

I feel it a great mercy that the Lord regards the intent, and blesses accordingly; and though the same words may be uttered by two, yet if one had a deeper and more spiritual intent in them than the other, though the Lord may in a measure bless both, that the deeper and fuller blessing will be where the deepest and most spiritual intent is. The spirit, not the letter of the statement, is the essence of it. If the spirit or essence be evil, no amount of sweetness or dilution in the vehicle will counteract the effects of the poison; but, thank God, if the essence be of the mind of God, though the vehicle be unattractive and even insufficient, it will speak for itself. My judgment is that no amount of useful or orthodox statements should warrant me to circulate the writings of one who at the time is under an evil bias, for though he may indite such apparently good things, yet there must be poison in his mind which sooner or later will betray itself.

Letters From J.B. Stoney, Second Series, vol.1, pp.61,62.

This advice should be followed regarding the writings of F.E.R., C.A.Coates, James Taylor,Sr. and partially for J.B.Stoney himself.

To illustrate J.B.S.'s statement how poison in the mind betrays itself, consider C.A.C.'s Outline of the Minor Prophets, p.146, commenting on Zech. 13:7,

Beware of those who would use such scriptures (Phil. 2:7) to take away from the Lord of Glory what pertains to Him as a divine Person in manhood.

The poison of Apollinarianism is in the sentence. Don't shut your eyes to the fact. On p.96 he wrote,

..."The Angel of Jehovah." I believe that when this term is used in Scripture it always has reference to Christ.

He could not bring Himself to say, "it always has reference to the Son", or "the Son of God", which is the correct thing to say. It illustrates how the evil affects teaching. That is how leaven works.

My attention has been called by another to the Ravenite comments on eternal life found in some of C.A.C.'s books:

Luke, p.11, par.2.

Numbers, p.281.

Deuteronomy, pp.62,64,77,95,348,349,365,390 (eternal life and "the land").

Leviticus, p.123 (the divine nature).

HOW THE LEAVEN WORKS

INTRODUCTION

The working of leaven is presented in two ways in Scripture:

1. As in Matt. 13:33 where it is viewed as diffusing itself through the mass.
2. As in 1 Cor. 5:6 [moral evil] and Gal. 5:9 [doctrinal evil] where the tolerance of leaven gives character to the whole lump.

Other important principles should also be observed in these matters. The passage of time does not alter the character of a moral action. Nor does a moral stream rise above its source. Furthermore, the point of departure is the point of recovery, or restoration.

All these principles show how the Stuart and Glanton companies and those with whom they united are a leavened lump.

The reader will have noticed how rapidly certain brethren absorbed F.E.R.'s teachings. This illustrates point one above. F.C.Blount remarked,

These profane teachings, which at first appeared unmasked, and which then could be unhesitatingly seen as 'a ghastly fable,' have laterly been so enveloped in a fog of explanations that the true character of them is obscured from the unwary.

You may have been surprised, too, at the defense Mr. R - 's supporters have been able to make, by quoting from his writings. This, however, has been by some accounted for, upon the ground of the flexible, shifting, contradictory character of his writings. Again, while at one time or place, the truth seems to be stated, at another you find the statement positively nullified; so one is left to

conclude that the words which seemed to convey the truth, are used in a new way, as having an import with which we are not familiar, but a meaning quite in keeping with this new teaching....

"A Letter," Dec. 1890.

J.Dunlop observed,

The question has been asked, "How is it that whenever anyone goes to England and visits R. that they always come away convinced that he is all right?" The answer is, because they act in self-confidence and in disobedience to the Word of God, which says in Romans 16:17, "Mark them," and "avoid them," not "visit them." We do not need to go to England and see anybody in order to judge F.E.R.'s written statements, put out by himself, as we have them here, and the Word of God, which we are responsible to judge by.

"Two Letters," November 1890 [See note 2 of the Notes, p.141, for F.E.R.'s depreciation of faithful bro. Dunlop].

Wm. Kelly noted,

As of old, so now, there is the like urgent ground for children of God to cleave to the Lord with purpose of heart, and to deepen in their consciousness of eternal life in Him, so that they may the better help the simplest believers to know it as theirs. Thus is Satan's wile turned to the good of those by such as try to persuade themselves and others that in what was quite plain one mistook its nature and bearing. Such is ever the cry when heterodoxy is seen through. Then follows the effort to gloss it over, to disguise the evil, if they cannot deny it wholly, in order to avoid detection and discredit. It is never so where there is honesty before God. If a true-hearted saint was betrayed into error, he would be too thankful to have it laid bare in order to repudiate it with grief and humiliation. But hiding, minimising, and excusing error so fundamental is unworthy of those who once suffered the loss of not a little in this world for the

truth. It exposes themselves to the danger of falling into what they tamper with, or the loss of spiritual discernment. Is it not the working of the spirit of error?

Exposition of the Epistles of John, London: T. Weston, p.9, (1905).

B.C.Greenman (a follower of Mr. Grant) wrote,

We are told as to many of Mr. F.E.Raven's statements when challenged, "Oh he does not mean that," in fact such is Mr. Raven's often only explanation of what he has said or written. We must, then, as believing in the transparency of truth, and mystery of error, hold a man responsible for his certified statements until they are judged, and openly withdrawn. Many who have more than fears as to Mr. Raven's doctrines excuse him by saying his meaning is not as his words, but Scripture records of some—"their word will eat as doth a canker," and our Lord once said, "By thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words shalt thou be condemned" (Matt. 12:37). Let none, then, be deceived by putting against Mr. Raven's statements others he has made, but let us know first what his words mean, and see if they and God's words are of like meaning. "To be simple concerning evil" will not make us in league with it, or uncertain as to what is evil, but in the wisdom which divine goodness gives, prompt in our refusal of it. "The fear of the Lord is clean, departing from evil."

"Letters Relating to Present Affairs. An Appeal To Our Brethren in Fellowship with Mr. F.E.Raven," pp.1,2.

Mr. Raven's letters are filled with apparently "humble" and self-effacing remarks. There are Christians to whom this appeals more than fidelity to Christ.

Mr. Raven had the effrontery to state in a letter dated July 3, 1890,

I do not claim to have found new light, but I have desired as a servant of the Lord, and of the

saints, to remind those who will receive it of truths well known, but apt to be let go.

Letters of F.E.Raven, Stow Hill, 1963, p.20.

Masks do come off.

I think that I have through grace received light on these subjects, and have sought in my measure to help others. Whatever defective statements I have made on the road to light....

Ibid., p.37, (Nov. 28, 1890).

There is an effort to reconcile what has come into view, with that which has been customarily held, and this temper is not one conducive to the apprehension of the truth.

Ibid., p.191 (Aug. 25, 1902).

The truth of the matter will come out, though the leavened teacher hypocritically and deceptively claims, at first, only to remind the saints of what had been taught previously. How leaven works and deceives.

The pretension didn't stop however. He wrote to J.B.Stoney on July 8, 1895,

I feel that the great point of late years was that the truth which the Lord had opened up by Mr. Darby should be maintained. Many made the mistake that it was to be guarded by insistence on the Letter. I believe that the true way was in its being made good in the Spirit's work in souls, and here I see the great value of your perseverance and service.

Letters of F.E.Raven, Stow Hill, 1963, p.108.

We will now consider the effect of association with leaven on several prominent brethren.

J.B.STONEY

J.B.Stoney desired that others believe that his and F.E.R.'s (mystical) teaching would have been sanctioned by J.N.Darby. For example, he said,

Anyone acquainted with the details of the controversy from Witney in 1888, on to the present time, must be convinced of the ignorance of some of the most advanced teachers as to what it is to have Christ formed in you. This was foreseen by Mr. Darby when he recommended the study of John's writings, which in great measure are subjective.
Ministry by J.B.Stoney, New Series, vol.2, p. 530.

Read Note 2, p.141, of the Notes here.

The above pretension to building on J.N.D. was carried on by C.A. Coates. He stated,

The Lord has revived, in infinite grace, Paul's ministry, and also (especially since J.N.D.'s departure) John's.
Cited by A.J.Gardiner, The Recovery and Maintenance of the Truth, p.182.

The mystical system of J.B.Stoney was at work during the last few years of J.N.Darby's life. An examination of articles appearing in J.B.S.'s magazine, Voice to the Faithful, vol.11 [I do not know if J.B.S. authored those criticized by J.N.D.] is found in Letters of J.N.Darby, vol.3, pp.482-491 [Stow Hill ed.]. J.N.D. refers to "a settled system" (P.488); says, "Your remarks, I think, are constantly fancies" (p.489); warns, "...Satan found opportunity to mix your own imagination with it, and introduce what tended to sap the reality of truth" (p.491). A few more remarks are found on pp.472,473. Further remarks are found on life and new creation in vol.3, pp.14,15 and concerning related matters on pp.54-56. An article received by J.N.D. in 1875 (vol.3. pp.439-441), found in Food for the Flock, vol.2, p.1, tends in the same line. (That article was not written by J.B.S.). J.N.Darby rejected the system which many think was "new light."

While J.B.S. had many good things to say, he was moving into mysticism that also ensnared F.E.R. It is likely that J.B.S. developed F.E.R. who in turn led J.B.S. into supporting and personally holding and propagating fundamentally evil doctrine.

F.E.Raven wrote on Dec. 19, 1895,

For myself I can say that there is no one on earth whose ministry and self have produced so lasting a moral effect on me as Mr. Stoney.
Letters of F.E.Raven, Stow Hill, 1963, p.111; also p.135.

Let us now examine some things that appeared in Mr. Stoney's magazine. In the second article in the Voice for 1891, B.W.K. writes,

Those who say that the Son of God, or the eternal Son, the Christ, and eternal Life are identical or interchangeable terms (and there are such) have evidently lost the all important distinction between the blessed Lord as a divine Person and as Man ... p.11.

You cannot see in this the separation of eternal life from the deity of the Person of the eternal Son? Let us hear more:

These are elementary truths, I admit, but it seems necessary that saints should be reminded of them, as there is a tendency on the part of some at present to connect believers directly with Deity, by affirming that "Deity and life are inseparable," and other similar statements, and this mainly on the ground of 1 John 5:20. I do not doubt it is a subtle effort of the enemy to obscure the glory of the ever blessed Son of God, by limiting Him to that in which we can be united to Him, for we could not have association with Him in His divine character and glory. Such a thought is abhorrent to every right-minded Christian, and would not be entertained by any for a moment but for the blinding influence of Satan. Yet this is the fair inference from many papers that are now being spread abroad. It is no use covering it by saying "we do not state or imply that on communicating life to us He communicates Deity," and similar remarks; or retiring behind the oft-quoted phrase, "No man knoweth the Son, but the Father;" the natural result of the teaching is what I have

stated above.

Ibid., pp.14,15.

Mr. Stoney allowed the printing of blasphemy in his magazine. This doctrine means that the Son was not eternal Life essentially in His divine, eternal Being.

In the third article in the Voice for 1891, H.C. Anstey attacked Bexhill without naming that assembly (p.28). It is recognized by him that the charge against F.E.R. was "the existence of false doctrine (leaven) allowed..." (p.27).

The Voice, 1891, p.257, says, "Things and people continue in ordinary agreement until a greater light from God is made known, and then a division ensues...". I take this as sanction of F.E.R., not ignorance of what he was really saying. I do not know if J.B.S. wrote the article.

While no editor of any magazine would agree to accept responsibility for every expression and notion printed in his magazine, when such vital truth is touched, an editor is responsible.

Previously the following was cited from F.E.R.

Query - Why is He not personally Man?

Mr. Raven - He is personally the Son. You cannot have two personalities in one. He is the Son, but in the condition of a Man.

"Truth for the Time." Part 8, May 1895.

Cited in N.Noel, History..., vol.2, p.547.

Compare that with the following from J.B.Stoney,

The truth is that God was manifest in flesh; the divine Being, a Spirit, took bodily human form.... The opposers want to have two persons in one, man and God, one time to act as God and at another to act as man. They really do not see the incarnation. They do not see that He who was God became man and hence a man out of heaven. They would have Him to be a man in flesh and blood, and in a way distinct from His being God - whereas He is God, and He, that same Person, became a man in

flesh and blood, but He came from God, He brought everything with Him.

Letters from J.B.Stoney, vol.1,p.127. The cover on my copy says "New Edition" while inside it says "second series". The publisher is Stow Hill. Also cited by A.J.Gardiner, The Recovery and Maintenance of the Truth, p. 142.

This is the same Apollinarianism as in F.E.R.; and not only that, but the same doctrine that the second man was ever essentially in the Son in eternity is also in this statement. It is an integrated system of fundamental evil.

As to his assertion of what his opposers want (and I have read some of them) it is a fabrication of his own perverted view of the matter. Those who hold and/or support evil always make such misrepresentation while claiming that those who stand for the truth misrepresent them.

Let us hear from J.B.S. again,

If I am not very much mistaken, there underlies the teaching fundamental error. What does the "Personality of eternal Life mean?"....

Eternal life is not a person, but the power to enjoy what the person is.

Letters From J.B.Stoney, Second Series, vol.1, pp.112,113.

In Romans you are dead to sin, and to the old man; you touch life for your own relief.

Ministry of J.B.Stoney, New Series, vol.2, p.456 (1893), Stow Hill.

I do not think one in twenty, of the labourers even, understand the mystery.... The divisions among us all spring from not understanding the mystery, and the nature of Christ;....

Ibid., pp.455.

Mr. Stoney, we see, imbibed the main parts of F.E.R.'s evil doctrine.

In June, 1894, F.E.R. stated in a letter,

I know of no divergence of thought between myself and J.B.S.

Letters of F.E.Raven, Stow Hill, 1963, p. 90.

Letters From J.B.Stoney are being advertised by the KLC-GLanton publishing house in England - the Central Bible Hammond Trust.

J.S.OLIPHANT

Having denied the true humanity of Christ, F.E.R. had to have another kind of humanity. The meaning of his teaching on this was that the Son of Man came from heaven. I suppose F.E.R. means what constitutes the humanity of Christ as the Second Man. He did not mean that His body came from heaven. Above, we saw that J.B.Stoney said, "He brought everything with Him". This must necessarily be so in the Apollinarian scheme since the doctrine says that all He had from down here was the body. In Ch. 7 we saw that Apollinarius had some such evil notion also.

H.H.Snell wrote, to the well known J.Oliphant, a defender of F.E.R.,

In your printed letter, dated September, 1891, you touch, if I mistake not, the root of Mr. F.E.Raven's evil doctrines, when you refer to his statement that—"the Son of Man, the Second Man, (though not yet revealed) was ever..essentially in the Son," (Nov. 21, 1890), but you do not appear to see this statement is necessary to fit in with his oft repeated doctrine, that—"Eternal life in scripture always stands in connection with manhood, whether in Christ or in us." To justify this, he is obliged to teach what you say—"that man or humanity existed in some shape or form before the incarnation," or, to quote his own words, that—"The Son of Man, the Second Man,..was ever essentially in the Son." This is very serious....

It is well you have brought this fundamental error concerning the Person of our Lord before Mr. R....

But to my mind you spoil all; for what you declare to be "most objectionable," you excuse by saying, "I am sure you do not hold what it implies."

How could you pen such a sentence? The point is, what does Scripture say? There we find a teacher is held accountable for what he says. Paul as an apostle delivered two persons to Satan "that they may learn not to blaspheme." They had been uttering what was blasphemy. He also refers to some in another epistle, who were "saying (observe saying) that the resurrection is past already," and he adds that "their word will eat as doth a canker." Another Apostle wrote, "If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine (the doctrine of Christ), receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed" (See 1 Tim. 1:20; 2 Tim. 2:17-18; 2 John 10,11). Our Lord's words also were, "By thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned" (Matthew 12:37). How could anyone then who was walking uprightly before the Lord, either request or receive "explanations" of words which dishonour Him? The principle is most demoralizing and unjust. "A Letter," Nov. 19, 1891.

Mr. Snell also wrote,

1.—Within the compass of about a page, Mr. O. repeatedly tells us what Mr. R. meant. Now while none of us should be captious, or seek to make another an offender for a word, but be ready to encourage the first sign of self-judgement in one charged with teaching error, yet for one to send forth erroneous statements concerning our Lord, and when charged with them for his chief advocate to say, "I am sure you do not hold what it implies," is a destructive and demoralizing principle, and cannot for a moment be accepted as according to holiness and truth. Scripture has settled it for us. It holds us responsible for what we say. There we find two persons solemnly charged with "saying that the resurrection is past already," and its effect was to overthrow the faith of some" (2 Tim. 2:18). It is not difficult to see that

nothing could more effectually further the work of Satan in subverting souls, than assuring those troubled about it that the author does not mean what his words imply. Scripture further says, "By thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned" (Matt. 12:37).

2.—Somewhat akin to this, is another attempt of Mr. O.'s to justify Mr. R. by bringing forward one of his good sentences to meet a bad one. The error of this was pointed out by Mr. Stanley in the beginning of this painful and humiliating controversy. It is an old device of Satan, almost always found associated with false doctrine, and dates as far back as the garden of Eden. It is the plea one constantly hears. When a sentence is brought before Mr. R.'s supporters which they cannot defend, they bring one of his true sentences to meet it. But it is a corrupting principle; and it is clear that no amount of truth added to it can neutralize or justify one unscriptural sentence about our adorable Lord. On the same corrupting principle Mr. O. speaks of some taking a sentence out of Mr. R.'s letters, and speaking of it as bad doctrine; as if a thousand additions of the truth could correct one false statement. If this mode of proceeding be admitted, then there will be no end to the propagation of false doctrine. An inspired apostle said, "We are not as many which corrupt the word of God, but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God speak we in Christ." And another apostle plainly declared that "No lie is of the truth" (2 Cor. 2:17; 1 John 2:21).

3.—The entire absence of Scripture proof for Mr. O.'s defense of Mr. R.'s doctrines must strike everyone who is accustomed to regard "It is written" as the sole authority, and only rule for the conscience. It may be easy to use special pleading, and to put sentences together in a clever way to meet an opponent, but cleverness is not the grace and truth which came by Jesus Christ. When "the momentous subject of the Person of Christ" is concerned, we must have Scripture; for nothing but Scripture can satisfy an upright soul.

"A few Observations on Mr. Oliphant's 'Remarks' on a Letter to him by H.H.Snell".

C.H.MACINTOSH

Appendix 1 and 2 named C.H.Macintosh who supported, we are very grieved to note, F.E.R. What a warning there is in this!

Regarding the trouble at Plymouth (1845-1848) and the Bethesda division (Open Brethren division of 1848), C.H.Macintosh wrote,

For my own part, I felt I had just the one thing to do, namely to take my eye off completely from persons and their influence, and fix it steadily upon Christ. Then all was as clear as a sunbeam and as simple as the very elements of truth itself.

...as the result of a good deal of experience and observation, I have invariably found that where a person was enabled to look at the matter simply with reference to Christ and His glory, all difficulty vanished. But on the other hand, if personal feeling, affection for individuals, anything merely natural, be allowed to operate, the spiritual vision is sure to be clouded, and a divine conclusion will not be reached.

"Fifteenth Letter To A Friend."

This was written in 1874. He was 54 when he wrote this; it refers to what he did when he was about 28. He lived from 1820 to 1896. He spent the last six years of his life in the Raven sect. It illustrates that age and experience do not keep us in the path.

A.C.Ord wrote,

We have in the Voice to the Faithful for January, 1891, page 14: "There is a tendency on the part of some at present to connect believers directly with Deity, by affirming that 'Deity and life are inseparable,' and other similar statements, and this mainly on the ground of 1 John 5:20. I do not

doubt it is a subtle effort of the enemy to obscure the glory of the ever-blessed Son of God, by limiting Him to that in which we can be united to Him; for we could not have association with Him in His divine character and glory."

What gives this paper an importance it would not have of itself, is that it has the sanction of the editor of the Voice, and has been widely distributed for the instruction of the faithful, like the second letter to the foreign brethren, countersigned by J.B.S. and C.H.M. Alas! that these writers also, in signing this letter objecting to Eternal Life being identified with Deity in the Person of our blessed Lord, should give the impression that they have become strongly impregnated with F.E.R.'s views.

It is alarming to see evil doctrine spreading in this way; and men of weight and character in the Church of God becoming involved in it, and lending their authority to unsound statements such as these, on the fundamental truth of the Person of Christ; instead of repudiating such assertions, and lifting up a warning voice to all they can reach against them. What hope can there be for the mass, who are sure to go beyond them. Our brother C.H.M. at the first refused to allow of any defining or separating Eternal Life in its existence and manifestation in the Person of our blessed Lord. (See Appendix B. in The Manifestation of the Divine Nature, p.45.) But there is no safeguard against the power of evil for the saint, but total repudiation of and separation from it. "Evil communications corrupt good manners." Those who practically lend it their sanction, cannot expect to escape its taint.

The Glory of the Person of the Son of God..., pp.27,28, note.

E.DENNETT

In 1895 there appeared a series on 1 John by E.L.H., in Ed. Dennett's magazine, The Christian Friend and Instructor. The following is from p.93.

Nothing is lost as to the eternal deity of our Lord in observing the characteristic force of the first verses. The character of that eternal life, which was such as was with the Father, is brought into prominence....

In the concluding article in 1896, p.78 we read,

"He is the true God and eternal life." He is the true God, as in contrast to all idols, and then there is a further description of the same Person—He is eternal life. Our blessed Lord's absolute deity is thus insisted upon; and He is also eternal life, as being Himself the source of all blessing and joy to us.

ALL of this is a denial that the Son is eternal Life. 1 John 5:20, perverted here, was well explained by W. Kelly in The Bible Treasury, New Series, vol.5, p.112.

A.J.POLLOCK

A.J.Pollock was in fellowship with the Glantons. In his "An Open Letter" to C.A.Coates, replying to C.A.C.'s paper which denied the Eternal Sonship, A.J.Pollock wrote:

Dear Brother in the Lord,

You have recently issued a pamphlet, entitled, "Remarks on a pamphlet by A.J.Pollock entitled 'The Eternal Son'," in which you endeavour to prove that,

- (1) The Lord Jesus is not the Eternal Son,
- (2) That the Lord Jesus is not the Everlasting Word,
- (3) That the Lord Jesus was not that "Eternal Life," before time was,
- (4) That the Father is not the Eternal Father.

C.A.C. was not a "Dear Brother in the Lord," but let that pass. Here is the point (p.2):

May I first point out that while freely criticising

my remarks, you have not ventured to animadvert upon the weighty extracts from the writings of J.N.D., J.G.Bellet, W.Kelly, F.W.Grant and F.E.Raven? The writings of these servants of God show that they entirely refuse the views that you advocate.

One of the reasons for disowning F.E.R. in 1890 was point 3 above. At any rate, this extract shows how A.J.P.'s mind was blinded to the facts. Otherwise we would have to conclude that the facts were being deliberately ignored. In either case it does not affect the fact that since leaven leavens the lump, the Raven-glantons were and are a leavened lump.

F.E.R.'S MYSTICISM ON THE LORD'S SUPPER

No, J.Taylor, Sr. did not introduce those preposterous notions concerning the Lord's Supper. Neither did C.A.C. F.E.R. did. Before considering that let us notice the mind-set of F.E.R.

We have seen that the mind of F.E.R. was not subject to Scripture. How did he regard Scripture?

W.M. Then a Bible student is not much after all.

F.E.R. I have said that if I had to live over again I would study scripture less and pray more. The great thing for a Christian is to get in his closet and pray. Prayer and meditation.

Readings and Addresses in the U.S.A. and Canada With F.E.R., 1898, p.126.

The evidence shows that the mystic was not in communion with God when in his closet. He is the author of mystical notions regarding the Lord's supper and the assembly.

F.E.R. You pass into the assembly through the supper.

Ibid., p.67.

R.S.S. Does not the more blessed part of the meeting come properly after the breaking of bread?

F.E.R. The supper is introductory to the assembly; and that is the reason for finishing all that is formal at first. Passing round the bread and the cup and the box are so far formal; you cannot help this, but it is a great thing to be free of it, so that you may be prepared for the assembly in its proper character.

Ibid., p.260.

R.S.S. ...I think we feel more free after the breaking of bread.

F.E.R. It is so if things are right. There is quite a change after the breaking of bread in the whole tone of the meeting.

R.S.S. After that it is what the Lord does. That is the second part. "In the midst of the assembly will I sing praise unto Thee."
Ibid., pp.264,265.

P.H. Is the sanctuary and the holiest the same?

F.E.R. Yes, the holiest is to us the sanctuary.

W.B. Going back to the Lord's supper, is it not rather the way in which the Lord conducts us consciously into the realization of what He is in the midst?

F.E.R. It is the way in which He makes His presence good to and felt by us. He was about to leave His own after the flesh, and shows them how He would make good His presence to them after He left them.

W.B. And then do we get on to the assembly?

F.E.R. I think so. You have another element of the truth in chapter 12, and that is we are one body in the Spirit, not in the flesh; there is one Spirit and one body.

G.W. You say we go from the breaking of bread to the assembly?

F.E.R. It is clear enough that the Lord's supper is the beginning.

G.W. Then you go from the assembly into the sanctuary.

F.E.R. The sanctuary is largely a question of individual apprehension; so long as we are down here (it will not be so in heaven) this must be the case.

G.W. I am surprised at that; you mean when we are gathered together on the Lord's day morning—and that, you say, introduces us into the assembly?

F.E.R. The saints are together in assembly, that is right enough, but the question of entering into the sanctuary is a question of individual apprehension.

G.W. On Lord's day morning?

Ibid., pp.270,271.

It would be interesting to know if any Glantons hold and practice these notions.

NOTES

NOTE 1

See Wm. Kelly, The Action of the Holy Spirit in the Assembly (Present Truth Publishers).

NOTE 2

F.C.Blount in "A Letter," Dec. 1890, p.4 said,

Some have assumed that what has provoked all this contention and strife has been antagonism to practical truth. This is an alluring assumption in view of what our state has been.

This is just what Mr. Stoney's explanation was for the cause of the 1890 division. In the following citations, page numbers refer to Letters From J. B. Stoney, second series, vol.1.

The root of the present trouble is that, while the standing and calling are accepted as God's grace, there is an absolute refusal of the state which He gives in connection with the standing and the calling. By state I do not mean practice, but what God confers. He gives the dignity, but He gives the mind, means, and manners, suited to the dignity (p.105).

The root is the reluctance to be heavenly (p.109).

The idea is that if a question be raised as to whether anyone is enjoying the result of the work, that you are thereby invalidating the work (p.111).

The last two quotations must, of course, be interpreted in the light of the first. The Lord having seen fit to allow the 1881 Kelly division, the 1884 Grant division, the 1885 Stuart division, it no doubt indicates low state and

worldliness coupled with pride. No doubt there was reluctance to be heavenly, but not in the exact sense of J.B.S.'s first statement above. He has there introduced a new meaning for the word state, a meaning which betrays the mystical bent that began to characterize his ministry in the late 1870's.

I will cite another perversion by J.B.S.

Those who dwell exclusively on objective truth can never know what new creation is—that it is the great grace of God to give us a state fitted to the reception of His grace, as the best robe fitted the prodigal for the great supper.

Ministry of J.B. Stoney, vol.2, p.530 (1896), Stow Hill, 1963.

Of course it is unscriptural to dwell exclusively on objective truth, and perhaps there was some of that. But every person "in Christ" is new creation (2 Cor. 5), is clothed with the garment of salvation, is a son, and in some measure of enjoyment eats of the fatted calf with the Father. New creation is a POSITION into which we are brought by the seal with the Spirit uniting us to the glorified Man on the other side of death. New creation is not a state. Practice and state go together. We need correction and exhortation for that.

These kinds of false teachings are what has rightly been called the new "line of teaching" that characterized F.E.R. and all who follow and/or read this "line of teaching". This "line of teaching" is mystical. The divisions of 1881, 1884, and 1885 were not enough chastening from God. His faithful hand struck again in 1890 on worldliness, pride, and on this mystical pretension and the evil doctrines it spawned. Unfaithfulness to Christ characterized these mystics and their supporters, as their espousal and/or support of fundamentally evil teaching shows. Mr. Raven saw the division this way.

I am convinced that it has been a conflict with the sort of materialism which had crept into Evangelical christianity through the effort to bring divine ideas within the comprehension of the natural mind. I can understand man's mind being

able to grasp the idea of sins and forgiveness but the moment we come to the positive character of our blessings in Christ, the human mind has no ability....

Some time since I was told by Gibbons of Newport that the result produced on his mind by a conversation with Dr. Rossier was that Lowe's course in England was determined by the fear of having to break with the foreign brothers, for they pretty well made up their minds to break altogether with England. It is certain that there has long been an unhappy feeling abroad in regard to England. Dr. R. said that they had not translated anything of J.B.S.'s for twelve years.

Letters of F.E. Raven, Stow Hill, 1963, pp.62,63 (Feb. 29, 1892).

That is, the mystic says his opposers' views are materialistic. F.E.R. made an interesting remark that illustrates the mysticism in which he became ensnared, as we noted in App.5. The point came out in a reading in which a questioner depreciated Bible students. It was stated that Scripture was given for bounds so as not to transgress. F.E.R. stated that if he had his life to live again, he would pray more and read less! Elsewhere he said,

We need the spirit of Scripture, the letter kills.

Letters of F.E. Raven, p.328, Stow Hill, 1963

The text of the N.T. never killed anyone. It lies on the surface of 2 Cor. 3 that "the letter kills" refers to the law. The law is "the letter". Hear him again.

...and the impression produced on me is that each time we read these epistles we get an increased sense of the Person, and thus in a way become less distinctly doctrinal.

Ibid., p.71, (Oct. 15, 1892).

I hope that brethren will get dislodged more and more from the old doctrinal methods, so that they are not only learning about Christ, but living Christ.

Ibid., p.207 (June 20, 1903).

And so F.E.R. could say of the faithful Mr. Dunlop,

Mr. Dunlop was always a morbid legal kind of a man, scrupulous as to the letter but entering probably little into the mind and spirit of Scripture.

Ibid., p.144 [March 5, 1898].

Thus does the mystic seek to be free from some of the statments of the Word; and often worldly Christians use a similar kind of statment against those who point out their worldly ways or who minister corrective ministry. "... as if preaching what is due to Christ is not preaching Christ." No wonder a faithful God must needs chastise us corporately.

Other statements F.E.R. makes that seem to balance his remarks are useless for that purpose. He had mystically and experientially derived 'knowledge', not to speak of his "mission...from an evil and opposing spirit". He perverted most everything he touched.

Of course, C.A.Coates carried on the mystical pretension, as others did also.

The honest persons to whom you refer have probably never had any spiritual idea of the holiest at all. Most of them would be likely to say if the truth was put before them that it was transcendental or mystical or too high to be practical! They have no idea of a range of things entirely outside the scope of man's mind or body, where the saints may realise entire separation in spirit from the flesh and from everything that is of the present order of things, and find themselves in the undisturbed repose of divine love in association with Christ in new creation blessedness, and in the conscious joy of sonship before the Father's face. Indeed, it was because these things, and others intimately bound up with them, were presented and maintained by J.B.S. and F.E.R. that the seceders withdrew. These things had no charm for their hearts, and their leaders had been for years slighting the ministry of J.B.S., which was pre-eminently a presentation of them.

Letters of C.A. Coates, pp.19,20.

NOTE 3

Wm. Kelly repeatedly denounced C.E. Stuart's doctrine of propitiation being made in heaven, using such characterizations as:

"The fundamental error which Mr. S. has embraced,"
The Bible Treasury, vol.16, p.190.

"his evil view"
Ibid., p.191.

"Even B.W.N. (Newton) and Bethesda (beginning of Open Brethren) would be ashamed to put such an affront on Christ's atoning death."
Ibid.

"...readers who are not leavened will see...."
Ibid., p.207.

"Mr. S.'s heterodoxy,"
Ibid.

In "'The Strange Doctrine' on Propitiation" W. Kelly pointed out that several in fellowship with him were put away when they were discovered to hold C.E.S.'s doctrine of propitiation made in heaven. W.K. wrote,

No person known to hold it has been, or would be, tolerated in fellowship.

In The Bible Treasury, vol.18, p.60 (1890, article "The Denial of Propitiating God By Sacrifice," the C.E.Stuart adherent, Walter Scott, is criticized by W.K. thus:

But I affirm that the author has abandoned the truth of God on propitiation in a way which the simplest believer in the most unenlightened sect, if orthodox, would denounce as false and evil.... It is not merely as in (1886) [C.E.Stuart's doctrine on propitiation being made in heaven R.A.H.) a fable supplanting the truth; it is since

then an open contradiction of a most essential element of propitiation as revealed in all the Scriptures of God, though presumably the last error (W.S.'s) flowed from the first (C.E.S.'s). For if propitiation be only in heaven after death, there can be in it no abandonment of God, no suffering of Christ. Both errors (W.S.'s and C.E.S.'s) make shipwreck of the faith; but the former is the parent of the latter, and necessarily involves it.

On p.83 he condemns "fellowship with those in such error."

Walter Scott went with Open Brethren in 1907 and died in 1933.

The 1933 merger of some Grants and Stuarts involved the denial that C.E.S.'s doctrine was fundamental evil. So was it in the merger of 1953. At one of the negotiating meetings of brethren in Paterson N.J., at which I was present, several Kellys said they thought it was fundamental evil. What carried the day was a statement by the Grant follower, F.W.C.Wurst, that it was "serious error to be rejected". Thus it was not permitted to be taught but one holding it would not be "put away". See Rev. 2:14,15.

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