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ARTICLE I.

THE SUFFERINGS OF CHRIST.

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A THEOLOGICAL inquiry has been revived of late, which had been regarded as long settled, whether the sufferings of Christ were confined to his human nature, or whether the Divine nature also suffered. Did he suffer only as man, or partly, principally, as God?

It is admitted on either side of this question, that our blessed Saviour is both God and man; that he possesses both a Divine and a human nature — a human body and a human soul — mysteriously united so as to constitute but one person. It is also admitted that he suffered the just for the unjust, and by his sufferings and death made a full atonement for sin. But the question is, In which nature did he suffer? In the human only, or also in the Divine? Did he suffer only as a man, — a divinely strengthened and supported man; or did the Divinity also suffer? Were his sufferings partly — and if partly, chiefly — those of God?

This question, though necessarily one of some intricacy, is obviously one of great importance. It respects God, — the Creator, Preserver, and Governor of all things — the only proper object of supreme love and worship. It respects Christ, — the only Saviour of lost men, — the soul and centre of the religion of the Gospel. It respects the atonement, — the most stupendous and astonishing of all Divine works, — the only foundation of mortal hopes. Such a question should never be approached but with reverence and humility, with a deep sense of our own ignorance and weakness, and with the most earnest supplications for the Divine assistance and blessing.

In discussing this question, it is necessary, first of all, to disencumber it, or to separate it from several others which have been confounded with it.

1. The question before us, then, is not, whether the Divine Being is in such sense *immutable*, as to be incapable of anything like a succession of views and exercises. Many excellent Christians have believed that there is, and must be, in the mind of God, something like a succession of views. Not that anything ever presents itself to his infinite mind, which was before unknown or unanticipated. God foresees, because he has purposed, all future contingencies and events. But then a foreseen event is not yet an actual event, nor is foreknowledge, even to the mind of God, precisely the same as present knowledge. Ten thousand things which were but foreseen yesterday, have come into actual existence to-day; and in passing from the foreseen to the actual, there has been, in respect to each, a real change. All these changes God has seen. He must have seen them, if he sees things as they are. And the seeing of them, as they came along, must have constituted a continual succession of views.

And as God is immutably holy, this change of views must have been followed by a corresponding change of holy feelings or affections. As God does not *view* things to-day precisely as he did yesterday (and for the very good reason that things actually *are not* to-day as they were yesterday, and God must view them at all times as they are) so he does not *feel* towards them to-day just as he did yesterday. His feelings, both days, have been unchangeably and perfectly holy; but in order that they might be so, they must have corresponded perfectly, and that too at every instant, to the constantly changing condition of things.

So have thought and reasoned some of our soundest and ablest theologians, both in ancient and modern times. But in so doing they have not conceded, nor have they thought of conceding, that the Divine nature of Christ participated directly in his last sufferings. The two questions are as remote from each other as almost any that can be imagined.

2. The question before us is not, whether God is in such sense *impassible*, as to feel no emotions, under any circumstances, which are in themselves unpleasant, or even painful. The Scriptures represent God as not only the subject of emotions, but of emotions in themselves unpleasant, in view of evil. He hates sin with a perfect hatred. He has no pleasure in iniquity. All sin and suffering are, in themselves, undesirable to him, and of course unpleasant. Such is the uniform representation of Scripture, and it is obviously a just representation. If God

is infinitely and immutably benevolent, it must be so. But the fact of such emotions by no means proves, that God endured, or directly participated in, the sufferings of the cross. The two things have almost no similarity. God may feel emotions in themselves painful in view of existing evils, and not himself bear those evils. He may have sympathized with the suffering Redeemer on the cross, and not himself have endured those sufferings in his own Divine nature.[1]

3. Nor is this the question before us, whether Christ suffered as a *mere man*. It is sometimes said that those who confine the sufferings of our Lord to his human nature believe him to have suffered as a mere man. But this is not true. At least, it is not true of Trinitarians. Our Saviour did not suffer as a mere man, for the very good reason that he did not *exist* as a mere man. He was God and man united in one person; and it was this same mysterious, glorious personage who suffered. But did he suffer in his Divine nature? Was the God, as well as the man, crucified? Did the Divinity die?

4. Nor is this the question to be decided, whether the Divine nature of Christ was not *indispensably concerned* in the work of his atonement. We hold that it *was* indispensably concerned — so indispensably, that without it no atonement could possibly have been made.

I pretend not to say how many important purposes the union of the Divine with the human in the person of Christ may have answered, in reference to the atonement. But I can easily conceive of the two following: First, his Divinity was necessary to sustain his humanity *to endure the requisite amount of suffering*. It is a great mistake to suppose that our Saviour, in his last agonies, endured no more than a mere man would have done, in the same time. From the very nature of the case he must have suffered inconceivably more. And then it is perfectly evident, from our Saviour's appearance in the garden, from the shrinking of his human nature in view of the scenes before him, and from all the

[1] It is just at this point that Chalmers and Harris have been misunderstood by some who have discussed this subject. All that Chalmers means to say (and the same is true of Harris in the passage which has been quoted from him) is, that the God of the Bible is not "a Being devoid of all emotion and of all tenderness," "but that in the bosom of the High and Holy One who inhabiteth eternity, there live and move and have their busy operation, all the resentments of perfect virtue against the sinner, and all the regards of perfect love and of infinite compassion towards the righteous who obey, and the penitent who turn to him." It is *God the Father* of whom Chalmers and Harris speak, and they represent him, and that truly, as loving the Son, and deeply sympathizing with him in his sufferings. But the question whether the sufferings of the Son were confined to his human nature, or reached also to the Divine, they do not touch. See Chalmers on Romans, Lect. 62. Harris's Great Teacher, p. 106, 108.

circumstances of the crucifixion, that his sufferings must have been, to the last degree, dreadful.

It has been said that our Lord did not meet his death with as much firmness as some of the martyrs have shown in like circumstances. But there is no comparison between the cases, and it is little better than impious to attempt a comparison. Our Saviour did not die as a mere martyr. The principal causes of his sufferings, their attendant circumstances, the amazing issues depending, the ends to be answered — all were different, and all in his case peculiar. I can conceive that our Saviour suffered more, in a few hours, than any martyr could have sufered in a thousand years. He suffered more, I have no doubt, than mere unassisted human nature could have sustained at all. Without the personal, all-powerful support of the Divine nature, the human must have been crushed in a moment.[1]

But there is a second reason why the Divine nature of Christ was indispensably connected with the human in his sufferings. It was to impart *dignity* and *worth* to those sufferings; to give the requisite *value* to the sacrifice. The atonement derives all its efficacy from the fact that it was made by the Eternal Son of God; by a person so ineffably dear to the Father, and sustaining to him such intimate relations. No being less than the Son of God could, in this view, have made expiation for sin. And yet it is not necessary to suppose that the Divinity in Christ directly suffered. The God sustained the man to endure all that eternal justice required. Our Saviour drank the bitter cup to the bottom, and wrung out the dregs. It was the Divinity of his person, too, which gave all its value and efficacy to the sacrifice. Without this, it

[1] I do not here refer to *spiritual* supports and consolations, such as have been enjoyed by martyrs and other Christians in their last extremities; for from the dying Saviour these seem to have been wholly withdrawn. But I refer to that physical, supernatural, omnipotent support, which the God, in personal union with the man, afforded to the immaculate sufferer, and without which, the burthen imposed on him could not have been borne, and the work of our salvation had not been achieved.

Speaking of Christ's sufferings, Pres. Edwards says: "How dreadful was the cup itself! How far beyond all that can be uttered or conceived! Many of the martyrs have endured extreme tortures; but there is reason to think that these all were a mere nothing compared with the last sufferings of Christ on the cross." *Works*, Vol. VIII, p. 167.

Prof. Stuart, after having expressed the idea that the sufferings of Christ were confined to his human nature, and after having recounted the painful circumstances of his dying scene, adds: "all combine to show that the suffering was such as the world had never witnessed, and that it is probably not in the power of language to express, nor of our minds to conceive, the extent of the agony which Jesus endured." *Sermons on the Atonement*, p. 12.

could have had no more efficacy than the sacrifice of a bullock or a lamb.

I have endeavored, in these remarks, to separate the question before us from others with which it has been confounded. We now return to the question itself. Were the vicarious sufferings of our Lord Jesus Christ confined to his human nature, or did they reach also to the Divine nature? Did the God, as well as the man, suffer? Did the Divinity die?

To prove that it did, a class of Scriptures have been adduced, in which it is said, without limitation or qualification, that *Christ suffered;* implying that he suffered in both natures, or in his whole person. "Forasmuch then as *Christ* hath suffered for us in the flesh." "For *Christ* also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust." 1 Pet. 3: 18. 4: 1. The argument from these and the like passages rests wholly on the assumption, that whatever is affirmed of Christ in the Scriptures, is affirmed of him in both natures, or in his whole person. But is this true? Can such an assumption be sustained? "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and forever." Heb. 13: 8. "Christ, who is over all, God blessed forever." Rom. 9: 5. "We are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ: this is the true God and eternal life." 1 John 5: 20. In each of these passages, there is something affirmed, and that too without any limitation, of Christ. But is it affirmed of him in both natures, or only in one? Every reader sees that these passages have respect entirely to the Divine nature of Christ. They cannot be applied to his human nature.

Take, then, another class of texts: "Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and with man." "And Jesus began to be about thirty years of age." "Jesus therefore, being weary, sat thus on the well." Luke 2: 52. 3: 23. John 4: 6. In these passages, certain things are, in the most unqualified manner, affirmed of Christ. But are they affirmed of him in both natures? Or are they not obviously and certainly limited to his human nature?

Some have made a distinction between the acts and the sufferings of Christ, and have said that though the former may be ascribed to him in one of his natures, the latter cannot be. His sufferings must belong to both.[1] But when we look into the Scriptures, we perceive, at once, that this position is untenable. In one of the passages just quoted, our Saviour is represented as suffering from *weariness.* But was the almighty God weary? In other places, Christ is said to have suffered from *hunger* and *thirst.* Matt. 4: 2. John 19: 28. But are we to suppose that God ever suffers in this way? Our Saviour also suffered from *tempta-*

[1] Prof. Lewis, in Bib. Repository for July, 1846, p. 397.

tion, and from *fear*. He "suffered, *being tempted*. He "was heard in that he *feared*." Heb. 2: 18. 5: 7. But "God cannot be tempted of evil." James 1: 13. And of what has he to be afraid? Or how is it possible that he should suffer from such a cause?

Perhaps it will be said that the required limitations, in the passages here referred to, need not be expressed in words, flowing as they do from the very nature of the subject. To ascribe hunger, thirst, weariness, fear, and temptations to the Supreme Being, would be inconsistent with all his perfections. And is it not equally inconsistent with his perfections to ascribe to him the sufferings of the cross? We affirm that it is; and if the assertion requires proof, the proof shall be furnished in the proper place.

Other Scriptures are cited to prove that the Divine nature suffered on the cross, which are thought to be even more decisive than those which we have considered. "Ye killed the Prince of Life." Acts 3: 15. "They crucified the Lord of Glory." 1 Cor. 2: 8. "Feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." Acts 20: 28. But to the sober interpreter of the Bible, these passages present not the slightest difficulty. We hold them to mean just what they say. That mysterious personage, who is properly styled "the Prince of Life" and "the Lord of Glory," the Jews did actually kill and crucify. But to this same personage, all Christians (unless it be Monophysites and Unitarians) believe that there belonged *two distinct natures*, a Divine and a human. In which of his natures, then, was "the Prince of Life" killed, and "the Lord of Glory" crucified? Was the Divinity killed? Was God crucified? The affirmative of these questions the passages before us go not a step towards establishing; and it is well for the credit of the Scriptures that they do not.

Of the other passage quoted, there are several readings; but we incline to the commonly received text. And as it stands in our Bibles, what is the language of it? What does it say? That a certain Divine person — one who with the strictest propriety may be called God — hath purchased the church with his own blood. But this wonderful personage was human, as well as divine — man, as well as God: and did the blood which was shed, and with which the church was purchased, proceed from his Divinity, or his humanity? This question the passage itself does not answer; and hence it fails to prove that the Divine nature of Christ was a partaker, directly, of his sufferings.[1]

To our interpretation of these passages it will be objected, that though

[1] It is one thing to affirm that Christ, a Divine *person*, suffered, and quite another to affirm that he suffered in his Divine *nature*. To the former position, all orthodox Christians would assent; to the latter, very few.

the designations of Christ's whole person are sometimes applied to one of his natures, yet not in a way to contradict the designations themselves. Divine names are not used in connection with human properties, nor human names in connection with Divine properties. Hence, when it is said that the Jews crucified "the Lord of Glory," and that the church is purchased with God's own blood, we are to conclude that the Divine nature of Christ did really participate in the sufferings of the cross.

But even this objection, plausible as it may seem, will not stand the test of a critical examination. The truth is, that human properties are not unfrequently ascribed to Christ, in connection with Divine names and titles, and Divine properties in connection with human titles. For example, the phrase "Son of Man," so often applied to Christ, refers properly to his human nature. And yet it is continually used in connection with Divine properties and works. "The Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sins." Matt. 9: 6. "The Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath." Matt. 12: 8. "No man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of Man, *who is in heaven.*" John 3: 13. "When the Son of Man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory; and before him shall be gathered all nations, Matt. 25: 31.

I may cite another example which is stronger, if possible, than either of these. By the mouth of Zechariah, the Jehovah of Israel is represented as saying: "They shall look on me whom they have pierced;" and this, we are told, was fulfilled upon Christ, when the soldiers pierced his lifeless body with a spear. (Comp. Zech. 12: 10 with John 19: 37.) In doing this, the soldiers, according as words are used in the Scriptures, *pierced Jehovah.* But so far from piercing the Divine nature of Christ, they did not even pierce his entire human nature, but only his dead body. As this was the veritable body, the only visible relic, of a person who, in life, was the Jehovah of Israel, so in piercing this precious body, the soldiers are said to have pierced Jehovah.[1]

[1] The principle of interpretation here applied to various passages of Scripture, may help us to understand a class of uninspired men, who have been thought to teach the sufferings of the Divine nature. We occasionally meet with expressions in prose, but more frequently in sacred poetry, which import that God died, that Jehovah was crucified, that the Lord of Life expired on the cross, etc. But what do the venerable men who use such language mean by it? Not that the *Divine nature* of Christ literally died, but that a *Divine person* died: one who united in himself both Divinity and humanity, a nature which *could die*, as well as one which *could not.* And if their writings, in general, were collated, it would be found, in nearly every instance, that they *exclude* the sense which has been put upon them,

In short, we are not Nestorians; nor do those who differ from us, profess to be Monophysites. We hold alike to *two* distinct natures in *one* Divine person. Hence, it need not surprise or perplex us, that we find frequent representations in Scripture which can belong to Christ in only one of his natures, standing in connection with names or terms which apply to his whole person. Thus, the Son of Man, while on earth, was in heaven. The Lord of Glory was crucified in the crucifixion of Jesus of Nazareth. The Jehovah of Israel was pierced in the piercing of Christ's lifeless body. And the same Jesus, which grew in wisdom and stature, is God over all, blessed forever. Holding fast to the venerable orthodox faith, with regard to the person of our blessed Lord, without swerving to the right hand or the left, it will be easy to interpret all the representations of Scripture with regard to his passion, and yet avoid what seems to us the monstrous supposition, that his Divine nature participated directly in the sufferings of the cross.

Another argument for the sufferings of the Divine nature has been drawn from the doctrine of *atonement*. To confine the sufferings of Christ to his human nature — to represent them as the sufferings only of a man, has been thought to detract from the greatness of the atonement, if not from its efficacy. It is but a creature-atonement, after all. The magnitude of the work is vastly heightened, when considered as accomplished by the sufferings of God. This objection would have more weight, if the Divinity of Christ were not regarded as indispensably concerned in the work of atonement; if his sufferings had been those of a mere man. But his Divinity, we have seen, *was altogether indispensable* in this great work. His sufferings were not those of a mere man. They were the sufferings of a man in whom "dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead bodily;" of a man in personal union with the Deity, and who was sustained by that union to endure what otherwise would have crushed him in a moment. They were sufferings, to which the connection of the Divine with the human in the person of Christ imparted an infinite dignity and efficacy — an efficacy sufficient

as to the crucifixion of the Divine nature. Thus Ignatius, writing to the Romans, and exhorting them not to hinder his martyrdom, says: "Permit me to imitate *the passion of my God*." But in his Epistle to the Ephesians, Ignatius describes his Saviour as "both fleshly and spiritual, made and not made, God incarnate, true life in death, first passible then *impassible*, even Jesus Christ our Lord." So Bishop Pearson says: "The eternal Son of God, God of God, very God of very God, *suffered under Pontius Pilate*." But fortunately, Bishop Pearson explains himself, and gives the same explanation with that given above: "The *person*, which was begotten of the Father before all worlds, and so was really the Lord of Glory, and most truly God, took upon him *the nature of man*, and IN THAT NATURE, being still the same *person* that he was before, *did suffer*." — See *Pearson on the Creed*.

to constitute them a full expiation for the sins of the world. The Scriptures nowhere determine the precise amount of sufferings endured by our blessed Lord; but we know that they were enough — considering the infinite dignity and glory of his person, and his ineffable nearness to the Father — enough to satisfy the justice of God, and answer all those purposes in the Divine government, which could have been answered by the destruction of our race. They were enough to declare, most adequately and fully, God's "righteousness for the remission of sins that are past..... that he might be just and the justifier of him who believeth in Jesus." Rom. 3: 25. As much as this all evangelical Christians believe, who hold the sufferings of Christ to have been confined, in the sense explained, to his human nature. And what more than this do others believe, who extend his sufferings to the Divine nature? What more than this need any one believe, in order to a full and complete atonement?

There is a theory of the atonement, indeed, which seems to involve the necessity of the infinite sufferings of God; — that theory which supposes Christ to have endured as much, in his own person, "pang for pang, spasm for spasm, sigh for sigh, and groan for groan," as all the elect would have suffered in hell forever. On this supposition we admit, that an infinitude of suffering on the part of our Lord was necessary; and not only so, but "the infinitude must have been multiplied by the whole countless number of the redeemed." But this view of the atonement is commonly rejected by evangelical Christians, even by those who believe that the Divine nature of Christ did actually suffer and die. These, for the most part, are understood to hold the doctrine of the atonement in much the same sense as other Christians; — an atonement which, for aught that appears, may be as adequately accomplished on our theory of the sufferings of Christ, as on their own.

In proof of the sufferings of the Divine nature in Christ, an appeal has also been made to the common apprehensions of Christians. When Christians read or hear of the sufferings and death of Christ, the impression on their minds is, that the *whole Christ* suffered, the Divine nature as well as the human; nor is it likely, until they are instructed differently, that they entertain any other thought.

It cannot be expected of Christians in common life, that they should speculate very profoundly on a question such as this, or that their opinions should be regarded as of special importance. They believe that Christ suffered and died, according to the Scriptures, and that by his death he made expiation for sin; and further than this their inquiries do not ordinarily extend. Still, should even the plainest Christian be asked, whether he really thinks that God agonized in the garden, that

God was crucified, that God bled and died; he would be shocked at the interrogation. He would shrink from a supposition so startling and incredible; and if inclined to pursue the subject at all, would probably adopt substantially the same views of it with those which have been here exhibited. Accordingly those writers who limit the sufferings of Christ to his human nature, appeal as confidently as any others, and perhaps with more reason, to the common apprehensions of Christians, in justification of their views.

Having now examined the arguments commonly adduced to prove the sufferings of the Divine nature in Christ, and shown that they do not establish the point in question, we proceed to the proof of the opposite doctrine. We hope to be able to show, to the satisfaction of all our readers, that the Divine nature of Christ did *not* directly suffer in his last agonies, but that his sufferings pertained to his human nature only. We say the Divine nature of Christ did not *directly* suffer. We deny not that the Divine *sympathized* with the human, or, which is the same, that God *felt* for his Son, as every benevolent nature must, in the hour of his sufferings. But to sympathize with Christ in his sufferings is one thing; directly to endure those sufferings, is quite another. God sympathizes with his people in all their afflictions. "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him." Ps. 103: 13. But God does not directly endure all the afflictions of his people, or any of them. In like manner we hold that the Divine nature of Christ did not directly endure the sufferings of the cross.

On this point, two or three things should be premised, not indeed as essential to the argument, but yet as belonging to it.

In the first place, if God suffered in the person of Christ, then the suffering must have been *universal*. God is an omnipresent spirit. In the possession of all his susceptibilities and powers, he exists everywhere. What he knows in one place, he knows in every place. What he feels here, he feels everywhere. Hence, if the Divine nature of Christ participated directly in the sufferings of the cross, the suffering must have been universal. Wherever God existed, the agony was felt. Every point of space throughout immensity, being pervaded with the presence of God, must have been also pervaded with his sufferings.

Again, if the Divine nature in Christ suffered, I see not but the *whole Divine nature* suffered. The suffering must have extended to the entire Godhead — Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Not only are the persons of the Godhead in some sense distinct, in some other sense they are one. By some mysterious vinculum they are so united, as to constitute but one God. What one knows, they all know. What one feels they all feel. What one does, they all may, in some sense, be said to do.

"What things soever the Father doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise." "I am in the Father, and the Father in me." "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." "I and my Father are one."

No one who believes in the proper, Scriptural *unity* of the persons of the Godhead, in opposition to tritheism, can persuade himself, that one of these persons could have suffered infinitely — could have been visited with all the agonies of the garden and the cross, and yet the other Divine persons remain unscathed. These sufferings, if they reached the Divine nature at all, must obviously have reached the whole Divine nature, and Father, Son, and Holy Ghost must have suffered together. I see not how this conclusion can be avoided, but upon the supposition of three entirely distinct intellects, sensibilities, and wills, which would constitute three separate, independent minds, or (which is the same) three Gods.[1]

I scarcely need remark here (what has been hinted already) that if the Divine nature of Christ suffered on the cross, his sufferings must have been *almost entirely* those of the Divine nature. The sufferings of the man must have been swallowed up and lost — must have been as nothing, yea, less than nothing and vanity, compared with the infinitely greater sufferings of the God. And in this view it is pertinent to ask, Why need the Saviour have been a man at all? Why must he take on him the Seed of Abraham? As his sufferings were almost entirely those of God, why could not those of the man have been spared, and the atonement have been accomplished without the incarnation?

In proof that the sufferings of Christ belonged, in the sense explained, to his human nature, I remark, in the first place, that all the *manifestations* of suffering, on his part, were human. The hunger, the thirst, the weariness, the poverty, the fierce temptations, the agony in the garden, the bloody sweat, the fears and the pains of crucifixion, the pangs of death — all this array of continued and most intense suffering was yet, so far as *appears*, the suffering of a man. There were no decisive indications of anything beyond this. The supposition, therefore, that the sufferings of Christ were but in the smallest degree those of a man — that they were almost entirely the sufferings of God, is, to say the least, a

[1] Hence Mr. Harris, in a passage which has been quoted by the advocates of a suffering God, admits, that the sufferings of Christ must have been those also of the Father. "How does it enhance our conceptions of the Divine compassion, when we reflect, that there is a sense in which the sufferings of Christ were the sufferings of *the Father also*."—GREAT TEACHER, p. 106.

The objection, that our argument equally proves that the *incarnation* of Christ must have involved the *incarnation of the Father*, will be considered in another place; where I shall endeavor to show, that those who urge this objection must have imbibed very gross and unscriptural notions of the incarnation.

gratuitous supposition. There were no outward evidences, no appearances to justify it.

Accordingly, the Scriptures teach, and that too in a variety of ways, that the sufferings of Christ *were those of a man.* We are assured, first of all, that our Saviour became a man *that he might suffer;* importing that he could have had no suffering but for his human nature. He "was made a little lower than the angels" — in other words he was made a man — "*for the suffering of death* . . . . . that he, by the grace of God, should *taste death for every man.*" Heb. 2: 9. "Forasmuch, then, as the children are made partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself took part of the same, *that through death* he might destroy him who has the power of death, that is, the devil." Heb. 2: 14. Christ is also said to have been "made of a woman, made under the law, that" — through his sufferings and blood — "he might redeem them that were under the law." Gal. 4: 5.

The Scriptures also teach, not only that Christ became a man that he might suffer, but that he actually suffered *as a man.* He was "a *man* of sorrows, and acquainted with grief." Isa. 53: 3. "Being found in fashion as *a man*, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto *death*, even *the death of the cross.*" Phil. 2: 8.

The human character of Christ's sufferings is further indicated, in that he is so often said to have suffered in *his body.* "Who himself bare our sins in his *own body* on the tree." 1 Pet. 2: 24. "Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a *body* hast thou prepared me," in which to suffer. "Then I said, Lo! I come, in the volume of the book it is written of me, to do thy will, O God; . . . . . by which will we are sanctified, through the offering of *the body* of Jesus Christ once for all." Heb. 10: 5—10.

Christ is furthermore said to have suffered *in the flesh;* or, which is the same, in his *human nature.* "Being put to death *in the flesh*, but quickened by the Spirit." 1 Pet. 3: 18. "Forasmuch, then, as Christ hath suffered for us *in the flesh*, arm yourselves, likewise, with the same mind." 1 Pet. 4: 1. "You that were sometime alienated, and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled in *the body of his flesh, through death.*" Col. 1: 21.

The Scriptures represent the atonement of Christ as consisting essentially in his *blood*, and his *death.* I need not quote passages, as they must be familiar to every reader. But the blood of Christ belonged exclusively to his human nature. It was that which flowed in human veins. To speak of the blood of God, except as of a *man* "in whom dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead bodily," and who had flesh and blood, like other men, is to talk nonsense. And *natural, physical*

death, too, which was the sense in which our Saviour endured it, is altogether a human affair. It is an extinction of the natural, animal life. It is a dissolution of the connection between a human soul and a human body. It was to accomplish the death of Jesus, in *this sense*, that the Jews conspired against him. The means which they used, and which the Romans used, were all adapted to this end. It was in this sense, undoubtedly, that the Saviour died. His human soul left his body. Animal life and motion ceased. His body became a cold and pallid corse, and was laid in the tomb.

To suppose that our Saviour died in any other and higher sense than this, is to speak against all evidence. Yea more, it is to affirm, in contradiction of the Scripture testimony, that he passed through two different kinds of death, or in other words, *died twice*. That he died, in the ordinary sense of dissolution, there can be no doubt. And now if his Divine nature also died; if he experienced a change which may, with any propriety, be denominated *the death of God;* he must have endured another and an infinitely more dreadful death — a death, compared with which the mere dissolution of the body was as nothing. Why, then, is no mention made of this more dreadful death in the Scriptures? Why is it so expressly said that Christ died *once* — not twice — for all?

The nature of our Saviour's sufferings is clearly indicated in a fact mentioned by one of the evangelists. While agonizing and pleading in the garden, and ready to sink under the weight of his sorrows, "there appeared unto him an angel from heaven, *strengthening him.*" Luke 22: 43. Nothing can be more natural than this, or more easy of explanation, on supposition that our Saviour suffered as a man. But on the other supposition, what shall be said of it? What *can* be said? Does the mighty God, under any circumstances, need the aids and supports of a ministering angel? Even if we could suppose the Eternal in that suffering condition, weeping, pleading, and sweating as it were great drops of blood, would he need to be strengthened from such a source?

There is another fact mentioned in the Gospels, which is equally conclusive as to the nature of Christ's sufferings. It seems that when the soldiers led him away to crucify him, they first laid on *him* (as was the custom in such cases) the wood of the cross. John 19: 17. But he had not borne it far, when it was taken from him, and laid upon one Simon, a Cyrenian. Matt. 27: 32. The only reason which has been assigned, or can be, why Jesus was relieved of the burthen of the cross is, that *he was unable to bear it.* Through weakness, distress, long fasting, and loss of blood, he was ready to faint and die under it, and might

not have survived to come to the place of crucifixion. Now all this is what might have been expected, on supposition that Christ suffered as a man. But on the other supposition, it is wholly inexplicable. Was *God* ready to faint and die under the burthen of the cross? Was not *he* able to bear it to its appointed place?

I have now briefly exhibited the *Scriptural* argument against the sufferings of the Divine nature in Christ; and to my own mind it is conclusive. It proves, as certainly as words can prove anything, that our Saviour's sufferings (if we except those of mere sympathy) were confined to his human nature.

I have still another argument to urge — one not independent of the Scriptures, but not so directly connected with them — growing out of the *Divine perfections.* If we consider the several kinds of suffering which our Saviour endured, and the causes of it, to suppose that it extended to the Divine nature — to God, is inconsistent with his *acknowledged perfections.*

The causes of our Saviour's sufferings were various. Some were bodily; others, mental. And of those that were mental, some were emotional, and others more purely intellectual and spiritual.

A portion of our Saviour's sufferings had a *bodily origin.* The mind suffered through its connection with the body. Thus we know that he suffered from weariness, from faintness, from hunger, from thirst, and from the thorns, the scourge, the nails, and other inflictions at the time of his crucifixion. But is it likely that *the Deity* suffered in these ways? Was the immensity of the Divine nature hungry or thirsty? Was the almighty God weary?[1] Did the driving of a nail, or the pricking of a thorn, inflict a torture upon the Divinity himself, and thus carry a pang throughout the universe? Who believes as much as this? Who that has any proper sense of the nature of the Divine perfections can believe it?

God is not impassible in such a sense as to feel no pity in view of distress, and no displeasure in view of sin. But he is, we think, in such sense impassible, as not to be liable to suffer from the direct inflictions of his creatures. Was it ever within the power of a man, by a blow of the hand, or the driving of a nail, to torture the Deity himself, and thus fill immensity with distress and anguish? Does not a supposition such as this tend to degrade and dishonor the Divine Being, and make him, in some respects, such an one as ourselves?

[1] "Hast thou not known? Hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary?" Isa. 40: 28.

A part of our Saviour's sufferings arose from *fear*. As his last agonies approached, he seems to have been appalled in view of them, and to have feared that he should not be able to go through them in a proper manner. In the language of the Psalmist, "fearfulness and trembling came upon him, and horror overwhelmed him." Ps. 55: 5. "He offered up prayers and supplications, with strong crying and tears, unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he *feared*." Heb. 5: 7. But how is it possible that the Divine nature in Christ should have suffered from fear? Of what could it be afraid? Being omniscient, nothing unanticipated could present itself to the mind of the Saviour to awaken fear — nothing of which he had not had the most perfect knowledge from all eternity. And being almighty and independent, he must have known that nothing could ever injure him, and that he had absolutely nothing of which to be afraid.

Will it be said that he feared as to the sufficiency of his *moral* and *spiritual* strength? But was he not absolutely and unchangeably perfect? And could holiness infinite and immutable ever fail?

That our Saviour suffered from fear is certain. That the Divinity within him could not fear, is equally certain. To suppose it, is to contradict all the Divine perfections. It is demonstrable, therefore, that in this part of his sufferings, the Divine nature did not participate.

Our Saviour also suffered from distressing *temptations*. He was sorely tempted in the wilderness. We read that "he *suffered*, being tempted." He was "tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin." Heb. 2: 18. 4: 15. But is it possible that his Divine nature suffered in this way? Was God tempted? We read expressly that "God *cannot be tempted* with evil, neither tempteth he any man." James 1: 18.

Undoubtedly, much of our Saviour's suffering was, in its nature, *mental*. It originated in the mind. Nor did it consist in mere nervous delusions and horrors; there was a rational cause for it in the state and exercises of his own soul. The most distressing thoughts were darted in upon him. Views of things the most painful and overwhelming passed before him, and filled him with anguish. To use the language of Edwards: "his soul was in a great and sore conflict with those terrible and amazing apprehensions which he then had." Now all this was perfectly natural, and may be easily accounted for, on supposition that his sufferings were those of his human nature. But suppose we adopt the other supposition, and regard them as the sufferings of God. What possible account can now be given of them? What painful views of things, distressing thoughts, and gloomy, dreadful apprehensions could have come over the Divine mind, just at this time, to overwhelm it, and fill it with anguish? Had not the great God perceived and un-

derstood the same things before? Had he not possessed the most perfect view of them — had they not entered into his purpose and plan, from all eternity?

But the severest sufferings of our blessed Lord — the bitterest ingredients of that dreadful cup which he consented to drink to the very dregs — were undoubtedly of a *spiritual* nature. For a time, God was pleased to shut out his prayer, and to withhold from him those spiritual supports and consolations — those comforting tokens of the Divine favor and love, which he had ever before enjoyed. "I cry in the day time, but thou hearest not; and in the night season, and am not silent. My God! my God! why hast thou forsaken me? Why art thou so far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring?" Ps. 22: 1, 2. Now these distresses may be conceived of, and accounted for, supposing them to have fallen upon *the man* Christ Jesus, while suffering in the stead of sinners. But what possible idea can we frame of them, if we say that they were the sufferings of God himself? Did God the Son cry, in his distress, to God the Father? Did he cry to him, and not be heard? Did the first person of the Trinity hide his face from the second, withdraw from him all spiritual support and consolation, and thus fill his infinite heart with distress and anguish? Could one person of the Trinity be thus deserted and afflicted, and the whole Godhead not be afflicted? Could the Divinity of the Son thus sorely suffer, and the Divinity of the Father and the Spirit escape?

But even this is not the worst of it. The sufferings of Christ — of every kind — are represented in Scripture as *the inflictions of God.* "It pleased *the Lord* to bruise him, and put him to grief." He was "stricken, smitten *of God*, and afflicted." Isa. 53: 4, 10. Whatever may have been the instrumental cause or causes of his sufferings, God was the prime mover and efficient; and all this was necessary, that so an expiation might be made to God for sin. Now all this is very possible and conceivable, on supposition that Christ suffered for sinners, as a man. But suppose him to have suffered chiefly, almost entirely, in his Divine nature. Suppose the God to have suffered. Suppose one person in the Trinity striking, smiting, afflicting another — bruising him and putting him to grief, and thereby putting himself to grief — visiting the whole Godhead with distress and anguish. Who can conceive of such a thing? Who can reconcile it at all with the Divine perfections? Who can contemplate it but with distress and horror?

We come now to consider the theory in question — that of the sufferings of the Divine nature in Christ — in its bearing on the *immutability* of God, and also on his perfect and unchanging *felicity.* I have said that I do not think God immutable in such sense as to be incapa-

ble of anything like a succession of views and exercises, or to be in such sense impassible, that he cannot feel for the woes of his creatures, or be displeased at their sins. But the theory we are examining goes much farther than this. It supposes the Divine Being at a certain period, some 1816 years ago, to have become, for the time, an infinite sufferer. He was tortured with fear. He was assaulted with manifold temptations. He was overwhelmed with the most distressing thoughts, and the most painful apprehensions. And not only so, he had put himself in such connection with a human body, as to suffer immensely from that source. The driving of a nail carried a pang to the very heart of Omnipotence. The pricking of a thorn, the smart of the scourge, was felt throughout immensity. And worse than all; one Person in the Godhead commenced, at this time, inflicting the most dreadful sufferings on another; — hiding his face from him — shutting out his prayer — striking, smiting, and afflicting him — bruising him, and putting him to grief; as though one of these Divine personages could so torture another, and feel nothing himself; as though the Son and the Father were no longer one.

If these expressions shall seem to any of my readers irreverent and awful, I cannot help it. They are no more irreverent than the theory which I am laboring to expose. But the charge of irreverence is not that with which I have now to do. How do the above representations comport with the idea of God's *unchangeableness;* and not only so, but with that of his unchangeable and perfect *happiness?* That God is unchangeable in every sense which does not imply imperfection, is clearly taught in the Scriptures. That he is perfectly and eternally happy is as fully taught; and the same may be inferred from his very nature, and from his other perfections. He has infinite and exhaustless sources of happiness within himself. But how is it possible to reconcile with these glorious attributes the supposed suffering of the Divine nature of Christ at the time of the crucifixion? According to this theory, there certainly *was* a change in God at this time, a mighty change, a most painful and dreadful change. He did not merely sympathize with the sufferer on Calvary, but *was himself the sufferer.* The agonies of the garden, the tortures of crucifixion, he literally *felt*, in his own Divine nature. It would seem that his happiness, for the time, must have been, not marred, but *destroyed*, and the immensity of his being must have been filled with anguish.[1] On the theory before us, there was, I repeat, a *change* in God at this time; a great, a most painful and dread-

[1] "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, *even unto death.*" If Christ is here speaking in his Divine nature, how much happiness was there left in that nature?

ful change; one that never can be reconciled with the plainly revealed doctrine of his perfect, unchangeable, and eternal felicity.

Will it be said here, that the *incarnation* implies a change in God, and perhaps as great a change as that involved in his suffering on the cross? I admit that the incarnation may be so regarded and stated as to involve a change in the Supreme Being. I fear, indeed, that it *is* so regarded by not a few evangelical Christians. If the second person in the Trinity literally divested himself of any of his Divine perfections and attributes, when he assumed our nature and appeared in our flesh; or if his nature became so commingled with ours as to be subject to human limitations, and in fact to constitute but one nature; or if the hypostatical union was the same in him as the union of soul and body in man; in other words, if, in humbling himself (or emptying himself), our blessed Saviour *ceased to be God*, as he was before; then would the incarnation imply a change in God, and perhaps as great a change as that involved in the pains of crucifixion. But such, I am persuaded, is not the true scriptural idea of the incarnation. If we cannot fully explain (as most certainly we cannot) what Paul describes as "the great mystery of godliness," we may show, to a certain extent, what it is not. And we know that it was not — could not have been — either all, or aught, of what has been stated above. Christ was as much God, and was as truly possessed of all his Divine attributes and perfections, subsequent to the incarnation, as he was before. The Divine nature assumed a personal union with the human, but was not converted into it, or mingled with it. It was as superior to it, and distinct from it, in this connection, as it was before. The incarnation involved *no real, essential change* in the second person of the Trinity, but only a different *relative position*, and consequently a *different manifestation*. The Divinity now *appeared*, it *showed itself*, in a human form. God was "*manifest* in the flesh." In the beautiful language of Mc Cheyne, "The almightiness of God now moved in a human arm. The infinite love of God now beat in a human heart. The compassion of God to sinners now glistened in a human eye. God was love before, but Christ was Divine love covered over with flesh; — just as you have seen the sun shining through a colored window. It is *the same sun*, and *the same sun-light*; and yet it shines with a mellowed lustre. So in Christ dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. The perfections of the Godhead shone through every pore, through every action, word, and look — *the same perfections*; they were only shining with a mellowed brightness. As the bright light of the Shekinah often shone through the vail of the temple, so did the Godhead of Christ often force itself through the human vail — through the heart and flesh of the man Christ Jesus."

I here close my argument against the strange and, to my apprehension, monstrous idea, that the Divine nature of Christ participated directly in the sufferings of the cross. That the subject is recondite and difficult, and in some of its aspects quite beyond the reach of the human understanding, no one can doubt. I have endeavored to treat it with that modesty, humility, and prayerfulness — with that deference to the teachings of holy Scripture, and of reason only as guided by Scripture, which its nature demands.

I know there are some who are averse to a critical consideration of this subject, and are full of regrets that the discussion has taken place. They believe that Christ died for sinners, and by his death made a full expiation; and that, they say, is enough. With this physiological analysis of the person of Christ — this dividing him off into two distinct natures — and the inquiry whether he suffered in both natures, or but one, and if in but one of his natures, which — with questions such as these, they have no sympathy. The very inquiry is presumptuous — an intermeddling with things unrevealed.

In reply to this objection, I have to say, in the first place, that the doctrine of Christ's peculiar and mysterious person is not a thing unrevealed. That he united in his own person both a divine and a human nature, or in other words, that he was both God and man, is as clearly revealed as any fact of the Bible. And so it has been understood in the church in all ages.

Nor do I regard the question as to *the nature* in which our Lord suffered, as a thing unrevealed. It has been my endeavor, in the foregoing pages, to unfold *the revelations of God* on this awful subject, and not to tread a step beyond them. If I have uttered my own fancies, let them be set at nought; but if what has been said is *the truth of God*, let it not be despised or rejected.

And as to the discussion which has come up within the last few years, certainly, those who take the commonly received view of the subject, are not responsible for that. The discussion was introduced, and has been forced upon them, from the other side.

The history of opinions on this subject, in the Christian church, may be given in few words. Until the fourth century, the question seems to have excited little or no interest. The early Fathers were content to use the language of Scripture, without any labored attempts at explanation.

At the period referred to, some few, we know not who, advanced the idea, that the Divine nature of Christ was passible and suffered on the cross; and the bishop of Rome wrote to Athanasius of Alexandria, requesting from him his opinion on the subject. Athanasius replied at con-

siderable length, sustaining the commonly received doctrine, and condemning that which had been introduced as novel and unreasonable. This decision of Athanasius, based as it was upon the Scriptures, seems to have virtually settled the question for the next fifteen hundred years. With the exception of a small portion of the Monophysites, and possibly a few others, who were regarded as heretics, the sufferings of the Divine nature were universally discarded, almost to the present time. The question was so entirely and quietly at rest, that theologians did not think it worth while to disturb it. With the exception of bishop Pearson, in his Exposition of the Creed, I do not now remember one, who has entered upon a serious consideration of it in modern times.

Thus the matter rested until the year 1845, when George Griffin Esq. of New York, under the signature of "a Layman," published his treatise on "the Sufferings of Christ," controverting what he acknowledged to be the almost unanimous opinion of the Christian church in all ages, and advocating with much zeal and ability the sufferings of the Divine nature. He has since been followed up by several writers on the same side, in the different Religious Quarterlies of the country.[1]

I make these statements for the purpose of showing to any who may feel disquieted by this discussion, that the responsibility of it does not rest upon the advocates of the commonly received opinions. They did not commence the discussion, nor are they disposed to continue it, any farther than may be necessary for the vindication of what they — and with them nearly the whole Christian church — have ever considered to be the truth.

As to the results of the error which has been so recently advocated among us, a sufficient time has not yet elapsed for these prominently to appear. But if the doctrine is persisted in and prevails, its appropriate fruits will ere long be manifested, and like all the products of delusion and error, they will be bitter.

Among them, I shall expect to witness, in the first place, *unworthy* and *dishonorable views of God.* As the doctrine which has been considered is manifestly inconsistent with some of the acknowledged perfections of God, those who hold it will be likely (at least, in their conceptions) to divest him of these perfections. Believing the Deity to have suffered from hunger, thirst, fatigue, fear, temptations, stripes, and other like causes; they will be led to conceive of him as *liable* to suffer in such ways. And this will be to conceive of him as subject to human limitations and infirmities, if not altogether such an one as themselves. It will be, I am sure, to degrade and dishonor him.

[1] An able and satisfactory Reply to "a Layman," by Rev. Dr. Tyler of East Windsor, Conn., was published in 1847.

I see not how this result is to be avoided, but by incurring others even more disastrous. Some, to escape the difficulty, may adopt the opinion (indeed, some *have* adopted and published it already), that in the work of our redemption, the persons of the Trinity, so called, are but *acting a part*. One of them *seems* to guard the honors of the law; while another *seems* to suffer, and to make expiation and intercession; and the third *seems* to carry on and consummate the work. But it is all an *appearance*, to which there is no corresponding reality — a moving, affecting tragedy, designed to melt the hard hearts of men, and bring them into a state of reconciliation with God. Now where this scheme is adopted, it will be not only natural but important to represent the second person of the tragic Trinity as suffering and dying in the sinner's stead; because the greater the suffering and the sufferer, the more moving and impressive will be the scene. And the Absolute, the Infinite, is not in the least affected by it. He sits complacent behind the curtain, and sees the moving farce go on, and rejoices in the blessed results of so blessed a contrivance.

Others may think to run clear of difficulties, by adopting *pantheistic* notions. God is everything, and everything is God. The multiform objects around us in the world, are but so many manifestations of the Supreme. Since God is to be seen flying in the clouds, and roaring in the storm, and crawling in the worm, and singing in the bird of spring, and groaning in all the agonies of a suffering world; why should it be thought incredible that he should himself suffer, in the sufferings of Jesus Christ? How could there have been any suffering in the garden, or on Calvary, in which the Universal Mind did not participate?

I have here hinted at some of the probable, and more than probable results of the error which has been examined, in its bearing upon God. Other effects will be likely to flow from it in other directions.

It can hardly fail to result in erroneous conceptions of the *person of Christ*. Instead of the good old orthodox statement — "two distinct natures in one person forever," there will be a revival, in some form, of the Monophysite heresies. The two natures will be regarded as so commingled and incorporated, as to constitute, in fact, but one nature. Christ, we hear it said already, is to be conceived of as *a whole, a unit*, so that what he thinks, or feels, or says, or does, or suffers in one nature, he suffers in his whole nature. There are no such distinctions between the Divine nature and the human, as theologians have insisted on.

I only add, that the views I have controverted, should they extensively prevail, will be likely to drive many into simple Unitarianism. The doctrine of a suffering Deity, of a crucified God, is too revolting to obtain currency with thinking minds; and if this shall come to be

insisted on as essential to orthodoxy, not a few will renounce it altogether. The Christ who died for us, they will say, was a man like ourselves, and his death had no more atoning efficacy than that of any other martyr.

It was undoubtedly the design of those who originated this discussion to magnify the atonement, and exalt the grace of God in our redemption. What more likely to have this effect, than to represent God himself as suffering, bleeding, dying for us? But there is reason to fear that the doctrine, if persisted in, will have, with many, directly the opposite effect. It will lead them to reject the atonement altogether, and trust to the work of their own hands for salvation.

It is always safe to follow the Bible, honestly, faithfully, reasonably interpreted; but specious theories and startling novelties are to be suspected and avoided.

ARTICLE II.

THE ANCIENT POETS AND POETRY OF WALES.

By Edward D. Morris, New Haven, Conn.

THE ancient literature of Wales has for a long period been concealed, almost entirely, from the view of men of learning. It would be difficult to find, in the whole range of literary history, so signal an instance of remarkable intellectual treasures, neglected and apparently forgotten. A silence as profound as that which brooded for ages over the buried cities of central Italy, seems to have rested upon these last and only relics of a once great and flourishing people. Time, which has done so much elsewhere to bring the rich Past into light, has only added to that obscurity which has so long enshrouded them. While toil and effort have been lavishly expended in surveying and examining almost every other field of literary or scientific study, the mountain fastnesses of Wales, rich in mental as in natural resources, have been wholly unexplored.

The country within whose borders this intellectual mine is hidden, has for three centuries past figured but slightly in the history of Britain; and is now scarcely known except as a retired province of comparatively little value or importance. From the time of the first assault made by Saxon power upon the liberties of the Welsh nation, to that in which they were finally annexed to the British empire — a period of