

For the Christian Sun.

THE SIN AGAINST THE HOLY GHOST.

We understand the unpardonable sin, or sin against the Holy Ghost, to be total apostasy from, and blasphemy against the regeneration of the soul by the true God, effected by his holy spirit.

That individual who has been made a child of God, by being born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God, can, may, will, and does commit this sin, whenever he or she turns away from and becomes a willing adversary to an opponent against this doctrine of salvation, by the immediate, true, proper, and positive agency of the Holy Ghost.

Now the words spoken against the Son of man, Jesus, were 24th verse, "This fellow doth not cast out devils but by Belzebul the prince of the devils." These words were spoken by the Pharisees. These had never been made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and could not sin against the Holy Ghost in their opposition to Christ.

Christ took this favorable opportunity of warning them, who had been converted, that they might be permanently guarded against the doctrine and sin of the Pharisees, which was a malignant opposition to the system of salvation by God's holy spirit, as taught by Christ: which was manifested by such expressions as "He has a devil," he cast out devils by Belzebul the prince of the devils, &c.

In the 1st Epistle of John xv. 16: this sin is spoken of—If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it. This sin was referred to the children of God. Christ prayed for his enemies on the cross. Father forgive them for they know not what they do. On the day of pentecost Peter tendered mercy to the wicked persecutors and crucifiers of the Saviour; and in Acts iii. 17: He says I wot that through ignorance ye did it as did also your rulers (that they denied Jesus Christ, or the Holy One, and the Just, and killed the Prince of life) and then exhorted them in 10th verse—Repent ye therefore that your sins may be blotted out &c. Then as Christ prayed for his opposers, and Peter exhorted them to repent, that their sins might be blotted out; it could not have been the unconverted Pharisees who committed unpardonable sin.

Paul was a persecutor and thought to do many things contrary to Jesus of Nazareth, he was injurious, a persecutor and blasphemer, and compelled the Christians to blaspheme, but he says: "I obtained mercy because I did it ignorantly in unbelief." He did not sin against the Holy Ghost, because he had never been a true believer and a partaker of the Holy Ghost; his language clearly implies that he would not have obtained mercy had he sinned as he did against the cause of Christ after he had received divine light as a true believer in Christ, that is, had he sinned against the Holy Ghost, or light and knowledge, by turning away into apostasy against the truth, he could not have found pardon. And as Paul was the chief of sinners, who had sinned in an unregenerate state, and he obtained mercy, so all unregenerate sinners who have never been born of God, may obtain mercy, if they will repent.

Balaam, Solomon and Judas all committed the sin against the Holy Ghost. Balaam was led off through covetousness, before he had fully turned against God, he was warned by the dumb ass, but he still loved the reward. Balak had offered and taught Balak to cast a stumbling block before the Israelites, to lead them into idolatry, and Peter numbers him among those who have forsaken the right way, to whom the mist of darkness is reserved forever. Solomon went into idolatry in his old age. David had told him that if he forsook God, he would cast him off forever. Judas sold his Saviour, and thereby turned against him, he repented but not unto life, and went and hanged himself.

They were all apostates, and we have no evidence of their salvation. Peter denied his Lord, but did not do so willingly, but did so unwillingly, and repented and found mercy. Jerome of Prague, the associate of John Huss, signed a recantation, but did it unwillingly through fear, and on reflection recalled his recantation, obtained mercy, and died for his religion in triumph. Cranmer also signed a recantation through fear,

but not willingly, and upon reflection, recalled his recantation and died at the stake a happy man; these last three did not willingly and in heart turn away from the truth and despiseful opposers of it; therefore they did not sin, the sin unto death. The sin may be, and is committed in our day by many in our world. All those who are born again, and who turn away from regeneration by the spirit of God, and in heart and will oppose sanctification by the spirit of God, and deny that men can be made partakers of the Holy Ghost in their bodies, after they themselves have once professed truly this way of salvation, have in our opinion committed the sin unto death, eternal death; though they may profess to be in the favor of God. These persons may occasionally be found among all sorts of formalists and restorationists, on principles of universal salvation through benevolence.

PHILIP E. GILL.

TEMPERANCE IN ANY THING.

Of all the words in the English language none perhaps more frequently perverted in meaning and misapplied to slanderous, ambitious, and fanatical purposes than that of Temperance. The perversion and misapplication of the term Temperance in those times (when by many even professed Christians the Bible appears to be lost sight of as defining true temperance) often spoil the temper, and eclipse if not destroy charity of even good and eminent men in other respects. Popular preachers, who are induced to hold forth on modernly so called temperance themes, are peculiarly tempted to become peevishly restive and uncharitably abusive, towards those defending themselves against attacks of their party spirit dogmas. This trait of fallen human nature arises from two prominent causes. The one, that all said to admiring crowds, listened to without dissent or opposing argument, apt to engender pride and self conceit, and consequent spirit of intolerance. And the other, that exclusive party dogmas apt of themselves to lead to intolerance. Hence the horrid persecutions in the name of the Christian religion; having often been urged on by men of reputation (in some quarters at least,) for piety and abilities. And the more exclusive the creeds; generally the more denunciatory and persecuting the sects. Our truly Christian liberal principle, of every man interpreting the Bible for himself, and letting no fellow mortal be a sort of a pope or deputy God to him, by dictating faith, is benignly calculated to avoid that bigotry and persecution, so fatal to charity, liberty, piety and salvation. And our order, through its papers and otherwise should discountenance by free discussion &c., a new species of creed fanaticism and persecution (of character at least) in the name of religious persecution direct is justly odious in our country, a new aspect of the old monster appears in intemperate abuse in the name of temperance.

The legitimate principles of the Order of the Sons of Temperance are not uncharitably exclusive or intolerant. And not a few prominent sons of my acquaintance concur with me in sentiment as to temperance positions. For legitimate sons simply set forth their free choice to abstain from having any thing to do with alcoholic liquors. They thereby set forth their own faith and practice or abstinence (not temperance) as to particular drinks; and condemn nobody; any more than the Rechabites of old condemned any of the people of God for drinking wine temperately, or for living in houses, or cultivating the earth. And we read of none drinking wine, living in houses, or cultivating land, opposing the Rechabites in self-defence; for, no need of self-defence where no attacks made. The people of God of old appear to have been more liberal and charitable than some Christians in our day. They content, as to non-essentials or where duty depended on choice, to think individually for themselves, and not to denounce others for differing in matters, that in spite of bigoted fanaticism, were alike acceptable to God; as taught the apostle when holding it right either to eat or not eat meat offered to idols according to individual conscience or choice. But some apostle making it optional as marry or not marry, mention the Antichrist that would forbid to marry. And apprehending another species of Antichrist he enjoins the precept as to the exercise that eternal vigilance "the price of Christian and other personal liberty."

"Let no man judge you therefore in meats and drinks and in respect of holy days." And he enjoins another precept, that by fairest implication, connected with many positive texts of proof warrants the free use of wine as an alcoholic liquor, in saying, "And be not drunken on wine wherein is excess." Not the temperate use but the excess was the intemperance. And according to most careful inspection of the various passages mentioning wine, and consulting best Commentators therein, I long since came to the conclusion, that not a word said in the Bible against the moderate use of wine in any way; though much said against its abuse; because as an alcoholic liquor, drunkenness the consequence of excess therein. And I am the more confirmed in this interpretation, (that has stood the test of ages and most pious and judicious commentators,) by no one in public or private argument ever able to point out a single passage of a liquor called wine, evidently not alcoholic. A late public attempt (by a noted lecturer) to do so was made by falsely quoting a passage to get the word wine in where Pharaoh's butler pressed the grapes into his cup. A position was once taken in New York State, that the Scripture wine had no alcohol in it, or was incapable of intoxicating, but after a controversy, it had to be given up by all the candid and learned. Equally untenable, as I have proved publicly and can do again, that any distinctive sort of Bible wine named, not alcoholic. All such untenable positions go to show how driven by Bible facts are these denouncing and persecuting "in good name at least" temperate drinkers. And just as much clear Bible proof that Jesus Christ was a temperate drinker of wine as that John his follower was merely abstinent (not temperate at all) as to that drink. A passage to this proof is so remarkable that I cannot forbear quoting it here entire. "Luke viii. 33. For John the Baptist came neither eating bread or drinking wine, and ye say he hath a devil." 34. The son of man came eating and drinking, and say ye; Behold a gluttonous man; and a wine bibber; and a friend of publicans and sinners." 35. "But wisdom is justified of her children."

Now for the special benefit of my brethren disposed to dissent from them, at least apparent full

Bible proof to settle the wine question forever. I will, very briefly give my reason for my sincere belief in such proof, or my interpretation of this passage. That it was wine that Christ came (was in the habit of) drinking evident from the contrast of John's declared abstinence as to wine and from the word of reproach—*wine bibber*. And, that it was real fermented juice of the grape, or alcoholic wine, or capable of intoxicating if used to excess or intemperately would appear, not only by the absence of all Bible proof of any liquor called wine and not alcoholic, and that new wine alcoholic as apostles acknowledged, in warding off the charge of drunkenness by adverting to the early hour of the day; but by the very charge itself of being a wine bibber, or evidently meant by the terms of reproach, that Christ was pointed out as going to excess therein, if not a drunkard on wine. And if any one disposed to get clear of the strongest of justly inferential proof for Christ being in the habit of temperate drinking of an alcoholic liquor, or being a temperate drinker of wine, by saying that it might be a false charge that he drank it at all, the completely refuting answer is this, that by the very term *son of man* (himself of course) "*came drinking*" he as much alleges the fact that he was in the habit of temperately drinking wine; as the fact that John was in the habit of abstaining totally from its use. A word or so as to the phrase in the passage cited "a friend of publicans and sinners" and "wisdom justified of her children."

Christ according to St. Paul's declaration of himself was "all things to all men," or as "not coming to call the righteous but sinners to repentance," and to preach temperance and other Gospel themes to the poor, associated with the worst of characters of his day to gain them over to righteousness. But for this he was specially reproached by them would be *grandees* or lordlings of Judea. Analogous is the case of a preacher now justly defending himself and other Christians; in Heaven sanctioned temperate drink. If in that defence he gains gospel access to some characters not temperate, or is commended by some such, in common with the many best and most enlightened Christians, while the proud lordling prejudice is laid hold of by some, that poor publicans and sinners of our day approving of him and his truth of course makes him a friend of such and also an encourager of their vices." Yet the ultras forget that by themselves joining infidels, swearers and other vicious characters in a society capacity, to exalt mere abstinence over Christian temperance, or being not only *with* but of such characters, this argument may be turned upon them with double force, or retorted, they encourage of what tends, to strike a death blow at the root of true temperance and all other Christian virtues, and also thus strikes at the church of Christ. But "wisdom justified of her children." And the converse of this true; or fanatical folly justified of her children. The truly Christian liberal minded children of wisdom approving of the right and exercise of private judgment as to temperance in particular as well as all other parts of the religion of Christ in general. And not so despotically foolish as to say that because that primary liberty right (the very pivot on which the glorious Reformation turned,) abused by some, therefore one set of mortals, as liable to abuse it, as their fellows, should lord it, Pope-like and God-like, over another set of mortals; or dictate to them how far to exercise said right. In short; the children of folly as to temperance may aptly represent drunkards and their like on the one hand denouncing others for private judgment choice of being abstinent individually or joining abstinent societies, and ultra teetotalers and their likes on the other hand denouncing others for the private judgment choice of not joining, or saying a Christian Church a good enough temperance society for them." Or both extremists anathematizing others for the choice of teetotal abstinence, or of real intemperance or as to alcoholic drinks.

If such be the rational common sense interpretation of the above cited passage (and I as much believe it as my own existence) then our blessed Saviour was in the abstract, as well as to all intents and purposes, a temperate drinker. And perfectly futile to bandy words as to who in our day percievly his imitators in this noble virtue and good example in this respect. The thing being right the manner of its privilege or exercise depends, on the alienable right of private judgment. To say, that the thing in general right in his day, and not in ours, is asserting a most important change as to temperance without the least Scripture proof, or any person except that given by the bare assertion of ultra party spirit zealots, seemingly disposed (as an eminent divine teaches) to put the ultra part of a newly arisen order or society into the parlour, and to thrust the Church of Christ and its truths into the kitchen. Christ's example so far as imitable good for Christians in every respect and at all times till the world ends, I fearlessly assert. And if this example in making wine and temperate drinking thereof an exception let that exception be most clearly proved—*ere* that common substitute for lack of proof, or denunciation be resorted to against those at least as honest in their opinions and moral and religious course of the affair in dispute as those arrogating exclusive righteousness to themselves and despising their more unpretending brethren.

My sentiments it will be perceived perfectly liberal or casting not the least censure on those choosing abstinence in anything or manner they please, all I ask in return is like toleration in my temperate use of any blessing I choose. And toleration, in my right of private judgment or interpretation of the Bible warrants to designate what a blessing is; and that irrespective of the vast majority of all *Christendom* on my side of the question. And as regard to limits of one essay compels me to break off in the midst of defining my positions on temperance, I ask a hearing once more, in your columns to reason calmly on this subject as if I, the only one holding the sentiments I advocate. With all due deference and respect to all concerned.

SIDNEY WELER.

For the Christian Sun.

DESIRE, "I would rather be the discoverer of one true cause of things, than be master of the Persian Empire." An Ancient Philosopher.

"I would rather be the humble instrument in the hand of God, of winning one soul to Christ, than to occupy the loftiest position in the gift of mortal man." C. H. PLUMMER.

Now for the special benefit of my brethren disposed to dissent from them, at least apparent full

For the Christian Sun.

RIPLEY, BROWN Co., OHIO, Aug. 22, 1851.

Dear Brethren of the South:—As I have been solicited by one of the Editors of your paper to pen one article for the "Sun," I feel some hesitancy in complying from the fact, that are so many more able contributors, and that it is difficult to conceive of a subject that might be interesting that has not already received attention. And further, I find you have some fiery spirits (particularly the Church at Providence) who if I should say any thing that would cross their views, would not only anathematise me, but the whole North. But trusting in that charity that hopeth all things, I merely offer my opinion on a few things:

1st. It is my opinion that a wrong spirit exists, both in the North and in the South, on the subject of American Slavery. One will declare that to practice it all under any circumstances, is almost an unpardonable sin. Another will declare that it is right and Scriptural, and if any one presume to write or speak anything to the contrary, will be for destroying all intercourse and familiarity with him.

2nd. It is my opinion that if I think slavery is wrong, contrary to the teachings of the Bible, the spirit of the Christian religion, and to the genius of our Republican Institutions; I have a right to declare it any way, or on all occasions in a proper spirit, and in the fear of the Lord. If you can reconcile the system with all these, and hold slaves, and have a conscience void of offence toward God and toward man, I have no right to condemn you for what you may be honest in practicing. Let us endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit, and pray that we may all come to the knowledge of the truth, and the truth will make us free.

3rd. It is my opinion, that it is wrong for a Minister to preach year after year to a congregation that will not pay him a reasonable compensation if they are able, for his services, and then complain of having to bestow so much labor for nothing; (if they appreciate your labors they will be willing to pay for them.)

4th. It is my opinion, that it is wrong for members of a Church to receive the labors of a Minister year after year, and not pay him what is right for his services, severally as the Lord has prospered, so he expects it of them.

5th. It is my opinion, that it is not only wrong, but downright infidelity, for a man that professes to be a Christian, and that has a standing in the Church to say that professors of Christianity and members of churches are no better than other men, comparing the two as a whole; and that Ministers in general are worse than the average of mankind—this I have heard.

6th. It is my opinion, that it is wrong for any one, because something goes wrong in Church, he may think himself not exactly rightly used, because there may be some Judas, or from any other other cause, to leave the Church and return to the world, or go and unite with a denomination whose faith does not accord with his own as nearly as the one from which he came out.

7th. It is my opinion, that it is wrong for a minority of a Church not to submit, when the majority agrees upon any measure such as employing a Minister, although he may not be their first choice, and refuse to go to hear him preach, although he may be a good preacher, and an excellent man.

8th. It is my opinion, that it is wrong for a person to become offended at some one or other, about something that they do not exactly like, and stay from meeting Sabbath after Sabbath, until the Minister or some other one of the brethren goes to see him, and asks him why he does not come to meeting; when his answer will be, I do not like such a man, or such a thing, or ask why he does not try to have a reconciliation effected, and he will reply, I am not for bringing difficulties into Church, I would rather just stay at home.

9th. It is my opinion, that it is wrong for any person, but more especially a Minister, to complain that their religious periodical is not interesting, its contributors are so few, its variety so small, its extracts so numerous, etc.; when they never write a word for its columns from one year end to another, and never make one effort to obtain a subscriber, and forward the pay, to encourage the heart of the Editor.

10th. It is my opinion, that it is wrong for some to refuse to assist in the erection of Antioch College, just because one man has said he did not see why colored persons might not be admitted as students.

11th. It is my opinion, that Antioch College will be built, and endowed, and that its location will be in Ohio, and that colored students will not be admitted.

12th. It is my opinion, that the signs of the times indicate, that the sects are becoming tired of their creeds and confessions of faith, and are leaning towards the ground, we, as a denomination occupy; and that those who are becoming denominationally discouraged, and are leaving us and joining the sects, will again become discouraged, and wish to return to the people from whence they went out.

13th. I am certain that we, as a people, occupy the only true ground, taking the Bible alone for our rule of faith, character the test of fellowship, and love the bond of union, without regard to our difference of opinion. E. W. DEVORE.

For the Christian Sun.

BRO. HAYES: Permit me to say to your numerous readers, and more particularly those of them with whom I have the pleasure of an acquaintance, that my wife and children, who have been unwell for several months past, are now much better, and through the Divine blessing I trust will speedily regain their health. I also have had several quite severe attacks the past summer. These afflictions will account for my not writing to some of my numerous correspondents. I purpose, the Lord willing now to resume my pen—till then they will receive this for what they may have supposed to be but mere neglect. The Lord be with them, and all who love him in sincerity. Grace be with you, In a common cause, C. H. PLUMMER.

CASTE. "The man who would presumptively despise another, because his manner of serving the community was different from his own, disparages his own claim to an exalted position, and great consideration." C. H. P.